



The Krewthedral
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Chapter 1

“How much amphetamine would you like sir?”

“Medium fucked please. Can I also get a bottle of the house red?” It was ten o’clock at night. I had eaten nothing all day and four Cannieboro marijuana cigarettes and a tab of cocaine gum had made me ravenous.

“Very good sir,” said the waiter as he passed me an ash tray. I lit up a hash fag and sat pensively at the table, which was tucked on the left side of the restaurant, near the front windows. I ordered duck pate with toast as a starter followed by Ampheti-Spaghetti with basil and tomato.

I reflected: my career was very much like that of the waiters: I was merely a contact man, but instead of hungry stomachs and crazy chefs, I found myself shuttling between account managers and clients.

It was not particularly busy that Sunday evening in El Marcus. Guests left and locals arrived for evening drinks; they lent on the bar, the side of which was draped in Spanish fishing nets with clusters of marine crustacean attached to the briny chords.

El Marcus had reasonably priced food and unlike most restaurants, did not have internet connection portals built into the tables, nor oppressive overhead monitors that blared out advertising. This was why I often ate here, to get away from the advertising, to get away from my occupation.

Advertising. Our era: a world saturated by advertising—run by advertising. If I were to step outside of this restaurant, I would be bombarded with advertising’s pestilent noise; it would wail in my ears, the song of a virulent siren. Nonetheless, the solace of the restaurant’s sanctuary was easily broken: driven into a delirium by the legalised drugs in their blood, the patrons loudly regurgitated slogans and blurbs; the commodity data imprinted in their heads was transmitted and its lifecycle continued through anaemic conversations with other consumers.

I looked out the window and up to the night sky—or what was left of it: digitally rendered billboards stretched over the city, stitched by electronics into a vast convex ceiling; the adverts blink, scroll and flash. Adverts dominate the sky; the stars, with their manifold arcades of astral

Gods, are now impotent, and forgotten behind the new daze of atmospheric mythology: adverts. This ceiling, a mantle of the heavens, is the shell: the Greater Lon-Dome—a protective, super polymer barrier that once shielded the capital from the laser beams of rogue terrorist satellites during the one hundred year Terror war. Now adverts are projected from the inner electronic skin of the Lon-Dome and the vast convex structure sits over the centre of the capital like a tick sucking blood from a pyodermic hound. The Lon-Dome is a hangar transmitting consumption, a soul crushing greenhouse of consumption that consumes consumers, who, in the process are consumed by the system of consumption, which is the whole point of consumption—never to reach satiety, only to absorb everything into the system; the consumption of systems, normalising and homogenising them into one system; all religions, all theologies and philosophy understand consumption, and in many circumstances they epitomise consumption; consumption became morality; humanity is consumption, and the Operations system had unified us, by consuming us in a design, a timeless system that reigns supreme.

One hundred years! Had the Terror War really lasted that long? The Terror War officially ended in 2196 after which the new Global World Order—called the Operations, partitioned the planet into territories (and conveniently utilised the gargantuan contraceptive cap that is the Lon-Dome to pollute the night sky with commodity).

My gaze returned to the restaurant: I looked at the ceiling, observed the décor of El Marcus—acoustic guitars with only four strings; baskets and flowers, a sinorita and her frilly skirt, soccer teams and black bulls charging cobbled streets—ah Spain! It used to be part of a continent called 'Europe', but this continent is now called Euphorica. The Operations renamed all the continents after the global crash; they are now referred to as states of intoxication; this occurred when drugs became legalised by the Great Temperance Order of the Operations (GTO). Antarctica was renamed Catatonia; Asia—Hypnotica; Africa—Phantastica; Oceania—Inebrianta; North America—North Excitiantia and South America, South Excitiantia. You have only to look in the history books to discover what the world was like before the global crash—some even say society still crashes, day by day—the human race is perpetually falling into catastrophe which is neatly surmised as progress—progress only leads to more progress and nowhere else, a circular process. Advertising: the implication of infinite progress.

