

WROTE



CJT

PRELUDE

The words became heavy and the sentences long. Along the narrow hallway towards the scene of the crime. Archer walked each step, smelt the putrid odor, and peered at the gory spatters across the wall. He knew the horrific image ahead, he'd written it before. He was writing it again.

The killer his creation, the murders his fault, the darkness deep inside, but it was never all his. He just had the keys to unlock it. Why would he aid the monster? Give him more victims, sharper claws, a more ravenous hunger? He had no remorse for the fates he'd given her. Given himself.

He had no regrets or mercy. Only fear.

He arrives at the last door in the hallway. Wondering what atrocity happened in the other rooms. The terror of fiction turning to fact. A nightmare into a tragedy. How could he ever write again after this? How can he speak or see or listen? How could he live. His love was dead. Again.

He opens the door

Her face was twisted, torn from the claws contorting her head. Pieces of her body strung about the red covered blue room. It was hardly recognizable as a human, but there was no doubt. He knew it was her.

Hardly any body to cry over. Nearly no tears left, that he hadn't cried before. He gathers the mangled head, a large loose piece of hair and flesh falling off. Holds on to a tattered ghost of what had been his last true love.

Her dignity and elegance lingered even in the most hideous and disgusting sights. A phantom beauty still imprinted upon her. Archer stared into a memory. It wouldn't last long, before the moment it would all end. The times philosophizing at Avalon Lighthouse, dancing in Chinatowns finest fish market and the kisses she always so desperately wanted and gently held. The visions fell back into the faceless, bodyless husk of his greatest romance.

The silent terror pervades for minutes. Until the hour was up. The beats of its heart pounding through the walls. It's breaths reek stretched from the basement to the second floor. It howls with a metal scraping pitch and slowly makes the ascent, with loud uncaring stomps. It knows he's there and wants him to know. It's wheezing breath drifted close. Archer sets Mara down and eyes the scene for anything. No pipes, no weapons that could do anything, no closets for hiding or windows for jumping.. No escape.

Archer lays with the scattered remains of his lover, the creaking noise of even that, attracts the beast. It hastens its prowl. It howls again, this time twice. It runs up the stairs in a frenzy. Knocking into the walls and tearing the steps apart even more.

It tears through the hallway. Only seconds would exist, before Archer met the monster he hid for so long. Certain death just before him.

ARC 1

I

The Pitch!

A tall blonde chubby man in his late 20s, wearing a suit that is a size too small, stands at a blank white board, in front of a dimly lit meeting table.

Two seated, watching the man at the board, with stern observations. An older man that looks like the boss from office space, but without a chin and a chubby waspy pale dark-haired woman, shaded by the smokey black room.

The writer makes his pitch, In a sweaty uncertainty.

“It’s a story.. about a writer, writing about a horror writers’ scariest story. After the death of the horror writers bride, the two writer characters become intertwined and the scary story, becomes a scary reality”

One of the seated producers, is an older man, who looks exactly like the boss in office space.

“Been done!! Inception! Ever heard of it?? Dreams within a dream, within a 250 million gross release?”

The pitcher taken aback by the sudden attack.

“Yeah.. I’ve heard of Inception. My..”

Cutting him off.

“87 million on opening night heard about Inception. They don’t want to watch it again. They already watched it. Already bought it. Unless you got a sequel.. I don’t know why you’re here”

Getting pissed, the pitcher retorts.

“I’m not trying to make Inception! What!?! does that movie have a monopoly on dreams and stories within stories? Its not even about that anyway.”

He finds it hard to express his vision. The producer, smugly tries to explain.

“No, but I can already tell it won’t sell.. this is not as original as you think. It’s been done 100 times. You’re not unique. I mean fuck! What do you think you’re gonna be with this.. Huh, the next Charlie Kaufman or uh uh Michael Gondry!?! They did it. It’s been done and they didn’t make a dime. I can’t buy that script. No one buys that heady shit anymore. The world isn’t Portland man. It’s not 2007 anymore. Those scripts don’t make money. Take your script and make it simple. Just a horror writer. Scary little girl. She gets kidnapped. Dad has to save her. Boom! A script that can sell. Should be writing this down.“

He stares at the slightly sweating pitcher, wide eyed with a thin lipped smile. The pitcher nervously tries to elaborate.

“Well it’s not even a script yet, it’s more of an adaptable loose book for now, to be adapted into a HBO mini-series and I don’t think you fully understand what I’m going for here. It’s a story of stories! It’s a character of a chara..”

The pitchers rising vigor is countered with financed fury.

“Get out of my office! Get the FUCK OUT!!! Take your pretentious FAT self-circle jerk piece of shit and fuck off!.. Tell me What I understand..! I understand how to make it in this business. I know money!! People with money!! MOVIES THAT MAKE FUCKING MONEY!!! Who are you? What have you done? Huh? Why are you even here?? Free donuts? A dare?? GODDAM STUPIDITY!!!”

Profusely sweating, the pitcher reels from the sudden assault and tries to return it.

“I’m just trying to write something that can transcend the medium. Capture a mystery that’s inside all of us. Represent the inner world, that bleeds into the outer realm.”

The woman at the table finishes her notes and gathers papers into a folder.

“I think you should leave”

The triggered producer puts a finger up to signal everyone to wait. He stands and paces briefly. Then leans over the table like a hawk, scouting its lethal strike.

“There is no inner world! There isn’t a world within the world. There’s not even an outside world! There is just the real world. Ok! This world. The only world. The one you obviously don’t you’re too high to live in. The one that doesn’t want to watch your bullshit. Much less, want to read it either. No one cares! If they did, why the fuck would they want to hear some pompous writer rambling about how hard it is to be a writer. No one cares if you’re deep and meta and different and fuck!! They really really could give less of a fuck about your emotions.. Wahhhh I’m a writer. Wah I’ll just write about writing, because I can’t write an

original story, so I'll write a weird one. Wah I'm so tormented with unique visions. I'm so misunderstood. People need to know! Wahhh wah wah wah!"

Taken aback and confused, the pitcher looks down below the whiteboard.

"I'm not that emotional. I just want to make something important or or interesting."

The producer sits back, as if he just blew a load all over the pitcher.

"Listen ok. Listen to me. I'm feeling generous. Let me give you some more fucking advice. You know what the people want? What they care about?? They care about what you have and have done. Who's in the movie. How much it cost. They care about explosions and talking dogs and scary little girls and and melodramatic love stories and being pandered too. They wanna relate. Live like the ads they see. Be the ads. They want to escape they're sad little uninteresting ant life and go on an adventure and talk about it at work the next day and seem interesting for once in their manufactured little life. That's what they want. Just write another fucking story, about aliens and space worms. Do a fucking sequel, a prequel. People love that UFO space shit. Entertain them. The aliens fight other aliens. They fall in love. Maybe an alien is revealed to be the other alien. THERE that heady enough for you?? You even gonna write this shit down?"

Finally boiled with an autistic artist rage. The pitcher finally explodes.

"They are not fucking aliens!! They are otherworldly spirits! Interdimensional from a rift between realms of space time! The worms are weavers and consumers of the space/time fabrics. You fucking money cock hungry mongloid machine of a human peon! Did you even read it???

Fuck you!! Who are you to judge a story huh?? and what the fuck!! What the fuck!!! Does

money have to do with making something that means something? You are the death of art! You are the poison of creation!! Fuck you!”

The producer rises again, seemingly a foot taller. Raising his arms and pointing his finger.

“I am the fucking, art god!! I giveth and taketh away! I can make stars. I make people. I make the world; people want to live in. Multi-million-dollar stories and characters. Shared by 100s of billions. You are nothing! Your story is nothing! Its amateur. Filth!”

The producer spits at the pitcher’s feet. The grey suited woman steps in to try a diffuse the escalating situation.

“Abe!?! C’mon”

Abe throws up his arms again and paces at the back of the table, glaring at the woman and looking pitifully at the Pitcher..

“What?? It’s a terrible pitch. This is the state of writers today. Preachy and entitled millennials, thinking some mundane big worded story about magic everywhere you look, is going to be interesting to anyone, but useless vegans, college dropouts, indie dikes, and soy drinking fa..”

The woman stops him fiercely. Fearing a possible lawsuit.

“ABE!! ”

Abe ignores her.

“Get out kid! Don’t come back unless you learn to write. Take notes. Make something worth less than the paper it’s printed on.”

The pitcher with nothing to lose, fights defeated.

“Fuck you! Abe! You don’t know my story. You don’t know who’s going to read it. You don’t know shit, except for pandering advertisements wrapped in propaganda and plastic plot, for your commercial overlord cunts. You make shit! You are the god of shit!”

The pitcher glares at Abe, looking for blood.

“Ahhh you hearing this heather? He’s trying to be poetic. Haha aha hahaah!”

Heather looks at the Pitcher, then to the door.

“You’re embarrassing yourself. You should really leave.”

Abe grabs the printout story outline.

“Haha ahh... it’s called story! Holy fuck, so simple and stupid, it makes the convolution seem meta retard simple. Holy shit! This is a joke!”

The producer walks around flipping pages to find an excerpt to mock. The pitcher stops the march.

“Just read my story dammit! Did either of you read any of it? WHY AM I HERE???”

The producer wags the story around.

“I know your story. Ok? You’re the lowest form of “has been”, who has nothing. Who can’t sell anything in this town, so you say you won’t sell out. There’s nothing to buy!! There’s fucking nothing. This story is worse than nothing. This story here... “

He crumples the story.

“It’s shit!”

Heather gets concerned. She fears what's ahead, apparently knowing what comes next..

“Ron! Not again!”

Ron drops his pants, smiling at the pitcher. He wipes his ass deeply, with the story.

Really getting in there.

“It's worse than shit!!!”

Heather yells at the sight of the shit covered story.

“Ron!!!”

The pitcher sees his story. Sullied.

“My story...”

II

Dreams

The pitcher wakes up in his brightly lit studio, milk stain on his shirt, 20-dollar kimono tangled on him and his office chair. Numerous pudding containers and sardine tins litter his desk. His head resting on scattered notes and drawings of a lighthouse. He perches up into his office chair. Rubs his eyes and wakes himself.

“It was all a dream huh? Ughgk.. what a cop-out.. Fuck!.. Maybe the producer was right.. Who is gonna read this shit?”

The laptop glows. Only 40 pages written. His black cat passes by the screen. He gives the cat a quick pet.

