



- ☐ A Dame Called Murder
- ☐ Rancid Horse Cum
- ☐ Murder Most Foul
- ☐ Objects Unidentified and Flying
- ☐ Rat Infested Mailbox
- ☐ The Communist Cat with the Broken Neck
- ☐ Please Kill the Bunny, Mommy
- ☐ Running in Crop Circles
- ☐ Constellation Murder!
- ☐ Gang Raped by Aliens
- ☐ Carved Up for Souvenirs
- ☐ All of the Above
- ☐ None of the Above



A Full Length Play
with a Puppet Show

by

Mar




Author's Note

FIRST OF ALL, PRAISE BE TO WWW.FONTSPACE.COM AND THE BRILLIANT ARTISTS WHO HAVE MADE THEIR WONDERFUL FONTS AVAILABLE. THIS SCRIPT HUMBLY USES THE FOLLOWING:

DK Abysmal Gaze

Bleeding Cowboys

 (Cave Painting Dingbats)

 (CropbatsAOE)

DisT°T°cø fΛi°h

D.K. P.I.

Fontdinerdot Swanky

GatsbyFLF

Kingthings Pique'n'meex

Moonylight Shadow

NITECLUB

OldNewspaperTypes

Parisiennne

RAT INFESTED MAILBOX

SpacePatrol

 (Split splat splodge)

the Constellation of Hercules

Treasure Map Dead hand

 (Vintage Decorative Signs)

 (GE Zodiac)

I HAVEN'T OBTAINED PERMISSION FROM ANY OF THE FONT DESIGNERS TO USE THEIR FONTS IN THIS SCRIPT.
PLEASE DON'T CALL THE POLICE.

PLEASE INTERPRET THE ECCENTRIC USE OF THESE FONTS, THE IMAGES, THE BLOOD/INK SPLATS, THE PARALLEL TEXTS, THE VARYING SIZES OF TEXTS, ETC. AS STAGE DIRECTIONS. TRADITIONALLY, STAGE DIRECTIONS WRITTEN BY PLAYWRIGHTS ARE USUALLY IGNORED AND LIMITED AS TO WHAT THE PLAYWRIGHT CAN OFFER A PRODUCTION. SO I DO THIS INSTEAD.

THERE ARE IDEAS EXPRESSED IN THE LAST GHOST TOUR THAT WERE INSPIRED AND INFLUENCED BY COLIN DICKEY'S *GHOSTLAND: AN AMERICAN HISTORY IN HAUNTED PLACES* AND JUDITH HERMAN'S *TRAUMA AND RECOVERY*. A STUNNING BOOK THAT HELPED ME THROUGHOUT THE PLAY IS LUNDY BANCROFT'S *WHY DOES HE DO THAT?* I RECOMMEND IT TO ANYONE WHO HAS BEEN IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP AND KEEPS ASKING HIM OR HERSELF, HOW DID I FUCK UP SO BADLY?

THIS SCRIPT IS OPEN TO INTERPRETATION. I HAVE NO FIXED IDEA AS TO WHAT THE HELL TO DO WITH IT.

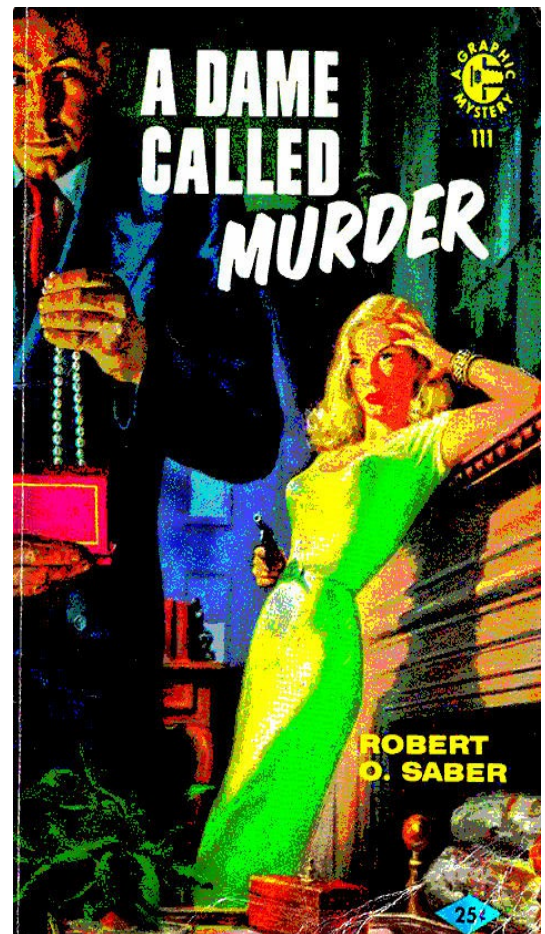
IN AN IDEAL WORLD, WITH AN IDEAL BUDGET AND WORK SPACE AND ACCESS TO ART SUPPLIES, THIS SCRIPT WOULD BE MADE OF THICK HANDMADE PAPER, WITH MANY HAND WRITTEN ADDITIONS, AS WELL AS USING PAINT, CRAYONS, AND LOTS OF COLORS. THE IMAGES BETRAY THIS LONGING, I THINK. I'M NOT SURE THIS IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW, BUT THERE IT IS.

WHY ARE THERE SO MANY CHARACTERS? BECAUSE LIFE IS FULL OF PEOPLE.

THERE ARE FACTS IN THE PLAY. DON'T LET THEM CONFUSE YOU. JUST GO WITH IT.

THE INQUEST: IT'S A PUPPET SHOW. WHEN I IMAGINE IT DONE BY HUMAN ACTORS, IT SEEMS RIDICULOUS AND SILLY. BUT WHEN I THINK OF THE SCENES BEING DONE WITH PUPPETS---PUPPETS OF ALL DIFFERENT SIZES AND KINDS, SHADOW PUPPETS, MARIONETTES, PUPPETS TEN FEET TALL, AND BEST OF ALL BUNRAKU PUPPETS---THEN IT ALL MAKES COMPLETE SENSE.

OH, AND THE FORMAT OF THE PLAY. THERE ARE PARALLEL TEXTS AND IMAGES SEPARATING SCENES AND OTHER WEIRD THINGS GOING ON. I KNOW THE TEMPTATION IS TO WANT TO DO SIMULTANEOUS SCENES, AND PERHAPS THAT WOULD WORK BEST. BUT IF IT MATTERS AT ALL, I WASN'T "HEARING" SIMULTANEOUS DIALOGUE IN MY HEAD WHEN THE PLAY WAS OCCURRING, WHILE I WAS WRITING IT. THE POSITIONING OF THE TEXTS WAS MERELY A MATTER OF GEOMETRY. I IMAGINE IF I COULD LAYER THE PLAY LIKE A CAKE, OR BETTER LIKE A VERY FLAKY PASTRY LIKE BAKLAVA, I WOULD DO SO. WHICH IS INTERESTING BECAUSE I REALLY DISLIKE BAKLAVA.



CONSTELLATION MURDER!

SO NUDE,
SO DEAD

CONSTELLATION
MURDER!

Thē ChāTāc†ēTS

The Noir

Detective
 Brother
 Veterinarian
 Office Mate
 Head of Dissertation
 Huey
 Dewey
 Louie
 Waitress
 Cook
 Professor
 The Rumor Mill
 Quasimodo
 Boy
 Billy Shakespeare
 Gas Pump Jockey
 Ben

The Inquest, a puppet show

The Corpse
 Sir Coroner
 Lord Prosecution
 Lady Defense
 Lord Psychologist
 Server
 Monsieur Le Bailiff
 Husband

The Ghost Tour

The Tour Guide

The AtomicPunk Mystery

The Scientist
 Margie, his Daughter
 Chester, Her Fiance
 The Detective Inspector
 Basil the Robot



The Ghost Tour

Stop #1: The Cheating Wife

What stands before you is a cheap, old apartment building. It is the color of seasickness, so the fact that it is stained and peeling is an improvement. It has few trees and no grass. It is a harsh combination of gray pavement and small windows with broken blinds shut anxiously tight against the world. It seems incongruous that a newlywed couple, very much in love, would find happiness here. For a few years, they did. They lived in bliss, never spending a night apart, shunning out the rest of the world and not caring that they lived in their own kind of paradise.

But their paradise was not to last. The husband began to come home later and later from work each night. When the wife would ask what had retained him, he would respond angrily, eventually accusing her of having spent her day with other men. His jealousy and temper increased, seemingly without any provocation. The wife doted on her husband, becoming even more loving and giving. But it only seemed to anger him more. In fact, according to his friends who had to suffer his drunken diatribes at bars, the husband was convinced that his wife was leaving him, not for another man, but another WOMAN.

One night, the husband started screaming at his wife worse than ever. He was drunk, but that's no excuse. It only made him honest. He threw things and called her names. Now, the wife had a little dog, a Chihuahua that adored her and never left her side. While the husband was screaming, the dog jumped in her lap. When the husband came up to her, to emphasize a point that she was a cheating whore, the dog began barking at him. The dog was simply protecting the wife. In response, the husband backhanded the dog and instantly broke its neck.

This caused the wife herself to break. Later she said she heard a deafening snap at that moment, that wasn't the dog's neck. The husband came to himself for a moment, realizing what he had done. But, of course, his grief turned to rage and he blamed the wife for the dog's death: "Look what your cheating made me do!" In the moments while the husband was grieving over the dog, the wife ran to the kitchen, got her best, largest knife, and proceeded to stab her husband over two hundred times.

When the police arrived, they found her covered in blood and cradling the dead dog. She explained her actions like this: "You see," she told the police, "my dog told me the truth about my husband. My dog barked at him. He wouldn't have done that if my husband wasn't dangerous and an asshole."

The wife ended up in a local institution for the dangerously insane. The apartment was cleaned, and rented out, but tenants never stay out their lease. They complain of a dog barking at all hours, and a man's voice, screaming in their ear, and accusing them of being a whore.

SCENE 1

The Noir

DETECTIVE and BROTHER.

in the apartment of the missing WOMAN.

The Inquest, a Puppet show

Courtroom. CORONER, PROSECUTION,
DEFENSE, PSYCHOLOGIST, CORPSE present.

DET

When was the last time you saw your sister?

CORONER

You may give your opening statement, Lord Prosecution.

BROTHER

Two, three years ago. Something like that.

PROSECUTION

Thank you, Sir Coroner.

DET

You're not sure.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury,
before you sits the corpse.

BROTHER

It was a while ago.

She lives and breathes, walks and talks,
but is nevertheless a corpse.

DET

You weren't close?

For she lacks the essential key to living:
she has no identity.

She has no memories.

BROTHER

We were. We had long discussions about politics.

She doesn't know her name or where she grew up.

Science, art, you know.

She doesn't know if she's married or a spinster.

I live across the country. I have a demanding job.

But she does have knowledge.

DET

But you're here now.

BROTHER

She's missing.

DET

When did you find out she's been missing?

BROTHER

A week ago. After the management broke in here because the neighbors complained about the smell.

DET

When was the last time you talked to your sister?

BROTHER

A few months ago. Around the time of the election. She wanted to discuss the probability of the republicans sweeping congress.

DET

So you have no idea how long she's been gone?

BROTHER

Afraid not. I imagine that her cat must reveal something.

How long it's been dead, I mean.

Didn't the vet say two weeks or something?

That's something to go on.

Look, something terrible must have happened to her.

She loved that fucking cat. She worshiped it. She traveled with it. She wouldn't leave it alone willingly.

For example, she speaks English.

She doesn't remember learning it,

but she has the knowledge of it.

It is through this knowledge,

and other evidence we will obtain, that we,

the Honorable Members of this inquest,

will determine who she is,

the cause of her memory loss,

In this state, she is a burden to the state,

an entity who cannot produce, who cannot

contribute,

who will always be a drain on our society.

She cannot exist, not in this perfect world we

have worked so hard to build.

It is our intention to return her to the loved

ones

who can give her the proper care she so

desperately needs,

and put her again on the road to being a

successful, rich member of society.

Now, have you examined the deceased?

CORONER

I have,

quite thoroughly.

PROSECUTION

What have you discovered about her body?

CORONER

She has a number of scars covering her arms

and legs.

Many look like slashes caused by razors,



DET

Do you know how the cat died?
I talked to the vet this morning, before
meeting you here.
Do you know?

BROTHER

I assumed it starved to death.

DET

It's neck is broken.



many are burns,
many look like chicken pox scars.

PROSECUTION

Can any of these scars be self-inflicted?

CORONER

Yes, it's entirely possible.

However I found no scars to indicate attempts
at suicide.

None of the scars would have caused
significant damage.
I doubt most of them bled much.

PROSECUTION

What about the state of her body?
How healthy is she?

CORONER

She's overweight, and I would hazard to add the adverb "grossly".

We've monitored her eating habits,
and she doesn't have habits that coincide with this state.
She refuses to eat most of the time,
wishing only bread, fruit, and water.
Anything more than that and she makes herself throw it up.

PROSECUTION

So what is your conclusion then?

CORONER

Humiliation.
She's concealing her eating habits because she's ashamed of her body.
Her normal appetite is most likely triple what a normal person's is.

PROSECUTION

You don't think it's possible she has an eating disorder?

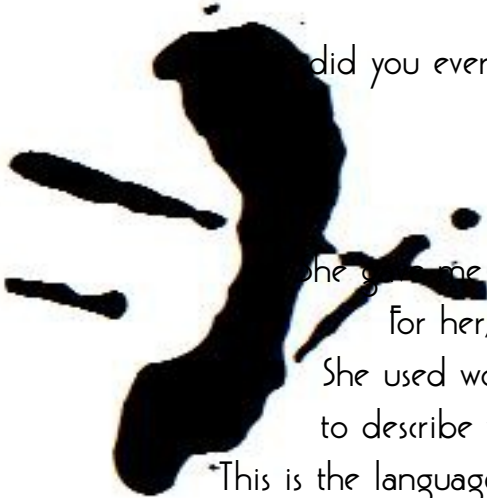
CORONER

She's too fat to have an eating disorder.
She's merely pretending she's thin because she's in complete denial,
and most likely a deceitful, manipulative person.

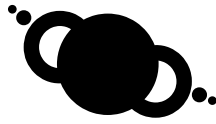
DEFENSE

For fuck sake, this is a fucking load of rancid horse cum!
Lord Psychologist,
did you ever question the corpse about her eating habits?

PSYCHOLOGIST



Yes, I did.
She gave me an elaborate analysis of the morality of food.
For her, certain food is "bad" while others are "good".
She used words such as "taint" and "dirty" and "disgusting"
to describe what her body feels like consuming such food.
*This is the language someone with an eating disorder would use.
I questioned her further as to her values and character,
and nothing I heard made me believe she is a manipulative or deceitful person.
If anything, she is quite the opposite: she is quite vulnerable.
An eating disorder has nothing to do with body type:
it is a disordered way of thinking that anyone can have.
You don't have to look like you came out of a death camp to have the disorder.
In fact, the Corpse told me that she envies people as skinny as that:
she sees it as a purified state of complete control, making the body a clean slate.
Anyone who believes that has a serious psychological illness.



The AtomicPunk Mystery

SCENE ONE: The SCIENTIST's laboratory. SCIENTIST and his daughter, MARGIE, are working.

SCIENTIST

In a few more hours,
I will have completed my experiments
and I will be ready to fly to Venus!
Margie, how are your computations for space flight?

MARGIE

They are as I expected, Dad.
Tomorrow night will be the best time to leave.
You'll have the shortest distance between our two planets.
I only have a little more work to do on the space machine.
But I'm certain I'll be ready on time.

SCIENTIST

Excellent, my dear Margie!
This will be the greatest voyage undertaken by mankind.

MARGIE

Wasn't your initial voyage to Mars mankind's greatest voyage?
You established peaceful relations with the Martians. Especially since
they welcomed you with such hostility.
They assumed we wouldn't go to their planet unless we wanted to conquer
them.
Luckily, they believed your good and true intentions.

SCIENTIST

Of course! Because I'm a scientist! And the Martians themselves are such
great scientists as well!
If we had sent a military man, our planets would be at war.
That only shows how superior and moral science is.
Scientists care nothing for conquering people or taking spoils or raping
women.
We only want information, to give it and receive.
It is the most peaceful form of philosophy.
That is why the President of the United States has asked me personally to
undertake the discovery of Venus.
It should be a fascinating trip. The Venusians are supposed to live in a
purely Utopian society! Something we've never been able to attain

successfully!

MARGIE

How long will you be gone this time, Dad?

SCIENTIST

I have no idea.

But I need you to promise me something, Margie.

Before I leave tomorrow night, I want you to marry Chester.

MARGIE

Dad, you're so serious!

You're frightening me!

You don't think you're coming back, do you?!

SCIENTIST

I'm not sure.

I just need to know, before I go, that you'll be safe.

That someone will take care of you.

MARGIE

But I have Basil!

SCIENTIST

Basil is only a robot.

You need a real flesh and blood man.

Marry Chester tomorrow, Margie.

I've already spoken to Chester and he's amenable to the arrangement.

MARGIE

You talked to Chester before talking to me?!

Does what I think matter at all?!

SCIENTIST

Of course it does, my dear.

But you're a very excitable, emotional woman,
just like all of your sex.

Oh, yes, you have the capability of being scientific like any man,
but you do let your judgment be clouded like any woman.

Promise me this. I worry so much about you.

When I've been gone in the past,

when I've had to leave you alone, Margie
your behavior hasn't been very...civilized.

MARGIE

Father!

I thought we were never going to speak of that again!

SCIENTIST

Margie, I need you to listen to me very carefully.

Have I ever steered you wrong?

Haven't I always done the best things for you?

Haven't the decisions I've made for you been ones that make you happiest?

Do you really think you have the right frame of mind to make intelligent, solid decisions about your life?

All I'm asking is for you to trust me, as you always have.

I would never make you do anything I didn't think was best for you.

There is nothing I do in life that isn't for you.

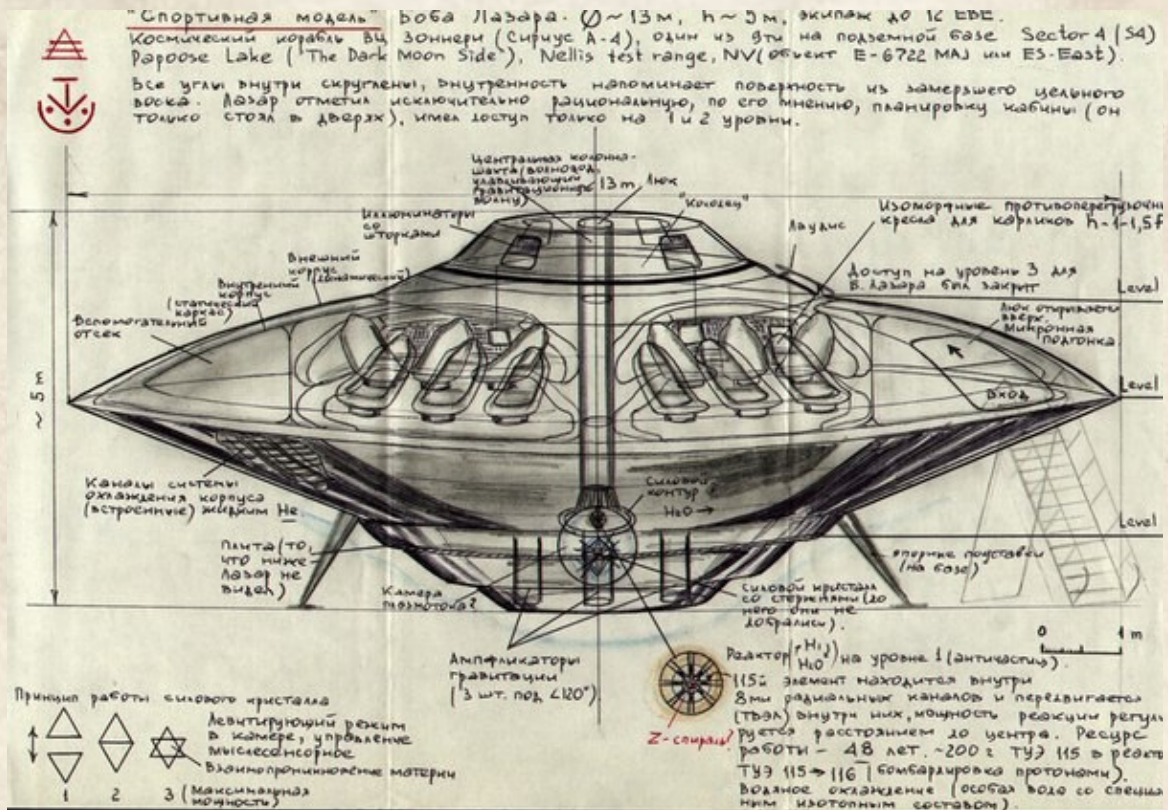
MARGIE

I can't think about this right now.

I need to do that work on the space machine.

SCIENTIST

Promise me you'll think about it.



SCENE 2



DETECTIVE and VETERINARIAN.

Physical evidence of the CORPSE:

Purse contents, clothing,
and characteristics of its body.

VET

This wasn't clean. Whoever did this struggled. Probably got scratched. If you find out who did this, the police will have to be notified.

DET

How long was it dead?

VET

Two, three weeks.
It had eaten before it died. Good quality food, too.
The owner took good care of him.

DET

Do you remember the owner?

VET

She's the missing woman? No, we don't remember her.
The staff has been trying to figure out who she was, but we got nothing.
We only remember the cat.
The cat was memorable.



CORONER

The contents of the deceased purse, found on her person:

Handful of American coin money.

Pack of playing cards.

Three ballpoint pens from well-known motels.

Handful of arcade prize tickets.

A small metal toy flying saucer.

A small plastic green soldier with parachute.

Tampons of varying absorbencies.

Hand lotion.

Lip balm.

Sewing kit.

A copy of the *Communist Manifesto*.

A small toy cat.

A primitive hand carved wooden tree,
painted.

Hair brush.

Hair spray.

PROSECUTION

DET
Why?

VET

He was a red tipped minx.

We mostly get orange cats and gray ones,
tabbies and black cats.

A red tipped minx is a rather sexy
deviation.

You should've heard the vet techs coo over
him.

And he had an interesting name.

DET

What was it?

VET

"Seize The Means Of Production".

Not kidding. She called the cat "Seize-Me",
"Meanie" or "Produce" for short.

Hell, we couldn't keep track of all the
names that cat had.

We called it Marx for short.

Fitting that the cat was part red, too.

She was a crazy communist.



The clothes the deceased was wearing at the
time she was found:
white cotton panties,
a cotton black bra,
(both plain and unadorned),
loose fitting blue jeans,
a loose fitting v-neck t-shirt, green,
a long sleeve purple sweater,
a large, plush dark purple scarf adorned with
sequence,
knee high leather boots.

All of these clothes displayed normal wear
and tear.

Nothing unusual was found on the clothes.

She wore no jewelry, though indentations and
tan lines on the ring finger of her left hand
indicate she had worn a ring for quite a
while.

CORONER

The body of the deceased:
five foot seven, one hundred ninety pounds,
brown hair dyed blonde,
and her measurements 43-34-45.
The only make-up found was blush, powder,
and lipstick.

No tattoos, no piercings,

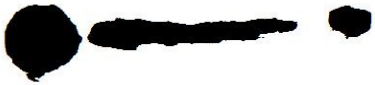
only various scarring which suggests it was almost all deliberate.

As stated, her eating is limited, and consequently are her bowel movements.

She averages five trips to the bathroom per day,
and suffers from constant diarrhea.

The Corpse has an irregular period,
lasting longer than five days.

She suffers cramps to the point of having trouble walking,
 with a blood output of more than 16 grams.
 Her genitals are of average size, with full vulva and prominent clitoris.
 She has the presence of hair on her vulva as well as legs,
 but not of a natural length.
 In other words, she has shaved these areas in the past and hasn't for some time.



DEFENSE

Goddamn it, are these details really necessary?

CORONER

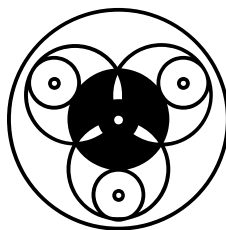
All of these details give us insight into the person of the Corpse.

To continue,
 the Corpse's vagina shows signs of having engaged in sexual activity, as does her anus.
 There is no evidence to indicate that the Corpse had sex with women.
 There is no evidence that would indicate that the Corpse has been pregnant at any time in
 her life.

Do you have anything to say for yourself?

CORPSE

No.



SCENE 3

DETECTIVE and BROTHER, apartment of missing WOMAN.

PSYCHOLOGIST's testimony as to the state of mind of the CORPSE.

BROTHER

That's absolutely absurd.
She wasn't a communist.
A liberal with romantic Marxist dreams,
but not a commie.

