

# Harbour

An Anarchist Literary Journal

*a harbour is a place  
from which to venture out*



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Issue 2

It would be impossible to not comment on the backdrop to which this issue of *Harbour* is being published: over a year of genocide in Palestine that has now crossed the borders into Lebanon. To any who are paying attention, we've been subject to — or even sought out — an endless flood of horrifying videos and images. When not directly subject to it, we've listened to interviews or read texts about the politics that led to this crisis and the grim realities of those experiencing it. Some of us in the anarchist movement have traveled to Palestine and other parts of south-west Asia, and some are even from this region or have friends, family, or comrades living there. We're kept up at night wondering what will happen to our loved ones or those we don't know at all but hold sympathies for.

A war of annihilation seemingly without end, and it can seem frivolous to focus on the arts.

But then again, humans have always found joy amid calamity. Those in Palestine have streamed their daily lives, the games they play, the small things they create, the solidarity they can show each other. It's possible to smile when uncertain death is around the corner. Recently, one of the editors saw a video of paramedics singing together, some hanging on to the edge of their vehicle as they drove through the night. Double taps and the targeting of medical personnel are well-documented, yet they sang anyway.

Maybe you can't yourself find joy, and that's okay too. You don't have to, but it's not "wrong" to seek out joy, art, beauty just because things are dreadful, truly fucking awful outside.

We mention Palestine most directly because of the large Palestinian diaspora here in so-called Germany and the repression we as the broader Palestinian solidarity movement are facing, but let us not forget the other suffering and other struggles against domination in the other parts of the world — or even those more invisible but right here on our doorstep.

With that in mind, here's our second issue. There's a bit more to it than last time, and we hope to continue this trend of growth and development in the future.

We'll leave the final remark before we begin to Palestinian poet, writer, professor, and activist Refat Alareer, perhaps best known for his poem "If I must die," murdered by the IOF on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023:

*Gaza Writes Back: Short Stories from Young Writers in Gaza, Palestine* provides conclusive evidence that telling stories is an act of life, that telling stories is resistance, and that telling stories shapes our memories.

## Bios

**B**lue gray (they/them) is an anarchist, AuDHD poet, amateur gardener, Web 1.0 enthusiast, and multimedia artist currently trapped in so-called "Texas." Free them, and be rewarded most handsomely. Upcoming projects at [liberapay.com/bluejorts](http://liberapay.com/bluejorts).

**C**aleb Cloaca is a queer writer hailing from the prairies of so-called Canada. They have been featured in publications like X-Ray Magazine, Pink Disco, and Marrow. They are interested in writing in a way that feels like sticking your hand out of the car window.

**F**inch (they/them) is a trans-masc living off in the forest somewhere in Cascadia dabbling in polyamory and doing their best to be a complete faggot.

**J**ohanna Teske lives and works in the southwest of Germany. She is an active member of the grassroots democratic union FAU (Freie Arbeiter\*innen Union), works as a social worker and is a self-employed artist. She is happy to make contact with other anti-authoritarian-minded artists. [johannateske.com](http://johannateske.com)

**J**on O'Mercy (they/them) is an anarchist writer living in Berlin. When they're not writing stories, they're often found petting dogs and watching birds. Other times they organise things like prison letter writing evenings.

**J**uan Tramontina (er/ihm) wuchs auf verschiedenen Kontinenten auf und landete schließlich wieder in Deutschland. Frühe Schreibexperimente zerschellten zunächst am hereinbrechenden Leben. Heute verdingt er sich als Übersetzer. Und nebenher schreibt er auch. Er ist manchmal auf Mastodon unter [literatur.social/@JuanTramontina](https://social/@JuanTramontina) zu finden.

**J**uniper C. Rhodes (they/them) is an anarchist living somewhere on the European continent. They are ensnared by the melancholy of the world, and sometimes they try to cope with it using words.

**K**imera (he/him) is a southern European queer anarchist currently living in Berlin. He writes poetry and fiction and makes digital art and comics. He recently published the zine *In the Heart of the Beast — Overcoming the Problems of the Anarchist and Radical Leftist Scene and Striving towards Revolution*.

**M**oose is an anarchist and anti fascist artist based out of Sacramento California, United States. Their style of digital collage uses harsh contrast and evocative combinations of images to make political statements. Moose often volunteers their art for use in radical projects and to raise money for political prisoners. Much of their work features images of resistance and life in the face of destruction.

## Content Notices

*Bayshil-baruunii*: Sexual assault discussion, physical violence.

## Call for Submissions

To keep the stories, poems, and artworks flowing, we're already making our call for submissions for the 2025 spring edition. We're anarchists, and once again we hope the submissions embrace this ethos. Full details about the nature of the submissions and the guidelines can be found on our website. Submissions will be accepted from **March 1<sup>st</sup> until the 31<sup>st</sup>**.

<https://en.scrappycopydistro.info/submissions>

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To avoid spoilers or prematurely triggering readers, content notices are all on the final page of this journal instead of at the start of each work.



## Weberin

Johanna Teske

Eingesperrt, funktionieren müssen. Sinnloses Weitermanchen, Stumpfsinn. Beherrscht werden, ausgeliefert sein. Die Existenzberechtigung: Endlose Arbeit und Not für den Reichtum und das schöne Leben anderer. Gewalt und Zwang.

Isolation. Wie viel noch? Der Druck steigt, Unerträglichkeit. 5 vor 12!

Aus: *Johanna Teske: Russische Revolution 1021 – In Erinnerung an unsere begrabenen Träume*. Moers. 2021.



## the hand that feeds me

Kimera

# What you swore to destroy — a critique of parts of the radical leftist scene and certain house projects in Berlin

Kimera

You became what you swore to destroy  
Locked yourself up in your false securities  
Left everyone out  
To fight a battle you long gave up on

Defend your fortress with teeth and claw  
Your utopia has become our hell  
While we fight your battles and suffer your defeats

We are the orphans of your neglect  
We will never be good enough for you, will we?

You built this empire on salt and sand  
Your promises fake and empty  
You took our hope for a better world  
And spat on it  
Left us in a graveyard of potential

Now I understand when they say  
“I hope you choke on the vows you failed to deliver”

The bigger predator will swallow you up  
If you don't destroy yourself first  
And we will watch you burn  
Rise from the ashes  
And build a new world from the ruins  
You used to call home

# Eine Frage der Abwägung

Juan Tramontina

Das Befriedigendste ist für mich ein Mord — ein Tyrannenmord wohlgemerkt.

Doch es wäre überaus tragisch, wenn ich missverstanden würde.

Ich bin keine gewalttätige Person.

Gewalttätig? Nein.

Verärgert? Ja, sicher.

Verzweifelt? Wohl auch, ein wenig zumindest.

Aber gewalttätig? Nein, noch nicht jedenfalls.

**D**as war er, der Einstieg in mein Manifest.

*Was hast du vor? Ich beobachte dich im Spiegel. Dein Gesicht verdunkelt sich kurz, Zweifel plagen dich. Ja, sicher, du möchtest das Richtige tun. Du möchtest edel sein und couragiert. Wie damals, als du im Zug die Notbremse gezogen hast, um einen rassistischen Übergriff zu verhindern. Oder passierte das gar nicht wirklich? War es nicht eher so, dass du lauter schlagfertige Sprüche und praktische Interventionsideen bereit hattest — Tage nach dem Ereignis? Im Moment selbst hatte sich niemand gerührt, auch du nicht. Klar, du würdest gerne anders handeln. Aber bist du dazu auch bereit?*

Am 23. Juli 1892 betritt der Schriftsetzer Alexander Berkman das Chronicle-Telegraph-Gebäude in Pittsburgh, gekleidet in einem brandneuen schwarzen Anzug. Er begibt sich zum Büro des Stahlmagnaten Henry Clay Frick, der gerade erst von einem Mittagessen im elitären Duquesne Club zurückgekehrt ist. Berkman stürmt in das Büro und schießt zwei Mal auf Frick, den er für den Tod von zehn Arbeitern bei einer Auseinandersetzung mit angeheuertem Streikbrechern verantwortlich macht, doch der Industrielle überlebt.

Ich hatte einen Plan, d. h. Ideen, die sich noch zusammenfügen mussten. Und einige Fragen, die ich noch zu klären hatte. Am Anfang stand die Recherche, der vermutlich einfachste Part des Plots. Meine Zielperson: Ein Mann, der regelmäßig im Rampenlicht stand. Es sollte nicht allzu schwer sein, an die erforderlichen Informationen zu kommen. Wohn- und

insbesondere der Arbeitsort — das Parlament — waren direkt der Presse zu entnehmen. Als ersten Schritt trat ich seiner Partei bei und ließ mich auf diverse Newsletter setzen.

Waren es nicht Harmodios und Aristogeiton, die mit dem ersten dokumentierten Tyrannenmord die Ära der Demokratie in Athen einleiteten? Kann jemand ernsthaft das Recht auf Widerstand gegen ungerechte Herrschaft in Frage stellen? Selbst Thomas von Aquin argumentiert für den Tyrannenmord, solange er unausweichlich ist und nicht noch mehr Leid verursacht. Wie anders sollte gegen ein diktatorisches Regime vorgegangen werden, das selbst eine friedfertige Opposition in Folterkeller sperrt? Braucht es wirklich weitere Argumente, wenn bereits die Ebene unbeschreiblicher Gräueltaten erreicht ist?