“What do people want to read?...”

He starts a new doc and stares at the blank screen.

“What do I want to write? What am I supposed to write, that hasn’t already been wrote?”

Staring for minutes, he tires and walks outside to the patio. Leaning up on the rails, near a bunch of empty beer bottles and grabs a pack of Marlboro Blacks. Smoking one in tired thought. Looking at a dark sky.

He deposits the cig in a overflowing ashtray, grabbing another from an almost empty pack. He fingers it for any remaining. Throwing empty down into a overflowing trash can. The

night clouds open a peek at a quarter moon. The writer sparks his second and stares. Drawing each breath of smoke as if it were a new idea.

Eventually gazing down at his watch. 10:29pm.

“I still got a couple hours... Fuck...”

He finishes his smoke and walks back to the script at hand.

“Hmm.. Maybe that should just be the beginning. Yeah.. That’s good for now.. Start with the shot and the pitcher.”

The words flow. He writes vigorously for hours. Fueling with chocolate pudding and black bean burgers, after he runs out of canned fish. Anime plays in the back. His quick hand starts to studder. The clicks stop. He backs away from the screen, stretching out and groaning.

“Ooph my back!”

He lays down on the dirty wood floors, moving a ottoman and pile of books to the side. He stretches out and stares at the ceiling.

“Fuck... Where do I go from here? How do I even narrate this thing? First person mixing third. Would that be weird. How does that even work. Maybe I’ll switch narratives to capture the writer writing a writer”

Rambling to himself, he then breaks into a horror scene monologue, to his resting black cat.

“Beware the long hallway son! There be animals in every room. Beast that wander through!!.

The cat meows.

“... Yeah I know.”

Pulling his hair and struggling for the last few words to finish the arc. He peers at the ceilings design. Seeing creepy faces. He loses himself in visual horrors.

Suddenly loud yelling echoes from the outside city streets. He opens the screenless window and snoops. Not being able to see the figures but hearing the argument.

“Whatda hell goin on baby girl..?”

A concerned gravely voice asks.

“You can’t tell me who I am! You don’t know me!! You wish you knew me! You’ll never know me! Get up offa me! GET UP OFFA ME!!”

A booming woman’s voice rejects the man’s plea.

“Baby c’mon! I know this tough. But What I do? What I do now??”

“No! this is bullshit! Tough luck Aaron. You fucked up, was that fat bitch worth it! Huh?? how was that coochie Aaron?”

“Baby! it’s all a misunderstanding. You know my character. I don’t play like that. That ain’t me!”

“You don’t know me Aaron and I don’t know you. That’s that!”

“Baby c’mon! You know me!”

The couple move their argument in view from the window. A young obese black woman and a scrawny older black man talk with their hands and loud words. A dog barks violently at the commotion.

“I don’t know what to believe anymore. Sure, as hell aint your ass right now!”

Aaron slouches at this.

“Melanie! Baby c’mon. She meant nothing to me! I love you! You know that!”

Aaron moves in, to consul her. She backs up fast and puts a hand to halt him.

“Fuck your love bitch and fuck that fat ass ho”

Aaron tries to hold her hand.

“Melanie! Girl!”

She slaps Aarons hand.

“Don’t you dare touch me Aaron!!”

The man reels back. Looking hurt.

“Baby please!”

Melanie gets pissed.

“Don’t baby please me! Quit following me. I don’t know you.”

Aaron stays, as Melanie storms off.

“Melanie please!”

He says on the verge of crying. She ignores him walking off.

“You my little dream girl. You my dream! Baby!!”

The sidewalk near the writer’s studio cradles the sobbing lover. He begs for minutes.

“Some Jerry Springer shit...”

The writer closes the window, grabs a tapioca pudding, and goes back to the laptop. The black cat wakes up along with the laptop, its tail brushes against. The screen glows.

“That’s it! It’s so obvious!! I need more characters. I need more stories, in the story. A comic relief, a tragic woman, a fat person... Black people, gay people. People in love. People! Character! Diversity!”

Centering the laptop, he starts to type

“Allright”

He sucks the pudding like a vacuum.

“Ok, characters. Gotta make em loveable, hateable, believable, unbelievable. The human experience. Hmm should I follow classic archetypes or just make a Frankenstein of personalities I’ve met. Can I do both?”

After an hour, another chocolate pudding. The last one. He finishes it and reviews the story so far.

“Ugh!.. oh man, they seem soulless. Like a means to an end. A vehicle without gas. Fuck, is it the words that make the character or the descriptions or what..?. Hmm probably both and more. I gotta give these characters character, but how? And how to get it to follow a strange overarching plot. Oh man, I get why writing is so shitty in films. Its fuckin hard. Maybee... No..“

He exhales existential dread on the cat, which meows again. Getting up, he hits his back a few times.

“Ahh oof, my back!”

The rest of the pudding vanishes, after a small anime break. One Piece, wine and weed, seem to spark something. He debates on writing it down

“Fuck though... It’s getting late”

2:44am. The cat meows again.

“Whatever. I gotta write at least six hours a day. It’s the only way to make it.”

3:13am another cigarette

“What to write?”

III

Second Pitch: Homerun!

In a humble 80s style colorful brightly lit office meeting room. A well-dressed Japanese American man gives a projector presentation to a robust blue dressed brown man and a thin woman in red pantsuit. The screen flickers images of twisted beasts and shadow veiled creatures.

“Which part is it? Which piece? What is the story, that will shake mankind to its core? Rivet even the most fearless godless heathen? What monsters exist more horrifying, than those who create them? Not god, but man. Imagined monsters, painted in shadows, are the most disturbing of all because they’re personal. Reflected in a dark mirror of our inner most terror. There’s nothing in the darkness, but what you think you can see. What you don’t want to see but have to. The depths of the abyss, can only be comprehended in instinctual imagination.”

A profusely sweaty robust Hawaiian man, wearing thick glasses and a well-fitting bright navy suit. Nodding vaguely, thru out the presentation.

“So... How do you... How do you make that a book?”

The presenter smirks confidently, but humble.

“Simple. Multiple characters with intertwined stories. They see this monster differently. An evil clone, a black hole, a killer clown. An alien. A scary little girl. The monsters are a projection of the characters personality and personal trauma.”

A mousy blonde haired rosy cheeked woman, in Hillary Clinton style garb. Seems intrigued by the idea. Smiling widely.

“Sounds kind of familiar, but in a fresh new way. I like it. Our company has been trying to expand our reach within the young adult market and this sounds perfect.”

She says very calculatingly. The presenter responds very receptive.

“Excellent”

The red lady looks to the man in blue. He seems confused.

“I don’t know.”

She gets excited and looks to the presenter.

“Great! Great!, yeah.. A couple more questions, before I sign the check.”

The presenter sits and readies for business.

“Of course.”

The thickly built man pulls some papers together and readies to write. Dropping his pen under the table. Likely due to the sweat. He struggles to pick it up, crawling halfway under the desk, but eventually succeeds, then grasps at a coin on the floor. A silence lasting almost a minute as he eyes the coin. A foreign one, he doesn’t recognize. He looks at them further confused, putting the coin in his chest pocket. The woman lights up like a robot and swivels to the presenter.

“This has a lot of potential. How flexible are you with characters? Be honest.”

The presenter leans back in the office chair.

“I like to see where they go. They write themselves a lot of the time. I just gotta listen.”

The mousy lady, nods intensely. Looking to her partner and then back to the presenter, with a confused smiling.

“Who? Um nevermind.. great ok umm, well, sooo we need these characters to appeal a very diverse readership. Our investors are looking to increase publishing number in Hispanic regions and African communities.”

Presenter answers

“Like.. in Africa?”

The Hawaiian jumps in holding the pen up and adjusting his glasses.

“African American woman to be exact.”

The presenter seems intrigued.

“They’re a pretty big base?”

The lady continues.

“The biggest. They love their heady horror stories. Pay for it too. By far the biggest consumer of dark esoterica and erotica. Especially the young 20s demographic”

The presenter slightly surprised by the lady’s info and deliverance. Perhaps turned on slightly. Gives in, excitedly to the demand.

“Well... Um yeah... I think I can uh make the story appeal to African women and Hispanics. More characters like that for sure. “

The Woman ecstatic about his racial openness, slowly turns to gross concern with her next question.

“Awesome really great and we couldn’t help but notice, they’re isn’t a love story in the pitch or proof of concept. Are you saving that for the finished product?”

The presenter seems a bit taken aback.

“No. I didn’t really want it to be represented in this, other than the hole monster story”

She bats her eyes fiercely but subtly.

“Yeah ok, well. Does he save the hole monster and turn her back to normal?.”

He responds somewhat coldly

“No. He gets sucked into the void of his ex”

The Hawaiian puts his pen down.

“Or... Or maybe we can try an alternate scene?”

The presenter chuckles at the thought.

“It wouldn’t make any sense otherwise”

The Hawaiian pulls out a cloth to dry his dripping forehead.

“We’ll work it out. We’ll work it out”

The presenter leans back in his chair again.

“Sure”

Not wasting a beat. The mousy girl asks one final question.

“And lastly... We unfortunately need spoilers. How does it end?”

Confused by the question. The presenter musters a response.

“The hole woman?”

The Hawaiian seemingly interested in the monsters

“No. The uh whole story. How do they destroy the monsters? They fight like a really big monster. Ya know. Final boss monster.”

The presenter is offended at the question.

“They don’t destroy any monsters. They become them.”

The woman is growingly concerned.

“Ok... and that’s it?”

The presenter swallows pride and tries to explain calmly.

“Basically. I mean there’s a lot of pretext to the transformation, but that’s essentially how it ends. They fall into the hole of themselves. They become the creatures of their latent fears, connected to the loss and lust of a small town.”

A light bulb turns on in the lady.

“Huh ok.. Just brainstorming here, buuut Maybe one character survives, maybe uhhh uhh they all come together and defeat the monsters or oOOoo ok, they come to terms with their monster and free them from their monster bodies. Teaming up against the King of the Monsters.”

The Hawaiian lights up.

“I like that a lot. Yeah ok!”

Scratching his head in frustration. The presenter interrupts the moment.

“Those wouldn’t really make much sense with the characters I have and the backstory, or the town they’re connected to. Why would Alan come to terms with his cosmic dread monster?? The same force that killed his father and haunts his mother! Why would Milly accept the baboon rapist who robbed her of childhood innocence? The cycle ends when the monster realizes what it is.”