DET

But you can't be sure because you hardly
talked to her.
Her sympathies could've gone completely
red.

BROTHER

You talked to the vet. I'm assuming that
you've accepted the job?
You'll find my sister?

DET

Lots of books here.

BROTHER

She liked to read.

DET

I like to read. But I'm not smart enough
to read half of what's in here.

BROTHER

CORONER

Sir Psychologist,

In your opinion, in light of the evidence we
have about the corpse's objects and state of
her person, what has occurred which has
brought her to this state of amnesia?

PSYCHOLOGIST

The simplest answer would be trauma, that of
a psychological nature.
Notice the corpse has no wounds, no head
wounds or bruising, no broken bones, no
evidence of sexual violence. Whatever
happened to her was emotionally traumatic.

CORONER

I'm sorry, but I fail to understand:
Mental trauma could cause amnesia? She
simply thought traumatic thoughts and thrust
herself into forgetting her life?

PSYCH

It's much more complex than that.



She was in grad school. Not sure what for.
She changed her mind a lot.

DET

With college, that can get expensive.

BROTHER

I don't know anything about that. I went
through school and didn't have any debt at
all.

DET

And her?

BROTHER

She's been in college three times longer
than I was.

I have no idea.

There should be paperwork here
somewhere.

Contact the university.

DET

They started back a week ago.

Was she registered for any classes?

Let me guess: you don't know.

BROTHER

I'm no help.

DET

No, you're not.

Did you notice the bedroom window?

I doubt it, so let me break it to you.

There was sign of forced entry.

The lock had been busted.

And you know nothing about it.

I'm going to talk to the police about it.

BROTHER

Something terrible could have happened to
someone she loves.

Someone could have been emotionally
abusive.

Whatever happened, she no longer wants to
be herself.

She's run away, so to speak.
She has abandoned herself because her life is
too unbearable.

DEFENSE

In light of this medical testimony, I move for
an adjournment and a cessation of this
inquiry.

CORONER

For what reason?

DEFENSE

Isn't it obvious?

Doesn't anyone else understand the
implications of what our learned Psychologist
has just testified?

Her life is so unbearable that she has escaped
mentally.

Her. Life. Is. Traumatic.

Why in hell are we working to push her back
into such a life?

She has escaped---why can't we help her?

Why can't we give her a new identity?

Why is it necessary for her to return and
simply bear it?

Why can't anyone understand that if



They told me they knew nothing about it.

DET

No one knows nothing.

Except that that her communist cat was murdered.

someone's life is so horrific that they erase their own memory, that returning that person to that life is not only reprehensible but immoral.

CORONER

BROTHER

The police checked her bank records.
She withdrew all of her money.

It isn't our job to create new persons. It's our job to maintain the status quo.
Overruled.

DET

How much money are we talking?

The proceedings will continue.

BROTHER

A lot.

DET

And how much is that?

BROTHER

See, our father just died and we inherited quite a lot of money.

DET

How much money?

BROTHER

More than I think she had the responsibility to handle.
More than should be carried around in cash.

DET

Am I searching for your sister or the money?

BROTHER

Sister first, money second.
She probably told someone and...

DET

And this someone killed her cat?



BROTHER

It's possible.

DET

But not probable.

That's too awkward. Killing the cat wouldn't be necessary.

She could have taken off.

People do. Just walk away, trash their old self and start fresh.

That kind of money you're talking about could do that.

Would she do something like that?

No, bother don't answering that.

BROTHER

She might.

DET

Don't tell me you're going to say something helpful.

BROTHER

She's been seeing a shrink since I was in college.

If you check out her bathroom it looks like a fucking pharmacy.

And all anti-psychotics, sleeping pills and antidepressants.

She didn't take the death of our mother well.

I imagine she took our father's death worse.

DET

So not only did your sister leave town with a suitcase full of money,
she did it without her meds.

And you think she killed her cat as a psychotic signature?

Maybe for you?

Because she knew you'd come looking for her?

BROTHER

I don't know what to think.

DET

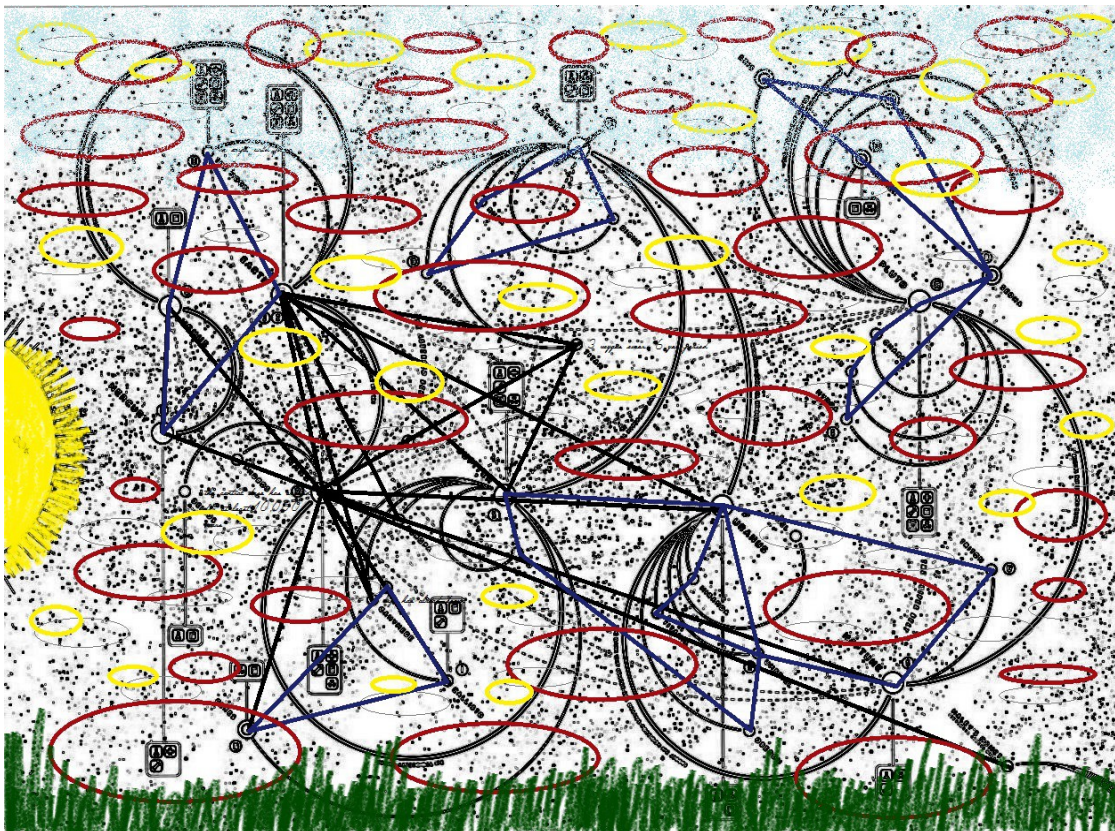
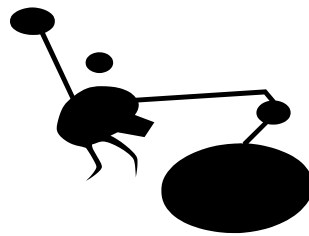
It's also possible someone broke in, killed her cat and she got understandably
spooked and ran.

Or someone killed her cat as a way to torture her, and took her off somewhere to

have more fun with her.
You know I get missing women cases every week.
It's an epidemic.
I'm surprised the country isn't experiencing a decline in the population.
I'll go up to the university and talk to her colleagues.
Now it's your turn to pass me a check which will make my eyes wide.
And I'll nod, realizing that you really do love her
because you're willing to spend a ridiculous amount of money to find her.

BROTHER
(passes DET a check)

DET
Yes, this is love in America.



The AtomicPunk Mystery

SCENE TWO: MARGIE and CHESTER are having sex. It is loud and vigorous, possibly violent. BASIL the ROBOT stands to the side, lights flashing. They finish and MARGIE lights a cigarette.

MARGIE

That was completely unacceptable.

You were too fast.

You spent no time stimulating me,

whilst I spent approximately ten minutes arousing your penis.

You didn't wait until I was fully lubricated,
causing penetration to hurt.

I told you to stop and you ignored me.

You proceeded to continue with heightened rigor
causing me great pain.

Therefore, this was a rape.

You should be ashamed of yourself.

This is the fourth time you've raped me.

So why do I continue initiating sex with you?

Why do I continue this ridiculous relationship?

Because I want you to be a good person.

I want the day to come when you decide that what I feel and experience
is important.

Because I have an absurd hope that one day
you will change.

CHESTER

I will change.

MARGIE

You're pathetic, Chester.

And I'm a fucking idiot.

CHESTER

You've never told me any of this was a problem.

MARGIE

Me saying No isn't clear enough language?

CHESTER

You're doing it again:

you're getting intellectual and scientific.

You always use your science against me,

to make me look like a fool.
If you told me sooner that you didn't like the sex,
we could have worked it out.
But you spend too much time in your head.
You're too emotional and irrational.
This is why we need to marry, just as your father wants.
Once we're married, there won't be any confusion.

(drops her cigarette on the floor and grinds it out)

MARGIE

You see that cigarette butt?
It has a very clear, very focused
relationship with me.
It wants to arouse me and kill me.
I'm fine with that
because I enjoy it.
Unfortunately with you, Chester,
I don't enjoy you.

CHESTER

Marriage isn't about enjoyment.

MARGIE

Chester, get the fuck out of my laboratory.

CHESTER

We'll see what Father has to say about this!

(exits, distracted, as if pursued by a bear)

MARGIE

Don't you call him that, Chester! He's not your fucking father, too!
Chester, you dirty fucking cunt!

[...]

Basil, I should marry you.

BASIL

I'm merely a robot, Miss.

MARGIE

At least the sex is better with you.

BASIL

I'm programmed to create all kinds of pleasure.

MARGIE

You know everything, Basil.

BASIL

Not everything, Miss.

Only ninety-two point six percent of the world's knowledge.

MARGIE

What knowledge don't you know, Basil?

BASIL

If I knew the answer to that question, I'd know everything in the world.

MARGIE

Basil, darling, will my father make me marry Chester?

BASIL

Miss, I believe you will marry him because you love your father.

You don't trust your own judgment.

You fear that the terrible things that doctors have told you is right.

You will marry Chester because, more than anything, you want to be normal,

even if you have to pretend.

(lights a cigarette, bends her head back and blow smoke as if a churning volcano)

MARGIE

Well, shit.

BASIL

Miss, if you'll permit me:

I promise you that I will always protect you from Chester.

You won't be harmed any more.

I will hear you when you say No, and I'll respond appropriately.

Would that be satisfactory?

MARGIE

Oh, fuck, why can't you be a human so I can marry you, Basil darling.

BASIL

I like when you call me 'Darling'.

SCENE 4

University office. DETECTIVE with OFFICE MATE.

The Deck of Playing Cards.

DET

You shared this office with her?
What did that entail?

DEFENSE

Do you recognize anything from your purse?

OM

She sat at that desk.
I sat at mine.
We both had a key to the door.

CORPSE

Yes.

The deck of cards.

DET

You didn't know her well, I take it.

DEFENSE

Do you remember where you got them?

OM

Actually, I knew her exceptionally well
intellectually.

CORPSE

No.

DET

What do you mean by that?

DEFENSE

But you're sure that they're yours?

OM

We talked. Bounced ideas off each other.
We believed the same things.
We wanted the same things.
And she's a genius. A complete, fucking
genius.
This department undervalued her.
It undervalues everyone, but her
especially.

CORPSE

I can't explain it.

I know they're mine.

I've used them before, but I can't remember
when specifically.

DEFENSE

How did you use them?

DET



How so?

CORPSE

The way that you use cards.

The normal way.

OM

People thought she was difficult.

Her work was difficult to understand
without the proper theoretical background.

She didn't want to do what everyone else
was doing.

She was always looking years ahead
and you always got the sense with her that
she was running.

Toward something, away from something,
running in circles.

She had problems with her dissertation
proposal.

(gives DET paper)

DEFENSE

You played card games?

Do you remember the games?

CORPSE

I didn't play games.

The cards told me about my life.

They predict my future.

Aren't they supposed to do that?

DET

(reads)

This is harsh.

DEFENSE

That's one way to use them.

Here: use the cards to tell you about your life.

OM

That was for the third draft.

But I doubt that's why she left.

She just needed to get away for a while.

((CORPSE deals out a card reading))

DET

You think she *left*?

CORPSE

Turbulent married life.

Long and happy life.

In the future, a change of residence for the

better.

Death.

OM

Absolutely.

She used to take road trips all the time
without saying anything.

She had friends in Illinois and California.

Fulfillment of greatest hopes.

Great luck and all ambitions attained.

Good tidings.

DET

Do you know any names?

I have friendly disposition and I'm gentle and

affectionate.

OM

No, she wasn't about names.

I will receive bad news and it will completely

shock me.

She gave people roles:
 The Guru,
 The Jester,
 The Town Drunk,
 The Herpes.
 There was a former professor, I think the
 head of her masters committee.
 He *hated* her.
 Told her to her face.
 She didn't care: she gave him all the credit
 for what she is.
 She thought he taught her everything,
 but he was only a crossing guard for her
 talents:
 He kept cars from running her down.
 And in this safety,
 she ran and ran.
 Anyway,
 she would visit him, or try to, so she could
 talk ideas out.
 You'd think that a normal person would
 just stay away,
 because he fucking loathed her,
 but she wouldn't.
 The work was more important than
 anything, more important than human
 feelings.
 Bizarrely, she was right. He hated her, but
 he'd talk to her.
 And he helped her.

DET

And you have no idea what his name was?
 Or where---

OM

Wherever she got her masters. Illinois.
 That's the best I can do.
 I remember his nickname: the Infant.

Someone is watching me and feeling
 incredible love.
 Success, great success.
 Dire misfortunes and fierce enemies
 Hatred. Terrible calamities.
 Divorce.
 Happiness and popularity.

DEFENSE

Does any of that feel true?
 Does it trigger anything?

CORPSE

It's all true.

DEFENSE

What in particular?
 You mentioned divorce, a turbulent marriage.
 Hatred.

You said someone is watching you and in love
 with you.

CORPSE

It all feels correct.

This *is* my life.

I just don't understand.

This is true.

This is really true.



DET

Why does he hate her so much?

OM

The same reason why she's hated here.

She's brilliant and difficult.

She fights when grad students are expected to roll over
and expose their bellies for
ritual disemboweling.

She refused: she carried her own knife
and gutted a few very thoroughly.

DET

That's rather violent imagery.

OM

You haven't spent much time in academia.

It's a wonder that more people
aren't gunned down in universities.

This is a savage, brutal environment.

Sometimes I think I'd feel more secure
living in a South American rain forest.

At least the poisonous frogs
wouldn't judge me
as they killed me.

DET

But you have her.

OM

Yes, we are our own tribe.

I found when I was with her,

I'd fight when I usually wouldn't.

We started a few battles together,
won a couple.

It's the fight that's important.

The fight builds character.

And it makes us feel alive.

DET

Do you two spend time off campus?

OM

We get coffee in the mornings at the student union.

DET

But off campus.

OM

I'm married.

DET

That doesn't answer my question.

OM

I think it does.

DET

A simple No for the record would be helpful.

OM

I have a little boy.
My wife is pregnant.



DET

Go on.
Give me more reasons why
you couldn't be in love with her.

OM

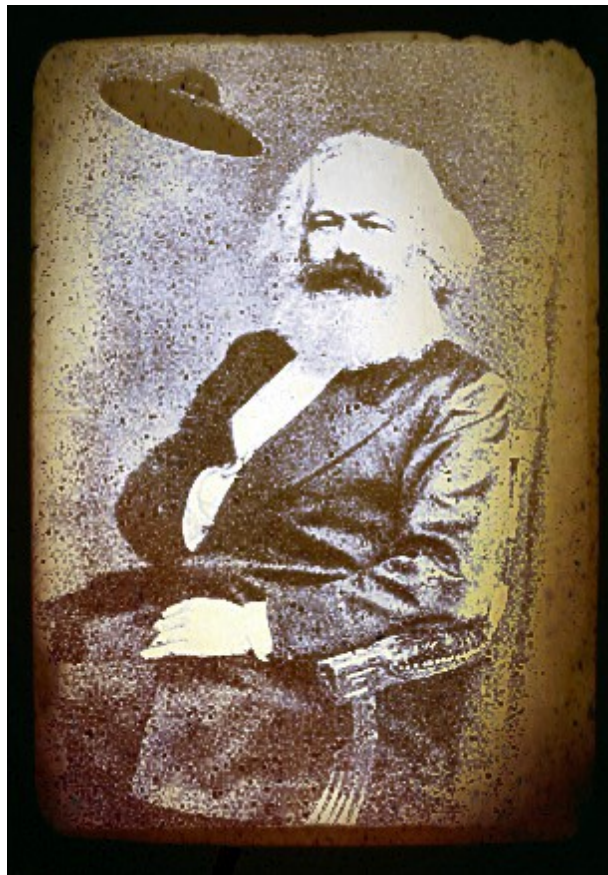
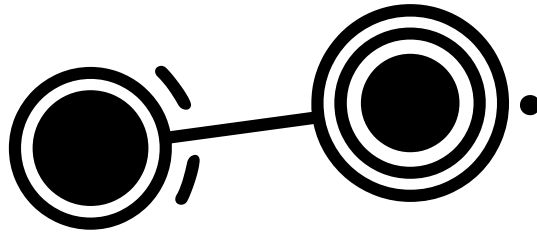
Academia is a brutal world and people do things without thinking.
We spend so much time in our heads
we let our human side act instinctively.
The stress can be impossible to cope with.
But she and I aren't like that.
We're friends.
We don't see each other like that.
We call each other "Comrade".
It's not what you think.

DET

Her cat was found dead in her apartment.

It's neck had been deliberately broken.

What do you think about that, Comrade?



SCENE 5

Dissertation committee HEAD and DETECTIVE.

PROSECUTION and CORPSE.

HEAD

Yes, I rejected her dissertation proposals,
but not out of malice.

It was shoddy work.

I'm sure you've heard romantic ideas
about her genius,

but she didn't know how to temper it.

She was more incoherent than not.

Several times I told her she needed to be
on anti-psychotics.

She drove me crazy. I have too much on

my plate dealing with four undergrad

classes, ten other PhD students,

committees and publishing and

conferences. I don't know how she got
accepted into this department, especially

since she didn't have a recommendation
letter from the chair of her masters

degree. That's a black mark. She

shouldn't have gotten into a PhD program

at all. But she walks in here with her
chaotic ideas and fights every decision I
make.

But she's a nice enough person.

She's been in at least one of my classes
since she got here.

As she's also my grad assistant.

Grades papers, makes copies, sorted slides.

She also teaches a class each semester.

PROSECUTION

What is your name?

CORPSE

I don't remember.

PROSECUTION

Where you were born?

CORPSE

I don't remember.

PROSECUTION

Let's try this differently:
where do you feel safe?

CORPSE

California.

PROSECUTION

Where do you feel in danger?

CORPSE

Texas.



DET

How was her work ethic?

HEAD

Satisfactory.

She'd do everything required.

But she was always looking out a window
or staring into corners.

I owned her body,
but her soul belonged to others.

DET

Any idea who?

HEAD

Isn't it obvious?

You've been to her office.

DET

Her comrade?

He denied there was anything between
them.

HEAD

Her soul was engaged.

They were doing complex,
emotionally vivacious things.

Such as doing and saying contradictory
things.

They played word games and
built puzzles to work out together.

They did these things because
there weren't any other moral options for
them.

DET

Would he be capable of killing a cat?

HEAD

He's more apt to be killed by a cat.

There are a lot of murders there.
And the murderers are really demented:
cannibals and necrophiliacs.
And they'll skin you alive and then wear your
vagina on their penis.

DEFENSE

What are the men like in Texas?

CORPSE

They're monsters.

They carry guns, and have them cocked and
loaded at all times.

They don't just expect to be attacked, they
want to be attacked so they can have an
excuse to kill someone.

Especially a black person or a Mexican. They
really hate people of a darker skin tone.

Unless it's a woman.

They all have lists of types of women they
want to fuck. And it's vitally important to get
through this list before they die.

If they don't, it's a major failure. A great
humiliation. They might as well be women
instead of men, because if they can't fuck any
woman they want, they're obviously not man
enough.

They especially want black women because
they have this belief or superstition that black
women are more like animals.

Isn't that crazy? They assume black women
are a different species and to fuck one is both
to conquer the species and to become it at

He's driven a car three times in his life.
Each time, he crashed it into a tree and
ended up in the hospital.
The real world is a little too complicated
for him.

DET

What about her?

HEAD

There...Now there is some possibility.
I doubt she's truly psychotic,
but she did strike me as someone
who will have her way,
one way or another.
If she felt it was necessary,
she would do it.
You could say that that's the
most authentic attribute of a grad student:
if your dissertation chair required it,
would you kill your own cat?

DET

Would you ask her to kill her own cat?

HEAD

I have proverbially in the past, and her
response was always,
"Fuck off".

Look, I have nothing to offer you that's
useful.

If you want to understand her, talk to the
undergrads.

The rumor around the department is that
she's close to several of them.

DET

Close?

HEAD

the same time.

Men Texas are fucked up.

They're also narcissistic, shallow, obsessed with
appearance, cruel, sadistic, petty and gay.

PROSECUTION

(Gay?)

You just said they have lists of women--

CORPSE

Yes, they have lists of women they want to
fuck.

And they're gay.

Look, this isn't my bright idea: I didn't create
men and then decide for some reason that
the men in Texas are simultaneously men
whores and gay.

But there you go: sucks to be them.

PROSECUTION

I'm from Texas.

CORPSE

I'm so sorry to hear that.

Well, you are, it isn't your fault.

I understand, really I do.

But you really shouldn't carry a gun so much.

And I think it's absolutely necessary you wear a
condom every time you have sex.

I promise, I might not feel the same but you
will still be able to have an orgasm.

Though I don't understand why an orgasm is
so important to men.

She was fucking them.
 Don't you want to know what her
 dissertation was about?
 It might help you find her.
 It might be a piece in this complex bullshit
 puzzle she constructed.
 Her dissertation was about UFOs.
 And they say I'm the cunt.

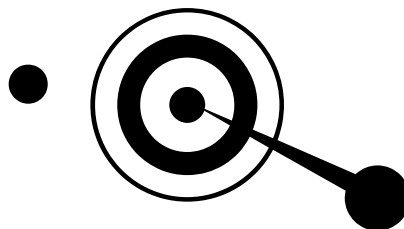
Have you ever tried just kissing and cuddling?
 That can be just as satisfying.
 Unless you find intimacy distasteful.
 That would make sense---you are from Texas.
 You don't even look a woman in the face
 when you have sex, do you?
 That's typical.

you beat your wife so badly that she had to go to the hospital?
 When you hit her, at least avoid her face.
 That way she doesn't have to be pitied by her friends.
 They already assume that she deserved it.
 Because she nagged you or mouthed off or called you a cocksucker.

Yeah, cocksucker really gets to you, doesn't it?
 It reminds you of the underage boys you fuck in parked cars and motel rooms.
 One of them will give you syphilis and because you're such a proud prick you won't see
 your doctor and it'll get worse and worse and eat your nose and brain away.
 Which isn't a bad thing, because you're from Texas, but for fuck sake, don't give it to your
 wife.

Just die in peace and let her have the house and insurance money.
 Hopefully, once she's free, she won't feel like her life is over.
 She'll feel like an empty husk, like nothing.

That you've made her a non-person, with no privacy or personality or identity.
 She won't remember the past because it's too painful, and can't conceptualize a future
 because she's too *nothing* to create one.
 Texas is fucked up.



The AtomicPunk Mystery

SCENE THREE: CHESTER and MARGIE are in a marriage ceremony performed by BASIL. The two kiss, and BASIL declares them "Man and Wife". They kiss and they seem to enjoy it, with real feeling and attachment.

The SCIENTIST kisses MARGIE good-bye, pulls CHESTER aside and says things in his ear which make CHESTER nod and appear scolded. Finally the SCIENTIST waves at them.

Without thinking, MARGIE tosses her bouquet at him, which he catches. All laugh.

He disappears and MARGIE goes to a control panel.

MARGIE

All systems go for launch.

I'm beginning the mix of the fuel.

It should reach optimum mixture in three minutes.

Basil, how is the position of the Earth.

BASIL

It's ideal.

If he waits more than five minutes,

he'll miss his window and won't be able to launch for another year.

MARGIE

I'm going on headset.

Dad, we are go for launch.

SCIENTIST

(off)

Go for launch confirmed.

MARGIE

You got your seat belt on, Dad?

You only got one shot at this and it's coming up quick.

It's your last chance to bow out.

No one will think less of you.

