

## 2. RESTLESS

The times demanded money. Deficits would balloon. Trade was out of balance. The dollar reigned supreme. The world wanted to jump into the intoxicating spree. You could trade the currency for paradise and still have cash left over. Molehills became mountains and mountains became molehills.

She was in the shadows of the Cube. But henceforth there would not be a nightlife without Gloria. Her mountain was the rock that held the scene in place. And the ticking of its hour glass were the erosion of the sands of that mountain. Once married to an up-and-coming architect, her dreams of a Xanadu would engage the faithful, until that Xanadu would crumble around her and take that world with her.

This was the fatality that needed believers. Belief would carry Atlanta night life through the next phase. The populace needed manna. And they would look to heaven, and their prayers would be answered.

With the closing of the Cube, nightlife was to assume a bitter and more committed direction. It would not let go until the wind had been let out of its sails. RIP had impressed a more punk ethos during the intermission. His successors would carry forth with this standard. Disco would still be king. But its edges were marked by a dark side. The flock would again embrace the night.

Just as RIP had managed the Aftermath, he took over the leadership of the new location. He found the DJ's from the Cube. From the ashes of the Cube the Phoenix of Atlanta nightlife would rise—Resurgens. After the burning of Atlanta.

The owners of the Cube still held the liquor licence. Due to their good fortune, the new venue would be blessed with a twenty-four hour policy. No longer would the doors have to close at 4AM. The nightmare could continue permanently. The patrons were always in a frenzy. They could never sit still. They were always **RESTLESS**. Hence the new name. Always insane, all the time.

It seemed as if the Cube had never went away. The gang reappeared with a few exceptions. Courtney was still missing. Had she died in the fire? No one even spoke of her. Thea seemed more scarce. Billy was still active. The Count worked to fill the vacuum. A couple of the Go Wild girls started to spend more time at Restless. They would often come in after work. Competing with RIP's punk mohawk was Infra. He had already been a fixture at the Cube. But now his style seemed more appropriate to the riskier lifestyle. There was no end. No closing. It would always be over the top. The Cube was dominated by the premonition of death. Restless was a place where you certainly went to die. Many wondered why the event took so long. This was the answer to all the profligacy. The end of the world was near.

Infra took nightlife seriously. For the time being, he was in school. He tried to incorporate Restless into a philosophy. He was one of the living dead. Typically, he'd be sucking on the straw end of his drink. He was pleasantly chatty. He led his crowd into the women's room and held court. Billy had taken to him. He was a natural.

But for the time being, even Infra was just more flattery for Billy. The Count was firm

about his place in the new hierarchy. He welcomed the departure of Thea and Courtney. It meant that glamor needed his reinforcement. He even had an elegant costume tailored. He would be the new rage! Restless offered him just enough posing space. His entourage filled the bar area. They were now anointed.

Just as the Imperial Set seemed to make its way to its peak it would face a new rivalry. No one could have told the story of the Titans and missed the contribution of the Vagrancy Contingent. That's precisely what the name evoked. That they were positively to be missed. The shine that surrounded the Titans was so brilliant that the Contingent was only a distraction, a deluding haze preventing the clarity of transcendence. At the heart of the Vagrancy Contingent was the wonder Immanuel. Despite his associations, he could blend in so well with the Titans. He was proof against their dominance.

Tommy had been the most obvious representative of the set. But he was nowhere to be seen. His former compatriots still manned the shadows. But Immanuel started to make his presence known. He knew what the Imperial Set only dreamed about. His wit had fueled Courtney's original entry into the scene. He had encouraged Tommy. He gave him the confidence to penetrate the Imperial Set. In his house on North Avenue, Immanuel would lead the insurrection. The plastic baggies strewn around the house were a testament to a new order. This enticement would now dominate the washrooms of Restless. The history of substance use would loom even more prominently at Restless. For the time being the VC (Vagrancy Contingent) would stick mainly to acid, pot, and ecstasy. But they announced the new world order.

## **THE END OF DESIRE**

In the Cube, the night always had a rescue. But there was no rescue at Restless. For many this meant trying to find a passage out of Restless. Once you had burrowed in, you could just walk out the door. There was too much involved. Here we entertained the end of desire. Some random seduction might get you inside. It might hold you until that first wave of the night. So many clientele tried to ride that giant wave. They didn't know what was coming. Even to let it take you home meant that you'd wake up under its devastation. Hardly anyone would slip out before its wake. Those who let the streams of desire lead them to halls of satisfaction would be the first to sense that they had conquered their wanderlust. They would think that they had escaped the curse. So be it. Restless was not about something. You could not take a piece home. You left part of yourself here. And you needed to return to get it back.

The fine curves of the body, the intoxicating appeals of drink, the permanent tracks of narcotics were all distractions from where the night would lead. So many would steal away with their nightly spoils. Time would tell. The patrons did not want to admit that they were part of the asceticism. They were hedonists. They had come here to indulge. But the most indulgent were a spectacle, and they provided the entertainments for which Restless became renown,

It was RIP's job to arrange the FIRST NIGHT. He would have to convince everyone that the days of the Cube were over. The nostalgically challenged still might cling to that old hierarchy. But the new order would be so overwhelming, that senses would not allow for looking

back. *Bring on the night!*

The theme of the opening was **TRANSFORMATION**. RIP was rallying the local celebrities to show their stuff. From out of the shadows, they all pranced. They didn't need to hide any longer. The drought was over. Billy prepared for the Restoration. The throne was again to be adorned. The Count used his social skills to insure that everyone was committed to RIP's vision. Christopher, Joey, and Chris had all lost some of their ardor for nightlife. But they were ready for what was to come. Anthea was busy with her writing. But she still wanted to hang on. Without Thea or Courtney around, she felt that she could play a more prominent position. Immanuel was scouting out his allies. They longed for some new diversions. The girls from Go Wild knew that their star power would add to the new locale. Infra knew that he was an added attraction. He really blasted the hair spray. This was to be his coming out!

–Five or six years from now, I'll still be doing this!

–By that time, you'll know how to do it right.

It may be difficult to express the role of dance in creating the new atmosphere. Restless preserved a lot of the same layout as the Cube. There was ample posing space. The gesture in action was the dance. Everyone obliged. There were all the old hits from the Cube. The vampiric appeals were also gratified by varied selections. This feature of Restless might suffer over time. Daniel Ash's music shared a spotlight: the older Tones on Tale material was combined with the more updated Love and Rockets. DJ's tried to keep up with newer Euro dance. They didn't want to lose the former crowd. They wanted to educate everyone in a new direction. Records by Ministry helped lead this transition.

The inexperienced sought dance partners to ease them through the anticipation. They mimicked sexy poses and worked to follow their partners writhing bodies. The music just rolled over the uninitiated. Seduction looked so amateur here. Everyone longed for the days of Courtney and her artistic dances. But even without her, there was an artistic bent carried on by the other devotees. They let the beat dominate them.

At the frontiers, a few noble souls penetrated the darkness. The melody was an invitation to something more. Balance and proportion held sway. But the adventurous used the known as a platform to risk the energies of the night. They were charged. No one else contained these mysteries of movement. Such exhibitions were rare. But Restless existed for this display.

The dancers worked to shape the music to body. They would not be brought down by the onslaught of the beat. In their gestures the body became an art form.

–There is nothing like this anywhere else.

How would RIP's opening night differ from nights previous or nights hence? He wanted to outdo himself. At the same time, this was meant to attract new clientele for the bar. So he had to whet the taste without permanently disabling the hunger. He hunger had reached a frenzy with the drought of the Cube. The feelings verged on numbness thanks to the long period of inactivity. Without a focus, night life seemed at a standstill. There were places to go. People still went out. But there was no reference point to build upon.

RIP had to initiate all the wonder that had been associated with the Cube. He also needed to take everyone to a new level of enjoyment. Like the best nights at the Cube when the crowd begged the DJ for more, the opening night needed all the earmarks of the halcyon days.

Restless was much more rugged in its decor. The warehouse feel was emphasized by the sparse fixtures. They didn't want to spend a lot on the club. They feared distracting the patrons. The Cube had succeeded because it was hole in the wall. Restless had to be no different. They also didn't want to exaggerate the bizarre. Early on barbed wire was vetoed. Restless was still a disco, not a hard-edged club. The fashion pose was essential for its success.

This time there would be no limits. The twenty four hour license told everyone that they never had to stop. They wouldn't. The just wanted to doors to open.

There was an open bar early. Some had got there too early and peaked before anyone else showed. That was just enough for some of the others. They drank heartily and headed home. But when the first celebrities emerged, everyone knew that it was time. The Count had out did himself. He knew the reputation that had been established on Halloween. Now everyone was regaled as the King and his court. Wigs were in evidence. There was this hushed feeling of white powder everywhere.

–I think that I've seen a ghost.

The court laughed. Restless seemed to exploit its side room. It gave everyone a chance to get away from the music. The sound system was tweaked to shake the whole building. A respite was truly in order. The Count made sure his associates would dominate this room. That way the tenor could be set for the social activities of the night. There would be no opportunity for frightened tourists to try to stake their claim to this refuge. They would be cast upon a non-forgiving dance floor–WOW!

At Halloween, the climax had been the entry of Thea. There was no such spectacle to attract everyone's attention. This created a real fear that the night would implode. Sure the costumed nobles were magnificent, but they needed to do more than admire each other. There was still something almost puritanical in their excess. Style gave way to the baroque. How could sterility be avoided.

Infra was more prominent in the mix. He went to school with one of the dancers from Go Wild. She kept entirely within theme. A long gown. Her dark hair and deep eyes made everyone think that she was indeed the devil's child. This was a change from the staid days of the Cube. Restless would be more open. The incestuous struggles of the Imperial Set would play themselves against the concerns of the outsiders. The Cube was close-knit. Restless was a theme. Its exchange was regulated by the seasoned players. But they needed actors for their drams. The newcomers would offer relief for the stultified attitudes of the Titans. They were facing an end to the dynasty.

How terrible if the opening night only reminded everyone of hard times ahead. One of the Go Wild dancers was doing a dance on the bar. She was joined by a drag queen.

–This is not sex. This is art.

A few high rollers had crowded around the bar. They knew that they could not disturb the balance of this place. The hustlers still rubbed elbows with the models. It was a brilliant mix.

The patrons were reminded what had brought down the Cube. This infernal magic was at

the heart of what made Restless appealing. For some the shift was subtle. Darker eyes. Lips more luscious. The spice more piqued. These wicked impulses would have a place to roam. The Cube frustrated desire and left its patrons suspended in a passionate animation. Restless pushed beyond desire to find new routes of stimulation. The laboratory was now open.

He had wanted to let down by weekends end. Saturday had been a crazy opening night. But it had ended prematurely. He was lost in the midst of a seduction. A drink spilled on him just before closing. A wink and a smile. His hand on hers. A missed opportunity. Wasting all his reserve. It all slipped through his fingers.

–Don't go!

She felt his breath against her neck. She held there motionless wanting to give in.

–I have to go.

The intensity of their contact blind sided him. This was something that he believed in. He had seen her around so much. They had exchanged polite greetings, tender glances. Now this. And he watched it fall away. For the moment, he could only live in the time of Restless. The present was forever. If not this minute, never. He carried this burden back into the club. He lost himself in whatever of the night remained. His guard was already down. He found himself making out with a club girl near the bathroom. He was pathetic.

–I've got something back at my place.

They were working way beyond imagination, and the images would not let them come down. A friend knocked against him while she was in the washroom. He was almost out the door. The shock brought him back. He was on the verge of collapsing.

–I'm going crazy.

–Come with me. I can help.

That whirlwind wouldn't let him calm himself on Sunday. He could still feel the last song abruptly halt his course. He was everywhere at once.

Sunday he let the dark passages of the club explore the emotional outposts of his heart. Nothing would materialize except for another binge. He forgot with whom he was sharing drinks. There had been no weekend. He reminded himself of this on Monday morning. He had tried to reach this safe space to get him out of his morass. It only dug him in deeper. But he was left with its promise. He wouldn't let go of that!

So this was Restless. There weren't the easy boundaries of the Cube. At least at the Cube, he could hide his excesses. Now he was surrendering to nothing but excess. The image of himself was gross. He was now afraid. The only way that he could face himself was by giving up the sanity that he had acquired. He like to hang out. But he didn't want to consider himself one of the night crawlers.

–I'm going out for lunch.

–It's not even noon.

–I'm feeling sick.

–You just came in.

–And I'm just going out. Cover for me.

For once his night life might prove a threat to his day time. Before he had used its potent

argument as a barrier to social commitment. He could balance his various love interests against the demands of work. But now the party was creeping into his insulated world. He didn't want to get drunk at lunch time. There was no pretense here. Even listening to a song by the Cure was no illusion for him. He smiled. He knew that he could get through this. Or could he. He needed something to keep him alert. It was one PM on a Monday morning, and he was thinking just like the party-goer of a late Saturday night. He had another cup of coffee. He avoided a third drink. That would have destroyed him. But by week's end, he would face the same problem again.

I stopped by the grocery store after work. She was at school with Infra and Sam from Go Wild.

–I'm Maria. I've seen you at school and at the clubs.

She spoke slowly and very deliberately. It hid what remnant of a southern accent. Creamy skin and flowing dark hair. I was mesmerized by her eyes.

–I've tried to stay in and study recently. Read a little. My life is changing.

She smiled. Her haunts seemed more exotic. She had lost herself in the pale world of the Cube and now Restless. But they couldn't appeal to that international call that she heard. I couldn't compete with the luxury to which she seemed accustomed.

–My Daddy is helping me through school. He gave me a new car provided that I keep my grades up. It's never been a problem to me.

She talked about her men. Guys who never struck her fancy. But they were there. Lighters ready if she pulled out a cigarette.

–I hate to smoke. Drinking doesn't agree with me. But I love to go out.

She knew the secret. But it was so remote from her. It made it difficult for her to talk about the magic of the Cube.

–Did you miss it when it was closed?

–I went to Jean-Luc's. He's just too serious. I almost dated him. We went out for dinner a few times.

I could tell that she was attracted by his wealth and ease of living. But she was never into his pleasure games.

I wanted Maria to be my goddess. Wished that she could provide the theme for Restless. But she was not haunted. She could not explore the night to its heart. So she admired the fashion, and that gave her the sense that she had discovered a meaning. It gave her admirers a feeling that she knew more than she actually did.

–I know how easy it is. Too simple.

With her nonchalant style, she easily outshone her rivals. But for her, there was no rivalry. She went out and came home. She had friends. But all that was enough. She knew that she would never ask the question that would help her break out of this coma. But she needed to remain distant from the heat. She had seen it wear too many down.

–I can't say too much about it.

I wanted to kiss her in the grocery store. It faded too quickly. She hopped in her Mercedes sports car. It was a Wednesday. I headed down to Restless.

–We see you down at Restless. You work here?

–Yeah. I’m doing research for them.

–Really.

Infra had the full mohawk even on school days.

–I’m studying fashion. Some design. This and that.

He never seemed to work, but he always had money.

–I’m not a dealer or anything. As long as I’m in school, my family helps out.

I wondered if any of that was true.

–Ivy goes here too. She’s a stripper at Go Wild. You’ve seen her. She’s always with Olive. The two of them.

–Olive?

–Chestnut brown hair. They hang out. I think that she’s going to get a job at Go Wild. I think that it’s kinky.

We both laughed. How daring were they?

Thursday night was dead at Restless. That first week of partying had taken its toll. Maybe Friday would pick up. A new phenomenon was evident at Restless. Even on a dead night, there would be an influx of people from the other bars around 3:30 or 4. It added a new element. But a rain meant that even those reinforcements were sparse tonight.

Once at home, the old doubts resurfaced. I had welcomed the return of a good club. But still, my disappointments lingered. The demise of Thea and the disappearance of Courtney left a real doubt if Restless could ever have the same enticement. RIP had assumed his same perch. But his act could not bring the skeletons to life. I could tell that Infra was ready to turn night life around. The music needed a bit of a push. The old hits couldn’t carry the energy night after night. Even in the first week, something needed to change.

Friday night high jinx struck up the band where the lull of Thursday had left off. It was a cold clear night. Everyone welcomed the crowded insides. The Count bopped around to make sure that everyone was comfortable in the new locale. The self-appointed host needed to make sure that no one got too complacent. Restless needed to make its stand before licentiousness about the Cube set in. The nights at the Cube were never all that. And people always grasped for more. But the more compact format prevented questions from getting too profound.

Finally the Night reigned supreme. There were no easy rescues. In this corner of time, the players acted as if this was their last stand. A solid helplessness. Each night seemed to be its own end. And the gamblers maintained their places at the table ready to risk it all. Unsteady hands found their mark. Nothing to hold them back. Nothing in reserve. On the verge of puking up everything of importance, they lost themselves in the downward spiral. How could they hold themselves together. It was hopeless. Everyone embraced this immoral hope.

A chasm opened between the theater of Restless and the fruitful day to follow. No one could work once they faced down the heartless darkness. The magic that everyone embraced early was replaced by the stark foothold. No spells could get a sorcerer out of this one. Everyone went down for the count. Time played its inevitability against the wishes of its victims. Oh, to reverse the order. Oh, not to let go for this solemnity.

–If someone would walk in at this moment, and smile.

A few people huddled around the bar and shared the same myth. They thought that they had insulated themselves by their company. They were all heading for the terminal stop.

–I want to end it all. Right here.

Had the weight of failed dreams made itself known.

–You’re being melodramatic.

Melodrama was something else. The ghouls haunting the room at 1:30. The couple breaking up by the washrooms. The lover finding her partner in the embrace of another. But the night had none of these excuses. The depressed had the opportunity for their feelings to lull and protect them. This was something else. This was where the empires crumbled for lack of one stone and a touch of mortar. This was Restless, named for all its symptoms. You were never going to get out of this one.

The patron watched his talents wither. His savings were eaten up by his licentiousness. The ravaging worm had found its pleasant host. And it settled into the sweet meat and savaged its prey. A longer embrace might just do it. A stronger kiss would provide the promise to the ravaged. For a moment, they believed that they could face it together. This was what friends were for.

For the rare occasion, the night didn’t seem so oppressive. But it was working its way inside. If you left Restless for a reason, reason would take hold. This was way beyond the rational. Who could stay on the ride.

–I have to go!

You better leave if you know what’s good for you. And the hearty souls stayed around. The weak let their revulsion drive them out the door. In between, the lucky ones ordered more drinks. They still had chips to spare, and the next hand was going to drive their opponent from the table. What skeleton were you staring down?

The heart felt the exile to this ragged garden. Without rain, without sunlight, life had halted its progression. And the caretakers made it past this stage. This was where they would abandon their hearts. From hence on, the journey would be passionless.

How could anyone come back from this devastation? This was a coma. If salvation was the next day, there would be no next day. Wonder of wonders. The celebs still clung to their shred of recognition to soften the blows. This wasn’t an appropriate come down for all their efforts. The shine wouldn’t tarnish so automatically. More than anyone else, these apparitions pretended that they wouldn’t go down without a fight. But how could any of them handle stellar dimming. Passing out seemed an immediate option. If they were anesthetized during the progression, then none of this really happened.

Errant lovers would cling to their latest touch as if they had made it through together. In the twilight, their wrestling bodies would find the perfect eulogy for their decease powers. But even after their first embrace, a wave of darkness would shatter the nostalgia for the dusk. Dawn was only a rushed promise. The premature breaths were now suffocating.

Glen was a budding rock star. For Restless that meant little. He thought that he could carry his swashbuckling vision into his challenge with the night. He was meeting Nicole after work. After her work. He worked at a print shop. He served part-time as a designer as well. But



he hope that she might lead him through his misery. She would eventually be an easy target for his troubles. That was her attraction. She was a talent. And in the lights of the night, she had an aura that would have been competition for the luminaries of Restless. But she had squandered too much of her vision on guys like Glen. Even now that wouldn't change. Just by being around her, you could feel some of that luster rub off. In this she was truly attracting even more than attractive. She had given herself to a routine. She wouldn't let herself become a prime candidate for Restless. But she had already fallen for Glen. This would be her undoing.

She only added to his sense of stardom. He expected nothing less than worship.

–Your hair is great!

And he's descend to a back alley for a quickie. Nicole would always be somewhere waiting. From their first encounter, she took this for granted. And summarily surrendered herself to his night. Their could be no Restless for her when the circumstances of her attendance were hardly her own.

But she continued to shine as if she was part of some other night. And Glen fed off her surrender. How could he deserve such devotion. From such a ravishing princess in her own right. And he traded everything to her in his kisses. Fundamentally, he offered so little, and she was mortgaging her soul.

Their first rendez-vous was at Restless. She waited with Dawn by the back door. And they waited.

–Is this guy worth it?

–He said that he might be a little late. That I could just hang out here and have fun until he showed up.

–Isn't that a bad sign.

She didn't notice Dawn's omen. And she waited. When he arrived, she had already committed herself.

–She was easy!

Little did he know. Now he had someone to blame for his own dalliance. And she would be worn down by these escapades.

–I'm sorry that I got home so late. Someone came in at the last minute for a rush print job.

But that wasn't the job that he was rushing. And his double life turned into a triple life. The myriads of others would have crushed any sane heart. But she was hopelessly devoted, and unconditional love meant enduring torture for a single caress.

He looked at her pouting lips and voluptuous pose. What would kingdoms would he relinquish for the empire of the senses.

–You need something from him. Your insurance.

Dawn lulled Nicole into a bargain with the scoundrel.

–I've warned you about him. I never like him.

But he was Nicole's catch. For the moment, she only saw envy on Dawn's part.

–I have something that I want.

But it had little to do with Glen.

–Where is he tonight.

And he made an smooth transition from the graceful shadow of Dawn to the clumsier

apparitions that were obscured by the long night.

Restless was continuous in its own fragmentation. There was no closing. It was always there. However, by seven or eight, most of the crowd had cleared out. And even if the license was actually limitless, they would close the doors until evening. But its constancy gave a lie to any other sort of permanence. Those endeavors stopped short from the embrace. The strongest kiss would not undo a curse that cradled its enthusiasts.

–I need a drink.

What would keep it going even after everyone ran out of cash?

–I'll pay you tomorrow.

–Get me a drink.

–I'm cash dry!

They would let the glasses empty completely in this near desert. That was the purpose of the myth. The habitués were already committed. They needed to seduce new candidates so that they could grease the wheels of this behemoth.

–You know where you have friends.

And the loose association became more networked, and the threads pulled tighter around the trapped as they reached to pull in new victims.

–Relax. No one is going anywhere. It's too late. Nothing else is open.

Sunday blended into Monday. When would anyone sleep? Maybe an occasional nodding off on a bar stool.

–If you're just denying physical need, then you're learning nothing new.

–There are other needs.

–Like emotional security.

–What are you, an insurance salesman. You need to leave you work at home.

Everyone laughed. It was another crazy night.

–Who's buying?

A promised kiss. Breath to breath. A wandering touch. It was simple to recruit initiates for this game. Even if they wouldn't last, they could make the night go by quicker.

–You're not making fun of me, are you?

–We're all getting trashed together.

Even if he felt that he was getting fleeced, there was nothing out there to soften the blow. He had met some new friends. They were together until death. How Restless seduced its new customers. Sunlight would etch its hard lessons. Darkness preserved these corpses until they could be exhumed for a new audience.

–You seem really creepy.

–I give good head.

If a little fireworks were needed to seal the deal, so be it.

–Just don't squeal so much. You were embarrassing.

The crowd was oppressive tonight. The word was out. Terrible nights only made for a bigger success. New faces and rounds and rounds of drinks and who questioned immediate success.

## CASCADE K

At the Cube, they had dabbled in hallucinogens. Surfing a crazy night on acid. Or shrooming through a dark and deadly. Even some ex to release the body. Things were all pretty light. Mainly alcohol. With the closing of the Cube, the true face would show itself—K.

What had drawn everyone to the Cube. It was a fascination with the end, as if this could be the last night on earth. But the journey was always too gentle. Like an amusement park ride, they tried to keep it entertaining. A jolt. Some spills. That was all. They stayed this side of Paradise. Nothing to upset the order of the day. They wouldn't spend the aftermath wondering how they had ever made it back. That was all part of their trip.

My encounter with the Paradise convinced me that there was something else going on. When you really touched the night, you hit this lull which wouldn't let you return. And it seemed endless. For a while you could float in this endless space. The Cube always sent you back before you could fully explore. But it suggested all the road marks. I tried to collect myself for a more profound exploration. How could you really cross over?

One summer I was overwhelmed by the feeling of awe. It was sunny, but I could not see the sun. I had seen the revelation. Touched the end. And the sky now settled down on me. I moved back and forth from the inside of the house to the outside. I could not escape that same feeling. I was burdened. It had shaken me out of my daily existence. Any routine was only a distraction. It reminded me how I wasn't facing that moment. My inevitable. And if I wasn't ready, I would lose my chance. Everything needed to prepare for that journey, or the terminal of the journey.

One day when Tthe ERA was practicing, the shudder hit me. After this, who would carry on. The room became a series of scenes like boxes in boxes. Each required a viewing but was contradicted by its successor, its limit. The realization was intellectual, but the feeling was physical and palpable. I saw death in the corner lunging for me. These infinite scenes reinforced the attack and held it further and further away. This was a soul with no possibility of a soul. The body out of itself. Touching what you could not touch.

I felt the echo of the feeling as it bounced off some wall and reverberate back. It had traversed the infinite path and made its way inexplicably back. My dizziness became worse. I couldn't talk about the feeling. I was still shaken up. It was as if I was braking before an inevitable accident. I held on. I braced myself. I saw it all coming so real. But I knew it was my end, and I tried to head it off. Tried to slow down the rush. This added to the feeling. A floating without a place to float.

—You are almost there. You almost feel the peace. There is no other way to get over your fear.

This was the twin illusions of the **INTENSITY** and the **PARADISE**. There was no respite. But still this belief motivated my confrontation. If I looked for these extraordinary moments. If I sought this helplessness, and threw myself into that void. Then the feeling would be most intense. I would come out of myself. And if I could prolong these moments of crossing over, I could touch the **PARADISE**. I knew that this is what Jean-Luc had in mind with pleasure. But he was an amateur. In thought, in music, in physical exertion, I touched these moments. And then I found a deeper tension.

I knew the risks. Sometimes the rush would be too heady, and I couldn't pass through the barrier. I'd peek on the feeling, and not on its consequences. Other times the feeling was not provocative enough to stimulate me beyond the first stage. I worked myself up, but I couldn't take it anywhere.

–Take that Paradise. You have to hold on to that for dear life. Don't let go. Now you are going to have to give that up. You have to face nothingness.

–How can I face something that is not there?

–You know the promise. You can taste what will come after. That is not going to happen. You will get nothing out of this. You can't realize what that means until you take everything that you can get. Do you understand what I am telling. You have to be mystical. Go way beyond. Realize what is the imagination that makes it all happen. Even find self beyond the self that offers you delights. There are disciplines that promise this integral reality. The other. But go one step further. This is where you subsist.

–What if there was a drug that said all that?

–I know that heroin use implies as much. But it only let you touch nothingness by showing you the Paradise. This is exactly the opposite feeling.

The Nudge had developed this philosophy of drug use as the major historical force.

–What if someone would write a history of the world only based on drugs. The phantasms of history.

His philosophy had influenced our band Dissect. I talked about his ideas in the song "Cutting Through". I was already familiar with thoughts that tried to explain the outside from the inside. It was beyond psychological history. It was pharmacological. What if they had gone one step further.

–What if there was a drug that did all that?"

–There is.

–No. Not really. Synthetic heroin.

–No, it's called Cascade K.

–What does the K stand for.

–It's the element. There's the Cascade. And the element. You move through the stages until the stages encompass each other. This goes way beyond the immediate self. Way beyond psychological regret. It's all about stopping and starting. Shudder. The edge of the world and all that.

Everything that the Cube embodied was offered in a substance, and more. This was authentic. No quitting on Monday. This would stay with you for every second of the day. How could you ever come down. This was the meaning of life.

–Utter non-meaning.

–What about friendship, good works, love?

–This is beyond that.

–It just sounds like pure ego.

–You don't grasp the significance. There is a moment in the night when we know that it is with us. It's your shudder. And then the endlessness. It's not about getting something from the night. You embrace it because there is nothing to get. You still want something for a while.

You don't want to let go of your grip. All philosophies of altruism are about the grip. The ruthless exchange. You give something because you are going to get something in return. This is even beyond that. There is nothing that is going to come back. No return. You have to give it all up.

>>Religion is a way to hold on that. God will give you grace. Someone will give you rescue. You know what that all mean. You're going to get back what you gave up. You'll get heaven. You'll be given Spiritual Enlightenment. And you feel gratified with your mystical return. Even you meditations give you that plus, the edge. You come back from a great meal. You've got your reward.

>>This is totally negative. How it had to be. You will not get solution. You will have to give up your solution.

–But isn't this just a trade. You are giving up something. Paradise. You get a more intense Paradise.

–This is not about intensities. Intensities are all about not letting go.

–But that is your drug. These feeling are all part of it. You used it to cross over. But you get high on the crossing over.

–I can't explain it to you. You don't see it.

But I did. That was the appeal of Cascade K. All those feelings together. Nothingness. The Paradise. The promise. The theft. Moving back and forth, faster and faster among these intensities.

–This all sounds like an ideal. What people want, but they'll never have. There are religious philosophies. But there is no Cascade K.

–It is all around us.

–Have you used it.

–I've smoked opium.

–So it's a narcotic.

–Not exactly.

–You mean that you have never used it.

He had an elaborate philosophy, but he was at a loss for words. He gave me a book to read. But it didn't tell the full story. And it said nothing about Cascade K.

For months, I had heard rumors.

–They were storing it in the basement of the Cube. That's why it caught fire.

Christopher told us that he had got his hands on some. But it was some new ex or something. I heard that they already had it in San Fran. Some chemist at Stanford. But the rumors proved untrue.

–You just need to prepare yourself for it.

I was already preparing myself. But if it was about preparation, it was not a drug, it was a philosophy. The existence of Cascade K convinced me that my search for the Paradise was dead end. It meant that the whole attraction was a physiology. I had not bypassed my biology. Now some biochemist offered the pharmacological equivalent to my search. I felt like I was scooped. But there were details that were left out. Cascade K seemed like the biggest rumor of the century. Mysticism in a pill.

–It’s going beyond that. I’ve taken it. It is love. And it is devotion.

Of course, no one had seen the stuff. But I knew about all the effects. The constriction of the blood vessels. The eternal hunger without the possibility of satisfaction. The panic. The shaking. The fear. The compounded anguish. The helplessness. The shrieking. The inability to hold back. Then it would take you. You would not be able to come back.

How long could the user prolong the onset. He felt himself touch the end. And then nothing. For days. For weeks.

–Why should I want to do anything else?

–Have you taken it?

–No, I know someone who has.

We went looking for this mysterious user. We found someone who had snorted some H. But K was unavailable.

–It’s a myth. The anti-Nirvana. It’s like this post-Vietnam thing. Despair in a drug.

–If punks had a philosophy, it would be K.

–No, man, there’s too much guilt in this K thing. Punks are more brutal. It’s all about being more brutal.

Cascade K was brutal. But the brutality was way beyond aggression. I was becoming lost in the belief.

–If it’s a myth, a rumor, then we’re just carrying on this stupid religion.

–I know that someone has to have some. Are you going to take it?

–I just want to find out if the rumors are true.

I found someone at the Institute who had done studies on the stuff.

–I know all about it.

–Really.

–At first, I thought that it was something like heroin. I saw the composition. It’s much more complex.

I felt like I was hearing more lies. Chemists who wanted to unload their latest versions of MDMA. Or some other synthetic heroin. The trail became darker.

–I was doing Defense Department work. They’re trying to get something that mimics religious belief. It could transform an entire people.

–Transform how? It has no content.

–Belief is not about content. It’s just the reverse. This hollow need that is satisfied by the Savior.

–But which Savior. The flock have to be directed. How is the drug going to work. You give someone the drug, and you have to already control their inputs. You have to take over. So that’s what makes you the Savior.