The Hawaiian takes charge, putting away his glasses.

“Ok well we can work on that too. All in all, I think this is a decent little idea here. I’ll talk to the higher ups and we’ll see what we can do.”

The presenter forces a cordial end to the meeting.

“Thanks. Pleasure meeting you”

The lady gets up to shake his hand.

“Yes, of course. Let’s make something happen”

The Hawaiian seconds

“Yeah, lets see what we can do”

The presenter takes his reel and leaves

IV

Calling

The writer, Arthur, this time with spikey jet-black hair and tanner skin. Thinner and with tinted glasses, leans back with a bottle of gin.

“Ok, got the intro of the horror writer. Seems kind of British or old timey, but whatever. Some people talk like that. Some people like that. I talk like that time to time. “

He puts the bottle down and picks up his vape. Filling the small open spaced apartment, with a thick chocolate cereal cloud.

“Alright and now. this is a story about a writer writing about a horror story, that most becomes real, for the author writing about the writer. Should I continue with the horror writer or switch to the writer... or to the horror book? Hmm that could be interesting... oh man this is gonna get complicated. What a mess. Maybe an outline.”

Typing furiously next a sleepy black cat.

“... Whatever.. Ughh its too open ended. Too fuckin convoluted. I just gotta figured out a different way to..”

The phone goes off with a metal gear solid ringtone. An unknown number shows up in the caller ID. He reluctantly picks it up.

“Hello”

90s Japanese music in the background

“Hello?”

“Yes hello, who may I ask is calling?”

“This is your worst nightmare!”

“Who is this?”

“Look behind you”

Looks behind him to see a messy bed, a sword above it, candles, and a small collection of anime figurines.

“Milo?”

His friend a bit offended

“Ah dude, don’t compare me to that cuck. I slay way more”

Slightly groggy, Arthur answers

“What’s up Arnold? It’s like midnight man. You change your number”

Drunk and excited his buddy celebrates.

“Dude it’s like 3am over here. Whatsup nigga??”

Arthur wakes a bit at the enthusiasm.

“Damn.. Yeah. How’s it goin cunt?”

Arnold proudly exclaims, as if he’d graduated college.

“Dude, I finally fuckin beat vagrant story”

Arthur proud of his boy.

“Dope”

Arnold goes into the struggle.

“Yeah, had to grind for like 6 hours to beat the last boss. Fuckin suuucked!”

Arthur slightly distracted.

“Yeah, that game was pretty tough”

Arnold ups the ante.

“Bruutal!”

Arthur looks at the computer screen. The feint progress of a novel. He leans back in the shabby office chair.

“Good game though”

Arnold moderately impressed.

“It was alright. No FF8, but it was tight”

Arthur meets in the middle

“Hard to compete with Final Fantasy”

Without missing a beat. Arnold goes to the next JRPG. A topic they often gravitate around if anime is out of season.

“You see the new trailer for Kingdom Hearts? It’s coming out this year.”

Skeptical Arthur segues.

“We’ll see about that. Hey, uh before I forget. You talk to Archie?”

Slightly worried. Arnold responds.

“No, not in weeks.. saw a post he made on Facebook though. Seems pretty out of it.”

Seemingly knowing something off. Arthur hints.

“Yeah he’s been acting kind of weird”

Arnold jumps to Archie’s old friend.

“Think it’s pills”

Arthur looks at the laptop again. Then to his stretching cat.

“I don’t know man. Was just wondering how he was doing. He seemed really different last time I saw him, and his brother said he hasn’t seen him in a little over a year”

Arnold seems unworried.

“Seemed good when I talked to him”

“It’s probably nothin’..”

Arnold turns the conversation to Arthur

“Hey, how’s the story going?”

Arthur perks up a little bit. Springing his chair towards the desk.

“Well, I was actually just writing it before you called”

Intrigued, Arnold asks.

“Hell yeah, what’s it about?”

Arthur pauses a little

“Well.. It’s kind of... hard to explain. It’s like a story of stories”

“Ok...”

“... Yeah like a writer... Writing about a horror writer. And the writing starts to turn into reality. Its been a little rambly, but I think I’m going to go more horror with it, then I thought, but uh yeah, kind of autobiographical, surrealist, multi layered storyverse.”

Arnold a bit overwhelmed.

“Yeah...”

Arthur studders to explain.

“Well...”

Arnold moves on to the next J topic.

“Oh dude. You’re caught up on Berserk right?”

Fanboyish, Arthur exclaims

“Yeah Vol. 39”

Arnold giddy

“That fucking ending am I right”

Arthur like a 12-year-old girl asked out to a dance.

“Beautiful! That image of Guts and the eclipse. Fuuuck!”

Arnold gets a little serious

“Dude! Caska is finally back”

Arthur speculates.

“Yeah it’s a pretty big deal. I wonder how it’ll all end. Miura is a fucking genius”

Arnold sees no end.

“If it ever ends it”

Arthur has a flash of a end scene. Involving a man alone, on the moon. A kingdom in his sight, far off in the distance. He feels a impulse to write it down.

“Yeahhh speaking of ends man, I really gotta get back to writing. “

His buddy groggy from 3am drunkenness.

“Well, let me see it, when you finish. If you need any help. Let me know. “

Glad to hear support, Arthur silently accepts.

“Thanks man. I’ll let ya know”

About to wish a goodnight. Arnold remembers something he was gonna ask.

“Alright alright. Oh, hey before you ditch. How’d the interview go?”

Arthur distracted but swift in his answer

“It was just a dream”

Arnold confused.

“What?”

Arthur trying to explain.

“It was great. Got a lot of good feedback, some good networking and It was almost unreal, how well, I pitched it.”

Arnold giving a lil shit.

“Sounds unreal, Mr. uhh uhh uhh”

Arthur getting slightly defensive

“Yeah, well. Good stories are hard to explain. “

Arnold counters with wit

“Your stories are hard to explain”

Arthur tries to match.

“Not hard to explain, just hard to write”

Arnold drops one last J-hard reference.

“Alright Kojima”

Arthur tired of the topic

“... Whatever”

Arnold reps one more.

“Ok squall”

Arthur returns the reference.

“Yeah you fuckin chickenwuss!”

Arnold quickly halts.

“Hey.. Hey man.. Let me call you back.”

Arthur confused at the sudden shift of goodbyes.

“Alright. Talk to ya later”

Arnold says his goodnight.

“Love ya man”

Brotherly love returned.

“Yeah you too”

Arthur hangs up the phone. Checks watch, after looking over work. A clock hangs over the computer desk.

“Fuck.. I need to go to sleep...”

Looks towards the window. The cat meows.

“One more cigarette”

He looks at the moon, while smoking a lucky strike on the balcony. His black cat asking for attention on the rails. Arthur dreams in a tobacco glow.

“Almost a full moon”

Third Pitch (Open Innings)

“It’s a cartoon about a cartoonist, who is working on a horror cartoon. The walls between cartoon and cartoonist fade, with the introduction of a magical TV that can transport him to the real world.”

A large colorful boardroom, with a large TV screen, surrounds a chubby balding man, pitching a cartoon to a couple producers. A blue and red table, seat a John Hamm lookin’ guy and an attractive Asian lady, wearing varying shades of grey. The cartoon producer looks conflicted, as he shoots an idea.

“... And its episodic. Seems better as a movie”

The cartoonist elaborates.

“Yes, maybe eventually, but it’ll follow a long form narrative, alongside of standalone cartoons. Arcs, ya know?”

Still confused the man in grey inquires.

“... Sure, and the cartoonist, why is he important to have in the story?”

Confused by the confusion.

“What do you mean?”

Trying to give nice advice to the cartoonist.

“Well, why not just tell the story of the horror cartoonist. Why do you need this middleman! Just seems a little convoluted.”

The cartoonist replies trying to reassure his prospective producer

“It’s not. It’s a layered story. With multiple timelines and perspectives of the horror.”

The producer gets blunt.

“Just seems kind of redundant. No offense”

A little defensive. The cartoonist takes a seat at the table.

“Well, it’s not... and no offense taken”

The producer claps his hands and grins a business smile.

“Great. So next phase of this little pitch..”

The cartoonist replies overly smoothly.

“Throw the ball”

The man in grey looks puzzled.

“What?”

The cartoonist tries to skip an explanation.

“It’s a... I think it’s a saying”

A silence is shared at the table. The two producers exchange informative gazes. The man in grey sizes up the woman and continues the meeting.

“Next phase. Alright. How open is this story?”

“very open. I mean, the plot can go so many ways. Especially with the cartoonist making the cartoonist angle. Its vast!”

“Whoa. A lot of excitement.. yeah.. ok. Um well, here at cartoon network, we are very open and very progressive. Appealing to a wide.. Vast demographic.”

The staunch half Chinese, half Japanese woman speaks up.

“How are you with minority inclusion?”

“Pretty good. I uhh like the underdog, ya know. The outcasts of society.”

“Outcasts!! Yeah, you can’t be calling our minority audience, outcasts, and dogs! Yikes”

The John Hamm look alike offendedly remarks.

“Yeah man, Minorities is all you have to say”

“Makes em seem kind of minor though, doesn’t?”

“No! Only to you”

“I was... just joking (I guess)”

“Well let’s not just kid around here Arthur, we got a cartoon to sell. So your open, but slightly offensive. Mina Wu here is a open minority and I’m open, In a lot of ways”.

He winks at Mina. Mina looks disgusted, but somewhat intrigued. Jon Ham acknowledges Arthur, after he eye fucks Mina.

“Let’s make a deal.”

Arthur exhales with relief

“Sweet. Yeah”

“First, you can’t have a male character as the lead “

“Why not?”

John Ham Smugly

“Wide appeal!”

“That’s gonna change a lot of material.”

“You’re gonna have to be “open” with that material Arthur. There are certain things, our network is going to want to see.”

“Like what?”

Mina jumps in.

“Non-patriarchy is a big one. I’m guessing you wrote the cartoonist as a white able-bodied man?”

“Well, the main character has pretty bad back problems”

John Hamm looks crosses his arms, quite offended.

“My kid can’t walk!”

“... Shit”

“Yeah, he needs help shitting too”

Mina grows intense.

“Are you trying to be offensive?”

Arthur continues to try and diffuse the tension.

“No, I’m just free balling here. I don’t mean to offend”

John Hamm leans back in his chair.