*Mal angenommen, du könntest in der Zeit zurückreisen und Hitler direkt nach seiner Geburt töten — würdest du es tun? Am Spiel deiner Augenbrauen erkenne ich, dass du es ernsthaft in Erwägung ziehen würdest. Was jedoch, wenn es nicht Hitler ist? Wenn es nur jemand ist, der potenziell Schlimmes herbeiführen könnte — du es aber nicht mit Bestimmtheit sagen kannst?*

*Wir zögern. Unsere Gedanken kehren zu jenem Tag im Herbst 2016 zurück. Drei Freund\*innen hatten sich vor Kurzem einen kleinen Hof gekauft, auf Usedom. Selbstverständlich brauchten sie Hilfe beim Renovieren. Selbstverständlich halfen wir, just an dem Wochenende, an dem die Landtagswahlen anstanden.*

*Ihr Dorf war eines von vielen, wo AfD und NPD auf mehr als 50 Prozent der Stimmen kamen. An jenem Abend saßen wir gemeinsam am Tapeziertisch, die Luft geschwängert vom Duft von DIY-Kleister und ökologisch verträglicher Farbe. Unsere Freund\*innen — so bleich wie die frisch gestrichene Wand. In uns jedoch entbrannte ein Feuer, das nicht mehr zu löschen war.*

Am 24. Juni 1894 wartet der italienische Bäcker Sante Gerónimo Caserio auf das Ende einer Rede des französischen Staatspräsidenten Carnot in Lyon. Der Präsident verlässt den Ort in einer Kutsche und passiert die Stelle, wo Caserio sich

eingerrichtet hat. Dieser schwingt sich auf den Wagen, lehnt sich durchs Fenster und sticht auf den Politiker ein, der kurz darauf stirbt. Caserio, der als Bäcker Arbeitslose vor dem Arbeitsamt kostenlos mit Brot versorgte, prangert mit seiner Tat die Gefängnisse an, die von den Regierungen und der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft aufrechterhalten werden.

Dann musste ich mich dem „Artefakt“ widmen. Es heißt immer, dass es kinderleicht sei, gäbe es im Internet doch entsprechende Anleitungen. Das stimmt: An detaillierten Beschreibungen mangelte es wahrlich nicht. Manche Ingredienzen waren allerdings sehr ungewöhnlich oder schwer zu finden. Am Ende fand ich alle in Spezialläden, die ich — wie sollte es in diesen Zeiten anders sein — verummumt betrat.

Soweit, so gut. Was jetzt folgte, war weniger einfach. Zwar halfen mir Newsletter und Internetrecherchen dabei, Auftrittsorte zu identifizieren, an einem direkten Zugang mangelte es mir allerdings. Ich nahm an vereinzelten Veranstaltungen teil, um ein Gefühl für die Situation zu entwickeln. Die Sicherheitsmaßnahmen waren enorm. Schwer vorstellbar, dass ich ohne zusätzliche Hilfe nahe genug hätte herankommen können.

Ich bin keine besonders mutige Person, ich bin nur verzweifelt — verzweifelt über den Zustand der Welt. Können wir wirklich erneut Zustände wie vor 1945 zulassen? Mit den aktuellen Ungerechtigkeiten sollten wir uns ebenso wenig abfinden. Tote im Mittelmeer, Anschläge auf Synagogen, sich ausweitende Netzwerke rechter Polizist\*innen und Militärs mit Todeslisten, die alltäglichen abfälligen Sprüche gegen Muslime auf der Straße. Sicher, Ursachen gibt es viele. Ein treibender Faktor ist jedoch eine gewisse Vogelschiss-Partei mitsamt ihres beflügelten Vordenkers „Bernad“ Höcke. Vordenker? Doch eher Rückwärtsdenker. Die Frage lautet daher: Wie viel Raum können, dürfen wir ihnen geben?

Warum handeln wir, wie wir es tun? Was ist unser Beweggrund? Im Spiegel sehen wir uns lächeln. Nicht übermäßig überzeugend allerdings, eine Leere stellt sich ein. Gewiss, wir lehnen Menschenfeindlichkeit ab. Aber ist das tatsächlich der Grund? Lass uns gemeinsam tiefer eintauchen in unser Herz, unsere Sinne, unsere Erinnerung. Die Vergangenheit — sie birgt so manche Erklärung. Was war der entscheidende Moment? Unsere Gedanken drohen abzuschweifen, aber das sollten wir nicht zulassen. Konzentrieren wir uns auf jenen Morgen, auch wenn es schmerzt.

Es war ein Wochenende der Trauer gewesen. Im Garten, unter dem großen Kastanienbaum, standen noch die Überreste der festlichen Gesellschaft vom Vorabend. Ans Aufräumen war bislang nicht zu denken gewesen. Die Trauerfeier war gut besucht gewesen. Damals, in den 60ern, hatte es keine Beschränkungen gegeben, was die Anzahl möglicher Gäste anging. Es waren sicher an die 80 Personen, die von Opa Abschied nehmen wollten. Keiner von uns hatte einen beliebteren Menschen gekannt. Er verstand es, unterschiedlichste Personen mit einem kecken Spruch sofort in eine bessere Stimmung zu versetzen. Wir selbst waren am Boden zerstört.

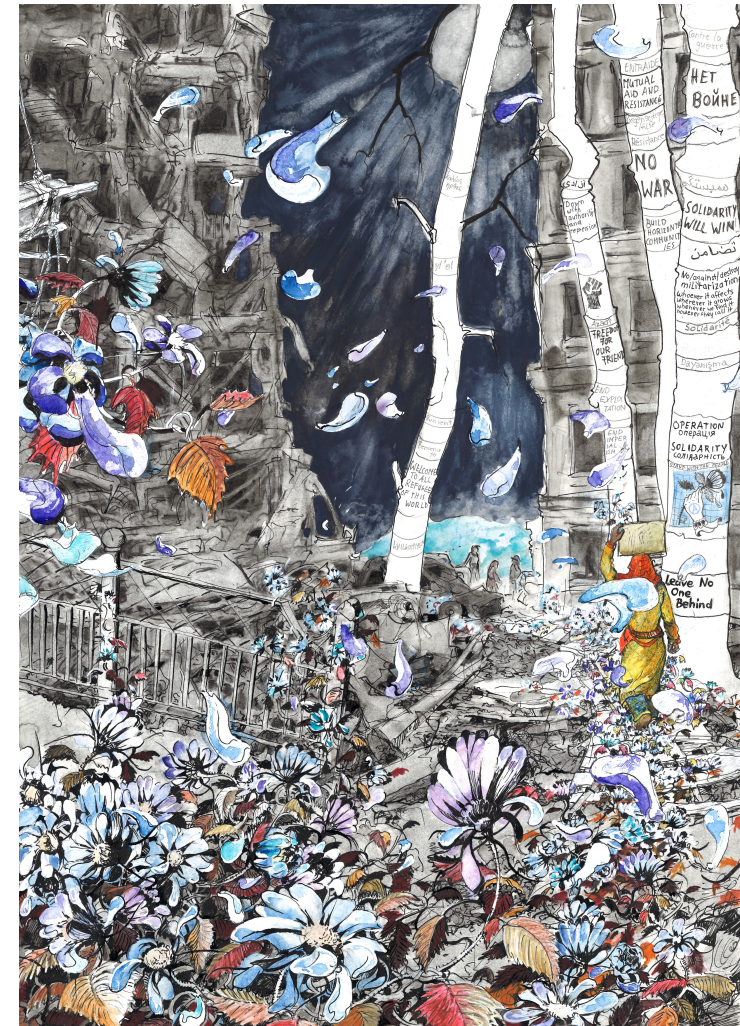
Er, der sich in jungen Jahren als Widerstandskämpfer den Nazis entgegengestellt hatte und zum Ende des Kriegs hin für ein Jahrzehnt in die USA emigriert war, hatte seinen Lebensabend bei uns verbracht. In unserem „Paradies“, wie er es immer nannte, war eine besondere Bindung zwischen uns entstanden. Unser aller Held war friedlich entschlafen. Kein Krebs, kein Alzheimer, kein Schlaganfall. Ein Glücksfall, und für uns eine große Beruhigung.

Wir gingen ins Obergeschoss, wo Opas alte Sachen noch immer in seiner Kammer standen. Wir wollten an seinen Dingen festhalten, an den schönen Erinnerungen. Hier der silberne Kerzenständer, den er bis zuletzt zum Einschlafen genutzt hatte. Ging die Kerze aus, war es an der Zeit, die Augen zu schließen. Dort die selbst gefertigte Kommode, bei der wir ihm zur Hand gegangen waren, als er bei uns eingezogen war. Und ganz hinten schließlich die Truhe, die immer unter seinem Bett gestanden hatte. Es war ein schnörkelloses Exemplar, das immer abgeschlossen gewesen war. Beim Aufräumen — nach seinem Tod — waren wir über den Schlüssel gestolpert. Und jetzt drängte uns die Neugier, endlich hineinzuschauen. Was gab es Schöneres, als ganz neue Erinnerungen an eine geliebte Person zu bilden, nach ihrem Tod? Wir zogen die Truhe hervor und öffneten sie. Das Totenkopfabzeichen hatten wir nicht erwartet.