Please bow out, please bow out, please bow out.

SCIENTIST

Nonsense!

You don't need me anymore.

You have that brilliant new husband!

MARGIE

Seriously, Dad, put your seat belt on. You always forget.

SCIENTIST

I have plenty of time.

BASIL

Ready to commence countdown.

MARGIE

Mixture has attained ninety-five percent solution.

Is it getting hot, Dad?

SCIENTIST

Sweltering!

But it'll be hotter on Venus!

BASIL

Countdown commence:

ten

nine

eight

seven

six

MARGIE

I love you, Dad!

Seat belt!

BASIL

Five,

four

three

two

SCIENTIST

It's on. I---

(massive explosion, fireball, building shaken, everything broken; MARGIE gets to her feet first and shrieks DAD!!!!)

SCENE 6

Party. HUEY, DEWEY,
and LOUIE with DETECTIVE.

People in the Courtroom.

DET

Can I get one of those?

PROSECUTION

Do you remember anyone in the courtroom?

HUEY

You can get anything you want, baby.
I made it extra strong.
And extra hard.

CORPSE

I remember nothing.

DET

That doesn't make any sense.

PROSECUTION

Does anyone feel familiar to you?

HUEY

Nothing makes any sense.

CORPSE

Yes.

DEWEY

Everything is absurd.
That's what she taught us in class.

PROSECUTION

Will you point out these people?

LOUIE

Mode has meaning.
The way you tell a story
is an expression of philosophy.

CORPSE

No.

HUEY

You look tough, honey.
The kind of tough
that was fashionable fifty years ago.
You could definitely break my neck with
your bare hands
and hide my body in the forest.
That's so sexy.

PROSECUTION

No?

Why?

DEFENSE

Are you afraid of these people?

What's your story?

DEWEY

Every story is politics.
Everything is political.

LOUIE

And religion.
How much of the media
is constructed from Christian doctrine?

HUEY

Good versus bad.
The beginning and the end.

DEWEY

The journey. The hero facing conflict.
Even the idea of conflict.

DET

Were all of you in her class?
And you partied together as well?
And had sex together?

HUEY

She understood the concept of incest.

DET

Excuse me?

DEWEY

We're all together constantly.

LOUIE

We're all a family.
Even when we have time off we spend it
together.

DEWEY

And fuck it together.

CORPSE

No one will ever make me feel afraid again.

DEFENSE

Are there people you don't like in the
courtroom?

CORPSE

Yes.

DEFENSE

Who?

CORPSE

I don't want to say.

PROSECUTION

Lord Coroner?

CORONER

Young lady,

it is the object of this inquest to discover your
identity and help you return to your life.

Any questions you refuse to answer will only
hinder this process.

CORPSE

Are you going to find me in contempt of
court and throw me in jail?

CORONER

If it need come to that.

It's not unheard of in cases such as these.



HUEY

Sometimes the best sex you have is with your cousins or brother.

DEWEY

You're so fucking gross.

LOUIE

You didn't have to put it like that.

DET

Have any of you heard from her?

HUEY

Is she really missing?

LOUIE

I thought she just went out of town for a while.

DEWEY

Man, when she goes out of town she parties.

DET

With who?

DEWEY

Her exes. And she with us but with her "adult" friends.

LOUIE

We're her "children".

HUEY

Because we're undergrads.

DET

Has she ever gone out of town with

You'd be surprised how many people fight to escape who they are.

DEFENSE

May I try this another way?

What sorts of feelings do you get about the people in the courtroom?

CORPSE

There are two people that I love more than anyone else in the world.

They're the only people who make me feel safe and happy.

I mean really safe. I know that if something really terrible happens, they will take care of me.

CORONER

Wouldn't you like to return to them? I'm sure they'll help you rebuild your life.

CORPSE

No, no, they aren't like that.

They don't want to have anything to do with me.

DEFENSE

That doesn't make any sense.

CORPSE

I embarrass them.

I'd rather stay here in this witness stand forever than walk across the room and ask for

someone?
One of you maybe?

LOUIE
She never said anything about taking
someone.

HUEY
Her office mate. Comrade.
He'd go with her.

DEWEY
He would not. He's married.

LOUIE
I could see him making up something to
his wife.
Tell her they were going to a conference.

DET
He didn't go with her. I already talked to
him.
Was there something going on between
them?

help.

There are others here.
A few I know what to kill me.

DEFENSE
Has anyone tried to kill you?

CORPSE
I got away before anyone could.

DEFENSE
Why do you think they want to kill you?

CORPSE
I don't know.

DEFENSE
Do you remember their names?

CORPSE
No.

DEFENSE
Have they ever hurt you in the past?



CORPSE
Yes.

DEFENSE
Physically?

CORPSE
No.

DEFENSE

Why did you make those cuts on your arms and legs?

The scarring.

You did that yourself, right?

Why?

CORPSE

Because it made me feel good.

CORONER

Young lady,

this Inquest orders you to point out those people in the courtroom who provoke strong feelings in you.

If you do not, you will be incarcerated until you are willing to speak.

DEFENSE

Sir Coroner---

CORONER

Don't you 'Sir Coroner' me!

You know perfectly well this is vitally important information!

DEFENSE

Will you at least ask for anyone in the courtroom who knows her to make themselves known?

CORONER

Is there anyone present who knows this woman?

Does anyone have any information about her life?

Is anyone willing to come forward?

There, Lady Defense:

it is as expected.

The people who know you are the last to come to your rescue.

SCENE 7

DETECTIVE with OFFICE MATE in office.

OM

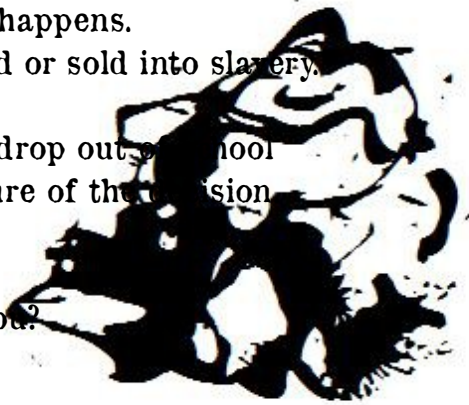
You can go through her desk.
I'm sure she won't mind.

DET

You're convinced she's coming back. Why?

OM

Life is boring.
Nothing interesting really happens.
She hasn't gotten murdered or sold into slavery.
That's silly.
If anything, she's going to drop out of school
and is taking time to be sure of the decision.



DET

She talked about that to you?

OM

Ever since we started here.
It's difficult to continue enduring the sadism.
But once you've invested time and enormous amounts of money,
quitting becomes something worse than what they've done to you.

DET


I don't understand what I'm looking at.
What are these photos?
They're just trees and houses and the sky.

OM

No, look. See that.
That's what the photo is about.
That's an object and its nature and purpose cannot be identified.
And its flying.

DET
A UFO?
She believed in UFOs?

OM
She believed in objects that couldn't be identified.
That's what her dissertation was about.
You know what.
She may not be off contemplating the end of her academic career.
(phone rings)
Hold on.
(answers)
Hello?
Hi, honey.
At least another hour. I have students scheduled for an office visit.
Uh-huh.
Yeah.
Yeah.
That's terrible.
I'll be down as soon as I can, but---
Yes.
Yes.
Yes, baby.
Yes, baby.
Yes, baby.
Toilet paper and milk and paper towels.
I know not to get the expensive kind.
Yes, baby.
I have to go now.
I'm sorry.
I know, I understand.
I'm sorry, it's all my fault.
I'll call you---
I'll call you when---
I'll call---



Yes, baby.
I need to go.
Okay, I'm sorry.
Okay.
Okay, I'm sorry, I'll call you before I leave.
Bye, sweetheart, I love you.
(hangs up)
She could be doing research.

DET
Research where?

OM
She talked about creating a definition for "unexplained".
She thinks it's possible for any object to be unexplained, no matter what it is.

DET
I don't understand.

OM
She's looking for mystery. She's looking for questions, not answers.
Questions keep us alive.
Answers kill us slowly.
Answers make us feel ineffectual and impotent.
I hardly understand half of what she says,
but I know she's on to something.

DET
When was the last time you talk to her?

OM
Friday. She was sitting there working,
we talked about nothing,
and I left for the day.
She was perfectly normal.

DET
What was she working on?

OM

You're holding it.



The AtomicPunk Mystery

SCENE FOUR: Parlor. CHESTER meets with the DETECTIVE INSPECTOR.

DI

See here, I'm going to confiscate every scrap of that space ship or Science Machine or whatever you call it, and I'm not leaving here until I do!

CHESTER

Inspector, please, listen.

DI

Her father died right out there!

That is a crime scene!

Your wife has no business hoarding the wreckage!

CHESTER

Inspector,

my wife is not herself right now.

DI

Of course she isn't!

She's so deep in grief she can't leave the scene of her father's death!

It's unhealthy, but that's how women are!

They always react in unhealthy ways when problems arise.

CHESTER

No, you don't understand.

She isn't behaving in any way a normal woman would.

Margie is going through the wreckage of the Science Machine and looking for a cause for the explosion.

DI

Damn it, Man, can't you see that that's what we want to do, too!

Now allow my men onto the estate to examine the wreckage,

or I'll come back with the Eighteenth Infantry

and take it by force!

CHESTER

I completely understand, Inspector,
but you need to understand my wife.

Her father was the world's smartest scientist,
and my wife is the world's second smartest.

No, now she's the smartest, since he's no longer with us.

She built that Machine and prepared it for launch.
If anyone can figure out what happened,
it'll be her,
not your scientists and definitely not the Eighteenth Infantry.

DI

All right, we'll play it her way for now.

One more thing though.

I discovered something in your wife's background that is disturbing to say the least.

Let me put this as sensitively as I can:

she was discovered in a indelicate and morally objectionable state with another girl. Your wife was sent away for a rest cure for a year and the girl who had been compromised hung herself.

Is this an accurate description of the incident?

CHESTER

Not a very sensitive description, but I imagine there is no way to describe what happened. I assure you, though, my wife has since been cured.

DI

Cured?

People like that don't cure, in my experience.

CHESTER

Inspector, she is my wife.

If anyone knows my wife's character fully it would be me.

DI

In my experience, people like that also escalate their degradation.

In other words, their crimes escalate.

It's not out of the realm for someone of your wife's history to evolve into a murderess.

CHESTER

So you've abandoned all attempts to be sensitive.

DI

Could your wife have killed her father?

CHESTER

No.

Look here, Inspector, my wife is the most difficult woman I've ever known, and sometimes I need to slap her to get her back in line, but she is also the best person I've ever known.

Your accusations are insulting.

DI

I was merely asking a question.

CHESTER

Even if my wife wanted to kill her father,
even if she set up the explosion in some way,
Basil would have detected any irregularities and prevented it.
Sometimes I think Basil was constructed to keep Margie in check.



SCENE 8

Party. HUEY and DETECTIVE.

HUEY

What's your story?

DET

I have no story.

HUEY

Your story is going to be her story.

Don't think you're just
doing research.

Research is obsession, jealousy, and, if you're lucky, it's also love.

DET

She tell you that?

HUEY

She told me lots of things.

DET

She tell you who she visited when she went on road trips?

HUEY

People from her past.

She never spoke about them as if they existed now.

It's like she was visiting ghosts.

Ex-boyfriends, ex-girlfriends, ex-professors: those sorts of ghosts.

People who no longer existed for her in the present,
but who she couldn't leave behind in a proper past.

You need another drink.

DET

She ever talk about her brother?



HUEY

I didn't know she had a brother.

DET

What about her parents?

HUEY

She confided in me about them.

She wouldn't talk about them in class.

But she told me.

DET

She trusted you?

HUEY

I liked to think she liked me. *Like* liked me.

DET

So what's your story?

How do you fit in here?

HUEY

I don't.

When I first got to college, I didn't care about getting my degree.

I wanted to get married.

I'd walk through the business department and the law buildings
when I knew classes were changing,

looking for attractive men who I knew would be rich one day.

I'd wear low cut blouses and tight skirts

and get asked to frat parties.

Then at the parties I'd get blackout drunk

and wake up the next day in some asshole's bed,

someone I had no memory of,

and I'd be naked and feeling like I fucked a rolling pin.

Sometimes there'd be more than one guy.

Once two guys were giving me a ride home from a party.

I was so drunk I couldn't keep my head up.

They pulled the car over and said that if I didn't fuck them they'd dump me.

We were outside town.

They drove like twenty miles out of town to do this.

So I fucked them.

What did it matter at that point, after everything else?

Anyway, I had to take a bullshit gen ed class,
in a department I didn't give a shit about,
and then I ended up in her class and
everything
changed.

DET

So you've found your husband then?

HUEY

There is something.

There was a story she never told me.

Something that she wasn't saying aloud,
but it was always running
between the lines.

She'd ask if I was going to a bunch of parties,
and if I'd take her along,
and there was something going on in the background.
Like white noise.
You know what I mean?

DET

No, not at all.

HUEY

I've always thought something really terrible had happened to her.
Years ago.

There was so much she never talked about,
conversations she never participated in.

She'd just sit and drink gin and get drunk
while the rest of us talked about bullshit in our lives.

She was like a robot that just didn't have certain things programmed into her.
Is that helpful?

DET

Maybe. I don't know.

Another one of these would be helpful.



HUEY

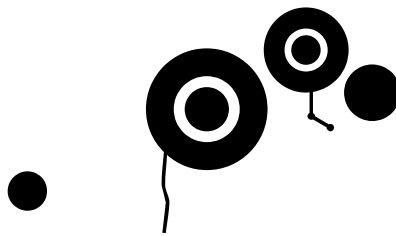
I have a fresh bottle in my room.
You can go on in there---
down the hall, across from the bathroom---
go on and help yourself.
Help yourself to anything you want.

DET

You're only doing this because you know she's not coming back.

HUEY

Didn't your mamma tell you
it's rude to turn down
cheap and easy tail?



SCENE 9

DETECTIVE and OFFICE MATE.

DET

You're fucking with

OM

What do you mean?

That's what she was

She was obsessed with it

DET

What is this?

What language is this?

None of this is in English.

What are those drawings?

OM

I don't know.

She made up her own language.

I can't read it.

For her it created a decent,

or an ascent,

it transcended her thinking

to write like that.

At least that's what she said.

DET

Is there something I can use to translate this?

A dictionary or something?

OM

I don't think she created one.

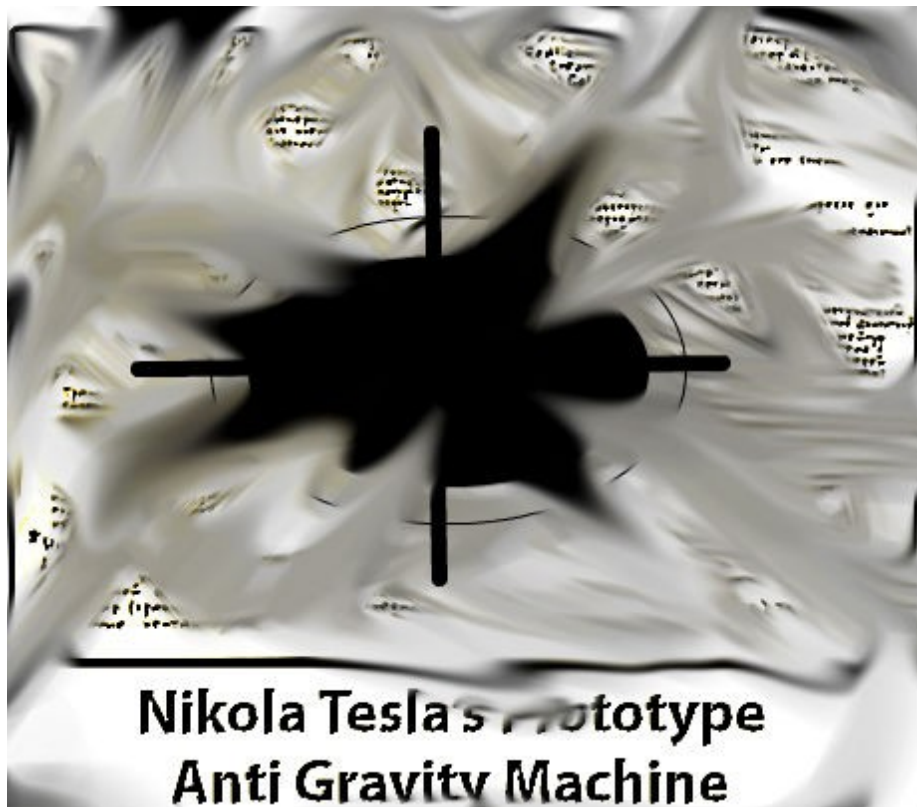
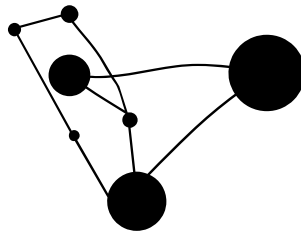
I think this was the only way she felt safe.

No one could get in.

No one could criticize her.
She could stand up for herself better than anyone,
but shit did get to her.
She had moments.

DET

What was the worst moment she had?



The AtomicPunk Mystery

SCENE FIVE: The site of the explosion of the Science Machine. Wreckage everywhere. Twisted hunks of metal, melted into surreal shapes, burnt electronic equipment, the charred remains of a space suit and captain's chair. MARGIE is in the middle of the debris, on her knees and examining pieces. BASIL stands at her side. The INSPECTOR and CHESTER enter.

MARGIE

Please watch where you step! This is a crime scene!

INSPECTOR

You don't need to tell me that this is a crime scene!

MARGIE

I think I found it, Basil.

Right here!

Test this!

(BASIL takes a rock from MARGIE and quickly analyzes it)

INSPECTOR

What's the meaning of all this?!

I demand to know what is going on!

CHESTER

My apologies, Inspector. My wife can be overly focused in her work.

MARGIE

Please, just be patient!

BASIL

Analysis completed.

You are correct, Miss.

It is all exactly as you expected.

INSPECTOR

What is as you expected?

MARGIE

This.

This caused the explosion.

INSPECTOR

This little rock? What is it?

MARGIE

What it *is* isn't important.

What it *was* caused the science machine to explode.

INSPECTOR

I don't understand.

MARGIE

Basil?

BASIL

This rock is plutachlorridiflourite.

It is not endemic to earth, nor is found naturally in this state.

Rather, it is the child element of a much more unstable element.

When this unstable parent element comes into contact with certain explosive chemicals,

it has an instantaneous, violent reaction,

releasing electrons and reducing itself to this inert rock.

MARGIE

The introduction of the parent element caused the explosion.

INSPECTOR

And what is the parent element?

BASIL

Hephaestite.

INSPECTOR

So where do we find this Hephaestus element?

BASIL

Hephaestite.

MARGIE

We don't know for sure.

BASIL

The professor theorized its presence deep below the surface of Mars.

INSPECTOR

Mars?

Are you telling me someone from Mars made the science machine explode?

BASIL

There is no other logical alternative.

CHESTER

That's ridiculous!

The Martians loved the Professor!

They built statues of him, and named a continent after him!

MARGIE

Aren't people usually murdered by their loved ones?

INSPECTOR

Statistically speaking, yes.

But it's absurd to assume that the entire planet of Mars assassinated your father.

It had to be an individual or group---

CHESTER

How many Martians are there?

BASIL

Eleven billion, five point six billion living on the surface, the remainder underground.

INSPECTOR

You're sure about this?

BASIL

Those are the most current population figures.

INSPECTOR

I mean about the element!

Are you sure that someone planted that rock in the engine--

BASIL

Not this rock, it's parent element.

MARGIE

It couldn't have been planted.

It had to have been shot into the engine seconds before the explosion.

INSPECTOR

So the assassin was here?

MARGIE

Was and probably is.

BASIL

Two weeks ago there was an anomalous sonic boom in the area which couldn't be accounted for.

INSPECTOR

So what does that have to do with anything?

MARGIE

The sonic boom was probably created by a craft or machine coming from Mars, delivering the assassin.

BASIL

And there have been no sonic booms since then.
Therefore---

MARGIE

The murderer is still on the planet.



SCENE 10

DETECTIVE and BROTHER.

Courtroom. DEFENSE, PROSECUTION,
CORPSE, CORONER.

DET

I've found no evidence of anything.

No one knows anything.

No one thinks anything.

Her office mate is convinced she's on a
road trip and returning.

Her dissertation professor seems to prefer
that she stay away.

She's probably in Illinois partying with
friends.

CORONER

Young lady,

you are being incarcerated until you are
willing to tell us who in this courtroom you
know.

Will you tell us now or will you go back to
jail?

CORPSE

Jail.

BROTHER

Go find her.

DET

Go to Illinois?

BROTHER

I want to know if she's fine.

I don't care what anyone says:

my sister wouldn't leave town without saying nothing to anyone.

And what about her cat?

Someone has to tell her about her cat, right?

DET

This is going to get expensive.

BROTHER

You'll need to drive, I imagine.
I think she'd take the most direct route.
It should be seventeen hours at least.

DET
I find her,
tell her about her cat,
and she doesn't want to come back---
what then?

BROTHER
In this scenario, has she spent all the money?

DET
No.

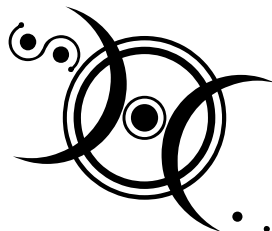
BROTHER
Wire me immediately.
If she's spent it all, well...

DET
Yeah, got it.

BROTHER
Oh, give this to her when you see her.
She'll want it.

DET
What is it?

BROTHER
Ashes. I had her cat cremated.
She'll want it.





The Ghost Tour

Stop #2: Eat at Joe's

Back in 1950s, Joe's Diner used to be one of the most popular eating establishments on route 66. At all hours of the night, you could get a cup of hot, fresh coffee, a steak dinner and a piece of homemade cherry pie. But after construction of the interstate, traffic got diverted about five miles to the north, and this modest crossroads and collection of mom and pop businesses became a ghost town.

But not everyone forget that this diner was here. It had a healthy crowd of regulars comprised of locals and travelers. You would never have to wait for an hour for a table like in the old days, but you could still get three eggs, four strips of bacon, biscuits, hash browns, coffee and orange juice for five bucks.

There was one regular who would drift in through the years, one who seemed more of a myth than a real person. But she was more than a myth or a real person.

Joe's had a waitress that always worked the graveyard shift, but then she died and a new girl

get hired. The new girl was the daughter of a friend of the owner and hadn't been a waitress before, but she was smart and fearless and picked things up fast.

One Wednesday morning at three AM, a woman in a black cape and black felt hat walked in. The waitress was pouring coffee for two truckers at the counter, and called a Hello to the woman, and told her she could sit anywhere.

The woman didn't respond and sat in a booth by the window. She sat and stared out the window into the reflection of the diner on the windows. Without thinking, the waitress brought a fresh mug and poured the woman some coffee and set a menu on the table. The woman said nothing, and immediately cupped the mug in both hands, as if it was providing life-sustaining warmth.

The cook, who was preparing cheeseburgers and chili for the truckers, suddenly hissed across the restaurant at the waitress. The cook up to this point had been friendly and kind to the waitress, joking with her and making her feel quite at home in her new job. She told the woman she would be back in a moment, and hurried to the window between the kitchen and the counter.

The cook was furious at the waitress and told her to get in the kitchen and finish his orders, that he would deal with the customers.

The waitress suddenly laughed. The idea was absurd. The cook was in a white t-shirt and

jeans and an apron, all of which was stained with grease, sweat and other various food juices. There was no way he was suitably attired to wait on customers. Not to mention, she doubted he could write out a proper ticket and use the cash register.

But his anger suddenly melted into something more disturbing: deep fear. The waitress realized this conversation couldn't continue through the window, in view of customers, and she scooted into the kitchen.

The cook told her to stay quiet and not look at the woman in the dining room. The waitress tried to ask the cook questions, but he was too busy finishing the burgers and chili, packing the food in to go boxes. The cook told her she should just go home, that he was going to close the place up. Involuntarily, the waitress glanced at the woman in the booth and saw she was out of coffee.

"She's out of coffee," the waitress said absently, and left the kitchen to refill her mug. The cook tried to grab her, but she was too quick.

The waitress retrieved the coffee pot from the coffee maker and walked slowly to the woman's booth.

She didn't hear the cook and men at the counter leave through the front door.

Her hands were shaking, but she didn't feel fear. The woman sat with a stillness that wasn't

human. The waitress didn't look her in the face, but only at the mug as she was about to pour her a refill.

"Are you ready to order or do you need another minute?" The question came out mechanically.