“Offensive is good. As long as its tasteful. We like to get pretty risqué with our programming these days. You know, were down to get “Edgy”. “

Mina combos.

“Just look at adult swim”

John Hamm continues, talking to Arthur, but peacocking to Mina.

“What I’m trying to say, is keep it in the animations and just be open”

Mina licks her lips.

“!!”

Arthur Looks slightly concerned.

“I’m.. I’m open”

Jon Ham looks pleased.

“Great, so cut out the “middleman”, add a African American woman, maybe transitioning. Maybe into a adrogonyous alien who needs to save the world and I think you got a great cartoon.

Mina nods in admiration.

“Oh yeah! That’s great. That’s really good. She’s transitioning thru the cartoon”

Jon ham claps his hands

“Wow!.. Yeah, now were getting somewhere!”

Arthur taken aback, but still interested.

“That’s!.. actually, not that bad of an idea, but the..”

Mina starts imagining.

“The horror cartoon is about high school struggles and racism in America”

Arthur trying to keep up.

“High school?”

John Hamm very pleased.

“A Latino/latinx high school

Mina on a roll

“It’s a coming of age story, about a strong willed, gender ambiguous girl of color. As she struggles with a Trump presidency”

Arthur a bit saddened

“I don’t really want to get political and I don’t know about some of these changes”

Mr. Ham asks slightly confused.

“Do you want to make a cartoon Arthur?”

Mina assures

“Contemporary matters sell, Arthur”

Arthur defends, while trying to retain openness.

“Still... It’s just can we have one thing without trump involved and the politics. I think it would really distract from the horror.”

Mr. Ham explains

“Yeah. This is a young adult and kids channel. If this is gonna air, it’ll be in our kid block, “Slime kids”. #Teenscene block is filled. It can’t be too scary. Playfully spooky at most. We can’t get sued by some school shooter parent about how a cartoon deranged her kid”

Mina sums it up.

“Think scooby doo spooky. “

Arthur closing up

“Fuck... Sorry... I mean, dang.. Ugh man. This is all... Really really dang open”

“You gotta be open in this business”

“I’m open! I’m a really open guy!! I’m very open”

Mina opens up

“Ok, well. I think there’s a lot more changes to be done, but I think we can keep this project on the table”

Ham agrees.

“yeah”

Arthur perturbed.

“You’ve only heard a couple sentences. I mean the few pages I sent you guys barely sums it up. What more changes can happen?”

Ham growing tighter.

“Well, I think I’m closing, up, minute by minute here Arthur. You don’t seem very open to what we have to say.”

Mina looks towards Ham.

“I’m feeling less open”

Ham Looks frustrated at this.

“You need to open up, if you’re gonna make it in this business. You’re not the only creative, in this town. You have to be open. If you want to make it big. Work with people. Listen.”

Arthur proudly

“I’m open”

Ham wraps it up.

“Well... We’re gonna keep this project open for now. Since you’re so “open”

Mina finishes. Grabbing her binder and getting up.

“Obviously, he doesn’t take this very seriously”

Arthur yells.

“I’m open!

VI

Open Windows

Sounds of shitty experimental late night community radio reverberate, in a muggy disgusting studio apartment. A tall thin sweaty, messy haired Mexican rocker, finishes up a long days writing. A white cat circles his office chair.

“This room has no fuckin airrr”

Turns on desk fan. The cat runs off, freaked out. He exhales in minor relief.

“Nice.. That’s good.. Ok. Page 19. The writer. writes about the murder of another writer”

Takes a hit off a hash pen and a hardy swig of sake.

“The dead writer, was similar to the living writer. Wrote a book that inspired him. He writes and writes, but it starts to not feel right. It can’t compare to the horror he’s been experiencing.”

Takes a step back and looks at his work and at his cat.

“Doesn’t feel right. What is wrong??

Pressing his fingers into his greasy black hair.

“Is it conflict? It’s got characters, it’s got stories, it has some sort of soul but what the hell is even going on. Is it convoluted?. Is it self-serving,? Pretentious?, why doesn’t it read right??.”

Takes another pull of sake. Then lights up a hope cigarette

“It’s just a rough draft. I’ll go back and perfect it. Can’t get it all right on the first go.

Alright. Next chapter”

The phone rings. He turns down the radio Caller I.D. says Arnold

“What’s up man?”

“Nothin much.. How you doin?”

“Pretty good, getting some headway on this book.”

“I thought it was a script”

“It’s kind of “open” ended”

“Huh.. Cool. Dude, check it out. My game just got a release date on steam”

“No fuckin way! Seriously”

“Yeah man, it’s really taken off. Just met our GoFundMe and our Facebook following is popping”

“Damn! Congrats!”

“Yeah.. It’s crazy”

“What was the story?”

“It’s about the talking dog, who wants to be a singer.”

“Oh yeah.. That’s cute”

“Yeah started out as a kid’s game, but now it’s a teen RPG thanks to Anders.”

“Nice! Yeah, he’s badass

“Genius!”

“Definitely.. Can’t even imagine how you’d make a game about..”

Arnold starts yelling violently at his cat, who seems to have gotten into something.

“Hold on”

Arthur waits for a minute.

“Sorry about that. so how’s the writing going man?”

“Great. Yeah it’s just flowing. Really opening up to me”

“Cool, what’s this one about again?”

“The horror writer forced to write about a romance “

“Ah nice. Sounds kind of like your last one you were working on”

“Well it’s kind of a spiritual sequel to “Written”. Part of a loose trilogy”

“There’s a third?”

“In a concept phase. Thinking a saga of 4 trilogies and an epilogue.”

“How’s the first one doing?”

“Almost done. Just gotta edit and fine tune the ending”

“I like the idea of it all. Sounds ambitious”

“Maybe. Should be pretty good when it’s all done”

“Looking forward to reading it”

“Eh, before I forget. You talk to Michael recently”

“Nah, heard he had a kid,, uhh Adam! “

“That’s what Anthony was saying”

“Pretty crazy”

“Right! We’re getting old”

“Couple of old hens”

“Let’s hang out this weekend mofo. Go to the goth bar and get fucked up”

“I’m pretty broke man”

“C’mon ill buy you a drink”

“I know it’s just gas and food. Bars are just so expensive. Ya gotta pay a bottle, just for a glass”

“Don’t worry about it. It’s annoying”

“I have to worry about it”

“Here, ill fucking pick you up, drive your broke ass to the bar and buy you a drink.

Alright”

“I don’t want to burden you”

“Don’t be a faggot”

“Yeah yeah.. Whatever”

“Hit me up this weekend. You need to get out of your place, you never go out.”

“Just been busy, I guess. Trying to knock out a few books, in a week, before I go to school and work full time”

“Fuuuck man! Yeah!”

“Fucking money, man. Slave life”

“Don’t compare yourself to a slave. Its offensive to niggers”

“C’mon man, you can’t say that.”

“Why!? Who cares? It’s a fuckin joke! “

“Would you say that in front of a black guy”

“Yeah. If he was being a nigger”

“Jesus man. It’s just, ya know. If you’re gonna make a kids game..”

“Teen game”

“Don’t you think you gotta be careful... Open... more open minded, I guess”

“Careful of who? What are you gonna rat on me?? Tell the Kike police? And open.. Open to what? Buttfucking. This is America. Free speech!”

“No.. It’s just. Ya know, just in case”

“I’ll open by gaping ass, just in..

A bloodcurdling scream of a woman shrieks thru the cracked window.

“AHHH!!!!!! HELLLLP!!!! HELLLLP!!!!!!”

Arthur wide eyed, springs up and goes to the window

“What the fuck was that??”

Turns off the radio

“Hold on. Let me call you back”

“Fuck no dude. Let me listen. Sounded like a fuckin’ murder”

“Yeah, that sounded real close. I think it’s the neighbors ahead of me. They’re fuckin crackheads”

“Go check it out”

“Fuck that. I don’t want to get shot or some shit.”

“Don’t be a pussy. Could be good story fuel”

“Fuck”

“The dream man”

“You fucking greasy cunt guap. Fine! Let me grab my fuckin’ dagger”

Arthur says angrily sarcastic. Arnold compelled by morbid curiosity, hastens Arthur.

“Hurry up! Be quick spick”

“Fuck off. I’m gonna call the cops. You don’t know these people”

“Dude, its probably nothing, just check it out”

“Fine... Fuck! I’ll look from the yard. You anus”

Arthur gets up, slicks his hair back and grabs a boot knife. Throws his patched to hell leather jacket and runs out the door.

“...You outside yet?”

“Just got out. I’m looking at the house. I hardly see any neighbors.”

“Well, get closer.”

“There’s no lights on. I wouldn’t be able to see shit, even if I got close.”

“Open the door”

“Are you retarded?”

“Just knock on it. See if everything’s alright. “

“Easy for you to say”

“Just be a man”

“I’m a cautious man”

“You’re being a little bitch boy. Go check it out”

“Fuck! Whatever”

“You going in”

“No!”

ARC 2

PRELUDE

The creature sized him up, as a lion would a injured gazelle. Archer looked at him like he was his long-lost son. A lost forgotten tormented child, hell bent on destroying any familiarity or concept of self, that would force it to realize what it was. Half monster, half human or perhaps a full-blooded demon. How could he not kill his torturer? His creator and tormentor?

Archer saw a resemblance in the sunken black eyes, long thin nose, and yellow crooked teeth. Pale and veined. Cuts and bruises across its body. He was once a man, perhaps a good man. Archer was one a man.

Archer thought of the terror brough onto him by the beast and pondered the horror he brought on the beast. Their fate intertwined in the desolate annals of a dark bloody hallway.

VII

Murder House

The place was brightly lit, by a dreary fall sun. An older house probably 50 years old. Didn't look particularly sketchy or anything. Just old and lived in.

The front yard was half assed mowed. The front porch had privacy curtains, from an angle, a view of months' worth of recycling piled in bags and boxes. The detreated walkway to the house was a short walk. Cigarette butts lay scattered off the porch

Another scream rang out of the house.

Looking around, not a soul around to take notice to the woman's scream. The streets were oddly empty that afternoon.

The steps up the porch were remodeled. Not sturdy, but new. The porch, was messy with old recycling and trash. Wine bottles spilling out of a trashcan on the right side. Two camp chairs stand by a cylinder block table, with ashtray overflowing with filter burnt smokes. The left porch window was cracked. Small hints of sandalwood incense wafted the outside area, barely covering up the smell of wine-soaked garbage and stale cigs.