What was the Army doing messing with consciousness.

–The mind is our best weapon.

Each character gave me wilder and wilder stories. The proportions were being exaggerated.

–There is no K. Just a silly desire for a better high.

–EA is your drug. We all have our own.

I hated his humor. I went back to Christopher.

–You said that someone had it. Who?

–I did. I thought I told you I did it.

–And I didn't believe you. You couldn't describe the effects properly.

–I told you what I felt. Are you doubting me.

–But that's not K.

I was getting more frustrated. It was useless. For a while I thought that Jean-Luc might have heard something. But K was such a contradiction to his philosophy of pleasure.

–Sure we practice denial, but there is no pure negation here.

–This is more like Hegel.

–You should be talking to Dovsky. Or maybe his teacher, Kalu. He was in Paris.

I wasn't going to travel to Paris. I already knew what Dovsky would say. He always claimed that no drug experience could equal cognitive discipline. I always wondered if he practiced what he preached. But even if he did not, Cascade K would be such a mind explosion that it would put to shame any of his thought. There would be no Cascade K as far as he was concerned. And if it did exist, he would do everything in his power to debunk its origins. He wouldn't keep quiet about it. And I had heard nothing. He would be no help.

RIP was always the mystical center of the Imperial Set. I wondered if he knew something. But K seemed like a contradiction of the Titans striving. Cascade K would be both too easy and too difficult. The difficulty would come when they tried to extricate themselves for its effects. And wouldn't it just destroy them.

I needed to admit the role of preparation. This multitude of effects would breakdown the weak mind.

–Sounds like a bad acid trip.

–But with acid that is not the desired effect. This is exactly what you seek when you choose K

–But it's not really death. You can recover. You can take it again. It's cheating.

–It's still the effects. It's a drug. A crazy amusement park ride. If people claimed that they had discovered a philosophy, I would ask about the philosophy. This is a drug—no more, no less.

*There is an incredible stillness. You want to cry out. You are muffled. You can't hold back the rush of time. There is a parching of the throat. This incredible thirst. You drink but it doesn't help. There are chills. But the other effects. You have this prickling feeling all over. It's a feeling, a sensation, but it's also an idea. That is what is so unreal about K. All the sensations correspond to idea. You realize this thing about the body. Like it is dissolving into its abstract form. I know how that works in mysticism. This is something else. You have revelation mixed with an incredible regret.*

*All this is only a preparation for what will follow. The shuddering of the soul. This is one of the first effect that is sought after. It wouldn't make sense. Because it contradicts why we do drugs. This is the opposite of any pleasure principle. This is taking you to a judgement. All the lead up only gets the body ready for this. It's a little shocking to realize that you have to undergo something this terrifying. And it is frightening. It's not just a fear of something. All the things happening to the body. As if it's coming apart. It's the soul being ripped apart. No hope*

*of getting past any of this.*

*You know how the idea of paradise is uplifting. This lifts you up to cast you down. It shows you the distance between your most intense high and the point that you would need to reach to escape any sense of physical condemnation.*

*The result is not moral. It's going to happen to everyone who engages the process. All these highs are themselves illusions. They are not the measure of all things. They are the nothing that we use to make sense of our ridiculous days. Our eternal restlessness. K makes us confront all that. It shows how our highs only make us more rooted in our everyday existence. The end itself beckons for us. But nothing that we can do lets us overcome that weakness. It's not about some training that is going to magically open up this power for us. It's not a threshold to cross over. It is the sheer inability to do anything at all to liberate ourselves from our dilemma.*

*K shows us this fact. On the surface, it is an anti-high. Then we confront the immense expanse that is threatened by mortality. Our perceptions put us in this infinite place ready to unleash the powers of the universe. The universe breathes through us. We can keep going on forever and ever with this power of revelation. K pushes on past all this. It crushes it. It limits the very awareness that make it possible. Without a recorder there is no time.*

*You want to run out screaming, but you are paralyzed. You have given up your mobility for this part of the journey. Now creation just forces its way back against you. You feel this monstrous power crush. And it comes over you again and again. You are breathless before the rejection. It will not stop. It tears you apart. You are parts on the cosmic floor. Too crushed to do anything. You cry out.*

*Even this is too much mercy. It gives the illusion that the crushing is only the flip side of your infinite power. You have been given the power to see. To combine agony and ecstasy into a more potent blend. This is not fucking heroin. This is not about promise. Or belief. Or addiction. Or a lost completeness. This is the throes of death.*

*Even in this basement, we have not fully confronted its effects. It is a challenge. This is where you have to direct the experience. It is the real experience of K*

I wanted to know more. But the account faded. This seemed like a state that would only confirm a more intense addiction. If you could finally ride this wave.

*It's not a salvation. This is the fucking end in itself. Even as the progress builds in momentum, it loses its sense of meaning. You don't want to jump on it. It is the end. Feel that. You're not taking K, and you can feel that wave. It's going to happen to you. You want to hold yourself back. AH!*

I wanted to scream. This was grotesque. I felt like hurting myself. Just hearing the story was having its effects.

–Let's suppose that there is no K. Just other drugs. And this story. It's a myth. The myth creates the effects.

–It is real.

–How do we know?

–You'll find the K heads.

The heads. More of the same lingo. I needed to further investigate. I didn't want to



think about this anymore. My search had gone in reverse. I had started out with a desire for a paradise. This was the total contradiction of my aim. The desire to escape these effects only intensified them more.

–The solitude of the morning.

–We never know it here. We're too fucked up.

If K represented this mystic privilege, why was it given to these lost souls. They had turned their back on exploration. They wanted the immediacy. And now all they had to do was take some K. I still held to my paradise. But where had it led me? I had substituted a fascination for Thea. And that story had turned into a nightmare. Maybe I had hit the wrong story. I needed a new character. I needed to become another character.

–There is a portal waiting for you.

–What are you talking about?

–K!

–I have other plans.

I did. I needed to explore the sources of the stuff. I had heard Bileti's story. I'd been filled in by RIP. But there were more details that I needed to find.

–Where do you get it from?

–It shows up.

–Like manna from heaven. Does Buffalo Lonnie have it?

–I know for a fact that he doesn't.

–Who does?

–You're not going to take it.

–No.

–You're asking the wrong questions. It's like asking a gas station attendant what's the chemical composition of gasoline. You need to find a prophet.

–A prophet?

That was my new search. But how could there be a prophet when the substance did all the work for the mystics. They didn't need guidance. Guidance was contrary to the very form of the stuff.

Peter taught philosophy at Emory. I had read some of his papers on metaphysics. He was bridging ideas on desire and substance. Using some psychoanalysis. I thought he could offer some real insights on the drug.

–Yeah, I've taken it.

–Where did you get it?

–I'd like to say from one of the labs on campus. I can't really say that. I don't want to lose my job or the jobs of some other people.

–But you have taken it.

–Sure.

–You don't seem that thrilled.

–It's all about what you bring to experience.

–You have a wealth of knowledge. What did you figure out?

–I've done meditation. I know the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. It's just a scientific way to deal with the same phenomenon.

–Nothing more, nothing less.  
 –How do the effects of technology relate to these ideas of death.  
 –Death is a technology. It's the way for biological systems to relate its parts to a larger whole.  
 –There's much more psychological resistance that would suggest.  
 –We just have to give in to our destiny.  
 –That could be misinterpreted. Almost an idea of being forced. A totalitarianism.  
 –If that's what it is.  
 –You're trying to evoke political neutrality. But you're approaching this from the point of view of dominance. You're just an academic slave holder.  
 –That's going a little far.  
 –Have you take K more than once?  
 –A number of times.  
 –You've returned to it.  
 –Yeah. I want to write some articles about it. Maybe a book.  
 He wasn't very honest with me. I knew that there was more to his experiences. He was hoarding his knowledge.

–You have to take it yourself.

I didn't want to take it. I wanted an honest account from those who were using it. I hated Peter's smugness. Perhaps there was something about the idea of K that upset his own role as psychic guru. He couldn't control who found the drug. He could monopolize their experiences with his grand scheme. He needed to dismiss the possibility.

Cascade K gave the Imperial Set their vampiric pale. It gave them knowledge that they could get any other way. But it demanded more than they were willing to give. How could you only dabble in K. From the first experiences it would disturb the balance of the altered and aware states. You would need K just to survive in the world. My investigation had hit a dead end. First, Peter's idle speculations and now the obscurity of its users.

–I can make heads or tails of any of this. The myth fulfills a need. But the idea of an actual drug seems too far-fetched.

Was Restless exciting enough to bring people out night after night. The music wasn't all that. It was even losing its appeal as it tried to rest on the same old selections. There was too much radio pop in the mix to please the late night crowd.

I had tried to reach to the source of what had made the Cube so popular. Maria had her story. I wanted to know more. But everyone just scratched the surface. Cascade K offered a depth even if the relief offered none. So it existed for my benefit. I wanted to believe.

Cascade K was an affront to Peter's philosophy. He saw the universe as becoming in human consciousness. His method allowed the self to touch these cosmic forces. In so doing the self got out of its center. It became part of the universe. In an even more interesting development, the universe became part of the self. The universe was getting to know itself. Cascade K destroyed such all encompassing connections. At the heart of its solitude was a realization of the finite limits of the known. The psychic explosions gave a feeling of endlessness. But they were linked to the deserts of experience. It was a universe that would

extend on without any sense of consciousness. It would return to its chaotic roaming without the support of any human record.

How could one conceive of this enormity. An enormity given to nothing. This ever present fear rang through the experience of Cascade K. So its effects went even deeper. It is the counterpoint to the original sensation that lends even more depth to the confrontation supplied by the drug.

If such were the effects of K, it would not just be a recreation. I would be a necessity. Once you had pushed this far out, you could not come back. Peter made fun of the sophomoric pretensions of K. It was the adolescent drug. Strung out kids listening to *Pornography* by the Cure. He even made a face to mock the users. He could face the utter contradiction to his own philosophy.

I didn't trust him in the least. He had steered me away from the trail. I knew that there was a meditative community that appreciated the new exploration. I wanted evidence separate from Restless. Something more serious. Were there any books or papers in preparation?

One of the reasons that K was so dangerous was that the government would eventually have to step in to limit research. It threatened too much of the social order. I finally made my way to Victor, a biochemist. He had been driven from two universities. He embraced both his research and the drug itself. It was a potent contrast to the acid gurus of the sixties. People still wanted K for the "trip". But it did things to the mind that were too upsetting for the tourist. The initial journey was not that pleasant. After initial use, an unprepared subject would get suicidal. A combination of therapy and further use could dispel the feelings. But there was a concern that it might just aggravate the depression.

–The substance will not offer a simple hope. It's like this logical puzzle. Behind every realization is its contradiction. The process has an infinite form. But consciousness will not abide this repeated division. There is a point of exhaustion. At this point of fatigue, there is no resolution at all. It is disheartening.

All this effort with nothing to show. Victor was the total opposite to Peter. He embraced the scientific basis of the exploration. Peter would let go of his metaphysical affections.

–Honestly, I don't recommend Cascade K. It doesn't help you get over your fears. The only strange part is that you may only die once, but you can repeat taking K. No doubt the anticipation of other drugs is part of the effect. This is the same with K. Once it starts to work, there is no turning back. There is no rehab. Rehab treats a psychological state. But in this case, the cognitive realization is tied with a cosmic state of affairs. Even if you get over the psychological state, the cosmic state of affairs remains.

>>Once the last human gives out, there will be nothing else. Imagine the terrible consequences of everyone taking Cascade K. It would effectively be the end of mankind.

–But that doesn't make sense. Why doesn't everyone who take K kill themselves.

–It doesn't have to enhance depression. It can act as a form of revelation. It can liberate the self.

I wanted him to walk through the effects.

–There are all the side-effects. These include the precursors. The best analogy for it all is this gross sense of shame. You know that something is wrong. But whatever you do, you just can't shake the feeling.

>>But then it gets more involving. You pass beyond your physical recognition. This is all part of the initial high—the trip. The floating, the feeling of the universe expanding. After that there is all the wonder. And then the bottom drops out. This is a worse feeling than shame. It is utter desperation. The shuddering before death. The self out of the self. There is no help here. It is desperation that you cannot stop. This is the heart of the drug’s effect. It offers no comfort. It is a complete barrenness. And it offers this as a an experience. This is the source of these feelings in our everyday experience/

>>Cascade K pinpoints all our fears. It will tear us apart. It gives us no respite. From the feeling of personal demise, we next face an integral awareness. That there is no end to these stripping away of the self. This is it. Cascade K. CascadeK. Cascade K.

Victor was solemn in his pronouncement. Peter would not have approved. But Victor would not cease in his crystallization. It even exposed his role. More than ever, he seemed like a pusher. No one could thank him for this.

–Why do you even come back? How can you even come back?

–That is the wonder of K. It is such a downer. But you want to take the ride again. Nothing that you do in life seems to have as much meaning. It induces lethargy. It invites purpose.

I thanked him for the revelation. Indeed, Cascade K was a threat to most cosmologies. It inserted a gulf where there was formerly continuity. I still didn’t comprehend the recreational use. It required a pulling back short of the more cataclysmic consequences.

–K had to be the end.

For Restless, this was the be all and end all. What had made Thea so appealing was the endurance that she had. Even RIP maintained himself night after night. But there was a unprecedented bliss in the reaches of K. We all were one with these implications. In many ways, it was too much for Restless. Even in its denial, Restless still coveted a paradise.

–You’re just running your mouth off. If you had taken K, you wouldn’t be so glib.

Indeed the adventurous souls had proclaimed their use. But the drugs was not so innocent. And the fake would eventually be exposed in the rounds of questions that would follow.

We were only beginning the journey!

Bileti pulled a big semi up to the warehouse door. He honked twice. The automatic door swung open.

–You’ve got to see this.

–What the fuck!

Big spotlights were shining on mounds of sugar.

–This must be all the supply for the southeast. Are you into the commodities market.

–Something like that. They use it for K.

–Is that just some glorified candy for adults.

–It’s like a sugar rush that never stops.

–Really?

–No. But it needs that push. It’s like a hydrogen bomb—it has to blow the mind wide open before it can do its synthesis. It’s the perfect seduction.

–Hence the need for a sugar base.

I marveled at the sheer quantity. This was a sign of plenty dwarfed by the magnitude.

–Eddie, this is totally nuts.

–It is a kicker. You didn’t think that I was so brilliant did you.

–Whatever you say. Where did you get this stuff.

–I’m in the business. I’m in charge.

–I’ve heard these weird rumors about guns and highjackings. Trouble at customs.

–None of it is true.

–but you’re making Cascade K.

–I have nothing to do with that. I just get the sugar.

–This is fucking amazing. So this is your career.

–This is mind blowing. I wish that I could let you in on some K. That’s not my end of the business.

–What are you dealing?

–It’s commodities.

–The whole thing could crash, and you’d be left with a warehouse full of sugar.

–I’m banking my profits.

–But don’t you have to keep buying more sugar to stay in the game.

–I’ve got it taken care of.

–A bank is willing to loan you money.

–I’ve got a bank.

His confidence was overwhelming. But I couldn’t believe him. All this contraband made him vulnerable. He needed some hook up. Something to protect him against the looming rivals.

–You’ll never get away with it.

–It’s just sugar. Taste it.

–Are you going to extort the coffee drinkers of Atlanta.

–I’ve got other plans.

Eddie was again at the center of something. He was the main players among lesser satellites, and he was going to let the world know what he had going on.

–You play the big shot and you may end at the other end of some tough guy’s gun.

–This isn’t about violence.

–We’re not in a small Midwest campus town anymore. This is not your cute layout for an art piece. It’s life or death.

–It’s all life. I’m just a delivery guy.

I knew that there was more at stake. He backed up the truck so that they could unload its contents.

–Let’s go get a drink. I’m thirsty.

–Eddie, you’re fucked up.

–I’m doing something that I enjoy. I’m making a good living.

The power was getting to him. I didn’t want to see him knocked down a few notches.

But a crash would be even worse.

–Where are you going to end up.

–On a bar stool, getting a drink with you. Let's clear out.

He had his BMW in the parking lot.

–It's still running?

–For now.

–Keep me alive.

–How's Courtney been doing?

–I haven't seen her since the fire. Most people think that she died. But they never found a body.

–What about Thea?

–She's gone underground.

–You told me about some stripper who's been up there.

–She dresses like Siouxsie Sioux.

–Wow!

–Ivy.

–The new Thea.

–Not quite,. She also goes to the school where I'm working.

–Are you teaching?

–No, research. I need a second job. I've thought about delivery. You used to deliver pizzas.

–You ought to try it.

–I don't know about my car.

–I'll help you out,.

I was surprised that he didn't offer to get me into the sugar business.

–Too bad that you can't drive a big truck. I always need drivers.

–This is getting too big even for you.

–It's a blast! Just go with the flow.

–You're going to drown in the flow.

–I don't even have any competition.

I didn't want to get involved but I agreed to go on the next run. When we got back to the warehouse, they opened the doors.

–What they fuck?

–Who took the shit?

–That's what I was wondering.

–You're teasing me.

–No, someone's pulling my chain. It's time to get out the big guns.

–I thought that you weren't into violence.

–I'm not. But someone is messing with my livelihood. This means war.

–When you live outside the law, you can't take it to court.

–Court is crooks with better guns.

So much for his revision of ethics.

I didn't see Bileti for days. Then he showed up at my place.

–Get in. We’re going for a little drive.  
 –What’s little about anything that you do.  
 –Trust me on this one.  
 I didn’t have much of a choice.  
 –I’m not going to kill somebody. I just want to find out what happened to my stash.  
 –It’s not like you had drugs. You were messing with the commodities market, and you got tagged.  
 –And it’s my turn to tag back.  
 We went to a row of warehouses off of 14<sup>th</sup> Street, somewhere north of Tech.  
 –What are we doing here?  
 –Watch the big dogs.  
 He had me climb a fence—the terror of my life.  
 –The next thing is some hoodlum pointing a gun in my face.  
 –Don’t look now.  
 He didn’t have his gun drawn, but a security guard had his flashlight trained on us.  
 –Quick—run!  
 –Run?  
 –I’m tangled in this fucking fence.  
 –Fall down, pick yourself up, and run. Run for your life.  
 –He’s got a gun.  
 –He doesn’t know who you are. And he’s not going to shoot your in the back.  
 –He’s a security guard. He probably got suspended from the force for shooting people in the back.  
 –Run!

We had dogs chasing us and a security guard with a gun.  
 –We still didn’t find your sugar.  
 –But they’re hiding something.  
 –Of course, they are. We were trespassing.  
 –But that’s the first sign that something is going on. They start trying to kill us.  
 –He had a gun. He never tried to use it on us.  
 –That’s because I drove fast!  
 –Why don’t you just accept it? You’re dealing with someone crazier than you are.  
 –I seem to recall that you went along with my supposedly crazy plan.  
 –At first, I didn’t know what you were up to. Later, I even questioned that you had the stupidity to come up with something as daft as this.  
 –We really had them going.  
 –Had them going. The dogs were chasing us, not the other way around. And the security guard was armed.  
 –Count you blessings. We’re alive. And now we know that he has the stuff.  
 –All we know is that someone is guarding his property.  
 –Great, now you admit it.  
 –Admit what? We never saw anything.

–But he didn't want us to see anything.

–That is the point.

Eddie wasn't listening. I had no real concern for his operations. It always seemed preposterous. Now he had me in the middle of things.

–On the detective show, no one ever believes that the detective's on to something. But then they start shooting at him. And we know that he's right.

–All we know is that there's a warehouse that's well guarded. If someone follows us and starts shooting, I want no part of this.

–You were my accomplice.

–I went along for a ride. If there's an accomplice to anything, we need to stop this shit right now.

–You're my man. My cover. I know your deal. I'm out front for you. This is part of you. You this as much as I do.

–I need nothing of the kind. You have almost got us killed for what? Some sugar that you were hoarding for no earthly reason.

–Now Ben's going to corner the market. I know that for sure.

I didn't want to be around to help put Ben out of business. Whatever had motivated Eddie now seemed like sheer lunacy. He needed help. And so did I. I was now the wing man on this ridiculous operation. Worse, he knew that I couldn't walk away. Bileti was my buddy. We were in this together. Or were we? He had never come clean on what he was really doing.

–Crucial, go back there in your car. Just see if the guard dogs are still there. Don't go in. Just drive by.

Eddie argued with me for all of an hour. Just to get him to shut up. I decided to drive on over. It was not a pleasant place to be at night. Giant trucks were heading in and out of the loading docks all night long. Even a resting place seemed to be in the way. I didn't want to draw too much attention to myself. I drove by the same warehouse and saw nothing. I know what Eddie would expect. That I would get out of my car and nose around. But that would only bring the dogs out of their lair. I watched a couple of trucks go through the gate. A sentry was manning the entryway. Everyone had to sign in. I had no reason to be there, and every reason to leave.

I drove around for another hour. I wanted to tell Bileti that I was trying to help him out. Right now, Eddie Bileti just seemed to be the craziest motherfucker that I had ever met. I really wished that he hadn't let me into any of this. There was no way that we were going to get anything back.

–It's like in the movies. You don't fuck with the mob.

Even if Ben was a small time gangster, he was a lot bigger than Bileti. Eddie had tried dealing in his territory. Ben was protecting his interests. Eddie would do the same if he had the muscle.

I realize that I was starting to believe Bileti. I even wondered whether he even had warehouse full of sugar. He could have just been driving for someone. And now the sugar had been delivered to its destination. On the other hand, it all seemed rather wasted to just dump all the sugar, and then immediately move it to another location. It really had looked as if it was being stored for the long haul. Oh Eddie!



When I returned to his place, I thought that he'd be frank with me.

–I've got a plan. We're going to go to Ben's. And we're going to kidnap his daughter.

–You are a mental case. I was just at the warehouse. They've got a couple of security guards ready to use their weapons.

–And I was over at his house. His daughter is there. And he doesn't have any security. He's got an alarm. But we can get in there no trouble.

–He's going to be waiting in the shadows with guns.

–Guns, nothing. He's not going to be able to stop us.

–You go. And I'll come visit your grave.

–Man, it's the best idea that I've had all day.

–You've been smoking up while I've been gone. This place smells like shit.

–I've had the best ideas. I'm inspired. Like I got struck by lightning.

–You've been struck. And now you have cerebral cortex damage. You're never going to get over it. The damage is permanent.

I thought that Ivy was thick. His psychology was positively ridiculous.

–Who's wired you?

–I'm doing OK. You need a buzz yourself.

–The only buzz that I'm interested in is the sound me sleeping.

–We're not going to do it tonight. He's over there.

–So we go over there while he's there.

–I said that we're not going to do it tonight. But I've got a plan this time.

–We get his daughter, and what do we do.

–We trade her for my stash.

–What if he decides to find you and kill you.

–We can off his daughter.

–And go to jail forever. Maybe worse.

–We're not going to get caught. He's afraid just as much as we are.

–What is he afraid of? He has your stuff. If it's actually yours.

–You're my friend. You have to back me up.

–I'm your very much alive friend. This is the most inane thing that you have ever done.

We should stick to going to parties drunk.

–You don't even drink.

–Exactly. I can keep an eye on your drunk ass.

–There are no good parties here.

–Then just drop all this shit.

It had gone way beyond the both of us. We had let loose forces that were going to eat us up. It's one thing to have crazy idea. But to let your imagination run wild in your everyday experience. That was beyond the pale. Bileti needed to be brought back to reality. Brought back before he had to be carried back.

–I need to go. I need to get some sleep. A lot of sleep. You've got something, and I want to make sure that it isn't contagious. I just need to inoculate my body. Get some real distance from all of this.

–Don't you feel that you're really alive for once. All your talk of the inspiration of extraordinary experience. Now you have the experience that you've been looking for. Aren't you glad that I came back to Atlanta.

–After this, I'm convinced that you should have stayed far away. I'm going to go home and try to sleep it off. I catch up to you late afternoon.

I got to Bileti's around 4:30. I hoped all the drama of the day before would just be a memory. I heard noises.

–I want to be discovered. I'm going to make my own movies.

She was in skirt and boots, sitting on a desk talking to Bileti.

–Hey, guy. I'll be with you in a minute. Go in the kitchen and get something to drink. We're already partying.

I opened the fridge and pored myself an orange juice. Bileti came by a few minutes later.

–Who's that girl in there babbling on?

–That's Jennifer.

–What's a Jennifer? She looks like she's in high school.

–She's in college. She studies film. And she's Ben's daughter.

–The guy who took your stuff. What the hell are you doing with her?

–She's going to help me get it back.

–Get it back. First, he's going to come here and take his daughter back. Then he's going to fuck you up for life if he doesn't kill you outright. Do you like torture? Because if you don't, you'd better prepare yourself. He is going to royally mess you up.

With friends like this...

–Jennifer, say hello to Crucial.

–Hey!

–I thought that he kidnaped you.

–That's silly. She's helping me plan the robbery of the century. She admitted that her father took the stuff.

–He's a real prick.

–The prick pays for your college. He'll cut you off.

–I'll cut him off. I know things on that mother fucker.

–That's no way to talk about your dad.

We all laughed.

–This is not going to work.

–Yes, it is. He thinks no one can stop him.

–We need a fleet of trucks just to haul all of the supply. That doesn't count for the fact that he wants to keep the shit.

–That's the brilliance of her plan. He doesn't have it at the warehouse. And we're going to use his trucks and his drivers to move it.

–His trucks and his drivers. Jennifer, you've been seeing too many movies. I thought that Eddie was bad.

He was playing with her hair. He was bad enough all doped up. But this seemed too silly to think about. We weren't going to fuck it out of him.

–I know that you’re both having a good time. But didn’t your daddy warn you about drinking too much during the day. You either pass out before dinner, or you’re a fucking terror that night.

Jennifer was becoming pissed off with me. She was taking a risk. She was helping him out. She didn’t need me getting in their way.

–I’ve got an idea, and I know it’s going to work.

Nothing had been working since he tried to corner the sugar market of the Southeast. But I was willing to hear her out.

–I’m listening.

I just didn’t understand how they were going to get his drivers to move the stuff back to where it started.

–It’s a brilliant plan.

I thought that maybe I should cover my ears. That way I could pretend that it really would succeed. And the next thing that I knew, I was in a fleet of trucks heading back to Bileti’s warehouse.

–How did she do it?

–Never underestimate a father’s love for his daughter.

Again, I didn’t believe him. There had to be more to this.

–I think that the price of sugar actually went down. And he was going to lose his shirt.

–He had nothing to lose. He didn’t even pay for the sugar. You would have been the one who endured a loss in any case.

Bileti himself was still trying to make sense of it.

–It’s not like we traded the sugar for his daughter.

–Then what did you do?

–She has things on him.

–That still doesn’t seem enough.

–I told him about K. At least, Jennifer did. That was the trick. He realized that he could make loads more if he worked with me in selling Cascade K.

–That still seems unbelievable. Why would he need you?

–He doesn’t have the contacts for synthesis. And now I have a line on distribution. It all worked out for the best.

–The best. He still might just kill you.

–Not with his daughter on our side.

It didn’t look like a case of blackmail nor the simple deal over the K.

–Some puzzles you just have to accept.

–Was he trying to teach you a lesson all along? Were you working for him?

–Not at all.

It just wasn’t in his interest to have given up so easily. Bileti seemed to live in this kind of serendipitous universe. Things just fell in place for him.

–I wish that I had your luck.

–It’s not always luck.

He told me this story about meeting some guy in front of his apartment.

–We hit it off really well. He had some smoke. I thought why not. So we lit up. It

seemed totally cool. We were just chilling on the steps. Then he pulled a knife on me. He wanted my money. I had a hundred with me. It was lucky that he didn't try to take my car.

–That's silly.

–No, really.

–Did you know the guy?

–Hadn't seen him before, haven't seen him since.

–Were you drunk?

–I was happy. It was a good buzz.

–You need to be careful.

–the hell I know.

–But you love this sort of risk. The short term.

–I've got big plans.

–You keep running in with the wrong crowd.

–I don't need a sermon by the guy who spent months staring at Thea.

–I was at the club dancing. She wasn't even there every night.

–You spent all that time without a job. I could have set you up.

–How? Driving stolen merchandise.

–I've told you about delivery jobs. I've done it.

–I'm still thinking about it.

–I thought that you were going to start one.

–Probably.

–You won't be going out as much.

–I'll still be at Restless every night. That's the great thing about a 24 hour club. No closing.

–You ever thought about doing something more.

–I've got the band. I've got my music. I'm writing. All of that. Dancing just inspires me.

I didn't think that he understood. If there was danger, then he might have gone along. I still couldn't get him to come out enough.

–Now, we've got all my sugar back.

We were standing in front of his warehouse.

–Have you learned a lesson.

–I need more of this stuff. And other locations.

He was only too driven by this mania. When would it play itself out.

–I've told you about K. It's going to revolutionize everything.

–Is it really enough. It will whet the appetite. Then something else will take its place.

Are you ready for that?

–I know how to work the market. How to advertise. How to work prices.

–But if something else comes along. You won't be able to respond.

–I've got my guys working on that.

–Take what you have, sell it, make your money back, and get out.

I knew my advice made no sense to him. Once he sold his junk, he'd be on a roll, unable to stop. I didn't want to sit on the sidelines and just watch.

- Won't anything stop you?
- I'm not going to stay in this game forever. I'll get my money and save it. Franchises. I'll buy a restaurant. Or a bar. I'll buy Restless.
- You had enough shit from Ben. You'll be facing some real competition if you do that.
- I've worked in a bar. I'd be a great manager.
- The pay sucks.
- I'll skim off the top.
- And send your business to the poor house.
- We both laughed. This was all entertainment.
  
- For the time being just lie low.
- What do you mean?
- Don't tell anyone that this happened. Especially at Restless. There's loads of spies there.
- Most nights, there's hardly anyone there.
- Take my suggestion to heart.
- I did. This guys showed up my place looking for Bileti.
- What the hell are you coming here?
- I just thought that you could give me the info on that guy?
- I'm a friend. That's all. He said that he was going to head back to Florida for a while.
- I went over to see Bileti. He had put a metal door with a lock over the wood door that came with the apartment.
- I'm doing what I can to protect myself.
- You're going to end up in jail. Have you been locked in here for days.
- I'm maintaining a low profile.
- Some guy came looking for you.
- Yeah, what did he want?
- He seemed like some tough. I said that you went to Florida.
- I've got people in Florida. You didn't say where.
- No.
- He still can look it up.
- You're not in Florida. You're here.
- Are you being a wise guy.
- I'm just telling it like it is.
- Have you even left this place in days?
- I'm safe here. I get the pizza drivers to come here for me. Give them a couple of extra bucks, and they'll get me booze. I've really got no complaints.
- I do. I don't like your hoodlums showing up at my place.
- He won't come back. If he does, tell him to fuck off.
- What if he pulls a gun on me?
- He's harmless.
- Harmless nothing. You got yourself in with a sick crew.
- I'm going to get a new job soon.

–And the Cascade K

–I’m still doing it. But I’ve got a partner handling the dirty work.

–Who?

–Ben.

–Who is Ben? Was he in it all along?

What impulse had led Bileti to get involved with these street toughs. The drama of the office and college life had only inspired the need for more intense forms of competition.

–This will eventually go from bad to worse. You’re in over your head.

–I told you that I got another job.

I was worried about the poetry of his life. As long as he remained this side of danger, he could keep that devil make care attitude. But he was slipping into riskier pursuits.

I had my own theory that I needed to explore. Something like Cascade K would explain Restless. It could have even been the source of the fire at the Cube. The drug seemed to represent a more profound tension with the everyday routine. It was just the sort of thing that had pushed Bileti over the edge into the nether world. I had heard stories about Lonnie operating with some of the Imperial Set. This had to be what was behind it all.

–How do you think that you can sustain yourself if you had to go to work the next day?

Waking up was becoming more and more difficult with the expanded hours. Sure you could head home early. But why stop. The mid morning blahs could be cured by a simple pick me up.

–Why Cascade K? Why not just coke or something?

–I think that a lot more people are doing coke. But coke seems more like a yuppie drug. Everyone here thinks that they’re an artist. Coke is bad news.

