

**Black Woman You're On Your Own**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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by

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When snow falls and dead crows sing, the children die but their cries remain *endless*.

*A Hateful Reality*

2 November 1981 – I wake up to a rather peaceful morning. Last night I had a dream of a hybrid named Sanity visiting my thoughts and travelling between the corners of my brain cells and the depths of my mind. Sketched like a theme park waiting for girls to come out and play. But they were hiding. She visited in a time. I was beginning to admire the dead crows' eyes that have been gouged out, neatly threaded into my rope – the wild extension of my dark skin, wrapped around my demon fucking monkey neck. They were once flying with the seagulls above the monstrous waves during summer; waves singing their own somber tune due to the impure mortals that swim in it. Sadly, they were killed by the harbingers of death who had come out to play.

When I wake from my dream, the brain and head are travelling in two different directions. The brain bounces up and down while the head slowly tosses from left to right. Morning is gathering. The fresh air is chanting.

A fresh cup of coffee – black coffee – the ideal task to begin my day. I stroke my hair with my cold fingertips as I attempt to smell the black coffee – pure fucking ground. The eye balls feel heavy as my eye lids are splitting their own thoughts into five. The first sip of my coffee stains my tongue with caffeine – the same caffeine similar to the one contained in a painkiller I swallow before falling asleep. I try to take another sip until I notice a broken shadow cast on the dark liquid. The broken shadow of a child who just woke up from the shadow realm called “dreams”.

I ignore my coffee and tried to pay attention to the sun's image and warmth cast through my kitchen window. The warm sensation is there. My admiration of its beautiful image is gone. This task failed. I remember the appointment I have with Doctor Hewitt in exactly three hours' time. Not a specialist. Just a normal doctor to prescribe me some sleeping medication. Sleepless cunt.

See – I'm an insomniac. Exhausted during the day because pathetic mortals try to project their own desires on to me. Goddamn loathsome. Grotesquely pleasant. The brain softens. Night time – eyes wide awake and my hearing heightened.

I listen to the owl painlessly singing outside. Aunt Samu tells my two-year old cousin Neymu to touch her “hoo-hoo” and “boobies” and say it was uncle Kaiba who did it. It’s hard to fall asleep and the anxiety begins to creep in. A fucking Mennonite. It enters my ear, down to the muscles around my ear drum; plants some words that painlessly reflect my mind and travel to my head – the most comfortable place because that’s where the pain begins.

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### *Recalled to Life*

No more sleeping tablets. Treasonous cunt. Endless whore of a medically demented cocksucker. No more sleeping tablets. A physical and sexual abuse of medication. Stupid ugly fucking bitch. Take 10mg but because you’re sexually attracted to its sharpening taste – you get a little excited. Take another – dark angel’s shadow – 40mg of codeine. Fall asleep. Endless dreams. Wake up to dead autumn leaves.

A piece of A5 paper. Initials printed on it. A black supremacist ballpoint pen – ready to diagnose me. A grin and smirk plays on his face. Eyes and skin in its own deathly hollow preparing to diagnose this cunt. No prescription, just a mere letter to a specialist I had to see. He said I need to go for a brain scan – unpack those noisy cells and see whether my sanity is declining. Happily. Sadly. Painlessly. All from the immense pain birthing itself in the corner of my brain. Then sing its own little love song. I tried to agree, pleaded for mercy but his black supremacy overpowered me. No more sleeping tablets. Nerves around my eyebrows getting warm as my esophagus momentarily stopped functioning from my submissiveness. Accept the now through silence.

### *Daily Words*

Sunday, November 1981 – a fact to reflect upon: we can absorb as many words as we can but in the end we’re all going to die.

Night sings with the crickets. I sit on my bed and try to read *Heart of Darkness*. Images of black men’s heads placed on spikes as a trademark for the darkness in Congo’s tender heart. Yes black fuckers, bleed. I head to the kitchen to make some lemon tea. No sugar. A slice of lemon dipped with its tea bag. I head back to my bedroom. I sit on my bed, I feel something quite funny. Not pain, just something that feels very tiny it’s tickling in my head just a little

bit. If I could compare it to a living organism I would compare it to a dung beetle birthed from its dead mother.

I return to *Heart of Darkness*. Sip on that tea, bitch, taste the slice of lemon on the tip of my tongue. I fall in love with some of the words – environment is heartless. Skinny black fuckers being compared to demon gods with blood red eyes while being chained around their tiny necks: eternally captured and enslaved. *Yes, black fuckers bleed.* The feeling travels in my body. It travels down my esophagus, there are little thorns blooming. It travels further. It enters my heart. My head begins to pain. It wants to fuck me bloody. It's starting from the corner of brain cells and travels to the back of my eyes.

Thunder sings. Birds are quiet. Crows are sleeping. Leaves are whispering. Trees are dancing. Roots are gasping for air, impure, sliced, punched, slit air. The head is being fucked bloody and so I contemplate about the prospect of taking a painkiller. Stilpane. Grandpa. Gen-Payne. All finished. Let me fucking die. I close my book, I cannot finish *Heart of Darkness*. I decide to fall asleep. It ends there. The addicted bitch.

### *Black Consciousness*

9 November 1981 – good morning. I find it interesting that I'm committing to journaling to you even after a monstrous night. It began after I closed my eyes. My mind was tickly. A centipede woke up from its fetus position and took a stroll in my head. Its many legs planted on my many brain cells.

It's hard to detail everything. Some things, strikingly, frighteningly absent in the hollow sky. Grey. Black. Blue. Green. Orange. Remembrance - images scribbled and vomited knowing those words will decay into black dust.

The surface of my brain slowly begins to recollect the dream I had. It was in the same place, my bedroom decorated with black roses and dead blue peonies. I was lying on my back, beautifully dressed in my silky satin purple dress. My hair thick and black, planted on my pillow.

The scene felt normal for a moment, until I was visited by the death god. A monstrous yet humanoid creature, eight feet tall. Fingers as long and sharp as the devil's claw. A cock, so black and tiny its legs were as skinny as those black fuckers. I didn't move. I wasn't frightened. I gazed at this humanoid creature. It held me. Softly. I looked into its glowing red

eyes and its black saliva started dripping from its elongated mouth to my face. It didn't say a word, only held me like a baby born into a new world.

I've always believed that dreams are not meant to have any meaning. I thought that for a split second until my mind shifts into the idea that my black skin fused with my culture proves otherwise. Sometimes I wonder whether being black is like being cursed. Ancient tales of my blackness echo monstrous nightmares that reflect events that are yet to unfold. Though I may not have recalled being frightened in my dream, *the notion of myself constituting it as a monstrous nightmare comes into play by remembering being held by a monster I had never encountered – the death god – shinigami*. My head hurts as I try to think of words I can put on this paper. If only I had Stilpane. My head wouldn't hurt. The pill would merely travel between my brain cells and ease my head till I feel so goddamn drowsy and crave sleep.

I need some ground coffee so I make myself some. Kenyan coffee has always been my favourite, one of the strongest African coffees I've tasted so far. I dip three scoops of it into my coffee maker so that my mind recovers from the previous night and is energized for the day. No sugar added. I have an appointment today. A brain scan. But I have to go the pharmacy first and purchase painkillers. Schedule 3 painkillers. Codeine. I silently pray that the Lord (if there is one) helps me through the day.

I try to drink my coffee. It tastes so good and strong. As I swallow the second taste that travels down my grey throat, the corner of my brain is disrupted by what feels like a heavy object smashing into my cells. It feels as though a dung beetle had come to make and mate on its own dung and later crawl away into its resting place. My head hurts. But this time I'll try to believe it's from strong caffeine. A body enters the kitchen as I rest my hands on the kitchen table. Sekhmet. My cousin, my lover and my muse. His silver hair with his golden-brown eyes and his concerned facial expression is what I notice.

"...you okay?"

"...yes... I think this coffee has become a little too strong for my liking."

A lie. A sad little lie as I try to convince my lover that all is well. It would be a great sin to tell him of my headaches and dreams because I don't want him to worry. That thing is crawling in my head again as these words are falling on to paper. For now, I'll just describe this "thing" as a dung beetle born from my sacred dreams.

I want to reflect. My cousin and my lover. I try to speak and write as little of him as I possibly can because of the story of the day we realized we needed to belong together. We both had a joy for surreal art and avant-garde writing and so the love manifested from there. Love itself is powerful and dangerous at the same time. This realization came from the tale of a single city of betrayal that emerged from my lover having an affair. We cried together and were reminded of our feelings for one another. Fortunately, I was smart enough not to trust him and had the urge to invite Atem over for lunch – woman-to-woman that ended in a beautiful death inspired by *Titus Andronicus*. I became Titus, mercilessly mutilating a body into pieces and feeding it to my lover for supper. It was like a small ritual performed over a bowl of “soup” where we took Holy vows to never betray each other again. The idea: we came into this world together and so we belong together. There was something so avant-garde about watching Sekhmet sipping on his own dead mistress in the name of love. I watched him eat her. He watched me eat her. Her remains – packaged in zip lock bags carefully stored in our deep freezer. Meat’s meat. Bone’s bone.

I kiss him goodbye as I leave for my appointment. Brain scan.

Upon arrival I am plugged into the waiting room waiting for my name to be called. My head pressure rises like the sun fueled with some pain and I take it upon myself to swallow some codeine. The taste is so fucking glorious that it sends its calm waves down my lungs to my maggot and dung-infested organs. I say a little prayer to god hoping that he watches over me and whispers some songs of hope and faith in the moments to come. I’m on the verge of wishing that an angel would appear before me and stroke my hair before having my head examined. I wait. I’m anxious. I translate this feeling into resuming *Heart of Darkness*.

Conrad’s mind interests me. Dark monkeys with devil red and black eyes roam hidden through the darkness fueled with heavy breathing of other dead monkeys that were captured, broken and mutilated. The sky is still blue, the darkness sings its own song. Boa constrictors slide and glide between the frogs and other insects while wild birds look upon how dark monkeys fight for their daily survival. Bananas rot by the second and the river turns black by the day. Dead fish rise in the east, dead fish rise in the west. Heads of dark red and black devil-eyed monkeys are displayed on spikes in the hopes of evoking fear and anxiety for anyone who wishes to enter the territory of one who is supposed to be feared the most. I am consumed by his breathless words. I try to continue reading. My name is called. Fuck.

My body is strapped inside a machine shaped like a plastic cave fused with numbers that I do not understand, its own engine sounds that are unfamiliar. A nurse beside me, telling me to relax and all will be fine. I don't remember her face, only her navy-blue attire, and her name tag that's very blurry to me because she injected me with something to relax me and make me motionless as the brain scan is conducted. I close my eyes and the clichéd death god appears before me yet again. It proclaims itself to be my guardian angel from this day until my last day and cradles me with its large black hands. Its voice is so cranky, non-human and shameless with its elongated black wings.

"...my child and my partner attached to me like a slave who no longer wishes to be a free woman"

"...it's you again. Why are you here?"

"I come when I'm needed."

"What if I ask you to leave? I can only allow you in my dreams and not hallucinations."

"You're not hallucinating and you're not dreaming. Why would you allow a mere mortal to experiment on your body like that?"

"I'm not allowing anyone to experiment on my body. I'm only trying to figure out what's wrong with me."

"Are you so convinced by the pain that hammers in your head?"

"I wake up with it every single day. It hammers like a bitch."

"But does that mean you're sick?"

"What are you saying?"

"Do you trust me?"

"How do I trust you?"

"...as your guardian angel and your hidden voice"

*As my guardian angel and my voice.* I come to believe these words gliding in my head like a boa constrictor slowly hunting for its food. I condition myself to trust it.

"I trust you. Somehow I can trust you."

I suddenly find myself having my eyes opened. The brain scan is complete. The face of the nurse is clear and she gives me a faint smile, kindly asking me to wait for my results in the waiting room. Yet again.

I was under the impression that I might be called again for a consultation with one of the specialists so that my results could be explained in detail. I was proven wrong. I was only given a brown A3 envelope containing my results and it ended there.

### *Arrival*

Home time. Once I arrive home the first thing I need to do is unseal the envelope and place the scans on my window. I am no expert. I can only rely on my instincts. Frame one, frame two, frame three, frame four; they all look the same, no change in colour or possible shifts of 'brain cells'. I hear footsteps. Sekhmet approaches me. I don't feel his hand gently placed on my shoulder, only a mere guess.

"What are you looking at?"

"Nothing."

"Then why do you look so anxious?"

Silence.

"Do you remember when I found out you betrayed me?"

"Of course I do."

"It was the worst day of my life. It was very painful. Did I ever tell you Atem's last words?"

"No, you never did."

My mind shot back to images of that day. And spilled out a gentle laughter and changed my expression into something somber.

"She said to me I was evil and belong in a bed with a dark angel. Everything changed."

I want to take a long afternoon nap, somehow I feel the need to pray, try to connect my palms together until I sense a heavy breath of black air travel across my face.

I struggle to unpack what it could possibly be because the heavy object is travelling again. It travels at a slow pace. My head twitches and twirls clockwise as it marks its journey from

the core of the thalamus into my callosum, laying its eggs because it was heavily tired from collecting its own dung from the day before.

Just when I thought it would rest there, it continues to travel but at a fast pace to the corners and sides of the pituitary gland. It plays with its tiny legs like a merry-go-round and collects more dung. The pain spreads and the festival of dung beetles and maggots hatching from their tiny eggs in my cerebrum, ventricles and cerebellum begins. My head rapidly twitches, placing a mere palm on my forehead in the hopes of ending the pain is useless at this point. Crying over it is useless. This is mindless. My mind is becoming unquiet. I try to say a little payer to the dark angel.

“...A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y”

I try to atone for my sins by citing the letters of the alphabet as a way of clinging to my own fucking sanity. I cannot say it’s declining – just deeply painful.

Deathly hollows.

Slaughter women like goats and sheep.

Mutilate my own body for crows to feast upon my flesh.

Pull my own hair in the name of gauntly madness and feed them to my dead butterflies.