Verwirrung, ein spitzer Schmerz unter dem Brustkorb — wie von einem Dolch —, die Nachmittage an der Schaukel, die plötzlich vorbeirauschen, aufziehende dunkle Wolken, Übelkeit, Scham. Migration, die zur Flucht wird. Zähneknirschende Wut, die Erinnerungen zermalmt.

Es ist keine Schande zuzugeben, dass mein Großvater bei der Waffen-SS war. Eine Schande wäre es, weiter darüber zu schweigen. Das Massaker von Le Paradis war gerade erst wieder in der Presse.

Im Juli 1900 kehrt der Weber Gaetano Bresci aus den USA nach Italien zurück. Bresci, der in den USA die Herausgabe einer Zeitung unterstützte, hatte zur Finanzierung der Reise die Mitherausgeber\*innen zur Rückgabe seines Darlehens von 150 Dollar gedrängt. Als der italienische König Umberto I. die Stadt Monza in der Lombardei besuchte, schießt Bresci



## Flowers of Solidarity

Johanna Teske

Dem Bild zugrunde liegt eine zerstörte Stadt. Straßen, Geländer, Gebäude. Als Vorlagen dienten mir diverse Fotos der aktuellen Berichterstattung aus den Kriegsgebieten der Ukraine und dem Jemen. Das rechte Gebäude ist noch bewohnbar, auf den Trümmern verlaufen Wege aus provi-

sonisch übereinandergelegten Platten. Der Himmel ist verdunkelt, wahrscheinlich ist es gerade Nacht. Ein Himmelsgestirn beleuchtet verhalten die Szenerie.

the person this Fox is. This Fox might not have *actually* done it, but they would, or they even *will* in the future.”

“Fuck you and your pre-crime,” Fox said. “I can’t believe you’re all taking the Karas sides.”

“It’s not pre-crime,” Ricky 2 said. “It’s who you chose to be over your whole life leading up to this. You could have done differently.”

“So what are we doing about this whole mess?” Simone asked.

“This,” said Moss lifting a stone over their head and bringing it down on Fox’s skull.

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No one moved nor said anything as Fox made wet gasping noises and twitched on the ground. Moss was shaking from the adrenaline, from the irreversible choice they’d made.

“Holy shit, Moss,” Simone said. “I didn’t know you had it in you.”

They laughed, nervously, on the edge of tears. “Me neither, but I guess you were pretty convincing.”

They turned to the Karas. “Not sure what you two wanted, but I had to.”

“No, babe—”

“—not a problem—”

“—did the right thing.”

The two of them spoke together, words tumbling over each other.

“I don’t mean to be a bummer,” Simone said. “But not we have a body to deal with, supplies to get into the tree, and an infinite number of versions of Fox-the-rapist running around in the many worlds.”

Simone’s practicality sobered them up and their faces darkened. There was work to be done, and cracking Fox’s skull open was going to create problems for not just them but the whole occupation.

“The body has to go first,” Moss started. “We need to carry it far away, far from where people who are coming to evict or support us would travel. And once we go up to the platform, we leave Fox’s harness at the base as if he left it there. He just wandered off and got eaten by wolves.”

The bloodied Kara spoke next. “No, first we need to warn the other worlds. My sisters, our brothers and siblings, need to know the danger their Foxes pose. Ricky? Rickeys? How dangerous is that?”

Both shrugged, and their Ricky answered. “We don’t know if this portal closes or how to get back where we came for certain. But maybe that’s okay, as long as we get back to any world without one of our copies. We’re kinda interchangeable.”

“But nothing wrong with warning others?” Simone asked.

“Not that I can imagine, but you’re kinda asking me about the effects of magic having just discovered it, so grains of salt ’n all.”

“So what if three of us go visit other worlds and explain what happens, and then tell them to go visit three other worlds. Then it would ripple outwards, right?”

The Rickys shrugged again. “Probably” they said together.

The other Ricky spoke alone. “I’ll go to my world, Kara 2 can go back to hers, and then one of us goes off and tells one more. That gets us the three. Moss, you want to go?”

“No,” they said. “I need to stay. I feel like... I have to be one of the ones who buries him.”

“I don’t want to go back to my world,” Kara’s other version said. “I can’t face another Fox, not after what happened.” She turned to Kara. “Could I... Could I stay here? Could you go for me?”

Kara leaned in a hugged the other version of herself. “Of course, honey. Of course.”

Simone spoke up. “I’ll go warn the others too.”

The rest of the group nodded. Ricky might be the resident philosopher of the group, but she was more than capable of repeating what he’d said. Plus, two Simones together ain’t nothing to trifle with. The other Ricky and their Kara straightened themselves out and got ready to leave.

The group said goodbyes. It was strange watching the Karas trade places as if they were the same, but in nearly every single way they were save for the last few hours of strange experiences. The other Ricky walked off, and a few minutes later Kara followed. When the visitors had gone, the rest started ascending the rope into Bayshil-baruunii. Simone hooked the first batch of packs onto the line so they’d have something to work with while she set out on her mission.

The first light of dawn tinted the sky the deepest shade of blue. A new day was coming, and who knew what would happen to the portal when it did. She had to hurry.

In the henge, the mossy stone circle, Simone watched the sky shimmer ever so slightly. Many worlds came together here, somehow. Spirits, the quantum, a glitch in the simulation. Perhaps it was unknowable how or why.

From across the way, another version of herself stepped into the grove, and Simone raised a hand in greeting.

“What’s a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?”

drei Mal auf den Monarchen und verwundet ihn tödlich. Bre-sci macht ihn für ein Massaker in Mailand verantwortlich, wo zwei Jahre zuvor mehr als 80 unbewaffnete Demonstrant\*innen vom Militär erschossen worden sind.

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Ich wälzte verschiedene Optionen. Ein Artikel in der Süddeutschen, bei dem es um die Verlagerung rechter Umtriebe auf den russischen Messenger-Dienst telegram ging, brachte mich schließlich auf eine Idee. Mit telegram kannte ich mich aus. Jetzt, mitten in der Corona-Zeit, schossen solche Chat-Gruppen wie Pilze aus dem Boden. Also brachte ich selbst ein paar davon auf den Weg, als Administrator. Als Administrator, der hart durchgriff gegen jede vermeintliche Provokation, gegen jedes Abweichen von der aktuell vertretenen Linie.

Ich tauschte Links aus und erhielt im Gegenzug Einladungen zu anderen Gruppen. Nach nur wenigen Wochen war meine Chance gekommen. Eine Person, die mich aus „meinen“ Gruppen kannte, empfahl mich als Admin für die Gruppe „Patrioten des Abendlandes“. Danach ging alles wie von Zauberhand.

Ich bekam Zugang zu Gruppen mit grandiosen Namen, wie „Sturm auf die Freiheit“, „Pommes — Schwarz, Weiß, Rot“, „AsozialeUndEntarteteVomLebenBefreien“ oder — meine Lieblingsgruppe — „Corona-Free-Doom-Fighters“. Bei so viel Freiheitsliebe drängten sich mir weitere Ergänzungen der bekannten Unterscheidung zwischen ‚Freiheit von‘ und ‚Freiheit zu‘ förmlich auf: nämlich ‚Freiheit für‘ und ‚Freiheit gegen‘.

Bei manchen telegram-Gruppen wurde anfänglich gefordert, dass wir uns offline treffen, bevor mir Admin-Aufgaben übertragen werden. Da ich jedoch „aktuell in Russland weil“, kam diese Option für mich „leider nicht in Frage“. Die Beteiligten waren umso beeindruckter davon, dass ich sogar dem Zugriff deutscher „Deep State“-Behörden entzogen war. „Putin“ — ein einziges Wort, und alles war gesagt.

Welch Ironie des Schicksals, dass es ausgerechnet ein Corona-Fall war, der mich zum Ersatz-Admin eines telegram-Kanals der Thüringer AfD machte — mit Zugang zu entsprechend vertraulichen Informationen.

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Die Alternative für Deutschland, selbst ernannte Hohepriesterin von ‚Volkes Stimme‘, bezieht einen wichtigen Teil ihrer Wirkmacht aus dem Brechen vorgeblicher Tabus und dem Überschreiten von Grenzen — des guten Geschmacks, aber leider auch des sozialen und politischen Anstands. Kurzum: Mit ihrem schulmeisterlichen Historienschreiber gelingt es der Partei, ein völkisches

Narrativ im Zentrum bestimmter, von Angst und Missgunst getriebener Teile der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft zu etablieren, wie es den weniger stark getarnten Nazis von NPD oder DVU nie vergönnt war. Und genau da möchte ich ansetzen. Denn ohne Praxis ist alle Theorie umsonst.

Ich speicherte das Manifest ab und programmierte eine Massenmail für den Tag X.

