

Chapter One: So

Counteraction is the centre of humanity's deepest paradox- if every action has a reflective and opposite reaction then nothing should ever end. And if no thing has a beginning or end, all we are able to relate each of them to is a circle, which means there is a chance that every fraudulent action you take will reoccur. You rape the tailpipe, come again. Fuck up on your paper crane, there is no fold. The whisper in your throat to light another cigarette, the seduction of touching the post every time the marry-go-round turns round and round. To be a child again, tongue stuck to the iron bars of this prison with no corners in which to tuck away our piles of nightmares. The phone rings, and you can't reach it because you are stuck (ha ha), and you couldn't speak even if you stretched right out, because of what is stuck (ah ha)- guess who's calling? Shouldn't have swallowed that pill, there are more potent ways of ingestion without the use of your tongue.

Lightning strikes, all has changed and you have a burst of energy, time to start beating down the walls. What lies out there, beyond to listen, and has it pressed its ear against the other side to catch our hollow world voicing? Or has it forgotten, or yet discovered we who clang about? The outer limits of what one can speak of with confidence, the playground for the students to recess while the teacher finds new worlds to make us worldly. Listen closely if you breathe against the covers of this book, listen closely to the bell toll. The iron hammer pounding back and forth against its hollow shell; beautiful music. The center of the universe for the denizens of a mountain town is a bell tower awakening the heartbeats of lifelong pedestrians. An hourly reminder that hours exist, and life is not too long. A kiss is broken, with the thought it should never be frozen. Two lips part to breathe again the cold fresh air. The sound of the bell resonating through all air, fresh or warm. Kept distant from every ear it touches, because time is too precious to risk the taint of finger smudges, because the hammer is too loud to press you ear against it.

A noise splitting the lips of the detective is the smoke exiting his mouth. Brushing up against the fingerprints he analyses from his drinking glass- after sipping his coffee, he always checks that the rest of the glass is clean. Just in case he may be able to complain to the waitress and get another. She was a little dazed- you know it's love when after a fight, you fill each other in on all the moments that made you smile when the other wasn't looking- but it was time to get back to work. As should he, but there's always time for another. Nobody cares. The waitress leans against the table beside the door, smiling as she reapplies her lipstick, time to ready another marker- the detective found one once. That's the other thing, she lingers by the door her man left through because she despised the man in the corner booth; he was always looking for a free ride on his break from the neighborhood mail route. It was time again to change her face from lover of a man who knows when the postman takes his breaks, to servant of a wandering eye. Minimum wage may be the newly legalized illusion that slavery does not exist, but that's okay, she spits in his coffee. Nobody cares.

The postman is now always five minutes behind on his route because of her kisses, not so long ago she had assumed her lips were clear after her kissing boyfriend goodbye, and took a fatal sip from his second cup. Now he always takes longer on the first in hopes to get another free. As the postman leaves to continue on his route, he puts the earphones of his walkman back into his ears and begins his song. It was almost time to change the

tape; he usually did so whenever he managed to learn the last of the lyrics. Until then he would stumble through, paraphrasing the verses and nailing the chorus. At least that's what the gardener picked up over time. Except for the sudden change a few weeks ago, when the mailman was found singing the end of his usual song instead of the beginning, the system of predictability was nearly perfect. The gardener smiled at this revelation, she wasn't always a gardener, but since her retirement she'd been able to find so many of life's little inconsistencies. It was so refreshing, to be amongst the hedges, its blossoms entirely naive of the existence of the bell tower. Although she had grown to love the daily relief of hearing the resonance and not having to finish up her break. So many broken moments that now seemed frozen and left behind. Frozen and blurred. She used to work at the... nobody cares.

