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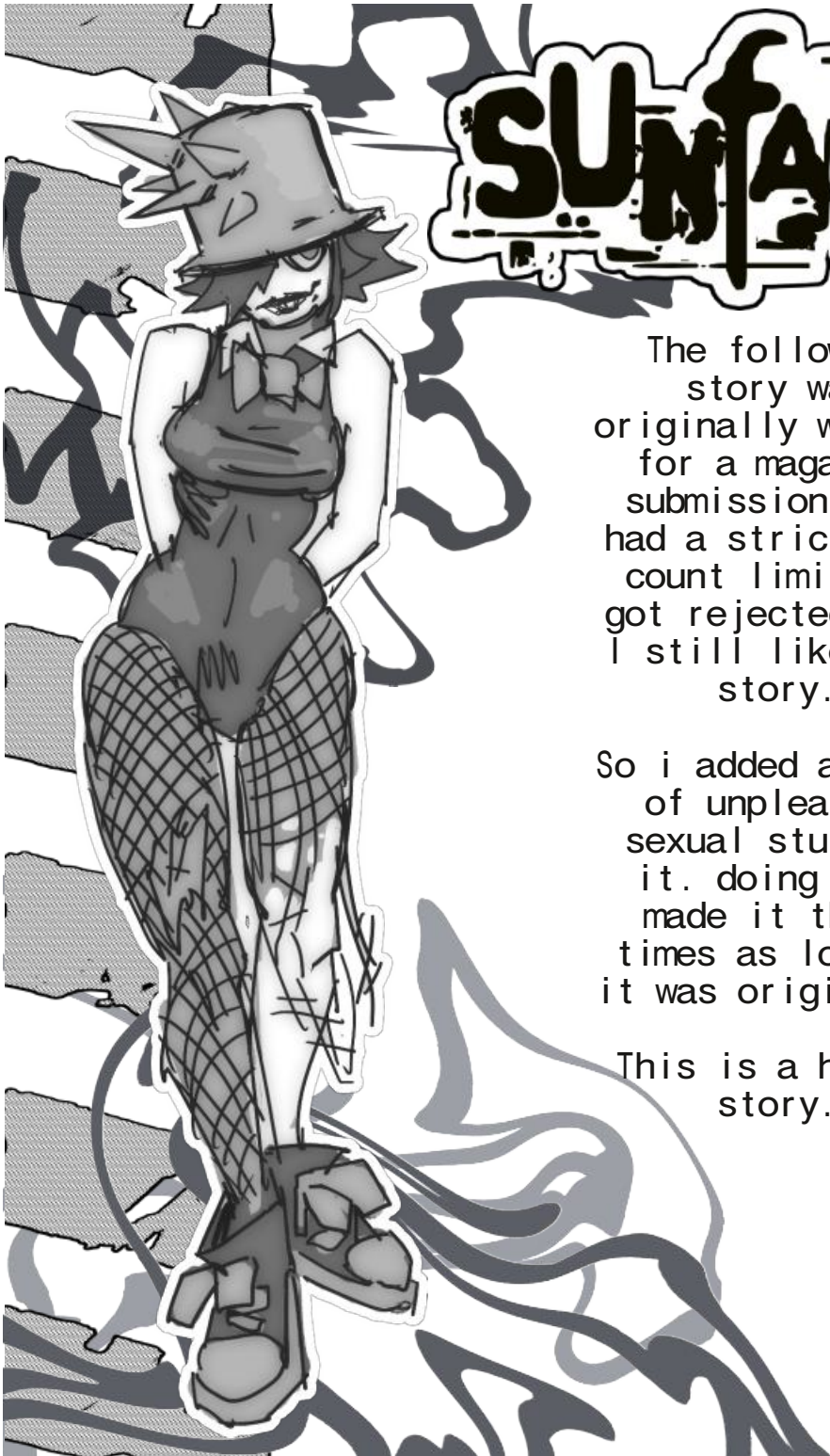
CASHORT STORY  
CALLIOPE NEUROTOXIN