The heavy breath of black air sweeps across my face. I stare into blank space. Fantasizing. The death god visits again, plays with my hair as I sit quietly on my bed. Jaw slightly dropped, tongue slightly loose, eyes becoming dry as the blood tears continue to play their own little game. Death god plays with my hair and whispers a love song and prayer in my ear. Dung beetles and maggots continue to play their own little game on their own merry-go-round. The game of faces and the game of places.

“...A, B, C...”

“...d, e, f...”

“...G, H, I, K...”

“...not only am I your guardian angel but also your lover.”

“...L, M, N...”

“...I can help you stop the numbness in your head...”

I gasp gently. Back to reality. The cliffhanger again - the second time I've had this encounter with the death god. I come to realize it wants to embrace me. When I pray it prays with me. My head twitches again. My body and mind verge on becoming one without any organs, no more than scurrying insects.

A boa constrictor crawls on my back and curls itself around my neck and lungs. My eyes want to turn blue but they morph into the dark devil-eyed monkey. Black wings crawl out from my lower spine stretching themselves to the corners of my skin and eyes. Insects play with themselves in my mind, cockroaches spit on their graves and on the veins in my brain and their own faeces spread like dragonflies.

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“Sekhmet. Did you get a chance to think about what I said earlier?”

“No...”

“Why?”

“Because I don't want to go back to the day you took Atem's life.”

“Atem. Even in death you still think about her.”

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So here's a strange sentence: I'm so happy that I feel dead inside. Technically alive but my organs are dead. To love someone is dangerous. But to feel hopelessness in the midst of trying to unpack your life is even more dangerous. I am no saint. Just a dark angel. When I realize that the brain scan was a complete waste of time and I find myself swallowing up to 200g of codeine daily (even in my sleep) I realize confrontation is vital. I don't know why but I feel I need to confront Sekhmet about Atem. Yet again. He still loves her. Deeply. Even in death. Despite having some parts of her stored in the deep freezer as a reminder to never betray me again he still loves her. It pains me. It fucks me bloody. But it inspires me to think a little deeper. Retribution.

I thought I'd be inspired by the legendary Punch and Judy show; reversal of roles, perhaps. But that would be too easy. When I try to plan something I force myself into a deep state of

thinking, inventing, planning. Multiple choices are important in this process because it allows me to dissect my imagination a little further.

*Girl loves boy. Boy loves other girl. How does girl heal?*

*A: Girl leaves boy.*

*B: Girl cries over boy and the other girl.*

*C: Girl pretends to love boy but loses her mind in the process.*

*D: Girl confronts the other girl in any way she sees fit and then confronts boy.*

*E: Let the punishment fit the crime.*

*ANSWER: E*

If I was a fragile little girl I would pick petals off a rose and ponder whether he loves me or not. I could be vulnerable to many things, even in planning. The greatest advantage in this is that I'm a person who likes to get things done.

Task one: what does it mean to be violated in the worst possible way? Perhaps creating the illusion of being sodomized. Carefully wash your hair and treat yourself into dressing up in your favourite night dress like an innocent toddler yearning for some vile molestation. Condition your hair. That is as far as you go. Grab pieces of thick thread and place marks by repeatedly encircling your wrists. You're a woman who was forcefully tied in what was supposed to be a night of passion. The next act should foreshadow the finale. The box cutter. My least favourite object but a very interesting one. Cutting your wrists will be too easy. Cut those rib cages. You have not been eating properly anyway. When blood drips smudge it across your chest to your core. It'll be a beautiful piece of art. Inflict the same marks on your wrists and around your ankles and remember to place hair ribbons on your bed.

Task two: cite your prayer to the death god and grab a bottle of tomato sauce and deeply penetrate yourself with it to the point you can feel blood leaking. Maybe sprinkle your dress with some of the saucee just to create the image of being severely wounded.

Days of endless, naked crying in my shower.

The little bird is badly wounded. Wings broken and feathers plucked from her eyes.

He beat and beat and took and took until I was left empty in a dog's kennel.

The taste of her own saliva from his mouth felt on my tongue in the name of love and loyalty.

He became a fucking Mennonite.

Held me up against the wall, nails dug deep into my neck threatening I'd meet Biko's demise: "He fell from the ninth floor".

Head smashed into a frying pan for breakfast and yet still: I loved him.

Role play was child's play: Jack McLennan and his precious beauty of five.

Dearly, not so long ago, I felt ugly inside. The ugliest girl alive. Bitches in primary and high school bullied me. I was never going to be with someone who could love. My cunt of a cousin named Nubia, the then prettiest girl alive in school made sure of that. I remember sitting in single file with the rest of my class mates waiting to enter class. Thirteen. As we stood up, the sound of boys laughing and murmuring swam. A little lady gently placed her hand on my shoulder whispering she needed to take me to the bathroom. Menstruation. The laughs grew louder together with the then pretty Nubia – the biggest cunt of them all. Yes I spent the rest of the day crying in the girl's bathroom and Sekh found his way inside, sat next to me, comforting me.

"Beauty fades" He said. "Beauty fades".

A few years later – fat and ugly. Her beauty decayed into ashes. Her mouth and pussy wilted from the countless cocks and gossip.

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I wait for Sekhmet in our bedroom. I find some comfort in the cool feeling from my conditioned hair. He enters. Perhaps stunned by the image. My sad little lies begin.

"I'm sorry for the way I treated you."

"You're looking quite lovely today. What did you do?"

"I came to say I'm sorry and you are right. Do you know why I killed her?"

"You've already told me a hundred times."

“Not this one. I remember telling her we were connected by blood and when love manifests from that, it tends to grow deeper and deeper. Her only response was that I was disillusioned. Can you believe that?”

“Why are we having this conversation?”

“To reflect. Before I could even respond to her ridiculous statement I remember having this beautiful moment. I somehow had this image: Titus Andronicus and the famously sadistic Hewitt family feasting on humans...all swimming in one pond. And that’s when I realized I had to kill her and for us to feast her, just to be a hundred percent sure she was no more. That’s what I initially thought.”

Task three: kill the boy. Kill the fucking boy.

I killed the boy because I was afraid that the man was going to be born. The quickest way to kill someone: the Michael Meyers way, the Thomas Hewitt way. I had to delete him. The box cutter. I calmly stabbed him in the larynx and sang a lullaby in his ear as I held his head on my chest. The muscles around his larynx were collapsing as my fingertips were held against the bloodied skin on his neck. There’s a lot of calamity as I describe this very moment. I am in control and as I recall the moment in such detail the words are not difficult to put on paper. The most fascinating thing that I can recall is those muscles collapsing. I was as calm as a bumblebee. The creatures in my mind were still playing on their merry-go-round. I’m beginning to think there is a see-saw somewhere. Some fucking where...

The snake and leopard don’t mate in the hours of the full moon and in winter. But all the same, they hunt for their prey.

### *Mindless*

‘Wounded raped woman treated in local hospital after killing lover in self-defence’

Did you know that it is actually possible to tamper with evidence as a means of trying to avoid the ultimate death? I never realised I was capable of discovering such in moments of dissecting my mind.

Shortly after deleting Sekhmet, I had to call the police to report a murder. I had to wait for exactly twenty minutes for them to arrive. I proceeded to swallow some heavy painkillers just so that my body could adjust to feeling physically relaxed and maybe recover from the

“shock”. I sat on the couch, pretended to stare into blank space and waited like a decent child.  
A bloody virgin.

An alternative fact: I deleted him in self-defence.

Delete...

Delete...

Delete...

That’s the best statement I could come up with. This claim led me into being kept in a hospital for some observation and questioning by a woman named Detective Hart and a psychiatrist named Doctor Pence. At this point, Pence was a mere observer while Hart was the participant.

Nice and comfortable in bed and a little more uncomfortable, bandaged with everything you can possibly think of, feeling a little sedated from those heavy painkillers.

“Miss Namu –”

“Namu is fine.”

“Right. Namu, how are you feeling right now?”

“Like a sunflower...but a little heavy.”

“Doctor Pence told me she had to sedate you for a little bit.”

“Right.”

“My team and I just finished with the crime scene and I was wondering if you are okay with answering a few questions.”

“Did I ever tell you that Sekhmet once told me that if my day is ever black, all I have to do is picture dead crows and their heads placed on spikes in some unknown imaginary forest?”

“No you didn’t. I’m very sorry for what happened.”

“Really?”

“No person deserves to go through what you had to go through.”

“Right...”

“If you don’t mind me asking you a few questions –”

“Please ask away.”

“Right. I hope you don’t mind me mentioning this but Doctor Pence informed me that your wounds are consistent with rape and there was some semen present. Could you tell me what exactly happened?”

“I feel a little tired...but I can try my best.”

“If you’re not strong enough to give me a statement –”

“No. I want to help. I’ve always known my cousin to be an odd creature, but I accepted him for who he was. That day I remember us fighting, we were fighting over Atem. She broke up with him and he didn’t take it well. I could hear from my bedroom they were having a screaming match. I kept on hearing “you’re never going to leave me” and the next thing I hear her screaming. I rush to the sitting room and I find her lying there. Her body so bloodied. I’d never seen so much blood. He was holding a kitchen knife”

“A kitchen knife? If he really did possess this knife my team would’ve found one and his fingerprints would’ve been identified.”

“Right... I...he had to get rid of it because he was afraid that I’d call the police or something. I asked him how he could commit such a horrible crime and his only response was that he did it out of love. He made me swear that I don’t tell anyone about it, that nobody finds out what happened to her and he...”

“He cut her up.”

“Yes ...so that he could keep her in the deep freezer.”

“Did he do the cutting or did you also participate in this?”

“It’s really hard to say.”

“I don’t think I follow...”

“I was too traumatized to remember whether I was helping him or not. I can only visibly remember the days he would cut me, beat me, sodomize me... And yet, I still chose to accept him even though he was an odd creature. Dear God I think I might have encouraged him...”

“You cannot blame yourself for sexual assault –”

“But it is my fault. Otherwise he’d still be alive while I’m being held down, stamped upon like a praying mantis and devoured like a dead snake.”

“Namu once again I’m terribly sorry you have to go through this but I have to ask you this question\_Did you kill him?”

“A...B...C...D...E...F...G...H...I...J...K... Did I ever tell you that’s been a little prayer of mine? My head contorts on its own while cockroaches continue to pollute my brain with their own shit and mate in groups of five, sometimes ten, fifteen... I say my little prayer whenever I feel a sense of hopelessness. And if you really want to know I don’t think I can remember killing him. I can only remember the horror movie. Instead of being forced to give in yet again, I can only remember having a little switch in my head to defend myself.”

“So you *did* kill him?”

“I’m sorry...I feel myself fading...”

“Of course. I’ll come back later once you feel ready to continue with this conversation.”

I find myself into a state of hollowness, a mist of dark and light voices that itch to emerge. I try to fall asleep, blessed by the heavy painkillers. My eyes close softly and I only hear some voices in the room. I cannot unpack the details ...just words that were repeated: “psychiatry, admission, treatment, health center”.

A death god visits, leaning forward touching my face with its elongated fingers and uttering words that bind me.

“...the god of death waits for you”

*A New Home*

## **PATIENT INFORMATION**

Date: 3 December 1981

Time: 09:31:13

Name of Patient: Namu

Age: 24

Height: 165cm

Weight: 75kg

Name of Doctor: Doctor Katie Pence, St Hart Clinic

Date of Admission: 3 December 1981

Diagnosis: Social Anxiety; Depression

Symptoms: Patient confirmed daily tension headaches

Lack of sleep

Fatigue

Patient has expressed feelings of hopelessness – suicidal thoughts apparent

Physical marks of self-harm. Patient denies use of self-harm

Patient has expressed difficulty in distinguishing between reality and falsehood

Has expressed challenges of interacting with people.

Suggested medication: Venlor (75mg) – patient required to take one tablet in the morning daily for the first ten days then is required to increase dosage. Possible side effects: nausea, weight gain, mild headaches and fatigue. Depramil (10mg) – patient must take one tablet in the morning. Side effects: fatigue and mild headaches. Dormonocet (10mg) – patient is required to take one tablet at night. Possible side effects: Fatigue in the morning. Patient must not exceed the recommended dosage.

Is the patient on any chronic medication? If so state the dosage: None.

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### *Therapy*

Here's an interesting revelation: I'm a dead crow trapped in a cage that has now become my new home. I lie with other dead crows and hyenas that are on the verge of starvation and imminent death. The very first day an angel comes to me and says I was diagnosed with the god of death. The angel is pure, white and fully clothed by the name of Doctor Pence. She proclaims herself to know everything about the god of death and that my symptoms are visible to her. She is like a crone who comes to me in holy light and claims to be the one true angel who wishes to heal me. I cannot reject her proposition. I will float on the bed of vulnerability and enter a new realm that is seen to be the path of righteousness. I say my usual holy prayer as I roll into this new place I can call home. Bulbs of light stab my eyes as I'm

accompanied by two unattractive bodies. My lungs and black intestines begin to swell in anxiety and vulnerability as I am rolled into my own personal space.

I feel emotionally and mentally immobile. I've had too many drugs injected into my system. They leave me in my new personal space and I am with the death god who sits beside me. I feel safe for once in the unknown space of silent voices lurking in the passageways.

My skin feels tight. A needle attached to a thick colourless tube has been inserted into my green veins with very little sensation. This liquid behaves like a group of pretty ugly ducklings that swim scavenging for food. Baby cockroaches are hatched from their eggs in the midst of this "happy moment" and start feasting on maggots as their first happy meal of being born into an unquiet mind. The head is too light to react, to twitch, to glide from side to side or to even contort on its own. Its lightness is comforted by the death god. I wish to name it Izanami – a name taken from the famous Izanami-no-Mikoto, goddess of creation and death; perfect name for a perfect companion.

As I lie immobile, Izanami slowly walks around me – breathless, takes a moment to observe me and begins to converse with me.

"You've been praying..."

"I've been trying..."

"I know. I've been trying to say the holy prayer perfectly because of my sins."

"Do you really believe in prayer?"

"Our Father who art in heaven – "

"Do you really believe in prayer?"