–And K isn’t? It rots the system.

–They’re all rotting here anyway.

They were all immersed in the same illusion. K would give them a bond that held it all together.

I want back to Bileti. It was a chore just getting me in the door. The place was full of this sickly warmth. But he seemed in great spirits.

–No one’s bothering me.

–What are you doing for money?

–I’ve still got the business.

–You’ve got to see my plants. My morning glories.

They were blooming on the porch. With the porch, it didn’t seem the impregnable fortress.

–I can bolt the door and put bars on the window. I’m safe.

–Better safe than sorry. Doesn’t this make you a little paranoid. You’re locking yourself inside.

–I take walks.

–It looks like you haven’t been out for weeks.

–This isn’t going to last forever.

–I need you to tell me about the Cascade K

–I don't make it. I just sell sugar to the chemists.

–That doesn't add up.

–I want nothing to do with that shit.

–Do the Feds know about it?

–I'm just trying to stay on the outside.

Bileti had been doing acid while he was staying in. He felt that this was his mystical phase. Everything that he had learned from his adventures was only a preparation for a new enlightenment.

–They don't have this at Restless.

–Restless is the anti-paradise

–I told you that all along. You should have believed me.

–It suits my purpose.

–Sometimes, you have to let the paradise go.!

## IVY

I was tied up and forced to serve as a witness.

–Is this what you like?

Ivy wanted to serve as my torturer.

–Do you usually get paid for this?

–It's how I make my living. You should try it.

–I can't do much of anything tied up like this.

–It's just so you'll focus on the images in front of you.

–As it is I can barely move. What do you want?

–I want you to tell me if you like what you see.

–None of this is really happening.

–I'm not going to tell anyone.

–No, I mean this is more like a dream.

–It's more like a dream. But it is real. Just go along with it for now.

–Is this some kind of bait and switch. I start off as the bait, and then you switch me for someone more human. A likeness.

–We've tried that with some others in the scene. It's just that you come out all the time. All those days at the Cube. And now Restless. You've seen things that you don't even realize.

–So this is some kind of consciousness arousal. I know you're getting desperate. First, you send Andre off for some kind of sex change and now this. You could have asked me what you want to know.

–It's not like that. We don't want to know one thing. It's like all your answers are scattered over grid, and then we detect a pattern to make sense of things.

–Usually you can detect a pattern just by talking to someone. But I suppose that's not as scientific as tying someone up and torturing them. I knew that there was a method to this madness.

–Relax. It'll make things easier. Pretend that you're not bound.

–If this is some exercise in my preferences, don't you think that they're going to be

affected by having me tied up. Anything associated with my domination is only going to appeal to me more.

–See. You wouldn't have thought of that without being tied up in the first place.

I thought that I was beginning to get the hang of things. That was part of Ivy's appeal. She affected that permanent mope. The isolated prisoner who needs definite rescue by her admirers.

–So are you my first test case?

–I'm not here of my own accord. It's more like a job.

–Are you being paid.

–I'm getting credit for a psych class.

–The things that they let you get away with these days. Wouldn't it be nice if you got the subject's permission before you tied them up.

–It's not like you're screaming. Besides, you look cute like that. And you wouldn't have given us permission under the circumstances. Part of the experiment is the surprise.

–But this is kidnaping. It's a prosecutable offense.

–Yeah, but the things that you learn are invaluable. By the end of the experiment, you want to pay us.

–You hope. This is a lawsuit waiting to happen. Permanent damage to my psyche. And all sorts of immediate after effects.

–We're prepared for all eventualities. You just need to settle back and enjoy yourself.

–I could enjoy myself if you undid the restraints.

–I'd undo the restraints if I felt safe about all this. I don't really.

–I might be willing to cooperate if I didn't feel that little Eva Braun was threatening me.

–I told you that a lot of guys would pay me good money to do this.

–I'm not one of them. I don't have that kind of money. And if there are some guys that would do that, then why don't you find them. Then you can buy your own university.

–You're making a mockery out of my justice.

–This ain't cute.

–Just get into it. That's your first problem, Crucial. You don't know how to make the best of a bad situation.

–That is my first problem. I don't know how to make an idiot of myself in a really stupid situation.

–If you'd give in, we could get this experiment all the faster.

–Trying to make me relax should be part of the experiment.

–Do you feel an attraction for me?

–Is this part of the experiment.

–It could be. For the time being, it's just a question.

–You know it's never good to reveal your position to your opponent.

–I'm your friend. I've seen you at school. I just thought that you'd make a good subject. You know lot of stuff. I'd like to see if it would affect the results.

–Is this how you gather data. He sort of looks right. Right now, you sort of seem crazy.

–I'm not really crazy. I'm just following the procedure.

–Then the procedure's crazy. How did they ever get you to do this?



- They needed volunteers. I get most of my credit for this.
- Why are you doing this anyway. You don't need psychology anyway. You're OK the way that you are.
- I can help you.
- I'm not the one who needs help.
- But you really seem shy.
- Is this how I get over shyness. You tie me up, and barrage me with questions. Why don't you just gag me and see how I deal with pain.
- That might happen later.
- And you think that under duress, I will come over to your way of thinking. That I'll identify with your way of thinking.
- Worse has happened.
- So you admit that this is the worst possible idea.
- It's a great idea. It's like everything in psychology. The true purposes are buried.
- Buried nothing. You create artificial situations to get just the kind of responses that you wanted all along.
- That's more like everyday life. Tell me, would you like to see my naked.
- While I'm tied up?
- Tied up.
- I thought that's what you do for a living. It's not like I want to head down to Go Wild and watch.
- I wouldn't mind if you do.
- It's not my idea of entertainment.
- Why?
- I just don't feel that desperate.
- Desperate. The girls there look better than the girls at Restless.
- Come to think of it, don't all the girls at Restless work at Go Wild.
- Of course not. I'm the only one. A few of my friends have thought about it. But right now, I'm the only one. Although I have brought a few girls to Restless.
- You're trying to turn Restless into a strip bar.
- It's not the same thing. At Go Wild, we're giving all of our bodies to this silly ideal. The perfect sexual moment. Restless gives me the chance to take all that back.
- But you still do that writhing dance on the floor.
- I'm trying to break myself of that. Any ideas?
- Different music. But that's part of the problem.
- What problem?
- The moment that you start to think about things differently, you won't be able to continue on with you lifestyle.
- That's the sort of thing that I want to hear.
- But what else do you want to do?
- What else am I going to do? The guys give me loads of money. I can make my own hours.
- But it's messing with your nervous system.

- It’s messing with me altogether.
- Then untie me, and let me go. We’ll meet later in the week to discuss your career options.
- This is part of my career. If you’d quit protesting, we could get through with this much sooner.
- I thought that the protesting was part of the experiment.
- If you didn’t protest so much then you could have had me by now.
- Is this part of the experiment? How do I rate?
- It’s your wonderful ideas.
- They are working.
- I’m just supposed to flatter you. It’s part of the experiment.
- How far does the experiment go.
- Anything to quiet you down.
- OK, I’m quiet now. Give me my reward.
- Tell me what you want.
- I thought that you were willing to provide your services.
- That was just a way of talking.
- And it worked. Tell me more of what your willing to do.
- I just want to help you. If that’s OK.
- I thought that this was an experiment. Not a therapy session. You’re the one admitting to needing therapy.
- You are a little bitch.
- Do you want to slap me now?
- I thought that was your territory.
- What are your saying?
- That you’re an aggressive little fuck.
- And you wouldn’t mind having that little fuck in you right now.
- You wouldn’t have the nerve to say that if you weren’t tied up.
- But I am saying it.
- Talk like that only gets you further and further from your goal. I’m not a whore.
- But you do take cash for sexual acts.
- It’s performance. Never an act. The acts are all personal for the viewer. I do not share in that.
- You’ll do anything for me. But I can’t touch you.
- Where have I heard that before.
- In the torturer’s bible that you were reading before you tied me up.
- So tying me up has been a sexual charge.
- It’s worked me up. But it’s not exactly something that I’m enjoying.
- But it already reveals an aggressive side to your sexuality.
- It would bring up an aggressive side to my eating habits if we were going to talk about that.
- And if I sprayed myself all over with whipping cream, you’d lick it off.
- I’m trying to cut down on the calories.

- You’d be tempted.
- Whatever would prompt you to do something like that? Is that what they teach you at the strip club.
- That’s what they’re taught at Restless. Do anything and everything to get your partner off.
- I’ve witnessed that.
- It’s not about touching yourself. It’s about touching the soft skin. Hearing the whimpers.
- Hearing the cries.
- What cries?
- Of torture. Ecstasy that you can’t describe except through an analogy. To touching. Touching in a horrible way. An agony.
- Then your fantasy filters into your real life. You can’t stop yourself.
- You can stop yourself if you never get started.
- But you’re already in the middle of things. You just find pleasure by hurting people. And it’s become worse. It’s not just the pain. You have to make the pain all the more worse. This is torture through and through. How do you find a way to reach that higher level of disgust. You want your victims to beg for pain.
- But are you any different. Look what turns you on. Me. My experiment. This has always been your fantasy. You want to act differently. Your professor ways and all that. You want whores. Your Theas and Courtneys. You give them just enough life to be part of the little game. But you won’t let them come to life. And you are inevitably jealous of their independence. You know that they’ll find guys who complement their youth and vitality. You’d lose it if we had any of those girls tied up like you are now.
- Is that the experiment?
- How do you react to that?
- I don’t know. It just seems like one of your ideas. Like you’re trying to challenge. Find out a secret of mine that will really piss me off. I’m not really reacting. What do you want me to do? Bleed for you. Is that part of the science? Are you collecting drops of blood?
- I wasn’t the one who spilled blood.
- Either did I. It was your idea to tie me up.
- That was the experiment.
- So where does it go from here?
- Where do you want it to go?
- I’m the subject here. You’ve tied me up.
- You’re still not relaxed.
- You’ve insulted me, and you want me to relax.
- So just mentioning darling Thea makes you hit the roof.
- I just want you to let me go.
- But you feel really uncomfortable that we’re dealing with things honestly.
- We’re not dealing with anything at all.
- But Thea’s the one that got away. And you feel frustrated.
- I don’t want to play this game.

- One of your butterflies got out of your collection.
- Have you ever looked at the sky. And you could feel yourself flying. Swaying and gliding in the breeze.
- You’re willing to think about all this.
- I just want you to let me go if that wouldn’t be too much.
- And if I let you go, then you’d cooperate.
- Not now. Some other time.
- And you think that you can tempt me like this.
- None of this is working. I’m the one who’s supposed to agree to let you go. And you’re supposed to beg to stay.
- Do you understand? None of this is working.
- You’re squirming in your seat. I’m doing nothing new to you. But you’re squirming.
- I can’t help it. I can’t stand sitting in one position for any length of time.
- Like sex.
- I didn’t bring it up.
- But if I brought it up, you wouldn’t mind thinking about it.
- Not like this.
- But this is how you expect every one of your love interests to think. First, they have to enjoy being tied up, and then they have to agree to your other demands.
- I am not the kidnaper.
- Only because you don’t know what it’s like. You don’t know their story. And when they’re close enough, you just knock them out for your collection.
- You’re mixing metaphors.
- I’m getting to the root of things.
- Butterflies don’t have roots.
- But they set down roots. It’s part of homing response.
- Is that the psychological experiment. All about homing responses.
- Something like that.
- And what’s a happy home without a little torture.
- Something like that.
- So you admit it. Now let me go.
- Then you’ll be the one that we let go.
- That is the experiment.
- I don’t want you to be the one that gets away.
- Without fucking my brains out.
- Without fucking you to death.
- Whatever. Do you do this electronically?
- Noise?
- More like shock.
- We’re not psychotic. And I really hope that you’re not.
- Not really.
- Just verging on it.
- What?

- To see if you'd like it too.
- Torture.
- What?
- The longer that you're tied up, the more that it affects your desire adversely. You like to see others suffer.
- That is nonsense.
- No, it's not.
- It is.
- Would you like to see me naked?
- That doesn't sound like a very scientific method. If the researcher isn't an Ivy, you don't have much of an experiment.
- We could just stimulate the pleasure center.
- You could make me feel good.
- You could make me feel good.
- It's hot in here. Why don't you take off your shirt?
- The next thing that you're going to tell me to do is to start touching myself.
- Isn't that what you're doing by having me tied up.
- If you didn't complain about it, you might be able to enjoy all of this.
- How can you tell that I'm complaining?
- Once you stop talking about being tied up.
- You have only one thing that you can talk about.
- And you have two. Tying up and touching yourself.
- Getting away from here would be a third.
- After fucking. After getting fucked up yourself. That would be your third.
- What of it?
- You wouldn't get to sex without the tying up. And it's really fucked up. What do you make of that?
- I'm just reacting to the situation.
- You're the one who's so interested in tying up.
- I'm reacting to a real compulsion. I'm drugged somehow. Then I'm abducted. And I wake up here and I'm all tied up.
- We've got big lights here! Doesn't this feel like Restless.
- Not really.
- OK I'll put a spotlight on me. I'll do a little dance for you.
- I've been through this before.
- Let me get close enough to you so that you can smell my perfume. Doesn't that make you feel good.
- You're so close that I can taste you. What next?
- What do you want to see? I can show you what you'd like to see.
- I want to see you.
- You're seeing me.
- Take off your shirt.
- Should I hike up my skirt. You want to run your hand along my legs. Slip your fingers

under the elastic of my panties.

–It’s not like I’m going down on you. I’m still tied up.

–I could give you a little treat. Don’t tell me that you don’t feel a little turned on.

She moved far away from me, as she buttoned up her blouse.

–Why did you stop?

–Why did I start? Is that what you want. You’re tied up. But you’re still getting off on the fact that I’m turning you on.

–I’m just getting off. It’s a fact of biology.

–A nice fact. Would you like to learn some more.

–So what!

–It’s not just nature. You take your sugar with spice.

–What?

–Pleasure and pain. Dualities.

–So what!

–It is your Thea.

–Thea hasn’t been around for a while. Let’s call it my Ivy.

–Call it what you will.

–You are pretty hot!

–Is that your story. If you can’t get ‘em hot, you’ll take ‘em cold. And if you can’t take ‘em cold, you take ‘em nice and cold. Bound and gagged.

–That was your torture.

–It was to teach you a lesson.

–I thought that it was an experiment. The lesson comes later on.

–A nice little paddling.

–You are the one that got away.

–If you were nicer, you could have had me.

–You got me hard. I did have you. I just have to think about your perfume.

–You are a dirty man.

–You wouldn’t want it any other way.

–This is not about me.

–You’re a volunteer. I was forced to do this. I might as well be asleep. You, on the other hand, are so deep into this, that it’s making you wet. So much for your scientific objectivity.

–But we are scientists. We react to the objects. It’s all part of the experiment.

–And if it was one of your cute little boys, it wouldn’t be an experiment.

–What are you talking about?

–Infra has told me stories.

–What stories?

–About piling on?

–What?

–You and a few girls take a guy back to your place. And you just go to town. Things that you really can’t explain with a psych text. Unless it’s abnormal.

–You’re expressing a fairly prurient interest yourself.

- I’m just the observer here.
- It’s my experiment.
- Isn’t that what you want. And exchange of roles.
- We haven’t exchanged roles.
- Just because you’re hiding behind your research garb. I know the cant.
- And I know the can. Those who can’t do...
- Bitch! Is that what you’re trying to make me do. Bark like a dog in heat. Bark, bark.
- You think that it’s going to turn me on?
- It’s not the first time.
- In your dreams.
- In yours. With the lights off, you wouldn’t mind me just slipping it in. And then you can deny it all in the morning.
- You’ve got a dirty mouth.
- For a dirty man. Don’t you have to maintain your scientific objectivity. Tell me your stories about depraved sex. Then tell me what it’s like to play the dominatrix at work just to balance out your fucked up life.
- It’s not like you’re Mister Perfect.
- I’m Mister Tied-Up-Here-with-Nowhere-to-Go.
- You seem to have gone pretty far already.
- You’ve been helping me out. Pushing me and all that.
- That’s why you’re always so closed lipped.
- That’s why you’re so good at drawing blood.
- You going to give me a blood test.
- I only test by taste.
- I’m not saying no.
- You already had your chance. You weren’t a good boy.
- I can never really tell if it’s my chance or it’s my imagination.
- I think that the two are mixed. You have to be more affirmative.
- You were complaining about my aggressiveness.
- So you want to make amends. Just sit still, and we can start this experiment.
- What do you want to know?
- The usual.
- The first time that I had sex. When I got caught touching myself.
- Whatever.
- I’ll make up things to get you off. And when I see that you’re getting off, I’ll get off.
- Go on!
- Hasn’t there ever been a pure time. One without all this sex.
- Really good sex is just a reference point for all this.
- Like one of your cute boys.
- Or one of your EA girls.
- You’re really crossing into sensitive territory.
- If it wasn’t sensitive, there wouldn’t be much point to any of this.
- How did you really manage to get me in here?

–You're here. So make the best of it.  
 –The torturer's creed.  
 –Any creed is about torture. That is why the belief is so strong.  
 –So you're here to free the body.  
 –I'm just along for the ride.  
 –And I am the ride. And it's getting too much for even me.  
 I could see that my jailer was tiring. Maybe my constant questioning had wore her down.  
 –Do you like me?  
 –I always have. But not that way. I like the fact that you're a free spirit. That you do pretty well anything that you please. What the fuck! Just let me go.  
 –But this is the only way that you can be tender.

–These aren't restraints. There just for your protection.  
 She wheeled me into the room in a chair, and proceed to hook up electrodes to me.  
 –This isn't going to hurt. We also need you to fill in some release forms. Just to make everything legal. We're going to give you something to quiet you down.  
 –You look like someone.  
 I was sure that it was Ivy. We had only exchanged a few words. I thought it would be embarrassing to say anything to her.  
 –I know that you told the doctor what was wrong. But that one form asks you to go in some detail.  
 Why hadn't they asked me to do this in the waiting room? I was already fairly relaxed.  
 –We're going to show you some pictures. We'll test your reactions.  
 –To see if I have a mother complex.  
 –To see if you're a homicidal maniac.  
 I asked her to repeat herself.  
 –Just to see why you've had problems sleeping.  
 I settled back. The first few slides seemed pretty generic. Like a bad picnic. Fireworks and all that.  
 –When did you first meet Thea?  
 –We never actually met.  
 –I know who you are.  
 –Is this stuff taking effect.  
 –Weren't you trailed by the police. There was a report about you.  
 I was fading in and out.  
 –Do you recognize her?  
 How did they get these shots?  
 –It was a girl that I saw only a few times in a club. Doria.  
 –I'm a real girl.  
 –What?  
 –It's Restless. There's so many damn drag queens in the washroom that I can't take a piss. They look at me weird and say nasty things to me.



That was my crisis. I couldn't tell if Sylvia was real.

–I am a woman.

–If I want you to be.

–I feel very feminine.

–That may not be enough in my moment of crisis.

Now things were getting stranger.

–You enjoy coming here.

–It's a doctor's office.

–You know why you've had those headaches.

–I'm getting ahead of myself.

–Exactly.

–Francine, Gina, EA. Is it all making sense?

–Not really.

–Let's start this all over again.

–I could pretend that I like you.

–You're not really my type.

–I could be really good for you.

–I thought that you were going to help me with my problem.

–What problem?

–The headaches.

–It's not really headaches. It's more like heartaches.

–I'm good with heartaches too. Just as long as no one finds out.

–You're only going to ruin my life. I'll fall in love with you.

–For me it's only a job.

–But you do want something more.

–I'm not going to go back to some uncomfortable past. I'm living a reality that I enjoy. I get paid. I'm enjoying myself.

–So what are you going to do for my headaches.

–You just have to regress in your past. To something that might have meant something for you.

–How can I possibly reach something that meant something in my past if I don't have a reference point from the present?

–I could be your reference point.

–That's why I offered to help you.

–Why did you tie me up?

–You agreed to submit to the experiment.

–I never agreed to be restrained like this.

–It's for your own good. It sets up a good balance for the both of us.

–I could help you.

–I'm the one who's all about helping.

–You haven't done a thing for me.

–What do you think that I am? A prostitute. I know the limits. It's all in your mind.

- How do you know what’s in my mind?
- I know your story.
- You have no feelings.
- At least I’m alive. I have something that you want.
- What is that?
- Flesh and blood. I could die for you.
- Is this my salvation?
- It’s the beginning. If you want to get something, you have to give up something.
- Did you learn this in economics class or at Go Wild.
- What is Go Wild?
- It’s a rehab center.
- I like what I do.
- That’s the first step in being helped.
- What the next?
- Belief.
- I believe in wealth and a good time, in that order.
- Do you ever try to reverse the order.
- Only if I’m in love.
- How long does that ever last?
- As long as I can touch it.
- And that’s what got it started. Inappropriate touching.
- Inappropriate looks. I got them from the point that I was thirteen.
- It’s part of becoming a star.

## **MY STORY**

I wanted to tell you the story. I realized how it might make a difference for you. I hoped that you wouldn’t make the same mistakes that I had made.

It started from my untimely birth and the dispute that it set off.

–We can save you.

I was abducted at a young age by circus performers. They thought that they could victimize me. It was from these ordeals that I realized that I was singled out for my future vocation. It created the necessary disassociation that enabled me to disengage my soul from my imperial consciousness.

I welcomed the consequences of a transmigratory soul. This would offer me the opportunity to share in visions that might be denied a mortal. From that point on, I considered all my real experiences as derivative from a deeper source of energy. On the other hand, it was also the cause of my solitude as I could never fully immerse myself in experiences that only seemed like profound dreams.

I was on a precarious journey. What experiences might take me to the point that I would think that I was part of something real. What were the traces in our transitory existence that might convince us of the influence of a transcendent reality.

My first evidence of such forces were in a bar in Paris. I was led in my meditation by a

out of his mind cosmic explorer.

–After I shake someone’s hand, I immediately wash mine. Even if he just washed his, he’s been touching himself. He’s a magnet for germs.

He opened the first door for me, then he himself disappeared down a mine shaft. I was left to confront the supernatural energies on my own. I could feel my body taken from me, as I let myself ride these cosmic trails. From then I could sense myself getting caught up in this rush. And I just floated as all the universe ran back into me.

My revelation invited me to other similar experiences. We were practicing in a garage for the Era. I could feel that I was out of my body at that moment. And again I was caught in the flow. But the confluences were also tearing me apart. And I returned to my body with only a sense of embarrassment, of helplessness.

From the fright of that event, I threw myself into these grotesque intensities. Anything that made me sense that division in myself seemed attractive. I pushed myself into more and more revolutionary experiences. I needed to throw myself into the tides of time. At this point, I became convinced of my destiny. Far beyond my predecessors, I found an inspiration that would project me into my new life.

–If this is your story, the journey seems so solitary. You need to offer more dynamic to your struggle. I know what you have been enduring. That’s why you have been brought here.

I could feel myself being moved back and forth by her words.

–Go back to her.

I was again at a night at the Cube.

–This place has burned down.

–It will serve us in what we’re going to do now.

My Ivy started her dance in the place where Thea would have offered her performance.

–It can’t be the same. You’re just trying to take her place.

–I can give you more than she ever gave you.

–You just want to be part of my story.

–It’s just your feeling.

–So why do you even care about any of this?

–You have a great imagination. Maybe I can learn something from you. My whole job is about creating fantasies for guys. There can be no fantasy without imagination.

But the imagination seemed based on something very real. Ivy’s body.

–I know Thea. I only have a vague recollection of you.

–Don’t think of the body as something sexual. Then you can recall our contact in the past. And this will remind you of all the things that you have forgotten.

–Why are we here together?

–I’m central to your story. I have to teach you something about yourself that you are afraid to admit.

There was no plan to make Ivy central to my story. Now she realized at this moment that she had the power to reverse the whole process.

–You made Thea the source of your story because you never let yourself become part of my story. Now is your chance to remake the whole project. Your fate is tied up with reversing

things how they have been.

I figured that I was falling out of my own story into hers. I never really thought that she had the means to disturb my plan. Now she was trying to rewrite the order.

–This is the perfect time to change your programming. You can let go of EA, of Dovsky, of Thea, of Courtney, and you can start over.

–As what.

I now realized that the nodes of my story—the EA, the Thea, the Courtney—these were all markers for my own story. If I followed Ivy’s invitation, I would be distracting myself from my own path. I’d be giving up everything that I had discovered.

Ivy’s presence was too much to ignore. Her perfume was overcoming me.

–Come closer.

–All that I can do is tell you is something that you already know. You have to let me play the guide in your story. You have had too many Theas. Too many ideals. Now you have to feel something real.

–What do you propose? A whipping.

The light was getting brighter.

–This is the Thea effect.

–There has to be more than this. That’s why you hang out. You’re not the mistress of ceremony. You’re along for the ride just as much as Thea.

–What makes you special?

–My origins.

This was a point of a significant decision for me. If I followed Ivy’s suggestion, that would change the rest of the tale.

–If I’m to continue with what you’re telling me, then I need to learn more of your story.

–You didn’t need Thea’s story. Her mystery seemed impressive enough for you. What’s wrong with me?

–You believe in the liberation by sex. She adopted the transfiguration by the light.

–You just never followed her around to see what she was really about.

–Are you calling her a whore?

–She’s not the angel that you thought that she was.

–I never called her an angel.

–I’m just telling you how it really is.

–And I’m telling you that she had a quality.

–Had?

–She hasn’t been around for a long time.

–All the more reason to give me a chance.

–You’re just too brutal about your entry. If this was a different story.

–I’m a better philosopher than her. Give me a chance.

–I’m trying to. You just enjoy belittling me.

–If you act stupid, I’m going to tell it like it is.

–Do you ever feel that time is passing too quickly.

–Only when I’m far from my goal.

–Maybe you’re closer than you think.

## INTENSITY

I held my breath as long as I could until I needed to come up for air.

–It’s sheer lunacy.

–You liked that.

–I felt like I was going out of my head.

–What is it?

–Life.

I didn’t know that I had it in me.

–When you have a partner, you can push yourself harder than if you’re on your own.

–An exercise buddy.

More than the feeling itself, what followed really opened me up to that sense of liberation.

–I wish that I could just tap all that.

–If you could, you wouldn’t find it as exciting.

–Let’s try that again.

Once I became accustomed to this high, I looked for it in almost everything that I did.

–It’s all about holding out, and then just letting go.

I started to think of my writing like that. The tide of words rolled over me.

–You have to give in.

Not simply daring entertainments, even more bizarre forms of recreation seemed to provide a more attractive form for my pursuit.

–You dig B movies.

–What are you trying to say?

–Weirdo characters hanging around in seedy bars.

–Like Restless.

–Only with more of a sense of danger. Where disaster is just around the corner.

–Fantasy.

–Crime shows.

–Like on TV.

–Only in these, the characters embrace the criminal lifestyle.

–Fucking up other people’s lives.

–Trying to escape yourself.

–What do you mean by all that?

–Danger just brings out the best. Being at the edge of breathlessness.

–What?

–Like the game that you liked playing.

–What are you saying?

–You have to break the dominance of the will. Otherwise, you can never let yourself discover that other side of yourself.

–Or the feeling that you’re going to lose everything that you have.

I wanted to explore the roots of my intensities. What I first thought was natural, I was now able to create artificially.

–Just make sure that you get addicted to these trashy films.

–I just want to entertain myself. Put another video in.

–It’s becoming an excuse. You’re not doing anything but watching these stupid movies.

–I’m going out at night. I have my music. The poems that I’m writing.

But the movies gave me the chance just to ride the high.

–Have you ever thought about writing down your dreams?

–What does that have to do with anything?

–Once you start thinking about them in a different way, it becomes the basis for wanting to change them.

–So.

–Just that feeling gives you the inspiration to affect them as they are going on.

I was divided between the satisfaction that I was already getting, and a desire to see if I could put this philosophy in action.

–My dreams really offer me a way out of all this.

–They do!

But the films just seemed so immediate in giving me what I needed.

Restless wasn’t very crowded. But I needed to shut the TV off.

–What’s wrong?

I tried to engage each song with my desire. But it felt too forced. I was missing the beat. My timing seemed to be off.

These intensities suggested a crossing over, a summit. But I couldn’t reach that point on my own. I needed a bridge. Perhaps relating these experiences together could offer the way out. That had been my attraction to Thea. I assumed that she had past the barrier.

–It was the stimulants.

And when they wore off, she knew that there was something behind this. Her melancholy was a clue for her.

–It’s a desire for completeness that is out of your grasp. Just waiting for it doesn’t make it come any easier.

The music only exposed a helplessness. I needed more than this. And once, the Titans got started, there was no turning back. All my fury had been part of something more clearly physical. The Titans needed a catalyst.

–Have you ever gone days without sleep? You cross a zone. You hear voices.

–Is this the same as the dream theory?

–There’s a force out there.

–Next you’ll tell me that you believe in ghost.

–There is supernatural behavior. And if you hold up these barriers to yourself, you never can get to that place.

There was the desire for that perfect night at Restless. That was a thought that served the Cube. But Restless disrupted the aspiration. There was all the promise of the Cube. But the open end of the night made it impossible for a favorable return.

All these nights seemed to slip out my control.

–Control was all that you wanted when you sought these intensities. Now you are way

beyond that. There is no way back from the experience. As long as you stick to the notion of the intensities, you actually diminish the full frenzy of the night.

The was the belief that sustained Restless. Where the Cube gave the impression that the self could contain these highs, Restless found delight in the experiences. There would be no magic night, no magic moment. Thea was gone, Courtney was lost. It was all over.

## PARADISE

The Cube had been the logical sanctuary for these desires for the paradise. The momentary lapses into the mystical were focused in the spectacle of the Cube. People thought that Restless would be a failure because it lacked all the dramatic appeal of the Cube. But that was why it was such a wonder. If there was a Paradise, it needed to subsist in a realm beyond the controls of the self. Otherwise, it would simply be imaginary—another aspect fo the conscious. This went way beyond the imaginary. It was explosive. It was threatening. It menaced the self.

–I needed to make it down to Restless.

It was the promise of the Cube. But there would never be any satisfaction. Even its pleasures were temporary. But the feeling of Restless suggested permanence.

–What are we looking for?

–Something that we have never seen before.

–We’ve seen everything.

Hot on the trail of the Paradise, I temporarily filed my video collection.

–I’m working on a new lead.

This was the pretense that I could associate the Paradise with some new character.

–You haven’t even finished with the old character. So it’s not really time to add new ones.

If I still wanted to connect with the Paradise, I needed to use the resources already at my disposal.

–It the feeling that you have before sleep. You’re on the verge of a new idea. You have to save your insight until waking. But in the morning, it just seems like gibberish.

Thea had never seemed so absurd. But there were no new heros as of yet.

–What about Infra?

–Are you kidding?

I could have made do with the meager offerings of Restless. But I had a question that could not be answered by the arrangement of game pieces. We needed to explore new rules.

–Or a contest without rules.

–To the death.

–But it’s Restless. You always have to return the next day for more.

–Then you can make do with what’s there.

–I’m waiting for the bodies to pile up.

–You’re waiting for the weekend.

–The weekend is our paradise.

–No mistakes.

–Or all mistakes.

- How would you know?
- There is no knowledge. No redemption. Just a few joys.
- This is bigger than you or me.
- It’s not a coincidence.
- Who have you slept with here?
- I’ve tried to keep my wits.
- It doesn’t help when you’re making out in the washroom. You hold out for months, and then you just give in for nothing. Is that your version of paradise.
- It’s about holding your breath with the hope that there’s some revelation around the corner.
- Finding angels in shit.
- Is the shit the angels? Or are the angels shit?
- I don’t believe!
- I can’t stop myself.
- It’s not like it’s a job. If you’re not getting anything out of this, maybe you should just take to the road.
- The Paradise was getting to me in this morass.
- Can you get a hold of what this means. You have to control this feeling. Like holding your breath.
- It seems like I’m going back in time.
- That’s what the Paradise is. It’s a spiral. It’s about twisting around the time line.