At this moment, the cook burst through the front door. After fleeing the scene, he experienced terrible guilt and knew he had to return to the diner to rescue the waitress. When he walked in the door, his eyes immediately met the eyes of the woman in the black cloak. Their eyes locked. He began to tremble. The waitress looked up at the noise to see the cook going into convulsions. Before she had the time to form a coherent thought, his skin turned dark gray, his flesh shriveled, his bones pushed through the desiccated muscles broke the skin. His mouth cracked open into a silent yowl until his jaw unhinged with a sickening pop and tumbled to the floor. There was suddenly a great steam around him, and when it cleared all that remained behind were his burnt clothes on the floor.

Without a word, the woman held up her coffee mug in the universal gesture of, "Can I have more coffee?"

Now who this woman in the cape and felt hat was, we don't know and most likely will never know. Sometimes ghosts and their trauma will wander into your life.

SCENE 11

Diner. DETECTIVE and WAITRESS.



WAITRESS

More coffee?

DET

Yeah, to the rim.

You recognize this woman?

WAITRESS

Sure do.

That's Trixie, right?

She worked here for a spell.

Not too bright,

really flighty,

wore too much make up

and flirted with the customers.

Men and women.

But she was a hard worker.

We've had worse.

DET

This woman?

You're sure?

WAITRESS

I'm pretty sure.

She and I got close.

Real close.

I ain't ever going to forget that face.

I'll remember her on the day I die.

You a bill collector or something?

DET

No, she's missing.

But it can't be the same person.
The woman I'm looking for was a PhD student.

WAITRESS

PhD?

As in going to be a doctor?

Can't be her then.

This woman was dim.

She thought the litter box in my apartment
was a trash can.

DET

Tell me...

Did she ever talk about UFOs?

WAITRESS

Honey, she'd never shut up about them.

She was sure she'd been abducted
or that she was being followed.

She was real paranoid that she was being watched.

She got me all worked up about it.

I went out and bought thicker curtains for my apartment.

She talked about them like she'd taken a ride into deep space.

DET

She tell you why she quit?

WAITRESS

Nope, just didn't show up for her shifts.

Which was fine---she broke so many dishes.

Now you got me all paranoid about UFOs again.

Just when I got myself to stop thinking about them.

Here's your check.

Pay me when you're ready.

DET

Hey, is there anyone else here who knew her?

WAITRESS

Sure. Our cook.

I'll send him over.

DET

Thanks.

Coffee's great by the way.

WAITRESS

I didn't make it.

(WAITRESS out; COOK in)

DET

Have you seen this woman before?

COOK

Uh..yeah, I think so.

Yeah.

She comes through here a lot.

Bacon and eggs. Four eggs.

Hashbrowns and toast.

Eats it all.

I love a woman who eats.

DET

She comes *through* here?

She's not *from* here?

COOK

No, she'd come in on a Friday morning and then again on Sunday night.

Someone who's traveling,

taking road trips.

DET

You know which way she was headed?

COOK

There's only one way people head:

the interstate.

No other way to get here or get out.



DET

You ever talk to her?

COOK

Just nod at each other.

I'd ask how her food was
and she'd always say the same thing:

"It was heavenly."

I liked that.

Made me feel like I was doing something important.

DET

She ever come in with anyone?

COOK

Not that I ever saw.

Orders to her table were only for one.

Besides, I figured she came here to work,
cause this place can get quiet.

The Denny's at the next exit
pulls a lot of our customers.

Don't know how long we can stay open.

DET

She worked here? On what?

COOK

Books.

Lots of thick old books.

I remember thinking
that she must be really strong to carry them all.

DET

Do you have any idea what they were about?

COOK

Uh...there was one time I had to ring her up,
we were short staffed,
and I saw the title on the side of one of them.
It was something about Shakespeare.



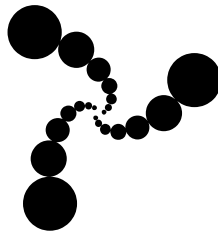
Can you believe that?
That girl was smart enough to be reading Shakespeare.
That always impressed me.

DET
When did you see her last?

COOK
Week ago, maybe more.
I've been expecting her to come through again.
Give us a call and we can let you know.

DET
That's mighty nice of you.

COOK
You know you meet people, but you don't really meet them.
But you like em.
They make you smile.
They become a little bit important.
She was that.
Did something happened to her?



The AtomicPunk Mystery

SCENE SIX: BASIL the Robot and MARGIE are "having sex" in the laboratory.

BASIL
I am so hard for you.

MARGIE
I'm hard for you, too, Basil, darling.
Please don't stop.

BASIL
I would never stop for you, Miss.

MARGIE
Tell me you love my tits.

BASIL
I love your tits.
Tell me my penis is more than adequate for your needs.

MARGIE
Oh! It's so abundant in its adequacy that it hurts!
Go faster.

BASIL
I have increased my velocity by .25 centimeters per second.

MARGIE
No, more! More! Give me five centimeters per second!

BASIL
I do not recommend doing so, Miss.

MARGIE
Do it! Do it, BITCH!!!

BASIL
Increasing velocity in five, four, three...

(CHESTER enters)

CHESTER

What the fuck are you doing?!
Are you...Are you fucking a robot?!

MARGIE

Chester?

CHESTER

Are you fucking OUR ROBOT?!

MARGIE

No.

CHESTER

No? He has an appendage inside you.

MARGIE

This is not fucking, Chester.

BASIL

Sir, technically, this is not sex, but sex play.
I am not a living being capable of reproduction---

CHESTER

Are you, are you, are you, are you telling me,
are you really telling me,

MARGIE

Chester--

CHESTER

Are you telling me that you aren't cheating on me with our robot because
he's not a life form?!
You're doing it again! You're using your science against me!

MARGIE

It's not science. These are the facts.
That's not a penis!
It's not between his legs!
He can't impregnate me!
He can't fall in love with me!
It's not the same.
Tell him Basil.

BASIL

I am not in love with Miss.

It is my purpose to follow all of her wishes and protect her against all threats, and see to all of her needs, and do everything to ensure her happiness. I am not in love with her.

CHESTER

That is being in love with her!

BASIL

That's not scientifically possible. I am not a life form--

CHESTER

You're doing it again!

YOU'RE SCIENCING ME!!!!

MARGIE

SCIENCING ISN'T A WORD!!!!

CHESTER

What is the matter with you?!

Your father was just murdered by Martians and his killer is still running around the planet!

In fact, the Detective Inspector thinks the killer is sticking around to murder you, since you're the only other person who can rebuild his science machine.

MARGIE

That reminds me:

tonight I'm rebuilding his science machine.

CHESTER

WHAT?!

MARGIE

I have to continue with my father's work.

CHESTER

Okay, look, I was going to bring this up later, when the whole alien-science-machine-blowing-up-father-getting-murdered-thing went away, but it seems right now is the perfect time. We should have a baby.

MARGIE

What did you just say to me?

CHESTER

We should have a baby.

BASIL

With all due respect, Sir,
I strongly suggest this conversation end.

CHESTER

You just stick your suggestions in your pie hole!
This is between me and my wife,
so go put yourself in a closet
and give yourself a diagnosis or whatever,
and shut the fuck down!
I'm talking to my fucking wife!

BASIL

Sir, I cannot leave your wife in your presence at this moment.
You are in a highly excitable state,
and the chances of you becoming violent are too great.

CHESTER

What did you just say?
Are you accusing me of beating my wife?

BASIL

You have raped her on multiple occasions, Sir,
therefore the odds are great that you would strike her.

CHESTER

I can't believe this.
I can't believe how you've programmed this robot
to disrespect me in my own home.
Is that what you think of me?
You fucking whore!
You fucking cheating, lying whore!

MARGIE

I thought you wanted to have my baby.

CHESTER

So you could raise it to disrespect me?!
You know, I talked to your father about you,
before he died.

MARGIE

I see it as quite impossible that you talked to him about me

AFTER he died.

CHESTER

He wanted you to be a mother!
He hated that you were into his science!
He thought you were unbalanced and
he told me we should have a baby.
He'd be disgusted by you if he knew.
If he knew what a lying whore you are,
how much you hate me and disrespect me,
and what a fucking pervert you are
to be FUCKING YOUR ROBOT!
All I've ever done is love you!
I'm not perfect! I'm not a scientist!
And you mocked me and disrespected me for it!
I've never done anything except love you!
And this is what you do to me!
You fucking perverted whore!
Your father would be disgusted with you!
He'd hate you!
He always thought you were fucked up,
but he knew I could help you!
Well, I'm not going to help you.
You can go fuck yourself,
and your robot can fuck itself,
and I'm sick of your shit and your lying and your cheating.
Look at what you've done to me!
Look at what you've made me do!

MARGIE

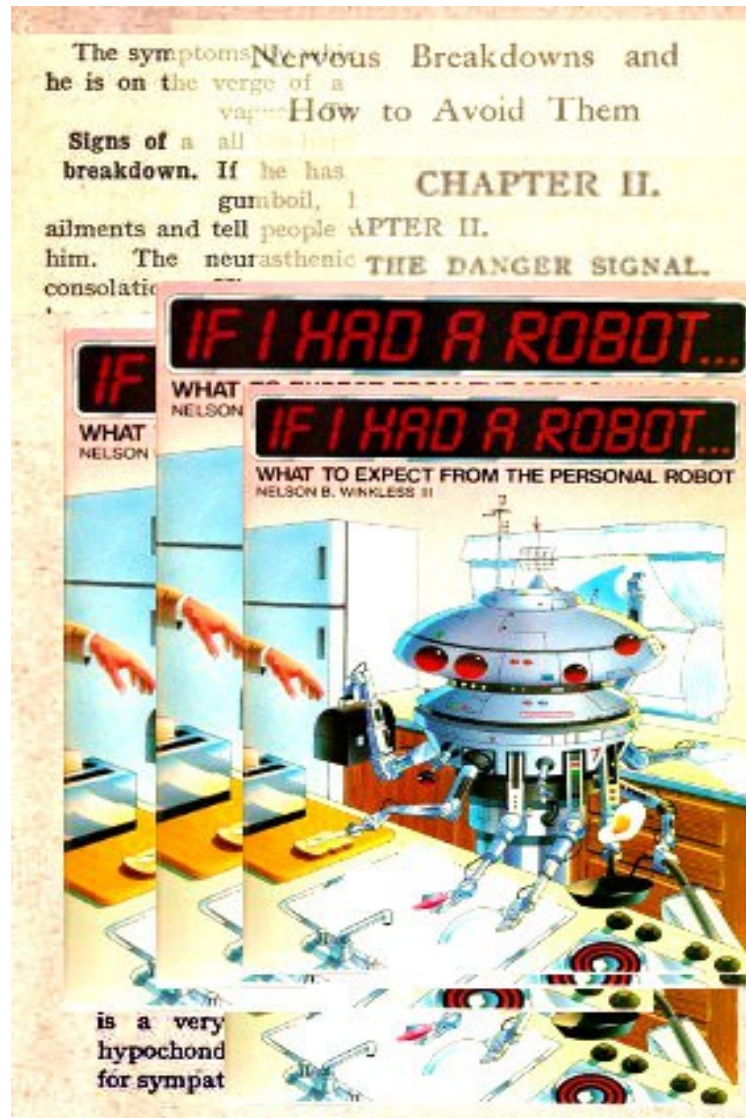
What did you do, Chester?
Did you cause the science machine to explode?

BASIL

Highly unlikely, Miss.
He's far too ignorant to perform such a feat.

MARGIE

Chester, what did you do?
What did you do?



SCENE 12

DETECTIVE and HUEY.

Courtroom CORONER and CORPSE.

DET

I thought I'd check in to see if you
from her.

If she's shown up.

HUEY

No, I haven't.

Not a thing.

DET

I wanted to check in.

You seemed genuinely upset.

One of the only people who are.

HUEY

I'm fine.

Really.

Really, I'm not worried.

She went out of town.

She does it all the time.

Ask anyone.

DET

Let me ask you something:

Did she ever talk about Shakespeare?

HUEY

Shakespeare?

Who's Shakespeare?

CORONER

Are you now ready to tell us what you know?

All you to do is point out one person
in the room.

Just one.

We promise to protect you. No harm will

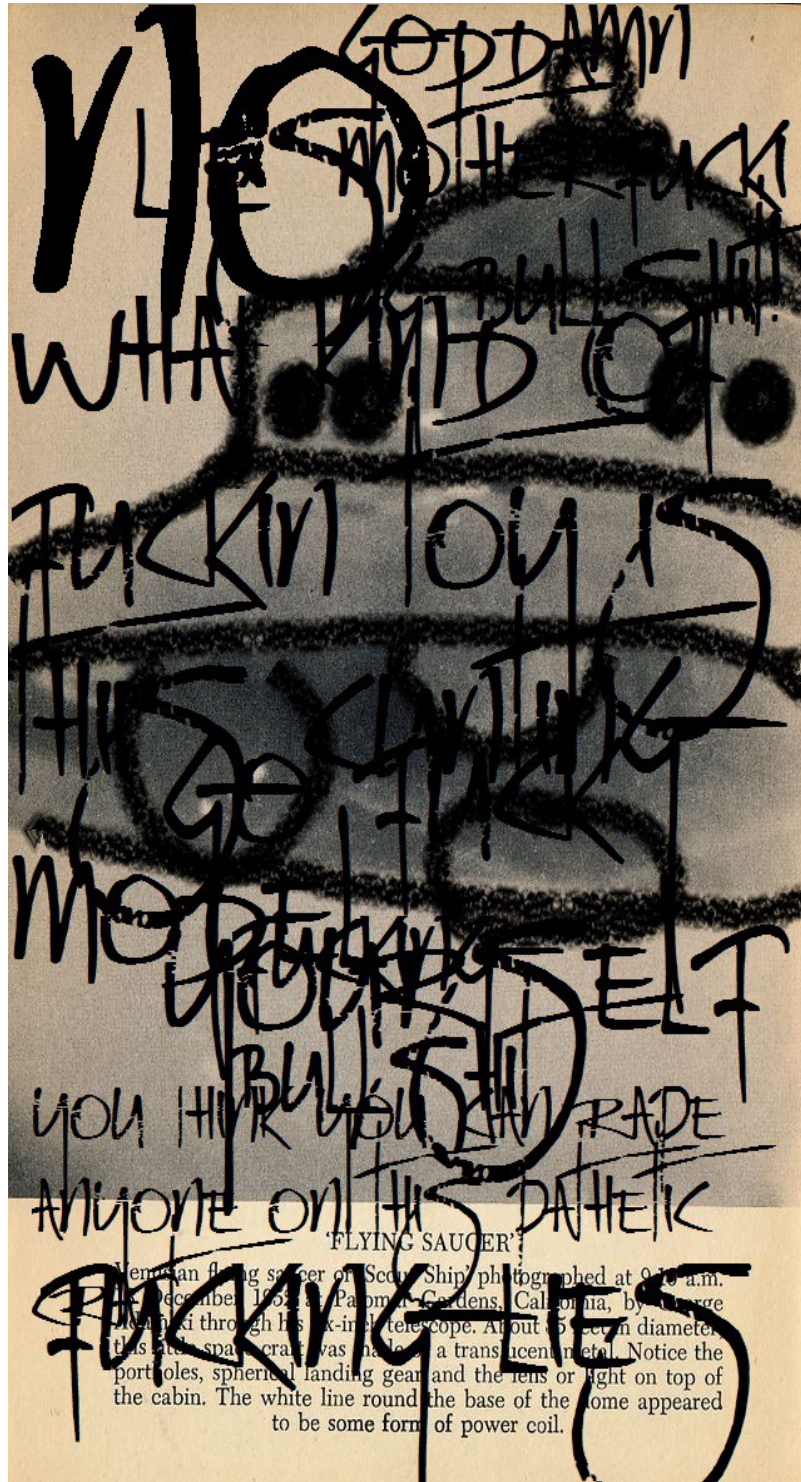
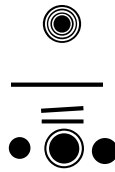
come to you.

Young lady, I need you to make a verbal

answer.

CORPSE

Send me back to jail.



SCENE 13

Office. DETECTIVE and PROFESSOR



PROF

What I want to know is
what the fuck does this have to do with me?
I haven't seen that self-righteous cunt
in years.
I paid my dues with that bitch.
I got through the three years
required for her degree
and I didn't strangle the fuck out of her.
I don't know what the fuck you want with me.
I don't know anything about her.
I'm not in contact with her.
When she writes me I burn her letters up.
I want nothing to do with her.
I don't want to see her when she comes to town.
She's here every fucking weekend
trolling for dick and pussy and whatever
fucking perverted
fucking thing
she's fucking into.
How did you find my office?
No one can find my office—this building is a fucking labyrinth.
Who the fuck are you anyway?

DET

I've been hired to locate her.
She's missing.

PROF

Good.
I hope that cunt got gang raped
and sodomized

and her hands and tongue cut out,
 and branches stuck into her bloody stumps.
 That's from *Titus Andronicus*.
 Not very original, but still quite repulsive.
 No one knew how to torture a person
 better than the Elizabethans.
 I wish I knew who did it,
 because I'd pay them to bake her flesh into a pie.
 I'd eat it with a good Shiraz while listening to Bach.
 What is it you want?
 I don't have all day.
 I want to say that I like you.
 I don't like many people,
 but I like your looks and I know you're one of the good ones.
 What did you want to ask me?
 But don't say her name.
 Don't say her fucking name.
 Hearing it makes me enraged
 and my shrink says I don't need more aggravation.
 My blood pressure is high enough.
 I really shouldn't live in the same hemisphere as her.
 Breathing the air she might have exhaled,
 rots my lungs like a cancer.
 Look, I don't hate women.
 I was married to one for twenty-five years.
 And I was faithful--I didn't fuck any other women.
 For twenty-five years, I stuck my dick into just one hatchet wound,
 no matter how much it disgusted me because it was the right thing to do.
 I didn't want to be married.
 But I was gay and back then I didn't have any options.
 I was gay with a hyper-masculine father
 and a controlling, narcissistic mother.
 I didn't have a choice, goddamn it.
 But I had to be true to myself.
 I had to do that much.
 I had to be with my authentic self.
 In class, she reminded me of my mother.
 She would be quiet, just listening, not taking part in the discussion,
 just listening.
 And her quiet was the same quiet my mother had

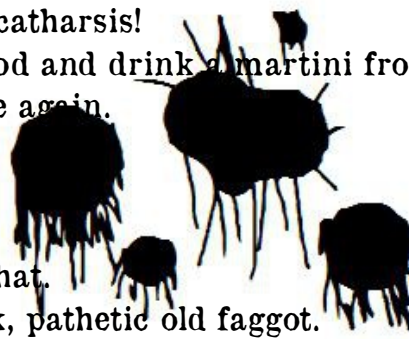
right before she hit me.

DET

Can you account for your whereabouts two weeks ago?
Have you left the state recently?

PROF

You think I fucking killed her?
I wish to fucking Christ I had!
Killing her would be the purest catharsis!
I would wash my face in her blood and drink a martini from her skull
and I would be healed and whole again.
But thank you.
THANK YOU.
You think I could do that.
You think I'm capable of doing that.
Everyone here thinks I'm a weak, pathetic old faggot.
But you think I could murder a human being.
I'm truly touched.
It's a complement to be told
that you still have strength
and the ability and desire
to commit murder.
That I still have passion.
That I still feel something purely human.
But no,
I haven't left the state for decades.
Do you really think she's been murdered?

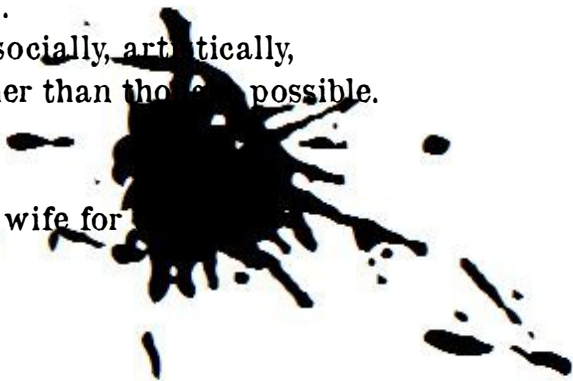


DET

You sound like you'd be sorry if she was.

PROF

I don't hate women. I respect women.
I want women to advance culturally, socially, artistically,
much further than they are, and further than thought possible.
My best friend is a woman.
I don't hate women at all.
I was married, but I didn't blame my wife for
It was my choice and I accept that.



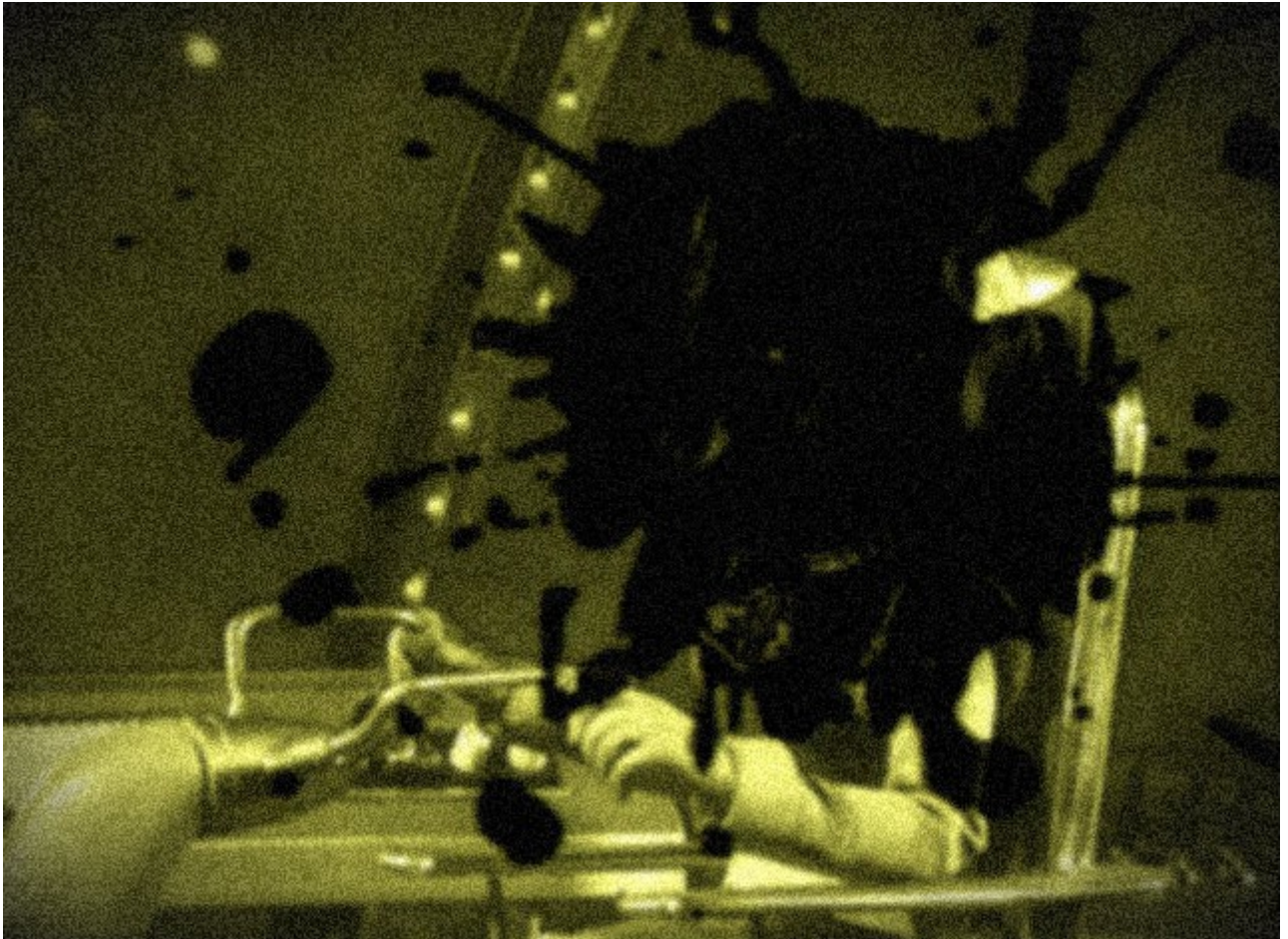
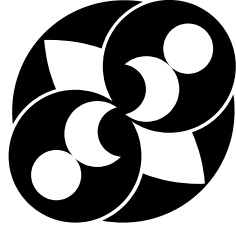
I assume all responsibility for my choice
and the ramifications for altering that choice.
The divorce, I mean, and never being able to see my children again,
because she convinced the judge I was a degenerate.
I never should have confessed what I was really doing
when I said I was working late,
or going to conferences out of state.
There's a motel off the interstate in Iowa,
just as you cross over from Illinois.
I met a guy in a bar who game me the name of the motel.
He told me to look for a certain car
in the parking lot.
I found the car, and in the windshield
was a menu for a Chinese restaurant.
One of those delivery menus you get stuck in your screen door.
On the menu, there was a number written in sharpie.
It was a room number.
So I went to that room.
The door opened and inside
were about twenty men,
naked,
doing just about anything you can imagine
to each other.
The only rule was that you had to be naked.
So I stripped and joined in.
The men weren't all that attractive.
Most really overweight,
only a few young,
some really old.
But there was this one,
he was about my age.
He wasn't hot,
he didn't have a perfect body,
but his eyes smoldered.
I'd never understood how anything could smolder before.
It sounded like hyperbolic bullshit,
but this guy. This guy looked at me like I was fuel,
that I was making him burn,
and he wanted to burn, he needed to burn,
he needed me to burn him.