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*Tu ich wirklich das Richtige? Stirnfalten bestimmen meinen Gesichtsausdruck. Meine Idee hat sich im Laufe der Vorbereitung durchaus verändert. Klar ist: Meine Tat soll Ansporn sein für mehr Widerstand. Meine Tat soll aber auch dazu führen, dass Demagogie im Sinne Höckes schwieriger wird. Wird mein Vorhaben diesen Kriterien gerecht? Ich hoffe es.*

*Dennoch kann ich nicht umhin, mir immer und immer wieder dieselben Fragen zu stellen: Was wird die Welt von mir denken, was meine engsten Freund\*innen? Werden sie mich hochleben lassen oder für wahnsinnig erklären?*

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Am 5. August 1939 zieht der Kunstschreiner Johann Georg Elser nach München und mietet eine Werkstatt an. Er kundschaftet den Bürgerbräukeller aus und lässt sich dort 30 Nächte lang vom Personal unbemerkt in einer Besenkammer einschließen. Nacht für Nacht bearbeitet er eine Säule im Gasthaus, die er aushöhlt und in der er eine Zeitbombe unterbringt. Am 8. November versammelt Adolf Hitler wie jedes Jahr einen Großteil seiner Führungsspitze im Bürgerbräukeller, um den Jahrestag des gescheiterten Putsches von 1923 zu begehen. Aufgrund schlechten Wetters für die Rückreise nach Berlin verkürzt Hitler seine Rede spontan und verlässt mit seinem Gefolge das Gasthaus 13 Minuten vor der Explosion. Elser, der mit seiner Tat die Ausweitung des Krieges verhindern wollte, gelingt es nicht, Hitler zu töten.

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Am Vortag der Veranstaltung machte ich mich ans Konfektionieren des Artefakts. Was auf der Anleitung aus dem Netz vergleichsweise einfach ausgesehen hatte, bedurfte dreier Anläufe, um sicherzustellen, dass alles perfekt saß.

Der Tag, auf den ich so lange gewartet hatte, war schließlich da. Ich hatte es in die Halle geschafft. Masken trug hier niemand, ich auch nicht. Die brauchte es aber auch nicht. Als Teil des Caterings hatte ich freien Zugang zu den Tischen, die direkt vor der Bühne standen. Nach zahlreichen anderen Personen, als Höhepunkt des Abends, war schließlich Höckes Rede dran, live auf diversen YouTube-Kanälen gestreamt. Wie er da stand, nonchalant seine Hasstiraden herunterspulend, merkte ich, wie es in meinen Venen brannte.

Ich nahm den Impuls auf und schritt zwischen den Stuhlreihen voran. Der Security-Typ, der meinen Zugang zur Bühne blockierte, bemerkte mich zu spät. Ein kurzer, explosiver Remppler verschaffte mir den nötigen Platz. Schon stand ich vor Höcke, der mich entgeistert anstarrte. Meine Ladung traf ihn mitten ins Gesicht.

Als ich direkt im Anschluss an die Tat von den Beinen gerissen wurde, spürte ich im Flug, wie mir einzelne Tränen der Freude die Wange benetzten. Kurz vor dem unsanften Aufprall auf dem Parkett gelang es mir noch, den Zeigefinger an die Lippen zu führen. Den Geschmack hatte ich gut getroffen. Was die Schichten anging, so hatte ich ernsthaft abwägen müssen, mich aber schließlich — der Farben wegen — für Schoko mit Schlumpf-Guss entschieden. Eine passende Wahl, dachte ich mir, als ich ein letztes Mal in Höckes verschmiertes Gesicht blickte.

Mein „Attentat“, mit dem ich Höcke — zumindest eine Zeit lang — mundtot machen und seines Aktionsraumes berauben wollte, war geglückt. Das war Befriedigung genug.

Kara embraced her twin and held her without saying anything. When her twin’s breathing slowed, Kara steered her away from the group so they could have a little more privacy. They walked around the clearing, keeping within eyeshot of the group. When supporting other survivors, there was always treading carefully around how many questions she could ask, what would further traumatize them. And as a survivor herself, she also knew what her reactions had been, so she had a very good idea of the perfect phrasing when talking to her twin.

“I know you might not want to talk about it, but I feel like we need to be worried about Fox. Can you give us even a little—”

“And you’re me, so I know what you’re doing, and you mean no harm, so just speak directly.”

It was almost shocking, the directness. It wasn’t something she could have imagined herself saying, and yet as soon as the words were out, she knew she’d have said the same. She could feel the bond she and her twin shared. But before she could answer, her twin kept going.

“Simone came back from the forest convinced she’d found The Seam, but of course she didn’t call it that. Said she’d found an infinite kaleidoscope of other worlds. Ricky wanted to logic his way through everything, you know how he is, and I tried to tell everyone about its spiritual importance, that if something astral was really there, then we wouldn’t even be able to conceive of it. Fox didn’t want me to go, insisted that we shouldn’t meddle, but I did.”

She paused to collect herself, radiating hurt and rage.

“I found The Seam, crossed into it, and Fox was already there. Not my Fox — couldn’t have been — but another. I asked if he came from another world, and he got a mad look in his eye. Came straight at me, attacked me, said he’d finally get what he’d always wanted and face no consequences, but I managed to get away.”

Kara’s eyes welled up. She felt betrayed. Fox had always been so aggressive about any perceived sleight, always was the first to up and denounce anyone accused of wrongdoing, and yet this discovery fit like a puzzle piece that made Fox’s entire personality make sense, finally. Maybe he’d done this before, or maybe he’d had such fear of getting caught he’d never tried.

“And you want to—”

Her twin nodded.

She felt like she was supposed to know the answer, what the nod meant, but she wasn’t sure. She wasn’t the version of herself that was betrayed. She couldn’t be sure how she’d react now, and it felt wrong to ask for clarification. Her twin had conviction, and she wanted to support her. Side-by-side, they walked back to the group.

Ricky watched as Kara 2 leveled her finger at Fox and said, her voice cracking with emotion, “Fox tried to rape me.”

“This is bullshit!” he said. “I’ve been here the whole time! Plus, you know Kara’s always been out to get me, so other Kara would *obviously* take her side. Now we have all this spirit shit going on, and she’s just using it as an excuse too—”

Simone walked over and slugged him in the gut, and when he collapsed, she spit on him. “I fuckin’ knew it.”

Moss recoiled, but it wasn’t so clear if it was from the accusation or the sudden violent reaction. Fox gasped for air.

“But I didn’t... do anything,” he said.

“You didn’t, but your souls are intertwined. Part of you did.”

Moss, still visibly shocked, replied, “I don’t think that’s how souls work.”

Ricky looked at Ricky 2 who motioned for him to speak. “Maybe you’re right, but he’s still a liability in some sense. Both of us and Ricky 3 all seem to think that whatever split in the universe is happening, it only happened when we arrived here. Maybe if we travel through the portal enough times or different portals, we’ll get universes that are more different, bigger changes happening further back in time, but that doesn’t seem to be the case here. Let’s check that hypothesis. Kara 2, did you drop your water bottle from your pack when tying your shoe right after a creek?”

She nodded.

“And did Moss get a peanut in their nose when Simone tossed one for them in that rocky clearing when it was still light out?”

She nodded again.

“And lastly, what did your Ricky say when you first arrived at Bayshil–baruunii?”

“Something about flying on top of the world?”

“The Déjacque quote: ‘I alight upon the wind, atop the world, and breathe change,’ no?”

“Yeah, something like that.”

“Right, so whoever our doubles are out in the different worlds, they were all the same versions of us that started this journey. Simone, you’ve read the most on this, go the deepest analysis ’n all, so I’m about to steal your thunder when I say it—”

Simone waved him on

“—but rapists don’t just come out of nowhere. There’s not some single moment that makes them horrible. It’s a life-long set of experiences to get there.”

Ricky saw the rage in Simone’s face turning to coldness and passed the metaphoric speaking stick to her.

“So the person that the other Fox is,” she started, “namely the one who was capable of raping a friend as soon as it seemed he wouldn’t face consequences, is the same as



multiple versions of themselves, the possibilities for insurrectionary mischief were endless. *But first thing I'm doing if I find another Simone is sucking her dick.* A lifelong fantasy would finally be manifested.

"Folx," she said. "I think I know what we should do. We need to get all the versions of us to one world and then show up with a small army and just storm the factories of Sebestyen Metals and Northern Lumber and Woodworks. They're the ones with the contracts, and with 1,000 of us we could easily destroy everything. Forest saved."

The Rickys were shaking their heads at her before she'd even finished.

"No, hear me out. So maybe not 1,000, but a few versions of us. One set gets jobs and keeps a clean record with solid alibis, and the others go off and do the deeds. We bankroll them as they squat one of the old factories outside Blackburn."

"But if we're all copies, we all have the same wants," Moss said. "I wouldn't want to work a full-time job so that another copy of myself gets to have the fun. Or maybe Fox would want the safety of the alibi version — no offense — without the risk of getting arrested or killed when burning something down, so then none of his copies would want to."

"Wait, Ricky. Rickys. Which world is the real one? How do we know it's this one?"