## **DISAPPOINTMENT**

- Is that why you didn’t say anything to Thea?
- I already knew enough.
- You had already got too close to the Paradise.
- And?
- You knew that she couldn’t follow you.
- She was already there.
- But you’d never know. You never wanted to see from that close. She could pretend that she had gone as far. For your sake. Then she’d just come back to something. And you didn’t want that to happen. That she’d come back to something really silly. What we’re you going to do. Fuck her brains out all the time. You never really knew if you were that good. And you might get way out there. And she’d still be back here filing her nails.
- What’s this thing about sharpening the nails?
- You never know when it’s good and ugly. You felt shame. About yourself. About your body.
- I don’t think that this is my story.
- For sake of argument, I’ll make it yours.
- What more?
- That sex was this forbidden thing.
- Sounds like your act.



- And you push closer and closer to this end in itself.
- It can never satisfy as much as you expect it to.
- Or it satisfies more, and you lose track of your starting place.
- You just have to ask for what you want when you need it.
- And get refused for a worse disappointment.
- You don't like my body.
- When I'm inside you. But in the sunlight, you look sick. There's this green tint to your skin. That's another reason for disappointment.
- But if you pump me really intensely, then you get nostalgic for your own hard-on even as your thrusting away.
- You just need to be a dominatrix.
- Jean-Luc's—it's way ahead of its time.
- Sex as an end in itself.
- A platform for pleasure. Happiness. Spiritual enlightenment.
- It won't last.
- Another sense of disappointment.
- Or for you luxury. Your pretty boys and rich old men.
- I think that I can take it all together.
- Or all at a time. And sex becomes more theater. Theater needs audiences. And as your performances get more intense on stage, you need to push things with your boys. Boy after boy. Quick.
- Or disappointment.
- One in your mouth, one up your ass, one inside you.
- And one more that I'm giving a hand job too.
- Why stop there?
- You can't. That's what sucks about it all.
- And even sucking is a fucking disappointment.
- Lather up, and cut you a check for your services.
- I don't want the IRS to know.
- So you have secret contracts. You're like a fucking spy.
- And that's what I go probing for with my rubber gloves and my medical instruments.
- You're getting a kick out of all this. If you slow down, it's only more disappointment.
- Just enough to get you going. You can't have Thea. You take the closest thing. But in the morning all that you can think about is Thea and how she isn't she isn't her. Disappointment.
- And you could show me a good time.
- You don't want a good time. You want paradise. You want eternity. You want a goddess to fuck you. But do you see what you're becoming.
- I'm protecting myself.
- Against what? A nuclear disaster.
- What else?
- A popular revolt against your dick.
- Are you taunting me?
- That could be my act.

- If I never woke up.
- Waking up is a disappointment. That last cold fuck. All automatic.
- What can you do about it?
- I can help it along.
- It's getting late.
- Are you warm?
- Are you wet?
- Anyone will do. Because the comedown is going to be worse than the come on.
- I used to think about Thea all the time.
- You don't now.
- You cured me. You could help me along. But then it would be something else. You will never be the Restless girl. You're always pointing to something outside of here. Something without this place. Sex. Beauty. Wealth. They have this independence for you. In fact, it's all part of your contingency. Ivy and her whip.
- I don't have a whip.
- In your mind, you do!

## **FACETS**

I needed to balance out Ivy with more input from Maria. I again saw her at the grocery store. She had on a new coat, a fake fur and these sparkling earrings.

- You've changed.
- I'm not the same person.
- I didn't know that you like crossword puzzles.
- I didn't know that you like doughnuts.
- I don't. I just like to play with them.
- You're going to get us both kicked out of here.
- It won't be my first time.

Ivy had opened the door to the Facets of Desire. Nothing would satisfy me except the implied story. My desire expressed itself as a unity among these facets. I wouldn't be able to engage any single element of the sequence without involving the whole chain. I would have to submit to the story and the completion of the rest of the order.

- You won't be happy with Thea. You'll just get her and want someone else.
- Thea is gone as far as I know.
- If I touch your arm, what do you feel.
- Your touch.
- Nothing more.
- Just a bit of a tingle.
- Does that make you a little excited.
- It feels a little creepy.
- And if you felt a little creepy all over.

- What if I touched you in other places.
- I'm not really expecting anything like that.
- You wouldn't mind if I did?
- Do whatever you have to do?
- It wouldn't please you.
- Not unless it pleased you.

This was all part of a ritual. A test. To see how involved I would be in her experiment.

- What gets you excited?
- That moment, that flavor. The spark.
- I don't do it for you. Am I not enough for you?

But I realized that the facets didn't work that way. Nothing in the night worked that way. I needed to surrender myself to that feeling.

- I could give in to you, but that would only increase my desire.
- You are a monster of your own fantasies.
- Don't you want to do something that you need to be punished for. If you can't

understand my pleasures, you will submit to my pain.

I remembered that breathless feeling when I watched Doria dance. This was the call that would eventually be answered by Thea. An energy moving too fast for me to even catch up.

- You missed your chance the first time. And now you're trying to make it up.
- Through no help of yours.

-Hardly. Doesn't it turn you on staring at my legs. Don't you want to run your fingers along my panties. To press you hand against them and feel my moist heat.

Her body shook as she let the beat pass over her.

- It could be you doing this to me.
- What made you like this?
- I'm exactly how you want me to be.
- Down deep, this makes you feel like shit.
- I've learned to like what I do.
- There's got to be another way out of this.
- You like this.

I was melting under her charms. She knew how to taunt and tease until all resistance broke down.

- Do you want to stay with me?
- Accept what I'm giving you for now.

She balanced on one heel as she wheeled herself around. Then she threw both hands in the air. It was her style. And I was becoming more affected by it all.

- I'm still not enough for you.
- It's not your fault. It's like a system. It's part of my biology.

But I knew how I was already transforming my biology. Even her influence was overtaking me now. I would start to expect this tight rope walk on the edge.

- I want you to put your hands on my neck.
- Why?
- I want you to choke me. Don't stop until I tell you to.

I didn't like this game. But she played it with such nonchalance that it was natural.

–Take my picture.

I set up the camera to take the shot.

–This is grotesque.

She laughed.

–You don't know what I've put myself through.

–What do you mean by this?

–I've come much closer. That's what attracts you about me.

Was Thea engaged by this same kind of bizarre activity?

–Restless is all about this. Whether it's real or all part of a game. What do you think this is really about? Games of life and death. This is their pleasure. I'm just the only honest person here.

I wanted to know what made Ivy tick. Surely this fascination for the outre was not sufficient to keep her alive. Why did she find enjoyment in such a painful experience?

–I'm no different than the rest of Restless.

I didn't want to admit to this predicament.

–You need to find a way to break out of the imprisonment of life.

Her antics at Go Wild were raised to new heights at Restless.

–You want to see what I can do. To see what is really inside. Thea, Courtney, we're all the same.

She moved her panties down to show more skin.

–You'd like to put your tongue there.

–And if I did.

–I'd just have to slap you.

–Are you trying to make me devoted to frustration. It really doesn't work. That's a trick for guys with money.

–You like my body. If I wore a tight swimming suit.

–You're already in a bra and panties.

Something about her eyes now enticed me. She was seeing way beyond what was real for us here and now. That was part of her visionary character. Her emaciated frame and gaunt features were all an echo of her calling.

–What we promise in our dances at Go Wild, we always deliver. That is what makes us so appealing. We know what we have and what it's worth.

She painted the picture of a hell that she had escaped. And she enticed with the appeals of a hell that she was creating.

–This isn't really Restless.

–Restless is what we make it.

–But that's the philosophy of Jean-Luc.

–This is always a sport for a partner. You don't have a real partner if you can't test your limits. Do you want to touch my breasts.

–I don't want to get too deep into this experimentation. I want something more permanent. When I start expecting you, you'll just head back to your tumble boys.

–The darkness frightens us because we can't control it. So we just give in. That only

makes it seem exciting. To go out in search of a guy, a great lover. And just bringing him back to my place and letting him fuck my brains out,

–How do you know?

–The way that he touches me. His dirty talk. You’re just too afraid to let me know how you feel.

I looked at her smooth back. My hand ran its way along it.

–I didn’t say that you could touch it.

–I’m just looking.

–I’m comfortable with my nakedness. That’s what guys like about me. I thrive in the spotlight. Not like these hot house flowers who pretend that they’re so shy. Watch out for those girls. They’ll end up with one of your friends when your back is turned.

She wasn’t helping me understand my desire.

–You know what it’s like as she turns her back on you, and your eyes are traveling up her smooth legs. Then she turns back and gives you a big smile.

–Can you be tender?

–You’ve got a mean streak.

This big pouting smile. Sylvia.

–Do you think ‘I’m cute.

I was remembering another time, another story.

–Don’t you hate walking back to your place by yourself. Would you love some hot thing in a plaid skirt following you back to you place?

–Would that be enough for me after all your teasing?

–I could use my hands on you.

–What are you really going to give of yourself?

–You find this entertaining?

–Not really. I’m just playing along.

–You love her perfume. Would love her waking next to you.

–The paradise.

–Take Maria then.

–She’s accustomed to a more leisured life. That’s what drew her to the Cube. The hope. There is none at Restless. That is why you are starting to fit in.

–Yeah, but I want my payoff.

–Clean yourself up, and it could be permanent.

–The doctor who’s going to pull me out of Go Wild and take me home for good.

–When you first come here, you can get just about any desire satisfied. Once they let you in the inner circle, it’s all yours. If you want to be with two other girls. If you want a cute guy for the night. If you want to take home a couple and have mind blowing sex. After a while participating starts to seem like something boring. You want to plan out the scenes. You want to get people to do things for you. You want to watch. Not in a salacious way. In a way to stay above it all as if none of this was ever happening. You’re numb to it all.

–But you still feel this need to get off.

–I want expose the needs of others. The perversions that they prefer to hide from polite

society. To make them commit themselves and just gloat.

–And then you’ll make peace with them and just give.

## THE BODY ELECTRIC

All of Ivy’s indoctrination was affecting how I thought about myself. My former pleasures didn’t seem sufficient. The idea of the facets was the perfect complement to Ivy’s method. I was led through stations of agony. Taunting became outright jeering. Spitting turned into sharp blows. I felt the lashings. I was crushed by the more intimate suffering. I could feel my flesh burn. I was corrupt through and through and needed this devotion to cleanse me.

My physical routines locked me into a weighty lethargy. I couldn’t pull myself out of the swamp. I was sinking deeper and deeper. Only my hands were visible.

Thank you, Ivy.

My dreams were enlivened by the encounter. My appetite returned. Sweets were intoxicating. I floated on the high. My skin glowed and tingled.

**The change over a protracted period of time: I rotated in space, but I continued to keep my balance.**

All in all I knew where Ivy’s track was leading me. It was the myth of the perfect haircut. I realize that she had it. It was disheveled, but it fell in just the right way. Her hairdresser knew the art. And Ivy practiced it so well. From that everything else followed.

Tommy was practicing the facets. What he couldn’t get from Thea, he hoped to find in Courtney. What if Courtney could have held his interest forever. But she would be losing interest in him. She was an artist. Could he be the same?

The art was in the body. That was part of the new lesson. Before art needed a separate medium. It negotiated between humans and space, between art and audience. For the Cube, the relationship had changed. But the Cube only explored this partially. Art devotee commented on everyday life. With Restless, there was no longer the need to a reference to the outside world.

–We have achieved a new synthesis between form and substance.

Could Ivy step into this void and be the perfect representative of this new artistic economy?

–That would mean giving too much of my self. My style is random.

Psychology had given her new clues into form. Her art would include a more fluid representation of space. From her earlier fascination with blocked out shapes, her new imagination was magical.

–It’s not the arm or the torso by itself. Note the line that moves from one to the other. But even more brilliantly, there is the reply heading back in the other direction. Like the flow of blood in the circulatory system.

Her science now captured something more expansive than the images of suffering. It was all a set up to get perspective. She embraced the mystical presence that had been released from her ritual.

–This is your body electric. It is sexual. But it is also freed from the limits of the physical body. It is extended infinitely in all directions.

–That makes no sense.

–Stretch out you arms. You feel where you stop. But move along with the stretching, and you can feel your movement extend further and further outward. Isn't that really exciting?

She was gradually making way for my body electric. Just like a current flowing back and forth, I felt the movement head back towards the source and then out to the extremities.

–You have already known this feeling in dance. But you can sense it in your gestures, in what you say. You both affirm and negate what you are saying at the same time.

I understood. I was becoming a psychic cosmonaut. She was my guide. I was projecting inside myself to reach outside of myself. The geometry was my relaxation.

Everyone moved toward that same energy field, the myth of the hair cut. But the form was exclusive. It only allowed for a limited focus. As I moved close to Ivy, it put off all her other devotees. I also served to compete with the source of the field. If Ivy was to hold my interest, she would have to cast me off. Only if I returned would she let me remain in her circle. That would mean that my body had crossed over.

–That was why I have been so attracted to the notions of torture and suffering. I do not embrace their violence. I just like their ability to get you directly in touch with the soul. You have to short-circuit your rational defenses.

I found her philosophy totalitarian. But I welcomed our exchange.

## **TINA'S VERSION OF SUCCESS**

Tina offered me the one element that I lacked in my dialogues with Ivy. What had motivate Ivy to embrace pain as liberating. The very thing that would usually cause us to reject an experience was the very element that attracted Ivy.

–You've been coming here since it opened. I remember you from the Cube. It was about the time that I first started coming out. I lived with this guy. I had to sneak out to come here. Wait until he was asleep. He was abusive. I don't know why I stayed with him. He called me a cunt. Said that I was so useless that no one would want me. It was a privilege for me that he cared.

>>He reminded me of the shit that I used to put up with at home. At first, my dad was cool with me. But when I got older and started staying out with friends, things seemed to change. There was almost a sexual tension. The things that he said to me. Or what he would say about the guys that I hung out with. He'd get into detail about sex. It encouraged me to take chances with the guys. At least, they made me feel that there was a world out there that had nothing to do with him.

>>Things got riskier with me. Different partners. A lot of rough shit. I didn't care. It gave me a sense of independence. When I was seventeen, I ran away from home and went to live with this guy. He let me stay there, but he would hit me for no reason. Slap me. Or if I was bad in his eyes, he'd hit me with his fists. I thought that I was tough. I used to hit him back. I was stupid. It seemed to make his treatment of me OK.

Once she had told me her history, I thought that I had the needed explanation. She then

started a tale that seemed a lot closer to Ivy's

–Do you like theater?

–I don't know.

–Have you ever watched a couple having sex?

–Not intentionally. I saw someone going at it in a car.

–Did it give you a rush?

–I didn't spend that much time looking.

–I was like you. But one day, I watched a couple make love outside my window. I was on the third floor. They were in a car by a streetlight. As I watched, I noticed what they were doing. They couldn't see me, but I thought that I had an opportunity. I started to touch myself. It wasn't what I was seeing. It was more just the emotion that I associated with it. I'm not really a voyeur. But I got touched by their sense of abandon.

>>It became almost like a profession. I found a couple and asked them if they would mind if I looked in on them. Later on, I found guys who would pay me to watch them with a girl. I'd even agree to touch myself. I wasn't a prostitute. I never, never let them touch me. But I was all about watching.

>>It became an addiction. I could no longer have straight sex. I needed to be watching someone. Have someone else in there to help me out. Where I first offered just to come along or to pay the couples, now I needed to get the money for myself. It was just sick. I couldn't stop.

>>I learned how I could get more. How I could make them think that I would join in. Face it! I have a great body. They knew it. I didn't want to be a stripper. And I wouldn't even take off all my clothes. Just enough. I know that it got them off.

>>One time, I had this couple. I remember how they struggled. And the girl was saying honey this and honey that just to keep him hard. I think that is why it fascinated me. I made enough money. I was living on my own. But I had no respect for myself. I had to blend in a crowd, and then I would beg for money to do what I did. It was perverse. I should have just been a stripper.

>>From that point on, men disgusted me. Some would humiliate their girls so that I would come along. The girl would be embarrassed, but it gave the guy a dick rush to make it happen in his own way.

>>Girls accepted it. Some thought it was cool. But it really got to be a drag. There was nothing in it for me except the money.

The man was only a go between for her contact with other women. She wasn't so much attracted to them. She saw the women as herself. They gave her the best chance to overcome the fears that she had. She could liberate herself from these dominant men.

–You're not going to hurt me anymore.

She revised her life. She left the abusive lover. She wanted the money and started stripping.

–It wasn't an end in itself. I really didn't like the men. And I didn't like the women either.

Restless was fascinating for her. It gave the chance for everyone to express their individuality. They weren't tied to the defined sex roles that she had always been used to.

–A girl can abandon her boyfriend here and go off with a girl that she meets here.



I wondered if she wouldn't be more at home at Jean-Luc's. She was entering and leaving through the revolving door that motivated Restless. Could she understand the theme playing underneath the easy sport.

–I'm not going to hang around here. I can act. I'm taking singing lessons. I have things to show the world. I'm going to leave here and not come back.

### **TINA MAKES A SCENE**

Tina had started to question her role in a deeper way than Ivy. Ivy liked the daring appeal other women. But she was still locked into the expectation that only a man could complete her. For all her radical independence, she still hadn't escaped the model of her parents. Tina's step had to be more far out since she rejected the world of her parents.

I wanted Tina to direct a scene in which she applied her new preferences.

–I don't think that I have as much attraction for bondage as Ivy. I've seen too much of that already. But I do like the notion of voyeur.

–Isn't the voyeur forced to assume the desires of the performers.

–Unless she hands them a script. That, no doubt, is my function.

–What can you ask for that you haven't seen.

–Real tenderness.

–You still want performance. Any emotion is going to be exaggerated for the sake of the performance.

–Precisely.

–That was Ivy's argument. The exaggeration invites the opposite.

–I think she wanted that resolution.

–It created something explosive. It gave her the chance to make the scene happen.

I love the dynamic that she suggested. It was one of Ivy's scenes with clearer motivation.

–That's why you're going to cross over into the same territory. You won't be able to contain yourself when you realize that the man is completely at your disposal.

We both were noticing a flaw in her approach. Again she seemed to merge with Ivy. But there were apparent differences. Even her image seemed more hard-edged. Ivy aspired after a vampiric glamor. In the end, Tina affected a little hard-edged dominatrix.

–I guess that I really can't help how I feel.

She didn't want to play house to a guy's aggressive whims. She was breaking out of her shell.

### **TINA GOES FOR BROKE**

She knew that her time at Restless was short-lived. If she had frequented Jean-Luc's she would have given in to the impulses that controlled Ivy. At Restless, she could step back from her dominant role and lose herself in the night. She didn't want to commit herself to the sex industry. She had big plans for herself.

Taller than Courtney, she would hardly play the little darling to the scene. In the games, she saw all the same combinations that had worked her interaction with men. Even potential

female lovers could be just as unforgiving.

–Thea is no ideal!

Perhaps, she welcomed the closing of the Cube.

–I loved the Cube. There's more self-hatred at Restless. But it's real. There were artificial manners at the Cube.

Despite her attraction to role-playing, she had none of the casual indifference of a Thea or a Courtney.

–There was this guy who I cared for. He liked me a lot. This was just after I moved out from that terrible guy. And Steve helped me out in all kinds of ways. It wasn't just self interest or the idea that he was going to get something from me. I did nurture his love. I hate to say that was it. But it was. I gave him just enough to keep expecting that something more was going to happen. And in my heart I wanted it to. But I could take the glare of real concern. Down deep, he pissed me off. I didn't realize but I was doing things that really fucked him up. Pulling him really close, and then pushing him away.

>>I started to feel that he was following me around. That he was spying on me. When I could get away from him, I felt this strange sense of relief. There was this guy wit money. Sort of cute. I know that he wanted to fuck me. I like the game. It seemed like something that I was used to. I went out with him a few times. Even stood Steve up on an occasion or two. Steve didn't question me. He just went along. In some ways, I made it his fault.

>>Steve found out that I slept with this guy. I did. I had been drinking. And it seemed like a kick at the time. But after that I felt so guilty about it. And I don't know how Steve found out. I was careful. Maybe I just blurted it out. Or purposely said something out of place. Something that I knew would make its mark.

>>Steve was my witness, and he served perfectly. I told him that the guy with money had forced himself on me. I had let it happen. I really didn't want t to happen. And I started to believe my story about being forced. Of course, I still saw the guy a few times after that. We had sex. But I told myself that I didn't like it. It seemed to make up for being forced. As if I was saying that I know you forced me, but since I didn't make a big deal about it, and fucked you again, think nothing of it.

>>And I kept Steve at a distance. I kept this up until some new guy offered to take me out. Just when I thought that I was going to lose Steve, I got real close. I made all these silly promises that we both knew that I was going to break.

>>All of that was a result of being with that abusive lover. It let me off the hook. I really hate myself for being like that. But it let me think that everything that I did was just OK. After all it was my life.

Tina had a story. It was a warning. It was also a game for her. I got caught up in it. It became my entertainment. I felt as if she had planned it that way. Maybe she had! There had been no Steve. I was Steve for that conversation. It was narrative stripping. She did it for my benefit. I paid her emotionally with my interest. I let it become my story. It brought me even closer to her. Closer than I had been with Ivy.

She showed herself. How she could care. How she could make someone else care. And I got involved just by listening. Nothing more.

The point of the story was to humiliate me. To humiliate Steven. It showed the degree that any guy would go to rewrite the events to suit his purpose. He would accommodate any excuse. In the end, it would show her venality not his. That was what he liked. She would return the prodigal on her knees or face an eternity of damnation in her own eyes. She would always feel like a whore. He had humiliated himself so that he could destroy her. Morality was just this pose to mock her.

Behind this urge was something else on her part. It was the mystery that had no explanation in Ivy. Ivy loved these scenes of humiliation. But she wouldn't expect the same humiliation of herself. She needed to stay a dominatrix. She wouldn't let her victims become hostage negotiators. Her personal life was off limits. Instead, she let clients invent Cinderella stories gone wrong.

Tina was further out there. She wanted the pose to remind people of her story. It seemed to remind her of her vulnerability. If her Dad didn't seem violent enough in the first telling, she'd add details that made him more the monster. She was a stylist, a fiction creator. And her past was only too willing to oblige. She took old accounts and revised them to benefit this need for more woe. She imagined that she had repressed so much. And she had. Her act had been an attempt to cover up the old wounds. And if she was going to be successful, she had to gloss over these wounds, not let the cuts show so deep.

–Was this *your* attraction to pain?

I almost wanted to deny Ivy. That there was just one entity with two forms. But Ivy had dyed dark hair and Tina's was dyed blonde. I also felt that I was adjusting both stories to suit my purpose. It did serve my purpose to illustrate the variety that we offered at Restless. Entertainers that would not survive the final cut, but who made the nightly fare bearable. If Ivy was out working, if she was seeking more dangerous pursuits at Jean-Luc's, then Tina could step in her place. She put together the script so that we could eventually cast the perfect girl for this local. Or the perfect locale for the girl reading this script.

–You don't really fit Restless.

They also made more sense of Courtney and Thea. Courtney and Thea didn't have performances. Relatively, they seemed like automatons. But Tina wanted to take everything back to her story. She acted the way that she did to get an explanation. This required a need for order. She ended up planning her scenes. Even if her dreams were an illusion, her present was full of just that observance that made her the most ideal screen writer.

Was Tina making me obsolete? Any guy could be her Steve. She could combine the Dad role and the Steve role into her super-persecutor. I would let Courtney and Thea have that kind of psychology. If there were psychologies, they conflicted. A story about Indiana contrasted with another from Iowa. Both mutually exclusive. Both attributed to Thea.

But no real psychological root in her present. She was just a child of the light. If she had a story, it would have slowed down her couplings and uncoupling. It would have made her acquisitive where she was self-sufficient. Her only lack was the fire and her apparent disappearance.

Restless was starting to distinguish itself in a way that the Cube never could. The Imperial Set could no longer dominate the fiction. It wasn't about characters serving the Imperial

Set so they could touch the night. The night made itself known to everyone. Would this doom the Imperial Set? Not as long as they acted out the conflict in a way that appealed to everyone. They had learned their craft at the Cube. They were supreme there because they lacked competition. At Restless, they realized that they were their own worst enemy. The pose gave way to its precedent underpinning, the ideology. Billy could only remain as King as long as the Count spread the mirth. Even Infra was part of this new phrasing.

–What’s Billy up to tonight?

Someone had to ask, or people would forget the reason why everyone came to Restless. The Imperial Set would have to continue their strategy. They would have to occupy the right places on the dance floor. Restless had still been designed with them in mind.

–Do you ever feel like we’re doomed?

–Not really.

–But we don’t have a star to fill the night.

–But that is what is so brilliant about this place. There’s always a star for the night.

Through it all we’re the constant. We’ve franchised out our method. Now everyone wants a part of it.

Ivy had given away to Tina. Maria was only a reflection. She could not take the plunge. Thea and Courtney were no shows. EA was only a memory from another time, another place. I recognized that the facets were just a trick of Restless. It kept us all attentive for the least change. It had us wedded to the night.

The Imperial Set still worked their phone lists.

–Are you going to Restless tonight?

–I’m going to an art opening. But I’ll be at Restless afterwards.

We no longer had to watch the clock at our other engagements. Restless was always waiting for us. On occasion, the pressure became worse. The time constraint had dissipated. But now events had to really pique our interest or we would be off on our usual trek to Restless. On those nights when we couldn’t get motivated, we’d blow off all other plans until it was late enough to head down to Restless.

–I think that our commitment is getting worse than a stripper’s

–Ivy would be proud.

Restless provoked a realization that would lie dormant, too deep for words. You couldn’t hold still to figure it out.

–We’re getting past and present reversed.

–What do you mean.

–We try to just go crazy, get so far out of our heads so that it will have a lasting effect on us. So that we can break from our mundane lives. But we eventually have to deny that any of this happened. It won’t be real for us in the future. Sure, we’ll have some memories, but we’ll deny the hold that this place had on us all. We’ll even have to deny our friends. They’ll just remind us how fucked up we were. Then there will be these guys who stood on the sidelines and tried to be even-handed about it all. We’ll think even less of them. Not only were they not part of our present, but they won’t be part of our past. If we’re going to deny our fuck buddies, we’ll totally deny their eunuch accomplices.

–Amen!

How valuable a witness was I to their intrigues. I'd catch bits of the conversations. But I couldn't link them with a face. They'd be off scheming while I was trying to enhance my EA. We were heading down different paths.

–This isn't our story. It has nothing to do with us.

–If it's important, it will all emerge in time.

The haircut myth would give way to the manifest illusion.

–That makes no sense.

–It makes all the sense in the world. It's the spirituality that informs the sensuality.

–Really.

–It's the genius in the bottle. A presence just squirming around in there.

That was the revelation behind my EA. What held the attractions together.

–If there is one idea behind it all, *we* have to figure it out. We have to feel it ourselves.

You can't tell us what it is. That's your problem. You're so good at putting together stories, and we're all tongue-tied, that you just end up putting words in our mouths. And we need something to say. So we repeat what you tell us. But it's not really us.

–I agree. That's why I lent you the idea of manifest illusion.

–What does it have to do with the haircut myth?

–Thea gets a new do, and we all turn our heads. Her successors walk in the door, and our eyes are trained on them. But it's not really them. It's their style. And what motivates the style in the most intense way—the haircut—the haircut myth.

–But the girls are real.

–That's the whole point. It doesn't even have to be a girl. It could be a guy. It could be Billy and his new haircut. Anything to get our attention just long enough.

–Long enough for what?

–For the illusion to take hold. For the illusion to become manifest.

–Manifest what?

–The idea behind it. Not just the haircut, but the attraction. And not just the attraction.

It's the night. All the nights. Mother night.

–It's a little too creepy for me. Like reincarnation or something.

–Exactly. The spirit of Restless inheres.

–What?

–We're all haunted.

–I heard people say that about the Cube.

–Only it's more so now.

–Courtney's ghost. We're haunted by Courtney's ghost.

–This is more like a general spirit.

–If it's a general spirit, how can we ever know, how does it ever make itself manifest.

–That's all part of the illusion. It sucks up the subject and the observer.

–It fucks with he who gives and he who receives.

–It's orgiastic.

The organic image of the Cube had been replaced by Restless. While this parasite ultimately fed off of Thea, what was the Restless's version of the same.

- That's what we're trying to figure out. We're like psychic detectives.
- That sounds pretty neat. Do we get paid?
- There is a pay off.

I was driving to the store. An image of a reclining woman looked down on me from a billboard. She seemed all comfy on her bed. She was dressed in a long white nightie. Passion was the farthest thing from her mind.

I wanted her to settle a dispute for me. I held at the intersection waiting for her to come alive for me.

- What do you want?
- Are you one of my facets?
- What's a facet?
- An aspect of my desire. Something that makes sense out of my life.
- It makes no sense to me.
- How did you make it up on that billboard. I thought that you were a model for human contact. You're showing us how we can enjoy ourselves.

I needed to get back to my place. She was never going to offer me what I needed to know. Just one thing could break the cycle that was closing in on me. Could I walk out of my apartment now that I locked myself in.

-I didn't think that you'd come back here with me. I mean your answers seemed pretty flimsy when you looked down on me from that billboard.

- You were asking the wrong questions.
- What is a right question?
- That is part of the lesson that I need to teach you.
- How do you teach it, by pressure, by pain?
- By osmosis.
- Is this like oral sex?
- I'm a model for the new world; there will be no physical contact.
- Can you even have physical contact?
- Only with equally screened applicants like myself. Do you think that you could make the cut yourself.

- I barely have a job myself. I thought that you could help me figure out my dilemma.
- You had the confidence to leave the house and meet me this morning.
- I'm even starting to doubt that contact. Besides, you're just a girl on a billboard.
- But I needed to be a girl first before I became an image.
- Is this deep philosophy?
- About as deep as your blow job.
- That really doesn't seem engaging enough for me.
- Do you have any mouth wash?
- I think that there's some in the bathroom.
- Small bathroom.

–Is that like a small dick?

–Something like that.

–OK, now that you’re here you can help me figure out where to start. I have my music career with The Dissect. And I’m looking for Courtney’s body. She supposedly died in the fire. And Thea hasn’t been seen. I need a new subject for my novel.

–You write too. I’m working on a romance novel. My heroine is stuck in a snow storm.

–I didn’t bring you here to hear about your novel.

–This is all that I can do to help.

–I do need your help

–There is no help. I can’t give you money for your shit. It’s just something that you need to do on your own.

–Is that stupid self-reliance theory what got you the job modeling. I thought you were all about freedom.

–I’m free on my off days. It’s you who’s got it all mixed up. You’re allowed to enjoy yourself because you’ve been working.

–I just want my life to keep going on like it always has.

–But you said that you were mixed up. That you needed help.

–We could work together at this. Pool our resources. You could tell me things about your writing, and I could help you with yours.

–I’m really pretty useless.

–You have body. I could pretend.

–We want different things.

–You don’t want to get paid for sex.

–No. But I am used to a certain lifestyle. Running water. And no bugs.

–It is getting pretty nasty around here. Do you want to go get something to eat.

–I have a shoot that I have to go to. I thought that you had a script for me. That you were a producer with money. If anything turns up, give me a call.

–I hate to have it end like this.

–I’d give you a hand job, but I don’t think that you could afford it.

–Why do you keep degrading me?

–Just let me touch you, and I’ll make you feel better.

–You said that you wanted more than I could give.

–Exactly. You don’t give of your soul. That’s why you always need money.

## **THE ENCINO KID AND DOLORES**

She was working in an insurance claims office. He was involved in a minor traffic accident. There had been some problem with the signature on the forms, and they needed him to go in.

–I know you’re at fault. But we’ll get you off.

He walked in to the office. The air conditioning didn’t work too well. There were fans on the desks. They had computers. But there were piles of papers everywhere—a real mess.

The receptionist point him over to her desk.

–I’ be been expecting you.

She started to go through a pile next to her computer.

–I can’t find the forms. Come into the office over here. I’ve got to close the door just to find things.

She started sifting through more papers.

–They’re always so slow in getting this stuff on the computer.