"I try to. Even after the most brutal acts of sin I try to pray, makes me stable. Why do you keep on visiting and leaving me in suspense?"

"Because I knew that this day would come. Deadly voices march between these passages."

"Deadly voices?"

“Voices that scream and cry every second. This instant they continue to cry and scream but only a few mortals can hear them.”

“I don’t think I know what you are saying.”

“You must go to sleep now, say your little prayer and get as much rest as you need.”

“...please never leave me.”

Never. Never is an oxymoron. Izanami leaves me lying immobile. I morph into a state of deep thinking, trying to unpack the meaning behind the menacing voices in the passageways of my new home, my heart of darkness. A part of me is convinced I will be healed but there are the other parts of me infested by cockroaches, dung beetles and maggots.

\*\*\*

A Storm Begins.

Blue eyes, black eyes, green eyes

If winds were happy

I’d be in the shadow realm of the deadly voices.

Children march on the wall

Children whisper on the wall

Children silently scream on the wall.

Dark angels become their new deity.

Their black wings spit out blood

Intestines

Brain cells

Limbs

And black tongues cut from their flea infested larynx.

If we can die like flies then headless men can pray for the children – children of men.

\*\*\*

Waiting. Patiently. Death has been waiting for me for the past ten years. My utopia believes that those who do not appreciate life do not deserve life. When I was happily diagnosed with death's other kingdom – the god of death – my heart felt light and my shadows were singing. I forged my own heart of darkness as my mind travelled in the depths of the sickness that morphed into the centipede my shadows were familiar with. Death's other kingdom waits for me.

\*\*\*

I spend my first day sleeping. Meaningless dreams, eyes slightly open from time to time, unknown bodies enter my kinesphere from time to time. Sleep becomes my guardian angel.

The following day begins. I'm awake, quietly seated upright waiting for an unknown body. I say my holy prayer: "T...U...V...W". Someone enters and her attire informs me that it is a nurse who works in the home. She does not greet me but sternly informs me she would like to measure my blood pressure. She records her finding in an arch lever file and abruptly leaves. Moments later, Doctor Pence enters carrying the same arch lever file.

"You're awake."

"A rather friendly nurse you sent in earlier."

"Her name is Sister Reed. She was just finishing off her last shift."

"Is she always a bitch?"

"Like I said, she was doing her last shift."

"You told her about my case, didn't you? [You're a self-proclaimed fucking doctor so] I'm sure you did. Not only have I been admitted here for a sickness but you decided to tell her about the fact I took someone's life in the process. And nurses *love* to spread news about certain patients over a cup of tea."

"Sister Reed noted your blood pressure and it is quite high. How did you sleep last night?"

"Changing the fucking subject like the two-faced cunt you are. I slept well. I did wake up with a headache though."

“Is it something that occurs quite often or on rare occasions?”

“Almost every day.”

“I see. And where exactly does this headache occur?”

“My forehead. Do you plan to heal me?”

“Well if you allow me to help you you’ll be out of here in less than a week.”

“I don’t know if that sounds like a dream come true or just one of your many fucking lies from your...prickly cunt mouth. Anyway, they occur mostly on my forehead. It aches immensely when I wake up and then it slowly descends to a mild headache.”

“Can you recall when these headaches started?”

“Atem. Shortly after her death I found myself feeling anxious for no reason. I read a love letter that I once found hidden underneath his pillow. It crucified me. Do you believe in love letters, Doctor? I kept on reading it over and over again and by the time the day ended I already knew it word for word:

*The days have gone by and so far I could feel nothing more than a knife stuck within my heart. It has become daunting to remove such a strong object because it has become a metaphor of my life and our time together the past few days. I write this letter to you, knowing that although it may appear that I have walked out on our relationship, a day will come when I knowingly find myself crawling back into your life. It will be a day that I least expected and perhaps a day that will be filled with nostalgia. But while I am gone, I would like you to go on with your life, find the happiness that you could not find with me, find someone who will love you unconditionally as I have failed to do so, find someone who will be your light when clouded in utter darkness and find someone who will plant the seed of happiness and serenity within your heart. These are such qualities that I do not possess because of the deep scars drawn on my body and painted with so much pain. Love you forever, Atem.*

Not only did it crucify me but it was a badly written love letter. A horrible one, actually. Fucking atrocious. Betrayal – that is the worst possible thing that could happen to anyone, including me for that matter.”

“Did you ever get the chance to process what happened that day?”

“For a moment? Yes. I had to accept that everything I did was out of love.”

“When you recall the moment she died – ”

“I was the frightened hen and he was the angry cock.”

In a sense, the statement was true. At one point in my relationship I became the frightened hen in the midst of pretending to be the jealous lover. I was the frightened hen when Izanami first came to me and spoke to me in cliffhangers. I was the frightened hen when I found myself awake in the middle of the night or the morning with my head aching and in the midst of trying to cure this pain. At one point I had to morph into the angry cock that would lash out against its own lover shortly after saying the holy prayer.

I kindly glide my light eyes at Doctor Pence as I utter my words: the frightened hen and the angry cock. I have a strong feeling that each therapy session will be dedicated to recalling the moments of taking the life of someone and recall those last words. I come to believe that my choice of words from recalling these events will determine the medication that I am obliged to be placed on – a rather impudent thing.

“How did you feel when you became this frightened hen?”

“How did you feel, how did you feel ... Surely that’s something that you can diagnose yourself as someone who claims to know a lot about the mind of a human.”

“I’m only trying to get your perspective of this. That is my responsibility as a psychiatrist. I only want to help. And if you allow me to help you, you could leave this place quite soon.”

“You know what? I feel myself fading a little. Some images are beginning to feel a little blurry. It must be from the medication.”

“The only thing you have been given so far is a sedative that takes a day to heal a patient. So you’ll have to come up with another excuse.”

“You know your drugs.”

“I’m a psychiatrist and I’ve been working here for a very long time. I’m not trying to antagonize you, just trying to understand you.”

“I see. What did the detective tell you?”

“I cannot disclose that.”

“And yet you expect me to be fully open with you?”

“Yes, I do. Can you trust me?”

I offer no answer. I think to myself: Go fuck yourself woman.

“I just want to help.”

““May I ask you a question?”

“Yes.”

“Do you believe in deadly voices?”

“Deadly voices from where?”

“Deadly voices in general.”

“No I don’t.”

I was under the impression that Pence would find a way to believe in this phrase, that maybe some people she had worked with may have done and said the most bizarre or brutal things in the quiet realm. I was not ready to recall any tales, just sat on my bed and reflected, my presence and my skin as tight and ice cold as the Night King’s dead army.

*A love letter to myself*

A mortal: a stupid ugly duckling, fungi-eyed, devil-eyed mortal who has been misunderstood because of her actions. She lies on her bed, surrounding herself with her own impurities. A stupid cliché.

Inflicting anger and pain on herself. She is angry at the world; at least she pretends to be but at the same time she is a little confused, and at the ones who thought they understood her.

I am nothing but a shell covered with bits and pieces of pain I still wish to erase. I can only cloud myself with nothing but the intent to break free and bring forth misery and pain upon those who have wronged me.

I have a lot of black saliva hanging from my mouth. Your meaningless existence to me, wicked one is nothing but a chronic disease, a constant repetition. I try hard to be a little formal about this: “Pray thee young one” – yet another cliché.

Because this is only the beginning. She may appear to have been defeated; but she knows that the winner of the battle still needs to be decided, though I would not exactly call it a battle. It makes her suggest that both sides have an equal chance of winning. Still refusing to weep and conceal herself with a defeated attitude. Yes, I have not given up, I still wish to fully compel myself to seek revenge on the wicked one.

The dead whisper.

### *Paper Planes*

The second day: they say the first day is always difficult and the second day is not as difficult as the first. The scene: a dark banqueting hall full of robotic bodies roaming around or conversing with other robotic bodies. I'm a lone crow with its extended black wings sitting at the table, my head aching, saying my holy prayer and mingling this with my attempt to make an origami crane. If only letters could morph into people. I say my prayer over and over again hoping the perfect crane would arrive.

We are becoming like mere children who have been dumped into foster-care and have bodies of power to look after us.

I am approached by a girl who appears to be in her teenage years. She sits opposite me, folding her arms and observing my attempt to make the perfect crane.

“That’s quite nice; did you teach yourself?”

....

“I’m not that good at making paper planes – ”

“A crane.”

“Oh. My name is – ”

“I don’t care to know your name.”

“Okay...then let me tell you a bit about myself...”

“I don’t care to know your name or know anything about you.”

“Have you always been this mean? That’s okay. Many people turn into mean people when they stay here. The nurses like to tell us that they take care of us because no one else outside wants to.”

...

“One day I woke up and decided that I wanted to leave. My aunt liked to play a game she invented called the tickle game. She did it every night. Sometimes it was painful. I tried to tell mom about it but she didn’t really want to listen. So one cold morning I woke and decided to have a glass of water with some rat poison. It didn’t really end well – ”

“Is this supposed to comfort me in any fucking way?”

“Not really. Now I’m here and I doubt I’ll get out of here. Most of them try but they end up disappearing into black air.”

The term “black air” sounded familiar to me, a term I have used before. I ignored her statement and continued making my crane and began to converse with myself -

A holy light in deadly darkness. A crone, a crane, Izanami. It came to me in the holy light, righteousness, a path I wish I had taken in my early years. Did I ever confess to my brutal sins? No. Where on this heavenly earth was my faith? Gone – ashes and rotten bones...

A beautiful poem –

*“They say the colour red signifies anger and aggression, an interesting image – ”*

*“If you obey God’s teachings, the seas will be bountiful and the storms will cease to exist. Little storms, heavy storms, happy storms, sad storms...”* I don’t think I understand what I’m saying to myself. *“There’s that tickly feeling again. I’m beginning to think it’s a dung beetle laying more eggs, mating and molesting baby maggots that have just hatched from their fungi-shaped eggs. Obey God and live a happy life”*

My crane is almost complete.

I return my gaze to the silly teenager now sitting next to me.

“Can I entertain you with an interesting revelation while you continue to bore me with your presence? But then at the same time I don’t really have companions in this place so I might as well tolerate you.”

“Again a very mean thing to say.”

“I know.”

“And there are very few people in this place who are likely to make friends with other people.”

“My head has been acting like a bitch since this morning but I haven’t told any nurse about it. It’s still painful though. I think I have a high tolerance for pain.”

“It’s good not to tell them anything, otherwise they’ll feed you more drugs to help you sleep.”

“Isn’t that what we should appreciate more than anything else? Sleep?”

“Not in this place.”

...

“I still haven’t told you my name.”

“That’s because I still do not care to know it.”

“When’s your next session?”

“That is something you don’t have to know.”

“Most of us don’t like the private sessions so we have our own group therapy.”

“Group therapy?”

“Yes, a therapy session without a psychiatrist. Maybe you should join. It’s lots of fun”

“*One, two – welcome me to the zoo.* Thanks for annoying me while I built my little crane. I’ll come to your group therapy if and when I feel like it.”

“Good. Nice origami by the way.”

∅

Day declines: I find myself silently seated at a table in the banqueting hall trying to pen down my thoughts with the use of appropriate metaphors: The great journal of Namu! My origami is my muse. We have been blessed to be given scrap pieces of paper and pens because nurses believe that writing is therapeutic. Bloody melodramatic sometimes.

I would not exactly say the day has been enjoyable. My head pulls away from me. I’m starting to think that my hopes of leaving are fading and I need to take extreme measures of trying to leave. My self-inflicted wounds are finally starting to heal, but the healing itself is not enjoyable. Monkey blood is the easiest way of healing a badly infected wound. The taste itself is quite strong. Somehow, I had this beautiful image that this monkey blood possibly came from the “monkeys” in *Heart of Darkness*. Very few of them kill, but many get killed.

If only I can breathe some form of life into this crane. The mind would ease on its own. I could sit at this table and spend every day making these cranes and pray they burst into life and fly around this banqueting hall. A mere fantasy. In some moments I wish I would float on the tears I was supposed to drink, while staring at white doves exploring the grey sky. A peculiar image.

Something strange happens.

The so-called process of being healed in this facility is sadly familiar because you spend up to eighteen hours locked up in your assigned room because those in power fear that you might commit the deplorable. It’s the first impression you give them when you enter this place. You only spend a couple of hours outside your room and during those hours you realize how well-

trained those in power are in convincing you to take your medication. There were moments where I felt I was in a dilemma. Do I take my medication or not? The side effects of fatigue and wanting to sleep are quite good because you do not have to worry about other troubles in your way. I ask myself:

*What is the current state of your mind?*

- A.) *Deplorable*
- B.) *Happy*
- C.) *Beyond measure*
- D.) *Stable*

*Answer: A new option I would like to insert here: it cannot be described.*

There are deadly rats that are constantly playing games in my cerebrum. They are the first mammals to be in there. That is the only explanation for the pain that has been gnawing day-by-day. I don't tell the nurses about it, otherwise I'd be in a state of deep sleep. I am beginning to think that is why I hear the squeaks and quiet whistles every now and then: they've been trying to travel in the tunnels of my ear drums and when they see the light they squeak and whistle in excitement because they believe they are on the verge of leaving. The best way to react in a situation like this is to try and appear as normal as possible.

The dead are about to march. Slide and glide between the halls infested with monkeys and dead crows.

Cut.

Bleed.

Bleed and cut.

Cut and bleed.

There is a large collection of monkey blood stored in the office containing many drugs. Observe my surroundings. Get into character. Take ownership of a life. My beloved to-do-list from this day forward. I think I am beginning to miss Sekhmet. I try not to think of whether his body has been burned or cleaned for a burial ceremony.

There are deadly rats that are constantly playing games in my cerebrum. They are the first mammals to be in there. That is the only explanation for the pain that has been growing by the day. I don't tell the nurses about it; otherwise, I'd be in a state of deep sleep. I am beginning to think that is why I hear the sound of squeaks and quiet whistles every now and then; they have been trying to travel in the tunnels of my ear drums and when they see the light they squeak and whistle in excitement because they believe they are on the verge of leaving. The best way to react in a situation like this is to try and be as composed as possible.