So, now the world is controlled by the Operations and divided into two hundred and fifty interlocking, hexagonal territories. Each territory

is of equal geographical space but obviously with a variation in land-mass. The hexagonal territories are identified by the name of the continent they are in and assigned a number; each territory can be abbreviated to Hex 1, Hex 2 and so on. We live in England, which is inside Hex 1 of Northern Euphorica. The sides of the hexagons are not equilateral. The horizontal borders are three hundred miles long and the diagonal borders are two hundred and fifty miles long. Each border is numbered. The numbering system works clockwise starting from the top horizontal border: Borders 1 and 4 are horizontal and borders 2, 3, 4 and 6 are diagonal. If you say: "I will be travelling from Hexagon 1 to Hexagon 2 via border four to one, this means you are crossing south. This is commonly abbreviated as '4 to 1', indicating that the hexagonal territory you are going to is south of your starting point. A '1-4' means North, a '2-5' is North East, '3-5' South East, '4-1' South, '5-2' South West, '6-3' North West. Each Hex is assigned a number and pre-fixed with the name of the continent it is in. England is in Hex 1 of Euphorica, Paris is in Hex 2 of Euphorica. Say you want to take the most direct route to Paris: you cross the fourth border of Hex 1 and enter Hex 2 via border 1—you are taking a '4-1', which is another way of saying that you are going south. This journey plan could be further abbreviated to: Euphorica 1, 4-1.

Another way to think of it is like this: the geo-political map of the present day (2205) resembles a soccer ball—the hexagons. However, a soccer ball also has pentagonal panels interspersed throughout its sphere—the World Order does not feature territories demarcated with pentagonal boundaries—so all the space that is left over between the ill fitting hexagons (for it is impossible to construct a sphere from hexagons) is conveniently clumped together into a space of non-descript boundaries, a hodgepodge of wacky demarcations in the middle of the Pacific ocean. The ocean serves as a sump for the territorial inconsistencies of the hexagonal system. "The utopian partition of the world may seem sophisticated," commented my teacher long ago, "but try to imagine an inflatable globe wrapped in chicken wire—and not very well, so that around the back (the South Pacific) we have a messy confluence of distorted, overlapping hexagons. The unequal, excess spaces that cannot be allocated to one hexagonal territory or another (for that would disturb the perfectly equal distribution of territory), are dumped over the most remote area where there is no land: over the Pacific Ocean." And what happens when this territorial equilibrium is broken? I asked. "The Operations maintain the global equilibrium by intervening whenever a nation violates its hexagonal boundaries," my teacher replied. And what do the

Operations do when they need to intervene? “There is no intervention, just embargo,” replied my teacher, “because the world is now a world of peace. We wage no war Sebastian. Instead of fighting, the Operations stop Papula Dust from entering the hexagonal territory...and as you know, without the special properties of Papula Dust people cannot control their drug intake. They loose control. Without Papula Dust there are massive outbreaks of hysteria, pandemonium, fear. The people cannot regulate themselves. They become dysfunctional and their society, infrastructure, chain of command and morale collapses—without the firing of a single gun. Have you taken your Papula Dust?”

I sketched many hexagons in my note book; dawdling in my thoughts, this was the shape I found myself returning to, scrawling until the pages resembled a bee’s hive. Hexagons are everywhere! “Mr Thorn,” said my teacher who was high on coke at the time and had shared a line with me, his inquiring pupil, “you’ll find hexagons everywhere, even in your eyes: the endothelial layer of cells in your cornea are formed from hexagonal molecules and it is their precise conformation that allows the light to pass through, light transmission, transparency, a pure window with no distortion or blemishes. Hexagons are found in biochemistry, your body, your genetics—and they form the core of many of the drugs you quaff just before you arrive in the class room, ketamine for example; and the hexagons are icons of power: Roche, the company that makes many of the stimulants that keep you studying my reading lists—their logo is a hexagon.” And why base the structure of the world’s geopolitical territories on hexagons? “Well Sebastian, there is an idea that the globe is the model information system. And the model information system uses hexagons. Therefore the world is a globe of equal hexagons. The era of production is over, we live in an era of consumption, the era of the hard drive, the era of the node where existence is defined by the locus of connection, the netocracy, naturally arising from the hegemony of globalisation; time-space compression, action at distance, accelerating interdependence, networking; the world is the model information system, the world is a giant hexagon; like the eye, we have achieved transparency and all you have to do is turn or move your head until you get what you want.”

I stopped drawing hexagons and moved onto sketching vague logos and slogans. I had caught a chill from outside: a little earlier I had been sitting on an old park bench opposite the restaurant. Why did I sit on a bench in the cold? Well, I was about to walk into El Marcus when I saw someone I knew preparing to leave. At that particular moment I did not

feel inclined to pleasantries and idle chat with this man, so I quickly sat down, grabbed an old magazine left on the ground and hid my face behind it. As I waited for the man to leave, I flicked through the publication; the usual: anorexics, cellulite in the surf, plastic surgery, divorce, cocaine, award ceremonies, pregnancy bumps and wedding photos. I rimmed the crispy pages of the gossip magazine; the pictures of spoiled heiresses on the verge of starvation were mottled and faded, crimped and sallow, battered by the elements.