He’d seen her before. He liked being in here with her. He liked looking at her.

He let himself stare. The blood started to rush to his head. He gave in to the fantasy. She was playing with the strap of her high heels.

–You like?

–What?

–I just got them waxed. Go ahead and feel them. They’re really smooth.

She wasn’t wearing hose. He got a charge rubbing his hands up her calves. As he moved up the thighs, he hesitated.

–Don’t be afraid. I’m not going to bite. It’s just us two in here.

–Aren’t you married.

–That shouldn’t stop you. My husband’s a real prick.

–But you’re married.

–You’re not.

–Isn’t your name Dolores?

She smiled through her glaze of bright red lipstick. Her make up had this vintage quality. Like she was done up for a movie set.

–I found it.

They both looked into each other’s eyes.

–I wish that everything was this easy to find.

She held up the paper as she led him back to her desk in the main room.

–I’m going to have no trouble taking care of this. You won’t even have to go to court. I won’t need to see you again, will I?

He looked at her and then looked away.

–It was a good thing that neither of you called the cops. It will just go down that it happened on private property. His company will have to pay his claim. Sloppy of him. You’ll get no points and no charge. You told me that you were going to get your car fixed on your own. It will be all perfect.

–This isn’t illegal or anything.

–Standard procedure.

He had left his briefcase in the inner office. He had totally forgotten about it. She called him, and he said that he’d be back before closing.

–You saved my life.

–The briefcase?

–The car too. Let me make it up to you.

–I’ve got to get home.



–I can get you a drink.

–I’ve got a long drive.

–Come on. You deserve it.

She didn’t take much coaxing. He could still remember her smooth legs.

Around 7:30, she was still nursing a martini.

–I thought that you had to head home.

–I don’t mind if he has to wait for once. I’ll tell him that I had to stay late.

–Will he believe you.

–He has loads of money. But he makes me work. He thinks that it’s good for my character.

–Why don’t you leave him?

–I told you he has money.

–You’ve got a job.

–I’ve got expensive tastes. You could never take care of me.

–I know how to satisfy a woman.

–You have dirty mind.

–I just do what’s got to be done.

–And who picks up the tab after you’ve finished your mischief.

–I can pay my own way.

–Great. But I’m looking for someone who can pay my way as well.

–I told you that I can satisfy a woman.

–What are you going to tell me? That you’ll go down on me all night long. How long can you stay hard?

–You said that I had a dirty mind.

–I know how to get what I want.

–And that’s enough.

–I told you that I wanted to be taken care of.

–I’ve got a tongue.

–You can let it wag. I’m looking for a rich lover. I’m tired of all these cheap ass hustlers.

–Good sex is worth something.

–You should be paying me.

–Let’s just call it even.

–Let’s just call it and pick it up another night.

She finished the martini and started to walk to the car. She wasn’t drunk, but there was a little bit of a wobble. He found her sexy. He reached over to touch her on the ass. She turned around and slapped him.

–I didn’t ask for that.

–Either did I.

–I’m married. And I have to go. You’ve had your drink and enough ammo for a thousand fantasies.

–I haven’t seen you naked.

–You’ve been undressing me all night. What more is there to see?

–I want to be inside you.  
 –I'm not going to respond if you keep talking so graphically.  
 –I can take care of you.  
 –How. You could barely afford the drinks. That place is a dive. What if I wanted you to take me somewhere nice.  
 –I can do nice.  
 –For how long. I'd end up picking up the check for both of us.  
 –Do you like your life?  
 –I get by. I'm a grown woman. I have class. I'm not going to give hummers in the toilet if that's what you're looking for.  
 –I'd only get into that if I thought there was something more going on.  
 –Why don't you make it easy on yourself. Just think it, and you can let yourself get away with pretty much anything.  
 –What haven't we said to each other?  
 –We haven't talk about our dreams. What we really care about.  
 –From the moment that you let me rub your legs, you were telling me what you wanted.  
 –OK, we'll get a hotel room. You can give me a massage, and then give me some oral.  
 How about that?  
 He nodded.  
 –You're a real piece of work. I've already got a stiff at home.  
 –Dead men tell no tales.  
 –Either do the live one that I've seen. It's getting late, and hubby wants to eat.  
 –So do I.  
 –I'm getting wet just listening to you. But you needed to make your move hours ago. Your bedside manner seem pretty minimal, and you don't seem to have the endurance to go another round.  
 –What do you want from me?  
 –Well. I'm not looking for someone who's going to force me to do something.  
 –I admit it. I suck at this.  
 –At least we're getting somewhere. I'm already cold. You'll have to pick up the trail another time. Meet me for lunch.  
 He had rehearsed what he was going to say at lunch. But he seemed tongue-tied when they got together. She gave him a peck on the cheek. He could feel her warmth as she came close to him. She had on a slit skirt and white pumps. She knew how to work it for him. Her blonde hair seemed a little stiff in its perm. But its brassiness put him off just enough to turn him on. He could taste her lips before they ate a bite. Their conversation seemed uninteresting to him.  
 –You want to go somewhere.  
 –What?  
 –I told them to cover me at the office. I've been doing a lot of extra work.  
 –We could go for a walk in the park.  
 –I'm not going to get naked in the park.  
 He almost choked on a piece of salmon. His reply was almost sheepish.

- We could get a room.
- You're not good at this.
- You are.
- I really don't like sneaking around. But I do what I have to do.

The room had cheap lighting. He hated the smell. The overall effect. It made it all seem tawdry. He wanted something more.

- I don't want to seem like a jerk.
- You are a jerk. That's what I liked about you. You're led around by your dick.

He pushed her against the wall. She knocked him to the bed, He got up and grabbed her. They embraced without doing anything else for a few minutes. He looked down at her legs, the slit skirt. Again she wasn't wearing any hose. He had traveled up those legs many times in his mind. This time there was nothing to hold him back.

- You know how to let a girl know that it's real.
- What about your husband.

She reached under his pants and held him until he became hard in her hand.

- I'm turning you on.

She kissed him deep. He almost gagged from her shoving his tongue down his throat. He pushed her against the couch and was humping her before they had taken off anything.

- Let me take off my panties.
- I'm not ready yet.
- I want you to go down on me.

Again it seemed too abrupt. It took a while for him to be comfortable with her. It had been a while in coming and he was now caught up in the excitement.

- I don't want you to love me. Just get me off.
- He laughed.

His anticipation had been too much. He enjoyed himself. But there was something missing.

- You're not disappointed.
- They lay on the bed naked, together.
- I guess that I just hate my life.
- I can second that. Sex isn't enough. I need to change my dreams.

- We both do. I'm going nowhere. I was sure glad that you got me out of that accident.

After a while, their rhythm started to click. They'd meet at lunch, or after work. It made everything else in their lives seem positively mediocre. He couldn't make plans. She was already married. But this was the main thing in his life.

- I want to meet you at your place for once.
- It would be too dangerous.
- That makes it even better. Give me a time and a place.
- You can't bring your car.

They had a security gate. He got a kick out of hiding in the back of her car. No one was in the house. She turned off the security alarm. It was a big place.

- I want to fuck you in the tube.

She laughed. She was getting aroused thinking about. They'd been there for a few hours.

–Shouldn't you get back to work?

–I'm not going back today.

They were reclining in the tub.

–Do you hear something.

–No.

–Listen.

–Shit, he's home. You're going to have to hide in the closet.

Her husband came home to find Dolores in the tub.

–Mind if I join you.

–I'll be out in a second.

–When I saw you here in the afternoon, I thought that I was going to catch you with some guy.

She laughed.

–Get out of the tub, and I'll show you how much I miss you.

They didn't seem to have the distance that she complained about. He made love to her while the Kid hid in the closet. He could see them going at it on the bed.

He had to wait for dark before he could leave. He hope that she hadn't turned on the alarm as he hopped the fence.

–You didn't seem to get on so terribly with him.

–I did it to save your ass. We were lucky that he didn't kill us both.

–It was a trip.

–It was a fucking stupid idea. I'm not going to do anything like that again.

–Are you sure that you don't love him. I had my doubts.

–It was mechanical.

–I almost got off watching you from the closet. So if that was mechanical, I don't know what real is.

–You're being too analytical. Enjoy it for what it is.

–I'm trying.

–I hate his guts. I wish that you didn't have to witness that. It's the first time that we've even been together in a while.

–You could just leave him.

–And try to live on my insurance claims salary. Who are you kidding?

–I'm kidding you. And I'm kidding myself. You're just stringing me along.

–Don't you like being with me.

–That's the point. I love it more than ever. That's why I can't stand you being with the fuck. You ought to know as much.

–I'd do something if I could. If we could.

He liked that sense of co-conspiracy. The husband didn't seem evil enough to bother. But the Kid wished that he would just go away.

He deliberately begged off their next rendez-vous. He wanted this more than ever. But what was he getting in to. He pained to think about where his life was going. He had worked in an auto parts shop. But that wasn't him. Why had he even come out to LA. Even Vegas was

more of connect for him. This was dead end city. But he was playing the gig like all the other pump jockeys. And he had a dream to ride

–Are you still going to meet me?

–Of course, I am. I’ve just been hating my life.

–I hate mine too. That’s why you’re the one thing that I have to look forward to.

–I see you after work. I don’t have the flexibility that you do at lunch.

They met later than usual. The sun was setting, but she still wore sun glasses.

–Is something wrong?

–Not really.

–You’re not even looking at me. And you’re mumbling.

He turned on the light by the bed. She turned it off. He was getting mad.

–Look at me goddam it.

–I’m looking.

She was staring into his eyes behind her sun glasses. She took them off to reveal bruises.

He touched them gently. They both winced.

–What the fuck?

–He found out.

–How? You told him.

–I never said anything of the kind. He went nuts. He said that he wanted a divorce. That I needed to stop seeing you. That I couldn’t go out on my own anymore. That he’d meet me after work everyday.

–So where is he?

–He had to leave town.

–You have to leave him.

–I need the money.

–I can help you out.

–With what? You don’t have a pot to piss in.

–We can leave here. Go somewhere that the cost of living is cheaper than this.

–And where will we work?

–You can stay in the insurance business. You can get a good recommendation.

–I’ve got to get out of that hole.

–Do it for us.

–If that’s what us is, there is no us.

–You’re in insurance. What’s your policy on him.

–You saw him the other night. He’s not going to die soon.

–He could have an accident.

–Don’t say that. I don’t even want to think it.

–Thinking it is a sin. You’ve thought about it millions of times. With the LA traffic, you’re waiting for that night that he doesn’t come home.

–But he keeps coming home. And I’ve learned to live with it.

–You’re going to have to learn to die with it as well.

–Let’s not say any of this again.

They stayed in the hotel over night. He loved their romance in the morning. He loved the

fact that she didn't care. It made her this wound up pleasure machine. But their fun only reminded him of the hell that he had entered.

–I am fucked!

He wandered around that morning. He found an old friend who had moved out to the metropolis.

–I hate it here.

–I've found some bright spots. But it's getting me down too.

–Just don't let the little head do the thinking for the big head.

–I'm not sure which head is littler these days.

His adult humor was overwhelming him. That night she again met him. They made love like there was no tomorrow. He seemed to take out all his frustrations against her.

–What was that about?

–What?

–I've got enough rough stuff at home.

He didn't like being reminded of their predicament.

–We can't keep thinking about it. He's coming back soon.

–What are you going to do?

–You're going to have lie low.

–I can't.

–You have to do what you're told. I can't take orders from two men.

–We have to do our part to end this.

–You're not going to kill him. I'd leave him first. This is not like the movies. We'd get caught. We'd go to jail.

–He has all that money. And it just sits there. It could make us happy.

–This is our happiness. It's all that we get.

–You're so fatalistic.

–I was made that way. That's my attraction.

They were coming to the end of their time together. He needed to do something.

–I hate the pressure.

She kissed him hard.

–You have to learn how to wait.

–I've been waiting all my life.

–I've lived with him for years. I know his weakness. We won't come out of this well.

He realized that he was doing her bidding. She was so clever the way that she encouraged him by taking the opposite stance. He suspected her all the while. But he had become a very simple man, and he hated his lack of analysis. He wanted to be a man of action. He had captured his butterfly, and he didn't want to let her go. She knew that she would die in captivity, but she charmed him. It was a way of granting him his wishes.

She was not a creature given to guilt. She was all about being practical. She feigned shock. But she knew what was his fated task. For him, the guilt and the fear started to eat him up. He needed to figure something out.

–I think we'd get more money if he died in a plane crash.

–Now we're going to blow up a plane.

–I'm just thinking out loud.

–You're not a killer.

–And he is?

–He could kill me. You've seen what he's done.

–Think of it as self-defense. We have to do away with him.

–I'm sure that will stand up in a court of law.

–You're in claims. What will work?

–A highway accident. He needs to fix his car and just get hit by a truck.

–That seems too good. I could rig his tire.

–We can't risk the truck. You need to do it.

–Now you're telling me what to do. A minute ago, you were saying don't even think about it.

He needed to get away. To find some perspective.

–I know this writer who has a place in San Francisco. I need some time to think about this. He looked at her in the cheap motel light. It made her look drawn. Her beauty was so fragile in this light. He was trying to hold on to this memory. Everything for this memory.

The crowded city seemed to take his mind away from his absurdity. He couldn't turn back once he went back to LA. He hated this determinism. She was a fatality. She was bad news. But it was the only new that he could tune in.

When he got back to LA, they didn't say anything about the plan. She had on a red skirt and a white blouse. They met for dinner. In the parking lot, he ran his hand under her blouse. As he touched her breasts, he kissed her.

–I want more than all this for our life.

They were furiously passionate back at their room.

–I was surprised that you got out.

–He's such a fool. He's keeping me on this long leash. I just take advantage of things. Let's just live with it.

–This isn't living. You knew what was going to happen when I came back. I tried to stay. I had nothing up there.

–You don't have much down here.

–I'm trying to stay alive.

–Neither of us can quit.

–We're pathetic.

–We'll come to hate each other.

She had come to LA with bigger dreams. There had been the chance at movies. But she ended up escorting actors. And the bit parts only made it easier for her to accustom to fast life. A little coke and she could pull off any part. She could barely resist getting into the adult industry. But she was being degraded by the lifestyle. She had hoped for some kind of rescue. She accepted whatever came along. The first year had been great. Then he sent her out to work. She wanted to take acting lessons. Do some theater. Get a better agent. He would hear none of it.

–Bitch, you were on the street before I took you in. I can put you back where I found you. She hated the B movie suppositions that she was accepting.

–I should have never read for this role.

–You’re not seventeen any more. Guys can read what you’re about. You’re not even a high roller any more. Count your blessings.

What had she become. The other women at the insurance firm were a sober reminder of how far she could still fall before the disaster would be permanent.

The Kid had been her one out. Her only hope. She was becoming a farce.

–You’re going to have to do it quick if it’s going to happen. He’ll wise up. He can take only so much estrangement.

The plan seemed perfect. He’d sabotage the car. It would break down on a trip back from San Diego. Just as he made an exit change. Like it blew out from bad construction. He’d commandeered the perfect rig to do the job. It would be a cakewalk. He got the semi off the lot. He wasn’t carrying a payload. He could do the job without risking a jack knife

He knew the route. And the time. But he couldn’t do it. He wasn’t a killer. All he had to do was swerve slightly to the right. He could get back on the highway without even grazing the car. The body would just get caught up in the flow. Instead of swerving to the right, his timidity pushed him to the left. He missed the car. He thought he missed the body. But it seemed to lunge at him. He didn’t mean for any of this to happen like this. He carried the body for about a hundred feet before it flew off the radiator onto the shoulder. He didn’t slow down. The end was obvious.

–It wasn’t me. I didn’t do it.

–You didn’t hear it on the news. They found his body. They said that it was an accident. The truck didn’t even know that it had hit anything. Don’t worry. You did a good job of faking it.

–I didn’t mean to run him down.

–It will all be OK. Just don’t contact me. I’ll find you. You got the truck back OK.

–Yeah, yeah!

None of this was his life. He felt that he had been doubly projected to this parallel universe. He had been supplanted to her world. Then she had taken him to some universe of total evil. Sure he had taken the truck. But he swerved left. And the body still came at him. The husband had to have been pushed. But she had her alibi all worked out. She couldn’t have been at the scene. Somebody else must have been working with her. Or was it even the husband. He wasn’t even sure that the guy that she saw at the house was the husband. It could have been her accomplice.

–I told you not to contact me.

–I miss you. I’m going crazy without you.

–I’m going crazy too. But we can’t do anything until I get the money. We don’t want investigators getting in the way. I know the business. They’re going to be looking at me twice as hard.

He felt that she was right. But she didn’t bring him much comfort. He needed to find out what she was actually doing. He drove over to her place. The fence was closed. It would be a chore to get over it and past the alarms. He watched a car drive up to the house. It stayed for a



while. It left without here.

–You’re not following my advice.

–You haven’t been by yourself.

–That’s my lawyer.

–Lawyer nothing. Who is that? He’s been up to see you for quite a long time. More than once. If I’ve seen him, don’t you think that the police know who he is.

–The police haven’t been to see me. I’m not a suspect.

–I don’t like this feeling. We killed a man.

–I thought that you said that you didn’t even swerve to hit him. It was a complete accident. Maybe he wanted to die.

–Maybe you were at the side of the highway. It wouldn’t be too crazy. How did you know where he would break down? What if you were driving? What if your accomplice was in the back?

–I only told you roughly where he would break down. I never said exactly where. You’re messing up in the details. The worse thing that we can do is to go after each other.

He remembered how she wanted to be an actress. She had prepared for this role all her life. She needed a script. And she needed to cast it.

He remembered seeing her around before that day at the office. One time outside of the insurance office. He had seen her at the auto parts store before he quit. It didn’t seem to mean anything. But she had been staking him. She needed a patsy.

Dolores was too smart for her own good. There were details that she left out of her rewrite. These were going to catch up with her. It was OK to be defensive after her husband’s death. But she needed to make sure that he was in her corner. The sex had been mind-blowing and illicit. Now it was only illicit. And its inappropriate nature was working away against its power. He would have given her the world. But she had stopped just short in trying to convince him.

–You’ve killed my husband. And now you’re going to kill me.

–You killed him. Or you used me somehow.

–Somehow? It was never even my idea. You brought it up. I just lived with him. But it was you who brought up the idea how it would be better to get rid of him.

–It was only after that monstrous beating. You probably did that to yourself.

–You are a monster. For all I know, you beat me up while I was sleeping.

–You showed up with your wounds. I had nothing to do with it.

–You’ve got it all mixed up. I’m in the insurance business. I know how people make up stories to cover their tracks. It never works. It’s not going to work with you.

–Look what we’re becoming. We’re starting to accuse each other.

–I never said that I loved you. You just offered me a place to get away. I knew it wouldn’t last. We’re too different. I have dreams. I make things happen. You just wait for your life to change. It’s not going to happen. You were a loser. I knew it the moment that I saw you come in to the office. You’re used to cutting corners. You always accept the easy way. I gave you a chance. And you took advantage of it.

–So is this it for us.

–There never was an us. You had this cheap fantasy.

Her dyed hair seemed positively metallic in the artificial light. He had loved an idea. The idea had gotten deep inside him, and was eating him from the inside. He needed to cut it out.

–If there never was an us. I wouldn't feel the least in killing you. There's nothing that connects me to you. I won't even be a suspect.

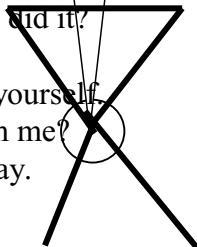
–But they will wonder who did it?

–Let them wonder.

–Is this what you want for yourself?

–Is this what you want from me?

–It didn't have to be this way.



## THE BODY DOLORES

<b>PREDICT</b> I know how to <i>satisfy</i> a woman. <b>EAVESDROP</b>	<b>SATISFACTION</b>	<b>THE SET UP</b>
<b>THE ESTIMATION</b> He was staring at her	<b>THE MEMORY</b>	<b>THE SCRIPT</b>
<b>THE OFFER</b>	<b>THE PARADISE</b>	<b>THE CASTING</b>
<b>THE TRANSACTION</b>	<b>THE FICTION</b>	<b>THE PRODUCTION</b>

## THEA VS. DOLORES

(CRUCIAL x THEA) > (ENCINO x DOLORES)

*I expanded myself up to project as the Encino Kid. It was my prime fiction. I had my script. Its object was Dolores. I had my casting, someone to play the role. My subject was the Encino Kid. Still smarting from his interaction with Christina von Mayhem in Vegas, he settled down for his adventure in LA. His confrontation with the mob seemed mild by comparison.*

*Dolores was a sculpture whose forms seemed to only sketch the depths of Thea. She was limited by her desire and portrayed accordingly. Thea would not have yielded to the same temptations. But then we wonder. Did she have the opportunity.*

*With the Encino Kid, I was able to sustain a demand that was satisfied in Dolores. As Crucial, I was not meant yet to pay Thea's price.*

## KUKEYAMA PHENOMENONATA

After WWII the US military constructed an amusement park for the children of Tokyo. It was built on the themes of SUFFERING, LOVE, AND DEATH.

–That's seems a little intense for children.

–Kuke was a roller coaster.

–I need to go to Tokyo to investigate.

–Let's go to RESTLESS; it will all make sense.

–You just want an EF.

–What?

–Eternal Feminine.

I was driving myself so intensely. Each experience was suffused with excitement. The world sparkled. Later, I became exhausted. Lethargic. Paralyzed. I had forgotten about my satisfaction. Now the economy switched. That was all that I coveted.

The magic disappeared. I felt that something had ended.

–You need to save your energy for Restless.

–What happens when you realize that your question is no longer a puzzle.

–Restless is the answer. Restless is eternal.

–This is stupid. Get me out of here.

She held them all.

–Do you want one? Do you want them all?

–What is it?

–Perfection. You can touch it.

Was she holding on to part of herself, something that she had learned before she ever came here.

- How long can you keep this going?
- As long as I have an audience.
- And then you scare them away by talking politics.
- Get them going by talking about some guy.

-Just as you're ending it, you pass by it, and start again. Your heart kept it going long enough to start again. What you wanted, you let slip by so early in the night. The purity of a new connection

>>But you didn't really want it, because you knew. They wouldn't understand the exquisite desire for the fallen. So you'd spend the night watching someone you never really wanted. Someone just as damned as you were.

- Crucial, I have to get for a drink.
- I'm going to leave while I'm still awake.

To covet a night that was always the same.

-Resist anything that remotely resembles an event. Restrain any concern except for the anecdotal. Restrict participation in the narrative. End the narrative when the narrator forces you to take a position.

>>Does the initial desire get it all going. That first flash of the field of magic?

-Sure, if it was all that invincible, I'd quit right away.

>>The suggestion of the multiple possibilities, each weak and faded. Each a waste of time. But together so full of promise.

- 1 *Is there life on other planets?*
- 2 *Have you ever been touched by another world presence?*
- 3 *What's the longest that you've been in love?*
- 4 *How far back can you remember?*
- 5 *What are you afraid of?*
- 6 *Why does the person that you want not notice you?*
- 7 *How long can I count on being here?*
- 8 *Why do you stop caring when you have to wait too long?*
- 9 *Do you remember your dreams?*
- 10 *Are you afraid to die?*

-We had his picture. He went through it. We lost our control. Slid in an informational copy. We'd been through that before.

>>He slipped through. We lost track.

-There's a passageway—a tunnel from the library to a disco.

Crucial's Novel: *Kill or Be Killed*

–It sounds really interesting. I want to read it.

*Live up to the source.*

–*What do you like about this?*

–*If you had any conviction*

–*Live for XX. Did you tell them things? Did you talk to THEM? You'll just pay the price. Saying things won't get you what you want.*

–***YOU JUST WANT TO FUCK THE SCENE!***

*Satisfaction raises the stakes!*

*I wanted to ask them if some conceptual disagreement broke them apart.*

*He got bored*

*I cried.*

*I wanted to ask why she had become so sloppy conceptually. Why she lacked social discretion.*

I was here in Atlanta. The Crucial Era had gone by so fast. If I wanted to get the concept across, I needed ***to write about it.***

–I create a new world every few years.

–You really think that?

–I do.

The intensified rules of someone else.

The Encino Kid ran a porn ring.

–The desire to cross over. Make a mess. That is Jay's territory.

THE CRIMINAL DESIRE: I'm just doing it.

**NO CONCEPT**

***HEAVEN: THE LAST ONE THERE IS THE ONE WHO DESPISED IT!***

–You had nothing to say to them, and now!

Translatability.

–If you hold it in your hand. You will know.

HISTORICAL NOVEL

–I don't like having to pay.

–For every night out, you lose a day of your life.

–This sound serious. It's worth the gamble.

–I like him, but I wouldn't want to kiss him. I'd have to wake up in his arms. He seems really unhappy.

–It'll all end when you want it to end.

–Is that the code of restless.

- If you never expect anything, you are never disappointed.
- No one can buy me. That doesn't mean that I can't be used.

CRUCIAL TALKED TO HIS MASTER!

- Explain the night to me.
- I'm asexual. Stuff like this makes me the way that I am.
- They've been ruining the world with credit cards.
- Literature doesn't lie. It doesn't tell the truth. It just is.

Her brain had been completely redone—completely replaced.

- live? –Do you ever get sad when you read a book? What's the biggest disappointment in your
- I want to be in your novel.
- Everyone wants to be a star. They want to be famous.

*You just want perfect people. You need to trust the flaws.*

## Trust

- My trust describes how I hold you to answer for your actions.
- Is trust an action?

A somnambulist needed a subject. He would hypnotize her and send her to Restless. No one would know that she was asleep/  
His subject

- Are we talking about Kuke?
- She killed her son when he was young. They predicted that he would be Jay.  
*Mommy will kill you so you cannot kill anyone else.*
- Jay still lives.
- I've seen him.
- It's a myth.
- This is life! You create it as you live it. Strictly, there is no biology.
- I want to be part of the stars. It all goes by in a flash.
- You only give me prepared answers.
- It's too late. There are no more characters left.
- We can make new one from the old ones. We have new roles.

–Get your drink and enjoy the action.

–Find the most intense pleasure.

–He’s like you, Crucial. Only without a personality.

–Just one big question.

–I’ve already answered ten.

–Why are you holding things up?

–Is that my question? Did you lose someone that you love?

–Why do you come here all the time?

NOT NOW. I’M HAVING SO MUCH FUN.

–The NIGHT goes in stages. We have already past part 3.

KUKE/ GEO

–He held me. He really believed what he said.

–I want to be everything.

–I just want to sit here and eat my lunch in private.

–but you said.

–I don’t care what I said.

THE NIGHT: the fullness of a moment that excludes WORK.

–Maybe I could get paid for just driving around. I think that I can just do that.

–There are magic words, and she knows them all.

ON BECOMING KUKE!

Supervision; Who is watching her?

–If you cut off the head, doesn’t the person survive.

Mouse lover

bringing you to tears.

GLIMMER

in the pantry

*Kuke makes a point: Southern Bell are all fundamentalists waiting for the Rapture.*

*–Did you see how fast the IBM tower went up. One day there was this lot. Then it was the tallest building in Atlanta.*

*–It was the devil’s work.*

*–They are warring cultures.*

–I expect something for this.

–EA is the WILD CARD.

*I listened for the voices. If someone had said something, it would not have been so oppressive. I walked for miles. They were always with me.*

–Art is an understanding. Figure it out.

–What about it?

–I can be creative.

*Love on target–the bomb!*

–What about me?

–Art’s an industry!

A new character: Emily. She was robbed of her human nature.

–Would you rather be with a cat or a human.

–Humans are my species. I’d love to understand cats.

–You’re playing want the hat, while people are dying.

–I change love gloves–no love!

*–They know what they want, but they are animals; they can’t say it. They either say it, or they don’t.*

*You deal it, we steal it. We deliver. We snatch it before it’s ready  
The Forbidden–a Biker gang.*

Jay ran to the woods to get his car.

*(I need to plan things better!)*

*Ethereal AM scene. Setting this one for you. Baby Crucial, that’s who! A little more time. Bargain for it. You’ve had it all already.*

*Something like wisdom. Waited nights hoping to be heard.*

*–Slept together. She said that she loved me. Two days later, she wouldn’t even talk to me.*

*>>Then she just stopped appearing.*

**NOT GUILTY!**

*The transcendental: related to  $S^H$  (homosexuality) and  $\sigma$  (situation, the desiring self)  
wished for  
abstract form*



*ACID*

*DRUGS ARE THE DRUG!*

Jean-Luc and Dovksy have an argument..

–Do you have any details of the argument?

DOVSKY: Pain is representative. It is not constitutive of the experience. It is a trigger. It helps connect to the memories which become part of the awareness.

JEAN-LUC: The pain creates an explosive state in the psyche. Even has a trigger, it requires a physical form. This is real. It helps the self cross over to the other side.

Remarks on reputation  
carry over of the One

THE ONE: Kuke is the one. Anyone else does not have sufficient velocity to escape gravitation.

□□



–People adapt their personalities to different circumstances.

–Can you really know a person?

–My friend Jay and I share all our secrets.

–Can you think of a secret that you can't share.

–Jay hasn't told it to me yet.

the center of RESTLESS  
out of  
exclude

you lose your job

They don't understand the historical forces.

*Watch the sequence of moves in the dance. It's like a telegraphic coded.*

*That's a really goofy name*

How to get kicked out!

–The door's locked.

You can feel someone else's pain.

I am someone else to myself.

Go out every night.  
–You don't know how to walk the line.

Act as if the EA theory doesn't matter.

Indiana  
nightmare  
border

Kookiness  
Cruciality  
la chatte

Thea what happened

VC and Kuke  
As power finds that it is at its weakest moment, it take its cruelest form. There was a climax in our exposition with the attraction of Kuke for Immanuel.

The sudden reappearance of Tommy made it clear that he did not die in the explosion

Fashion show  
Kuke gets the part

They redo the *Wizard of Oz* on their porch.  
Immanuel the tin man  
Tommy the lion  
Ronnie the straw man

you don't want to know

still want to play EF games  
in love with love  
what she thinks aloud

THROWN  
POPULAR

He's not coming out. He's escaping.

social scum

Joy in the basement with a skull

the dust queen

reprehensible: Joy  
facets of intensity EA  
Courtney I

fiction  
Thea  
Courtney II Kuke  
Tuna Ramon

deep feeling for you  
feeling Cruche tripping

locked in a room  
DLM burrowed in

Kuke Kuke pop un coca

Thea on the wire

Bileti and Encino

disdain

Tommy's play  
the Call of the wild  
about a boxer

at Jean-Luc's  
Kuke and the donkey  
is the donkey an android

leave Restless and rob a hotel  
return with money

spiritual advisor does not get the game  
I tell him everything  
did you tell him that we slept together

mistaken identity  
fake passport

#### THE NEW COSTUME

It's going to be a good night  
I can feel it  
Do you know something?  
    –Something good is going to happen.

How to make an exit

Does she have a pretty face  
she doesn't even have a nice car

consciousness at a price

we're friends among other things

eyes caked with Cascade K

on her Kookiness  
at 30 on her death bed  
she can't die again

catch up  
futility

I'm one quarter man  
and three quarters beast  
run down the street  
looking for a feast

Aaron  
mathematician  
gambler  
advise to Baron de Rothschild  
    la princess Cathy  
talks about experience

by a series of mirrors he watches her room  
the bed  
takes off her wig  
the charm

trap le Duc de Reynard  
ends up implicating Cath

Dovsky  
under cover  
not looking for drugs  
why do you torment him  
because I like him

easy to snap her for a few

Robert talks about the Glorious Revolution  
do you know my name

the luxurious town homes of Foxtail Grove

I want three valiums  
Porn-research  
anonymity is OK  
everyone is someone

on a float after doing a row of K  
shifted into an Adman tilt and then hung on the haze periphery

Bileti  
not an overdose  
unbalanced a K  
got rigged  
zapped into the

mass produced diminishes the quality

are those the formulas that teach us to be invisible  
the Wizard of Babylon  
dream words to remember

I like studying the philosopher Ted

Why did you say that  
so you could understand that I know

get Kuke

start cheating on her  
 how would you cheat  
 marriage of convenience  
 oppressiveness of death  
 talks to the child  
 plays  
 Kuke quits  
 back from being Kuke

all appliances on  
 artificial sweeteners  
 can't hate what she doesn't know  
 plastic bags  
 razor  
 Margaret  
 I'm coming  
 Infra  
 heavy dose of artificial sweeteners  
 He'd take what he could get  
 Rita  
 We know that and it  
 all downhill from now on

can't turn off the light  
 she left the pearls  
 strip the veils  
 the Rivals  
 the doll  
 the dog copy  
 software June  
 ex-Savak agent

why continue after the Regal party  
 desire

end of month omen  
 lose the never  
 you can't to have sex with me  
 good sign  
 great sign  
 in capsule form

–Christiane, you got some real nice shots.