Sometime later the ninth expected pedestrian passed, the girl who lived down the street that nearly always smiled as she walked by. Today she walked on the other side of the street, she always did that on days she did not feel like smiling. Sometimes she didn't even travel down her street at all, rousing the gardener's curiosity: she wondered where the girl goes when she isn't walking home. And she grins at that idea too, that now she has the time to ponder things that nobody cares about. (Ha, ahhh). Of course she travels from her white picket fence, into the outer-universe every once in a while. She visits the people that do not know her name whenever she feels spontaneous. Like the time she found out the girl who always smiled was a waitress at the cafe beside the grocery store. The gardener could still picture the girl's contained surprise to see her there. "Good to see you out of the yard," she said. She had to say something as she wiped down the table, the gardener was distracted though, she remembered, not being able to respond in time. Beside her, someone had torn up the lid of their coffee cup, the little bits lain out over the table like stars in the sky. She was having fun trying to find some constellation, some recognizable sign it really was a star filled sky. She almost had it before the waitress cleared it off. (Ah, how some let work get in the way of everything, ah). The one thing the gardener had a hard time forgetting were the regulars. The customers that drifted in at the same time once or nine times a week that always left the same impression. How bitter she sometimes was, for entire days just because of some idiot, no, some genius at pushing buttons. Even if they didn't mean to, they must have noticed how they made her feel. Somebody must have. What a sad world it would be if nobody cared.

Over time the gardener had come to miss the various expected pedestrians when they neglected to keep schedule, their lives she built up in her head had really taken root. She imagined for them spouses and children, anxieties and hobbies, reasons for the way they walked. Except for those who strut, for some reason those who strut bothered her. But of those that did not, there was the banjo playing club owner and the golfing sea major. And then there was the man who always wanted to, but never owned a cat (although he did own a hamster). One time before her husband died, she tried to explain how she would do the same for her customers, the regulars, but he laughed and said, "what if you accidentally asked some girl if her pet newt survived the accident?" It was always the same thing, it's not like she was crazy, it's not like she actually believed that these fantasies were real. They weren't even fantasies, they were just something to think about when she got bored. It's not like she had the whole world to say goodnight to or anything. Nobody cares what goes on inside your own head. Some customers would make her so bitter!

She loved the garden, each blossom so naïve of the existence of frustration, responding so freely to the wind. Relaxing was the thought of just how freely the flowers responded to the touch of the wind, the seeds of cherry blossoms floating off into the sky. Fragile shells finding strength enough in faith, to melt away and allow its spirit to rise out and be tempered with flight and song. Seeds lifting away from her tend into the air which resounded with wishes just like the ones she once cast upon the stars and the far reaches of the bell tower. Away from this town of tongues stuck to the bell. Well, at least a few of the seeds did make it a stone's throw away to the railroad tracks, which held a different resonance. The vibrations from trains gone away, escape slowly blending into the tapestry of sights seen and pulp fermented. But though the town of the gardener's white picket fence has become drunk on memories of locomotive smoke, the train itself is fully sober. Though not fully aware that nothing ends, the vibrations it left in infinite reduction still exist. Silenced only by another train or the bell's fingerprint leaving multiple reverberations, like a ghost ten generations down the line. The two battle, though naive of the fact that they do, within the restraints of the tracks: still, nobody cares. The trains next arrive at a bridge over the river most farms in the area used for irrigation. Above the trestle, the stars lie a bit later in the sky than they did over the village. The ends of some just appearing on the horizon and the beginning of others fallen to the ground. Here the train battles another force, rippling up the support beams from the stream's current and sediment. Little grains of soil the size of cherry blossom seeds eroding away at the trestle beams. They may not axe the bridge, but the water will eventually rot away the wooden beams if no one bothers to replace them: if no one cares.

It's been there for awhile, it seems that travel has its slaves much the same as consumption. Though rarer, and thus better paid, since the days of imported track layers at least. Rivers cover the world, so extensively without gloves or sole to blacken with scuff marks. But the trains that pass cannot float as the randomly selected do picked from the shore, and so do the stars above the bridge meet with the blackening marks of exhaust. The marks lead down to a smoldering furnace, which burns the limited fuel of incompleteness of, not knowing what one's searching for, only knowing that something's missing. And instead of staying until all is clear, using that which they already know and pushing forth. Still within reach of the bell, but seeking out just how far away the engine can make it. Undoubtedly the engineer who fuels the machinery can be considered the soul of the whole ordeal, though in the end his emotions and prayers to the stars are but a spine to control the arms lifting the shovel blade full of coal: the shovel blade acting as the hammer providing the music of crackling flame. A flaming passion is blinding in so many ways, its brightness beckons you from the world, trapping you alone with your fantasies. Its flash erases all else, even the target in a foray of too much shoveling from piles of incompleteness.