The doors were rusted white. No doorbell, no knocker. A super Mario theme knock defaults. Scuffling inside knocks over a bottle.

“Shit”

Someone was definitely in there. The door was unlocked, but the window seemed a less creepy entrance.

“Hello”

It came out unconfidently, but loud.

“Is everything alright??”

Dead silence for 30 or so second.

“Do you need help?”

Her voice stressed and rushed.

“Come in”

The invitation was strange, but what if it was a trap. The door looked more and more foreboding of danger but leaving didn't seem an option. Cracking open the door revealed a strong scent of marijuana coming out of the living room. It was surprisingly clean inside, aside from a few dishes by a pleather futon. The kitchen was in sight. The stairs just before.

“Hello! If everything's fine. I'm probably just gonna leave.. Are you ok?”

Wasn't sure if she heard. The yell in an indoor voice.

“I can't hear you! Come up!”

Perhaps the staircase hall, can provide a better line of communication

“I'm just checking in. I head you scream for help”

She answered back

“I don’t know who you are and I can’t hear you. Just come up!”

She seemed slightly annoyed, but hospitable. The steps up had stains on nearly every step. Pictures along the wall of beach scenes. Picture you’d find at a goodwill. A hall stretched with three doors. The bathroom door was open. Sounds of paper shuffle inside the room at the end of the hall.

Two knocks nudge the barely cracked door.

Her room was messy. Filled with scattered papers, clothes, and chip bags. She seemed fond of white cheddar popcorn. Her laptop lightly played Beach House.

“You’re not a cop?.. Who are you?”

She spoke confused and weary. She was an elegant beautiful, albeit unbathed Japanese woman. Her black purple strained hair was bed tangled. Her eyes looked unslept. Her voice operatic and destined for lung cancer. She had what looked like a script on her lap and a bowl of strawberry’s.

“My names Arthur, I uh, live next door. Were you.? were you Rehearsing?”

“Yeah, I’m an actor”

The way she said it, shot an arrow of love into my lonely creative heart. There was no way to say that to her though. Had to play it cool.

“I thought you might’ve actually needed help”

“Oh sorry, yeah I got a little too into that scene. It’s a great part. By the way, my name Mary, I didn’t think anyone could hear me thru these old ass walls. No one called the cops or nothin’ did they?”

“No, I’m pretty sure I was the only one who heard you”

“Aww that’s brave of you... Or creepy”

“I.. Uh...

“What’d you think?”

“I thought you were getting murdered”

“Pretty believable huh”

“..Yeah”

She screamed once more, even more blood cuddling then before.

VIII

Bedtime Stories

I couldn't stop thinking about her. Tried to write about her, but it seemed strange to intertwine her in a macabre exploration of storied murder. Seemed ominous, but her three screams haunted every story I wanted to write.

It drove me to distraction. Wasting away the day of toiled thoughts, in a marathon of Andy Sidaris films and Final Fantasy VIII. Overeating, sake drinking and marijuana induced time travel. Thoughts of the past surfaced. Ex-girlfriends, best friends, family, childhood, old bosses, art, journals, desires, depression, weight, ex-girlfriends. Fuck!!... I'm still fat.

The thoughts vortexed in my head for hours, spiraling into a vice spiced TV dinner. Try to write em down again, but they come off nearly incoherent. A rant going nowhere. How long will this restless repetition last? The same repetition that grinds my me down to a husk, every time time seems inaccessible to do anything meaningful. To fulfill any sort of true being.

Maybe it's just money. If I got payed for what I wanted to do, maybe I can live the livelihood I want. The life I need. Maybe I can afford to date or travel. Feed my senses with worldly wonder.

For now, I've got a couple months before my finances fizzle. The soul crushing reality of mundane responsibly sets in. The job, going back to school, the juggling act of derivative pursuits. Maybe school can be good. Just so fuckin' expensive

Maybe I just can't afford to be a writer. Maybe I can't even afford love. Maybe im just overthinking this. Yeah that's it... Or maybe im just creating existential conflict for my writings. I don't even know anymore. The line between fiction and reality have nearly completely blurred. Almost every story derived from a world brewed in my escaping of the world around my discontent. Things I wanted, happenings I still craved. Simulated self-fulfillment half expressed in exaggerated words and unfinished books.

I can't finish anything. I probably won't finish this. Why can't I finish anything. I can write a beginning, conjure the whole plot in a night, follow it for a couple weeks, until it infects me with disenchantment. Maybe I can't make something that can be finished. Losing myself in rambling ambitions and esoteric expectations.

Fuck! All these doubts have no end. These thoughts can't be resolved in my bed. I need to write, but its 3:39 am. I can't fall into a crazed vampire esque state. I don't think.

Fuck! And what about Mandy. Am I gonna see her again. What if she becomes a big deal in my life.. Or just another romantic phantom threaded in my itchy sweater. What if shes thinking about me or not. Like not at all. I'm probably not that memorable. I didn't say anything interesting, I didn't make any moves. No jokes. No connection. Just another wannabe writer intruding in a actors house...

Shes an actress... A fucking actress. What if everything was a act. Every word a well played attempt to steal my heart. Maybe im just fickle. Too easy to fall in love. I need a romance. Everyone likes a good romance. Its probably whats missing in the story.

Yeah, maybe I just gotta add it to all my stories. Maybe that's the end. The hook and the draw. The way to finishing my whoas. A pretty partner to anchor my hasty ways. Most great artists had that muse. That wife that helped build them. Keep em focused.

I've had muses though. Loves. Lusts and dreamy dames. Not many, but enough to know their power over an artist. Their ability to spark a man to be a great man.

Ughhh... But I can't rely on a woman. I can't rely on anyone for my shit. Especially not my ability to create. Fuck... I'm definitely overthinking. Maybe I should call Arnold. Been meaning to call Andrew, but goddamit, it's 4am. I need to sleep. Empty my brain and slip away into a new day. I'll be able to write then.

Maybe I should try to see Mandy tomorrow though. At least get some closure. So I don't build too much of a fantasy. I wonder what she's like. What she likes.

Ahh what's the point, I met her for a few minutes. Why do I feel like I could know her in such a short time. I don't even know myself or hardly anyone for that matter. Knowledge is another goddam rabbit hole to prevent my sleep.

Gotta quit thinking. Either sleep or write... Or smoke.

Yeah.

That's what I need. A cigarette and fresh air to clear my head. I bet the moon is beautiful. Haven't seen it in a while. Too cloudy.

VIII

Lighthouse

It was another overcast day. The grey was thick, but sun rays casted down on the far sea of the Oregon coast. She looked beautiful with the beach behind her.

She wears a long flowing blue velvet jacket, with a low cut red shirt and black yoga pants. A floral silk scarf draped across her fragile neck. She was quiet and noticeably introspective this day. There was no point asking why, I already knew the answer was me reading too much into her. She hated that. Hated being read at all. Ironic for an actress.

Only been dating for a month, but she says its nice to get out of the house. Says shes a bit of a shut-in, after her mom died. She still reels with it, but doesn't talk about it much, unless shes too stoned or drunk.

Don't know how I got so lucky, maybe it was the script I showed her, maybe shes just desperate for someone to be there or maybe I actually pulled off the impossible. Romanced a beauty.

I shake off the thoughts, as they get more egocentric. Focus on her. She looks at me.

“Whats on your mind?”

“Oh... nothin'. Just thinkin about you”

“Aww that's so fuckin' cheesy”

“Its true”

“Sure..”

“.. Whatever”

I throw a strawberry at her playfully. She hits me and retorts.

“You jerk”

I want to tell her I love her, but its too early.

“Hey lets go check out the lighthouse. ”

“I didn’t really bring the right shoes for that.”

“Shit, yeah.. I mean it not that far. Maybe a mile at most.”

“Youre carrying me on the way back”

“Deal”

The lighthouse trail was roughly two miles. Mostly uphill, I could tell it bothered her.

“Want me to carry ya for a little while?”

“Yeah no, Im good.”

“Ya sure? you look like youre struggling”

She looked agitated.

“Im fine”

The lighthouse was in view, thru the wooded bluff. The clouds opened to subdued blue patches. The scene looked like it should’ve painted. Gave me some ideas about potential settings

and scenes. Why hasn't a good lighthouse tenant horror story been made. Seems like an eerie experience.

Numerous tourists selfied themselves and filled the beautiful scene, with a consumer plasticity. Untamed kids and dogs trying to bark at the next dog. It was loud, overdubbing the crashing waves below the nearby cliff, with the sounds of family and social peacocking.

Mary went and promptly sat on a bench, taking off her fashionably sandals.

“Ahh that's nice!”

Her feet smelled, but I was kind of into it.

“What time is it?”

She asked, like she had plans afterward.

“2:13”

“Thanks”

We watch the people. A morbidly obese family getting with they're red headed child. The extent of his tantrum amounted to him not wanting to be there. A disgustingly cute couple pose for multiple pictures from a kindly old man. A dog that got off its leash and the owner furiously yelling its name, “Bokief” “Bokief”

She seemed fixated on the couples.

“Lets get a picture taken”

“Alright.. uhh let me find somebody”

The task was annoying. Asking a stranger for a favor. It'd be easy if everyone didn't look sucked into their groups. An old man and what looked like his grand daughter, sat on a bench nearby. They looked approachable.

“Heyya you mind taking a quick picture of me and my lady friend?”

The old man seemed perplexed and asked in russian, to his kin, what I was saying. She explained. He extended his hand tiredly to grab a camera.

“Hold on I don't have my phone. Hey Mary”

She put on her shoes and shuffled over.

“Hey”

Her smile put a smirk on the two Russians. The old man got up. His smirk turned to a grimace, it seemed to pain him getting up. The girl looked worried and frustrated for her grampa. Mary handed him the phone and showed the button to take the shot. We started trying to pose by the lighthouse. She should've been a model. Her pose and instant perfect smile, was powerful. I struggled to force emotion on my face. The old man pressed on the screen a few times. Then motioned to his grand daughter. Nodding, to see if he'd done it right. She nods.

“Thank you so much”

Mary said sweetly.

“Thank you”

I said with a weird bow.

They do a little wave and its back to the bench, which the owner of the recently unleashed dog promptly sat at, scolding her dog.

I wander over to the railing to look out at the sea. Mary says my name.