I stretched back on the old park bench which responded by creaking its rheumatoid oak. I dropped the publication on the bench from where I had picked it up. I was cold and hungry, as well as agitated by a searing neon advert on the underside of the Lon-Dome. It was an advert for the 'Hotwork' new LP, its spectral incandescence an interlaced series of images: soft rock pin up boys, fashionable in the current post-modern cycle of musical trends. Twenty seconds elapsed and the puppy faces of these pop drabs were replaced by the tangy asteroids of 'Super Mondo Cheese Shots' which now have a 'new crack coat': cocaine sprayed onto crunchy potato nuggets.

"If only I could get a contract like that!" I mused. The best advertising agents got to work on drugstenance. I coveted a narcotics confectionary account—it would bolster my flagging career as an advertising executive.

The man I wanted to avoid soon left. So I stood up, looked towards the restaurant and walked inside.

"Ah! Here comes my starter!"

After the starter I reviewed my material. Then I closed the note book, dissatisfied and destitute of inspiration. My creative impulses, those blebs of prospect that once pulsed from me like sausages squeezed out of a meat grinder, had ceased. The waiter served me my second course and the ampheti-spaghetti picked me up.

I twirled the strands around my fork and sucked, watching the patrons empty their pockets of drugs paraphernalia—pipes for crack and hash, or flash card injection sticks for direct portal access into the venous blood. I had once considered buying the sterile prosthetic interface, but I was never keen enough to pierce my skin in this way; I was content with my natural apertures: mouth, nose, ears and anus. My girlfriend, Clarisse, had recently installed a venous portal system, it was laser sewn into her wrist, purchased on the 'good' advice of a personal drug stylist, an apothecary from drug dealers dot com.

I paused... an odd, discordant melody intruded on my thoughts... could be heard from somewhere... again it sounded... A tumble of notes rang from a clanking piano cosseted at the back of the restaurant. It was very dark back there, the candle light gave the impression of a pirate's cove where huddled figures shifted in the shadows. I concentrated on the disharmonious but structured clatter that built up and down—the piano player was banging chords with crossed arms. A softer vocal percussion ebbed and flowed with the music; a crowd of listeners, sitting at a table next to the piano were all beat boxing in time to the composition: ohm cha ohm cha ohm cha!

The pianist wore a panama hat and brown corduroy trousers. He frantically pumped the shiny copper pedals of the piano, the tiny notes played out in a funky way. A lime green shirt completed his oddly stylish ensemble. The candle light flickered on his face: he bore a strong nose with prominent cheekbones that seared the soft gloom enveloping the clandestine gathering. The beat boxing culminated; then a final volley of stabbed chords signalled the end of the composition. The man with the hat turned to face the cheerful banter and appraisal of his compatriots.

At this point, the rush of amphetamines came inside me and I caught the attention of the passing waiter. I asked him to deliver a bottle of red wine to the crowd at the back. "Please send my regards to the gentleman on the piano, courtesy of Mr Sebastian Thorn." I finished my meal, tapping my toes and drumming my fingers, feeling the whiz. Ten minutes later the waiter returned with a silver dish. He gave me a wine glass containing a transparent liquid.

"Compliments of Monsieur Aston," said the waiter. I looked at the crowd. They saw me and raised their glasses. I lifted mine and I necked the fluid down in one shot, smarting from its tepid, subtle taste. It had an organic, mildly salty warmth, like a teenage bodily fluid; not a terribly comfortable sensation—but it felt virile. I grimaced; the drabs pooled at the bottom of the glass—an oily immersion, maybe a perfusion. Emitting a silent burb, I felt a plasticized bubble roll languorously over my tongue. After consuming the odd elixir I felt peculiar, impulsive and inquisitive. Tossing the napkin onto my plate, I approached the crowd.

It consisted of five young men and a young woman. They were huddled around a thick oak table littered with cigarettes and drinks; they fiddled with party poppers and drugs paraphernalia. I introduced myself; I praised the piano player for his excellent performance. He tipped his panama and cordially invited me to sit with his party.

“Many thanks for the wonderful drink!” I said addressing the man in the hat. I then inquired into the nature of the fluid.

“Ha ha! The drink you say? The drink! Well, first let me thank you for the wine,” the pianist replied. At that very moment, a heavily built man to his left lifted the half empty bottle with his thick forearms. “It is lovely wine, thank you! Now to reveal the identity of your drink, our gift to you! Well what have we here?” smiled the man in the hat, addressing the rhetorical question to his friends.