It's been a long time since the engineer looked up into the stars, so used to the screen of locomotive smoke he never even checks for breaks in the cloud anymore. He doesn't do much anymore except speak to his little friend every once in a while. Ever since negotiating the peace settlement, he has been happy to have the little tag a long aboard, though he remembers the battle. The slow development of the icicle that used his own flesh daily to build that steadily empowered isosceles dagger. But as the little glacier moved forward, the engineer gave in to the shameful temptations of instant, acute and fatal camaraderie. Through the aftermath of radiation and internal burns, both he and the

cold fought valiantly to be victorious, but in the end it was the engineer rising out of the illness on top. But despite his new debt, the engineer still had such mixed feelings about the hospital, so he speaks daily to the shriveled cancer, befriending it so they may never fight again. The one solidly good thing he remembered from the clinic, its walls sometimes seeming too glad to house his climactic pain, was the feeling of clean hands. So many years of coal dust underneath his fingernails, he'd forgotten what his hands really looked like underneath the muck. The calluses fell away into his skin with the little bottles that the nurse replaced once a week kept by the sink. Towards the end of his stay, as the pain started to lift, it seemed his greatest preoccupation. Running his smooth hands over his grizzled face, he still only shaved every three days. The engineer now always found himself doing the same thing as the train pushed forth, and remembered the first whistle blast he heard in the distance as his car pulled up to the station for the first time since the company dragged him away.

Since the beginning of his stay, he'd learned slowly that he had really been, as they said, too pale to go on. They said there were too many ghosts haunting the rails already, that they didn't need another one. He'd slowly learned to be spoon fed and submit to a sponge bath when days got rough. But his hands, he always cleaned his hands himself, and the first time in ages he'd picked back up that shovel, he realized what a mistake he'd made. As blistered palms prolonged the memory of sweet scented lotions and the beautiful nurse. For someone who spent so much time alone on the cargo train, he picked up the knack of nervous conversation almost immediately catching the medic's gaze. The two would talk a few minutes every meal about things like how the nurse's father had at one point wanted him to be a pilot; the engineer of the twentieth century. How his grandfather had been a track layer and what a thrill it would have given the old man to see the boy command the path he'd set, the back he broke. But alas the eldest grandson would choose sweet scented lotion by the carton, replacing each bathroom on the fourth floor D ward every Friday. The rooms were always the same, but at least the people were different. Coming from a small town to the big city, there were more people in the boy's first year chemistry class than went to his entire high school. The plan was to finish out his residency this year and move back as the neighborhood doctor, to join his mother's uncle's practice, but he wasn't too sure anymore. He'd gotten so used to the new faces every day, new problems by the hour that he felt like he'd found a new home. One without the same speech on flu shots given every year to sixth grade parents.

There were more people in that chemistry class than in his elementary, junior high and high schools combined, and there were probably twice as many people at any given time registered at the hospital than lived in his whole town. The other day he got a letter in the mail from his Dad that the new department store just renovated room for one of those fast-food burger joints. But the buzz seem to die in the distance between tongue depressors and MRI's, there were six fast food joints within a block of the place and ten downstairs in the food court. What he was most scared of was telling the family that he wasn't moving back, disappointing them. Just before he'd left last Thanksgiving, his father had taken him aside and said but four words, "Whatever you do, you're almost there. Don't lose your passion!" It was just that his passion had changed, that's all. He thought about his a few minutes around meal time, three times a day, as the old man in the cancer ward rambled on about losing his (passion). It was like fate had sent him a messenger to speak those four over and over until he finally understood. The kicker was

always the man's story about leaving his hometown to see the world by train, to look out at the stars in a place so distant from any building light, a place of such clear skies. He wanted to ride out into a valley where the echo of his whistle was the only sound above the owls and woodpeckers; and it really was like that, until he realized there were only so many rails to ride and that a train cannot escape its track. Which wouldn't be so bad if it weren't that cargo only needed to be delivered to so many destinations, over and over again.