“... Theres no picture”

“What do you mean”

“I don’t think he took the picture”

“Damn”

“Yeah”

“Well... wanna just take pictures of us standing by the lighthouse”

“Sure”

She sounded pretty disappointed, but I really didn’t want to ask anyone else. I told her to go first. She poses it’s a red carpet. Effortless and elegant.

“Its hard to get the lighthouse in frame.”

“Just do a panorama”

“I don’t know how”

“Whatever, just take a picture”

A nervous man politely waits before crossing passed the shot. I tell him to go ahead. He says he can wait. I hurriedly take a couple pictures.

“You get em”

She drops the pose and walks over

“Yeah, I think these should be good”

She looks at em disappointed.

“They’re pretty blurry”

“Really, damn. They looked good when I was taking em. Here ill take some more”

“Its fine. Its whatever”

“You sure?”

“If I say im fine, im fine”

“Alright. Alright”

I walk over to the spot she was at and try a funny pose. A captain morgan leg up thing. I don’t know why, but it seemed a go to.

“Really”

She exclaimed half joking and half embarrassed.

“I don’t know how to pose”

“Alright well, I think I got a couple good ones of you”

“Nice”

We look at em. The shots great, but my eyes are closed in one, retarded in another and the last, I looked particualirly fat.

“That’s a good one”

She point at the fat one

“I look fat”

“Oh whatever, your not fat. You just got low self esteem”

“No.. I just look fat”

She rolls her eyes at this.

“Uh huh.. Well lets go check out this place”

“Alright”

We enter the lighthouse after a 20 minute line. Of which she texts vigorously.

The door is old and kept closed until the next group is allowed a tour. The door opens with a strange sight.

A man looking exactly like me. It was like looking in a mirror. He barely looked at me before turning the corner back to the beach path. Looking over at Mary, I can tell she didn't quite notice.

It was uncanny.

IX

Not Me

The stoic black judge would never hear such a defense. Irrefutable evidence of a murder. My identity was seen there. My face at the center of it all, but, It wasn't me.

"It wasn't me, your honor"

"Mr. Alman there is video evidence and witness descriptions that match you completely. You still plead innocent to these charges?"

"I didn't kill her"

"Who did then? A twin? A clone?"

"You wouldn't understand"

My defense attorney comes to my aid.

"Your honor, my client, has no history of mental illness or any criminal record. You expect a completely normal 28 year old, to just snap and start killing randomly. Especially the woman he loved. Miss Anna Madeline"

Bringing her up was core to the defense. He mentions her name often. Crushing me every time. My dear Madeline.

The prosecutor motions for an examination.

“Granted”

The judge allows it. My attorney seems defeated, he gives me that look. He knows its an unwinnable case. He told me it was before it started, but I still had to fight. I know I wasn't insane, but how do I tell them what happened. There's no way they'd believe me.

“Mr. Alman”

“Where were you on the day of September 13th, 4:56pm?”

How is anyone suppose to remember their days that well. I can barely remember what I did last week.

“I... Don't remember”

“ You don't remember”

“Correct.”

“What was your connection to a miss Anna Madelline?”

“She was... She was my wife”

“Your wife! And uh how long were you married, Mr. Alman?”

“Three weeks”

“Three weeks!! Wow..!”

He looked to the crowd smugly, wriling them up. Then back to me, like a wolf looking at a easy prey.

“Three weeks, ok. Ok, So, you two marry, three weeks later Anna is found dissected and drown in Snake river, Nevada. Can you see how we might think.. That’s just a little, suspicious?”

“You wouldn’t understand... We were in love”

“You and Anna were in love huh”

“Madly. We never left each others side, for 3 weeks straight... And.. ”

“And then she was brutally murdered. You were reported seen there, at the time Mr. Alman. A 7 foot Native man, is pretty hard to confuse”

“It wasnt ME!!”

“Then who was it, Mr. Alman”

My defense attorney calls out”

“Objection!! your honor”

The judge quickly rejects

“Overruled”

The prosecutor, had the judge in his pocket”

“Thank you your honor. Now as I was saying”

My attorney shrugs

“I tried”

I get the feeling he really didn’t

“Who murdered her Mr. Alman”

“it was someone that looked exactly liked me”

“Oh man... Do you really expect the court to believe that?”

“Its true. I saw him before”

“Ha was that during the incident one week before the murder?”

“What incident?”

He grabs a paper from his desk, licks his lips and reads”

“September 6th 2027, 7 foot tall native man locked up for the night, after having a psychotic episode on the streets of Los Centas, Nevada.. Seen naked, covered in feces and violently yelling about self, to drivers and pedestrians. Eventually resists arrest and spends three nights in the drug tank. You don’t recall this incident Mr. Alman”

“No.. That... Wasn’t me”

“Your unknown twin brother?”

“I went on a road trip with Anna 6 days before, theres no way, that could’ve been me. I have reciepts”

“A road trip, and I suppose that would’ve been the beginning of Annas dissapearence September 9th”

“She didn’t go missing! We wanted to go somewhere... She wanted to leave”

“And why is that. Anna Madeline, had a successful life in L.A. She was a successful actress, set to star in a new movie that week. Why would anna want to leave?”

“It was our honeymoon”

“Anna wanted to leave her dreams for the honeymoon, couldn’t reschedule it for another time? No Anna left from L.A. to Nevada, with you.”

“Stop saying her name”

“What?”

“Stops saying her goddam name”

“Excuse me”

I cant stand the way he abused her name. Using it as flag to put me away. Inspiring hatred every time he used it. He doesn’t deserve to speak her beautiful name.

“I rest my case your, honor”

The judge readjust himself

“I think that pretty much closes it for me. Any last words from the defense.”

My weak attorney stands for a about 2 seconds

“None here, your honor”

“Judge, please hear me out”

“I believe we’ve heard enough of your testimony, mr. Alman. Im ready to make my decision”

“Please!! Im telling the truth. I.. I.. I met the man, months before”

“Mr. Alman!!”

“I met the murderer! I.. Know... The doppelganger”

Arc 3

X

Break

Day 0

Archie!! Archie!! Wake up!

Day 1

“Oh man.. I don’t know where this is going. The two look-a-likes become friends, then weird poly lovers With Anna Magneline, then murder. Feels like a bad romantic 90s movie. How can that even be scary? Suspense maybe, but I prefer fear. It has to be horror.

Where do I even go with it. How do I catch that constant sense of being just like someone else. Almost identical or truly mistaken for someone else. Its weird in life, but probably mundane. Ehh I like mundane though. It runs thru my work. Theirs usually just existential conflict, then real conflict. College classes say I need conflict. I don't like conflict. Fuck! That sounds like psychology thing. Ughh this writing is probably a mental thing. I can be crazy though. Others are neurotic. Its just especially in artists. Most ive met are pretty off. I should just rock it!

Yeah!! that's it! I'm just overthinking it. Goddamit, that happens all the time. Need to shut it off and just finish this story. Finish it. Just finish anything. It cant be another "concept" or "draft". This could be something.

Maybe add clones as a thing. Twins. Everyone likes twins. Clone wars was successful. This could sell. Some sort of mainstream shlock, yeah!

Ah but why cant I just make it good. Could be a decent story.

Getting caught up in doubt. Im too stoned. I should just write about that.

Nah thatd be stupid

Alright]

Fuck it next chapter

Day 3

I went to a swing dance thing with Anna today. The ticket guy said, "haven't seen you a long time". It took me aback. He said I looked familiar.

Last week at a small bookstore I was asked if I forgot something. Thought I was messing with him, by saying I'd never been there before.

A month ago, I saw the man at the lighthouse.

Could it be him? Are there others? Do all tall guys look alike? What if I am some sort of genetic clone...

Either way, the doppelganger thread has weaved itself hard the last few years. Even before the lighthouse. New York, Japan, Germany, Colorado, Portland, Olympia and now Seattle. Most places I go, Ive gotten some comment on how I look familiar or identical to someone they met earlier. I find it hard to understand. Seeing as im 6'9. Seems particular, but maybe all tall blondes do look the same.

What would it matter if someone out there looked just like me! Its not like they are me or like me... But would if they were like me in every way. Same character, same dreams, same fears and ideas.

Could it be, that there's exact copies out there in the world. Repetitions in life and nature. If the universe is wild and random, it'd stand the reason the probability of a loop would occur. If the universe is linear and full of fate, A parallel story would have to unfold.

I mean theres billions here on earth. A finite amount of archetypes and physical appearance variation. Eventually someone has got to be the same. We cant all be so unique. Every story has its themes, clichés and recycled content.

Day 33

No matter how much inspiration hits, all the more recent semblance and alter identity shit, comes up. I cant seem to translate it on page. Writing has hit a wall, me and Annas relationship has hit past its honeymoon period.

I haven't hardly done anything creative in a couple weeks. Been too busy watching anime and generally fucking off on my phone.

I've been jerking off to weird stuff. Over eating again. My back teeth have been breaking from constant grinding. Havent had sex in two weeks. Most of my friends text back excuses as to why they cant hang out. All that been there, is the bittersweet taste of modern surrealism. The mundane day to day creating stories, nearly impossible to translate to paper. Even if I could, distraction would probably derail that line.

Fuck! I gotta write something, get a good story going or finish one of the dozens floating around. Couldn't be that hard. Just a few days a week writing or a few hours everyday. Why cant I just do that. Just sit down and focus. Bring these beautiful visions in my head, to life on the blank stage. Maybe it's the breakup a year ago or stress of a new town or maybe its just me. Maybe I was all talk. This climb could be too high.

Even when I do create, it always seems to shift. In style and pace. Its story is hardly one, but multiple. Always seem obsessed in putting a story in the story or a story beyond it. By the halfway point, it becomes another story completely. Muddled in a Frankenstein of ideas and half assed ambition. Maybe a whole week dedicating myself to that.

Yeah! Buckle down and work. Suffer for the craft. Drown in coffee, smoke a chimney and force my hand until it dances.

Day 40

It was Annas shoot for a vampire movie. The movie shes been practicing for, for months. Her big shot. The director calls her and the actor for the next scene.

Figured id support her by being there. What a terrible idea that was.

The next scene was one I dreaded, since I helped rehearse the scene. For some reason, the way it was written, I thought the scene would require very little physical acting. Boy was I wrong again.

The vampire lures the young maiden into his bedroom. Shes wearing a red lacey renaissance fair dress. Hes a tall all black man, shirtless and ripped. He grabs her hand and guides her to the bed.