“G!” they cheered and a thin man with spectacles ejaculated tissue paper from the plastic cannon of a party popper. The frizzy rolls draped the others with multi coloured strings and the aroma of cracker fumes wafted through the air.

G? I could not think why I had not recognised it when the waiter had brought it over. I had failed to register its identity as it flooded my taste buds. I’ve done G many times, especially when I was a young impressionable whipper snapper—G is cacker cheapo dribble; I use to buy it at Ye Olde Happy Shopper, but now that shop is called Cadnam News and Food. I had expected this strange group, possibly El Marcus patrons, to offer me a line of coke, or a pill at the very least; but I couldn’t complain—this liquid X seemed potent enough.

I sat between a broad, strong looking man and an intelligent looking bold man who was taller than the strong man.

“I am Graham Aston,” said the man in the hat. He introduced me to the members of his ‘crew’.

The first man he introduced had spectacles, a slender frame, the avidly keen eyes of a scientist eyes and bony fingers. He was called Steve.

The second man, called Bro-DiE, had long strawberry blonde hair, a large but aristocratically straight nose and blue close set eyes.

The broad, stocky man was called Dave; he had a rugged kindness to his features and soft wide set eyes; the bold man was Matt, who was intense and striking, debonair and mysteriously dashing. The girl who sat between Steve and Graham was called Evelyn and she had long dreadlocks, a kind, gentle face which phased into an intellectual profile as she turned her head in the candle light.

Dave and Matt sandwiched me in with their bodies and dispensed more of the oily liquid into random glasses. “Here drink,” ordered Dave. Matt fixed me with his cheerful eyes and encouraging smile: I immediately felt comfortable. Steve giggled and ejaculated more paper from the poppers, whilst Bro-DiE leaned over the table and nodded at everything anyone said.

“A toast! To our new friend, he who is so impressed by our drink! What is your name?” asked Graham. All eyes turned to me.

“Sebastian Thorn,” I replied and they riotously exhaled narcotic breath in a welter of cheer: “To Sebastian! Techno, techno, techno!” They drained the glasses of G; I followed suit, the G further intoxicating me; I felt the dose effusing through the pores of my skin. I already had two shots of this strange grease and tried to anticipate the effects of the double dose, this double penetration, trying to gauge it next to my usual drug habit of double dropping pills; But strange, it seemed to me, this G has a most peculiar effect. I can’t be sure what it is, but it is very good!

“My goodness, how much G did you give me!” I said aloud.

“Three mills, neat from the teat” said Matt. “Neat from the teat! Load me up Dave!” Matt asked Dave who reached into the baggy pockets of his pink shell suit top; Dave pulled out a vial of liquid. He dispensed this liquid with surreptitious squirts. This I found odd: was this fluid strictly legal? What was it? Why would Dave sneakily dispense such an elixir in an age when all drugs were legalised?

“If this is G we are drinking then why should there be any need to hide it? G is perfectly legal!” I asked, but my words were ignored as Matt swilled the mixture and then drank the liquor, converting his oesophagus into a drain, his bobbing Adams apple and his wet eyes turned to the ceiling; as he swallowed he looked like a ravenous heron devouring a frog.

“Ahhh! That hit the spot!” cried Matt. Steve giggled.

“Hey Steve, make me a rollie why don’t you!” barked Bro-DiE. Steve obeyed the command and rummaged around in his big pouch. Bro-DiE grinned. “I work in agribusiness, in particular in parasitological control for livestock; I’m doing lots of genetic engineering work—well, I’m a lab technician in a transgenic research facility. It sounds fancy, but it’s not very well paid.” His hand was held aloft, waiting for the cigarette to be delicately slipped between his fingers by the kind Steve. “I have two weeks off and am staying with Steve. Steve designs furniture.”

“Indeed, if you need any chairs, desks or consoles processed to your own dimensions, requirements and taste then I can assist!” chirped Steve.

“What do you do Sebastian?” Evelyn inquired. Matt passed some cocaine over to Graham who snorted the powder up his nostrils.

“I work in advertising, at...” I paused because I wasn’t too sure if disclosing the name of the company that I worked for to these hedonists was wise; but the G was intoxicating—so violently funky in my

gastrointestinal tract that I felt my qualms disappear and my eyeballs slop in a liquor of slime. "I work at Fletch Touch Promotions, as a creative. I handle various accounts, from washing powder to cars. My office is near Leicester Square." Graham Aston half twisted his face into a portentous chagrin but then drew himself closer to me; I could see the flecks of cocaine on the inner rim of his nostrils.