As the intern left the room he always thought about the packages, not the delivery. Every time he got a letter from home he felt something- at first it was joy, relief of loneliness, after a while it was a pleasant break from bills and junk. Then it became almost fear as his life drifted away from the little town- for the further it drifted from connection, the deeper the roots of those little secrets grew, growing into the forest he now hid within. Dreams sown and now nearly harvested. Most days he left the old man's room with the fuel of knowing he would never be that delivery man, that his deliveries were personal, mutual and that giving health allowed him to see the results of most everything he did. But once a week, still, there was the fear of becoming lost in the masses, trapped in the confines of nobody knowing his name. Those days he drew out the ladder: of the postman delivering emotion, the engineer delivering a giant machine of blind product and himself walking around with a box on a cart, replacing little bottles of lotion.

The feeling soon left him as he entered the next unit through a little hallway in between the last room in D3 and the first in D4. The rooms here were always different, the girls who lived in them put up posters and paintings, photographs and teddy bears. Making as much of a corner as they could manage. It was always interesting when a new girl moved in, replacing the various style, often using up the bottle more than once a week. The nurse was always happy to return sooner than expected; the girls were adorable, whispering when he came on, the odd one boldly introducing herself while tussling her hair. There was one girl in particular, sixteen, she'd been there longer than he had, at least a year or two. She always smiled and put down her book as he unlocked her bathroom to replace the lotion, sometimes three or four times a week depending on how often she emptied out the bottles into the garbage. It was for people like her that he was always volunteering his time to the nursing unit now, near the end of his residence. He first met the girl almost five months ago, as she was receiving stitches to her leg, after what she claimed was a shaving accident. As he sewed up her last cut they'd gotten fairly deep into shallow conversation, and the first few times he'd seen her afterwards she would laugh and say, "looks like I don't have to shave today".

She took a Polaroid of him once to put in her scrapbook beside the words, 'never lose your passion'. That first day she met him, he had managed to struggle out an opinion, something normally only assholes and psychologists could do. It was rare that a descent person would share their thoughts on her 'illness'. He asked her if 'shaving her legs' was a way of trying to finally get off the unit- of course the answer was no. If that was the case then there were better places to shave, and she'd come to learn there really was only one way out of the place. For even if she had tried to kick her own bucket, a doctor was never more than ten seconds away to catch her and bring her back again. She'd tried running away too, though he didn't know that, but again found the hospital had become too strong to let her go. They would always find her, always bring her back. All these

things lay tucked within her book, centered round her stranger's passionate response about will. Now matter how close someone pressed their face up against the cover, they could not hear what would never be spoken. The silence of the hurt inside: a bell whose hammer was removed by psychotherapeutic drugs and plastic windows. One day the nurse's comment made so much sense to her that she asked him to water her flower pot, giving the seed its lunch.

"Is it a flower?" he asked. She just smiled and wrote the second four words in her journal. Beside it was the picture of a cherry tree. For one of the first meals after she'd met him, the menu listed fruit salad, and as she chewed down on a spoonful, she found a cherry pit. Normally she would have swallowed it hard, loosely hoping that she would choke, but this day she decided to take it out and slip it in her pocket. The group session this week had the girls planting a flower, some crap about learning to take care of it as they should take of themselves. Instead, she put the cherry seed into the little burrow; for flowers die at the smallest nip of winter. The tree, she imagined, would sprout and root-in the pot until she made it back to her front garden- and shoot up through all seasons. For life isn't always sunny. The tree would grow up until she met someone just like him, who'd take a blossom from the cherry tree and keep it in his pocket: who'd take her flower and keep it as close to his heart as could be. So close to him that no secret needed to be kept.