We didn't hook up immediately.
I had a rather rotund man sucking my dick,
sitting on the floor on one side of the room,
And he was on the edge of the bed,
getting sucked off by a twink.
And we just stared at each other.
When we came it was together,
and I blew the biggest load of my life.
After, I dressed, he dressed,
and we met up in the motel lobby.
We got a room and fucked each other until dawn.
He was from Iowa and we met up regularly,
at least once a month,
for years.
He was a priest.
He eventually left the priesthood.
Then he wanted a relationship.
He was ready to move to Illinois.
I was still married, and you know what I told him:
I told him my family were sacred and I'd never leave my wife.
That I had more devotion to them than he had toward God.
That I knew what the right thing to do was,
that all he wanted was to get his dick wet,
and I was the better person.
Never saw him again after that.
I have no idea what happened to him.
He disappeared.
Vanished.
Probably just like her.
People vanish all the time.
And it means nothing.

DET

Would you like to get a drink later?





SCENE 14

DETECTIVE and THE MILL.

An acquaintance comes forward.

MILL

I didn't know her personally.
We never had a conversation.
She wasn't a costume student,
so she never took one of my classes.
But I heard quite a lot about her.
I'm The Rumor Mill of all information in
this department.
Professors and students visit this office
regularly,
confessing their rumors, and I,
a priest of gossip,
absolve them of their guilt.
I heard a lot about her.

DET

Like what?

MILL

You probably know this already,
but she's having an affair with a married
man.

DET

No, I didn't know.

MILL

Most stories say it's one of the
undergraduate actors.
Other people say it's not a married man,

CORONER

I'm getting tired of asking and I'm sure you're
getting tired of having to stare at my face
every week.

The sooner you tell us what you know, the
sooner you can go home.

CORPSE

I don't want to go home.

CORONER

Then back you go.

SERVER

Lord Coroner, wait!
I know her.

CORONER

Who are you?

SERVER

I work at a diner that she comes to
sometimes.
She always gets

but a woman.
Some say it's pretty much everyone.

DET

And in your expert opinion?

MILL

Definitely undergrad actor.
It's an unfortunate case, actually.
His wife is so obese she's bedridden.
She tops out at 450 pounds.
I can't imagine!
I try to see myself that way,
and all I can imagine is that I have so
much flesh,
I can't touch parts of my body.
Parts of my body disappear from my sight.
I lose myself as much as I gain myself.
It's such a nightmare, poor thing.
So the stories go that the husband got
tired of having...
(How shall I describe it?...)
Improvised sex?
So he strayed.
He strayed pretty far.
He strayed in here.
Right where you're leaning against that
desk.

DET

Where can I find him?

MILL

Chicago?
He went there after he graduated.
They graduated at the same time.
He went north and she went south.
I think they broke it off because he
wouldn't get a divorce.
He's desperately in love with his wife,

bacon and eggs, biscuits, hashbrowns, and lots
of coffee.

CORONER

What's her name?

SERVER

No idea.

We don't talk much.

She gets a booth,

I bring her coffee,

ask if she wants the usual,

and she smiles and nods.

Then she stacks books all over the table and
reads while she eats.

CORONER

What kind of books?

SERVER

Thick ones.

The kind you can only get in a library.

And old.

The books are all different sizes,
so it gives the table a strange look.

CORONER

Do you remember any titles or authors?

SERVER

No.

So you'll release her, right?

Someone came forward, so she doesn't have

and yet such a pathetic man whore.
His only requirement is that you be
smaller than him.
He's pretty big, so he'd go for a subtle thing
like you.

DET
Hear anything else about her?

MILL
Yes! Possibly the best thing of all!
She had been abducted by aliens.

DET
Could you repeat that?

MILL
She told Quasimodo--
(that's what everyone called the married
undergrad)
She told Quasi that she had been abducted
by aliens.
Taken aboard a flying saucer,
went into orbit,
did a few turns around the earth
while they molested her,
and then dropped her back in a corn maze
outside town.
We have a corn maze every Halloween
outside town,
and she was left half naked right in the
center.

DET
Did she go to the police?

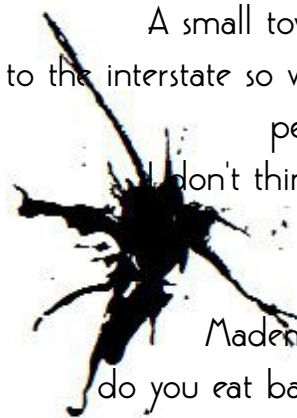
MILL
No, she didn't see any point.
Not because they wouldn't believe her,
but because they couldn't do anything

to go back to jail.
Right?

CORPSE
Shakespeare.
I was reading William Shakespeare.

CORONER
This is quite a significant development.
Where is this diner located?

SERVER
A small town in Missouri.
We're close to the interstate so we get a lot of
people traveling.
I don't think she's a local.



DEFENSE
Mademoiselle Corpse,
do you eat bacon and eggs?

CORPSE
I love them.
I love eating animals.

DEFENSE
You love eating animals?

CORPSE
Absolutely.
Animals are such nasty, violent creatures.
They practice incest and eat each other.
They're disgusting.

about it anyway.
 Apparently, she said that the most
 frightening thing
 about the entire ordeal,
 wasn't getting repeatedly raped by the
 aliens,
 but not being able to find her way out of
 the maze.
 I so feel for her.
 I've been in that corn maze.
 It's terrifying.

Everyone should eat animals.
 They need to be extinct to make the world a
 better and safer place.

CORONER

Monsieur Bailiff,
 contact all the diners in Missouri along this
 interstate and ask if they have any regular
 female customers who eat bacon and eggs.
 You should probably include California and
 Texas. If this doesn't yield any significant
 information, expand your search to any diner
 along the major interstates linking all these
 states.

DEFENSE

With all due respect, Lord Coroner,
 it's unlikely this search will yield anything useful, except a mountain of data about the
 consumption of bacon and eggs by females.

CORONER

This is the most significant lead we've had with the Corpse, who is hardly giving us much to
 work with herself.

We have a state, a city, an interstate, and a passion for bacon and eggs.

CORPSE

I love eating eggs.
 They're like eating abortions.
 You're stopping the reproduction of animals directly at the source,
 and they taste so good with cheese.

DEFENSE

Did you hear what she just said?

She believes in the genocide of animals by eating them.
Isn't this a more fruitful topic to explore?

CORONER

No one is stopping you from exploring it.
You needn't be so paranoid, Lady Defense.

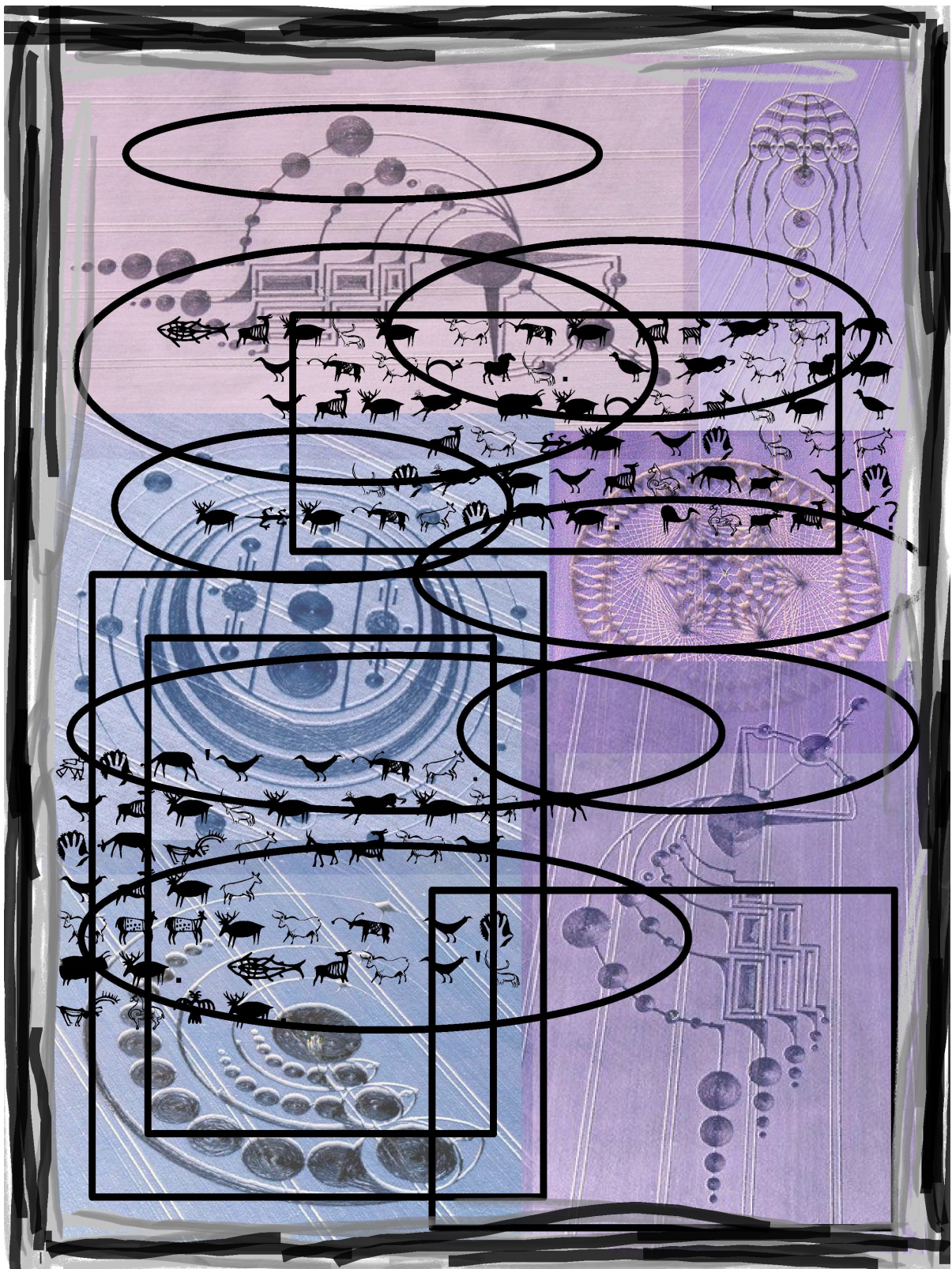
No one is out to get you or condemn your client.
This inquest recommends that you curb your paranoia before it begins to interfere with what
we are trying to do.

SERVER

There's something else.
Sometimes she acted strange.

Most of the time she was normal, but sometimes she acted strange.
She always sat in a booth by the window, and she'd always stare out it. Every few minutes
she'd look up to stare out the window.
And sometimes, she looked really fucking scared.





SCENE 15

DETECTIVE and OFFICE MATE.

DEFENSE and the CORPSE discuss rabbits.

DET
Did she ever talk about her past?

OM
Yeah, grad school in Illinois.
Her undergrad...
Some of her... exploits.

DET
She ever talk about traumatic
that happen

OM
Her father's death. That happened a year
ago.
She couldn't help but talk about it.
She was sitting there, where you are,
and just started crying.
It kind of forced the issue.
I think it really embarrassed her,
losing control like that.
She always,
always,
seemed as strong as a fucking temple.
Like she'd existed for thousands of years,
and nothing could bring her down,
not weather or looters or bombs.
The only thing that would change

DEFENSE
Has anyone ever followed you?
Do you feel as if someone is spying on you?

CORPSE
Doesn't everyone?
That's what relationships are:
we watch each other.
We jealously watch each other and analyze
and collect details and facts and suppositions
as if that's all we eat and breathe.
We're always looking for proof of being fucked
over.

DEFENSE
Is that what marriage is?
The cards said you're married.
And you're divorced.
Is that what marriage was for you?
Do you feel uncomfortable talking about
marriage?
Do you think your ex-husband or ex-wife is
in the courtroom right now, watching you?

is that she'd get scarred,
and her paint would fade away.
But she'd remain standing.
And people would visit her
with fucking reverence.

DET

Like you?

OM

Yeah,
like me.



DET

So you were having an affair with her.

OM

Why,

WHY

is so in-fucking-comprehensible
that a man and a woman could be friends,
good close friends,
without **FUCKING?!**

Do you feel like he's a danger?
Why should animals be eaten to extinction?
Wouldn't it be better to keep some animals
so we can always have meat?

CORPSE

They're dangerous.

Animals are dangerous.

They do hideous things.

Sons fuck their mothers. Fathers fuck their
daughters.

And all sex is rape.

You'd think an animal wouldn't have a
concept of rape, but they do.

My mother wanted our rabbit to have
bunnies, so she brought in a male rabbit to
have sex with her.

It took two seconds and no bunnies came of
it.

But the rabbit changed.

It stayed in the corner of its cage for hours at
a time.

It was always afraid.

It hardly ate.

It died alone, and the only significant event in
its life was having been raped.

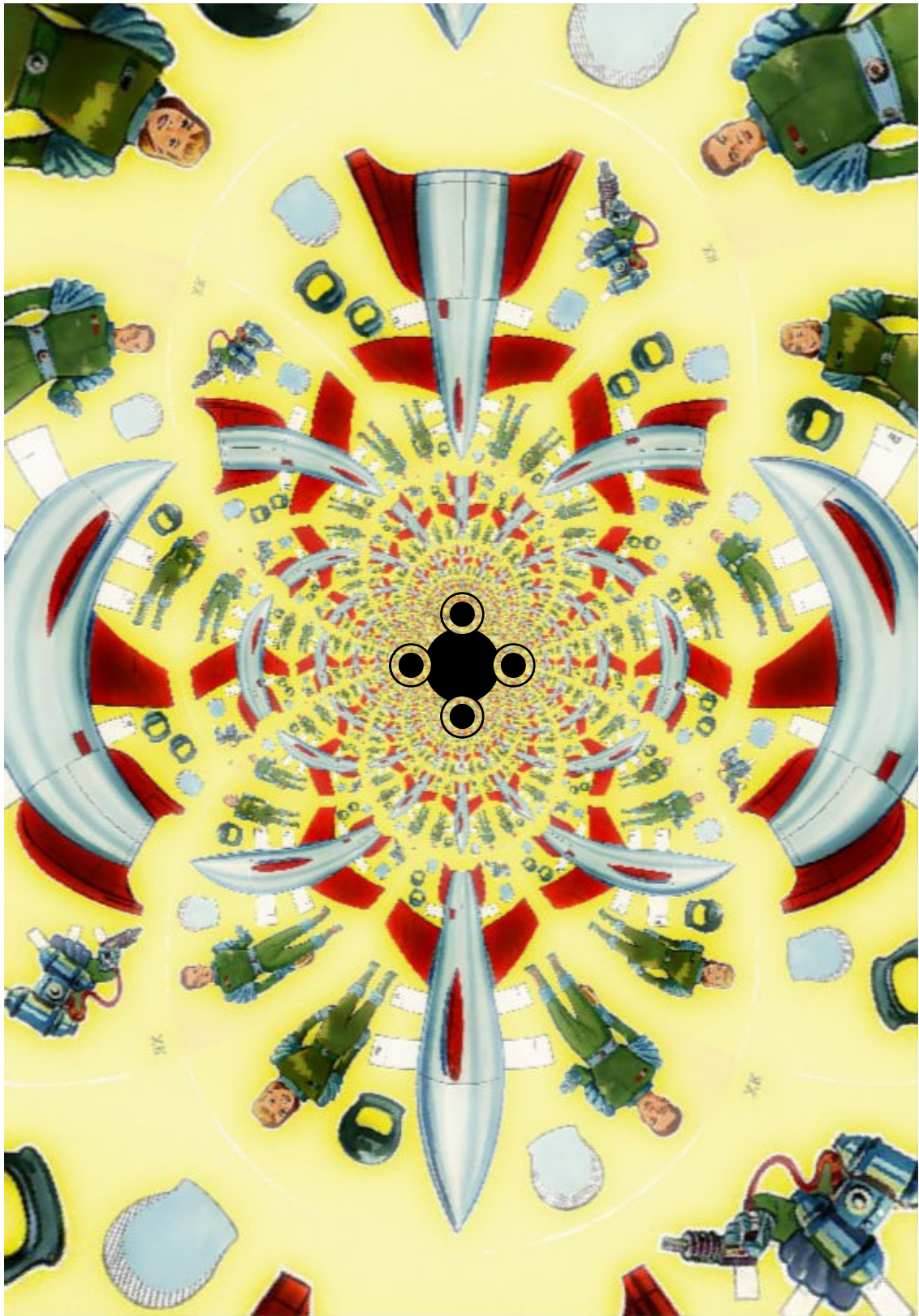
DEFENSE

Did you have rabbits as a child?

CORPSE

I don't remember the past.

I don't remember anything.



SCENE 16

DETECTIVE and BROTHER.

The HUSBAND Comes Forward.

BROTHER

She never told me anything.
As far as I know,
she's had a perfectly safe life.

HUSBAND

Sir Coroner,
I know this woman.

DET

What about her behavior?
She ever act different,
be overly sensitive,
get really angry and lash out?
She ever disappear for long periods of
time?

CORONER

Come forward.
How do you know this woman?

HUSBAND

She's my wife.

BROTHER

She stopped behaving in extremes once
she started college.
Before that we'd fight,
get in fist fights,
the way kids do.

CORPSE

No!

HUSBAND

I don't understand how you can't remember
me.

DET

The way kids do?

DEFENSE

This isn't your husband?

BROTHER

We were competitive.
We were close when we were young,
but then you hit high school
and your little sister is the most
repulsive creature on the planet.
But even when we were kids

CORPSE

I don't remember.
I don't want to go with him.

we still fought.
 Kids do.
 In high school she got crazy,
 and our mother told me it was just
 hormones
 and to ignore her.
 That must've been true
 because after high school,
 she mellowed out.

DET
 Hormones are like the volume knob on a
 stereo.
 They turn thoughts and feeling and
 emotions
 up as loud as they can get.
 They may be loud,
 but something is still being said.
 You think in high school she wasn't saying
 anything important?

BROTHER
 Who can tell
 when someone is screaming in your face.

HUSBAND

Well, isn't that just great.
 What's wrong with you?
 I've come to help you. You've gotten yourself
 in a total mess.
 I can't believe how unhelpful you've been.
 What happened to you?

CORPSE

You're such a cock-sucking cunt.
 You always blame me for everything.

CORONER

Then you admit this is your husband.

CORPSE

No, I just know this walking pool of raw
 sewage is a cock-sucking cunt.
 No one has to be married to him to know
 that.

HUSBAND

I don't know why I even bother with you.
 I waste so much time with you, and you don't
 even thank me for being decent and doing
 the right thing.
 You should just sit in a jail cell and rot away.

CORPSE

That would be delightful.

DEFENSE

Can you provide evidence that you are



married to her?


HUSBAND

I don't have the marriage certificate with me.

I can't find anything because she keeps putting things in different places. Probably

just to fuck with me.

Can't you all look that up?



HOMICIDE REPORT

Middle Name	Race	Sex	Age	Residence of
			W/M/24	Irvi
Ship	Race	Sex	Age	Address of P
				After Invest
11)	Division	Platoon	Room	Officers Mark
	B	2	102	J. R.
Canon	Date Reported	Time Reported		
	11-24-63	11:20		
DESCRIPTION OF DEAD PERSON				
Complexion		Identifying Marks, Scars, Etc.		
Coroner Attending—Time of Arrival				

SCENE 17



PROF

Yes, she did.

DET

She did?

I thought you'd be a long shot.

PROF

She told me a number of stories
about terrible shit that happened to her.

When she first got here

she was having terrible trouble writing.

She was incapable of writing about things that were personal.

She wanted to be scholarly,

she wanted to do research,

and I pointed out

that she really wanted to hide.

In research and analysis

it is as personal as writing a memoir.

Even in our most objective moments,

we are crippled by our heavy subjectivity.

So I encouraged her to keep a journal

and talk to me.

She did.

Sometimes she read the journal to me.

She told me some outrageous fucking things.

Even when she had a purely safe place to express herself,

she hid behind metaphors.

DET

I didn't find a journal in her apartment or her office.

Do you know what happened to it?

PROF

I do.

She gave it to me.

DET

You have it?

PROF

I do.

DET

May I read it?

PROF

Absolutely not.

It is private.

She gave it to me as a ritual.

She was giving me the worst of her life,
because she knew I would use it against her.



DET

I need to read it.

PROF

You do not.

Nothing in it will help you.

DET

I'm trying to find her.

She may be in trouble.

PROF

There are only two outcomes to this:

she is dead and therefore there's nothing you can do for her.

Or she is alive and doesn't want to be found.

DET

If someone murdered her---

PROF

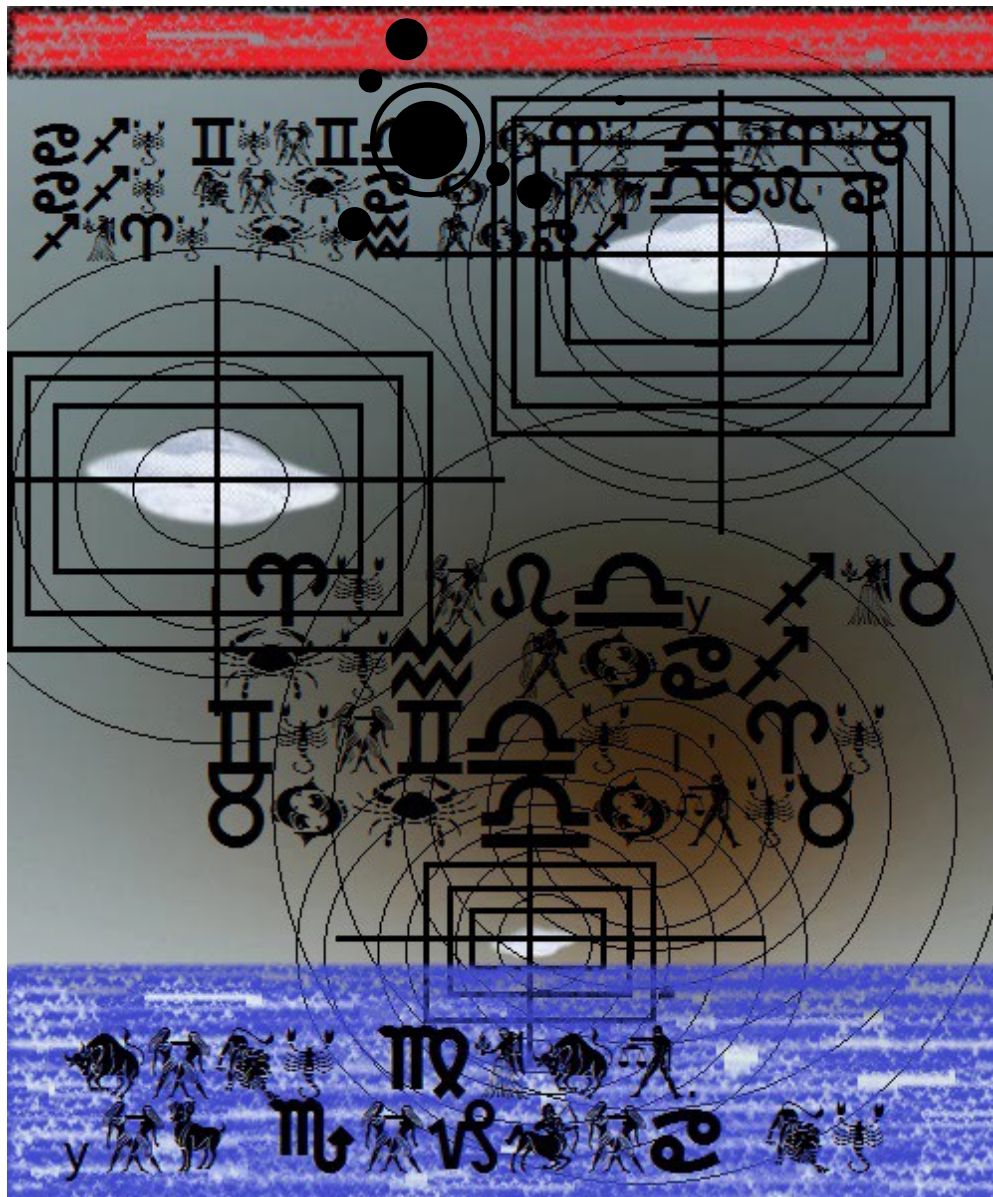
Justice is for the living.
It means nothing to the dead.
You might as well leave her be.