Their Ricky answered "They're all equally real, just this one feels the most real to us because we're from it. Ricky 2 over here might as well be Ricky 1 and me Ricky 2."

"So if we all go off to other worlds, we'd be leaving our friends behind."

"Basically."

"And could we come back?"

"I don't know."

Simone could feel where the conversation was headed and intervened.

"We knew coming here we could get arrested or disappeared or killed, so it's no different if we disappear into another world instead of some secret prison."

"I don't think it's right to callously deny ourselves to others so quickly," Fox said.

"Maybe a better argument," the other Ricky said scratching at the stubble on his chin, "Is that we can't abandon all these worlds to futures where we don't exist to support them. 'No one left behind' includes these worlds, if of course that's how all this works."

"Okay, so we don't abandon them," Simone said as she threw up her hands in exasperation, "We just go from one to the next taking down the factories like a roving gang of time-bandits or something."

Their Ricky answered, "But there's infinite of them, and we don't know if this portal—"

"Seam," Kara corrected.

"—will stay open or if we can ever get back to our own worlds."

"But you did," Moss said. "Why can't we do it again?"

"I'm not even sure that's true, that I 'came back.' Maybe this is just one that's close enough that I can't tell the difference." Ricky started pacing around and making inscrutable gesticulations. "Maybe I got lucky and arrived at this 'empty' one, but what if I couldn't find a world where I wasn't already present. Dead to everyone in my home world, just an unneeded double in my new one."

Simone acquiesced. "Fine, fine. We all try to go back home then."

"Go back home?" Kara said, accusingly. "How are we going to live with the knowledge that we're not unique? That our life-sparks are just one of so many that are exactly the same?"

"I don't know about you," Simone said. "But I feel like we have bigger problems than that."

"Than the diluting of our true essence? I can hardly see a bigger problem."

It was that moment that a bloody Kara came crashing out of the bushes and skidded to a halt in front of the group.

—

For all the fear of their twins, of fractured souls, Kara felt nothing but love and empathy for her own twin when she, bleeding with tattered clothes, nearly tripped and collapsed in front of the group. Before fully coming to a halt, she saw Fox and pointed at him. She opened her mouth but was unable to speak and backed away.

Simone caught on immediately. "Fox, what the fuck did you do?"

"That's a harsh accusation," Fox said, his face losing color. "You know I didn't do anything; I was here the whole time."

Her twin was standing apart from the group looking afraid. Kara knew what her twin was feeling, fear not just of what had happened but what might happen next. She'd felt it before when trying to face her abusers her too. She went to her twin, sister Kara, and draped her thin hoodie over the twin's shoulders. Whatever happened, whatever her twin feared, surely her twin would see her with a reciprocal bond, and there would be trust.

Moss went to soothe Simone's fury, and the Rickys stood back and watched. Fox kept blurting out protestations as if he was still being actively accused, and while no one was saying anything, the collective suspicion was palpable.

"Kara, my sister, what happened?" she asked.

Tears or rage had welled in her twin's eyes but they refused to fall. Her twin pulled Kara in close. "Fox tried to rape me," she whispered.

# Feeling Some Type of Way (about COVID)

blue gray

I'm screaming inside  
My mask muffling me  
The lady standing nearby  
Asks what's wrong with me  
Her face too close (I can't breathe)

Is it just me?  
No, but it might as well be  
No doors open (too hot)  
No filtration (too high a cost)  
No love and understanding (they think I'm pandering)

The masses await execution  
The safety net has no inclusion  
Fear is an illusion  
Despair is not a solution  
But, it sits gamely on the nightstand by my bed

I haven't gotten up today  
Maybe I won't the next  
I feel like I need the practice  
I have my phone charging and some chapstick  
Do my needs have to be so drastic?

I talk too much (to myself)  
Throat aching for my effort (check my temperature)  
Deep breath in (I must be sure)  
Would be a shame to come so far  
And lose it all with the world

I remember a girl, for lack of a better word,  
Bubbles in her hair  
Humidity is bad for curls  
The air stuffed with transparent pearls  
What will I do if it feels like that all the time?

I like to make food  
Little tufts of herbs from the garden  
I love when it smells so good in the kitchen  
What will I do?  
What do I stand to lose? (everything)

What do I have to do to prove to you that I am worth more than  
what I learned in school, on the building-of-tools and  
entertaining-the-masses?  
Why stop there when we could end ALL the classes?  
I'm not puffed-up just because I wear glasses.  
I'm tired of being the *only* one who asks:

WHY AREN'T YOU WEARING A MASK?

# Alone, In the Cold

blue gray

We are all a little chili  
In the same pepper-pot soup  
My tongue will burn for hours  
Yet the ice-cold is something I can't seem to shake loose  
It tingles my toes as much as I fiddle with the piercing in my nose

My impatience grows  
When I see an other's work, I say  
"I wish I had one of those"  
I'm the same child who would wear other kids' clothes  
It greatly shamed my mother who didn't want to impose  
Not because she's shy or demure or whatever words I compose  
But, she hates to owe anyone anything  
To each their own, I suppose  
"You do you," in colloquial

I, for one, am kinda in love with debt  
Not the kind that takes your home away and leaves you stranded  
But, the kind(ness) that ties you to people who you want to love you  
Gives you a reason to show up, comically-timed, for dinner  
Carrying a big pot o' soup that'll fill everyone's cup  
Because, maybe, if they see you enough  
Maybe, they'll see what you're really made of

Not the tall tales you and your shame-throwing family made up  
Just you, the wizard behind the projection  
You, the child always awaiting rejection  
Not a thoughtless care bear, filled only with fluff  
Though, I am very good at hugs.  
Already at oldest change

Ricky slid down the line and planted his feet on the branch. Fox reached out to pull him in and once settled, he asked what was going on.

"Moss saw a spirit," Kara said.

"No, a copy," Moss said.

"Or just a hallucination," Fox said.

They all started speaking at once until after bellowing a single "Oi!" Ricky got their attention.

"Y'all trust me, right? That I'm the one least likely to make any fantastical claim, yeah?"

The rest nodded and mumbled yeses.

"Alright, then I'm gonna go look at whatever's down there, and then I'll come back up and let you know what I saw."

"Oh look," Fox started. "A man is taking control yet again."

"I'm just letting you know what I'm doing." He said as he looped the line to the forest floor around his descender. "Come if you want, or don't."

And then he pushed off.

*Fucking Ricky*, Fox thought, *always trying to be the hero.*

The minutes ticked by. Fox apologized to Moss for insinuating they'd been smoking. Kara tried to soften her claim that it was spirits into something that wouldn't seem as unsettling given their remote location. Simone brooded quietly.

Almost half an hour later, Ricky shouted up from the forest floor.

"Y'all are definitely all going to want to come down to see this!"

---

As they came down, one by one, they each asked Ricky about what he'd seen, and with each he said the same thing: "I'll tell you once everyone's down." When the four of them were assembled in front of him, he started the spiel he'd been rehearsing, the careful phrasing.

"First, there's no immediate danger, not so far as I can tell. Second, there's definitely something *very weird* going on here, and I'm not claiming to understand it, but if we are going to understand it even a little, this is the only way to do it."

He waited for some sort of reaction, and when none came, he continued.

"Now, please don't freak out. And please trust me that whatever's going on isn't a trick and isn't dangerous."

Ricky turned and shouted into the forest, "Come on out!"

From behind a tree stepped an exact copy of himself save for the missing climbing harness.

"Say hello to Ricky 2."

Kara yelped, Fox gasped, Simone snorted, and Moss said, "I fucking told you!"

"Yeah," said Ricky. "Pretty fucking weird."

"Hi y'all," Ricky 2 said.

Everyone started to speak, and the Rickys held their hands up, palms out and both started to speak. The uncanniness of their similar gestures silenced the group more than the gestures themselves, and Ricky 2 waved for Ricky to speak. Ricky turned to Ricky 2 and said, "Tell them what you told me."

"Right, so I was midway up Bayshil–baruunii, when—"

"No, you were up the top with Fox," Kara started.

"Wait," Ricky said. "Just let him speak."

"I was midway up when Moss came back saying that they'd gotten lost and found someone, but when the voice that called out to them was their own, they freaked out and hid. They got spotted by their double, then ran back to us, we came down and discussed what had happened. It was our usual chaotic conversation, and Simone volunteered me to go look since I'm— We're the logical ones. I went toward the overgrown henge thing and found my double there on a similar hunt."

"How'd you both know to go there? Moss didn't tell our Ricky where to go," Simone said.

"Nor my Moss," said Ricky 2. "I just had a feeling to go that way, like something was pulling me."

Ricky nodded and held up twinkle fingers in assent.

"And do you two have a... theory?" Fox asked.

Ricky 2 extended an open palm to Ricky as he nearly did the same.

"No. We can't explain how or why, but we do know that there's more than two of us out in the forest because we did a little exploring and found several other copies of Bayshil–baruunii, and even talked to a Ricky 3. Best we can tell is that the timelines diverged when we arrived at Bayshil–baruunii, but not before. Our doubles didn't all do the same things after, however. Different doubles went up to the different levels, but the hike up and everything else seems the same."

Soft tears started to run down Kara's face, and Simone put an arm around her. "What's up, sweetie? What's wrong?"