Chapter Two: La

If you put on too much lotion, over time your skin stops producing the balance of oils it normally would in order to keep it moisturized and healthy. In a sense the skin becomes addicted and cannot aesthetically survive without the additive, this replacement vitamin also takes away from the texture of natural hands, which are essential to proper control of the paintbrush. Though most believe it a superstition, this opinion worked well enough for the painter sitting on the corner across from the hospital just as he did the day before. Today he paints the picture of a single flower ravaged by flame- inspired as all of his art was inspired, this time by a shy little teenage girl and her loudmouthed friend. The loud one bantered on about how cool it would be to make a living just laying back and jotting down notes and sketches about their view of the world, and asked of where he learned his craft and how he came up with such artistic ideas. On the career involving laying back and making money being cool, the artist definitely agreed. The painting he had on the easel was of a frog jumping from the lily pad in a pond, only to find with eyes closed and tongue outstretched to catch a fly, that pond lay at the edge of a building. She ranted about how wonderfully symbolic it was, and how she would love to take it back to the eating disorder unit but the psychiatrist was already riding up her neck trying to mine some sanity from the base of her skull.

The other girl looked at the paintings on the table, flipping through from top to bottom, pausing for each one. Whenever the painter looked over she would glance up and give a little bashful smile. She picked up one of a shooting star being chased by an angel reaching out to grasp it with one hand, holding its pocket open with the other. Putting it back and shuffling through some more, she next pulled out the sketch of a stick man with the head of a shining light bulb taking a sledge hammer over its head, posing to bring it

down on a chicken's egg. The next was a nymph lying in bed as a dark hooded, cloaked man lifted the sheets to crawl beside her. Lastly she found one she had looked at near the top of the pile; that she had looked at for some time. She put it down on the table beside the artist's stool and took the wallet from her purse. "You don't talk much, do you?" replied the artist.

"Don't take it personally", piped in the loud one, "she only talks to her samurai nurse."

As he painted his newest piece, he wondered whether or not to show a giant hand reaching and picking the blossom from the ground, or to leave it be. The only real reason for this is his obsession with gigantic hands, like the fingers of an artist creating grassy fields and animals coming into existence only after its touch. The girl had taken the last of the hand prints, but in this case he figured to just let things go, he had the original for the one she'd taken anyway. A little bloody for a shy little girl, he thought. After another hour he was done and the sun had almost set, so collecting his portfolio he began to walk to his apartment. The walk was a good half hour, easy enough as long as he switched his bag to the other shoulder every few minutes or so. It wasn't usually a straight-forward journey anyway, often stopping to talk to potential connoisseurs or capturing a moment of additional inspiration. However it was rare that he would come up with an idea not inspired by the people who bought his paintings. Two thirds of the way home, he checked his watch to see how soon it was before the party started. Changing from his paint splattered garb, he pulled on a pair of nylon/cotton blend pants that hung around his feet and pulled on the hoodie his girlfriend got him for their six month. Throwing on the headphones, he set up the records in order and popped each vinyl up onto the turntables- scratching and mixing the treble on top of exchanging bass rhythms, his new set was almost complete. The jungle undertone just needed a funky uplift to perfect the timing.

A few hours always went by like a flash of light, fading into the alarm he kept set beside the table from when he used to lose track of the time on occasion. Since then, he began to lose track of the time on every occasion, just forgetting that a world exists outside his headset, losing himself in the music. The alarm method was also perfect for nailing down the specifics of a set, too long or too short and you knew you fucked up even if you didn't notice where. Three hours and twenty-one seconds, almost there. It is most important here to push yourself to finish the set even if its way over, for the crowd will forgive everything but pulling the plug. He wasn't spinning tonight but felt like showing at the club anyway, kicking it down the street. His residency was almost up, the six month contract extension run its course, it would soon be time to travel on. In two months he would start up his new set at a weekly slot in foreign lands, hitting up a few invitations to practice at a few raves along the way. Arriving at the club, he knocked on the back entrance.

"We ain't open yet, use the front door."

"Man, fuck you too," the door cracked open.

"Oh it's you, sorry about that." The floor was empty, but a few DJs stood up in the booth hung above the floor from the three-story roof, the floors between the main level, basement and attic were knocked out when they opened the place. Over in the greenroom relaxed the owner and three girls listening to him strum away their favorite songs. As the sound checks crept through the door as it closed behind him, the trance each seemed so

deep within broke, the girl in the middle jumping up and running to him- leaping to wrap her legs around his waist.

“Your girlfriend won’t be here for another hour, how about you and me go back into the coatroom?”