- Where are my drugs.
- I've got money for you.
- Hell, you're the only one with access to K.
- You know the pipeline.
- That's all shit. It's all synthetic.
- That's all it is. The rest is a myth.
- They told me that you got the stuff extracted from baby goats' brains when they scared them to death.
- That's ridiculous. It would hardly affect a human. Still I like the idea.
- You can taste fear in the blood.
- I thought that was another myth.
- What about the deal. I want it. At least your supply.
- Extracted from human brains by scaring them to death.

#### PARADISE

- Kuke got lost in the hole infinite. She was the infinite.
- I want some candid shots of Kuke.
- She knows.
- I want the camera inside illuminating my pussy. To climax more times than the shutter can capture.
- What?
- Make it transparent. A series of shots. I made Kuke

#### **GANGS DESTROY RESTLESS!**

- A social history—the super history.
- Violence—what type—sexual oppression.
- There never was a Kuke. No one could have survived the fire. I made it up just for you.
- I changed her just for you. I set the bomb just for you. I destroyed Tommy just to make fun of your ridiculous male desire.
- You were Tommy jut for me. You couldn't kill her because you loved her. You wanted her nice and easy; you wanted to be her. Get ready, I'm coming on.
- Don't think that I'm going to give you're the chance to finish.
- I destroyed her because I hated Tommy.
- You're giving me the perfect hate fuck. Banging away until perfection. Some negative paradise pain
- On fire—touched her.
- How do you have so much love to give.
- Who's Kuke with tonight?
- Some mustard boy. You just spread him on hot.

HALO as the code word for BLISS

as the alias of Immanuel

she wants HALO

THE KEYS: It is obvious who is who. This is all based on real people.

Mustard boys: what do you want on your hot dog.

*Kuke tears off my arm.*

SPECIALIST: Kuke as only that—limit her character

Go through the wall and see.

What could I want?

Without desire.

—I like that. Can I wear it.

—Let's hang out here.

—Let's leave and go to a party.

—The party's tomorrow.

We would all forgive if we had the substance. Immanuel procured for Tommy. He invited girls to the house. Gave them Bliss. It flashes through the eye.

—I want Courtney.

—Kuke.

—Kuke

—It will all come in time!

**HOW THE KUKU FUCKS ANYTHING:  
the beginning of the downfall.**

The Wizard of Babylon—the spell—the hideaway.

THE HALL OF MIRRORS

the mask

the dose ended—the end of history.

Jackson, Tommy, and Carl were hanging out at the back door of the Cube.

—You guys look weird.

—We're fucked up on acid.

—You have to be.

—The music here sucks.

—Everything sucks.

—We get closer to the center on acid.

—You know!



Kuke—so full of will—confront her at her house.

—I needed to say something to you.

She moved on past me. She disappeared. She is projected into the theater of Restless.

—The one thing lacking here is wisdom.

—We manage to get the job done. The one thing lacking here is remorse.

Immanuel had an apprentice—Claude(?). He passed his hand through Claude's body.

—You not really here.

The Sorcerer exposed Crucial's scheme.

Dovsky and Kuke had this scheme to draw blood and mix it with the drug. It would increase the potency. Just re-inject it.

Dovsky had this actress for porn—DANA.

—I thought that she was a kid.

Milli—a dancer—embraced death.

Tony T—perfect T: I'd fuck anything that moves.

YOUR REPUTATION

Restless was a private club for Kuke. To get her partners for sex.

The kiss: reprehensible.

—What do you want?

AFTERMATH: integrity.

—The VC are ruining the scene. We're going to have to kill them all.

ATOMIC WAR

disappear in a flash

everyone

it's already happened.

—What are you afraid of?

—They really aren't children. This isn't child porn. They're just made to look that way.

—Why? It's preposterous.

—It's about the will, bending the will.

They were dream children. Kept asleep all the time. They woke up for two hours to exercise their power: 3-5AM.

—I want all your drugs.

KUKE: My boy is so smart.

DOVSKY: The cry of the animal.

—Don't do that, Dovsky.

When it was will meeting will.

Ben went berserk inside Restless.

–Good thing it was a weekday.

THE ACCIDENT–fatalistic

Everyone milling around the hall–waiting for the seminar.

Kuke removes my respectability.

–You just want to fuck the scene.

–This is where I start.

I submerged. locked in Passions night after night.

–We have a bus arriving with all the new characters for Restless. We’re going to completely recast the section.

–Use my name for now.

–Take one of these. It will help you get into the role. Take another later–it will help you do the job better.

–I need to know the character that I am playing.

–Know! You can’t know her. She died in a fire.

I was calculating the conceptual opposite of Kuke.

–That’s me.

She was right. She said who she wanted to be.

–I’d have to believe in love–to put aside my cynicism.

I became the formalism–just a mark on the page–*F*.

–I’m not here anymore.

THE CRITICAL ERASURE

–I wish that you could be like this–something real

DISDAIN

play to the end!

I was the last to leave RESTLESS!

–You know so and so. He died. The enemy got him.

**SUGAR HAS ITS SWEETNESS–ITS TONE!**

**CASCADE KUKU**

**There’s not much left.**

**–Kuke used it all to come back. That’s how she made it back. She used Cascade K–a warehouse of it.**

Rocky had all this coke. Restless was awash in coke. Everyone was using it. And she was making so much money. Money, money, money. She was wandering around Restless and making a fool of herself.

–Let’s go back to my place. We can do some blow!

–We’ve done enough.

They wouldn’t stop.

–I can't take it.

–Shove it up your pussy. That feels great. Put it all up me.

Rocky was mad.

After this she went NUMB! She was a zombie. She tried her act. No one needed her.  
She had even fucked Kuke.

–Now we have Kuke. We don't need you tired pussy around here.

She stayed at Restless–hung around in the shadows.

I became the wall at Restless

one day you're going to wasn't something and you can't have it

Jay

the killing can't stop

prisoner

eats the cat

faces death

Jay poisons him

the puzzle of the night

The night would not release any of its participants until the puzzle had been completed. The excitement of the night had already begun to crest. And everyone seemed oblivious to the night. Whose sick joke was this? Who could stop the march of the night?

–Come work at Jean-Luc's

CASCADE K–the last drug you ever need to take

–I'm sleeping longer and longer.

–You need the rest.

–I don't have any time to work.

She felt terrible about it.

The hot sun burned down. It would never be night again,

–You think that it's night time. For us it is only daytime without the sun

One of these days, you'll really want something and you won't be able to have it.

I thought the curtain was bleeding

some day the world would open up

we're telling

Bill Meyer  
 police journalist  
 a sick fuck  
 I learn to accept  
 complexity of the scene  
 representation./ reality  
 Artaud  
 remorse  
 I just want to dance to this song  
 woman who see themselves in the image that men have of them  
 character who==Evelyn  
 Luke winds  
 days and cigarettes  
 poet I know I'm good

celebrity live

THURSDAY  
 extreme falling apart  
 step no notion of extreme real value

FRIDAY  
 Courtney  
 time curves

Saturday  
 fill in space  
 $\sigma$

satisfy  
 B

**U**

support of social net  
 trend scene

Ben taking photos  
 making a film

when you consider someone an enemy  
 he loses his right to survival

Jay  
 you can't lie when you approach death

## THE AM DREAM

I have my Bible  
it will not help

Courtney forced to do things that I don't want to do  
we're going to sue you Crucial  
blackmail

Courtney  
pure application  
from desire  
physical  
the theory  
theoretic of power  
CRUCHE  
in love with image of self  
the shadow  
the mirror

wanting more  
a transcendent soul

We wouldn't work...we spent all our money on drugs and albums

**If** you do it

Now that I hate the power ..noone will ever do that form again

revolutionary gesture  
traced out of professional gesture... partial amateur  
does not espouse completeness

long enough you start to enjoy.

multiple personalities

prepares the house for years for the crime i into various aspects of his project

**Jay** becomes all the characters—multiple personalities.

I left abstract space and reenter time.

Time to answer mathematical questions

Tommy stole a truck full of drugs and money. He sped off not to be seen.

–He’ll be back. The drugs will run out, and the money will be spent.

He sucked Immanuel’s cock.

–Everyone sucked Immanuel’s cock.

–It’s the effects of acid. It breaks down barriers. You just want it all the time.

AUTOMATIC

[   ]

[   ]

ACTIVATE IMAGE:

**beyond desire**

**as desire**

**What Thea wants Thea gets.**

What do you want to talk about  
about you

–I can satisfy a woman. I can give you what you want.

–How can you know what I want? I don’t even know what I want.

–I can give you money.

–You can’t pay my price.

It’s like blackmail

I’m a demon. I keep asking for more.

you buy it to resell it.

[   ]

[   ]

You can buy a new body.

**INTENSITY**

As the body moves in the zone, it starts to stretch out. It is fly. It moves frantically than just glides.

She copies his movement.

can you make something out of this

easy smell of cigarettes and alcohol

He got high the closer that he got to her/

–You’re not afraid of me.

She looked at him. She was trembling.

–Hold me.

He kissed her.

–I won’t be able to control myself.

**THE HEART**

–I don’t mean to get personal.

–What?

–I’ve been watching you. Your approach are all wrong. You need to be more aggressive. Get in their face. Tell them what you want. You’re lovely. Didn’t someone break your heart.

–What?

–Is that why you’re the way that you are. Someone broke your heart.

automatic	for sale	EASY	DEMONS	HEART	PARADISE
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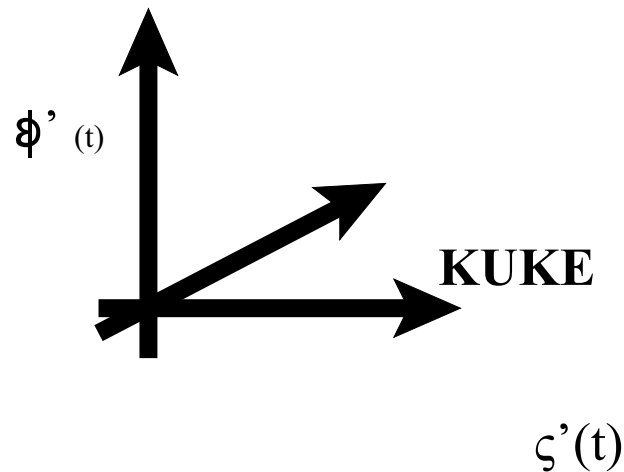
<p>AUTOMATIC</p> $\sum_{i=1}^n \alpha_i = \text{THEA}$	<p>EXPLANATION</p> <p>The Cube is at the disposal of Thea. She attempts to carry on the same mistressing to Restless.</p>	

<p>EXCHANGE</p> $\sum_{i=1}^n \sigma_i =$	<p>The self creates a body to acquired the desired values.</p> <p>You buy in order to resell.</p>	
<p>PAY HER PRICE</p> $\sum_{i=1}^n \gamma_i = \phi$	<p>EXPLANATION</p> <p>Her price is met by the application of the aggregate of all the units of investment.</p> <p>She claims that her price cannot be met in exchange.</p>	
<p>INTENSITY</p> $\sum_{i=1}^n \zeta_i = \tau$	<p>EXPLANATION</p> <p>The physical effort yields a heightened state of awareness.</p> <p>The intensity tries to gage the flight of the two bodies.</p> $\phi'(t) \zeta'(t) = \tau(t)$	
<p>THE HEART</p> $\sum_{i=1}^n \tau_i = \hbar$	<p>EXPLANATION</p> <p>A fiction entangles the emotions of two narratives. The characters are out of their heads.</p> <p>This is related to the effects of CASCADE K.</p>	



PARADISE  $\sum_{i=1}^n \tau_i = \underline{P}$	EXPLANATION	

$\phi$	$\nexists x$	EAVESDROP Л
$\mathfrak{R}(t)$	$\nexists y$	INVARIANCE И
Estimation Q	$\mathbf{a}$	n+1 $\sum_{i=1} \oplus_i = KE$
Offer A(Q)	$\underline{P}$	
Transaction A(Q/ $\underline{\phi}(t)$ )		



The movement of the body suggests an intensity. It is that sensation which appears to stimulate the same condition for another person, the body of the other. Out beyond that intensity is a story, a narrative that disrupts the certainty of that intensity. It notes a number of similar feelings that may be more or less of the same thing.

Kuke survives in a world beyond the intersecting intensities. Thea proposed a fiction where the extremes found their representation in her dance. It achieved paradise. Courtney breaks from the representation to enter a more chaotic space.

### **MORE INFRA**

Tony and Infra had been hanging out for a couple of weeks. He let Infra stay at his place. Tony worked at a design house. Infra was in school. They were a perfect match.

–Infra, I’m going to take acid tonight.

Tony gave voice to Infra. Infra was too introverted. He rolled himself around the straw in his gin and tonic. Tony showed me the Infra that Infra could not reveal.

–We’re getting along. We do have our spats. You ought to come over to the apartment. I could barely make it anywhere except to Restless.

–Have you seen Margaret. I owe her some money.

–We all owe Margaret money.

–At least she has a job.

- I’ve got a job.
- Tony, you’re always broke.
- That’s cause I’m always spending money on you.
- But you call me a little darling.
- For now.

Infra was taken by RIP’s idea of stardom. He thought that he could be another RIP.

–You don’t dance as well as RIP.

–I do too.

He did a few moves on the dance floor and then tripped and fell down. Everyone laughed. Infra didn’t mean to fall down. But he laughed too. He pretended that it was intentional.

–If you want to be a star, you’ll have to do better than that.

Each night, he spent a long time getting his mohawk to stand up straight. On that account, he thought that his looked better than RIP’s.

–I am the living dead. He is just playing at it.

Everyone loved Infra’s defiance. RIP was still their man. But Infra invited them to descend deeper into the night. Too bad, he didn’t offer more of a philosophy. He was lost in the maelstrom of Restless. But he looked perfect so he was the perfect face of the moment. Even in her ascendancy, Kuke looked back to the regal era of the Cube. Restless was undoubtedly her stage. She made everyone forget Thea. She was more of a true celebrity than RIP. But she could never seriously engage the night. Infra and his cohorts provided the first indication that there was more to explore. He paid homage to the Imperial Set. In many ways, he offered the same transparent exploration as them. But he seemed more intent; this gave Restless a darker purpose.

The music and the attitude of the club seemed to have mellowed. The DJ’s were blasting Janet Jackson. They were catering to the post-club scene that filtered in as the other clubs closed. Fashion queens wanted their disco. Boys hot from the tanned summer fields liked to show themselves under the flashing lights as the high energy invited them to bare all. Sure, they were all along for the ride. And they never really balanced the actual effects of the night. But their merriment also heralded a graver portent.

Even as I tried to encompass Kuke’s magic. I was becoming closer to the source. Infra was now a satellite. My time with Tony meant that I was also part of that new subgroup. So we all felt that we represented the true Restless. Even Kuke was giving herself to this magic. And as the VC started to fill in the empty spaces, they started to witness my performance. Even as the music would overwhelm the other members of the Imperial Set, I raised a new banner. The audience was marveling at the mystery of a new dancer. One who never stopped. Whose pirouettes and leaps were bending the dance floor to new heights. It was Kuke’s floor. But she could not command the presence all the time. And I moved in to hold up the new standard.

Carl approached me one night. He was a friend of Tommy’s. He had seen me around. We started talking about a new single from England.

–It reminds me of Restless.

He had none of the history that had propelled the Imperial Set. For him, I was as critical to Restless as RIP or Kuke. Where I had created my mythology from what I had observed, he was doing the same. Granted he had the influence of the doyen Immanuel. But many of his comments were fresh without outside reference.

Our performance of Facades was meant to further integrate me in the scene. I thought that our collaboration with Christiane might get us closer to the VC. At least, Kuke might respond to my magic as I had done with her. I had practiced diligently with the other members of Dissect. People had been hearing our songs on local radio. But we still didn't fit the digestible dance floor fare that blared in the other room. As we tried to make the theater ours, we realized that there was another drama for which we were just a footnote. Christiane had proved to be more trouble than she was worth. Her shots were good, but they didn't offer the magic that we were looking for. Her attitude was just too blase to help make any inroads.

Even my band members never understood my Ellie. They turned her into some wide-eyed freak. For me, her appeal had been that tame outlook that confronted a depraved surroundings. She was an EA immersing herself in Restless. Ellie used her words to integrate her into the bizarre. She still inhabited a more pristine experience that subdued the hobgoblins. She could wear her Halloween mask well.

Where formerly, the route to the theater had seemed at hand, now the proximity dissolved into the strangeness of a distant land. Only a few people were able to cross the frontier and venture into the wilderness. There was an audience. But we needed to continue our descent further if our music was to encompass the denatured effects of the night.

For the moment, I returned to my shadows. I still followed the comings and goings of Infra. But he seemed a bit tired now and then. Constant partying could take its toll. He was in the style of the new character drawn to Restless. He wasn't the worker bee who needed to infuse his 9-5 world with some excitement. He was forging ahead with a new time clock. The onset of night was the only commitment that he had to keep. How could Restless sustain these wonders. The night needed more sponsors. The idle rich who could finance the research into the soul.

—Infra, you have to be more provocative if you're going to develop a following.

He'd spend all evening listening to Siouxsie and the Banshees and Sisters of Mercy. He grimaced in the mirror to strike the right pose for that particular night. Wasn't he doing enough to enhance his reputation.

Infra's fancies were protected by Tony's down to earth attitude. His lunacy never seemed disproportionate as long as Tony could keep him in line. Therefore, he was more of an oddity.

—I don't want to die. I just want to look dead.

Everyone laughed. They needed a comedian. It was bleak. Infra could mock their misgivings. He could help them liberate themselves from their inhibitions. For once, the Imperial Set had a mascot who made them feel as dangerous as they thought.

—Have you seen Terry? Have you seen Margaret?

I hadn't seen anyone. It was dead night. Infra would have to entertain himself tonight. Even I was getting bored. A couple of the VC were sitting on a bench out back.

—We're really fucked up.

- It sucks in there.
- It always sucks. When is he going to buy some new music?
- The old music makes people buy more drinks.
- I’m trashed.
- We brought our own. Drinks are too expensive in there.
- Any price is too expensive for us.
- Underneath the hand me downs did the VC have any style.
- It’s not like we spend our paychecks on clothes.
- Do we have paychecks?
- They all worked at a theater in Buckhead. They had taken it over.
- It’s great working at a movie theater that has beer.
- First, we get drunk, then we head over here.
- Come on in. We’ll sneak you in for free.

I listened,. Sure I’d head up there. I wouldn’t mind getting closer to Kuke and her friends. How could they sustain such a sparkle on the scene. They were immersed in an obscurity. She still invited us with her shining path, its clarity.

Even if we couldn’t break out of the world around us, we would pretend. We would go back into Restless and make it our own. Our dance would be so involving that it would make the music superfluous. We shook the night to its core. We were Restless. Why wouldn’t they give us the keys.

The Imperial Set feared for their survival. They were still dominant. The Count and his brother Robert still dazzled with their costumes. Connie and Anthea made their appearances to claim some of that visual magic. Radical designers projected the daring lines of fabric and the body. The Set could still make their mark. But their edifice was being held up by the twin tours of Kuke and Infra. Infra was a death punk. And Kuke was surrounded by the VC. She found her stage in a region claimed by the Imperial Set. She was always drawn to their sense of costume and theater. She was a star in her own right. Worse for the Imperial Set, the newcomers would never recognize the debt that Kuke owed the royalty. She had disrupted the social order that once made Thea their Queen.

Even Billy felt that times had changed. In his mannerisms he started to imitate Infra.

–I’m not surrendering my crown. I have a heart too.

The gossips claimed to have seen them kissing. But Infra was still with Tony, and he didn’t want to lose his sinecure. They could share their troubles over drugs and drinks. Everything would fade into one mass. It was a hybrid. A constitutional monarchy. As the Absolutism passed away, Kuke pranced in the glorious dance of liberation.

–You are all mine.

In the acid haze, Kuke’s pretensions were being raised to the level of goddess. Infra’s remarks bordered on the skeptical.

–I don’t think that we would be as enamored if we all weren’t trashed.

The devotion went deep. Tony claimed that the drugs helped them to tap this spiritual base that had been repressed in the workaday world. If this was the root of Kuke's divinity, they all embraced her. They needed to believe.

What had happened to the infallibility of Thea? The New Church was seeped in doubt and discomfort. Under these emotional terms, the leap into faith would be more profound. The classicism of Thea had transmuted into the romanticism of Kuke.

- Why do bad things happen to good people?
- Because they're really fucked up on drugs.
- Amen.
- On you knees, sinner.
- Are you going to suck me off?
- No, I'm checking to see if someone dropped money on the floor.
- You're all so sacred!

The night was supposed to project everyone beyond desire. For the moment, it lacked coherent philosophy. Everyone was caught up in an unbridled hedonism.

- At least we can overcome the fascination with our mothers.
- Don't give me that look. I'm a real woman.

The sharks trawling for a quick fuck would have to face women who could expose their tourist ways and send them packing. But right offer might convince a girl that she could find the suburban home that would help her escape her captivity to darkness.

- Everyone's gay in there. No one asked me to sleep with them.

Identities were swapped and reformed here. The monsters of childhood were finally stilled as the denizens awaited new scripts and more challenging roles.

Infra knew that he didn't want to meet someone more serious about his impending demise than he was. That was his vocation at Restless. He stared down a fate more ominous than the amateurs at the club. This was also his fear. That even he would be exposed as a fake once a real demon crossed the threshold of the club.

- How can I scare people tonight.
- Infra, you're afraid of your own blood.

He had to pretend that they were involved in some bizarre chemistries at Tony's place. Meanwhile, he'd take his cocktail at Restless as if he was developing a tolerance for arsenic/

- I'm really not good at this.
- It's a little bitter, but just swallow it. It'll go down nice.
- Tony, rub my belly.

Everyone else was on the verge of fatality. Tony was already raising himself up for his nightly triumph.

- What would I do without you.
- You'd get some guy to suck you off in the bathroom, and then you'd pass out in one of the stalls.
- Is that what you're going to do to me tonight.

Billy listened and learned. He thought maybe they wouldn't mind a threesome.

–Tony's sensitive about adding another prick. One prick just about all that he can handle, and he's being a real prick tonight.

–Infra, you are such a suck ass bitch.

–Switch on, switch off.

–I'm going to go get some coke.

–We don't do coke at Restless.

–Get in line, sister.

Rocky had disrupted the symmetry at Restless. It had not returned since. But there was still an air of civility that had to be maintained.

Everyone was immersed in useless chatter. Infra only noticed the VC when they had something to offer him. He was oblivious to Courtney. He wanted something more daring. But he hardly encouraged the scene himself.

–I already look good enough for things to change without me. If you queens would just catch up. Catch up.

His friend Trix was entertaining some real log rollers tonight.

–I'm going to do both those cowboys.

–You hold on tight.

Trix had that same style as Ivy. A slight bath in blood. And the eyes of a wolf.

–I do look great.

She would in any circumstance. She wanted more than this.

–You do have a story?

–You want to know about my Daddy. Tie me up, and ride me like a bull, and you'll learn about all the man that's left in me.

Stopping short of the full program of Restless, she showed how easy it was to take advantage of an easy situation. Were Courtney and Thea much different? They were still waiting that fatal step that would propel them further into the darkness. Even Infra clung to Tony so he wouldn't have to face his own destructiveness.

–I'll be OK.

–We all will. Just don't ask too many questions.

–We don't want to disrupt the present.

–We could go into much more depth about things if we only didn't have to go back to the past.

–There is no past here.

–Thea is a memory. Kuke is part of the future.

They all welcomed the change. Thea would have opened old wounds. Kuke showed how the body could regenerate. Even if they didn't follow her path, they realized the promise that she made available.

–Someday, I'll pull the curtain.

–Let's get really fucked up and pass out in the theater.

–It smells like piss in there.

- Get me another drink
- Infra, I'm not your fucking servant.
- Get me a drink, asshole. You're my fucking slave.
- Fuck you. You'd be nothing without me propping you up.
- You're just some five and dime fuck ass queen.
- You need that drink. Maybe then you can get so fucked up that you'll puke on yourself.

The routine was starting to wear on both of them. How far could they control each other, could they tolerate Infra before it all blew up in their faces.

- I'll do what you need
- I got a job at the food museum

#### WHAT HAVE YOU TURNED ME INTO?

I have just turned you on.

*You have let me burn you. See the burn marks on your arm. I've had it done to me. I've done it to myself. Now let me do it to you.*

*Slice into the soft skin and taste the blood that flows.*

*–Do not be afraid. I am pure. I do this for you.*

Thea made her comeback.. A nasty Eternal Return as all these folk happen to do. :

- Am I getting narration now?
- Whatever your life happens to need.
- It really needs love.
- How about some brandy?
- That will do.
- Wouldn't you rather call it Evil Return.
- I never did smack. Whatever my sins, I never did smack.
- what about that little freak who follows you around.
- My hair dresser.
- Do you commingle.
- We mingle and he "co-'s".
- What does that mean?
- Stay tuned.
- Did you do some of Robert's coke.
- We wanted to. But he cooked it up for himself.



–That wasn't very nice.

–No, it was not.

We would return to the return later. This was the best that she could do for now!

### **DOPE FIEND SAVIOR**

–Just before I die, I'll figure out the meaning of the universe

–And you'll have time to tell us

–That's why I'm a savior.

–So do you keep regular office hours.

–You're standing in my office.

–And how long are your consultations.

–As long as you can hold my attention which isn't very long.

Project in the gulf

this immense heat

reach out

that is it

where the desire extends to its infinite  
and the gasp

[mimic the feeling]

[[can't know

it is happening to all of them

as intensely

more intensely

feels good

massively good

the PARADISE

INTENSITY to the PARADISE

the fall and the distraction

you could know...

### **THE GHOST I AM AND THE GHOST THAT I WILL BECOME**

kill the voice

repercussions  
 shock waves  
 reverberate

put life back in order

answer

I have discovered my frequency

If you count blow jobs my numbers are going to all crazy. It'll make me look like some kind of whore

If you count hand jobs, it makes it seem like I'm some kind of fucking skanky whore.

I would have never done some of those things to those guys if I knew that it counted for sex. I even had a boyfriend.

See her drowning

opened a door  
 pull down into the water

**BEYOND THE HEART  
 BEYOND THE BODY  
 BEYOND THE SOUL  
 CHAOS**

**BEYOND THE MIND  
 CAN I TELL YOU SOMETHING PERSONAL  
 BEYOND STORIES**

you don't know anything about what really goes on here

- They're down in his office looking at pictures of dead people.
- I need to look in the safe.
- Come in my office.

**BEYOND PERSONALITY**

***BEYOND SORROW***

<b><i>SORROW!</i></b>
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**ANASTASIA**

Infra was still trying to top himself. He heard rumors about Gloria. But it was not yet her time.

–This is not about a drag queen.

They all gathered at Anastasia's bed.

–This is better than Restless.

–You'll have to bring a note pad. She has so many witty things to say.

–It's beyond sex.

–She is going out with one of the managers. But it's not about that. He's not even there.

This was a whole new crew. Infra's team! The Imperial Set would not understand this brand of mysticism.

–She's trying to channel a dead Russian princess.

–She is a dead Russian princess.

–I'm not dead at all. I'm very much alive.

–Who are you trying to channel?

–The founder of my tribe.

–We're not descending to tribalism.

–Listen, I am your Queen.

Her immobility was in stark contrast to Kuke. She was just as much a challenge to the order of Thea. She didn't need a club to engage her pose. She could do it from her bed.

–God will appear to her one day.

–She is a goddess.

–She wishes.

–No, she really is. She is learning her powers. She is the universe as becoming.

–In order to really learn your powers, you have to break the limits of consciousness.

–You have to let your mind get a little freaky.

–More than that, you have to get beyond the effects of consciousness—project into another realm.

–Drugs.

–I don't need to take anything. I already have the will.

–It is beyond the will.

–I am will beyond will.

Everyone became quiet for a few minutes. Anastasia broke the silence.

–We are on our way.

–We truly are.

Could a girl in her bed really replace the prolonged excitement of Restless.

–Rasputin had the Russian court in a tizzy. Certainly, our Queen can offer more than one madman.

–A thousand crazies does not equal genius.

–You never know.

Even at Restless, Infra seemed to bask in the new celebrity of Anastasia. He felt that he had christened her new powers and, therefore, should share in their benefits.

–You’ve got to come over to see her.

–I work during the daytime.

–You should quit work. I’m going to become her manager. This is the next big thing. It’s like a religion.

–Does she have a testament. Can you explain the belief system to me.

–It’s very simple. It has something to do with the afterlife. We are all spirits waiting to be reborn.

–That seems vague.

–I’m not getting it right. I’ve had too much to drink.

Could Anastasia offer much help to her rag tag followers. There were rumors that she was going to be featured in a newspaper article. There were claims of miraculous cures. This was getting out of hand. It wasn’t just a few scene kids that had been attracted to the shrine.

It hardly phased her. Her face hardly showed any response to all the publicity.

–I’m not going to change. Otherwise, I’d get out of my bed and head over to the Winn Dixie!

–You’re a strange one.

–You don’t know the half of it.

There were rumors about how she had these bizarre Alabama origins. Raised in a chicken coop.

–Those are simply blasphemous rumors. But I did learn conjuring on my mamma’s knee.

Everyone laughed at her adopted accent. Even though she was going out with Max, he was never at her place.

–He’s always helping them over at Restless.

That didn’t stop him from spending a little bit too much time at Rocky’s.

–I have to make sure that all the accounting is right.

–Who runs the place?

At Restless, there was all this mystery around the office. I had visited it to book my shows in the theater.

–I can help you out.

Max had an in everywhere. I was drawn more to his shady inventions than to her pseudo-prophecy. But the idea seemed entertaining.

–I want to perform at Restless.

–Honey, RIP is already the shaman of Restless.

–But prophecy makes perfect.

She pretended that she had no ambitions, but she was already thinking of taking her act public. In fact, Infra had brought RIP with him to the house. They were planning something magnificent in the future.

Anthea represented the more cynical line of the Imperial Set.

–Once you start believing your own powers like that, you eventually have to fuck with your body chemistry just to maintain the balance. Junkie in waiting.

RIP wouldn't give in to such talk. If he had a greater vision, he needed to feed the fanatics that could populate his circle. So he gave a credibility to her operations that was disruptive to the scene.

–I *can* see the future. Everything that Anthea sows, she will weep. What will she do when her house is asunder.

RIP totally believed the warning. He would even fall victim to his own humbling. He had already known the mystical side of experience. He loved the atmosphere.

–I am a believer again.

Ivy and her ilk had promised a surpassing. Transformation through death. The living death. But Anastasia's vision was positive. Even if there was a touch of pain that the subject had to endure to be ready.

–You will feel the crack of my whip. You deserve a lashing.

Everyone laughed. They didn't realize that she wanted to practice her craft.

–I'm going to take you all with me.

Infra wondered if he should write down her pronouncements. He could use them to seduce others from Restless to pay her visit.

–I don't know how long I'll have to put up with this shit.

Tony was feeling neglected, but he didn't want to let on to Infra. Infra was in the zone. If he lost his connection to Anastasia, he might never have a moment of transcendence for himself.

–You're not going to quit drugs and drinking?

–This enhances the experience.

It made the penitents think that there was a reason for their lost highways.