Bed time. A nurse enters my room carrying a tiny container with a tiny object and a glass of water.

"It's time for you to sleep."

"What is that?"

"Your medication. It's supposed to help you sleep nicely."

"Where's Pence?"

"She'll be coming in tomorrow. Now...you need to take your medication"

"Very well, then." I look forward to strangling you in my sleep.

I drink and swallow the tablet and proceed to resting. Dreams begin to gather. Death god stands next to me in a pool of black blood and headless rabbits and headless wolves and headless kittens and headless dolls and headless rats and headless cockroaches floating like they are alive and well. Mist gathers and the smell of black air gathers.

For some absurd reason I do not see any dead crows or dead human bodies floating on this black pool. My hair is drenched from moths surrounding this pool. A happy dance.

A sacred dream occurs. Two shadows stand opposite one another – female shadows that are descendants of the god of death. They morph into the light winds at the hour of 3:48 and sometimes they hiss – like baby pythons and sometimes like spitting cobras waiting patiently for their prey. Drenched in thirst. Drenched in greed and hunger. There is a need for conversation to take place, conversation about who they are, their names or perhaps where they came from. They are nameless as dead inland taipans decomposing below the blazing sun.

If the death god could be compared to any known object the shadows would be the best comparison. My sudden interest in shadows came shortly after realizing that my body is not behaving the way it is supposed to behave. It rebels against the head even though the head has the tendency of contorting on its own.

My dear, precious black woman.

The morning rises. Time to eat breakfast. A morbidly obese nurse crawls into my room with a tray of food reminding me that it's time to eat. I don't protest because my body is still light.

"Thank you".

I slowly sit up and start to eat my breakfast: porridge in the shape of a baby's vomit. This woman folds her arms and watches me slowly eat. Her presence annoys me.

"Was there anything else you need?"

"No, I'm just here to make sure you eat well before taking your medication."

I continue eating. As I swallow my third tablespoon of baby vomit, the black wind begins to travel again and the door starts to open on its own. I silently gasp and I divert my eyes to this woman.

"What was that?"

"It was nothing. You have to continue eating if you still want to have your medication."

"It *wasn't* nothing. Something's here."

"That is not true dear. Now eat up."

I'm expected to have a peaceful meal after being scolded by an ugly woman. I stay silent and stare at my baby vomit. Loud footsteps begin to enter this room. Izanami. I silently gasp as it stands behind this woman.

"Don't worry, only you can see me..."

Izanami pierces its elongated arm through this woman's back and there she is lying on the floor dead, blood travelling. I try to scream but cannot, I try my best to leave my room. By the time I do Izanami has disappeared. I run down the passage and I hear whispers follow me. A male nurse immediately stops me, grabs me by my arms and asks where I'm going.

My only response is to breathe heavily and try to escape his large hands. The last thing I remember: my head smashed against the wall and my eyes closing.

“Smashed her head...

...she attacked her...

...smashed her head...”

*The Wall of Voices*

I have been brutally touched. I say this because my legs and my breasts and my groin are painful. Only faint memories of what happened; only waking up in an empty room with no bed, tied up inside a jacket, barefoot, sitting against the wall. Will I ever say the holy prayer again? A part of my body feels forcefully taken from me, my other half is somewhere over there, or over here ...

Izanami appears...walks towards me and bends on one knee to feel my cold frightened face. My throat pains. Something had been inserted inside me. I know it.

“What...do you want?”

“How are you feeling?”

“What?”

“How are you feeling?”

“...why? Why did you do it?”

“To protect you.”

“I don’t trust you anymore.”

“You don’t have to trust me. I was trying to protect you.”

“And here I am in the blue cells of my new home. Why did you do it?”

“She was going to hurt you. Those dead voices, they were running after you. Do you remember that?”

“Voices, how did you know?”

“They were following you when you tried to escape. Deadly voices march in those passages.”

“How – what do you know about them?”

“Do you have any idea what that woman would’ve done to you?”

“Will you be the one to tell me? Because of you I’ve been thrown and tied up like some prisoner.”

“That’s better than being slaughtered.”

“What are you talking about?”

“Children once lived here, happy children. They used to play in their white and black dresses. This place used to be a playground for them. They were often told this was their new home and their mothers and fathers would fetch them after a few days. Ten days: that’s how long they were supposed to stay until a child started disappearing on the fifth day. Twelve bodies disappeared. And they were found dead. Suicide was the apparent cause of death. Now their lives have become these deadly voices in these passages.”

“How do you know all of this?”

“I didn’t go to heaven or hell, or become trapped with those children.”

It didn’t go to heaven or hell. Its presence and form make sense to me now. I still refuse to trust it. I’ve been categorized as someone who is a danger to this small society; someone who is also a danger to herself. Little did I know there would be a day when those in power, those made to “heal”, would be the dangerous ones. How many of her are here? I told Izanami that I wanted to be alone and sleep. My body is light. It told me that my own body is intentionally deceiving me and that I should start listening to the voices of nameless woman in my skull.

I stayed wrapped in the empty space for some time. I could see the ants crawling in different places on the walls and hear drops of water from the ceiling. This is an old place. Particles begin to play. They’re about to play a game of ping pong; happy little particles playing into the thin air of hollowness. That is how long I have been here.

I try to clench and unclench my own sweaty fists. Drops of sweat fall from my ear. A large yet silent siren plays in my ear drums, melting the wax away.

I try to go back to the young thirteen year old girl who woke up from being sedated in the middle of the night with heavy moisture between her legs; heavy blood. I once thought it was menstrual blood, but was proven wrong because I was visited by my very own Boogie Man who claimed to have loved me unconditionally. I think of that moment and wonder if the Boogie Man was capable of doing such, then what could these people be capable of doing?

Three male bodies enter the space. One carries a file and the other two walk in with what appears to be hospital equipment. I am loosely unchained and held down in the name of therapy and healing. My mouth and legs are covered with their large hands. The needle is inserted and I have become a small feast for the crows.

A few hours later I wake in the caged room. Doctor Pence is beside me looking at me with a level of concern.

“You’re awake.”

I remain silent.

“I had to rush here as soon as I received the phone call of what you did. Based on your file, you shouldn’t be reacting to the prescribed medication. And so I ask you this: Why?”

“I guess someone had to do it.”

Pence has a weird mind. Somehow I’m able to dig inside it. Her thinking: *“Do you have any idea what you’ve done? Sister Eileen was a loyal employee for the past thirteen years who spent her time making sure she properly nurses her patients. What you did was unspeakable.”*

“Why are you so calm about this?”

If you saw the things that I’d seen in the hospital I once worked in, you would understand.”

“What did you see?”

“Blood on walls, especially in the mortuary. We had to decide either we stay or simply walk out.”

“And you walked out?”

“Yes. It was after Christmas, 1996. The place still exists but everything is dead. From what I hear there are people who often tour the place because of the stories they heard.”

“Why?”

“Dark whispers, inhuman shadows, silent whispers of men and children screaming, silent whistles on the wall, blood stains on walls that are still as fresh as they were years ago. We had to walk out. And nobody had to say anything on what really happened. Now do you understand why this not new to me?”

“I can try. Where was this hospital?”

“Johannesburg. Can we get back to why I’m here?”

“Sure...”

“I’m going to have to increase your dosage. You’re supposed to take 75mg of your antidepressant for the first ten days then increase it to 150mg but I think it’s best that you take 150mg for the first ten days and then we can increase it shortly after.”

“Will it help me sleep?”

“Not entirely. But it will make you tired.”

“All the same. They’ll come for me either way.”

“Who’s they?”

“...I’m sorry, I’m probably getting a little confused. I don’t even know what I’m talking about.”

“Okay, I accept that. So let’s talk about you. Have you been eating lately?”

“I try at times.”

“Why do you try?”

“Because I try. I’m not familiar with this place so I get anxious and lose my appetite.”

“And sleep? How have your sleeping patterns been?”

“The medication has been working.”

“Have you had any dark thoughts as of late?”

“Yes, they’ve always been my personal favourite. One time I fantasized hanging myself from a tree in a graveyard – a tree with no leaves. The other time I fantasized killing my own lover and then myself because I was so fascinated with sharp objects. It’s pretty interesting because I never had the courage to kill myself because I was anxious about what happens to the body when it stops breathing.”

“... interesting.”

“What?”

“You’re speaking different; using contractions...which can be a good and a bad thing”.

“And do you want to know why?”

“Please.”

“Do you want to know what they did to me?”

“And who is they?”

“Men. Monsters. Did they brag about what they did to me? They held me down one by one. Everything blurred. My eyes were shut and my legs opened spread-eagle and I felt things being inserted and remembered that kind of pain when I was thirteen. My arms being clawed and clutched and scratched, all the time my eyes completely shut. Each monster inside me. Eating me. I wanted to scream but knew it would be so pointless. They tossed me aside like spoiled meat. And yet still I breathed. That tells why the way I speak has changed.”

“Who were these monsters you speak about?”

“You don’t believe me do you? Because I’m black? Don’t worry, we do look like frightened apes at times.”

“We have to control your paranoia and aggression that come from depression. I’m not trying to antagonize you here; I’m trying to help you.”

“To fucking help me. How can you help me when you won’t believe me? Did you not hear what I just told you? Three men drugged and raped me. Is that language not simple enough?”

“You attacked the nurse so viciously and it shows your emotions and thoughts are warped, and that is normal in its way.”

“I didn’t hurt that woman.”

“And denial is also a normal side effect.”

I think she smells of Sulphur because of the shit that comes from her mouth. “Very well. 300mg it is then. I have to warn you though, resisting treatment can be deadly. Sleep well, Namu.”

I follow her smirk as she leaves the ward. She has power over my body in this new home. I understand I cannot convince her I didn’t do it. I fight to know what has happened. The woman killed by the ghost, pieces of me torn away, my head still aching, and my body an object for a number of experiments.

### **PROGRESS REPORT: PATIENT INFORMATION**

Date: 18 December 1981

Time: 11:45:03

Name of Patient: Namu

Age: 24

Height: 165cm

Weight: 69kg

Name of Doctor: Doctor Katie Pence, St Hart Clinic

Date of Admission: 3 December 1981

Diagnosis: Social Anxiety; Depression. Important note: Patient has shown signs of schizophrenia.

Symptoms:

*Patient confirmed daily tension headaches. Patient has also expressed daily headaches intensified in different areas of her head.*

*Lack of sleep.*

*Fatigue*

*Patient has expressed feelings of hopelessness – suicidal thoughts apparent*

*Aggression: patient has shown signs of aggression and resisting medication.*

*Patient has lost a considerable amount of weight, has refused to eat on daily occasions as she has claimed she is scared the food “could contain poison”.*

*Paranoia: patient claims to have been sexually assaulted by employees.*

*Physical marks of self-harm. Patient denies use of self-harm. New signs of self-harm have not been identified.*

*Patient has expressed difficulty in distinguishing between reality and falsehood*

*Has expressed challenges of interacting with people.*

Patient Classification: High Risk – involved in assault of an employee.

Suggested medication: Venlor (300mg) – patient required to take three tablets in the morning until psychiatrist further recommends increase in dosage. Possible side effects: nausea, weight gain, mild headaches and fatigue. Depramil (10mg) – patient must take one tablet in the morning. Side effects: fatigue and mild headaches. Dormonocet (20mg) – patient is required to take two tablets at night. Possible side effects: Fatigue in the morning. Patient must not exceed the recommended dosage.

Is the patient on any chronic medication? If so state the dosage: None.

Psychiatrist’s comments: *The patient has often shown signs of resistance during therapy sessions. She has also expressed signs of schizophrenia shortly after the assault on Sister Eileen. Patient has lost a considerable amount of weight. A feeding tube will be recommended should she continue to refuse food.*

### *Lost and Found*

I recall words written by Gilles Deleuze: “The self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities.” It would’ve been a random thought had I not devoted myself to reading again. It is a form of therapy where I’m exposed to naked words and naked worlds and a thousand naked lives. If I question the self I’m afraid the answer would be that it splits into letters of the alphabet.

A strange feeling occurs. I say my holy prayer without any feelings of hope and faith. I pray because I feel I need to go back to a routine that kept me sane and safe. As I close my eyes I am taken to a summer park – trapped inside the mind.

It's an interesting world where maggots, cockroaches, centipedes and rats have grown into nameless women who play on the merry-go-round and the see-saw.

I take a walk in the summer park and as I approach the merry-go-round I observe such nameless women joyfully playing. I wish to have the same joy they have: I fear I'm missing out. The last time I played in one I was ten. I join them. Their laughter is gentle whispers that soothe my ears – familiar to me. The last time I had this sensation was the day I ran down the passages and heard the deadly voices crying from the walls.

A woman sitting next to me on merry-go-round asks me why I'm here.

"I live here... I mean, I think I'm dreaming."

"You shouldn't be here, child."

"I don't understand. I don't have control of what I –"

"This isn't a dream, woman. You should go back to where they're treating you."

"How did you know –"

"Because we've seen everything. All of us, parts of you. If you're looking for Anya she's not here."

"Anya?"

"Yes, your friend. Your death god. She's not here. You should go back."

"You didn't tell me who you are."

"Letters of the alphabet. No more than that."

"My holy prayer..."

"Yes your holy prayer. Where is your faith now?"

"Gone."

"We're very much like the rats and maggots and dung-beetles, cockroaches and centipedes you've complained about. You have to go."

"I need to get to know you all."

*There's nothing you need to know about us.*

“Why are you here? I think I’m in a dream world.”

*This is no dream world.*

“What world is this, then?”

“The corners of your mind” – does that sound familiar to you? You’re playing with the rats, maggots, centipedes, dung beetles and cockroaches...

“In my head...”

“You have to go, child. Don’t worry – we’ll still be playing here.”