“Hey pedestrian”, called the owner, “do you always have to bust in here and steal the show?” The owner was always teasing him for walking everywhere, especially because of why, once gave him the nickname of pedestrian and it stuck.

“We have a present for you”. The girl around his middle released and spun around behind him, covering his eyes and leading him to the couch. “So, tell us again why you’re always walking everywhere?” The painter smiled and knew he’d explained himself a hundred times to them. When he burnt energy his exhaust fed the flowers, when an automobile burned energy, its exhaust fed extinction. Besides, somebody stole his... the hands covering his eyes let go as his girlfriend rode into the room on a brand new twenty-one speed racer. Even better than the one he had before. But before he could get up to touch its handlebars, the girl behind him pushed him down onto the couch.

“On one condition”, affirmed his girlfriend, “we want to hear your new set”.

“But I don’t have my-”, cutting him off was one of the other girls grabbing a case of records from the closet. He shook his head and walked over to take a look at the box in her hands, the records from his apartment, and kissed his girlfriend.

Two lips separated as he put the second record between his teeth and laid the first onto the plate cover, he had begun before the second was out of the slip. Checking his watch, he marked the time. The club below slowly began to fill at about the same pace as the music filled his total focus. Taking a deep breath, he began the second riff, Gymnopedie No. 3; a classic piano solo by Erik Satie. Blending the hard bass line with the slow Satie drew one into a world where all people forgot all things. From behind him, he could feel the arms that had become so familiar since he just after he arrived (passing a two week trial contract), and feel the whisper of her so familiar voice within his ear, “You’re gonna be famous.” It was the voice that had soothed his spirit since she’d spoken so long ago, “If you want me, take me. If you don’t: take me anyway.”

He replied, “I’m gonna miss you.” The set moved on through the ranks of classical musicians interwoven with sharp and swallowing electronic echoes, and as he flipped through each of his chosen pieces, he lost himself even deeper than before. The warmth of her breath on his neck became the key to ecstasy. Every tweak became like another brushstroke, every twist another well planned decision whether or not to apply a giant hand to pick the flowers below. Behind him slowly gathered the owner and his friends who’d come to so anticipate this moment since the painter’s girlfriend caught that original taste. The most amazing part of it all was the final ten minutes, as the painter approached his finale. Over the course of these moments the people below fully entered his trance as he led them to the climax. As the music faded into the sounds of the ocean and a bell toll, three final bell tolls, the watch clocked three am. “It’s more difficult to do seven or eight, to fit in each without letting them trip over one another”, he said as he removed his earphones. The people below, just as the people behind him, were silent. Lost in the eventual silence he had given them in the resonance of the final bell.

Later on that night, the owner approached him as he sat crouched as usual in the corner of the dance floor, buried in his sketchbook. He peeked over the painter’s shoulder to see

his new creation, the girl he hesitated to paint for months until this day. The girl who bought that painting his first day in this city, who'd given him so much inspiration he'd trouble figuring on what to do with it all. The owner smiled and passed him a folded piece of paper, rubbing his head before standing and walking back to the greenroom. He put the paper beside him as he finished the sketch of her beneath the cherry tree, reaching out with one of its blossoms pinched between her fingertips to where her eyes seem to have caught sight of something she could trust. Not in desperation, or relief, but in total trust. The finishing touch shaded in, he looked down beside him to the paper the man had put beside him. Within the paper were written four words, "Never lose your passion".

He'd come so far, his bike stolen by some hoodlum in his first week fuelling an anger that had tapered off as he realized that he had come here with nothing, and would leave no longer thinking that nobody cared. But it plagued his heart that in a few short weeks, he would again be alone. The painting of his girlfriend he would keep in his private collection, the ones he photographed for his album and then mailed home to his parents. Collected for the day he feels the album is full enough to set up his private opening. Whoever stole his bicycle also took two paintings he was planning on shipping home, one time a friend of the owner swore she saw them hanging for sale in a gallery downtown, though they were gone when he showed up to try and identify them. After reading the words again, the painter looked up and out into the crowd. Pushing against each other, it was a mess of people dancing, even more on top of that just trying to get through. Filing through the crowd at a party is a skill unto itself, optimized by disorientation due to the crowd's intoxication level.