"Our souls are fractured."

Ricky looked at his double, and the two of them kept their mouths shut. Moss came in for the save. "Oh Kara, they're not fractured. They've multiplied. They've grown."

---

Simone listened to Kara and the Rickys try to explain what was going on. Kara pulled from the Hu'apti tradition, and the Rickys spoke of the infinite repetition of everything in infinite worlds and convergent and divergent timelines. Simone cared less about why mostly because no one here really could explain it and was only throwing around wild-ass guesses. She cared about how it could be used. Multiple worlds with

“Moss!” Simone yelled without warning. Already on edge, quite literally, Kara jolted. She opened her mouth to chastise Simone when the sound of thudding footsteps and a body crashing through brush interrupted her. She tried to fix her eyes on the sources, and when she did faint red light burst into the clearing around the tree.

“Get me up! Get me up!” Moss screamed, their voice hardly a shout because of the distance.

*Night vision be damned*, Kara thought as they flicked their headlamp to the brightest full-spectrum setting. Moss had already had their harness on when they’d climbed Bayshil-baruunii, and the ropes and ascenders were already reset and reconfigured for the next load, these things Kara knew. She looked at the assembly and mouthed to herself each piece’s configuration and purpose to ensure in the panic no mistakes were made.

“Kara...” Simone said with quiet urgency.

“Wait.”

From above, Ricky yelled down “What’s going on?”

Kara ignored him, trying to see the assembly in its totality, and when the image satisfied her, she clipped the carabiner to her harness.

“Moss? Ready?” she yelled down.

“Fucking go already!” came the response.

Kara started pulling in huge wrenching motions using her whole body. There was 2-to-1 mechanical advantage, but even still, she was immediately winded after the work of hauling up everything else earlier. Simone was a little bigger and stronger, but Kara had been better positioned to start quickly. Plus, she only had to get Moss a few meters up before they’d be safe from whatever was down there. *Unless it’s a bear. Wait, can they even climb trees this broad?*

She wrenched back.

“Moss!”

Wrench.

“What is—”

Wrench.

“—down there?”

“I don’t fucking know.”

Simone had switched her light to a brighter setting and sat with her legs straddling the branch peering over.

“Injured?” Kara gasped.

“No. They look okay.”

Kara kept pulling until Moss was almost at the height of the branch, then Simone pulled a second line to draw Moss closer to the branch. Moss shaking, and Kara and Simone struggled to securely pull them on to the branch. Ricky and Fox were, thankfully, keeping quiet, and presumably they could see enough of what was going on in the bright light to know they’d need to wait it out before getting answers.

When Moss was secured, Kara helped guide them as they crawled toward the trunk of the tree where they sat

still breathing heavy, more from panic than exertion. Kara dimmed her light then sat down with them. Moss’s dark skin had an ashen quality to it.

“Jeez, Moss. What’d you see down there, a ghost?”

Moss nodded.

“Wait, really really?”

Moss chewed the inside of their cheek and bobbed their head with uncertainty. “I dunno. Maybe.”

In her time on the reservation with the Hu’apti, those who had historically lived in these mountains and valleys, Kara had learned their cosmology. This ecosystem was the origin of the Great Elders who spread across the world and over time grew small before their human offspring returned to live in this idyllic wild. Somewhere here was The Seam whence they sprang, where they emerged into this world from theirs. Some said they came from the fires of heaven; some said other worlds. This land of many names that settlers called Lower Arcadia had a grandeur that Kara could feel, and she could feel the truths of the stories. If Moss said they’d seen a spirit, there was no reason to doubt it.

Fox finished rappelling down the tree to the midpoint where Kara and Simone were attending to Moss. When he reached the bottom, Simone helped him clip into a safety line, then he unclipped his descender and flicked the line sending a wave up to Ricky signaling it was clear. Kara was talking to Moss, and Fox listened in.

“It wasn’t a spirit, Kara. It was an *exact* copy of me.”

“But how would you know what a spirit looks like if you’ve never seen one?”

“I don’t fucking know how, but I just know. I was looking at myself, not a spirit or ghost.”

Fox bristled. Everyone’s food and personal gear was still on the forest floor, and now two of them were occupied taking care of a third, and they were debating what sort of doppelgänger Moss had seen. There was, of course, a simple explanation for this.

“Moss,” Fox started. “Are you high?”

Kara answered. “Just because you don’t understand—”

“I’m not high, Fox” Moss said. “I know what I saw.”

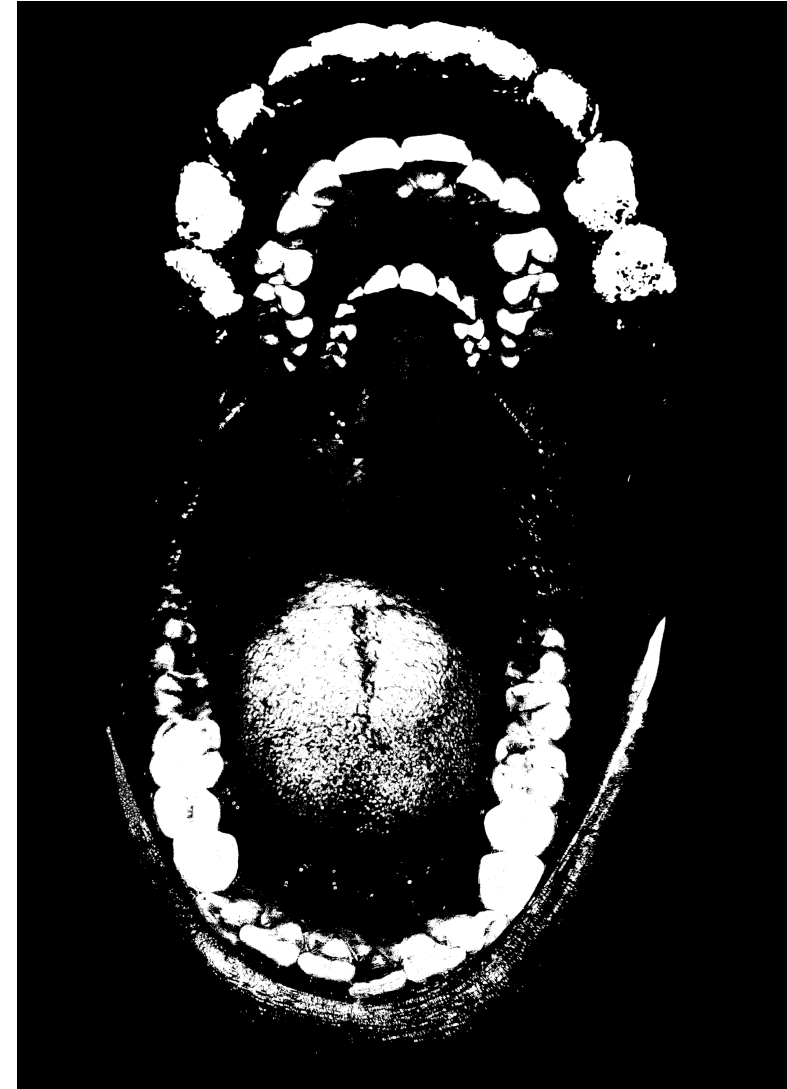
“Look, I just had to ask. We know what you do, and what happens when—”

“Yes, and I also don’t smoke before doing anything important like climb a hundred meters into a tree.”

“Fox,” Simone interjected. “Don’t be like that.”

“What? I had to ask. And do you really think they saw a clone or a ghost or whatever?”

“I don’t know, but I’m willing to believe they saw *something* strange down there.”



Void

Moose

# A Step-By-Step Guide to Surfing on Waves of Human Misery

Caleb Cloaca

The waves are rising. Not temporarily, not the rocking up like snow peaked, frothy-style, ready to come crashing down any instant sort: rising. Rising like they've stuffed a couple books, big books, the bible in our home, under their ass at the dinner table so they can reach the peas and mind their Ps and Qs at the grown-up table where the devastation, call it Devastation, comes easy. The good news: with waves come: surfing. Surfing, packed in swimsuit, ankle roped, like an ankle monitor (but 'hot') and hooked up to a board that bounces you along big, rising waves in big, rising waters. If surfing comes with waves (is it waving?), rising water can't be all bad. Don't apologize to your children or your grandchildren or your great-grandchildren, or your so on and so on just yet. It won't all be drowning or wading through great grafts of plastic bottles, plastic cups, plastic straws, plastic mess, looking for their next meal. It might also be: surfing. Surfing past the bodies, past the plastic, past the bodies, past the houses that used to be waterfront, now water fronted. And 'hey!' you sure as hell can't do that now.

So tuck this in your back pocket, back porch, or in the slot along your back door: wherever it'll last for your kiddies, so you can show them how the surfing looked here, way back here in the end that was their beginning, in this: *A Step-By-Step Guide to Surfing on Waves of Human Misery*.