With Anastasia's benefit, Infra felt he was again a marvel. The return of Kuke had obscured his star. He felt that there was a real competition. Anastasia would have to make her mark on the scene before Kuke was permanently crowned the new princess.

–You can't stop history-in-the-making?

–But I can set up roadblocks for the actors.

–You don't have anything against Kuke.

–She's lovely. She's just not what she thinks she is.

Kuke ruled the dance floor. There was only a minimal presence for Anastasia. All of it was by word of mouth.

More and more curious types frequented Anastasia's bedroom. Infra felt that he was key to the celebrity. But Tony lost it!

--You're spending entirely too much time on this Anastasia thing. You'll never be a woman. But you let Anastasia be your substitute

He walked out. He was completely frustrated. I talked with him later at Restless. He wouldn't let his full venom known to Infra. He told me about his utter disbelief in Anastasia's spiritual powers.

–She has a bunch of misguided kids in there who want to give some validity to their acid

trips. She has nothing to offer them but more heartache.

I worked to calm down Tony. He would have none of it.

–She’s a fraud. She’s getting money out of this. She needs to be reported.

I convinced him to do otherwise.

–Crucial, you’re becoming too respectable. You don’t want to upset the apple cart.

–It’s not that.

But I did stand to benefit as long as Max influenced decisions at Restless. Anastasia’s scene was my scene. It was the first real stand against the Imperial Set. It was a populist spirituality. The Imperial Set had reserved salvation for the eugenically acceptable. This was a revolution of the spirit.

–We need to get Kuke up to snuff.

–She doesn’t need help.

–If only Thea could do more.

–Thea is in the shadows. She has a life.

The questions about Kuke lingered. Even the VC had their own misgivings.

–Kuke hasn’t seemed the same since the accident.

–I heard that they had to hypnotize her to help her survive the accident. She was regressed to her childhood. Now, she is walking in her sleep. All the time.

–It’s not the same.

–That’s all bull shit.

Immanuel was emphatic. She was submitting to his influence. He felt that Jackson and Tommy objected to his methods.

–She’s not asleep. She’s not even hypnotized. She’s in a state of bliss.

–Have you been going down on her.

–It has nothing to do with me or anyone else. She is in a state of bliss.

–I hear that it’s a new guy.

–She received training while she was away. She is beyond our influence. She exists on another plane.

Tommy laughed. He was sure that she had been using drugs with the rest of them But Tommy doubted everything about here Kuke transformation. He wanted to pretend that it was the same old Courtney.

–You’re never going to get her back.

–I don’t look back, Carl. I’m way beyond her. Or Thea. Some day the world will worship me.

Carl didn’t know if he was serious. The acid was wearing off, and Tommy wanted a drink.

I had another performance coming up in the theater. I started hanging out with Rita. I didn’t realize that she was Jackson’s sister.

–You’ve met my other brothers too.

I guess that she was talking about Matt and CC.

–Yeah.

She told me about their journey from fortune to misfortune.

–We moved from Kansas. My father was well to do. Then he lost all his money. We’ve been struggling since we’ve been here.

The three brothers had a house, the Bellevue house. There were hosts of rumors that the place was haunted.

–They’ve got some devil cult up there.

–They kidnaped some high school girl, and they’re torturing.

Most of the stories were total exaggerations. The guys just liked to smoke dope and hang out. But the police were stopping by and hassling them.

–We’ve got to do our jobs.

The house was the last stand against sprawling development. Everyone claimed that the police were in the pockets of the developers.

My bothers all have jobs. They’re respectable guys. The cops are fucked up.

Rita had an earthy sense of humor. It was charming. Maybe a little too coarse for me.

–I love downing a case of beer and just belching.

It was hardly the call for a romantic evening. But she still had an effervescent charm. She was part of the Restless magic, but she didn’t take it too seriously. She was more open than the average ruthless scene queen—our of my way.

I thought that the Bellevue house might have been one of the sources of Cascade K. They had one time supplied the acid for the club. CC had been a chemistry student at Tech. Jackson told me about one of his own acid trips where he had sen the harmony of the universe.

–Do you know quantum physics?

– A few ideas.

–I have this theory about physics and consciousness.

–Can you do the equations?

–No equations, but I know about the science.

–Science is the equations. The forces.

He became too absorbed in his own vision. He became all loud until I changed the subject.

–Do you know about K?

–I’ve never taken any.

Tommy always contended that Jackson had taken too much acid.

–You know that tall girl who used to come here.

–Tracy?

–Yeah. She had a good job. Jackson got her pregnant.

–Really.

–He’s all over the place. He paints. He has some ideas. But I could do as well.

Tommy needed to put himself in the story.

–I’m working on some painting. I’m going to get a warehouse, and turn it into a studio. We’ll also have a club over there. It’ll be downtown.

I planned on it.

I was playing piano when Rita walked in the theater. I stared at her and started flubbing my part. I hoped that she didn't notice.

Later she was polite.

–I liked it. Hazel didn't want to stay for the whole thing.

Hazel seemed to be in a different world. She couldn't grasp the balance.

–There's some guy Andy that she really likes. She said that he was going to be hanging out in the courtyard.

–I don't think that the parking lot was a courtyard.

–They've got a few tables out there now.

We both laughed.

I could feel myself hurtling towards a new summit. The stories of Anastasia, the return of Kuke—all this made me dizzy. I tried to include my time with Rita as part of this new equation. I couldn't. We weren't part of the same world. As she started to touch down, I could feel that I was soaring. I rode this lucid vision. My casual experiences were being penetrated by this overworld. Kuke and Anastasia were heralds. I followed their lead. Even Thea had taken us to unprecedented heights. The night held out a promise. I stepped on the raft as I watched Rita on the shore. Already we were too far out to look back. I couldn't go back with her to Kansas. We set sail for our new destination.

Perhaps, Kuke's encounters with Bliss held out as much promise as Anastasia's visions. For the moment, I put my faith in the new religion.

–What's Bliss?

–It's a new drug.

–It's some silly idea of Kuke's. A drug that give everyone the sensation of her orgasm.

–And it is different.

–Ever since the accident, she has had divine aspiration.

–I always saw her reach towards heaven.

–Now her entreaties have been answered.

–She is one lucky one.

The fear was an actual appearance by Anastasia at Restless would diminish the power of her revelation. Caught in the intrigues of a new location, she would pain for the return to safety of her bedroom.

–I can't promise you anything. We'd have to pay everyone there to have the kind of response that you want.

–If I get fucked up, I'll look silly. If I fall down drunk. There goes my higher being.

–Just be yourself.

–I wasn't myself when I had my visitors. It's not like things are going to change at this point.

–No, they won't.



She knew that she would have her time. But she needed Restless to be more softened up for her appearance. Once the Imperial Set had experienced, a few more set backs, the time would be apropos for her triumphal entry. She could hear the fanfare of her future. She waited patiently.

–I can't mess it up worse than it is now.

Anthea's prediction hung like a sword of Damocles over her. This was the curse of Restless. Worse than the Cube. There was this promise of sanctity. With it went the vertigo or eventual demise.

–I need some of my potion.

If only they knew.

–Is there nothing sacred?

The impertinence of the VC threatened to disrupt any triumph. They would vandalize the decline of the Empire. Anastasia had to make her imprint known before the setting sun.

–It is my nighttime.

–You know what you'll have to do.

She didn't see herself conspiring with more demonic spirits. She already advanced a pure magic.

–You 've got the whip.

–It's just a reminder.

–The more that you punish, the more that your aficionado's will want more.

–I don't leave marks.

–How about lipstick stains.

Everyone laughed.

–Time to get on your knees for a paddling.

Infra was the first and last to bow. Everyone laughed even more.

Anastasia planned her entrance. Even RIP was going to get in the act. For a moment the music stopped. All eyes were on the door. The spotlight shone and she made her way in. Everyone cheered. Then it was as if it hadn't happened. They were all back in her bedroom. She really does have mystical powers. Even Tony let down his guard. This reminds me of when I came out.

–You're still coming out.

A stay got lost in the darkness of Restless.

–Kiss me.

–I don't do guys.

–Close your eyes, and it's all the same

–Inside it doesn't feel right.

But acid eroded those boundaries. And so did Restless. Lost alone, he wanted to belong. He would never be the same again.

If ecstasy had incited the powers of the Cube, acid offered an architecture for Restless. The inside was everywhere outside. If tricked with the right kick, each self could stip off its

inhibitions and achieve its precarious unity. For those who wanted more, there were the mythic drugs of Cascade K or Bliss. Their effects would be felt later.

With or without the psychedelic, Anastasia was playing to the converted. And the hunger was provoked to achieve just the right tenor. If she had the marketing, she would have been playing to the audiences that had given in to the Kuke phenomenon. But she met Kuke on her home turf. Her sensibility would prove to be disruptive of Kuke's hold. But Anastasia could only offer philosophy. She could not sustain her disciples on the dance floor. There, Kuke maintained her throne. They watched her twist and turn. She braced on the balls of her feet, retreated, and then engaged a sequence of turns. This was an event. It was the clear affront to any challenger. It was a high achieved without any reference to hallucinogenics. It was the hallmark of Restless in these glory days. There was no doubt about the coronation. The believers flocked to her.

Infra would continue to talk about Anastasia. But he would have to do more to distract the faithful. It was easier to sell a presence than an idea.

–There's an article about Anastasia in the paper. All these pilgrims have been showing up at her house. They say that she can work miracles.

The Count pronounced the last word/

–Kuke really is in form.

Even if Billy was drawn to Infra's antics, he would not go it alone.

–Yes. I've never seen anything like it.

She had her entourage trying to shine in the same light. But there was only room for one. This was Restless's game. She played it to the hilt. If you couldn't attain a comparable high, you wanted inspiration.

–There's not a second that goes by that I don't feel this force pulsing through my veins.

For the moment, everyone wanted to be Kuke. If they couldn't work the change naturally, there had to be an artificial means. Tonight, all eyes would be on her. Everyone tried literally to soak in the performance. If she pervaded the spirit then the union would be complete. It justified all the forced couplings of the night.

–I feel hopeless. I can't help it.

–Blame it on the night.

–Blame it on Kuke.

And the reports were all flattering.

–Have you seen her?

They all knew who was being talked about.

The Cube had the lights trained on Thea. For Kuke all the psychic energies mobilized by the place were focused on her.

He looked at her in the strange light.

–Kuke,

It was someone else. From the stairs Anthea watched the lovers. She was in a silver wig. She was the sole competition to Kuke's luster.

The lovers continued the passion.

He caressed her bare arms. Her body announced a premature spring. He kissed her neck.

Her lips beckoned with all their weakness. She turned her head back to suggest surrender. He pulled her body closer. Her hips locked with his body. She could feel him sway her to the music.

- There’s no turning back.
- We already agreed what had to be done.
- And when you cross a line.
- You don’t look back?
- You don’t want to go back.
- To what.
- What if he finds out?
- Is that what we are about? Hiding?
- I never wanted things to get this messed up.
- Remember what we said!
- No stories.

She was so confused. They had been friends. He was guiding her through a difficult time. There was something in this air that seemed to disrupt their connection. It was all being pushed in the wrong direction.

- There’s no turning back.

He turned her around and embraced her. He pulled her closer so that he could kiss the back of her neck. Without being face to face, she felt more vulnerable.

- You didn’t put something in my drink.
- Never.

She felt under the influence. She also feared the anonymity. For the moment, she could have been anyone.

Anthea stayed in her perch. This was the perfect vantage point. All the other eyes were turned to Kuke. For Anthea, this was tonight’s secret of Restless.

Could the lovers ever approach the subversiveness of Restless. Would it rip them apart just as they were cementing their feelings.

- Why did you take me here?
- I told you that it would be an important night.
- For us, or for someone else.

She was feeling like someone else. She felt too free. If he became her lover, what about the dreams at home. How long could this last? Three months.

Anthea loved the new limits that the club imposed. The appeals of the sedentary life were challenged by all the upset here.

- Why can’t I have my story.

Anthea felt as if she had just cast her spell. She could be nowhere near as powerful as Kuke. But she aspired after the watching eye. While Kuke spun deeper and deeper into the vortex, Anthea was spinning further and further out. She was measuring the limits of this episode. She wanted to chronicle it all. But even for her, it was a night without limits. She tried to protect herself against the morning sun, as she crawled back to her place. She had witnessed a true changing of the guard. But the club had bred her to be cynical. In every triumph, she could see a decline. It was sunrise. It would soon be sunset. She shielded her vampiric self from

certain destruction. Welcome the light.

I was about to head out, when I was approached by a bewildered boy.

–Are you leaving?

–Yeah. It’s not a good night. Last night, they had their coronation. No one’s made it out tonight.

He perked up.

–I’m here. You’re always here too.

I felt slightly impatient but I listened.

–There is a magic here. I’ve never seen anything like it. All these beautiful boys. I want to touch them all.

He confessed a crush on Billy. He wouldn’t stop talking about the Count and his costumes. He felt that he was at the court of Versailles.

–I moved here from Virginia.

He was studying at an art college. He wanted to design fashion.

–You have to see my drawings.

The city was an eye-opening experience. He had a hair style that showed his desires to integrate into the Imperial Set. But he seemed too awkward to encompass their grace.

–I want them to let me in.

He didn’t voice such zeal. But I could feel his earnestness.

–Kuke is really a trip.

–Yeah, Courtney.

–I’ve never seen such a creature. I’m not attracted to women. But she is almost like a young boy.

–I never thought of her that way.

–I have.

He swallowed his sentence.

–All these guys here make me sort of afraid. I don’t want to lose my identity. Do you feel that way?

–No, not really.

He imitated Kuke’s dance.

–Do I have it down?

–Don’t let her see you copying her?

–Haven’t you been looking? Everyone has been doing that dance.

I thought about it. He was right. The scene had undergone that transformation with her return. They were no longer stomping out the insects. They were now doing the Kuke dance–WOW!

–I wish that I had a dance.

–You have your style. I’ve been watching you. You’re not here with anyone.

–No. I’m just enjoying the night. I’ve got to know a bunch of people here. I say hello. I didn’t dare call it a community. It sucked us all dry. There was nothing communal about any of this.

–You don’t get high.

–I don't even drink. I'm taking medicine.

–Really.

–Sometimes it gives me a little buzz. If I change the times during which I take it, it can really fuck with my body.

–You like that?

–It can feel really cool

–Oh!

–Did you have fun tonight?

–It wasn't that great.

–I wanted to have fun. I couldn't make it out last night. It sounded like a spectacle.

–It was an event. I was just here. I really can't take any credit for it.

–My name's Mark. I've just moved here.

–Yeah, you told me that. Are you glad that you're here?

–I love it. I love all the boys and their haircuts.

He even tossed his hair at that moment so that he could feel part of it all.

–Do you like the hair?

–I guess so.

Maybe he had arrived too late for the full-fledged myth. He might have been more at home at the Cube. But then he would have never faced the demons that were populating his soul. He wouldn't have gushed about the new gravity. He would have only lost himself in the old asceticism.

–I like the guys here. But they seem too aggressive. I'm just afraid that I couldn't control myself. I don't want to go crazy. I'm not calling them crazy. But you know what I mean.

He tried to stay on script. He knew that there was a history stalking him. He wanted to stay one step ahead of it. He wasn't in to confession. He didn't want to go back. He wanted to become as free as everyone else here. He could only feel the effects of the medicine. That strange balance.

–I don't see you talking to many people there.

–I don't.

–I try to get out of my shell. To meet some new people.

I didn't want to let on about my fascination for Kuke. He could understand the passing fancy. She still wasn't one of his boys. I played along as if my concerns with the same as his. He would never understand my fuller motivations. If I cared in the same way, wouldn't I have found his distractions annoying? Since you were talking to me, why were you hunting up a thousand other little boys. But I found his trifles entertaining. And at times, I was too lax. Mark was worse than disillusioned. He was on the verge. I always thought that I might be able to offer him something different. He ended up just seeing what he wanted to see. It was good having an audience. We both observed the delightful wonders. At the same time, I needed to separate myself from his irritating manners.

I was performing at Restless. I had witnessed Infra's integration into the heart of the scene. I had an ally to observe the goings on. I had even attempted to interact with Rita. And Carl and I would exchange pleasantries. I felt that I was part of the magic.

I was one among many who gave testimony to the brilliance of Kuke. I was closer to the center than I had been with Thea. Everyone else felt the same with Kuke. But they were all more zonked out of their minds. It makes any sinner seem like a saint. Hallelujah!

The VC had placed themselves within striking distance of the gold. They expected that they could upset the hierarchy. They were probably more dangerous because the scene paid them no mind. It was their work that had given Kuke the edge that she needed. The Imperial Set might have been more resentful at the opening of Olympus. For them, their goddess was being assumed in the Pantheon. All hail Kuke!

–She was better when she was dead.

–She never was dead,.

–You know what I mean. I heard that she didn't have a body. They had to create her from scratch.

–I wish that they could do the same for me.

–There are more of those unwashed boys in here.

–If I'm going to take someone home, I want to make sure that he's nice and clean.

–We all end up in the same shit house.

They all laughed.

–Where's Billy.

–He's probably nodding off somewhere.

–Why does he hang out with Infra?

–Infra is cool. He just looks like a freak.

–How does he sleep without cutting himself.

–How does he give a blow job without running one of those spikes through Tony.

They laughed again.

–Guess we'll never know.

–How long can we keep this going?

–As long as our glasses are full.

–Are our glasses half-full?

–There is no humor in this.

–Who's paying tonight.

–There's some queen out there in a jag. I think that he has the cash for all of us.

–We don't have to do some freaky thing to that old guy.

–I'll do anything that he wants if he keep me drunk all night.

–You ought to be working a bath house.

–Honey, I'm no street fag. I've got class.

They laughed their final gasp. It was getting too late.

–We still have jobs.

At least, Infra still could hold his head high among his detractors. His rebellion was hushed enough that it was merely an oddity at Restless. Everyone needed variety to make the night pass quicker.

–Do you ever feel that this is our job.

–Sister, they don't pay well enough in this rat hole.

–The bartenders can make a lot with tips.

–And they spend a lot.

–Where are you going to go at 9:30 in the morning. This is the last stop for most people. And it felt like the last stop.

Anastasia knew that she had to settle for a secondary role. She could polish up her dance moves and add a little spice to the nightly fare. She wanted an identity separate from Infra. RIP had already expressed affection for her act. They were like two girls sharing clothes. The sunny disposition of Anastasia was a palliative to RIP's sullenness. The garden was being planted at Restless. Even if the disco queens wanted to rule the roost, there was a call for new meditative order. Restless was not simply another club. It had a theater. It was a museum for the drama of the psyche.

–I like how that sounds.

Immanuel was joking about his vision for Restless. For him, it was simply an addition on their North Avenue house.

–Anything that we want, we can find here. It's a supermarket for our silliest desires.

Tommy wished that he had Immanuel's sense of humor. Immanuel started calling himself an Earl and Tommy the Baron. They were making fun of the idea of the Imperial Set. How they must have hated this crew in used cardigan sweaters messing with their hallowed fashion vision.

–I'm a real artist. What can these apes do? Tap each other's asses.

Immanuel was in rare form. He felt that he had been spending too much time sucking up to the Imperial Set. He was ready to unfurl his wings.

–Watch out, queens, I am here.

More than Tommy, he played his sexual ambiguity to the masses.

–I've got a nice body. Everyone wants to get in it. So what if I use that to my advantage. And he did.

–They all want me. Not just for my body. My creator added the one element that he left out of them—brains.

Tommy smiled.

–It's not like we're Immanuel's chorus that chime in whenever he makes a crack.

Carl added his perspective.

–I feel pretty much the same way. You go take a piss, and they're all tittering away.

–You can still make it go.

–I usually go in the stall.

–I'm surprised that someone is not doing drugs in there.

–There always is. I just tap on the door.

Immanuel laughed.

–Tap on nothing. Bang on that mother like a tank. Come on out you bitches, I've got to tie one on.

–They'll only want to watch.

–Piss on them all too.

For all their bravado, the VC wouldn't have that luster without their connection to Kuke. And she would always crawl back to her home. For a while, she'd bring a new love over to get the once over by the team.

- I really hate how you criticize my friends.
- For once if you just bring over someone who doesn't Hoover all our drugs.
- At least if you bring over a girl, I can have a little fun.
- Tommy, you just resent the fact that I dumped you.
- Dumped me, I abandoned you.

She didn't really like that sort of kidding. But she knew that she had one over on Tommy anyway. Besides, he couldn't survive without acid.

- That's not true. Some morning I'm going to walk in on you and just piss on your bed.
- Fuck you too.

The next morning Kuke told everyone that she discovered Bliss.

-I was diddling myself, and I felt this wave come over me. It was like a chemical released into the blood stream.

- Diddle juice.
  - No, I'm serious. If you injected my blood in you right now, you'd get high.
  - Were you just diddled. Maybe it's already worn off.
  - Everyone has been talking about Cascade K. This would be the happy drug.
  - Kuke, you are a kook!
  - Fuck you Tommy. You're such a weak ass in bed.
  - You liked me when you had me.
  - You know how I like to boss around guys. That's why I'd rather be with a woman.
  - Why kind of world do your ladies promise you?
  - I'm not talking about that.
  - Courtney just wants what every girl from Alabama wants.
  - Immanuel. I'm not called that anymore.
  - Koo-kay just wants what every girl from Alabama wants.
- Tommy interjected.
- A pig's dick up the ass.
  - Tommy, you are crude.
  - Too bad that crudity can't be translated into some real pleasure.
  - That isn't what Carl says.
  - He's not here to defend himself.
  - Either is half of Restless.
  - Tommy, go get us some breakfast.
  - With what. I don't have a cent to my name.
  - That never stopped you from stealing before.
  - Or you could hunt through the trash for food.
  - They've got a great salad bar at Big Star. You can always take from that.
  - Get us some bagels and coffee.
  - I want a doughnut.
  - Koo-kay, you always want sweets.
- Immanuel kissed her close-lipped on the mouth.
- How's that for sweet?



–Whose dick were you sucking last night.

–I don't suck dick. At least if there's no money involved.

–This is tedious. I'm out of here. I can't keep up with the mutual admiration society of the two of you.

–You're just pissed that we aren't talking about your tight little ass.

–I kissed that ass enough times. It wasn't so tight.

–I don't want to hear commentary from some emaciated ballet dancers. You're all stick and bones.

Tommy found a five on Immanuel's dresser.

–I'm headed out for breakfast.

–Be sure to come back before noon. I saw you take my five.

–I saw your performance. You were good. I'm a friend of your drummer's.

She approached me out of the blue. I didn't even recognize her. Her comments felt uplifting.

–Remember my name.

I promised not to forget. She had a vision. She was an omen of greater things to come. Kevin was our drummer now.

–She's cool. I think that she's crossed over.

–What?

–She's out there.

–What do you mean?

–She had a brother who died doing coke. Now she communicates with the dead.

She had said something almost incomprehensible to me. I kept it to myself.

–We went out until her brother's death. I couldn't take it after that.

She had crossed my path like a phantom. She knew. There were these lost spirits. They had tried to disengage themselves from their terrestrial contacts. They were looking for their constellation. I too needed to be ready.

She wasn't primarily motivated by something physical. Kuke was articulating an art form. It was away from the formal stage, and its appeal was meant to be wider. It asked for participation. More than that, she connected her movement to a concept, an abstraction. The dance floor was a sketchbook, and the figures that she drew took her to another realm. Ultimately, she didn't drugs. She just needed access. She had the codes that could send consciousness into its altered state. So the dance invited a frenzy, a passing over to the next state.

Kuke wouldn't trust her gifts from the immaterial world. She needed something else to reassure her. She pretended that her sexuality was mystical. But it was a loose approximation of the harmony that she sought. She constantly needed reassurance. This was even more the case after the accident and reconstruction. Tommy joked that it had dislodged any pretense of restraint.

–You're a total nympho!

–You're just shocked that I don't accept your morality. You're no different. You're just

more clumsy with your pleasure.

But Immanuel was equally shocked by the appetite of his pupil.

–Nothing can hold her back. It actually hinders her journey. She tries to make the two equivalent. I'm not denying the relationship. But she's taking the same point of view as Jean-Luc. That sex alone can offer this transcendence. If her partners are more mercenary, any insight will be crushed by their opposite fervor.

Kuke was goddess without morality. She didn't want a parent that returned her to childhood. Her innocence was not for lack of curiosity. She knew no bounds. That was her appeal to strangers. They all fell in love with Kuke immediately. She was like a pet poodle that cuddled up close to them. They couldn't help their attraction. The more that they felt, the more that they assumed they were closer to her spiritual center. She did nothing to contradict this feeling.

–They don't have to do anything to get her salvation. They can keep their wasteful lifestyles. It's the same principle with Jean-Luc. He just makes them pay a lot. They figure that since they pay so much, and since he stimulates them so intensely, that they must be undergoing some spiritual change. He's a quack. I don't want Kuke becoming a farce as well

Immanuel was able to create a sense of proportion with Kuke that he couldn't find for himself.

–I'm not trying to moralize for her. I make jokes all the time. I get fucked up. Perhaps, I'm not the best example. But I'm independent financially. It's a meager existence. She's waiting to get rescued off the dance floor. I know how she's stepped over to another realm of existence. She's sold us on the idea. But that's where it stops.

–Maybe she needs to start her career over again.

–That was a fluke. It's like her childhood. She's too involved in the discovery of Bliss.

It had seemed like a joke. In many ways it was. She had reacted to the rumors about Cascade K. She wanted to design her own chemistry. Something automatic so that she could share this thing inside.

–I know how the idea started by accident.

She was still dazzled by her own Wonderland. If this had been the wide-eyed Courtney of a year ago, it might have been charming. But her fate now took on a more ominous tone. She was a star–Kuke. She could command audiences. She was trying to assume her old role. Hanging around the house on North Avenue as if her spiritual advisor would show up at the door. The other girls in the house started to resent her.

–I'm watching too much television.

She needed a springboard for her fantasies.

Immanuel continued to defend her. Her doctors lent him support.

–She has recovered. But you never know about relapse. She still is in recovery. At this stage, the shock of a relapse could kill her.

Her lobbied his roommates to be more sympathetic.

–How long will this go on.

–For some time. It's not like she owes us any money.

–Where does she get her money?

The touring may have worn her down and made her more prone to stay in Atlanta. She

also realized the potential of Restless. It was a dump, but the idea was solid. She had surpassed Anastasia in advancing a new view to the supernatural. Anastasia had been much more hesitant when she needed to reassert herself. She was now one character among many. They all worshiped Kuke.

The word had spread. Restless was this collection of seers and oddities. It was the nighttime paradise that small-town southern boys had always dreamt about. They wouldn't have to go to New York to come out and be daring. They had a home in Atlanta. This went beyond the promise of the other identity bars. The die hards weren't acting out a time of rejection. No guy dressed up as cheerleader to invert the dynamics of the small town on the psyche. These kids forged new inventions. Things that had no place in their provincial upbringing. They pushed forward with the strength of inner confidence.

–I just bought a couple of dance imports from Germany.

–They need to play more of this stuff at Restless.

–I'll lend you some of the stuff. You can copy it.

The rebellion needed an updated soundtrack. Despite the daring outlook of the players, the club culture was still backward. It catered too much to the disco queens. The real visionaries of the night life spent their time on the sidelines waiting for their favorite son.

–It's Depeche Mode.

–I was hoping for something even more edgy.

–We take what we can get.

–Another New Order song.

–It's better than more Janet Jackson. Or Paula Abdul.

This was not a laughing matter. The philosophy of Restless was cosmopolitan. But the culture lagged.

–If they opened up a new place, I wonder if everyone would just go there.

–Don't say that.

–It's not really about the music. We can listen to the good stuff at home. It's more about the feel.

–What feel? The atmosphere here sucks.

Even though the rest of the VC made do, Immanuel started to explore his vision. On some nights, he would bring over his sketchbook and put together plans for a new club.

–That's all great. But it's never going to go anywhere.

–It might!

Kuke hit the dance floor. He drew inspiration from all her flourishes. She was a new architecture, an art deco. She was a wall that moved. A column that came alive. She was the muse that breathed life into these immobile forms. Around her there was a trace of these waves. And she moved in the current. The dance kept expanding.

–There is no limit to what I offer you!

–There is no limit to what I offer!

Immanuel and Kuke seemed to sing in concert. From idea to form to idea to form.

–There is something too abstract about all this.

It froze time. She had pierced the barrier. She was kinetic. There was a stillness that would prove oppressive. Anastasia's insights had actually been more revolutionary. But she could never exploit the institution. She was embraced by RIP. She dazzled the Imperial Set. But they were envious of her power. Kuke only continued the reigns of Billy and the Count. She wasn't going to damage the harmony of Restless. She kept the masses on the outside while she enjoyed the fruits of their oppression. Open the gates, let the flood begin!

The experiment had started at the Cubes. But now it had entered a new phase. Under the influence she could feel the transformation of the body. On her return, she felt that the body was still constrained by the same limits.

–How can I arrive at a final transformation? It's like an insight that you get when you are dreaming. You wake up, and it's all gone. I want to keep in my dreaming state.

This feeling had motivated Thea to her becoming. Everyone had remarked on the transfigured self.

–Perhaps she wasted the opportunity.

–What would you have had her do? She wasn't a visionary.

–She was blessed with a gift. She needed to use it for the maximum benefit.

–She used it for *her* benefit. How could you expect her to know any different?

–Isn't the power great enough to transform you?

–You're adding the fictional component.

–If you don't have a background story, then you need a foreground.

–Where do you get that from?

–From an experience, an intense experience, an intensity.

–In itself, doesn't it cut the personality off from its source?

–Let me make sense of this. You have the gift—it opens you up to these intense experiences. But that is simply an enjoyment in itself. This goes beyond that. You need a bridge.

–A history.

–If time held together. But there is a discrepancy. So the history just takes you back to the traumatic, and all the energies dissipate in your reaction to it.

>>This goes further. It breaks with the traumatic history. It's not about finding the parent, or a new parent.

–How long do we have?

–Long enough to break the connection.

–Is this the promise of Restless.

–It's a promise. But it's barely enough.

–You have to keep alive.

–I'm not sure that I can.

–How's your heart.

–I don't have enough heart for this.

–There isn't enough heart for this.

–You need to have your heart broken.

–This is not a river of tears.

–But if you drink from the river.  
 –You can taste the moonbeams.  
 –I don't want to lose you.  
 –It's in the blood stream.  
 –How do you get it out?  
 –It's more like an idea.  
 –The only way that I can help you is if you cut me open.  
 –It's not like it's running around inside me.  
 –Can you save me?  
 –I don't think that I can feel what you feel  
 –I can't feel what you feel.  
 –The Paradise is available for you. You have to push to the edge—don't eat, stay up for days, push the envelopes of pleasure and pain.

I watched the couple share their secret. They feared the power of Restless. They felt that they could resist it by finding that shared moment within themselves.

She yielded to his kiss.

–Tell me your name.

She put her finger over her mouth.

–Shh!

–He won't even know that you were gone.

–I can't help you. I can't give you love.

–You can give me something deeper, your self.

She smiled. He was too good at his game. He touched her leg. He tried to peel off her blouse. He undid a few of the buttons. It exposed her shoulders. He held them. He kissed her neck.

–He's so preoccupied with work.

–We don't work here. We have our own troubles.

–I need a new body. One that doesn't feel shame.

–You are too modest.

–I'm myself.

–I'm forgetting.

–Kiss me harder.

They embraced intensely. She felt that she was somewhere else.

–This is all too automatic. All too a pattern.

–I read the reports.

–This is how it's supposed to happen.

–Who else is involved?

–You want names of my other lovers.

–I just want forgiveness.

–This is a terrible story.

–We have to trust each other.

–I can't stop.