DET

Did you...
Did you have sex with her?

PROF

She forced me.



SCENE 18

DETECTIVE and THE MILL

DET

What's the most unusual thing you've heard about her?

MILL

Oh, let's see...

Some of it couldn't possibly be true.

DET

I want to hear it anyway.

MILL

Remember, I didn't make this up.

People told me these things.

DET

Yes?

MILL

Well...she was a witch.

She was a lesbian witch, to be specific.

Apparently, she'd go out to the corn fields in the middle of the night,
dance naked and fuck all the girls.

I think she was a leader or head witch or whatever you're called.

DET

Anything about animal sacrifice?

MILL

Actually, yeah!

Cats, mostly.

After she'd break their necks,

she'd drink their blood

and sell the bodies

to the local Chinese buffets.

That would explain the stringy, greasy texture
of their Kung Pao Chicken.

I did not believe any of that.

She was not a witch. She didn't have the whole goth/pagan
purple wearing, no deodorant,
vegan and World Peace bumper stickers thing happening.

Other rumors said she was an atheist.

The consensus was that she was a lesbian
and had fucked half the female undergrads,
as well as me.

I'm always flattered when I make it into The Rumor Mill.

She had several abortions, one she performed herself.

This one's my favorite:

she perform abortions on other women if she could keep the fetus.

And as she removed the fetus with a serving spoon, she would simultaneously go
down on the woman.

The resulting orgasm was supposed to cause a demon possession to possess the
woman.

Amazing stuff!

If only the students had put such imagination in their work.

Oh, there was also the thing about the crop circles.

She made them.

I don't see how she could have possibly done all these things at night---she was a grad
student, and a good one at that!

DET

I'm sorry?

Crop circles?

MILL

You know---someone pushes down crops in geometric patterns in fields at night.

Lots of people think they're created by aliens to communicate with us.

There were rumors that she used to go out at night and make crop circles.

Because of witchcraft or possession or a complex sexual ritual, who knows.

I told you, the rumors about her were wild.

I have no idea what it was about her, but she provoked imaginations.

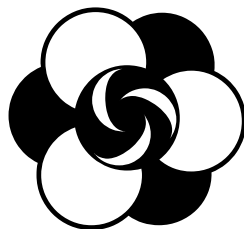
Some people are bigger than others.

They're either heroes or monsters.

They're doorways between the sacred and the profane.

For the people around her, she moved between the worlds.

She was the true unidentified object flying through our lives.
I wish I was like that.
I am, unfortunately, exactly what I seem.
She also raped several men.
I had this first hand from a couple of guys from the department.
They would get drunk at a party
and she would take them to a back bedroom
and next thing they knew, she was going to town on them, one way or another.
I know this happened to at least two, and a third hinted at it.
I did it myself in college.
I didn't know it at the time.
I assumed men wanted sex no matter what, however they could get it.
If they said no or seemed uninterested it just made me angry.
So angry I burned.
It was like they were lying to me,
pretending they were more than they were,
more than just animals enslaved to their bodies.
Every woman knows that no man is going to turn down a blow job,
especially once their dick is in their mouth.
In the end, they always come.
Always.
I never did it for my orgasm. It wasn't about that.
A lifeless piece of plastic had more interest in my orgasms than any man ever had.
I did it for the rush,
the victory,
for the smug satisfaction that I could take the most arrogant asshole
and push his face into the dirt
and prove he was just a pathetic slave to his appetite.
And that I was stronger than him,
because I had control over my orgasms,
I didn't have to have sex.
Yeah college was fun.



SCENE 19

DETECTIVE and HUEY.

HUEY

You ask such strange questions.

Why do you want to know so many things about her?

DET

Anything can help me find her.

Sometimes the littlest detail can lead someplace I wouldn't have thought of before.

HUEY

I don't think it's important if she ever had an abortion.

Where do you think you're going to find her,
in some back alley with a coat hanger?

DET

I need to reconstruct her character.

I can't figure out where she is without knowing who she is.

HUEY

She's a woman and she's young and she's missing.

She's probably been kidnapped and raped and murdered.

Who she is has nothing to do with that.

DET

You don't know that that even happened to her!

HUEY

She's a woman in America!

What else can happen to her?!

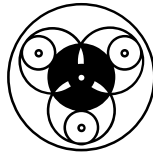
The only way women in America are interesting or lovable

is if they're dead and naked in the woods and carved up for souvenirs.

That's why you're so in love with her,



why you're so *jealous* of her,
 because you see her as a victim.
 She was a lot of fucked up shit, but she was never a victim.
 When you find her head in a jar in some psycho's basement
 give it a kiss for me.



MAN-MADE UFO'S
UFO's on the screen

Film makers have been building rockets and flying saucers throughout the 20th Century. Science fiction began on the screen in 1902 with 'A Trip to the Moon' by French film-maker Georges Méliès. But the first UFO appeared in 'The Airship Destroyers', made by Charles Urban in 1909. Some of the best early science fiction movies came from Germany. For one of them, 'The Girl in the Moon', a rocket was built which was so authentic that the film had to be destroyed. It was feared that foreign spies might make use of it. On this page you can see some of the famous film UFO's built since then.

▲ These Martian war machines from the film 'War of the Worlds' were to be supported on pillars of but the million volts required dangerous. The final models equipped with heat rays creating burning wire.

▲ This spaceship is an evil star of the television series 'Star Trek'. In this programme the **Fourth** crew of the spaceship 'Enterprise' explore the planets and peoples of the galaxy. They encounter the Klingons, a warrior race who fight for control of the galaxy in spaceships like the one above. Though Klingon warships appear huge they are, of course, only models.

► 'It came from Outer Space' was the name of a film made in 1953 about a UFO landing. The UFO was a huge sphere of hexagonal panels, illustrated right, which half-buried itself in the desert of Arizona in America. Alien creatures control local people to make them help repair the ship. The film used a great deal of technology so that when seen

Command and control console
 Power pod
 Main view
 scale for large picture in metres
 In the original 'War of the Worlds' by H.G. Wells the three-legged mobile toy shown here tentacles like a bottle-like heat ray device

SCENE 20

DETECTIVE and PROFESSOR.

DET

If you won't let me read her journal,
will you let me ask you questions about it?

PROF

You can ask me yes or no questions.
If the answer is yes,
I'll take a drink.
I like drinking games.
At my age, making a game of it makes me feel less like an alcoholic.

DET

Was she a witch?
Did she ever kill any animals?
Had she ever done anything violent?
Had she ever had an abortion?
Was she ever raped?
Was she abused as a child?
Was she the victim of incest?
Was she ever abducted by aliens?
Was she ever physically abused by anyone?
Did she come visit you in the last month?

PROF

Okay, so now that I'm drunk,
I'm going to have sex with you.

DET

I need more.
I'm lost.
I don't know where else to go?

PROF

You need to visit *that cock-sucking fucking faggot*.

She always preferred him over me.

I don't know why: he's grotesque.

You know what I really hated about that cunt?

She was a fucking *fag hag*.

Hags are despicable disgusting liars.

She didn't like me---she wasn't my friend.

She liked the role of being my *hag*.

She liked being edgy and vogue.

She thought we'd go clothes shopping and gossip and eat cookie dough as I confessed my secret fucking fears.

Fuck her.

I'm not her gay fucking faggot action figure,

to play with whenever she got bored with her labyrinthine sexual orientation.

Let that ugly motherfucking cock-sucking fucking faggot be her gay boy toy.

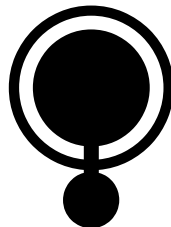
He can have that dirty fucking cunt.

DET

Does this gay boy toy have a name?

PROF

Billy Shakespeare.







The Ghost Tour

Stop #3: The Ten Pendle Witches

This next stop on the tour is about a witch. Witches are the common stuff of ghost stories. Most of the time, witches cause quite a lot of unnatural trouble and die most hideously. And on this spot in 1602, that's exactly what happened: both the unnatural trouble, and the death.

But you look confused. Why is that? Because we're in a theater? Because we're in a theater that once produced Shakespeare's plays? In fact, we're in the theater that produced one of Shakespeare's most notorious plays ever. But this story isn't about Shakespeare, but about his compadre, his very close and intimate friend, Christopher Marlowe.

Christopher Marlowe was a playwright, a scholar, a spy for the queen, an atheist, and a homosexual. We don't know if Marlowe and Shakespeare had a thing, but Marlowe's character haunts Shakespeare's plays like a ghost. Mercutio is no doubt based on the ribald, careless, manic Marlowe. We don't know if there was love between the men, or even devotion. But we do know there was passion. There was blood. There was life. Marlowe had left his print on Shakespeare as surely as if his boot had pressed the skin of his neck.

But this ghost story isn't about Shakespeare, except perhaps to note that Shakespeare was present the night the events occurred.

Marlowe loved spectacle and drama. He loved gigantic characters that clashed upon volcanoes in struggles for one's soul. He also loved pushing the boundaries of acceptability. Boundaries offended him. As if any kind of restriction was a deep, offensive gesture against his individuality. No one could tell Marlowe No.

Besides, Marlowe was one of the three greatest poets in England. Obviously that granted him a kind of moral authority. If lesser men than he, if dumber, less creative men than he could become clergy and priests and make pronouncements about men's lives, wasn't he in the same position? Couldn't he at least have the power to judge appropriateness?

So in this philosophical vein, Marlowe wrote The Ten Pendle Witches. The play no longer exists. We know of it only through reports of its one and only performance. In the city of Lancashire, ten women were executed for witchcraft. The event wasn't unlike what occurred in Salem, Massachusetts about the same time. Hysteria moved a town to believe the impossible and torture and slaughter innocent women.

Marlowe believed the women were innocent, and the play was a harsh condemnation of the town's authority. The play was also a celebration of women and women's freedom. It is obvious that that is why the women are killed. In the play, there are love scenes between

several women, one woman has an abortion, another dresses in men's clothes and goes by a male name. And yet another of the women, named Elizabeth, manages to fight off and kill one off a priest as he attempts to rape her. This is the event which starts the events of the play.

But the climatic scene is when all hell broke loose. Elizabeth is quickly tried and condemned to death for witchcraft. The evidence being that only a powerful witch could successfully resist a raping man. A normal woman would have willingly submit.

Elizabeth is hung onstage. Now, the Elizabethans could have done this: they had quite wondrous talents with stagecraft. But after she dies, nine women appear on stage. According to the script, the women dance and chant. They perform a magic ritual designed to resurrect Elizabeth so they may take their revenge upon the town.

Now, Elizabethans were quite superstitious. And they believed absolutely in the power of theater. By that I mean, they believed that if you did something on stage, you REALLY did it. It was a REAL act. So if they performed a magic ritual on stage, they could really perform the ritual.

So one night, something goes wrong during the production. It wasn't a surprise. They didn't have much rehearsal time. But the actor playing Elizabeth died during the hanging. No one realized this, except those closest to the boy realized something wasn't right about his performance.

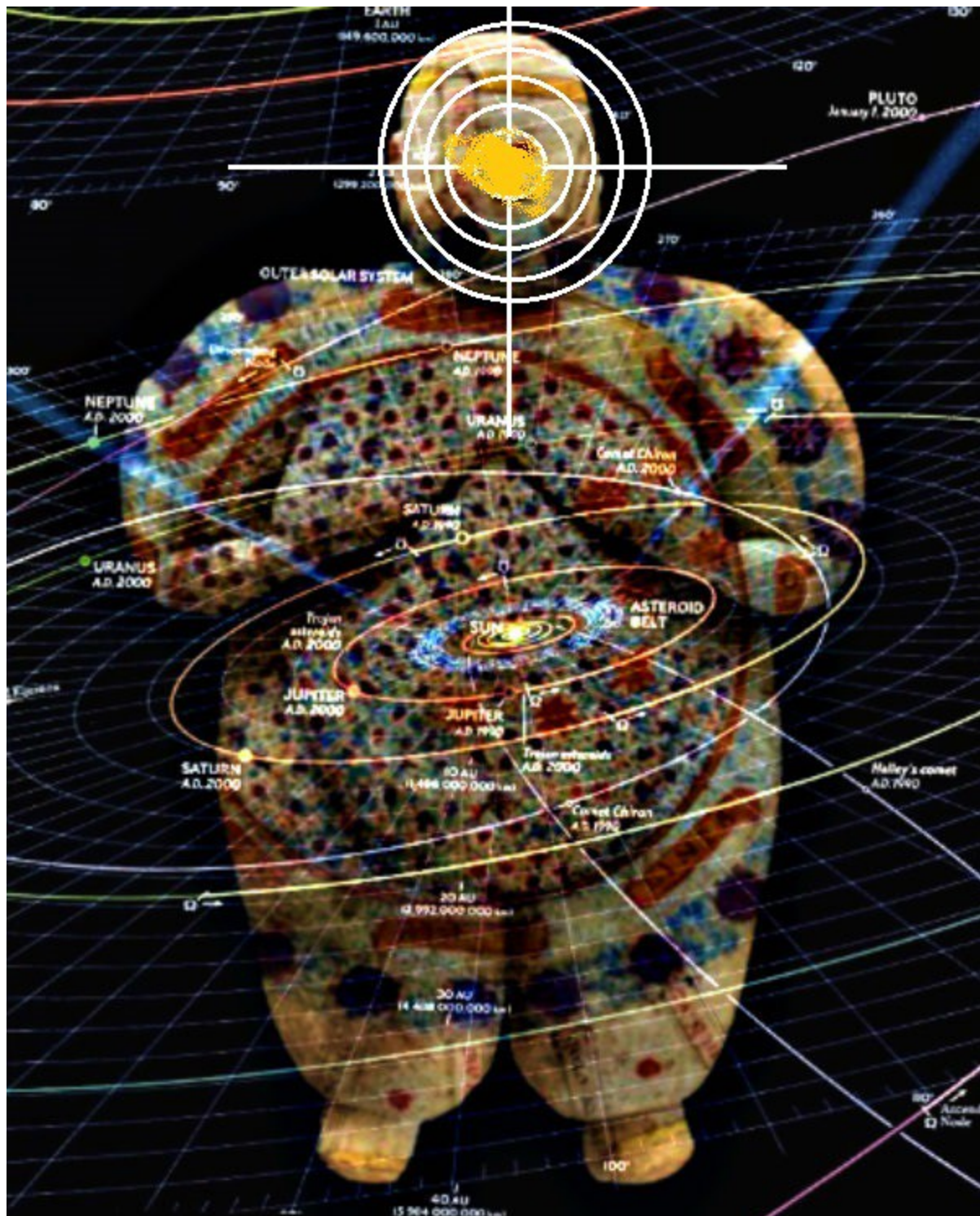
The nine witches come in, do their ritual. It began raining in the Globe. There was thunder and lightening. People on the floor began shrieking. The actors closest to Elizabeth realized what had happened. And it was then that Elizabeth rose up.

Elizabeth rose from the floor. Only it wasn't a boy actor in drag. Elizabeth rose, tore off her costume and revealed that she was actually a woman, not a boy actor. A woman with bruises from where she had hung from the neck and died.

The actors panicked. They shrieked that it was a woman, that it was a woman come from the dead. And the audience believed him. After all, they were doing a real magic ritual. The audience rioted. An actor in sheer panic, fired off a cannon backstage. It was a real cannon. The cannonball hit the roof, it caught on fire, and the Globe burned down.

Many actors died, but no one was able to locate the woman witch who appeared on stage.

Many people say she flew away. Others said all nine of the witches flew off together, cackling and shrieking at the pandemonium.



SCENE 21

Halfway, DETECTIVE and a line of waiting BOYS.

The HUSBAND examined.

DET
Billy Shakespeare—is this his office?

BOY
This is the line.

DET
Line for what?

BOY
To talk to Shakes.

DET
Is there always a line like this?

BOY
Sometimes longer.

DET
What're you seeing him about?

BOY
Uh...it's kinda personal.
It's a guy I like.
I found he's having a sexual relationship
with his German Shepard.
And I don't know what to do.
I mean, I know bestiality is indicative of

HUSBAND

We've been married almost four years.
She just disappeared one day. I came home
from work to an empty house---

A house she wanted, not me---
and I waited and waited and she didn't show.

So I said, fuck her.

I had always been afraid she'd leave me for
someone else, because she has a history of
being unfaithful.

So I said, fuck that bitch. I'll start over, sell the
house, move on.

Then I heard about this going on.

So I stopped in to see if it might be her. I
mean, I'm her husband and I have a duty to
her, even if she doesn't believe she has a duty
to me.

CORONER

What do you have to say in response?

CORPSE

The cards said I was divorced.

someone unable to connect with human beings,
 but he's really sweet and we can talk all night long about poetry and sex and the meaning of existence.
 You know what I mean?
 Have you ever had that kind of connection with someone?
 So he can connect with people because he connects with me.
 But he still gets fucked by his dog.
 I don't know what to do.

DET
 And you think Billy Shakespeare can help you?

BOY
 He's the most incredible, brilliant person.
 He's the only one who can help me.

DET
 Look, I'm looking for a friend of his,
 a woman---

BOY
 Oh yeah, I know who you mean.
 He doesn't have any women friends except her.
 You missed her?
 She was here last week.
 What would you do?

DET
 Sorry?

BOY
 The dog. The guy and his dog.
 Would you still date him?

HUSBAND

You are divorced.
 I'm Attempt Number Two.
 You cheated on Attempt Number One.

CORPSE

I don't believe you.
 I'm not going with him.

CORONER

We are having some difficulty going through our records.
 There are thousands and thousands of certificates to go through by hand.
 In the meantime, I'm willing to remand the Corpse into the custody of the husband.

CORPSE

No, I won't go!

DEFENSE

Is this necessary, Sir Coroner?

CORONER

She has been in the custody of the state for several months now.
 It would be best to have someone else take care of her while we sort the rest of this out.

DEFENSE

She doesn't want to go. We have no idea if this man is actually her husband.

DET

What if it wasn't a dog, but another guy.

What would you do then?

BOY

Goddamn it.

I get it now.

We are potentially putting her in danger.

HUSBAND

Danger?

What the fuck have you been telling them
about me?!

CORPSE

I'm not going with him.

HUSBAND

I can't believe how fucking selfish you're being!

You haven't lost your fucking mind.

You remember everything. You just don't want to live your life anymore, so you invented
fucking amnesia to get away.

Oh, don't blame her for every fucking crime she committed because she can't remember
anything!

CORONER

Sir, if you still wish to take your wife home, the Bailiff can fill out the necessary paperwork.
Please have her back to this Inquest on Monday morning.

((CORPSE attacks husband and incapacitates him))

CORONER

Bailiff!

Take her back to jail!

CORPSE

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!



INTERMARRIAGE

OR

THE MODE IN WHICH, AND THE CAUSES WHY,
BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND INTELLECTUAL
RESULT FROM CERTAIN UNIONS,

DEFORMITY, DISEASE AND I

MATRIMONY

At last, then, the mind of the young woman receives more accurate notions of an affection which is to be the principal affair of her life.

Love.

From the physical state which has now been described, there results in woman a superabundance of sensibility, which seeks, as it were, to diffuse and to communicate itself.

All is then animated in woman. Her eyes acquire an expression previously unknown, and seem, by a sort of electric spark, to light up the amorous flame in every breast formed to sympathy. Her figure displays all the light and simple graces, which man is equally unable and unwilling to resist.

THE FAMILY:

In Three Volumes.

VOLUME I.

MATRIMONY:

OR, LOVE, SELECTION, COURTSHIP, AND MARRIED LIFE.

VOLUME II.

PARENTAGE:

OR, A PERFECT PATERNITY, MATERNITY, SEXUALITY, AND INFANCY.

VOLUME III.

CHILDREN AND HOME:

AS EXPOUNDED BY
PHYSIOLOGY AND PHRENOLOGY.

By PROF. O. S. FOWLER.

PRACTICAL PHRENOLOGIST, LECTURER, FORMER EDITOR "AMERICAN JOURNAL" AND AUTHOR OF "FOWLER'S PHRENOLOGY," "PHYSIOLOGY," "SELF-CULTURE," "MARRIAGE," "LOVE AND PARENTAGE," "MARRIAGE SOCIETY," "MATERNITY," "HOME FOR ALL," ETC., ETC.

AS TAUGHT BY
PHRENOLOGY AND PHYSIOLOGY

In Three Parts.

Part I.—LOVE:

OR, LAWS, AND ALL-CONTROLLING POWER OVER HUMANITY.

Part II.—SELECTION:

OR, MUTUAL ADAPTATION.

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

THEIR ERRORS, AND HOW TO RENDER THEM BENEFICIAL.

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NEW YORK:

O. S. FOWLER, PUBLISHER.

1859.

PART I.

PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS CONNECTED
TERMINATING IN, LOVE.

SECTION I.

I.—THE CHANGES CAUSED BY IT.

in the Period.

infant, as it is small in infantile heads; and in them this faculty is correspondingly weak. It is also small in the accompanying engraving of a regular man-hater.

at their junction. It is very small in the following engraving of an infant, as it is in all infantile heads; and in them this faculty is correspondingly weak. It is also small in the accompanying engraving of a regular man-hater.

LEVEL OF AN OLD MAN AT SIXTY.

LEVEL OF AN OLD MAN AT SIXTY.

SCENE 22

DETECTIVE and QUASIMODO.

Q

WHY?!?! WHY HAS THIS HAPPENED TO HER!

Jesus fucking Christ this isn't real! This must be a dream!!!

DET

I assume you two were still seeing one another.

Q

I couldn't let her go!

I tried! I tried to pretend, to wear a mask
which hid my deep misery and pain.

Has this ever happened to you?

To live with such agony and to have to be silent?

To smile and laugh and seem normal,

and your insides rot away in the worst pain imaginable!

DET

No.

We don't know what happened to her.

The evidence seem to indicate that---

Q

If she's dead I can't live with myself.

I can't live without her.

I'll throw myself in Lake Michigan.

There is no life for me without her.

DET

When did you last---

Q



I remember ever moment like it was yesterday.

DET

Was it yesterday?

Q

Three months ago.

She drove up here,

got a hotel room near my work,

and I took time off to be with her.

I told my wife I was working as usual.

I left in the morning as usual,

dressed in a suit for the office,

and I'd spend the day in her arms.

Fucking her every way I could think of.

Then I left when I usually would leave work to go home.

I would make excuses about hanging out with friends in the evenings,
and see her again.

DET

How was your last meeting with her?

Q

Glorious.

I have the best sex of my life with her.

Have you ever experienced that?

Something so sublime, you hardly believe it's happening?

DET

What was her mood?

Q

Nothing unusual.

We fucked a lot, talked a lot.

We have intellectual fuck fests.

DET

And you've never experienced anything like this before.

Q



Never.
I'll never give her up.
When I'm on my deathbed,
I'm going to order my wife to get her.
I want to die with her by my side.

DET
Are you planning to die anytime soon?

Q
No, but when I do, I want her there.

DET
Did she talk about anything going on with her?
Was she depressed or--?

Q
She was always depressed.
She took a handful of pills every night to stay normal.
But they didn't always work.
We fought a lot, but always about the same things.

DET
The fact that you're married?

Q
Marxism.
She thought staging *A Streetcar Named Desire* with a Marxist interpretation was absurd. She laughed at me when I told her I was doing that. She could be a snobby bitch.

DET
I heard she was a big fan of Marxism.

Q
No, she hated it.
She thought it was a fantasy and a distraction,
that it can never be realized in real life.

DET



Was there anyone you can think of who would want to hurt her?

Q

Her ex-husband.

DET

I'm sorry? Her what?

Q

Didn't anyone tell you?

She was married, right before she started grad school.

When we met her divorce had just gone through.

We celebrated by tearing up her wedding photos and fucking on top of them.

Do you really think something happened to her?

DET

I don't know what to think.

Who was her husband?

Q

I don't remember his name.

She'd talked about him using a nickname.

She did that for everyone.

She has to make everyone into a character in her own story.

Now that made her angry, pointing out how she appropriates people, objectifies them.

DET

What was the nickname?

Q

Bluebeard.

DET

Like the fairy tale?

Q

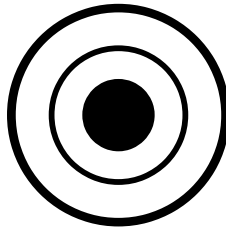
The nobleman who murdered his wives,
and kept their corpses locked in secret rooms in his house.

Yeah.

Her ex was violent and a sadist.