I couldn't stop it and I knew it was just acting, but a terror shook my heart as I watched the woman I love, seduced by this other man. A muscular bloodsucker at that.

She kissed him reluctantly at first and as per story, passionately after he caresses her tight. Her acting was top notch. I just wish she would've acted for me.

The scene called for a reshoot. The lighting was off, according to the director. They go again. The performance slightly improvised.

Was it still part of the act. Is she acting or kissing someone else. Its fiction, but its real. Shes Anna playing Michelle, the vampires victim.

The rest of the movie was standard fair. Vampire hunter and half vampire twist. They all smiled and wrapped up, like it was a construction job.

I couldn't help bring it up. She hates jealousy more then anything. It caused a horrible argument. She told me, she was just acting. She wasn't Anna. She becomes the character. She compared it to my writing, in how im not the main character in my stories. I couldn't tell her how much I put myself into them, but instead sulked butthurt about the whole thing. There was no convincing her.

Day 70

Its been a week since the breakup. She couldn't take the jealousy and inability to support her craft. I couldn't stand the thought of her someday doing a sex scene, something she mentioned being open to, for a lars von trier movie.

When the fuck did I become so old fashioned. So goddam romantic. Its toxic.

Dreams of monogamy to the extreme. I wish I could just have a clingy cute girlfriend, who wants do nothing more, then to live vicariously thru me and watch anime.

A stalker who'd get jealous of me. Fuck that'd be great!

Every girl I date, is independent, weird and on the run. Most my friends and family just call em crazy and a few of em have been diagnosed. Its what I attract, it seems. My demographic. I like the out there ones. Always with a fuckin past too. A darkness I can explore, til I find a light thats all ours. Knight in shining fucking armor complex.

I'm such a fool.

I really did love her though. Gave her my small little world. Shared every piece I could think of. Inside and out. Returning to the world is like visiting suburban ruins. Without her, I hardly know who I am. I always do that though. Lose myself in others.

Day 99

I keep lying to myself. About the truth. The truth I cant even write about. The real reason behind the breakup. Behind my despair. Behind the curtain, I preform.

The secret I've held for so long. Weighs me to my bed. The terror of anyone finding out. Destroys me on the spot. And that's only one.

The lonely days in self imposed exhile clears my head, of the fog I ran to, after the dark chapters of my 20s. I wonder if people heard them, if they'd even think they were true. Sometimes I question whether they were a strange dream that bled into my reality.

Years of silence, has gripped my voice. Stained my eyes red, white and blue. I don't belong here. I don't deserve even this shitty little life. I don't want to be here. Don't want to be me anymore. Anyone else! Anywhere else!!

I need to escape, but the blank page has her face on it. My hands are frozen.

Day 365

(old year)

Another year without killing myself. Yay! Pretty proud of myself. Barely 20 pages done. Wanted to lose myself in anything else. All this autobiographical surrealism is exhausting. I don't even want to read the shit I have. Let alone write it.

Feels like I'm stuck. The good stuff I wanna work on would require more time or resource than I have. Fuck it, may as well do anything else. Poetry, drawing, shitty films, D&D. The return of JRPG's. I dream about a life absorbed into that life. Cute little nerdy girlfriend. Just game and watch anime and fuck and get fat.

Instead, what?? Toil in creative hell. Making shit no one will see. No one will care. Made by a no one, for no one. What a brilliant fucking career move I've made. My mom was right. Shoulda just been a cop or a ranger. Wouldn't be borderline homeless and working dead end jobs and living in uncertainty every goddam hour of my life. Living in the shadow of every trauma, every evil, every ambition unfulfilled, every dream crushed and darkened. Every fucking night,

alone. Every day alone. No matter who I'm around. No matter how much I try or want or pray
or...

The idea of living. I don't see a hope in it anymore. I cant even imagine joy or love. For
fucks sake, I cant even write it. It's all just depressing mundane bullshit. Every word. Every
page, just garbage.

I'm at the end of my rope. The creature won.

Do I have to write the suicide?

ARC 4

XI

World Actress

“Oh, sweet Mia. Lovely darling Mia. I am in love with you. Beyond life or death. I am in love with you. I am. I am.”

Maria kisses the photograph of Mia at an awards show. Staring at it longingly as if she was there. She sets it down into a collection of other memorabilia. A cup, several CDs, news clippings and a bag with a few hairs.

“Mia. We are together. We will always be together.”

Maria prays to the small altar. A loud knock on the door.

“Mara!!!”

Maria frustrately

“Momma! I’ll be down in a sec!”

Momma yells angrily

“You’re in big trouble Maria!! Open this door!”

Maria yells saddened, but more angry.. She screamed.

“Momma!! STOP!!!”

Momma slams the door outside her room.

“Just wait til your father comes home!”

Momma marches down the hall and downstairs. Maria plops down on her bed, saddened. She pulls out a yearbook dated to 2009. She skims through until she finds a picture of Mia singing a choir song. Maria bite her lip and taps into a memory. A fantasy that hardens her nipples and moistens her loins. She begins playing with herself.

A commotion from downstairs as her mother and father begin arguing. She looks over and masturbates harder. A glass breaks against a wall, followed by loud stomping.

“MARIA!!!!!!”

Maria runs her clit viciously and grabs a clarinet from her time in band class. She inches it in.

“MARIA!! IM GOING TO KILL YOU!!!”

Maria reels violently in ecstasy. Father pounds on the door, nearly shaking the room. Maria grips the year book close to her, nearing climax. Father kicks the door off the hinge. His anger fast and brutal, he leaps and grabs Maria. Throwing her against a wall. Choking her with his left forearm, he screams in her face.

“What have you done Maria?? What have you done???”

Maria reels in defeated pain. Going limp. Father grabs her hair and thrust her head into the wall.

BANG!!

BANG!

BANG!!!

Mia wakes up from a such an awful dream. Her sweat dampening her long lushious hair. She takes some deep breaths and feels below. Wet. She thinks about finishing, but becomes disturbed by the context. She adjusts her pillows and flips over reflecting on it. She wondered if she had a fan like that. She laughs dismissively at the thought. She wonders if she'll reach that level someday.

“Sweet stardom!”

She tosses and turns trying to sleep. Her big audition in just 4 hours. After about an hour of stirring she gets up, stretches stiffly and tries to energize herself. She goes into the bathroom of her tiny studio apartment. Splashing water on her face and staring in the mirror, worrying about the tired look in her eye. She was already hard on herself, but now sleepless, the doubts ring in. she looks into purse and grabs some pills given to her by another actress. With a little perk she does her rituals.

Showering, she looks down and quivers with a erotic need. Mornings have never been that tempting for her, but she entertains it, inching her finger around her clit. She pinches a nipple and twists softly. A fantasy a of a fan/stalker at her feet, licking her heels, sets a fire down below. She slides a finger teasingly into her vagina and imagines her slave on a leash. She pulls her up.

“Lick my fucking asshole Maria! You dumb fucking.. whore!”

Mia slides her finger from her pussy down slowly into her asshole. She folds slightly into the walls of her tiny shower. Holding herself with one hand and quivering in a ego ecstasy. She imagines hitting Maria and pulling her away to look at the shame of her face. A first glimpse.

She looks like her dead twin. Eyes loving but hurt. A helpless pleasue in the ridicule. Just happy to serve her cruel mistress. The fire inside her loins burns a guilty pain, but the taboo sets something off. She curls down and goes in for both holes. She imagines more. More fans. More slaves. An orgy in the name of Mia. Men, women and everything in-between. Every race and creed. She wants the world at her feet. Licking her pussy, fingering and fucking her tight cunt. Biting on her nipple.and hands, so many hands; groping, caressing, petting, reaching, grasping and simply just feeling the glory of her body.

She imagined all the men and women that lusted over her body. All those she granted the privilege of enjoying it. She imagined them at the bottom of the pile of bodies, desperately trying to climb up.

Then she saw Maria at the top. She saw her at the edge of the tower of bodies. Her sad, but longing eyes just rying to please her. No pleasure from her body, only a pleasure in serving the being.

Mia doubles up on fingers, struggling at the tightness of her bodies holes. The fantasy deepens, the tower rises. More bodies ravaging her. Biting and tearing. Scratching just to lap up the blood that seeps down her golden skin.

Maria still staring up looking for affirmation. Mia kicks her off and cums hard. As if she was pushing the tower of affection through her body and out into the shower drain. She thrashes

like a fish smashed in the head. Tossing around on the floor hitting bottles from her plentiful beauty products lining her entire bathroom.

She lays silent and breathing hard in the thick hot fog accumulating. The ecstasy and lack of oxygen makes her tired. She turns off the water and lays in the grey water trying to go down the hair clogged drain.

-

Her mind cleared, she finishes up her rituals. Doing her hair, like her favorite actress and running through a few lines. She does her make-up and runs over the same lines. An hour and a half til auditions.

“Oh Anna wont you come back? Stay with me just one more night. I can show you forever”

She says the line with tears in her eyes, one of her acting speciality. She looks a bit unsatisfied, but bus ride is 30 minutes away. 50 minutes til audition. She couldn't be late again. It's already too late.

-

She enters into HBO studios. The receptionist guides her to the correct wing. She enters the hallway of girls. All beautiful and talented and hungry. Just like her, just like everyone. The same dream hung over there pretty little head. Some smile, as she passes by to a available seat. Somse scowl, all strategies to climb on top of each other. Top of the tower is paved in lesser people reaching the same glory.

A tower to God.

Mia didn't want to be god, she just wants to be seen as one. Praised and adored. Served with body and soul. It's all presence. Her life is empty, just like she likes it. Allows her to fill in what she needs to, when she needs too. Today she is Nurse Maria Alice in love with southern belle Anna Marie. Civil war raging around their forbidden romance. Both married to men chasing other women and other loves.

Mia looks around to the other women practicing lines, texting and calling others. Hustling for the next role. To some this a pit stop, others a chance, for a few a dream, to Mia her panties moisten at the thought of the Tower of God.

An hour passes after her 2:30 audition. Most of the girls cleared out and the janitor readying his cleaning shift, by vacuuming in the hallway nearby. Mia wondered if she'd been passed up. Her bladder full, she dare not piss before her name was called. She considers asking the agent as she brings another girl back. She didn't want to look desperate.