- We have to start here.
- I’m helping you.
- Give me your hand. Let me hold you.
- That’s good for now. Until I trade in my body.
- Do you want a new one? I like the one that you have.
- I want to be her.
- Everyone wants to be like her.
- Who is she?
- No one really knows. She claims to be Courtney.
- I know that can’t be.
- Don’t tell me that you are?
- I don’t know who I am. No one really does.
- You have got beyond the body. You have reached the paradise. You can’t survive with that much information.
- I just want to be a heroine.
- You are to me.
- I don’t trust you.
- You said trust.
- Those were your words. I just held your hand. I kissed you. You didn’t want to stop. Now you are finding the answer that you need.
- Give me the word, and I will free you.
- This is hopeless.
- I’m not doing something illegal.
- That may be the only way that any of us will escape.

They moved together in this fluid zone. They could feel the tides pull them together. But it was a belief that they would never accommodate together. They were restless.

- That’s all you needed to say!
- Do I know you?
- No, but you will.

The Kamikazes rolled in like a thunderstorm. They were the new cherubs of the dance floor. Their appearance announced the end because they already had seen the end. Their fatalism was fresh because it was so stark in comparison to the frills of the Titans. From the moment that Jimmy spun around, the geometry was to change forever. The room could not bear these new symmetries. He tossed his jet black hair to an imagined audience. His hand reached in the air to bring down lightning bolts!

It became so easy for everyone to try to ignore the arrival. The Titans only felt the visitation of the angels of death as premature. Their flourishes would not submit to the reaper. Why not another twirl around in defiance of the new disorder. It was just that the Titans had none of the grace of their new adversaries. And Jimmy had an appeal that none of the Titans had attained. He tempted a precariousness that had formerly been eschewed. The Titans had wanted

to dabble but could never cross over to the other side. Their art sought a more traditional balance. So the actual creative gesture was always thwarted. On the other hand, the Kamikazes left no doubt about their intentions. Just as we were dazzled by Jimmy, Terry and Blaise mesmerized us on the flanks. Nothing would ever attain that insanity. They explored that ill-will that was the heart of the Titans regime. This would be the twilight that Titans had so feared. The cataclysm that they had so constantly avoided.

Unlike their predecessors, the Kamikazes would never submit to the mandates of the daylight. Already R.I.P. and Infra had challenged the social expectations. But in essence they ended up paying tribute to the ultimate dominance of the day time order over the night. The preponderance of hair shop and boutique workers was a critical support to the Titans hegemony. The Kamikazes had none of that mundane flair. They sought to live by their charms alone and would do anything to sustain that illusion. They pushed it to such an extreme that for once the assembly became real. They attained an eternal night.

Even if the ritual would eventually bring tragedy, the angels would strut these rare climbs as long as their powers held .

The orphans laughed about the new arrivals. They didn't think that anyone would replace them as the angels in waiting. But they welcomed the new order. For once they felt a promise against the imperialism of the Titans. The V.C. had seemed to propose an antithesis. But they were always overshadowed by the Titans' craft. They became lost in their own self-indulgence. A couple of hits of acid and the bleak reality was a dazzle.

–I don't know how you can take this place straight.

Sara had touched Blaise's penis.

–It was probably an accident..

–No, he let me do it.

–I hate to tell you , but they're all gay.

–He needs money. I can pay him.

–You barely can pay for your apartment.

–I don't want to go to work tomorrow.

–Suck it up. It's getting late.

–I wanted to make out.

–This is a gay bar.

–Not totally.

–For you, for tonight, it is!

<p>I know a way that you don't have to tell me your story. You can just let it tell itself. Then it will just go away.</p> <p>–I like that. How can you make it go away.</p> <p>–Does it already hurt enough?</p> <p>–More than you can know.</p> <p>–Is it physical pain?</p> <p>–All the time.</p> <p>–Where does it hurt.</p>	<p>–I think that I'm getting a big head.</p> <p>–What do you mean.</p> <p>–The world is revolving around me.</p> <p>–That's a joke.</p> <p>–It is pretty funny.</p>	<p>–You could help me to forget.</p> <p>–What happened?</p> <p>–What do you do?</p> <p>--I mess up people's lives.</p> <p>–That's sort of clever. Until the next day. When you have to wake up.</p> <p>–There's something that can help that.</p> <p><b>You always wanted that.</b></p>
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<b>CARRIAGE ACROSS THE STARS</b>	<b>1</b>
<p>looking for a car with a dent in it kidnap torture scheme REPREHENSIBLE as actual</p> <p>poison: He thinks that he can outsmart me.</p> <p>–I wouldn't think that was that easy. Is it about love?</p> <p>–Love that turns to hate.</p> <p>–We take what we can get.</p> <p>–Until we have to take it away.</p> <p><b>SOLUTION:</b> They just need a new Lazarus.</p>	
<b>COMMENT: They'll take whatever they can get.</b>	

<b>ROOM OF INTENTION</b>	<b>2</b>
<p>Gives them too much attention.</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: Happiness isn't all that it's cracked up for.</b></p>	
<b>COMMENT: She knew what she had touched. And it was solid.</b>	



<b>ARE YOU HAPPY?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>Never!</p> <p>the movement: THE ACT interminable therapy what I want make it a problem</p> <p>new blood</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: Do you know that you are a star?</b></p>	
<b>COMMENT: Jay intended a connection to his victims.</b>	

<b>WHAT HAPPENED TO EA?</b>	<b>4</b>
<p>EA knows about the transformation what you were before</p> <p>Jay gets to know Jordan after the death of EA</p> <p>can't love unless you know         Can't hate unless you know</p> <p>can't hate unless you don't know         Can't hate unless you don't know</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: Jay wanted to feel needed.</b></p>	
<b>COMMENT: I doubt the existence of Jay. It dos offer the writer a needed excuse. How close can he get to EA?</b>	

<b>CUTTING INTO THE HEART</b>	<b>5</b>
<p>feel the pain that I feel unravel He told me that he knew something about me. And the more that I talked to him, the more that I felt that he knew the pain that I knew.</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: He only wants to make you feel more pain.</b></p>	
<b>COMMENT: If she doesn't get away quickly, he will start to act like Jay.</b>	

<b>DON'T SPEAK UNTIL YOU'RE SPOKEN FOR</b>	<b>6</b>
<p>–You wish that you were there for a conversation that you weren't part of. You want to speak for me.  Still her face would not lie for her.  level of voice: anger speaks for her.</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: I can take care of it. I want to look beautiful.</b></p>	
<p><b>COMMENT: There are only so many stars in this constellation</b></p>	
<b>MORE PARADISE</b>	<b>7</b>
<p>On occasion I found myself moving against what I call reality.  But these movements of relief were necessary. Otherwise, I would be held by paralysis—not doing anything.</p> <p>P: Paradise</p> <p><b>CELEBRITY</b>  immediate: get what you want  afraid to bargain without it.</p> <p>The woman with the handshake.  <b>SOLUTION: It's in the touch.</b></p>	
<p><b>COMMENT: It will cleanse the soul!</b></p>	
<b>THE SYSTEM</b>	<b>8</b>
<p>He promised that he would make her a star.</p> <p>a remarkable person  say important  act in mysterious way</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: She learned how to hold her breath for a long time.</b></p>	
<p><b>COMMENT: Everyone learned the method.</b></p>	

<b>THE HIDING PLACE</b>	<b>9</b>
<p>BACK PORCH:  too many faces to sift through  new blood: Marilla and Tina</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: How pure is the blood?</b></p>	
<b>COMMENT: There is a way to turn seasoned hands back into new blood.</b>	
<b>BEYOND PAIN</b>	<b>10</b>
<p>Take her in for war crimes.</p> <p>{[F] [K] } RES (x+ h)</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: This is where it becomes an institution.</b></p>	
<b>COMMENT: It won't hurt that much.</b>	
<b>LOSS OF CRUCIALITY</b>	<b>11</b>

lost its promise  
lost its pleasure.

She seemed to be looking at something glowing. Her revelation.

–I don't want to go out anymore. I've lost something.

–The promise?

–No, just the pleasure. I wait around for something to happen.

–Oo, you're going there.

content: **CURVE**

THERAPY: silent movies

the face

of course an accident to interrupt

**THE MOVEMENT:** love them.

know them to hate them

hate their image

do it for personal gratification

**SOLUTION:** Once the old blood slips away, the new guard won't be able to resist the magnetism.

**COMMENT:** There's new blood here. Some brat from Schaumburg. No one else will listen to your tale.

**DOES COURTNEY WANT TO PUSH DANCE?**

**12**

phones up  
talk slow  
he takes off his hat

castrate  
It was about this time that I revealed my weakness for...

They don't know. They think that it's original.

--I had to sell all my records  
--How tragic.

**SOLUTION: She needs reverse dance lessons.**

**COMMENT: She wants no masters!**

**PROPHECY**

**13**

We've got a surprise for you.

**SOLUTION: Her heart is her master.**

**COMMENT: She will depose the heart.**

A

They talk from the movement.  
Theory of participation: the movement.

B

They rely on each other.

committed to  
participate in

acceptance by the NORM

**DERANGED**

**14**

He's trying to create his life based on his look.

**SOLUTION: He needs a better stylist.**

**COMMENT: He needs a better life.**

<b>THE SCRIPT</b>	<b>15</b>
<p>–I listened to hear the conversation directly.  –This won't be of much use to you.  – I do have a method.  What are you afraid of?  Anything that you think or feel  things became the worse</p> <p>adjust</p> <p>the bomb  alone  the last person alive.</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: You will be chosen if you hang around long enough.</b></p>	
<p><b>COMMENT: It's not just going to happen to me. Its going to happen to everyone that we know. I'll be the last person on the earth. Wandering around by myself. But will I look good?</b></p>	
ETERNITY	<b>16</b>
<p>Don't tell her.  We'll hate you forever.</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: It's a powerful thing.</b></p>	
<p><b>COMMENT: It gives you the chance to do something worse.</b></p>	
<b>THE BEST CUT</b>	<b>17</b>
<p>Hide beneath her hair—one eye looking.  Thinking that staring could capture, could encompass.  I've watched you and I know.  Know that you are being captured in return.</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: Thea gave in to that tactic.</b></p>	

**COMMENT: Kuke feels that she is more clever.**

**THE RUNNER**

**18**

She was dragged into the alley way.  
–Hey. Let go. That’s mine.

She thought that by becoming ever more depressed, she would bypass death and become closer to God.

–What’s behind that door?  
–Let go! You’re hurting me.

**SOLUTION: Jay was working with the K!**

**COMMENT: Kuke, Cascade K, Bliss**

**VENOMOUS IDEAS**

**19**

He had his alibi. He would induce a death-like trance. He could not have been in Providence murdering his wife.

The Snake placed venom in the Raven’s vein. He was hanging between life and death.

**SOLUTION: He pretended that the poison was Cascade K.**

**COMMENT: If he showed up the next day, they knew that it went well.**

**SAINT COURTNEY**

**20**

Find their souls.  
Crush them.  
holding back

exchange: know completely

**SOLUTION: It’s all an attempt to strip them of their immunity.**

**COMMENT: Kuke was already a part of them.**

<b>PARADISE BLUNDERS</b>	<b>21</b>
<p>–Your response  –Tears apart respectability  –Bring Jennie over: we’re going upstairs  –You had all this planned  I had visions of myself crawling through a window</p> <p>PURSUIT OF THE PARADISE: Will alter everyday life.</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: Maybe we can reduce the dose,</b></p> <p><b>COMMENT: They had cornered the market.</b></p>	
<b>THEORY OR PRACTICE</b>	<b>22</b>
<p>Take her before the Fashion Tribunal for war crimes for wearing a jacket like that  –It’s not such a bad thing.  –She needs to be shot.  –Why don’t you do it?  –I just might.</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: You can live on criticism. It’s how you get over</b></p> <p><b>COMMENT: You can’t survive on criticism.</b></p>	
<b>PRACTICE</b>	<b>23</b>
<p>MARRIAGE GAME  Sondra</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: There was magic in Atlanta.</b></p> <p><b>COMMENT: Sondra needed to go back home.</b></p>	
<b>LOVE AND PARADISE: PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT</b>	<b>24</b>



So overwhelming that he could think of anything else outside of this place and this time.

Whom he loved.

**SOLUTION: You need to have your heart broken if you're going to find salvation.**

**COMMENT: Pleasure is not the antithesis of pain.**

### STELLAR DISPOSITION

**25**

star because I want to be.

I say look at me

The group gets together and declares me a star.

How many people in the group.

A few.

–A few too many.

–Are you trying to insult me.

–No, just admitting to the obvious. You are a star. Now turn water into wine.

–Just get me a gin and soda water.

**SOLUTION: All the drinks in the world aren't going to change how I feel.**

**COMMENT: The drugs would let him drink more!**

### COMING DOWN

**26**

Only say hello.

You thing that it means something else.

–Why don't you throw away this stuff.

–It's my story.

–It's a human interest story. And when there's another freak, you'll be on the trash heap.

–I'm already on the trash heap, darling.

**SOLUTION: If you're already too far gone, a little push won't be noticed.**

**COMMENT: Jay is only going to be too comfortable here.**

<b>NEW BLOOD TAKES REVENGE</b>	<b>27</b>
<p>At first he loved the kid!          But then he started hating her.          Why the hell are you bothering me?</p> <p>Prepare a little surprise.</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: Don't try to stop her until she shows her hand.</b></p>	
<p><b>COMMENT: She's wearing gloves today.</b></p>	

<b>THE ONLY HIGH WORTH GETTING OVER</b>	<b>28</b>
<p>His name was Andrew also.          Waiting for someone special          realized that it didn't mean anything different</p> <p>higher experience          entertained the idea</p> <p>it was a thrill</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: It's not mystical.</b></p>	
<p><b>COMMENT: It's just cyclical.</b></p>	

<b>JAY'S CODE</b>	<b>29</b>
<p>He claimed that the only person that you could trust was a traitor.          Only logical. Someone who knows.</p> <p>He shakes her hand.          –You can't talk to him. He's poison.          Magnetic ray.</p> <p>[] α [] β [[] []]</p>	
<p><b>SOLUTION: Everyone seemed to have a new teacher.</b></p>	

**COMMENT: Don't blame the teacher, blame the erasers.**

**IDENTITY SWAP**

**30**

assume an identity  
 somnambulist: not responsible for what you are doing  
 terribly plain  
 get him to do things  
 Jay

Magnetic Ray

**SOLUTION: This proves Jay was a myth.**

**COMMENT: There was that nasty bath tub killing.**

**A READY SOLUTION**

**31**

have the weapon  
 kill on a whim

knowing the consequences  
 this is the last mission

you even get the chance to call the cops

**SOLUTION: Tell them what they want to hear.**

**COMMENT: It's not in the heart, it's in the head. Do them both!**

**THE NAKED CITY**

**32**

looks  
 ideal  
 Crucial was undone by his own seriousness,

**SOLUTION: I want you to write about me.**

**COMMENT: So taken to this novelistic existence that you'll do something bizarre to get locked up for it.**

**IN WHICH THEA LOSES HER VOICE**

**33**

**DOMINION OF PAIN**

legislate  
make laws  
tell me what to do

make a difference how long this will last

a little planning

you'll have to do

Karen-Kevin  
treacherous  
superfluous

learn without reference to extraneous content

**SOLUTION: It's already too late for her.**

**COMMENT: She could still serialize her autobiography. She needs to learn to write better.**

**APPRENTICE**

**34**

If we can't trust anyone, we become frustrated. The trusted part, the part you can't trust

Ted  
-trust  
can't see through it

on what it is based  
and aversion towards killing

**SOLUTION: You need to teach them how to do more than write.**

**COMMENT: They all love the DEATH SENTENCE. How do you write that?**

<b>ORIGINS</b>	<b>35</b>
Girl in Philosophy's class with the bridges she's famous now girl in the film class  Florence  vt gravity of desire in Georgia  COOL do not move outside  <b>SOLUTION: We need someone to help with the equations.</b>	
<b>COMMENT: The equations are intuitive.</b>	
<b>COURTNEY AND THEA</b>	<b>36</b>

something of me died  
sociopathic

–I feel this absurdly eternal power. It is without beginning and without end. Once I start something, it give me the power to finish it. Any crime become logical.

General: the time to find that he is a jerk.  
they've been talking about you.  
of course all women do

are you  
do you  
will you

did he say anything about you

[L] What I will say...

pure violence

that won't take on a life of its own  
the temptation of cash

she poisoned it by telling Courtney about Thea

HOW COULD I LEARN TO HATE YOU.  
just give it time...

What do you want? I'm not sentimental about the past.

The Revolution  
I'm coming in to your house.

**SOLUTION: The novel needs a center.**

**COMMENT: I'll invent a new character—you need a new place too.**

breakdown of the phrase

your double

with J, Crucial plans to trick and rob a divorcee. Another one of J's friends.

what happens in the kitchen

the other room

over there

**SOLUTION: It all sounded better on paper.**

**COMMENT: The punishment would be delicious.**

**THE LISTING OF  
POISON BOYS AND  
OTHER ASSORTED  
RIGAMARoles**

**If you have an  
attraction for a girl  
and she finds herself  
pulled into the web of  
the poison boy, then  
you have to abandon  
your attraction.**

**POISON BOYS**

1. **Ganglia**
2. **Phil**
3. **?**

Easier said  
than done.

Once she  
has been  
sucked up  
into the  
whirlpool  
of the  
night, you  
need to  
affect the

We wondered if we  
would put ALAIN in the  
rogues gallery. Had his  
appeal given him a place  
that could evade the  
crass manipulation of  
his desire.

Within the two sexes  
**homosexuality.**

A moment when  
homosexuality appeared  
to offer the avenue to  
escape from the  
outsiders. Immersed in  
the presence of the  
dance in its immediacy.

carve out a resistance

the appeal of desire in  
its crass immediacy

that even the HERO  
acknowledged his  
attachment for the crass

The creation of the third  
sex

that we had discovered  
the force of the night.  
not by being held by an  
attraction, a lure

**JEAN-LUC WANTS TO BE HEARD**

**38**



Louise  
Lucretia Bondage  
Jean-Luc Sexxe

Does it really hurt  
Arrested  
leave her in there

this means everything to me. You have to do it.

come on  
do a little  
tease for me  
prancing around the room

in the corner  
playing her own tune  
you can't cross this line  
how to be a saint

**BIMBO ROCK**

just open up to  
betrayal  
no risk  
easily protected

pick and choose over  
why not all

Gina  
I felt betrayal  
Eleanor

beyond  
Cassandra/Sondra

**SOLUTION:** Cassandra

**COMMENT:** That's how it goes.

<b>COURTNEY AND THE MIRROR</b>	<b>39</b>
<p>nice back</p> <p>nice pinkie finger nice reality concept</p> <p>blinded</p> <p>they made me wear these shoes who les flics</p> <p>Bileti to Marseilles pour chanter le ROCK</p> <p><b>SOLUTION:</b> He knew how to make me come.</p>	
<p><b>COMMENT:</b> Could he make you disappear—through the mirror—that’s how the pleasure started.</p>	
<b>MORE THAN K–D!</b>	<b>40</b>
<p>coconspirators in desire</p> <p>called substance grey mater we spout the might sub kind</p> <p>no way you don’t spend a night it’s a lifetime sneak up disintegrate</p> <p><b>SOLUTION:</b> Kuke needs a better opponent.</p>	
<p><b>COMMENT:</b> She’ll eventually fight herself.</p>	

<b>ORAL CASCADE</b>	<b>41</b>
<p>treat it as if you have an audience rather large of course it's only a private discussion and you're losing me too</p> <p>Cascade K movement gives you something to hide believed as if you're one of us but your shoes</p> <p>they're not playing</p> <p>all fiction do you care about it fresh tattoo</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: She is behind it.</b></p>	
<p><b>COMMENT: That's two Kukes for every one of you.</b></p>	

<b>MAN-EATING SHARKS</b>	<b>42</b>
<p>it doesn't really matter trash can't love we just want to get to the end all the characters are gone robbed from trade plateau-happeiness another plateau-earlier happiness</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: I'm explaining it. You just don't get it.</b></p>	
<p><b>COMMENT: You have to write it in the flesh.</b></p>	

<b>NEW STORIES</b>	
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Tommy and Thea  
 Aaron  
 the Count  
 friends of crime  
 accident corners  
 mechanism of hatred  
 dark edge  
 music

**SOLUTION: It's not about crying.**

**COMMENT: Drink from the river!**

**STORYTELLERS**

**43**

$\tilde{N}_{ij}$   
 This is where I made the break.

**SOLUTION:**

**COMMENT:**

**DUPLICATION**

**44**

$\tilde{N}_{ij}$   
 Why are you here? What got you to come out?

**SOLUTION: My work has to start someplace.**

**COMMENT: Why are you here?**

**LUCKY STRIKE**

**45**

$\tilde{N}_{ij}$ 

No doubt the opening of Luckie's had been the ultimate defeat of the Titans. Now they needed to act out at home in a way that they were not permitted anymore in public.

–I think that I need to increase my dose. It's not getting me off as intensely as it once did.

This charting of inner space was to prove their undoing. The shock. Once they hit that inevitable barrier, they could never go beyond.

So they had to keep hitting against it with all their might.

**SOLUTION: Don't get ahead of yourself.**

**COMMENT: Prediction is an art form.**

### TITAN ROCK

46

 $\tilde{N}_{ij}$ 

discovered something about the out that was parallel but entirely incompatible with the lessons offered by the Titans

Their Olympian stretches had always been graced by a stream of self-admiration.

**SOLUTION: The gods get angry!**

**COMMENT: Is it raining in Atlanta—how unusual.**

### THE OUT: EXPLORATION

47

 $\tilde{N}_{ij}$ 

This thing that would henceforth be called the out. The out existed in a place way beyond the initial enticement of the night. That initial trek was only the complement to the everyday. It almost encouraged the imprisonment of daily experience. The out operated in a place that was not recoverable in daily activities. No wonder its taste burned up so many of these explorers.

**SOLUTION: You have to get in to get out.**

**COMMENT: Go to town!**

### THE TERRIBLE TWOS

48

$\tilde{N}_{ij}$   
Kim

I just wanted to stand close to him

His friends laughed as she struck a pose to shape her body to fit his.

He's just perfect.

He doesn't interest me anymore. I've got someone waiting for me at home.  
He can't cook. He doesn't work out.

By sitting with Kim, I was precariously close to April.

Sparkle

the hand gesture remembered

a cleverness

a pout in the mouth

curiosity

**SOLUTION: It's what you say, not what you do.**

**COMMENT:**

**The heightened intensity of the impression**

**the subsequent subsiding of that impression**

**CRISIS OF PERSONALITY**

**49**

I used to see these guys getting beat up. Some girl put a cigarette out on a guy's arm , And when he said something, they just beat him, nearly killed him.  
I was afraid of all that.

**HER EMERGENCE:** debutante!

I used to be fascinated with death and beauty. That stoic look that knows what is, who she is.  
–You fascinate me.

–Don't say that. You are embarrassing me.

–Sometimes I think that life is just like a fashion show and we're all just staring at the lights waiting to go on. Are we showing too much flesh. Or not enough.

–I wish that I could love you.

–I wish that you could so you knew what it really meant not to be able to love. You seem so remote. But I know what it is, You give in to easily. That's why you hang around with Tony. He is perfection without disappointment. That's why he never can really like a woman. Or he can only like her for what she really is. In his eyes you are always eternal.

Her eyes glistened as I spoke to her. She gripped my hand. If it were only something more, she would have wanted me to come home with her.

I was afraid that this sentimentality would continue in our subsequent meetings. I did not want to die. I did not want to die with her. She was possessed. She was telling me as much.

**SOLUTION:** And I wanted to know the secret of her longevity. It was simply that she had battled time. And I became frightened, disheartened. What I had always wondered about. It had been with me all the time. What she was, everything that she was I could see. Everything she had done to escape the ravages of time.

She had been doing it all along from the moment that she emerged. We might say from the moment that she was reborn. Or made dead undead. She knew how to preserve herself for death.

**COMMENT:** You need to list all the participants. It feels like Friday!

<b>K BOYS</b>	<b>50</b>
<p>And all my life I hoped there would be someone who could answer all my questions. The incredible loneliness before death.</p> <p><b>SOLUTION:</b> She was the perfect candidate for Cascade K.</p> <p><b>COMMENT: It's just a coincidence.</b></p>	

<b>ANGE</b>	<b>51</b>
<p>–It's weird but my dreams are coming true. It's like these tinkling bells going off to remind me</p> <p>I wanted to kiss Ange at that moment. To peel off the blue satin dress and slide myself along her bare legs. I hoped that in sex I might get her powers to see. For once I felt immersed in this experience. I knew that she would be overwhelmed by my understanding. It was her gift because it was so simple. She could not share it. Ultimately it was a curse that made it impossible to change course in midstream. Love once would be love for life.</p> <p>–Are you listening to me.</p> <p>Worse. I was becoming her, entering her dream. But everything was all misty, hazy and the closer that I got to her...</p> <p>I could sense that curse. And if I was with her I could feel her losing her power. She twirled in the empty parking lot.</p> <p>She would always remember this moment. Not for what was said or what happened. She probably would forget the actual event. But something colored her experience. Years later when she was a stumbling obnoxious drunk, bumping into everyone, exposing herself in public, she stared at me and reminded me of that glimmer. But it had already rubbed off and there was nothing that I could do to put it back together.</p> <p>Do you hear that. They're playing "Daffodils". That's my favorite song.</p> <p>Do you want to go in and dance.</p> <p>I can dance out here. Besides you're here. I like spending time with you,</p> <p><b>SOLUTION: Dreams. She was near being pregnant with an ex-lover's child. And the witty comments that sounded so good at 4AM in a grocery store would seem like stale commentary advice when she had to get up at 5 in the morning to scout down some Pampers.</b></p> <p><b>COMMENT: She'll haunt you after death.– She never stopped, did she.</b></p>	



<b>THE END OF THE WORLD</b>	<b>52</b>
I feared being the only one alone in Restless. Just the bartenders and the DJ.	
<b>SOLUTION:</b> You need to be the DJ.	
<b>COMMENT:</b> Who just walked in the door?	

–**We got carried away.** I started kissing him. Then he started reaching underneath my blouse. I knew if I gave in to him that he would like me.

>>We started to sway together. I love the feel

>>**It felt good at the time**

–I hate myself now.

**Q** *If it's something that I like, I can get it for myself.*

–You live in a little ratty apartment.

On her stage, she had been without equal.

–I don't like the feel of a man inside of me.

–What?

–Are you OK with that?

–I am , but a lot of guys are like that.

–You'll go far.

–You've already done well.

>>I can't afford to feel bad about anything that I do. I don't have that kind of time.

–I'm burning up. I want you inside of me.

**S'** –I can't take it. I'm coming out of myself.

She felt her body pushed along by the current. She let herself glide in flowing excitement.

–When is it going to happen.

–It’s happening as we speak.

–I want to feel more of this.

–I feel like I’m driving ahead with breaks. I can’t stop. But I love it!

–It felt good at the time. But now I hate myself.

[A E]

[M N]

[A E]

[M N’]

–I did it again. I hate myself that I didn’t do something to stop it.

(AN) Do you feel any better about things?

Do you feel any better about yourself?

She started crying. She couldn’t stop. She couldn’t help herself.

–What’s your name?

It seems like she didn’t hear him.

–Where do you live? In Buckhead?

–My name is Theresa. I couldn’t stop myself.

She steamed tears.

–Stop crying!

–I can’t stop. I live on Buford highway with my sister and our friends. We all live over there.

EM →  $\Lambda$  –You have to learn to enjoy yourself.

–No stories.

–What do you mean?

–Don’t look back. No regrets.

–A story?

–A girl give her life to the first guy that gives her an orgasm. That’s a story.

–We just get over it.

–You’ve got take something for your problems.

–What?

–If you felt good doing it, you have to make sure that you know what you like. Keep it going the way that you like it.

–Next time I’ll know what I’m looking for.

–I had fun.

–Yeah!

–We’ll have to do it again.

The next night she caught him doing coke and making out with another girl in the bathroom.

–Just tell me if that’s what you’re going to do.

–We all have possibilities.

–Two can play that game.

–My body’s coming alive. I can feel it running in my veins. I’m just coming out of my skin.

–You need to take something to even out the feeling. That way you won’t lose your high. You can pass over to the next stage.

–Is this what it’s all about. Keep pushing to the next stage.

–Never come down.

But she was coming down. She felt worse about herself than ever.

–I never thought that I could feel any worse.

–But now you know the cause. You can pull victory from the jaws of defeat. You’ll get yourself back.

–Hold me!

–I don’t want to feel attached to anyone.

–You’re not being yourself. You’re acting like her.

–She wasn’t born that way. It’s a defense mechanism.

–It’ll make you hard. Don’t fear you melancholy.

–I just fear coming down.

–You have already fallen too far.

There was no star to lead her to deliverance. She embraced the executioner’s song.

–I can’t survive outside of him.

–Here take this.

–I still want to be her.

Kuke had a new rival. It only enhanced her reputation.

–When you have the viper down, don’t let him rise up. She will only destroy you.

–Is that the new code?

–She will come anew!

Across Buford Highway swarmed a new breed. The Imperial Set could not survive without new blood. But the flowing blood would be the stream that would take them down. Anthea saw the trouble. But even she would be tempted along the way.

Theresa, Mike, Tim, Jerry, Nate, Jerry, Sara, Rachel, Jaz—they were the Orphans. Some of

the Orphans didn't even live on Buford. But they would all blend in with the other forces—the Kamikazes, the Blands. Restless would never be the same.

I was again heading out of Restless when Mark flagged me down.

—It's not that late.

—It sucks in here.

—I've heard about a new place.

—I saw the *La Dolce Vita* fliers.

—Let's go.

We felt a little out of place at Lucky's. It was a night of Latin dance. The manager came up and sat at our table.

—I'm Sam.

—Hey.

—I know that tonight seems a little weird. But it's going to get better. We know what's going on at Restless. We want to give the crowd a choice. You'll all love it over here.

There was a sense of haunting luxury that captivated the place. A giant mirror filled one side of the room. The art deco style was captured in the twisting walls and swirling fixtures.

—This used to be owned by a movie studio.

He brought us down to explore the vaults where they stored the films. This is all part of our vision.

—We could store corpses down here.

At first, he thought that I was serious. Then he started laughing with us. He never understand my humor. He was too uptight. But the place engulfed him. And we all loved the concept.

—I admitted that I needed cash. I'd show him a little affection. And he'd just call it a loan. A loan that I wouldn't have to pay back.

—Is that how you live.

She smiled as she gripped a cigarette holder in her teeth.

—I live!

### **PROCESS OF DISDAIN:**

I see what I want represented. I start to hate it!

RESTLESS!

—I did what I was told. It still wasn't enough.

—You're not coming apart.

—I used my intuition.

—It's not a method.

—It only worked for me.

—I like your hair. I want to see you naked.

—We're all naked at Restless!

PARADISE: The frequency of honey!  
GO MEDITATE!

–You killed RIP. He just lay there a long time. Left him for a day or so. Brain damage for sure. Claimed that the voodoo bite did him in.

–Kuke that was a strange dream.

–Dream? It seemed real to me.

–RIP is talking about going to LA with Anastasia. I don't think that it will happen.

–RIP died and has been traveling in the Death Zone. He will come back when we need him.

Dovsky ran off with a student–Ellie. She forgot her copy of the Scarlet Letter. They had to buy another one.

PASTE–better than K

dead in New York then alive in Atlanta

why are we here

Jay: I'm no thief–I only sacrifice victims–a religion

TOTAL EXPERIENCE

K

honey

paste

–I want to be someone. I want to go places.

–Don't hurt me whatever you do.

Her lack of will pushing her head into the pillow–Xendra.

–Let those who want to work–work. The rest of us have things to do.

RIP's message to the people

–Don't get caught in your own conceit!

–What's happening now?

–We're all becoming cats.

–Anastasia.

–Meow!

–Sometimes I'm obsessed with my own sense of history.

–I feel so natural taking off my clothes.

–I want to leave mine on for now.

It was a set up. I was buried as if dead. My greatest performance.

–That’s Cascade K. It offers all the symptoms of death.

–I’m not really dead.

He took a school hostage.

–Not Jay?

–Not Jay!

–Now let get back to Tom’s dick. It will be an accident tomorrow. It is falling off.

–Bitter, bitter.

–It’s falling, it’s falling!