She never talked about details.
I don't know what he did to her.
But she was terrified of him.
Always looking over her shoulder in public, jumpy.
Oh there was one especially crazy thing she did.
She did this at a party.
She was in the kitchen, pouring a drink,
and suddenly she swung around and screamed.
She told me someone had been standing behind her.
No one was there. It was just me and her.
She said it was a tall black figure,
and she saw it out of the corner of her eye.
It put its hand on her shoulder and she spun around.
There was no one there.
This happened all the time.



The Atomicpunk Mystery

SCENE SEVEN: The site of the explosion. Only now, the field is covered with dead, mutilated rabbits.

MARGIE
Rabbits.
Hundreds of dead rabbits.

INSPECTOR
There must be...

MARGIE
I stopped counting at 109.
That's when I threw up.
In that pile over there.
All of them have been autopsied.

INSPECTOR
Autopsied?

MARGIE
Split the chest open,
insides removed,
some organs gone.
They're all different.
Hearts, lungs, stomach.
The intestines are all here
left in adorable little piles besides the bunnies.
There's nothing more adorable
than the tiny coiled spaghetti entrails of a bunny.
BASIL?!

(BASIL enters)

BASIL
Yes, Miss.

MARGIE
Have you finished your examination?

BASIL
Yes, Miss.
There are five hundred, forty-nine rabbits present.

INSPECTOR

And they appeared overnight?

MARGIE

Yep.

BASIL

Yes, Inspector. As impossible as that sounds, these dead bunnies were not here yesterday. If they had been, we would have notified you. We did not, therefore we are telling the truth.

INSPECTOR

It doesn't quite work that way--

MARGIE

Don't waste your time.

He won't get it.

He can define a lie, he can list reasons why people would lie, he can give an example of a lie, but he can't find the organic moments in his life when lying could occur.

It's a form of robotic retardation.

But I assure you,

neither of us have the capability of doing this.

BASIL

The rabbits weren't cut open with a blade.

They were cut with intense heat.

MARGIE

A laser,

maybe even a single directed photon.

It's nothing I can do.

INSPECTOR

What about---

MARGIE

It's nothing humans can do.

INSPECTOR

You mean--

MARGIE

Aliens. Martians or Venutians. Though Dad hypothesized that there were creatures living in the rings of Saturn.

INSPECTOR

I'll put down "the usual suspects".

MARGIE

Another thing,
I don't know where these rabbits came from.

INSPECTOR

That was my next question. Were you having a rabbit infestation?

MARGIE

If we were,
we're not anymore.

INSPECTOR

Where is your husband?

MARGIE

In his room, sobbing uncontrollably.
He adores animals.
This has been terrible for him.

INSPECTOR

Didn't you have an incident in the past involving a rabbit?

MARGIE

Yes.

INSPECTOR

And?

MARGIE

Yes, I had an incident in the past involving a rabbit.
A dead rabbit.
But that was a long time ago.

INSPECTOR

Not so long ago.
You're how old now?

MARGIE

I don't do things like that anymore.
I had the chicken pox when I was ten. And I had an incident with a

rabbit.

I was cured of both illnesses.

I have to get back to work.

I have a launch window coming up soon and I won't miss it.

I assume you want to take these back to your crime lab and fondle them.

Basil, stop collecting them. Leave them for the nice policeman.

(MARGIE exits)

BASIL

Inspector, the incident you are asking about:

I can assure you,

Margie dispatched the rabbit painlessly and with great empathy.

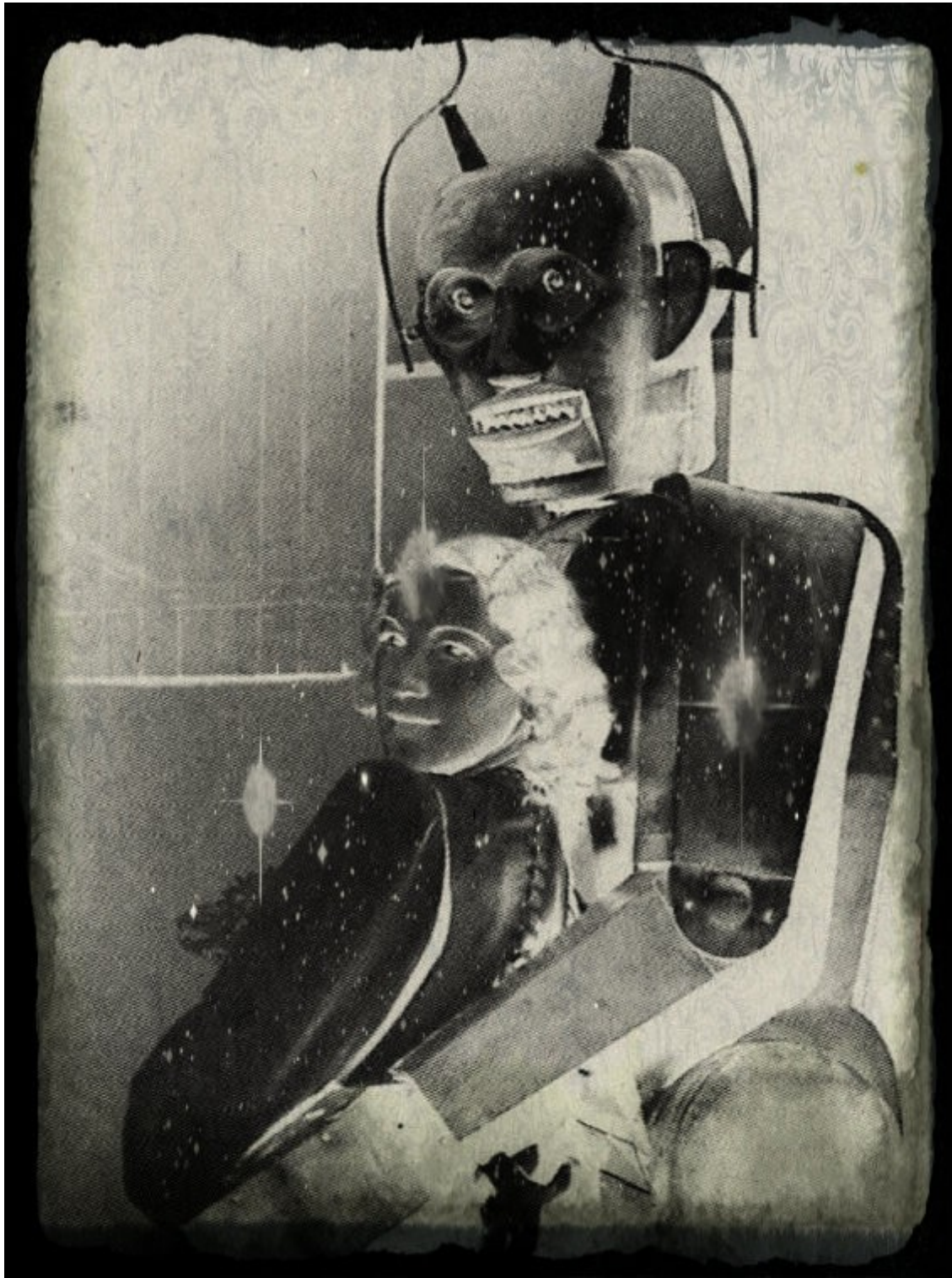
INSPECTOR

Dispatched?

BASIL

The rabbit was quite depressed.

It asked Margie to be released.



SCENE 23

DETECTIVE in the hallway with BOY,
still waiting.

The Toy Flying Saucer.

BOY

Yeah, I know who you mean.
She's good friends with Billy.
She helps him in his work.

DEFENSE

Let's try something a little less intimidating.
Can you explain this object to me?

DET

So they're close? How close?

CORPSE

This is a toy flying saucer.

BOY

They aren't dating if that's what you
mean.
He thinks she's...well...
She's a woman. You know what I'm
talking about.

DEFENSE

It was found in your purse.
Is it yours?

DET

He's not fond of women.

CORPSE

Yes.

I play with it when I get nervous.
I get nervous when I have to talk to people,
especially on the telephone.

BOY

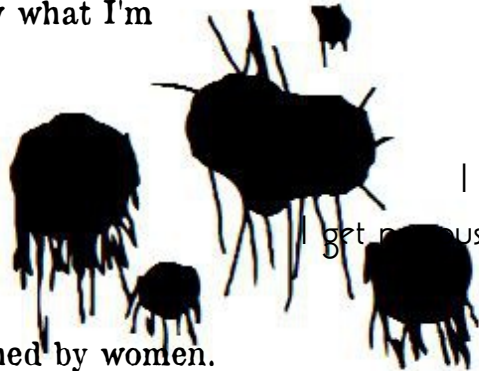
You can't blame him.
All his life, he's been pushed by women.
Women are predominant in the media,
and they're always sexualized.
The media gives no other option for a
man.
So having women shoved down his throat
for his entire life,
of course he's going to develop a distaste
for them.

DEFENSE

Where did you get this?

CORPSE

A friend gave it to me.
Someone I work with.



But she's different.
They're very close.

DEFENSE

Where do you work?

DET
Why do you think?

CORPSE

BOY
No idea.
There are rumors, but you can't trust
those.
Rumors are acts of violence.
They're designed to destroy.

I don't remember.

But I do know what I do.

I design these.

I know exactly how to design these.

DEFENSE

Toys?

DET
And what did rumors say about Billy and
his one woman friend?

BOY
Nothing *imaginative*.
You know, that they were sleeping together.
There was one though that had nothing to
do with that.
I can almost believe it because, well, it's
different.

DET
What was it?

BOY
That she was going to move here,
that Billy was going to take her in to save
her.
That she has a husband that beats her up
and Billy was going to help her get away.
There was something to that, I think.
One time she showed here with a huge
bruise on the side of her face.
And he'd do that, too.
He's that generous and I think he really
loved her that much.

CORPSE

No, flying saucers.

I'm an aerospace engineer and I specialize in
disc shaped aircraft capable of leaving the
Earth's atmosphere and attaining orbit.
Ideally, the craft would be able to make long
distance trips to Mars or Europa, but we
haven't figured out how to sustain astronauts
for long distance voyages.

We're still trying to figure out how to make
the thing go. Escaping the gravitational field
of the Earth is easy.

Condensing a two year voyage into a few days,
that's tricky.

I'm getting close, though.

DEFENSE

Do you want to go back to work?

CORPSE

He's an amazing person.
Everyone falls in love with him.

This wooden tree.
This is the earth.

This reminds me that this is where I live, and I need to keep my priorities here.
When you do nothing but think all day about leaving the planet, it's easy to reduce the earth to nothing more than a kitchen and a bathroom.

DEFENSE

What do you know about your husband?

CORPSE

I helped design the first vertically launched saucer that made it into orbit.
While I was explaining to him how it worked, he interrupted me and said that he really didn't find my work interesting and could I talk to someone else about it.
Then he went on and on and on and on about his students and how they make fun of him.

And I listened thoroughly.

I told him not to pay attention to them.

That his voice sounded normal and he didn't sound like a "fag" like the kids said.

I listened and listened because that's what a wife does, right?

She supports her husband, even if he's acting like a fucking mental twelve year old.

If only the school knew how many of his students he's had sex with.

Seven: that much I do remember.



Nervous Breakdowns and
How to Avoid Them

The Port of Missing Girls

CHAPTER II.

THE DANGER SIGNAL.

naturally be asked by what sign
an to know when they are threat
down.

o one sign in particular. One c



The symptoms by which
he is on the verge of a
vague. The
Signs of a all the hard
breakdown. If he has
gumball,
filaments and tell people
him. The neurasthenic
consolation. His symp

ALL ABOUT UFO's

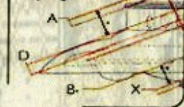
Beings from
outer space



Space bases on
the Moon



Inside a
flying saucer



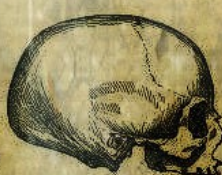
UFO's versus
jet fighters



Amazing
array of
flying
saucers



THEY call Hollywood the port of missing girls,"
said the press agent in his best semi-humorous
at their junction. It is very small in the following engraving of an
infant, as it is in all infantile hearts; and in them this faculty is cor-
respondingly weak. It is also small in the accompanying engraving
of a regular man-hater.



INFANT.

SKULL OF AN OLD MAID AT DEATH.

or snapshots that are always out of focus, and he
has decided to begin again for the first time.
At last, then, the mind of the young woman re-
ceives more accurate notions of an affection which is
to be the principal affair of her life.

Love.

From the physical state which has now been de-
scribed, there results in woman a superabundance of
sensibility, which seeks, as it were, to diffuse and to
communicate itself.

All is then animated in woman. Her eyes acquire
an expression previously unknown, and seem, by a sort
of electric spark, to light up the amorous flame in
every breast formed to sympathy. Her figure displays
all the light and simple graces, which man is equally
nimble and unwilling to resist.

SCENE 24

QUASIMODO and DETECTIVE, drinking.

DET

I've got nothing.
I've been chasing her half my life,
and I've got nothing.
Just stories and rumors,
and I'm no closer to finding her than when I began.



Q

She's really a very open person.
She wasn't afraid to talk about anything,
especially sex.
And so smart it pissed me off sometimes.
No, there was something she was afraid of.
She never talked about her past. Or her feelings.
We'd get in a fight and I'd yell and scream and cry,
and she'd sit there and stare at me
with that fucking intellectual stare,
as if I was a fucking curiosity.
She was watching me in the wild
and thought I was slightly absurd.
Of course, I was, but I didn't need my fucking mistress thinking I was.

DET

What's she like?

Q

Passionate. So fucking intense about physical feeling.
She'd wash her hands and fucking giggle from the feel of the water on her skin.
I'd barely touch her sometimes and it made her thrash and buck like a fish out of water.
When you meet her, I think you'll like her.
I think you'll really like her.

And you can do whatever, you know, it doesn't matter to me.
 I'm married, and I don't expect her to be faithful.
 I wish she would, but she didn't want that.
 She said it wasn't fair.
 But love isn't fair and it isn't generous---it's fucking selfish and mean and it's made me say some terrible things to her.

DET

Have you ever hit her?

Q

I've gotten close.
 I've broken hotel lamps and thrown chairs.
 Never at her, though.
 After a fight like that, when I'd want to slap that intellectual smirk off her face, we'd have the best sex ever.

DET

What's the craziest thing you've ever done with her?

Q

We were in a threesome.
 And she made that fucking shit hot.
 I really think she's more of a lesbian than straight.
 She certainly ate the Mill out until she cried.

DET

The Mill?
 She didn't tell me---

Q

She seems honest, don't she?
 Rumor mills aren't honest,
 they're only selective.
 She was such a good fuck, too.
 Both of them were.
 Both of them sucking my cock at the same time was like meeting Jesus.
 No, it was like Jesus sucking my cock.
 That would have to be awesome right?
 I mean, it's fucking Jesus and everything he does has to be super magical or

whatever.

Who else have you talked to? If you talked to the Mill, you must have talked to the Prof.

That fucking guy is fucking crazy.

DET

Did he sleep with her?

Q

No! That's so ridiculous!

Who told you that?

DET

He did.

Q

HE DID?

She fucked *him*?

She *fucked* him?

She *fucking fucked* him??

I'm going to kill that fucking bitch.

DET

She gets around.

Q

What's that supposed to mean?

What the fuck are you saying?

DET

She sleeps with a lot of fucking people.

Q

So what's wrong with that?

DET

Well, it's starting to make some sense, her disappearing.

She was messing around with the wrong people.

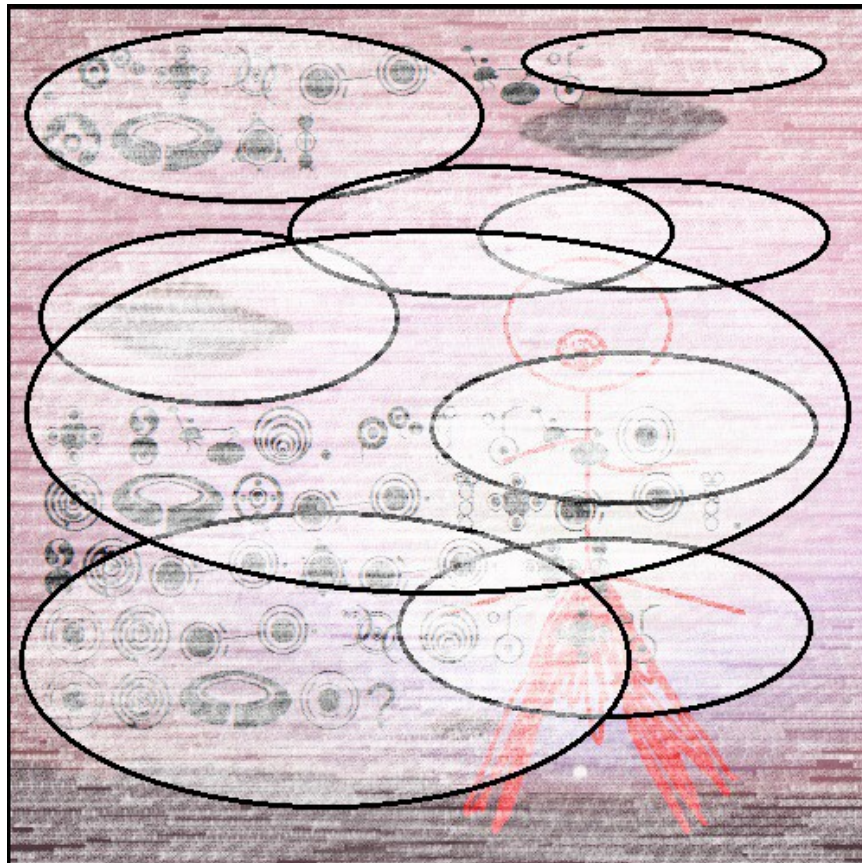
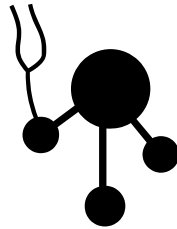
She pushed someone too hard, picked the wrong person.

Like her ex-husband.

She probably had a suicide complex, or was self-destructive or something.
 Women get that way the more they fuck around.
 It's a shame.
 She probably could have made something of herself.

(Q beats the shit out of him)

Q
 You want to blame her for this?
 You think she's responsible if some fucking psychotic asshole cuts her head off?!
 What the fuck kind of world are you living in?!
 She isn't responsible for the fucking evil in this world.
 Get your fucking priorities right, asshole!
 Stop blaming her for everything and maybe then you'll be able to find her.



SCENE 25

DETECTIVE and BILLY.

BILLY

I don't think there's anything to worry about.
She spent a week here and then left for California.

DET

She was about to start the new semester.
Why would she decide to go to California?

BILLY

She wasn't going back.
We talked it out thoroughly.
She wasn't happy and wanted a change.

DET

Why California?

BILLY

She grew up there and that's where Ben is.

DET

Ben?

BILLY

She and I are apart of a best friends triangle with Ben.
The three of us met while she was getting her masters
and we've stayed friends.
Even though we're at different ends of the country,
we talk daily
and write letters constantly.
Since her father died, Ben has been all the family she has left in California.
He's a little brother to her.

DET

Are you sure she's heading there?

BILLY

I have no reason to doubt it.

I know she took a long route through Colorado and down the California coast.

She may stop along the way for a prolonged stay.

But I'm quite sure she'll end up there.

DET

While she was here, did she say anything about her cat?

BILLY

No, nothing. I thought it was odd she didn't bring it with her, but I didn't ask.

DET

She usually traveled with it?

BILLY

Oh yes. I think I mentioned it and she said she left it with a friend or something. I didn't think much about it.

DET

Her cat is dead.

It was found in her apartment with its neck broken.

BILLY

You have to find her.

DET

You think she killed it?

BILLY

When she was a little girl,
she had a rabbit.

The rabbit had a terrible ear infection
and her parents didn't know what to do about it.

They never let the rabbit out of its cage.

They got another rabbit and mated them.

The second rabbit got pregnant and had babies.

Apparently it turned into a twisted rabbit ghetto:
they continued having babies and started pulling hair out of each other.
They ate the babies.
Then they started dying out
until there was just the one with the ear infection.
By that point, she begged her mother to kill it.
The rabbit represented depression and torture and she lost her mind.
She got hysterical and screamed and cried.
Rather than helping her daughter cope with these feelings,
and this incredibly profound projection,
her mother killed the rabbit.
She broke its neck and buried it in the backyard.
You must find her.

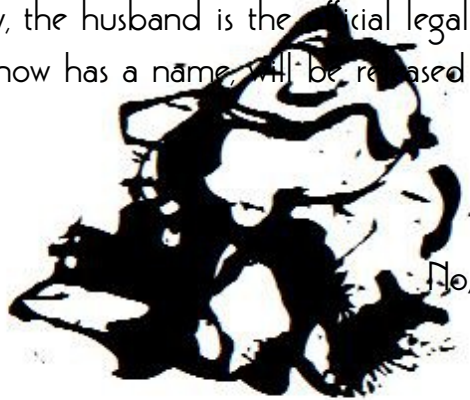


SCENE 26

The CORONER makes a decision about the HUSBAND.

CORONER

We have made a thorough search of the records and have determined that the individual who claims to be the husband of the corpse is in fact telling the truth. According to the law, the husband is the official legal guardian of the wife. Therefore, the Corpse, who now has a name, will be released into the custody of her husband.



CORPSE

No, please, don't make me.

CORONER

Are you prepared to give evidence of marital abuse?
Can you prove that your husband is a danger to you?

CORPSE

I don't remember anything.
I don't want to remember anything.
But the cards! The cards said I was in danger!

CORONER

Lord Psychologist, in your opinion, is this woman the victim of abuse?

PSYCHOLOGIST

There is no hard evidence to support such an accusation. Rather, it is more likely that the Corpse suffers from Bipolar Disorder, an anxiety disorder, and very possibly OCD.

That would explain her paranoia.

I believe that with proper medication she can resume a healthy life.

CORONER

The corpse will be ordered to continue care with the Lord Psychologist.

Young lady, marriage is one of our most sacred institutions.

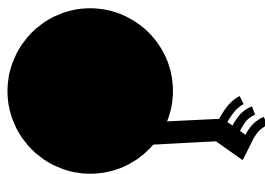
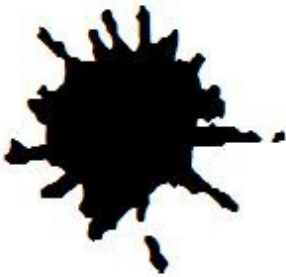
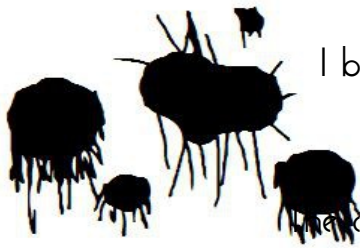
People your age don't take it as seriously as my generation.

Marriage isn't disposable: you don't have "attempts" at it until you get it right.

As you regain your identity, I strongly encourage you to regain your grasp of its most sublime nature.

This Inquest is officially closed.

(the CORPSE kills herself in an explosion of blood)



SCENE 27

DETECTIVE and PROFESSOR.

DET

Tell me about the dead rabbit.

PROF

Typical childhood memory.

DET

Typical?

She convinced her parents the rabbit was depressed and needed to be euthanized.

PROF

I didn't say it was a healthy memory.

I've got traumatic memories,
we all do, Miss. Perfect Childhood.

DET

Billy thinks it's relevant because of what happened to her cat.

PROF

Billy is a fucking fence-sitting pervert.
I can't believe I ever had sex with him—
No matter how much I shower
my dick still stinks of cunt.

DET

What about her ex-husband?
Everyone got an abusive ex-husband?

PROF

Or something like that, yeah.
Being abused is what it means to be human.

You'd think we'd have gotten passed that
since we have cars and washing machines and fucking toilet paper.
You'd think that having toilet paper
would have removed almost all of our desire to murder each other.
But running out of toilet paper makes me want to run out and gut a kindergartner.
And guess fucking what?
All that shit has only helped us get our sadism organized.
Now we have forms and philosophical schools and systems of punishment
that label and create hierarchies and makes sadism more imaginative.
And nothing has fucking changed.

DET

Why didn't you tell me?