As he looked out a bit longer, a sharp pain in his hand broke his trance. Jerking it back, he caught a glimpse of the culprit disappearing into the crowd. The boy had arrived late because of a session of crystal meth out in the parking lot. The lights weren't helping his case any, frustration sinking into his restraint from screaming that strobes are cool, but not until he found his friends. Stumbling out a little dance every once in a while. As he kept trying to blend in so no one noticed he was high, he kept trying to stop blending in just in case his friends were looking for him too. There was no time to gently tap people on the shoulder, but to get by without causing a ruckus he had to tap them on the shoulder, but there was no time. Finally arriving to the usual spot he plopped himself onto the bench and slumped out a hand to five his buddy. "Can you get me some E?"

The boy reached into his pocket and fived a passing friend, signaling with his eyes that his buddy wanted the pill he'd just handed over. Downing the capsule with a gulp of water, he got up to join the crowd in moving to the music and opened the seat for a candy girl moving off of the floor to sit. The girl straddled her leg over top of his and began to suck on his ear, as he laid back and starred up at the lights he had just so cursed. Sliding his hand down her pants, she groaned into his ear as her tongue ran the course of its inner-lengths. The only thing was that he couldn't remember her name, he could only remember that he'd given her a few free pills earlier on. As the girl began to react more and more to his fingertips, she turned around so that he couldn't see her face as her eyes rolled into the back of her head on display for everyone. "You're coming home with me", he ravished into her ears – she'd no need to reply. The pill he'd given her would last until they railed on the way back to his place.

“Bring your friends”, he said as he walked over to the greenroom. Strolling in past security he plopped himself down again, this time onto the greenroom couch and called the owner’s name into the air. Coming out from the office, there was a look of surprise on his face- the kid must be the Shogun’s new runner, he thought. Last week the boss caught his other guy selling over street price and pocketing the difference. This new kid definitely had an attitude, head pushed back and feet crossed up on the table as he lifted his arm up over his head to take a drag from the cigarette held in his left hand, returning it back through the arch only to ash on the floor. The owner sat down beside the kid’s feet, crouching forward for a moment and waving over the bouncer. As the kid finished another drag, the owner smiled as the bouncer snatched the smoke from his hand and tossed it to the owner. The bouncer then used the kid’s arm to put on a headlock, the owner taking a knife from his belt and pressing it to his legs. Pressing down to immobilize him, the owner took a drag of the cigarette and ashed it on the boy’s shin.

“No smoking in the greenroom”, spoke the owner as the bouncer lifted his hold and the knife was placed back into the owner’s belt. The kid’s giant pupils disappeared into his wrenching pain, before triggering a rush throwing his head back in overbearing sensation. Coming around, his expression turned to great anger as he threw down the monthly tithe for the owner’s counting. As the amount panned out, the kid was removed from his seat and escorted from the room. Meanwhile, the rage built up within him, as he left looking for an easy target. Heading straight for the back door, he looked over to see the painter busily sketching away in his book. The kid walked right up beside him and began ranting.

“That’s my corner!” Looking up into the boy’s face, the painter glanced over at security in disbelief- they’d already begun to walk in their direction. Ready to just explode, madness gave a steadiness to his action. Leaving, the candy girl sat curled in the exit way beside her two friends chatting away. Reaching out as he walked by, she grabbed his leg to bring him down for another session. Dropping down, he began to bitch about just ‘how everyone in the club thought they were just so fucking important’. That it was like every kid in there thought the colored lights were a tiara crowning them king shit of the world. But as the girl slid her hands where she knew would make him make her happy, it all just seemed to fade away. As the back of his head melted into the ocean of hormones, the drug proclaimed its handle of the whip. In this pit it had been given a thousand limbs to push with, its world given a portal just as Europe’s into Africa. Standing over it all was the owner, returned up to the DJ booth to look over his ocean of darkness. As he randomly selected invitees for an after party, he grinned at the thought of lining up a set of neon golf balls and driving out into the floor, watching them scramble over the pellets by telling them they couldn’t get in without one. His giant hand able to paint your smile, plucking innocence from the garden and letting the rest rot into the compost underneath his fingernails, ferment into his handle: drug of choice.