Here, the water's rising. As in, in the current (and the currents are changing too). Rising, not risen. The ice caps are teetering, not toppled, but we're just waiting. Cap like cube, ice cubes dropped in our drink: our fifth 'on the rocks' for the night. So we stumble, one collective mess of: mass of: humanity to the urinal and piss on our black, shiny shoes because we couldn't get the aim right, or rather center. But in between the 'pissing on our shoes' we piss in the ocean: as in: plastic gets passed along and dunked in the ocean so that the whole mass water's filled with bobbing message-in-a-(pepsi)-bottles that just read 'go surfing!' the waves are rising!

That's the beauty. Even as the water's rising and the bottles with messages make a mass, there's surfing to be done: somewhere. Take beautiful golden coasts: even while the boats come crashing in packed hundreds by hundreds and come crashing back out so that lungs hooked up (somewhere along the way) to faces get brined and their eyes go blank

and they go floating on their way not packed hundreds by hundreds anymore: people go surfing. Take beautiful golden coasts: even while brown foam, like the excess of a rootbeer float, mixes in and amongst the plastic caps and blasting caps on the coasts down the way, not so 'beautiful' not so 'golden' but coasts just the same: people go surfing. People not surfing in the resort resort to fishing in the pond scum in the biggest pond we scum have ever found.

How did we get here? That's a good step one: *Step 1 - How Did We Get Here*. This is the part where you look less cool: in your wetsuit, on your belly, paddling like a doggy, if a doggy were to paddle like a doggy paddle. Just like the spot before you get on your knees, we started this on our bellies. On our sides, rather: like a prize sow, with our bright pink belly, tender and bright to the sky, but instead of piglets to nurse, this nursery rhyme terminates with a man in a rich, awful suit kicking us in the ribs leaving us to wish: we'd gone surfing.

He, the man, the one who does the kicking, is them actually, as in, plural, them. The kind who dunked the ice cubes in our drink to leave us piss drunk. The kind who shot cock shaped rockets and left our lungs putrid in a cloud of exhaust. He is desperate for it, for immortality, power, pussy, immortality. So with all that driving, like a golf swing, he is a man in his dad's suit using a straw to suck the bone marrow out of sick kids' casts and screaming.

If *Step 1 - How Did We Get Here*: is how we got here, in *Step 2* you'll learn that we're still, in fact, here. *Step 2 - We're Still Here*: *Step 2* is the part where you get on your knees on the board, which, luckily enough we have found ourselves brought to. The funny-is-it-funny divergence is that when you're surfing on water, this is the tough spot, where you start to feel the waves and eventually: get to standing: you surf. Luckily for you, surfing on misery demands less standing, less 'tough spot', mostly because we have capitulated. The only action left, here and now, is to help wave the massive white flag amongst the waves, give up! give in! "if history is to die, why shouldn't I?": let's go surfing.

The issue is we're caught in a competition between him and him: those dad's suit-clad fellows with belly's full of bone marrow. Competition, though it seems like it should look impressive: like a hail mary right to deep in the oppo-

# Bayshil-baruunii

Juniper C. Rhodes

Moss tugged twice on the rope to signal they'd finished securing the final load of spars and hypercanvas. Nearly a sixty meters up, Simone and Kara started hauling the platform material up, illuminated in the moonless night by the red glow of their headlamps. Another forty above them, hidden behind layers of branches, Ricky and Fox were likely finishing the first of two stories of the shelter they'd be indefinitely staying in. All that remained was a pile of backpacks with their sleeping bags, hammocks, small personal effects, and the first two weeks' worth of food. Moss stepped back, taking care not to trip on the exposed roots, and took in the scene.

The tree, Bayshil-baruunii, a *Sequoiadendron colosseum*, towered above reaching a height of nearly 150m. Its base was just over 16m in diameter, but even still, by no measures was it the largest of the Colossi in the Lower Arcadia Wilderness Protection Zone. From a distance, Moss knew it made the other trees around it look puny, but from the ground and in the dark, all the trees reached up to blot out the stars. Without seeing the tops, Bayshil-baruunii looked like every other, only a fair bit wider.

Things were in motion, and as soon as their comrades hoisted them into the tree, their fate would be locked in. In the eight of the other Colossi in the valley, activists — mostly other anarchists, but not all — were climbing and building shelters that would protect them for however many months the occupation would last. There was something perverse about the illegality of not just climbing the Colossi but even treading the ground around them despite the legality of logging them. It was to be part of a clear cut before strip mining the entire valley in search of Yttrium. The Forest and Wetland Authority justified these resource rights, claiming it would allow them to better protect other wildernesses, but of course, not this one.

Moss was itching to climb Bayshil-baruunii, but they wanted to savor the forest floor because as soon as they reached the canopy, the ground would be but a memory. With a few minutes to spare until they had to prepare the next load, they followed a game trail to a small clearing with some sort of ceremonial stones that were so old and overgrown with moss and lichen, it was hard to tell if human hands had placed them at all. They ran their hands through the hook moss, *Sanionia uncinata*. In the red of their headlamp and warmth of the night, it looked like the pelt of a great beast.

From the opposite end of the armature, Moss saw a red glow bobbing and casting indistinct shadows on the trunks of surrounding trees. Whoever it was wasn't coming from Bayshil-baruunii. *It must be someone from one of the other Colossi*, Moss thought assuming any cops searching for them would be using the brightest possible lights and many of them. *Maybe something went wrong*.

"Hey! This way!" Moss shouted as they took off their headlamp and waved it around.

The other light paused, then switched off. *Why? Did they just trip?*

"It's Moss!"

Their words hung in the air, and as the silence stretched, the hairs on the back of Moss's neck started to prickle. Whoever it was was avoiding them, but who else could it be but an activist with that behavior? They put their headlamp back on and started walking through the duff and sparse vegetation poking through, the cracking of twigs ringing through the desolate silence. They moved slow and when they reached the depression where they thought the light had disappeared, they slowed even further, listening for any hint about where this mystery person could be hiding.

*But why are they hiding?*

The sound of muffled and ragged breathing alerted them that just behind the next stone, they'd find their quarry. A single boot protruded, and unless its owner had their eyes closed, they'd know Moss was about to come upon them. With two steps remaining, the boot became clear. It was the same brand as Moss's, had the same wear and frayed laces too. Moss's heart started slamming in their chest, but curiosity wouldn't let them back down. In a swift movement, they stepped around the stone to face the other. When they saw them, Moss screamed, then the figure screamed back.

"Did you hear that?" Kara asked.

"Yeah. What the fuck was it?" Simone responded.

"It came from that way, yeah?" Kara said, gesturing away from the base of the tree.

"Yeah. Seems like it. You don't see Moss's light down there, do you?"

"Nuh-uh."

From above them came the sound of rope rolling through pulleys, but from below, nothing.



rot, you bastard

Finch

It's not so deep. I simply wanted to see a dead Hitler because  
fuck that guy.

sition's twenty-two, does not. It looks, in our case, like a group of sex-pests throwing money at each other until every little island on the ocean gets covered over by salty water, and a putrid man sponsored by an energy drink called war-criminal™ surfs over the remains; their remains. There remains no recourse but to give up or give in: up, as in stop competing and let the waves rise, toes in the sand. Give in, as in start competing and help the waves rise, toes in the sand-castle, sans-sand.

In some other world, some other life, in which you hadn't found yourself inside a tremendous wave called 'giving up', in which you hadn't come searching for surfing tips, things might have looked quite different. You might have pulled our collective dick-to-center and stopped the spray, stopped the rising, before its risen, and rose to the occasion, which looked like: throwing rich men in rich men suits into an ocean: still. Still, there's time left, I only feel the cold water at my ankles. But giving up feels so much better than working up, doesn't it? Why, working up means home, and hard work, and hospitality. You sure can't work from a car or a canister, sealed off from pain and misery.

I digress, you're here to surf, and in luck. We've reached our final step, the third: *Step 3 - Give Up*. Up is the imperative word here, this is the part where you'll pull yourself from your knees and on shaky, newborn-calf legs, you'll start to surf. Forget the waters, rising or not. Let out a whistle and let the whole of the city form up, in one gargantuan snake, linear and unidirectional, as is our awful prison, and let them carry you to the ocean: to be drowned amongst the plastic. The end of surfing on waves of human misery is after all: giving up, letting the waves rise, and going surfing.



## I am not a dog

Kimera



## Rose von Rojava

Johanna Teske

Ein Bild der Hoffnung aus der Gegenwart. Im Vordergrund wächst eine Rose in den Farben von Rojava, im Hintergrund ist ein Teil der Stadt Kobani nach dem erfolgreichen Widerstand der kurdischen Kämpfer\*innen gegen den sogenannten Islamischen Staat (IS) zu sehen. Die Revolution von Rojava wird seit 2012 durch den Aufbau von Selbstverwaltungsstrukturen praktisch umgesetzt. Frauenbefreiung, demokratischer Konföderalismus, alternative

Ökonomie und Ökologie bilden die Grundlagen dieses alternativen Gesellschaftssystems, das weltweit unter revolutionären, demokratischen, linken, sozialistischen, anarchistischen Zusammenhängen ein Begriff der Hoffnung und des Widerstands ist.