∅

I’m awake. I’m sitting at a table making an origami cherry blossom. They always have their meaning – clinging to happiness. The bed has gotten too hard for my ass so I occupy myself with being the good girl. My holy prayer stays trapped inside my mind. I can’t say a prayer anymore. My first words in making this origami is to remember more words from Deleuze: “If you're trapped in the dream of the Other, you're fucked.” Its shape is slowly coming to place. Perhaps I could thank the body that is as calm as a tomato. My fingertips, on the other hand, feel grey and blue: “The shadow escapes from the body like an animal we had been sheltering.” I continue folding as my fingertips darken, the eyes getting tired. I hear a knock on the door. A young girl quietly enters my room. It’s her again. I make eye contact with her and proceed to make my origami.

She talks to me about the group therapy and what they talk about: the molestation, calling them all high-risk when most were low, making them swallow the sedatives like bread and soup, waking up with no underwear on and told they are paranoid ...

She continues to talk to me and I half-listen and complete my cherry blossom.

Perhaps I refused to fully listen because the cherry blossom and its sensation on my fingertips feels nostalgic –Emptied. Emptied into a gaping pit with all the other abused, unwanted, depressed black heads.

I tried. I fucking tried.

Stars were not twinkling as my curtains were opened and the moon was amber. I sip on my lemon tea, a little mouse craving for its cheese, only to be led into a room filled with cats hanging from the ceiling with their furry and bloodied tails. I was no popular girl. Just a ghost who enjoyed minding its own business.

My clementine still itched from Aunt Samu's taste – a friendly feast that ended in dark African tales.

Sweet clementines, dry clementines, wet clementines, fungi-dried clementines. Each day to her own, each time to her own. She came into my room, caught me drinking my lemon tea. A gaze into my eyes and told me how much I reminded her of her own sister. Sweet sister. Two fingers were played and then it escalated to five. Multiplied. Divided. Lemon tea was no longer worth drinking. The liquid was stained with dust from my cries and my screams and my hopelessness and my sadness and vulnerability. Sweet clementine.

I wanted to die.

I wanted to fucking die until I dreamt of my own body hanging from a tree filled with cherry blossoms. Sweet clementine stained with lots of fungi, swinging from the cherry blossoms. Birds building their nests like any other normal day. Black hair blowing with the summer winds. Sweet clementine hanging lifeless.

I lacked the courage to butcher myself but it was those cherry blossoms that gave me a sense of hope.

Cut. The poor black child needed to cut. I wanted to cut and cut until my own meat was made for the dead – dead cells within. Samu once found me taking a hot bath, my hair wet from a momentary suicide attempt. It walks, silently, sitting beside me.

“I'm sorry, sweet clementine.”

“...why?” I whisperingly asked as my eye lids started heating.

“You look sad.”

“I'm not sad. Just depressed. Though I haven't been sleeping well lately.”

“Are you afraid of me?”

“Maybe I am.”

“Don’t be afraid of me, sweet clementine. It’s getting late. Finish up so that I can tuck you in.”

Those were her words: finish up so that I can tuck you in. I rested in my bath tub gently splashing water on my face. I refused to cry. Wounded, damaged, broken weak child. Not a fucking chance.

o

I once tried to write a suicide note to myself. Now that I think about it, it was a terrible idea. Why try to end my own life by trying to sound poetic? Samu would’ve had so much power over my dead body. But I guess it was understandable to write one while still being a teenager so confused at the world:

*Samu*

*I do not want to start writing on this piece of paper with the words “if you are reading this, I will probably be dead”. I think that has been used and familiarized over a thousand times. I’m only writing this letter to tell you this: I am sorry. No matter how confusing this may seem to you, I am sorry. I am sorry I could no longer wake up each day and remember to smile at my reflection. I am sorry I can no longer look at life on a positive note. I am sorry I have to find myself every single day in my room with my curtains closed and cry whenever I feel like it. I am sorry that in those moments of solitude, thoughts that I cannot maintain start to infiltrate my mind. I am sorry that self-harm was the only way to end those thoughts. You’re a sack of shit but still; I am sorry. I want to live but at the same time I do not want to live. I hope I am making sense by saying that. I think that by now there will be blood stained on my clothes as I slowly close my eyes and pray that they close to the last sound of my heart beat. I love you. I will always love you.*

*With love, and lots of hate*

*Namu.*

o

Monday: One AM – had to drink some water afterwards to relive the pain. Monday: Five AM – with an old broom stick, I was tied up. Monday: Ten AM –two fingers. Monday: Two PM – a carrot. Monday: Two-Thirty PM – a teaspoon. Monday: Four PM – the water turned red and I wanted to drown in my own shame, she touched me in the bath. Monday: Five PM – a thumb. Monday: Six PM to 8 PM – two small broom sticks, one inside my sex and the other in my... Tuesday: Five AM – her sex rubbing against mine. Wednesday: Eight AM: “My sweet clementine” – then back to the game of hide and seek. Wednesday: Twelve PM: Hair brushed and then cutting some split ends, then rubbed my hair...then pulled it. She became a monster and laughed while I screamed. Wednesday: Five PM: She sang “you are my sunshine” and then tried to drown me in the bath tub.

o

I switch my lights off, but leave the bed side lamp on. My head hurts. Samu opens the door and sits beside me.

“You’re already tucked in.”

“I’m a big girl.”

“I know. But a mother’s love is sometimes always needed. – ”

“I had a mother.”

“I know. But you understand what I’m trying to say.”

“Vaguely.”

“Please don’t be upset with me.”

“I’m not upset with you. If I’m not being bullied in school by those plastic bitches then I’m at home being your sweet clementine. Of course I’m not upset with you.”

“You can always stay in tomorrow if you don’t want to go to.”

“I’ve already missed out on a lot of work. Not my cup of tea. Tomorrow is the end of term counselling sessions with our grade head.”

“With Mrs. Joubert?”

“Yes. Our tests and assignments are coming up soon and she wants to make sure we’re all in the right head space.”

“...and what will you tell her?”

“...I don’t know...maybe that I’ve been feeling depressed, tired, sleepy, moody.”

“You’re not feeling any of those things.”

“I am. I go to bed trying to close my eyes but instead I picture various ways to kill myself. And the little sleep I get turns to nightmares. Chased by monsters, strangled by humanoid creatures. And even when I open my eyes the following day I’m supposed to be relieved it was just a nightmare, but I just end up waking up to the nightmare of the living.”

“Nightmares, depressed, sad, tired, sleepy and moody. Sweet child such a language doesn’t exist in our culture. Bhaca, Bomvana, Mfengu, Mpondo, Mpondomise, Xesibe, Thembu – that’s who we are – unbroken, strong, unbent, driven, warriors of the Nguni. Nightmares, depressed, said, tired, sleepy, moody – words only uttered by pink pigs. Are you a pink pig?”

“...No.”

“No... I think Mrs. Joubert will be very pleased with your term marks. It’s getting late. May I sing you a bedtime song? I’ll pack you a nice sandwich for tomorrow.”

I nodded.

“Come here.” I rested on her chest as she wrapped her arms around my head and her cold fingertips touching my scalp. Hair stroking. Light breathing. Soft humming.

“I think you know this song very well.”

*...You are my sunshine, my only sunshine, you make me happy when skies are grey. You never know, dear, how much I love you...*

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### *Unconditional Love*

21:08 – My head has been pounding like a wrecking ball. If only I could take a butcher knife and split it in two, let all those rats and insects come out and the pain come to its abrupt end. If only the blood could help me write this journal. I don’t know what else to write so I will

talk about the pain in the head. No medication yet. If my head were to split in two the silent stress would ease a little. I tell myself it will be alright. If I write freely maybe pleasant thoughts will come. I sense the shoulders relaxing, perhaps making a new friend.

I've never believed in "voices in my head" because the madness can be beautiful thing. In the ward it is darkness, a boa constrictor travelling the forest until it strikes, its head impossible to chop off.

Little lady helped me realise this. I wasn't the only one. There are many more molested, sodomized black bodies in this place, once pink flowers now red flowers. Shougo said "*a beautiful flower too will eventually wither and fall. That is the fate of all living beings.*" Perhaps that's why my red flower has been blooming a lot. Little lady and I shared an intimate moment. I gave her my origami cherry blossom because I had empathy deep inside. No teenager deserves to be raped by monsters.

"I'm sorry."

"Why're you sorry?"

"You're only a child. You shouldn't have to experience being raped."

"It's no big deal, really."

"What?"

"Black girls getting raped and abused? I don't understand why we're still trying to act shocked when it's been done to us and the people before us for over a hundred years. The fate of the black child."

"Can you, do you still remember their faces?"

"Yes. Black men feasting on my body. Very easy to remember."

"Kaffirs. Devils. Monkeys. That's who they are."

"And yet despite it I still choose to have a gentle heart. I don't want to give them a sense of victory over my body. You should do the same."

"I can't."

"Why not?"

“Because the next kaffir or devil or monkey that rapes me I kill. It doesn’t get harder than that. We’re all insane here. A little killing won’t change it.”

“Interesting. I haven’t heard you talk about your family or hear of family visiting you.”

“There isn’t much to talk about.”

∅

When I was five I felt a shadow move beneath my bed. I was playing with my crayons and trying to find a picture of a princess I could colour in my colouring book. It was a shadow that whispered beneath my bed and helped me play with my crayons. It was faceless. Feathers from my pillow floating, dancing, singing, chanting. The stars looked like they were made from milk and honey.

∅

My words with Little Lady ended serenely. She told me that if I feel anxious or in pain I must close my eyes and see seagulls above the sea waves and the sound of the waves will calm me.

My eyelids become heavy as I’m about to fall asleep. Doctor Pence enters my room.

“I’m here to give you something that’ll help you sleep. These nurses are going to be measuring your blood pressure.”

“On a high-risk patient?”

“They’re also giving you the antidepressants I suggested.”

“I thought they are only to be taken in the morning...”

“You didn’t take them this morning.”

“If I didn’t take them then you’re only supposed to give me something to help me sleep.”

“I’m not here to fight with you. Let us do our jobs.”

I don’t protest, stay silent and nap. I only remember Pence injecting me. I know what will happen next so I take Little Lady’s advice: happy seagulls and one unhappy seagull that commits suicide by falling into the singing waves. I am the unhappy seagull.

*Little Lady*

I saw a little boy once. Out of boredom I stabbed his eyes and his larynx. A nurse tried to pull me away as I was in rage. The boy was already dead.

The world was emptied in some heavy blood. My pupils diluted in some heavy blood. Red liquid disguised as tears swimming on my tender cheekbones. The poor little boy. I once heard the name “Mazwi” float in the air while lightly playing with my stale oats in the morning.

I once walked down the hall of atonement: bodies of black gods that are supposed to heal us – walking up and down in their own attire.

I witnessed a deadly voice murdering a girl of ten by the name of Tinker. It cut her hair and accidentally cut deep into her scalp. The half-bald bitch was crying like a baby. Her eyes now shut forever. By the time it was lunch time, the dining hall was half empty.

A man named Thabo was standing at the window looking a little pale. Skinny as he is. His head tilted a little upwards. His eyebrows raised. His eyes turning a little red. His hair looked it hadn't been combed in a number of days. His lips dry. His toes dry from the lack of any lotion applied. Somehow my curiosity towards his appearance made me approach him.

“How long have you been standing here?”

He remained silent.

“I used to stare at my window back at home whenever I was having a bad day.”

“She's gone.”

“Who?”

“Sister Nosi. She was the only one I trusted.”

“I'm sorry.”

“Did they tell you what happened?”

“No.”

“Then why are you saying sorry?”

“Because I can see how sad you are.”

A nurse approached us and gently held Thabo’s arm. He cautioned me to keep my distance from Thabo, still looking pale as ever and oblivious to his surroundings. I asked him why.

“He’s not well. We need to look after him.”

“Are you transferring him?”

“Not really. We’re just going to examine him and give him something that’ll help him get a little better.”

“He won’t trust you. Where’s sister Nosi?”

“There’s no Nosi here. Like I said, please try to stay away from him.”

I knew he was escorted to the high intensive care unit. A few days later he was found dead. The nurses said he jumped from the third floor.

I witnessed a voice commanding a woman in her twenties, “take it off”. The vulnerable cunt refused. Now her neck looks like a doll’s vomit. Suicide attempt is what I heard until I witnessed her vulnerability. Eyes peeking into a key-hole from the hall of atonement. Two black gods looking down on this woman, analyzing, experimenting, hypothesizing...:

A: Name of patient: Fezeka Khumalo. Weight: 75 kilograms. Sex: Female. Age: 25. Diagnosis: suspecting chronic depression due to her third suicide attempt. Patient stabbed herself with box cutter numerous times. Stab wounds identified close to the vital organs.

B: Third suicide attempt requires a 48-hour psychiatric hold and evaluation.

A: Heavy sedation is required, anti-inflammatory and anaesthetic is also required. Side effects: heavy drowsiness which could lead to heavy sleeping.

B: Symptoms from previous admission to the hospital – heavy mood swings, appetite loss, weight loss, inactivity, isolation and sleep deprived. Medication prescribed: Dormonox, 10mg; patient was required to take one thirty minutes before bedtime. However, an attempted overdose took place twenty-four hours later therefore patient was diagnosed with chronic depression. Medication: Venlor – 75mg for the first seven days and must increase dosage to 150mg thereafter. Possible side-effects: fatigue, weight gain, headaches and nausea...

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Eileen died. Every fucking human says I'm obsessed with the unseen.

I witnessed two girls aged eleven, spread-eagled – screaming like seals then hung by their shoe laces in the room where no one sleeps. Perfect lobster meals.

I overheard G and X talk about A. They wanted to kill her and so they dragged her by the hair and smashed her prickly head against these haunted walls.

A woman named Gealy spent her days in the dining hall reading unknown books. The following day, I found her body in the toilet taking a shit while her pupils were spread and blood coughing from her eyes.

“I have a mental illness – let me fucking die” – Khwezi said before she smashed her own head with a hammer and a table spoon.

I made friends with a girl who often spent her day sitting in the bathroom looking outside the window. She constantly said “I'm not alive”.