"Advertising," he leered, "does it mirror how people are acting or how they are dreaming?" He sharply leant back. Evelyn prepared a pulverulent line of coke and presented it to me on a make up mirror.

"Good advertising reflects the fantasies of people," I said as I sucked the cocaine into my nose, feeling its persuasive opiate tinge. "I have always wanted my work to be aspirational. But recently, I have had difficulty understanding the aspirations of citizens, thus I have had difficulty connecting the product to the citizens dream. I just wish I could do something original—be more original."

"Ha ha! I didn't think there was such a thing as good advertising!" Graham chortled and everyone laughed with the arrogance, the confidence of cocaine masters...they are thinking...they are effusing...effusing through the pores they know better than of my own skin—anticipating people. Dose response. I snapped out of it...

"The executives used to listen to my ideas, but not anymore. They tell me we have to sell aggressively; we send the same message out: buy, buy, buy. The advertisers think they know better than the consumer—adverts are instructions, thinly veiled codes of control. Society placidly accepts these repeated codes. Most people aren't even aware they are absorbing the codes—even less understand what it is they are absorbing."

"Absorption!" blasted Matt, startling me, "a time of superfluous information. A time of mind pollution. We don't believe in this 'advertising'," he grunted. "But I would not worry about being original, for only failures are original because they are not good enough to meet the standards of the masters, so all they can be is themselves: original! From my warez experience I feel that the emphasis on originality and the villification of plagiarism seems to be a rather direct reflex of property rights in the context of highly legalized private ownership."

I couldn't think of a response to this so I shrugged and returned to my own state of affairs:

"My profession implicitly offers a prospect of misery if the citizen chooses not to consume the commodity; if you do not buy this commodity you will be unloved and unsuccessful. Just on the side, I take it you

guys are not particularly enamoured by our government or the Operations rule of force? I'm not."

"The Operations? Who knows, we just like to get fucked on drugs and party!" beamed Dave whilst tugging at his gym top. "Help yourself!" he generously motioned and I worked his drugs paraphernalia from the chaos of the table.

"Everyone likes to get wrecked on drugs and party! I am always getting smashed. I can't remember ever being sober. I wonder if sobriety is real... but to experience sobriety is too unreal for me, it wouldn't feel natural," I rambled. "Drugs are legal, getting fucked is legal. Don't we want to aspire to party in some slightly different way?" Dave understood me; I felt his penetration, the way he looked at me, the look of a tutor on the dance floor: yes student, you double dropped! But you still have a lot of catching up to do...

"Some aspire and some even achieve that objective. But we party slightly differently," said Graham, drawing the words from his mouth like a thin ream of silk. "We party..." and he was joined by the others in a synchronised exaltation: "with pure party power!"

"Yeah! Let's go!" said Steve

"Here we go!" shouted Matt

"Go!" yelled Graham

"Let's go!" spluttered Bro-DiE

"Here we go!" sang Evelyn

"Hold tight!" boomed Dave and he dripped more G into my glass.

"I think its time to go back to the old school!" announced Matt.

"It's time you came to Club Grez," Dave huffed and he started collecting up his drugs paraphernalia.

Chapter 2

Through slippery corridors of bricks and between gangrenous pipes hanging from dripping gutters, we traced an intoxicated path through the alley ways to Graham's house: Club Grez. The GHB was at full force; Dave braced me as I tripped over soggy cardboard boxes. It was getting on for midnight. Bro-DiE and Steve ran ahead talking nonsense. Matt rolled spliffs whilst walking around in spirals, his technique far better than those machines in the Cannieboro manufacturing plants. My pre-rolled Cannieboro fags were far harsher with a less succulent fragrance. Matt's spiffs were cool, smooth, yet pungently comforting.

"Are we there yet?" I asked.

"Not far, not far Sebastian! Not too long to go!" enthused Graham. Then Evelyn said: "Yeah yeah, it is so good to meet you, we have much to discuss, very interesting, yes!"

"Uhh! I feel so queasy, but it feels so good!" I dribbled as I struggled to walk; I almost belched the transparent tonic out into the miserable corridors of the crumbling warehouses.

"That's it Sebastian, feel the revulsion!" yelled Matt as he put his arm around me. Indeed, I felt an illicit, exciting and despicably self-indulgent shimmer transpose itself into a guttural exhalation and my breathing became inconsistent. I paused; behind me I glimpsed a filthy rat, its black glossy coat oiled by the tepid puddles; it was standing upright on its hind limbs, glaring at me with a piecing eye.

