

WORMFEED

By Benjamin Netherway

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Sunday, 16th October 2034; 06:04

Case Number: NA; Incident: 10-48

**Reporting Officer(s): DI Collins; Other investigating officer(s):
DC Taylor**

A cordon has been hastily erected along the seafront. The sun has barely risen above the horizon and is already smothered by a blanket of thick, grey clouds. From the windscreen, you can see the sea wall, and out the side windows you're flanked by other patrol vehicles. The 'Grand Pier' dominates the view, with its gaudy LED light displays, fading graphics and rusting bolts. Sea birds caw into the dawn air and litter the skyline. They watch and wait for fresh rubbish to be discarded so that they might swoop down and tear it apart.

You can just catch the reflective surface of the sand and mud, but the view is obstructed. You get out of the car and lock the doors. Christ, it's cold; barely halfway through October and the temperature's plummeted. You regret shaving. The air tastes of chemicals, landfill and salt.

The blue air rinses everything from here to Wales with a light pissing of mist, clinging to bricks and bones alike. Now you're stood up, you can see the flats stretching a mile out to the distant sea-line. Mud—deep enough to swallow children whole—shines, blurring the line between heaven and earth.

You walk towards the cordon and the high-vis man standing behind it. The blue police tape continues down the beach until the mud is sufficiently deep that no-one but an idiot would attempt to circumvent it. Though, judging by the state of the teenagers you passed this morning, still pissed up from the night before, a wire fence may still have been a