I was staying in the same ward for a week. Every single moment was on repeat. Yesterday was my last day. Pence and I had our usual therapy session. I got tired of her questions on how everything makes me feel because feelings in the monstrous realm don't matter. She asked me how I was feeling – the same fucking question and I decided to give her a smart-ass reply: “People today have forgotten they're really just a part of nature. Yet, they destroy the nature on which our lives depend. They always think they can make something better. Especially scientists. They may be smart, but most don't understand the heart of nature. They only invent things that, in the end, make people unhappy. Yet they're so proud of their inventions. What's worse, most people are too. They view them as if they were miracles. They worship them. They don't know it, but they're losing nature. They don't see that they're going to perish. The most important things for human beings are clean air and clean water”. The poor child didn't note my reply on her usual file. She asked me how I'd become so perceptive to think that way.

“I was just quoting a filmmaker because this session was getting too boring.”

I spent my last few days getting to know the nameless women. I was sitting on my bed cutting out random shapes of paper as death's other kingdom crept inside me.

*If a girl had chains she needed to break, what should she do?*

*A.) Let her break those chains.*

*B.) The word 'chains' seems to be vague so this question is meaningless.*

*C.) Imagine chains to be either another object the girl finds fascinating or a person she does not like.*

*D.) Ignore those chains – the question is a mode of trying to stay intact.*

*E.) Pretend that chains don't exist.*

*ANSWER: C*

I remember cutting a triangle. Its shape resembled the cave I was thrown in and the corners represented the closed doors. In a sense, I was in the jigsaw puzzle – one of John Kramer's games. I suppose I must've fallen victim to his philosophy: "those who don't appreciate life don't deserve life".

C and I engage in a conversation about triangles and their corners. I tell her that in the hour of being sodomized, I fell prey to John Kramer's philosophy.

*– You seem to be obsessed with recalling that moment.*

*– Obsessed?*

*– Yes. You're having a habit of clinging to that movie.*

*– Sodomy isn't a movie.*

*– It is if you're going to develop a martyr complex.*

*– That's not true. I'm constantly recalling it because they did the same thing to me last night.*

*– That's pathetic. And because of your constant prattling about your own truth you're now wallowing in being the victim. "Ugly monsters come for me so now I have to spend my day talking about how much they've wounded me". That's so fucking pathetic.*

*– Then how am I supposed to move on? I've been diagnosed by the god of death.*

*– Slash those wrists, take a fucking overdose. Bang your head against the wall and convince yourself that you don't deserve life.*

*– You're saying I should kill myself one day.*

— *Slowly, painlessly, because that's how life ends. You've been chained by these people you call monsters. Don't you want to escape these monsters?*

— Of course I do...

— *We all do... F, H, I, D, E, Q, A, and P. We want to help you put yourself out of this misery. Your skin colour makes your diagnosis worse.*

— That's not true.

— *Deep down you know it is. Our culture does not accept this state of our mind, otherwise you wouldn't be so obsessed with talking about devil-eyed monkeys that lurk in the forest.*

— If I cut myself –

— *You should kill yourself. We're monkeys surrounded by hounds.*

— Why are you so convinced I don't appreciate life?

— *Because it's pessimistic. And pessimism makes us do strange things.*

— Then maybe I should sneak into Pence's office, grab a pair of scissors and cut my throat.

— *Don't be melodramatic.*

— I apologise.

— *There's a saying that goes "hunger turns men into beasts". What's going on?*

— I hate half-cooked porridge and hate cold vegetables.

— *I'm sure you do. You miss her, don't you?*

— Has she been playing on the merry-go-round with you?

— *No. Sometimes she stares at us and then walks away. Too often she behaves like a lifeless doll.*

— She hasn't visited in a long time. I'm beginning to miss her.

— *Like Sekh?*

— Very much so.

— *Why not take an overdose then? Or drink the venom of your deep fantasies.*

— They're rare to find. But it's like you said: "hunger turns men into beasts".

∅

*"Hold my hand in the dark street, for if you do I know that I'll be safe. Even if I'm far away and alone, I can be sure that you'll find me there, this I know. You hold me close for a while, so quiet. You tell me everything. If I forget what to say then you'll come to me and tell me again, yes you'd tell me once again. But what happens when I know it all and what should I do, after that, what then?"*

∅

"...A..."

"...K..."

"...T..."

"...Q..."

"...B..."

"...L..."

"...X..."

"...O..."

"...C..."

"...R..."

"...U..."

"...W..."

"...N..."

"...E..."

"...F..."

"...V..."

"...G..."

"...S..."

"...T..."

“...H...”

“...Y...”

“...I...”

A happily depressed woman once said: “Once you have perceived that life is very cruel, the only response is to live with as much humanity, humour and freedom as you can.” How fucking absurd.

A new day – I pace around my room and feel compelled to look out the window. Blue doves flying in their groups as the day ascends is quite hopeful. Sound of car engines, mortals on their bicycles and horses down the cracked pavements. Blue doves happily flying. Black skin lightening.

Little lady visited me shortly before I fell asleep. In a mad world I was becoming quite fond of her because she had to sneak into this ward. “The room with all the bad seeds” is what she called it. She gave me a box of one hundred Syndol tablets – a gift that she stressed I needed to keep hidden at all times.

“They’re quite good and should help you. You’ll feel bliss.”

I couldn’t protest her generosity. I gently thank her, take four and fall asleep. No protest because I was familiar seeing Samu take them early morning after calling me her sweet clementine.

As I observe the blue doves playing I hear silent whispers in the corners of my room. Their black eyeballs drop from the sky on to their hidden trees and their feathers slowly change their colour. The sky is black and black raindrops start to pour. Pour. Drop and splash.

I swallow another two – dry.

I was supposed to have a feeding tube inserted. I was a troublesome patient – all because I complained about the food. My room is locked. When you’re surrounded by treasonous entities you just don’t feel like screaming. We’re all beasts here. I open one of the drawers beside my bed and out of boredom I notice a gift. This is after I refused to eat half cooked

and cold rice with spoiled ham. I make friends with it and slash those goddamn wrists out of pleasure.

A tickly liquid.

There is some blood. This breakfast is far more enjoyable than the rest. I spend the morning clicking my fingers while pacing around my room. I hear the silent sounds of whispers against the walls breathing heavily against the gravity of the thin air.

I get quite anxious, wondering why no one has visited me so I swallow an extra four.

Pence enters my room looking quite beautiful. She informs me it is time for my therapy session. They're getting a little tiresome. I try to answer some questions she raises.

"How did you sleep?"

My answer is always the same: I was surrounded by a number of devils.

Pence has been itching to increase my dosage yet again. *Calm yourself, girl, just try to act as normal as possible and it will be alright.* "I actually made a new friend" I tell her after watching her scribble notes on paper. In a sense, this was true – no little lady has ever stolen for me.

"That's good to know, dear."

"May I ask you something?"

"Sure."

"When will I be transferred?"

There is silence for a second. I ask her again.

"If you pass your psychiatric evaluation there shouldn't be a problem."

"You promised me I wouldn't stay here for more than a week. I've been here for two weeks—"

"You've been resisting treatment, Namu."

For all the good reasons I have. My dosage had been increased and I was forced into treatment, held down while having a large pipe forced down on my throat. Eternally fucked.

I felt liquids and small objects travelling. The pain was excruciating. Another increase in my dosage.

Thrown back into my bed like a slaughtered goat. Crying was my form of begging for mercy. I didn't want an increase in that dosage – whatever the fuck it was.

“Are you sleeping?”

“When do I leave?”

“When I see fit to say so.”

“And when will that be?”

“Probably never.”

If treasonous cunts could transform into beasts, hyenas would be easy to kill. I bite and scratch my nails.

“Where's the feeding tube?”

“You can clearly see it's not here.”

“Why?”

“Venlor, Depramil, Cilift, Dormonoct –”

“Oh yes and the list continues. And the killers. You like to send them in my head.”

“Ah, yes, the killers. Let's talk about these killers.”

“Don't start –”

“I'm not starting anything dear.”

“Let's talk about the sleeping patterns.”

“Right. Well, you should be getting some sleep. They're quite strong.”

“Did I ever tell you about those beautiful blue doves? So glorious.”

“Blue doves?”

“Blue doves and their small groups. Looks like it's about to rain.”

“And why do they intrigue you?”

“I don’t remember saying the word ‘intrigue’. Are you trying to put some words in my mouth?”

“Is that so hard to figure out?”

“No. how’s Eileen doing? A little bird whispered the service was beautiful.”

“Eileen? Okay. Listen if you don’t bear with me here then this session will be pointless.”

“But I’ve been a good girl, haven’t I?”

“Of course you have, my child.”

“Please don’t send them.”

“They’re the reason I have to update your progress report.”

“I don’t want any killers in my head.”

“No one’s here to kill you, child –”

“They keep running after me, galloping like hungry horses. They once came during the long night. Please don’t send them in my head.”

“I’m not going to send anyone in your head, child.”

“But I’ve heard you talk to them before. Then I break out into prayer. I heard them once in the walls trying to run away from Eileen.”

*A Plague of Psychosis.*

In a game of hide and seek, the wolves hide, the lions are silent, the crows and dung beetles lay their eggs while the mindless children scream for their mothers. We were once living in a world where we were bounded by faith and reality. Like a deadly, yet delicate, flower with its sharpest most poisonous thorns, we grew apart.

Inscrutable sniveling doctors, inscrutable angel goddam fucking nurses. Apes running around this zoo. Other apes being chained on their necks as blood cries from their scarred necks. I click and unclick my nails trying to explain, to beg for no more killers while my sex continues to bleed in disgust. I go on my knees as a chained ape begging for my pitiless life. Black tears

bleed on her knees and my saliva drips on the floor. My head aches – too many merry-go-rounds swinging mindlessly. Dead rats – fungus erupts around their eyes and their fur whitens as dead snow. Qyburn is dead. Monty is dead. April is dead. Little Lady spends her minutes crying like a molested bitch before falling asleep. The room with all the bad seeds roars quietly as killers enter and exit when the ward sleeps. Puff adders slither in the middle of the night and spit on exposed bodies. Water drips into my body. Plastic wires stab my arms and my nose as water continues to flow. They said I've been a bad girl.

Trust no one.

Paranoia and lack of emotions: this was the apparent finding. Existing people were non-existent in her eyes. She continues to write. I can only register the words “increase” and “Sedation”. While the ward sleeps, I continue to slash and bash those wrists and thighs. Salvador Dali would be so proud.

I've always wondered what you would say at my funeral: *dearly beloved we're all gathered here today to celebrate the life of another*. I can only imagine drinking those tears before committing suicide. If only there was an antidote in my blood tears. I'd be detoxing this body like a cat skinning its own skin and eyes alive.

What's the meaning of this torture in this chamber? If there was a secret remedy for this whole two yards it would've been to add 30ml of all the bad seeds into a glass of bleach and drink all my horrible dreams and silk dragged out from the core of my lungs. Why am I alive? I wish there was no god – life would've been easier that way: to not beg on those knees for any sign of hope.

∅

Black snows, black skies, black mist; all I could possibly wish for in this day and age.

Black snows, black skies, black mist; a beautiful picture for the days I could be in. The day I desire somehow does not belong here, but in a place I have often come to desire; neither heaven nor hell, just another place where I think the spirit would be at ease. Wake up every morning, take that breath of fresh air similar to the lavender I moisturize my body with. Sometimes it may be hard to inhale that breath of fresh air because of the dreams fueled with objects that have become my dark and pleasurable desires. I think I want to cut myself further.

I think I want to lie in a bath tub, completely naked in warm water trying to think; a possible cure for eternal happiness; a possible cure for gaining a clear perspective of life.

No cure. Nothing. I think I just want to sleep.

I want to sleep. I don't want anybody to wake me up. I just want to put myself to sleep and take that last breath of life while the sound of my heart beat fades into emptiness.

∅

G, F, D, S, X, Y keep begging me to hold on. I try to tell them of monsters. It apparently does not exist in this realm. Just dried up biltong human beings who find their own peace in feasting like crows. Little lady wakes up the afternoon and spends time in slashing her own hands and smudging the deadly walls with her blood. She feeds them.

Slaughtered eyeless pigs hang in the offices. P has been begging me to cling on to this thing called life. She said it's synonymous with cherry blossoms. I smile a little, just a little and say my prayer again. I cannot move – too many wires and too much water. I tell P that I will one day escape these wires. You cannot tame a cobra and only expect it to spit at your enemies. The cobra sleeps. The sheep are naïve. The wolves howl and birth more wolves.

It'll be a bullet-proof.

Two days later I find myself in a new ward. The cobra bit itself having the full knowledge of its venom. No more wires. They were deemed dangerous. A girl named Wafe is my roommate. She is the quiet one. Folding and unfolding pieces of paper and folding them again.

Schizophrenia and abuse of Vikidin.

Her eyes were so lividly red. Her head would've made a beautiful display for Kurtz's secret compound. Wafe was a typical Waif. She shut her own eyes two days later. She slit her own throat with a box cutter and jumped out the window. The rats tried to stop her.

∅

Blue sky, grey sky. Darkness penetrated, light penetrated. Humans living, humans dying. The dead singing, the dead lying awake. Trying to play with some words while awake in the evening, words decaying. The list goes on and on. If there was a moment that I wish I could recall at such length it would be the moment I found myself lying on my bed trying to gouge

my eyes out with a box cutter. The smell of death and the crow of hopelessness found me in a delicate position of sanity while birds were trying to chirp in the corners of my mind. The smell of earth was breathing in my lungs as madness which mutated into a spitting cobra that wanted to attack my nervous system which was being infested with maggots, dung beetles, centipedes and cockroaches mating with one another trying to produce an unknown species. I was trying to write a letter to my lover but then I realized he had stabbed me in the heart too many times and its veins squirted across my lungs like a horror movie replaying itself.

I was trying to understand some words that were coming out of my mouth because I was addicted to binge drinking my tears juxtaposed with sorrow and hollowness. I begged for the angel to visit me but instead I was visited by a black angel with no wings that wanted to devour me in my dreams. My words are decaying as I try to make sense of my surroundings because my hybrid consciousness no longer wishes to see any light or clarity or serenity or anything that needed to be jettisoned. I'm associating myself with the sum of my memories while disassociating myself from the drugs of purity I try to swallow every day.