"Ah here we are!" announced Graham. At the end of this sordid journey there stood a green door, the same colour as Graham's shirt. He opened the door, not with a conventional number pad, retina scan or radio frequency device implanted in the skin ("I don't wear that shit man," he had said vigorously), but with keys: copper, steel and brass, which jangled from his long index finger.

"Prepare!" and he swung the door open. I was practically carried in by Dave who deposited me on a comfortable leather couch with brown tan upholstery, exquisitely creased by many chill out sessions.

Matt swooped onto a DJ console in the corner and the sound system instantly started pumping repetitive, electronic music, of the highest quality, the best I had ever heard.

I was reeling from the snowball effect of the narcotics mixture in my gut. Evelyn disappeared into the kitchen and returned through the mermaid blue bead curtain with a tray of Papula tea.

“Papula tea! Ah yes, lets all get some of this down us!” announced Steve. Bro-DiE helped Evelyn hand out cups and saucers whilst Graham leaned against a book case of 20th century post modern classics; he watched us as he traced his finger over the mottled spines.

The Papula Dust tea was refreshing. Its magical properties cleansed my vascular system, stripping the vinyl sheen of G from the endothelium of my capillaries, absorbing the rogue metabolites of substance abuse that posed a carcinogenic threat to the DNA of my cells. Papula makes drugs disappear: like a light switch, people are flipping in and out of drug space on a daily basis. “Papula Dust! To think that without it we would all die of overdoses!” exclaimed Dave. The world was hooked on the Papula Dust. We were all addicts that could break any drug habit through the miraculous properties of this compound, mined from secret catacombs in the depths of South Excitantian jungles, the arid deserts of North Phantastica and the tundras of Northern Hypnotica. No addiction, no affliction, no abuse just substance use. The Papula Dust was served in many forms and preparations, from pills to milk shakes, even frosted on breakfast cereals. Papula water spurted forth from a giant fountain erected in each hexagonal territory of the Operations world order—when the children went to visit the granite dispensing units on compulsory school trips, they drank from the squirting fountain head.

“I wish I had a Papula mine,” grumbled Dave. “I could do with the money, especially since my XRC is costing me an arm and a leg. I need a new exhaust and some fresh tires.” It was impossible for anyone to privately operate a Papula mine because the Operations World Order owned and operated them all. Dave continued to reflect on his financial situation when Steve cut in:

“I tell you Davey boy, you tear away too quickly at the start of the race. You’re always wearing your tires out! And besides, you need to keep your revs lower at the start so that you don’t reveal the full capability of your engine to your opponent, or your driving technique!”

“What do you know?” Dave obstinately replied, “You’re always crashing cars let alone racing them. I’ve been into road racing for years, you’ve only just gotten into it and you think you’re the business! I’m the

racer, me!" Dave turned away from Steve and addressed me: "Fifteen victories Sebastian, Fifteen! But recently I've had a spell of bad luck. My car has a few mechanical problems and to add to my woes, a woman reversed into my door and dented it. I couldn't even get a write off claim from the insurance company."

"You race cars?" I asked sipping the hot Papula tea, relishing its capability to eradicate the excess fuck zone of the amphetti spaghetti, coke and weird GHB.

"Yeah I do a bit of road racing here and there. I'll take you out someday, but don't tell the cops hey. You won't tell the cops?"

"No! Of course not!" I replied. Dave fixed me with an earnest expression which was broken when a spliff, passed on from Evelyn, was placed between my lips. Why would Dave be paranoid enough to assume that I would immediately inform the authorities of his illicit road racing?

Graham sat next to Dave on the couch, itching to dance on his arse. Matt turned the volume up. The music was archaic yet smooth; rhythmically more sophisticated than contemporary music. My imagination was captured by its machine soul, a perpetual narrative of proletarian discourse that complimented the G dose perfectly, not to mention blending in with the bohemian countenance of Grahams abode. Graham leapt up, his eyes burning; on a whim, a bedazzling impulse, he dived into his closet and quickly changed all his clothes. He looked excellent: the proletariat's unbridled experimentation with gaudy jackets and flashy cravats.

"This music is so good! What is it? where does it come from?" I inquired as Graham prepared to load me up with another three mills of G.