She put herself back in Marias life. Her acting imagination immersive and instant. Back in Kentucky, she sits at the table silent and frustrated. Her husband chewing food loudly, children she never wanted, doing things she never cared for. She knew her desires were selfish, but she's never been able to be selfish, except in Annas arms. She wanted to be inside her. Her inside of her. Weaved together so tight, it begins to merge their flesh.

“Mia Anne?”

A mousy assistant calls her name.

“Yeah!”

Mia snaps out of the other world.

It was her big break. Her pit stop, her dream, her chance and tower. She clears out the expectations and enters the small auditorium room. Two woman, a older jet black haired pale lady in all black and a younger black woman with blonde dyed hair in all white, sit across the way at a table. Dark behind them, spotlight in front, black and white tiled flooring stretch into the darkness.

“Name, age and projects worked on?”

“Mia Anne age 27. I’ve starred in Story, Author, Pinocchio and Beauty and the Beast. Co-starred in..”

“Just starred in. Thanks”

The lady in black looks around, the mousy assistant brings her a coffee. She thanks her and checks her watch. The ladies stare, expecting her to start without prompt. Mia focuses herself during the awkward silence and jumps into Act IV Scene 20.

“It cannot be! That you’d leave for good? No come with me, leave that life forever. I’ll take care of you, I’ll love you like you’ve never been loved before!”

The woman in black reads the lines of Mia.

“I have to. I’m a woman without choice. My freedom be thy rare days of your love.”

“Then lets be free.”

“How can we be free?? My husband is general of the 45th. Your is a engineer for all of Dixie. There is no freedom in this war. Not when we’re at perpetual battle with ourselves.”

“Be gone, the war!! Lets us cease fighting and start loving. Let that be our end and beginning forever and always. Let this be our battle and our peace. Let this be..”

The lady in white's phone rings, she picks up.

“One sec.”

She begins speaking Japanese very amicably.

The lady in black stares at me. Sizing me up, calculating my appeal. Wondering if I'm fit for world wide broadcast. Am I good enough, pure enough, sexy, beautiful, ugly, scary, sad, happy. Am I what she wants. Am I...

“I'm sorry. Business call.”

She whispers something to the woman in black. They whisper a little while longer. The woman in black looks to Mia, almost forgetting she was still there.

“Thank you for your time.”

The woman in white kindly lets her know.

“We'll be making calls at the end of the week.”

Mia just with acting blueballs having been cut off from her moment to shine. Her crying desperate longing for Maria. The love she had been practicing for weeks. Dreaming of and living in. Cut short. The assistant approaches her to show her to the door. Mia begins sobbing.

“Anna! I won't let you go!! I am yours and you mine. I'd do anything for you. Kill my husband. Kill yours. Kill myself and every soldier in the Union. I can't live without you!

Please!!”

She sobs uncontrollably. The assistant nudges her towards the door. She follows out the door expecting the auditioners to stop her and give her the part or at least a bone, but nothing.

Mia falls once out of the door, the assistant pats her on the shoulder.

“It’s ok. It’s a tough business. Cant please everyone hun. It’ll be ok”

Her words only hurt more, but the tears wouldn’t stop. For Anna and Maria and Mia herself.

“Alice Maron?”

A woman with ethereal beauty walks in. Mia looks down teary eyed at her muddled body, seeing only disgust. Just a climber. Another at the feet of someone else.

She struggles for breath and composure as the embarrassment of other girls trying to cheer her up surround. Closing in like a wall. A large black security guard clears them back and softly lifts her up.

“It’s ok to cry. Just not here.”

He gently leads her out.

-

Back at home, Mia lays in bed. Masturbating a dry and unstimulated vagina. She plays hard with her nipples and viciously fingers herself. She tries to imagine the same fantasy, but she only imagines herself at the feet of Maria. Her eyes still sad and longing. Loving, but only in service of Mia. Mia desperate to please a disappointed Maria.

Mia winces in pain, cutting herself with her nail. Her vagina bleeds, as she pulls back a little bit and moves to the clit. Rubbing violently. She moves to the ass after, and fails to loosen up. She starts crying. Rolling over onto her belly. She screams into a pillow.

She knew then who she had to become.

“I am...”

XII

The Mask and The Shadow

Who am I anymore. Am i?

Am I even writing?

Am i... Alive?

Has it been written yet?

Yeah.. I wrote it last night.

Didn't I?

I am... not..

Am I...?

Not yet..

I am not...

Wrote another day. Last night. Wasn't the same story. Whenever I near an end, I cant help but start a new one.

How do I end a story, that ends me. An autobiography fated for a suicide. If I kill pseudo fictional am, am I doomed or am i...

I have to write it. Finish the story, but the writer knows the fate. I know the fate, I'd be creating. He's creating. He's writing my story, I'm reading his story to the world. We're not writing the same story. We're not the same. He is words. I am...

Am I?

Could I be?

NEVER!!!

Where the fuck does it go from here. I'm at an end. Beginnings already been wrote. The middle was hardly there. Now the end. Always the end.

Could I just rewrite it? Edit it into something else? Scrap it? Maybe I can keep it going.
The first never ending story. Just not end it, the way its supposed to end. The way it has already
ended. Again and again.

I am not the end.

I am..

Am I at the end?

I am... Never.. ever. I am Not! I cannot end it. Not now. Not ever!

Am I..

Am I even real?

I have to be. I speak, I understand and feel and dream and breathe. But only in the story.
The rest of the world, just doesn't seem...

He's just a character. We're all just characters. It's all written on some level. Genetics,
culture, history, entertainment that becomes are language. It's all been written before. That's
what they always say. I'm just another. Wrote and being written.

Til the end.

It's close. This could be the chapter or maybe the next. No sequel. No chance at a happy ending. Tragedy was always supposed to be the thread sewn into this one. Why cant I write a happy story? What happened to happy stories? Was there ever any?

I cant keep questioning everything. I don't need to know. Ha! I'll never fucking know. What answers are gonna come? Nothin. Self fulfilled, self assumed bullshit. A distraction and a filler. I'm too afraid to just do what needs to be done. I don't know which is harder. Starting the end or just ending it?

Am I really.. Afraid?

Am I anything, but numb. Perhaps not numb... Blank. Like a goddam blank page. The one I've been staring at for 3 years now. I've become it. Theres no fears there. No sadness or loss or questioning or nothing. No doubts or ambitions. No shadows following or light blinding. No nothin. Just peace and possibility. Potential and constant beginning. A mirror reflecting every story I don't know how to write. Every story I've written. Every story.

This story is ending. My story is ending.

Am I?

Is this finally?

Another end and musing. I just cant bring myself to write it. Doesn't feel right. I don't want to pull the trigger. I know the shot. It's only aimed at me. Another fucking suicide. Another beginning. False starts over and over and over. Just to avoid the ending.

XIII

The Man on The Moon

A tall dark athletic Turkish man, dressed in a silky white suit, greets a chubby shaggy blonde haired Arthur in a oversized black pinstriped suit. A blue room looms over the starkly grey beige office.

“Mr. Arthur, it is a pleasure!”

Israel shakes his hand. Arthur looks preoccupied, but amicable. Giving him a half hearted handshake.

“Thank you, Please just call me Arthur.”

Israel sits down and readies a fancy briefcase.

“Yes. Of course.”

Israel opens up the briefcase and pulls out a folder, readying the well organized contents on the dark grey mahogany table. Arthur kicks his feet up on the table.

“So, Mr. Israel. I quite like your story.”

Israel lights up.

“You read it? Already?”

Arthur casually. Almost unamused.

“Yeah, a couple times.”

Israel looks relieved and ecstatic.

“Wow! This is amazing!”

Arthur lights a cigat.

“Wasn’t completely a compliment.”

Israel is taken aback.

“I’ve read it before. I’ve written it before.”

Israel looks a bit taken aback, but assured.

“I swear! I did not plagiarize. I would never...”

Arthur exhales and adjusts his feet on the table.

“I know.”

Israel confused.

“Then..”

Arthur looks at the door.

“It’s not cliché. It’s just..”

Israel tenses up.

“Let me show you something.”

Arthur gets up and stands at the blue door exiting the office.

“C’mon.”

Israel looks at Arthur puzzled but curious. Arthur escorts him out into a long long hallway.

“You’re not dreaming. That’d be too cliché.”

Arthur says to Israel in a happy tone, as he walks off. Israel looks to him worried and then glances at the unreal depth of the hallway.

“This isn’t the hallway I came in from..”

Arthur looks back.

“Exactly! You’re catchin’ on.

Arthur pushes the pace.

“Keep up!”

The two quickly walk for a few moments, until Arthur speeds up into a jog. Israel stops in a existential terror. Staring into the never ending hallway. It wasn’t the first time he’d had an experience like this, but this one was different. It had a weight, it had a space, a scent and thoughts. He knew the differences. He’d written and ridden the hallucinations and strange characters of a alternate world, but he always knew in the back of his mind. In some sort of anchor, that his feet were on the ground.

Til now.

The world was gone. The suspension of time, physics and belief. Any sense or perception of reality out the window.

Israel looked back. The freshly painted blue door leading from the office, a few feet behind. There was no distance.. He turns around breathing hard and scared. The long hallway sprawling ahead. He half expected to be back in the office pitching his masterpiece to Arthur, lost in a brief daydream, a vivid moment. But the hallway and glimpse of Arthur in the distance.

“Wake up! C’mon!!”

Israel looks around for details not found in a dream. Clocks, shadows, a smell, a sensation. He feels himself up while looking all around. Basic empty higher end office walls. A lite beige. He looked up at the popcorn ceiling. He pinches himself several times. Hoping it was all the most vivid.

“Oh man! Oh man! No.. No no!

He starts walking trembling. Arthur almost too far to catch. He walks for what seems like 3 hours, but according to his watch, it had been only 30 minutes. Another door, Red and old. A gold rusty handle. A almost plastic wood look. He looks back again and sees the long hallway. He once again half expected to turn back to the Blue door and the office of his pitch dreams. Yet again, it was not. A Red door. He cautiously opens the door.

“Welcome! Come in!”

Arthur in a disembodied voice calls from a deep reach of outer space.

“Come out!”

Israel not having it, shuts the door and hyperventilates. Slouching down along the door.
He stares out and tears up slightly. His entire world thrown out the window. He wondered why?
Why now? Why him?

“WHY???”

He wondered if he was dead. Staring at his hands.

“Am I?”