Dead wolves get into a formation resembling the harbingers of death I encounter in my dreams. Night tries to gather its own mentality but it is constantly stopped by ghosts of my own thoughts that split my head into several pieces...several pieces of a puzzle that frantically sits up at night trying to puts them together. Darkness becomes cliché and my limbs begin to dismember themselves. Mindless is my name as blue and black crows gather in their groups and feast upon me. I was like a boa constrictor being hit by a car and left for dead; the heart beats slower until it stops and eyes drip of blood and blue veins. I was a mortal in disguise but possessed the mind of a dead boa constrictor. My mind is like a cloud that freely moves in its own perplexing direction eating its own brain cells. The body wants to harm itself so badly physical pain becomes the norm in the new day of my post-apocalyptic mind. I find myself drastically moving between the spaces, particles, holes and hills of earth remembering the black angel that visited me.

∅

## **PROGRESS REPORT: PATIENT INFORMATION**

Date: 25 December 1981

Time: 03:48:48

Name of Patient: Namu

Age: 24

Height: 165cm

Weight: 65kg

Name of Doctor: Doctor Katie Pence, St Hart Clinic

Date of Admission: 3 December 1981

Diagnosis: Social Anxiety. Bipolar. Schizophrenia.

Symptoms:

*Patient confirmed daily tension headaches. Patient has also expressed daily headaches intensified in different areas of her head.*

*Fatigue*

*Patient has attempted suicide – transferred to a new ward*

*Aggression: patient has regularly resisted medication.*

*Patient continues to lose a considerable amount of weight*

*Paranoia: patient claims to have been sexually assaulted by employees. Patient claims to have killed a non-existent employee. Patient has also claimed the food supplied to her is spoiled and sometimes dry.*

*Physical marks of self-harm. New signs of self-harm found: wrists, arms and neck*

*Patient has continued to express difficulty in distinguishing between reality and falsehood.*

*Patient has been living in the falsehood.*

*Has expressed challenges of interacting with people.*

Patient Classification: High Risk – suicide attempt.

Suggested medication: Patient requires treatment for schizophrenia – Aripiprazole. Patient requires 200 mg twice a day. Side effects: Dizziness, vomiting, lightheadedness, fatigue, nausea, constipation, mild headaches, weight gain, sleep deprivation and impaired concentration.

[Is the patient on any chronic medication? If so state the dosage: None.] Patient will be placed on chronic medication (Cilifit: 30 tablets, 10 mg) upon day of discharge.

Psychiatrist's comments: The patient has continued to resist medication and food. Patient has also shown signs of paranoia and has continued to lose a considerable amount of weight. A feeding tube and drip has been placed and was removed after her suicide attempt. Patient will be classified as a high-risk patient with a second opinion provided by psychiatrist Doctor Ester Elizabeth.

o

Death by poetic destruction.

My sweets are gone. They were found by a retard shortly after being transferred to a new ward. My skull cracked. My eyes blackening. Two men swinging me into my new bed. A comfortable one. Blood pressure. Body temperature. Torn attire. Torn underwear. Straight shoot without a miss. A number of times. Then the injection comes.

An ugly black greasy piece of shit.

Roses and black petals are blown over apes and hyenas. The hour of the wolf is yet to arrive. Izanami just won't see me. I miss her. It.

A day arrives. Another therapy session. I'm followed into Pence's office. She bores me with the same questions about my sleep and the food.

Death by poetic destruction.

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Roses and black petals are blown over apes and hyenas. The hour of the wolf is yet to arrive. Izanami just won't see me. I miss her. It.

A day arrives. Another fucking therapy session. I'm followed into Pence's office. She bores me with the same questions about my sleep and the food.

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*When madness rises in the East and sets in the West, birds will no longer chirp in the early hours of the morning, wolves will howl, apes will scream and snakes will shed their old skins. Children will no longer play on their merry-go-rounds but roam in the deadly walls of deadless souls.*

The art of writing in the evening is reflective of the deeds of past or the deeds I am still yet to commit.

The sound of the pen on paper carefully shaping letters and combining words to express your thoughts is what makes it serene, yet beautiful. I want to dissect my thoughts in the most artist yet dark way. I can say for sure that if it was not for my depression, my thoughts would be so superficially clear that creativity would be something I'd deem undefined ...

See, I'm beginning realize I like to cling to sadness within and physically inflicted outside on my body. *Sadness with pain*. My pain – black pain – clearly visible by the use of the smile I like to make use of in this game I like to live. I think the task of smiling on a daily basis to the other was yet another sign of how depressed I was and how, to the eye of the other forged a perspective of a young and happy girl. Yes, black child – I'm on my own.

My last bath. Bath time. Happy time. A moment to reflect. A moment to realize how pitiless, weak, vulnerable yet jettisoned I was. I wanted to start praying. Not to the death god. Just to the God we were taught about back in school. My last bath – an intense de ja vu – Samu's shadow, watching me, singing me her favourite her. *Her sweet little clementine*.

Soaking my body with water was not enough. I needed to sit in the bath tub and do absolutely nothing. I needed to rest, gently placing my arms on the sides of the tub, tilt my head backwards and look into the plain white and "pure" ceiling. I don't think I had any expression at that point. Somehow, the white ceiling was like a mirror of this interesting world; See, I am sort of an odd child. I am in a bath tub, looking depressed as though I have completely eradicated any feeling of happiness. Resting in that morning compelled me to do what I promised myself I would no longer do. I needed to grab a familiar object. And in my hand: a razor blade.

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Words are pouring from her cunt mouth. For a brief moment, I fantasized a thousand women and a thousand apes raping the daylight out of her. Toss her remains to the harbingers of death.

The plague of psychosis creeps in – staring into her face. My very last session with her started with the usual “how are you feeling today?”

“Why do you keep on asking me the same fucking question?”

“Because I care about you.”

“But if you really want to know, I can tell you I’m feeling at ease today. My dreams have gotten much clearer – a whole lot clearer. I think I’m beginning to understand myself a little more.”

And I think to myself as she sits there vaguely smirking. Task one: swallow 5000mg of paracetamol tablets (that contains heavy codeine) all at once to the view of you lying completely naked in the bath tub. Task two: swallow 175mg of Venlor and then another 60mg of Cilift all at once when you feel the body is feeling relaxed from the codeine. Task three: make sure to cut yourself hard and bleed a lot; cut and bleed, taste the sight of blood and cut again. Leave the scars on your body until you are satisfied at the artistic and grotesque sight of cuts inflicted on your body (wrists happening to be my favourite). I really like the sight of blood. It actually keeps me “going” in the pleasure of pain that is constant and sharp. I do not want to inflict it upon anyone else...only myself and myself alone as I close my eyes to the sound of my heart beat slowly getting weaker and weaker. When will death come? If death arrives today, will I be ready? The answer to that is sometimes yes, and sometimes no. I wish I could find a cleaner way to speak my thoughts so they don’t taste like a raw piece of rotten pork infested with maggots and flies waiting to lay their eggs. I could scream for help but I do not wish to do such a thing. I could only take the one long last breath.”

The smirking bitch doesn’t say a word. Perhaps this is where she realises I should be dumped with the other used, unwanted black bodies in the highly intensive care. I have always fantasised what happens when you sit on a bed with sheets wrapped around your naked body, take a knife that is sharp as tempered steel? I am supposed to appreciate the game I like to call life, supposed to appreciate the gift of waking up to the sight and smell of earth. My thoughts are jumping like freshly cooked popcorn.

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*The hearts of snakes will no longer beat to death. The eyes of crows will turn red and the dung beetles will finally crawl out from their resting places and dance on the bodies of the children.*

Sometimes I prayed. Sometimes I prayed and then cried...and then prayed in the hopes that God would hear me (if there is a God). Let me be clear about this: I don't want any human to feel sorry for me. There's often the idea that we yearn to have other pathetic, weird, shrewd, used mortals feel sorry for us but that is not even close to the case. We just merely struggle to utter how we have come to accept that the body on the outside appears to be whole and yet on the inside it painfully decays like a body that has been buried six feet under for weeks. I think it's the pain of decaying that makes it hard to utter how we feel. I tried to utter this pain to Fae, she appeared to be attentive, raising her one eyebrow while crossing her legs and holding a pen in her hand with a notebook waiting for me to say that one word that would compel her to inscribe that word in her notebook. It is the one word that would have me declared insane and being in a state of madness, another way for her to profit from my madness: admit me to Valkenberg yet again and have drugs of sanity injected into my body by beautifully dark skinned female nurses. It is like the days go by and I began to raise questions about myself:

*Why does a girl write?*

*A.) Because she likes it.*

*B.) Because she feels misunderstood.*

*C.) Because she hates the idea of taking anti-depressants and so she uses writing as a means of expressing her anger.*

*ANSWER: Both B and C.*

In moments of despair, I have this wish of being tested with the will to live, like the famous JIGSAW did; being chained up with barbwire symbolizing the pain I have had to endure in my life and find a miraculous way of breaking free from it. It sounds grotesque but shedding some blood in order to live could be a moment of relief. I want to live free of pain from the poison coursing through my system. In moments I have been come to lock myself in a dark room with the desk light beaming on my desk, trying to understand what the psychoses have been up to. It is about posing questions, questions I cannot answer, questions that travel like a rat voraciously hunting for its food:

- Do you cut yourself because you want to exude your emotional pain to the level of physical pain?
- Do you deem yourself a cutter because you are in pain or do you just crave the attention of the other becoming the bystander of your physical pain in the form of red slashes on your wrists and thighs like a grotesque form of body art?
- Do you find it easy to close your eyes the minute you place your fragile head on that soft pillow?

ANSWERS: UNABLE TO ANSWER

My last visit. Waiting in the visitors' lounge. Dressed in white with white bandages around my wrist. A danger to oneself. I try to ask one of the nurses who is visiting me. No answer. Just a gentle and annoying mumble from her face. I place my sweaty palms together, saying a little prayer while being a little anxious.

It was the nut job. Dressed in black, looking inconsolable. Our first eye contact – feeling of anger becoming water swimming in my eyes. She sits with me while the nurse was standing by the door, carefully watching me, making sure I didn't do anything stupid.

“You look...cleansed, child”

I didn't answer.

“How are you?”

“You really want to know?”

“Your cousin's dead. She's been dead for about three weeks now. We buried her this past Sunday.”

“How did she die?”

“Overdose. Kids of today; instead of facing their problems ...”

“Perhaps it was for the best.”

“I don't know why I'm not surprised by what you've just said.”

“Because you know if I was in her shoes I'd have done the same.”

“Is that what your doctor's been telling you?”

“No.”

“...Look, I came here to tell you she died. I felt it would be best to tell you when you’re a little better.”

“But how would you know I’m better? I escaped a monster and was fed into other monsters. What makes you think I’d be better than before?”

“I’m not a monster –”

“Then I’m not a psychopath. If it weren’t for you I’d still have a family, and a lover.”

“You really do sound like your mother –”

“Don’t you dare talk about my mother.”

“I’ll talk about your mother in any way I see fit. Just like you she wasted her life away and who was there to clean up her mess and the rot that came with it?”

“You know, part of me was hoping that you’d come to apologise. Everything my cousin and I had to go through ... I was hoping that somewhere in your cold heart you’d open your eyes and say sorry. I was wrong.”

“Yes, you’re wrong because I have nothing to apologize for. I took care of you as my own child, sent you to one of the best schools, clothed, fed you, brushed your hair, and washed your tender body...like my own child.”

“Like your own child. Seriously you need to go fuck yourself.”

“Oh I’ve been happily doing that since you left. It’s not the same without you, you know.”

Evil stared right into my eyes – the same evil that resembled some of the nameless women.

“You should probably go. This conversation is clearly pointless.”

“You’re definitely right. I should get going. I spoke to your doctor a little earlier and she has assured me beyond all doubt that you’ll be here for a *very* long time. The house will be boring without you but perhaps it’s for the best.”

“Did she ever tell you why I don’t really get enough sleep? Why I’m often forced to take sleeping meds?”

“Mental illness can be such a cruel thing –”

“Because while these nurses rape me I picture hideous ways for you to die. I lie awake thinking...praying...that I escape while everyone’s asleep so that I can do to you what you did to me. Mental illness *is* a cruel thing. Sleep well, Samu.”

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It’s time to fucking play.

Little Lady sings a song. It starts out as a mild wind. A wind of whisper that echoed her hair and her black lips. It was a wind of peace, until it became a wind of chaos.

False utopia. New utopia. Kill the masters. Rescue the children. Cry the beloved children. Die the beloved masters.

“Kill those fucking masters”. Little lady sat at her table in the dining hall. Her head was twitching. “Kill those fucking masters”. Her eyes turned red and her black lips started to bleed. “Kill those fucking masters”. It was a silent voice in the dining hall. It was a voice that opened more deadly voices. Shadows of voices were travelling like snakes along the wall. Their nests came out to play. Little lady stood up and started swinging her body from side to side. Her life was being absorbed. “Kill those fucking monsters”. She started following the dead voices. Subconscious awakens. Shades of purple and shades of blue fused with ripped tongues from dead skunks and cats and lions and silkworms.

She held a knife on her hand. “Kill those fucking masters”. Stabbed her head and ripped her tongue to feed it to the harbingers of death.

New utopia.

False utopia.

Kill the masters.

Rescue the children.

Where was your faith now? Gone. There was no funeral. Just a mere shutdown and a secret group therapy session. Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to remember with love and hate the late Little Lady. A sad death by destruction. We slit our wrists and take a vow of holy silence amongst the harbingers until evil was finally driven from this realm. V tries to convince me otherwise: silence can be deadly and silence can be painful.

We ask ourselves how we are feeling. Fuck feelings. Our lives are lost in the forest and we’ve become Bhutto creatures. A man who calls himself Sway sways his fingers from side to side and says that we will soon become the children. Cry the beloved children.

He begins to scratch his face as his eyes painlessly roll back to his deep lake forest and says we cannot leave. Impossible. We’ve become the children of men.