"Matt obtained these tracks from Siberia, from a hidden Russian bunker full of relics and artefacts; spindles of vacuum sealed plastic CD's, you remember them? CD's, you remember CD's?" I admitted that I hadn't seen a CD for quite sometime. "No one remembers CDs! Not been used for centuries! This music you're hearing, this music is Detroit techno. It is over two hundred years old. Pretty rare material actually, but Matt has the warez power, he can get his hands on anything," and Graham, or 'Grez' as he was affectionately called, depressed the greasy black rubber dongle at the end of the G pipette. The dongle, creating a negative partial pressure, sucked the greasy fluid up the glass tube. Behind me, Matt was twisting equalising knobs, deft flicks of his fingers controlling the music's onward trajectory. He concentrated on crafting swells and rushes from the sixteen bar patterns, pulses emanating from within the aesthetic, the textures of secret code; the G became visceral

again. Grez then pursued our earlier discourse in El Marcus: he talked about advertising as the drops of G rolled down the side of my glass.

“Sebastian, advertising is a uniquely powerful medium. So powerful it is the foundation of social, political and cultural control, control that now defines our existence. You say that ‘good’ advertising reflects people’s dreams, but maybe the analogy of a reflection is flawed? Surely the supercharged cultural commodification of advertising is selecting and presenting to us only those elements of social life, those vistas of existence that conform to the interests of big business? It is a selective reflection, which is to say, it is not a true reflection like the image of you in that mirror over there; no, this analogy, it is typical of all analogies: it is an inventive lie—just like advertising.” I pondered these words; should I snort some more coke to fire up my brain for a response?—I often took charlie before proposing my ideas to my boss and the impatient clients huddled around aluminium tables in the conference room. It seemed that this special brand of G, dispensed without reserve, was more than sufficient to pick me up; after the Papula infusion, I felt both remarkably high and clear headed. I enthusiastically applied my faculties and enjoyed a good discussion with Grez.

“Big business is the Operations. The big business and the machinations of consumerism, propelling our hopeless race into monotonous cycles of commodity culture...the world order rigidly set within the boundaries of these planetary hexagons. Like bees in honeycomb chambers, we toil in sweetness to an unseen Queen,” Grez lamented, pumping his arms up and down in time with the music. He stood up from the couch to dance.

“Bee hives...” I reflected.

“You’ve been listening to Steve rabbit on about those bugs Brother dear,” said Evelyn. Grez ignored her; he continued to juke his body to the groove.

“Anyway,” I said, “I think advertising is lagging behind the Operation’s progressive political currents.” I inhaled from a spliff; THC smoke crossed the alveoli of my lungs. I exhaled blue wisps into the box like room, the hovel known as Club Grez. Evelyn lighted a jasmine joss stick. I noticed Steve was observing an aquaraium in the corner of the room; it was buried in a cluster of rubber plants and cactus.

“Yes, political stability, consumer choices, availability of produce, the ability to discover new inner depths of psychology, the prevention of war. We live in a golden era. But we are held in a vice and assaulted with choice, choice and even more choice! The progressive politics of the

Operations allows us to consume and revel in a glut of commodity: but it is not progress. I am depressed by the mediocrity of existence. I am uninspired by the products I sell. I cannot tell if they improve the quality of life or make people unhappy. My title as a 'creative' is a misnomer, I simply design methods to push the commodity further into people's faces. I hardly re-contextualise the superfluous information, I am really a technician of trash!"

Graham stroked his chin. Dave lined up some speed, sprinkling it from a seal top plastic bag. Graham returned to the sofa. Crossing his legs he said:

"Somehow we have paid a heavy price in order to guarantee world peace, that is: total commodity absorption, an effective buffer against mans compulsion to absorb other men."

"Its all about the absorption of women mate!" interrupted Matt. Grez continued: "We are mauled by luxuries into submission. Take music and movies: their prime function is to aid in the selling of immense collections of commodities. This has been going on for a long time, but it came into prominence at the start of the millennium." Grez held the G dongle and squeezed it rhythmically as he spoke; his attitude struck me as cynical, but with each dongle depression I found myself compelled to listen more closely. "Let's try to relate to this analogy,"

"An inventive lie," I interrupted.

"Quite," continued Grez. "Now imagine humanity as a diamond, and those glints of impurity that make diamonds sparkle have been abraded, leaving a duff congeniality that is remarketed by the slight tilt of the design axis—a world of kitsch: the utter denial of shit." His face was long, the angles of his cheek bones hoisting the words up from his mouth like a sail. His will to resist the mainstream was strong, projected through his stoic features, dramatized by the dim light of his home.