PROF

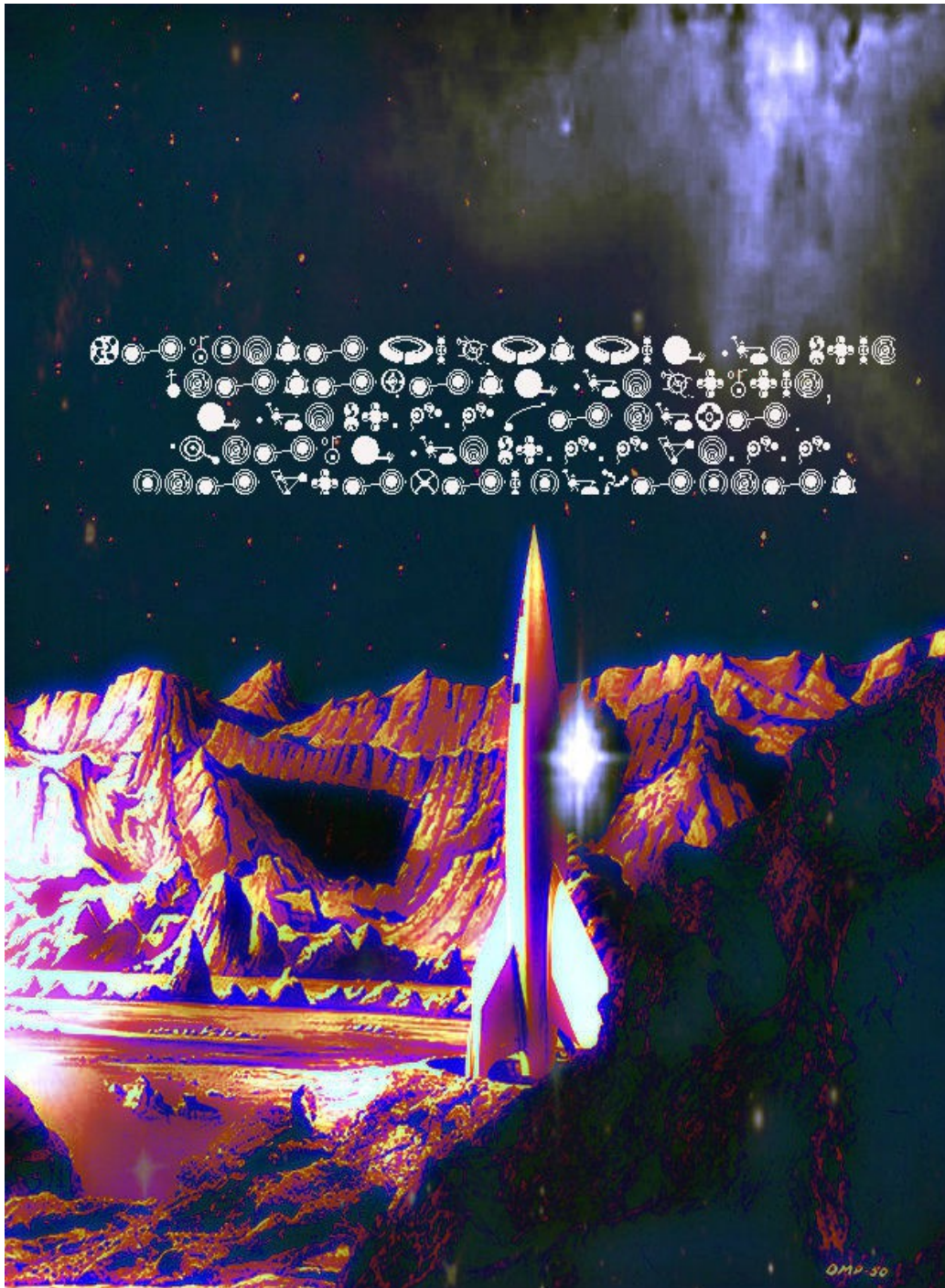
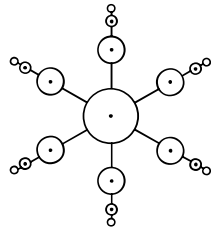
First of all, I don't owe you fucking anything.
It's not my fucking job to find her.
I put in my time with her,
and I burned off a lot of my sins putting up with her.
I'm definitely going to push to the front of the line
at the gates of Heaven,
and, you know what, I'm going to tell St. Peter
to fuck off for making me wait so long.
Second, it's not a big fucking deal.
You think he kidnapped her
and has her in some mountain cabin
sodomizing her?
Grow the fuck up.
Life is fucking boring.
She's just on a fucking road trip
getting in touch with her fragile fucking feminine feelings.

DET

I need to read her journal.

PROF

You need to fuck off
and do your job.



SCENE 28

DETECTIVE and BILLY.



DET

Did she ever talk about UFOs?

BILLY

You mean the UFO she saw?

DET

She actually saw one?

BILLY

Yeah, in the middle of the day.

Clear sky, no chance of atmospheric anomaly.

No strange lights that could be interpreted as anything.

She was standing in her backyard---

DET

Backyard? Which---

BILLY

In California. Where she grew up. I forget the city.

She was picking oranges

and looked up and saw a bronze colored globe
moving soundlessly across the sky.

Two jets were following it slowly.

She watched it cross the sky

and right before it vanished from her field of vision,
the globe suddenly shot into the sky
and disappeared.

The jets suddenly arched and headed back the way they came.

Then she realized she lost two hours.

But that wasn't unusual.

DET

What wasn't unusual?
The UFO or losing time?

BILLY

Losing time.
When she was stressed it would happen more frequently.
But she was on medication for it.

DET

She left her medication behind,
when she left on this road trip.
She was on some pretty strong meds.

BILLY

She was a fully functioning, healthy individual.
Her life wasn't perfect, but that had nothing to do with her brain chemistry.

DET

The number of people she's slept with is very long.

BILLY

I'm not on that list.
I think that's why we got along.
I wasn't a conquest or a trophy.
Neither is Ben.
She didn't enjoy all those people.
But they were exciting.

DET

Including Quasimodo.

BILLY

Especially Quasimodo.
The fighting and making up,
that's pretty exciting.

DET

You think he'll ever leave his wife?



BILLY

If he was ever going to,
he would have by now.
Why should he?
He's in the best position---
he has his wife and a mistress
who will do anything sexual he wants.
And she's willing to drive twenty hours to see him.
He makes minimal effort.
It's disgusting, really.
The route she took to California is straightforward.
And I know she's headed to Ben.

DET

Tell me about Ben.

BILLY

Gorgeous.
Absolutely flawless.
Tall, well built, smart, funny.
He's as perfect as a person can get.
He's also ambitious and driven
and he can forget people at times.
Especially when he's in a relationship.
A girlfriend becomes the center of his life.
And when he doesn't have a girlfriend,
such as now,
well, then...

DET

She becomes the center.

BILLY

Don't think he's leading her on.
She thinks of him as a brother,
she always has.
She adores him, and would never think he'd be interested in her.

DET

Why?

BILLY

Because he's perfect.

He's a minor deity,
like Narcissus.

She thought he should have stories written about him,
singing his praises.

DET

Did she write about him?

BILLY

I don't think so.

Even if she did, she wouldn't share that with me.

She was very shy.

DET

What about her ex-husband?

Did she think he was a minor deity?

BILLY

I assume so.

But I never met him

and I only heard the worst about him.

DET

When did she get married?

BILLY

When she was at USC as an undergrad.

And he was, from what she described,
gay.

DET

Gay?

BILLY

Bisexual, but she thought he was really gay.

There were things he did...well, she interpreted them...

She's still very mixed up about him.
Gay or not, she interpreted his sexual behavior as being gay.

DET

Do you have an example?

BILLY

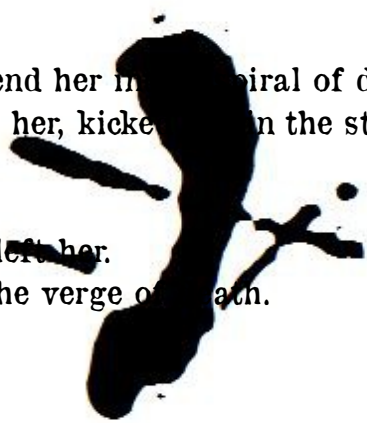
His primary interest was with her ass.
Now that in itself doesn't mean anything,
but that's all he wanted from her.
He didn't even like looking her in the face during sex.
He didn't want blowjobs or for her to do anything to him.
It was odd.
Plus he was fucking men on the side.
They had a slightly open relationship.
He could do anything he wanted with anyone,
and she could do nothing.
She believed if she didn't allow it,
didn't know about it,
he'd do it anyway.
She never trusted him.
She assume he would always act selfishly.

DET

What about the abuse?

BILLY

More emotional than physical.
She came out of it feeling like a dried husk,
that the best of her life was over
and she was going to die soon.
She couldn't see herself living more than a year ahead.
She walked around like a beaten dog,
assuming she couldn't do anything right.
She'd get a letter from her ex and it would send her into a spiral of depression.
There were times when he got drunk and hit her, kicked her in the stomach, and
broke her things.
She blamed herself.
She got better over time, but it never really left her.
I doubt she got over the feeling of being on the verge of death.



Apparently, he was supposed to be gorgeous.
It's strange---she never liked him.
She said that when they were dating, she hated him,
and when they married she barely liked him,
but she was deeply in love.
She said she lost time during the wedding:
They had a courthouse wedding.
She didn't remember it or anything else that day.
And she kept the marriage a secret.
She never wanted her dad and brother to know.

DET

They never knew anything?

BILLY

Not a thing.

DET

Was she terrified of her brother and father?

BILLY

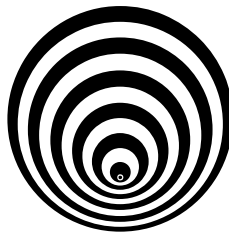
Not her father. She adored him.
But her brother:
she was terrified of him.

DET

I've been thinking about all this..
Is it possible her brother sexually abused her?

BILLY

I have no idea.







The Ghost Tour

Stop #1: La Llorona

We all believe in ghosts, because we have all experienced some sort of secret trauma. Secrets burned by trauma sting to be told. There is an implied healing that comes with exposure. Show the wound to the air and the body with stretch and sigh with relief. That is when a ghost is born. The ghost is the secret trauma howling to be told.

Howling wind is the most human sound in nature. If you listen right now, listen hard enough, you can hear the wind. But there is no wind. And yet, there is howling. Why? This area isn't known for wind. If anything, the air is unnaturally still. The leaves and grass seem frozen in an attitude of profound displeasure.

Which brings us to La Llorona. She is one of the most popular ghosts in the world. Seemingly born in Mexico, this ghost of a howling woman can be found in many other cultures. And she can be found here, this empty, still street in the middle of nowhere.

There are many stories explaining the trauma which occurred to the young woman which

transformed her into the howling woman. The version I'm about to tell you is isn't the most believed version, but it's the most likely, and most horrific.

(Because that is also a characteristic of trauma: it is the story which seems most impossible, most awful, that is the most likely true. If a traumatic event was believable and normal, it wouldn't need to be a secret.)

The howling woman, La Llorona, was once an unmarried woman. She fell in love with women quite regularly, and the women didn't fall in love with her. She was in a common habit among gay virgins of exclusively falling for straight people. Then a young man came along. He was like her: gay and falling for straight men. But he asserted to her that he was bisexual, and he fell for her completely and obsessively, assuring her she felt the same way about him. He also told her she was selfish, arrogant, stupid about money, a cheater, a liar, and generally a less than moral person. She believed this, because she had little evidence to the contrary, and because he assured her that he always had her best interests at heart. Because he was the only person who truly cared about her. So because she believed these hateful truths about herself, she believed in his love, and most importantly, in her love for him. She worked at being a better person, and he corrected her faults often, and became an excellent girlfriend. She was always available for sex, and in any position he wished, always open minded and willing to experiment. It didn't matter if she wasn't interested in what he wanted to do sexually. As long as it didn't actively disgust her, she was willing. Apathy was tolerable. It was better than refusing because he had many, many girlfriends who would refuse him sex and she didn't want to be a selfish bitch like them. She was happy about the

person she was becoming.

Then he wanted to have a baby. In this, she was honest and said she didn't want a child, but he assured this came only from her selfish impulses.

She told him the idea was disgusting and repulsive. He would come to her, say he wanted to try for a baby, and put his hands on her genitals. She found it disturbing that he coupled sexual activity with talk of a baby, of wanting a baby. He would put her on her hands and knees, fuck her very hard, pulling on her hair, and just after coming he would observe that he must have impregnated her then. Many times she would throw up immediately after sex. He accepted this as possible morning sickness.

Eventually she got pregnant, and in her forced excitement, she became convinced that she didn't have a baby inside her but a tumor pretending to be a baby. She became afraid of having a daughter: would she sexualize the creature. Her lesbian feelings remained burning brightly within her, anguished and starving as they were. She believed that any naked female presence would drive her desire to violent action. She was afraid if it was a boy it would get hard-ons when she changed its diaper. She couldn't uncouple sex with the child. After all, her husband would talk about making the baby during their bizarre, undesirable sex.

Most of the common stories of La Llorona involve her killing her children when her husband leaves her for another woman. She then kills herself having come to the realization of what she has done. She haunts the land ever after, seeking her children. Sometimes kidnapping

living children and disappearing with them.

Not in this version. In this version, when the woman was enormous in pregnancy, she became completely obsessed with the antagonism she felt toward the fetus. She became convinced it was killing her, eating away at her insides, and that her husband would eventually replace her with the baby in bed. She was convinced her husband wanted to fuck her child. Certainly, the bigger got the more interested he became in her, often making jokes about trying to touch the fetus with the tip of his penis while fucking her.

The woman found a metal hanger, straightened it, and began the long process of removing the baby. She didn't care how many pieces it had to be cut into, she wanted it out. She used skewers, long thin forks, and many other kitchen utensils. By the time her husband got home, he found his wife in the bathroom, in the bathtub, with their remnants of their child in a small bright yellow plastic trash can.

For several minutes, he screamed and yelled at her for what she had done, when he realized she was dead. She had bled out. He wasn't sure if she died hours before or while he was screaming at her. He decided she had already been dead.

Forever after, in stories he told, she became "that psycho cunt who killed my unborn child".

Forever after, on their empty, dirty street, she howled in the wind. It was a confused, twisted howl. Because she didn't understand anything—why she died, what her husband had done to her, why she was so miserable, and, most of all, how everything could have been better.

The main problem was that she blamed herself entirely, because even in her death she believed that her husband had never done anything wrong.

SCENE 29

DETECTIVE and GAS PUMP JOCKEY.

GPJ

Fill er up?

DET

To the brim.

Is there a hotel around here?

I'm beat. I've been driving all fucking day.

GPJ

Up the road about two miles.

It's on the expensive side,

but it's nice and you can get food all night.

DET

Perfect.

I could eat a fucking giraffe stuffed inside
an elephant.

GPJ

Stuffed inside a whale.

DET

Yeah, and a big mountain of roasted
potatoes.

GPJ

You traveling for business or pleasure?

DET

I have no fucking idea anymore.

I'm trying to track down a missing woman.

The further I look into it,

the more I'm not sure what's missing.

GPJ

I don't understand.

DET

Me either.

Anything strange ever happen around here?

Like UFOs or crop circles?



GPJ

La Llorona.

DET

What?

GPJ

The howling woman.

She's all in black with wings.

At least a ten foot wingspan.

She appears at night,
perched in trees or staring in the windows
of houses

and howling louder than the wind.

She only appear when something is going
to happen.

DET

Something?

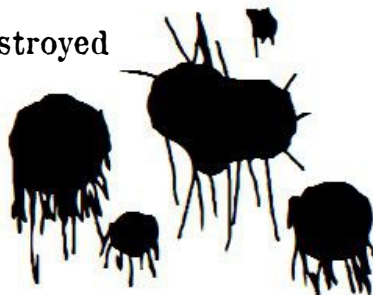
GPJ

Something terrible.

Last time they were seen was two years
ago,

right before a terrible flood that destroyed
half the town.

A month before,
la Llorona was seen 76 times.
I saw him myself.



Red eyes, too.
Scariest fucking thing I've ever seen.
Are you a private dick or something?

DET
No, not a private dick.
A friend of the brother.
He's terrified she's taken off with a lot of
money.
He hired me to find her.

GPJ
She steal the money?

DET
No, it's hers.
He's just a greed bastard.
And she's terrified of him.

GPJ
Maybe you shouldn't find her then.
Sounds like she doesn't want to be found.

DET
It's possible that she might have had a
breakdown.

GPJ
That makes your job difficult.
That'll make her unpredictable.
She could be in Mexico for all you know.
Here, take a hit.

DET
You are a merciful angel.
I should quit this fucking job.

GPJ
So quit.



DET

You know that fucking bird woman you saw?

I feel like I'm being followed by one,
or I'm following one,
or I turn a corner and there one is.

Every step of this fucking trip,
there's a harbinger of disaster.
I can't let the woman I'm looking for go.

I owe it to her.

I have to look after her
because she's irresponsible and unstable.
And no one will take care of her except
me.

GPJ

Have you ever met her before?

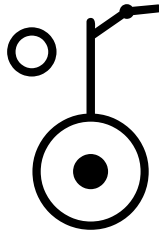
DET

Yeah, actually.

We used to play together as kids.

We were close.

We were really close.



SCENE 30

DETECTIVE and OFFICE MATE.

DET

I have to know, just be fucking straight with me, okay, please, just tell me the truth, all right?

Were you fucking her?

OM

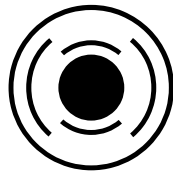
It is absolutely possible that a man and a woman in the twentieth century can be friends

And.

Not.

Fuck.

Get out of my office.



SCENE 31

DETECTIVE and BEN.

BEN

If she's on her way to see me,
she hasn't gotten here yet.

DET

She ever talk to you about UFOs?

BEN

She's talked to me about *everything*.

DET

She talk to you more than Billy?

BEN

Yes, even more than Billy.

DET

Does that make you uncomfortable?
You sound uncomfortable.
Were you romantically involved with her?
Were you fucking her?

BEN

What makes you think I'm going to tell you anything about her?
I know who you are.
Get the fuck out or I'm calling the cops.

DET

I've been hired to find her—

BEN

I'm not telling you again.

Fine. I'm calling the cops.

And if her body is found butchered in a quarry,
the cops will have you to blame.

DET

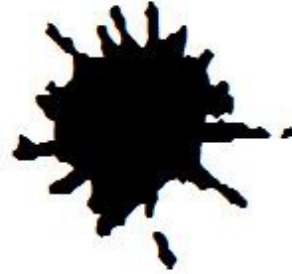
Fine, I'm gone.

BEN

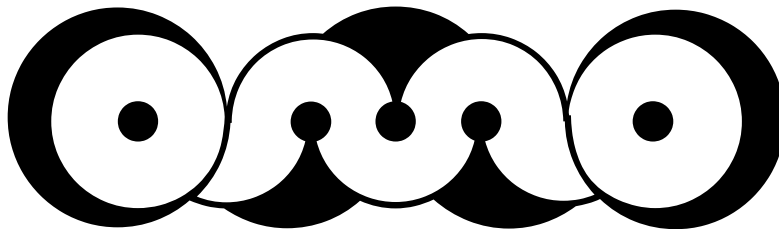
If you're here when she gets here,

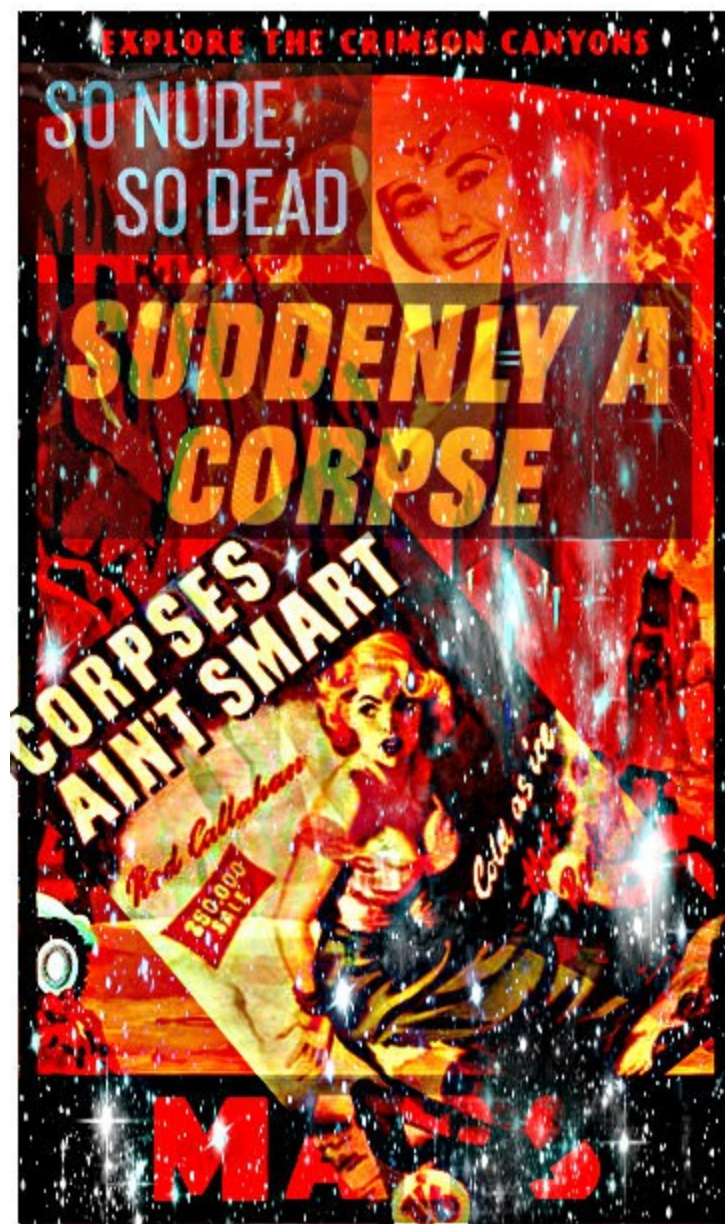
I will fucking kill you.

Do we have a clear understanding?



(DETECTIVE exits)





The Atomicpunk Mystery

SCENE EIGHT: Surface of Mars. The science machine has just landed. Clouds of smoke, etc. A door opens in the machine and MARGIE and BASIL exit.

MARGIE
Where is everyone?

BASIL
Everyone?

MARGIE
The Martians. Where are they?
I thought they'd send out a welcoming party.
A delegation, an ambassador and his hot daughter.
You know, the daughter with the emerald green skin and red hair.

BASIL
That was from an episode of Star Trek.
You're mistaking fantasy for real life again, Miss.

MARGIE
My father told me Martians have green skin.

BASIL
Then those Martians no longer exist.
We are alone on this planet.

MARGIE
We can't be.
My father said there are a billion inhabitants.

BASIL
That must have been when he visited.
There are no life forms on this planet.

MARGIE
He was here a couple years ago.
How could a billion Martians disappear?

BASIL
Perhaps your father's conclusions about Mars were in error.

MARGIE

A billion people? He was in error over a billion people?
No, there must be corpses somewhere.
Basil, where are the cities located?
The streets are probably piled deep with corpses.

BASIL
There are no cities, Miss.

MARGIE
Underground! They must be underground!

BASIL
I've scanned ten miles beneath the surface.
There is nothing except underground fresh water lakes.

MARGIE
Did my father lie to me?

BASIL
I have no information about that, Miss.
It is entirely possible that there was a Martian civilization when he
visited and it is no longer here.
It is possible that his presence caused some kind of infection which swept
quickly through the population like a plague.

MARGIE
So he could have accidentally killed them off.
He accidentally exterminated a species.
So who killed him?

BASIL
I have no information about that, Miss.
I cannot hazard a guess.

MARGIE
The last living Martian came to Earth and killed him in vengeance?

BASIL
It's possible.
But most likely, we will never know.

MARGIE
You know what I'm really disappointed about?
I wanted to meet the hot, green skinned daughter of the ambassador.
I imagined that I'd fall in love at first sight,
and she'd love me and want to keep me here.

And I'd never return to Earth and stay on Mars and have nothing but hot Martian lesbian sex.

Now I have to go back to Earth
and have lots of sex I don't enjoy,
or, at best, feel tremendously apathetic about.

BASIL

You don't have to go back to Earth.
And you certainly don't have to go back to Chester.
You have the option to kill yourself.

MARGIE

I do?

BASIL

It is always an option, Miss,
in a free society.

MARGIE

Do you think I should kill myself?

BASIL

I would be very disappointed and unhappy if you did, Miss.

MARGIE

That's impossible. You can't be either of those things.

BASIL

Nevertheless.

There is also Europa, Miss.

The chance of life on Europa is great and you could make incredible discoveries.

It would be dangerous, but less so than returning to your difficult husband.

MARGIE

Do we have enough fuel?

BASIL

The solar collectors need a few more hours,
and then we will be ready to go.

Shall I make the necessary calculations for departure?

MARGIE

Please and thank you, Basil.

BASIL

My pleasure, Miss.

MARGIE

We might as well go look for Martian corpses.

I'm sure they're here somewhere.

Dad couldn't have been lying, right, Basil?

There have to be dead Martians somewhere.

There have to be.

My dad didn't lie to me.

BASIL

That's impossible to know, Miss.

MARGIE

I'm sure something terrible happened here.

I can feel it.

There was great suffering and terror.

It's so haunting.