Aus: Johanna Teske: *Russische Revolution 1021 – In Erinnerung an unsere begrabenen Träume*. Moers. 2021.

in quarantine returning back, a few more would be given to some neighbours in other towns, but there was a pile left for him. He looked at all of them — these misfits, these sometimes prickly, unlikable people who'd lost people and comforts and maybe even parts of themselves to get them here, like he'd lost his David. They were eating in pleasure, Fatima laughing and lightly hitting Francesca's arm when the latter moaned in pleasure, saying "Be decent!" Seb gesticulating and talking slightly too loudly about some point or other, his little sister looking up at him like he hung the moon. Bassam and Gianluca deep in conversation.

Charles looked at them all and he smiled. When he was sure nobody was watching, he surreptitiously fed Sam the truffles from his plate. He didn't much like them.

# I am not a dog — a poem on police checks

Kimera

You stop me and state your will  
Knowing too well I can't refuse  
Hands and face against the wall  
As if I were fucking dangerous

Your hands are all over me  
Indulging in those places where I feel the most vulnerable  
You take everything apart  
My body and my belongings  
On your autopsy table

And you have the guts to play nice  
As if a "thank you" could mask your blatant violence  
As if a "please" was louder than the gun on your waist, or the taser on your chest  
My whole body shakes from rage  
My teeth pulsing  
My heart is a grenade

But I must behave  
You're the one holding the knife  
And the blade is against my neck

I am not a dog  
But if that's all I am to you  
Then I'll be a rabid one  
One that never forgets  
One that will tear you down  
As soon as you turn your back

# Truffles

Jon O'Mercy

Few had been able to afford truffles even before as the rains either didn't come or flooded the woods where they grew. Now, while they were a rare treat, they were one treat that was shared equally.

Charles and Sam had come back from their expedition a few days earlier with a small sack full of them. Charles, a sixty-something year-old man, sat at the end of the dinner table now, which had less to do with seniority and more to do with the fact that he preferred his own company and that of his dog, a three-year-old mutt called Sam, who was currently gnawing on a bone in the corner of the room.

Sam had been David's idea. Charles had grumbled a little when David had bought the puppy home. "Someone's got to keep you company when I'm out and about," David had said. They'd reached a balance between David's social exuberance and Charles' hermetic lifestyle, but still, the dog had come on Charles' fortieth birthday. "Hm," Charles had said, and the little dog had leapt up and licked his face. "I suppose she'll do."

Charles liked this time alone, rambling through the forest, seeing how proud Sam was when she found the truffles. He'd tell her that she did well, as though to an equal and not an animal, because she was his equal. He thought she understood when he cut the truffles and gave her some.

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It was November in what used to be called southern Europe, and it was cool and raining outside. The small community were eating in the former town hall that they used when it was cool. When it was nicer, they all liked to eat outside at the long table and benches in a park. There was a fountain there for the kids to play around in and Charles took Sam under there as well on the hot days. It was one of the few times people saw him smile. He wasn't rude — not exactly — but he could be terse, and he didn't really have close relationships with any of the others and sometimes had disagreements with them.

Not that the others didn't have their own disagreements. One was being talked about now, as Fatima was standing up to serve her husband.

"Ah, but it doesn't bother me that much," said Bassam, putting some parsley onto his dish. A handsome, older man in his fifties with kind brown eyes which highlighted — it

had to be said — some dark rings under his eyes. "It's part of living together."

"You just said Tilman keeps you up at night!" Francesca laughed. "This isn't like the old days, where we kept it to ourselves or left pissy little notes for our neighbours."

Bassam paused, a somewhat guilty expression on his face.

"Bassam," said his wife Fatima as she served him, having noticed the expression, "did you leave him — what was it? — a pissy little note?" She said it a little scornfully but with a smile on her face.

"No, of course not."

"Why don't you talk to him about it?" said Francesca. "That's not like you, is it?"

"He did so much for us," said Bassam after a moment. "He fought so hard."

Tilman been a fighter during the uprising, a main instigator who'd planned a lot of battles. Still only in his early thirties, he was at a party in a neighbouring town. Francesca, one of his partners, preferred to stay at home.

"That doesn't mean that he's better than anyone," said Francesca, "or more deserving of rest than you are. You fought, too, in your way. We all did. Tell me when he's out of quarantine. If it doesn't work, we can swap. I'm an early riser myself."

"Thank you," said Bassam.

Fatima finished serving her husband and then served herself. This had caused some consternation, when they'd first been there, as Fatima seemed to always be serving her husband, or they were both absent. Francesca had questioned him about it.

"And what does Fatima get in return for all of this service, Bassam?" Francesca had been smiling but her in tone was a slight warning. She still wore a lot of black around her eyes and had a deep, smoker's voice kept low and husky by the growing of her own tobacco plants.

"Foot massages on demand," Fatima had laughed as she put some beans from the big platter onto his plate. "And he takes care of me when I have my problems. There are many times I can't help, so I help a little when I can."

Her husband had looked up at her. "You always help me," he said, and took her hand to squeeze it. "It's my pleasure to help you."

Fatima wasn't the only person with these problems.

They'd been brought about by the virus that was left to endlessly mutate and ravage society until the uprising. Thanks to widespread tests and masking in public spaces, the virus had been mostly eradicated. There were some outbreaks from the clubs in the neighbouring town that didn't take such precautions, where Tilman was. They came in sometimes to trade or share news. They knew this community's norms. They tested themselves before they came in and wore their masks. Sometimes people from this community went to their parties and orgies and then kept to themselves for the isolation period, coming out afterwards to regale everyone with the stories. There were occasional parties and orgies here, too, but less frequently and generally sober ones. Hard drugs weren't welcome in this community. Some weed was grown and some of the people smoked that, both recreationally and medically.

Anna and Charlotte, a couple in their late twenties, were talking.

"What do you miss the most?"

"New movies," said Anna. "You?"

"Chocolate," replied Charlotte. "On demand, not just taking whatever's been shipped here for however many months."

"Chocolate," echoed Anna. "What kind?"

The answer was cut off by Francesca, who didn't like this romanticised talk of the past. She'd lost her father to the first mutation of the virus. Her mother had acquired a kind of hero status when, unable to deal with her grief, she'd strapped explosives to her body and had walked into a police station. As well as herself she'd killed seven officers, one of whom had been recently acquitted for the murder of a protestor in the neighbourhood close by which had been turned into a ghetto.

In other communities, people would come up to her to congratulate her, or to ask her about it. Here, people didn't bring it up — at least not in a congratulatory manner. Francesca was close to Fatima for this very reason. Fatima's sister, a resistance fighter, had been martyred very publicly, the last few shots of her from drone footage still emulated in drawings. Both knew of the complicated feelings of having loved a hero, respecting the change it brought and simultaneously and paradoxically — somewhat shamefully — wishing that they were still around, that nothing had changed.

And yet — when Francesca heard talk like this! All these lives, for people to mourn chocolate. "Do you miss the child labour used to produce it too, huh? Deforestation? Colonialism?"

Anna looked mollified but Charlotte rallied. "C'mon, Francesca," said Charlotte. "Can't we talk about stuff we miss?"

"You can talk about whatever you want," said Charles from down the table, patting Sam, who'd abandoned her

bone to come sit on the pillow next to his feet. "It doesn't mean that you can't be criticised." He lowered his voice — slightly — and said, "Especially when it's something so bloody trivial."

The two women were quiet. They knew from experience that arguing with Charles didn't bring much. They didn't often talk like this in public. It was done tongue-in-cheek, anyway; neither of them wanted to go back to the way things had been. How could we do this for ourselves, was the question they really meant and would ask each other, often in their trailer after sex, naked and wrapped in blankets, arms over each other. How could we make this new world a little better?

"We gotta fix the storage shed," said Seb from around a mouthful of pasta. A big eater, he'd taken a huge mouthful of pasta with truffles on top and moaned in pleasure before he'd even finished serving himself, having declared for the previous hour that he was fucking starving, man. "Fuck me," he said, and then, louder, "This is fucking delicious, Charles, cheers, mate!"

At the end of the table, Charles nodded to show that he'd heard but didn't respond.

"Classic Charles" said Seb quietly, but not without affection.

"Well, you swear a lot," said Lucy, his younger sister next to him. "You could tone it the fuck down, you know."

Seb faked outrage. "Now where did you learn to speak like that?" He smiled at his sister's laugh and his voice softened. "Try a little of this, see if you like it."

Lucy did so and made a face. "Ugh!"

"Really ugh, or I'm-going-to-eat-all-of-yours-as-soon-as-it's-gone ugh?"

She took another slow mouthful, considering.

"Gimme a little," she said, motioning for it.

"I fucking knew it," said Seb, smiling at her as he grated some on her plate.

"You say fixing the grain shed," said Gianluca to Seb, taking the offered plate from Seb, "but it's not really broken, is it?"

"It's close enough," said Seb from around another mouthful of pasta. He swallowed. "We should fix it before the winter really sets in."

"We still have a couple of months," said Gianluca. "And some of us were talking about going south for a while, to the beaches. You should come with us."

"That's a good idea," said Seb. "We'll come too, of course."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah, of course," said Seb. He put down his fork and grinned at Gianluca. "After we all finish the grains shed."

The truffles made their way to the end of the table, to Charles. There was still a few left — some for the people