"In advertising," I added, "there is always an implication of infinite progress. The prospect of progress is so alluring that we sacrifice our cultural vitality for it." I sighed and drank more G, which Bro-DiE called celestial juice.

Suddenly Steve exploded with violent squeaks; he extravagantly described the colony of ants housed in the aquarium: "Come see this Sebastian, the chemotatic navigation of the workers, columns of biochemistry with six legs negotiating a microcosm within this aquarium—their world!" I inspected the tank; it contained a network of colonies with interconnections for transport; the insects lived industrious mono lives.

Steve rambled on about communication and the hierarchy of the ants with their many sub divisions:

“Nanotechnology has allowed us to investigate life at the ant level. Scientists have recorded the movements of manufactured nano ants that have been mechanically integrated into real colonies. They are using the data to provide formats for the latest artificial intelligence platforms. To think, our theories of cognition and group minds are being developed through observation of these remarkable creatures!”

“Oh Steve don’t bore the poor man!” Evelyn interrupted, but Dave quickly shouted: “We love you Steve!”

“Sebastian, would you like some chloral hydrate?” Evelyn offered me a dose as she swept her long dreadlocks off her face. I accepted and out popped the soft gelatinous capsules. I took one and had a few more spliffs. I was becoming progressively mashed again; I started to dance with Bro-DiE and Dave. Matt increased the volume of the techno and we talked through our body movements; the music our vocal fold.

I was then taken for a tour around Club Grez: a stuffed tarantula, more rubber plants, record collections, plaster of Paris splattered on the ceiling; it was starting to peel off and the lumps looked like frosted cowpats glazed with sugar. The walls were adorned with reproductions of cubist paintings from the 19th century; and rejects of plastic toys: like Bellmer’s dolls, they with crude malformations, congenital defects formed from a synthetic womb.

“I work in a plastic toy factory down the Thames, near the docklands, not far from here. I collect the rejects!” Grez laughed, “More G?” He nudged me with his own greasy vial and I could not resist despite the stupor of the liquor weighing heavily on my senses. This G was unlike the cheap G I used to quaff—it was more an orgy for the belly gut!

“I have to work tomorrow, I...”

“Don’t worry about that!” Bro-DiE cut in. “Hey guys, should Sebastian worry about tomorrow or should he take more G?” His friends shouted: “Take more G!”

“Come and join us in the looped reflections Sebastian!” said Evelyn, “Ohm cha ohm cha ohm cha ohm cha!” The others accompanied her, thumping wind from their narcotic nuzzles. I remained steady as Evelyn danced a dervish before me. Steve came over and tried to distract her.

“It’s OK, get fucked!” said Dave, “and leave your troubles behind. Feel the pure party power of Matt’s mixing!” Dave (as I first discovered that night), had a talent for convincing me to take his advice. He gave me another squirt of G as I danced; I was rushing, prancing, twisting and

sweating. My mind started to brighten and relax, fresh ideas popped into my head. The empathy I felt in Club Grez was more significant than any of my previous experiences on MDMA. Oh the joy with these strangers! Brothers in arms who had no fear of barbiturate or opiate; they were not pacifists, but violently hedonist—a new, exhilarating consumption: fun! I was no longer stressed out, no longer depressed—but filled with a sensation like the thrill of the discovery of something new, rare or exquisite.

“At Club Grez we embark on fantastic interior voyages,” sang Graham, popping his arms out in time with the tight angular rhythms of the techno. He shimmied over to Matt who was heavily perspiring over the mixing console. Grez loaded him up with three mL of G.

“Shout: let’s go!” Steve wailed.

“What?” I replied.

“Shout let’s...go!” he repeated.

“Let’s go!”

“Not like that! Hey G funk, teach Sebastian how to shout let’s go!” “Like this Sebastian...Let’s...” Grez’s pause was protracted, I leaned forward, Grez leaned further towards me.

“GO!” he shouted. The word pushed the air violently, the timbre of his voice whipping me with its sneering tension. It took me many attempts before I had satisfied the panel of experts: Evelyn and Dave remained on the couch preparing drugs paraphernalia whilst giving me marks out of ten. I was soon out of breath and I had to pause for a rest.

“I don’t think I can shout ‘let’s go’ anymore! What is this G? What brand is it?” I asked Dave.

“G? He thinks it’s G Grez!” laughed Dave with a deep resonance.

“That’s not just any old G you are drinking Sebastian,” Graham swooned as the techno slotted abrasive beats into my auditory canal. He glared at me passionately, as if possessed by a joyous, insatiable flame: “It’s Initial G!”



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