Hyer, a newly introduced dolt, is angered by this. She throws some of the heaviest, gruesome words and smashes his head against the wall. New blood is on the wall and disturbs the frequency of these deadly walls.

Our children have been scarred.

We share a common story: forced, held down. Inserted. Tossed for goat's meal. Girls and boys, women and men. Scarification has become the norm. Its pictures differ from one patient to another but all carry the disgusting feeling in their core.

We decide it's time to play. Become a Bhutto dancer in the hour of forced medication. Slap your masters with the biggest massacre and if you are lucky to escape, hoo-fucking-ray.

We stab our hands as a sign of taking a holy vow of silence. We pray to who or whatever we believed in. Some of us question why being alive is just so painful and goddamn tiring.

No letters written to our loved ones.

We wish ourselves farewell. The mind decays. She explodes because the nameless women are in conflict with one another. Some said I was being weak, others said I was developing a complex, others, especially P, said I was doing the right thing but must expect something quite bittersweet.

I miss Little Lady. Her origami was nowhere to be found. Treason.

We are like children sleeping and eating beneath the ice. Our minds driven to the core of madness. Our eyes blacken to the depths of dark angels singing for their prey. We could no longer remember the days we came into this world. We could only forge memories of the day we create our own utopia.

A bunch of shitless savage niggers and desperate mindless kaffirs.

I was a savage nigger when I was sent in for a psychiatric evaluation. The same old boring questions. I expressed my hatred towards Pence. And I expressed my love for Eileen's fate. She continues to shake her head and squint those thin eye brows while taking down notes. At one point, my body compels me to bed for a mother's mercy. No more drugs. She continues to shake her head.

"I only want what's best for you".

Then go forth and multiply yourself.

A greedy girl takes my blood pressure. She sighs and notes the reading. Pence continues to observe me. I play with my eyes and my eyebrows. The eyebrow game. North and south.

Fill in the form.

Pence tries to convey some kind words: to fill in the form. She tells me she wants to examine the extent or the severity of my diagnosis.

Do I lie or act like a savage nigger in my choice of colorful words? Kill the fucking masters. Bureaucracy is a dead crow.

### **PATIENT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION**

Name of Patient: *Namu*

Gender: *none of your business*

Age: *24*

Please fill in the following where applicable:

1. Have you shown interest or enthusiasm in doing activities?
  - a. Sometimes
  - b. Almost every day
  - c. Not at all

*Answer: C*

2. My emotional well-being: feeling depressed or sad in general:
  - a. Every day
  - b. Sometimes
  - c. My emotions fluctuate every minute

*Answer: C*

3. My purpose in life is meaningless:
  - a. I experience this on a daily basis
  - b. I barely experience this
  - c. I never experience this.

*Answer: A and B*

4. My eating habits:

- a. I eat very little.
- b. I eat a lot.
- c. I eat normally.

*Answer: A*

5. How often am I tired or exhausted:

- a. Everyday.
- b. Barely.
- c. Sometimes.

*Answer: A*

6. I see things that I believe are real but an illusion to many:

- a. Mostly.
- b. Barely.
- c. Sometimes.

*Answer: I see what I know is real.*

7. I have trouble falling asleep or waking up:

- a. Everyday.
- b. Sometimes.
- c. Barely.

*Answer: B*

8. Self-esteem: do you feel you are a failure to yourself or family?

- a. Yes, most of the time.
- b. I barely feel this way.
- c. I feel this from time to time.

*Answer: C*

9. Self-harm: I often have the urge to cut myself or think about cutting myself.

- a. I frequently cut myself and also think about doing it again.
- b. I barely think about cutting myself.
- c. I sometimes cut myself.

*Answer: C*

10. Sleeping patterns:

- a. I sleep very little.
- b. I sleep normal.
- c. I get enough sleep on some days and sleep very little on other days.

*Answer: C*

Please tick (√) where suitable:

	☺	☹
I have been participating in my therapy sessions.		√
My medication has been helping me with treating my symptoms.		√
I look forward to the day ahead when waking up in the morning.		√
I make an effort to socialize with other people.		√
Everything appears to be clear to me	√	
I put trust in my psychologist		√

Please provide further comments (if applicable):

*If death waits for me I'm ready.*

▪ END ▪

*Happiness*

Unearthed. Unbent. Unbowed. We whisper together in the last hour of the wolf and pray to our god. Our sleep begins. A thousand cockless kaffirs roam in the deadly halls of a hundred niggers. Children awake – walls build their own mist and we begin to hunt for our prey.

I pay my first visit to the room with all the bad seeds. I sigh in so much relief. It was a candy land. Momentarily. Until I was found by one of the male nurses. I was escorted to my room. Hand-in-hand. Step-by-step.

“How are you able to get inside?”

“I’m sorry. The door wasn’t locked.”

“Patients are forbidden to enter.”

“I know. I was...my head is actually quite sore. I needed something to ease the pain.”

“I’ll get you something that’ll ease the pain and help you sleep.”

“Will I sleep forever this time?”

“It’ll feel like it.”

“What’s your name?”

“Songezo.”

“Songezo. You’ve been nice to me.”

“You’re one of Doctor Pence’s patients?”

“Yes.”

“You’re in good hands.”

“That’s what they like to say.”

I was put into my cradle. My hair gently stroked and my body nicely warmed. Songezo said he’ll be back with the pain meds. I can only assume its paracetamol mixed with a huge ounce of codeine. A sedative.

Here’s a thing about a sedative: it’s supposed to make me sleep while I imagine snapping the necks of every fucking traitor I’ve come across. The person who gives you the sedative has a mentality? In his mind: it’s hard to tame a lion when it refuses to sleep.

He comes back. A needle in the bum.

“Can I ask you something?”

“Of course.”

“May I speak to Pence?”

“It’s after hours, she’s not available. Is it something that I can maybe help with?”

“I think so. Maybe it’s a matter of wanting to have someone to talk to.”

“You can talk to me about whatever makes you comfortable. I’m good at keeping secrets.”

“Then you’ll put the needle away?”

“Bedtime stories always help one sleep.”

“What do you know about the story of The Children?”

“The Children? Who told you about that?”

“Someone who used to stay here. Little lady.”

“Your friend. What did she tell you?”

“She’s dead now so I don’t think talking about the dead is appropriate”.

“You were really fond of her, weren’t you?”

“Sort of. She always made the effort to speak to me...even though I didn’t want to speak to anyone.”

“Either way you liked her. She’ll be back soon.”

“What?”

“We’re people who take suicide attempts very seriously. She’s getting all the rest she needs and once she’s better we’ll move her back to this ward.”

“I thought... What do you know about The Children?”

“That question again. I haven’t been working here for a long time so I wouldn’t know.”

“And what if I told you you’re being a traitor like Pence?”

“Then that wouldn’t bother me.”

“Just like you and your two other monsters weren’t bothered that night?”

...

“Savage kaffirs are not hard to remember. Their faces – clear as the sky.”

“It’s getting late. I should probably give you that sedative –”

“Pence once told me about you. I didn’t want to believe it at first but she was right after all. Your paranoia is beyond diagnosing.”

“Then I must be the worst patient to be staying in this ward. Why not transfer me, then?”

“Probably because she wants to keep you close.”

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*When winter arrives, lions will no longer roar and apes will no longer scream. Only children will weep from the time madness rises and sets.*

Suicide can be a beautiful thing...especially in the art of writing. I yearn for it. But sometimes lack the courage to do so. Flashbacks happen, the sum of my memories appear in the form of shadows and nameless women; A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O – and the list goes on and fucking on...like how Sarah Kane talked about her desire to go on with as much humility as she possibly could. In the end death was her answer. We’re all going to perish anyway. Black bodies will perish. They’ve perished in the most brutal way for the past three hundred years: chained and smoked like the red-eyed devils.

“See the dove spreading up and down its serene wings until the stars flicker in every serene moment.

Cast away all your worries and despair and dwell within the depths of deep love, happiness and serenity. Every moment, every beauty”.

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The killers hunt.

Mad children scream. It was a moment of the cry for help but it turned into the cry for freedom. Eyes stabbed out, throats cut to the bone, backs beaten, men raped by their women and butchered like cows. The hens were strong and the cocks were weak. Their heads smashed against the deadly walls.

Songezo – my finger nails dig deep into his eyes and I pull them out. “You will no longer come down on the weak lamb”. His scream was silent. The siren went off. The children went mad. Our handprints marked on their bodies.

The children walk in their pretty dresses. Blood spills. Drinks are made. Drinks are sipped. The massacre of the demons and kaffirs gives us the chance to celebrate. But only for a moment. A hundred dead kaffirs now lurk in these walls with The Children.

Their graves: the walls.

Their bodies: carved out for a perfect stew.

Their fangs are as sharp as kitchen knives.

We gather in the great hall in our bloodied dresses. We hold hands and silently sing our holy prayer together. A breath of black air soothes behind me. Izanami. The morning gathers. The dead will haunt us one day. One by one: dresses collapse. I remain standing.

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T U, V, W, X, Y: they disappear.

We live on the dime of these fuckers. Pence took my life and whatever dignity there was left. The bitch took and took until she was satisfied there was nothing left of me. My insides were carved out by the monsters. From the hours of the sleeping crows to the early hours of the chirping birds. Carved and carved and baked my insides for lunch and supper.

What am thankful for? No bastard in my belly.

My desire to return the favour was strong. It grew – like a cherry blossom. It fades – in the form of an origami I was obsessed with making. Paper planes and paper flowers – I was capable of making paper human beings.

I've thought about killing myself – twice. And let my white dress fall with the others in front of me.

I was locked in a cage. Pence looked disgraced. She no longer had her pen and notebook.

“Who are you?”

“No one. Just a dead flower

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Thinking, breathing, inhaling, exhaling – pained experiences indeed. I've often thought about you in the shadow realm. I've thought about you quite a lot. In moments of drinking tea,

having a glass of red wine, rigorously chopping my vegetables, painlessly dying my hair black, smoothly washing my clothes – yes, I’ve thought about you. I close my eyes and think of the painless moment I smash your peachy head against my wall, the deadly wall of children’s silent screams I’ve become quite fond of.

I’ve thought about killing you and reciting a poem of mine before killing you. One two welcome me into my zoo. I stab your heart out and feed such a tender organ to my horses and let a thousand lambs rape you and a hundred horses dismember your body like feast for my crows. Your face doesn’t matter, your feelings don’t matter. You’ve broken me, scarred me, ripped me, sealed my own fate in the name of your dark twisted love. You’ve morphed me into a heartless woman.

Perhaps that’s why I don’t get enough sleep. Yes, I lie awake, even during the hour of the crow and wolf staring into those faint stars thinking of many possible ways I can torture you in the name of love and pleasure. I picture stripping you naked, whipping and lashing you and hanging you in front of the gates. I picture taking a kitchen knife, bread knife, sharpening it one last time before I cut your cock and feed it to the lambs, watch you scream in pain and then slit your throat to the bone. I picture beheading you and placing your pretty little head on spikes in my garden as a starter meal for my crows and rats.

You’ve hurt me, you’ve broken me in ways I cannot imagine or even say but I can only recall the traitor you are. I’ve thought about hurting you a lot. Trash. That’s what you are. Trash. There are times I feel you eating my organs but my body retaliates by citing Shakespeare’s darkest words: so should I rob my sweet sons of their fee, no, let them satisfy their lust on thee.

You are trash, you belong to trash, run back to the trash you came from and stick your head in the trash you belong to. Oh, if only murder was not a crime in this country, if only murder was never in the Ten Commandments; you’d have been slaughtered in your crib.

New shadows appear. New letters are formed.

What is this beautiful feeling? I am surrounded with so much serenity. The body is stable, the muscles in and around the body relax. The sun casts a beautiful image on the tree right beside me. I feel peace consuming my body, consuming the seed of hatred that was once planted.

I sit back and allow my mind to consume its stories, I realize there are untold stories neatly sealed in an envelope at the back of my mind.

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*Snows have fallen. Winter has blown. Boa constrictors are hidden. Madness strikes. The children once alive, whose cries have emptied...emptied into a deadly, silent, headless, gaping pit.*

My dear Samu,

In light of your predictable reluctance to apologize to me and be the witness to my recovery, I have personally resorted to the long-lost art of writing letters to the one I dearly love and cherish. You might have noticed that the date of this written letter has allowed me to successfully anticipate your unwillingness to see me after our encounter. I find it joyful to return to the long lost art of writing letters, letters in my head and letters to put on this piece of paper because of my love for literature: “They say the colour red signifies anger and aggression, but the true signifier lies within moments inscribed on to it”. I sincerely hope you find the answer to that riddle because it’ll reaffirm how well you know me. If the task of solving this riddle has been proven to be quite difficult for you, I will not be angry but be determined to leave an easier riddle for you to solve. This was solely inspired by a story we were taught in pre-school – the school you bragged about taking me to:

“One, two – welcome me to the zoo,  
 Three, four – live in the realm of terror,  
 Five, six – be on the brink of falling sick,  
 Seven, eight – use your (secret) bait to make me straight,  
 Nine, ten – fall on to the ground and rise again”.

I sincerely hope you are able to figure this one out. It used to be one of our favorite games when still a toddler. My love for you will never perish, though I may be in a position to delete those around you.

Yours and forever, Namu!

PS: I have been taking my medication and the doctors said I have been making great progress!

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## **PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL TO CLOSE DOWN**

A psychiatric hospital is set to close down after twelve years of operating due to renovations that are set to take place. According to Doctor Pence, a psychologist working in this hospital, the patients are set to be transferred to a hospital that is set to open. The hospital was closed down 26 December 1999. However, due to a petition consisting of eight hundred thousand signatures started by the official opposition party (DA), the MEC of Health decided that the hospital would be reopened. This reopening will involve admission of patients from the psychiatric hospital set to close down. "Although it is sad that we'll be closing down a psychiatric hospital for renovations, it is indeed good news that new jobs will be created as the formerly biggest and successful hospitals will be reopened to the public", the health MEC stated.

*The Daily Mail, January 10 1982*

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