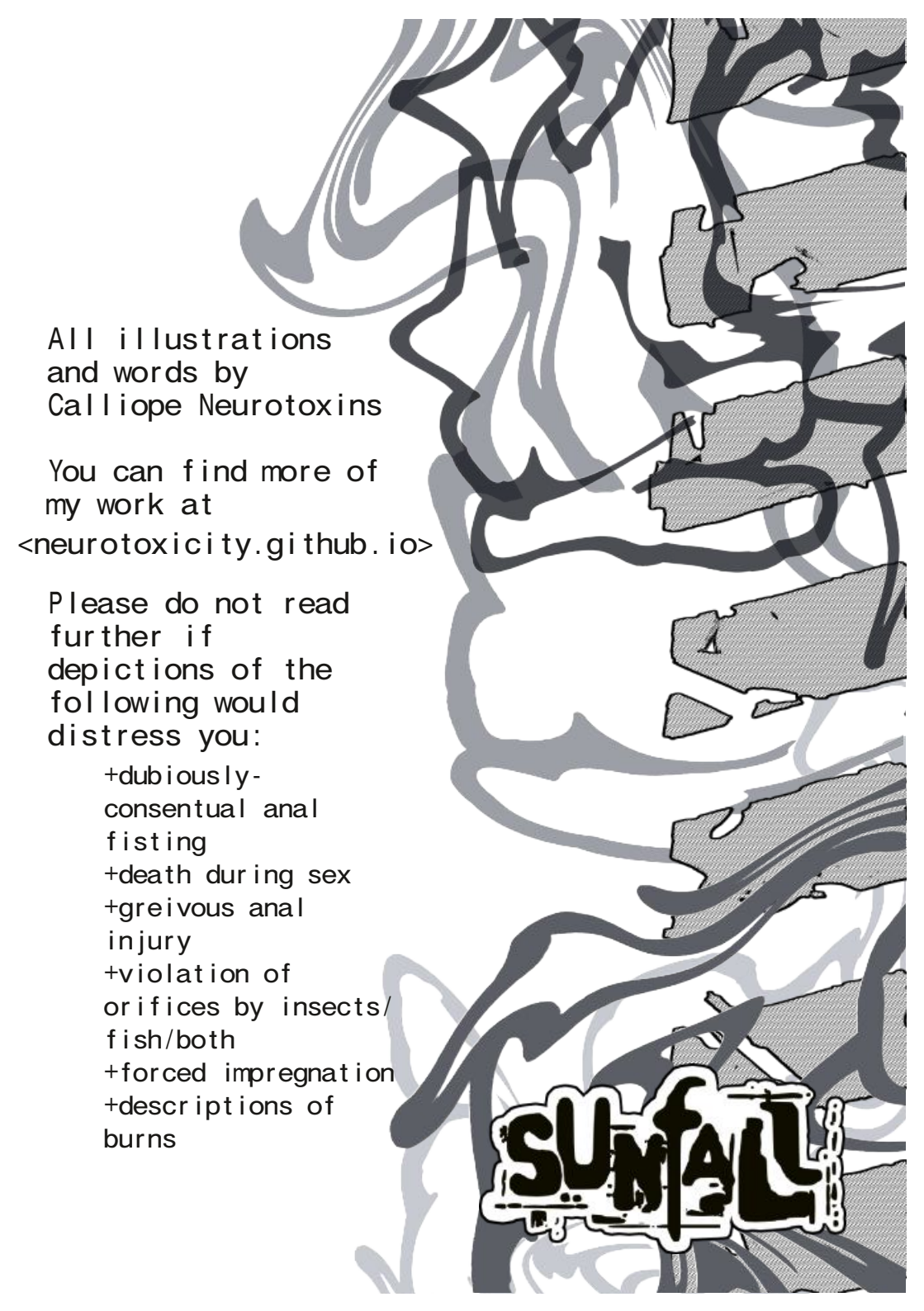
# SUNFALL

The following story was originally written for a magazine submission that had a strict word count limit. It got rejected, but I still liked the story.

So i added a bunch of unpleasant sexual stuff to it. doing that made it three times as long as it was originally.

This is a horror story.





All illustrations  
and words by  
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You can find more of  
my work at  
<[neurotoxicity.github.io](https://neurotoxicity.github.io)>

Please do not read  
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- +death during sex
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injury
- +violation of  
orifices by insects/  
fish/both
- +forced impregnation
- +descriptions of  
burns

**SUNFALL**



# SUNFALL

At an unjust point in history, sunlight flows like water. Every morning, for a single shining instant, the world drowns in a pure brightness. But then it rolls downhill and the darkness returns. The light pools in the deepest places. It sinks below the waves, rots in deep caves. In the desolate trenches of the ocean floor, secret fishes are immolated by the sun's warmth. The light falls hard and fast, and it burns everything. Plants survive now only beneath a lucky overhang. People also. The light hurts. But even so, all of humanity is made wretched for want of it.

Everyone I've ever met lives within a vast and sprawling plain of rotted buildings. Near the specific one I grew up in, there's a city that fills up like a bowl. It enjoys a perpetual daytime achieved through the combined artifices of tall, tall walls and a drain they never unstopper. A rare utopia.

The light rots in that place. Its

denizens are ruddy-faced and sunburnt. Well-fed melanoma bobble on their necks like second heads, nodding along in assent to every stupid thing they say. When they leave the gates of the city (through a complex series of sealed bulkheads) they carry nothing of value with them; the only thing worth anything in this world is light, and it never occurs to them to bring some. They have so much and have never lived somewhere without it. And their eyes, dried out and cracked, can't see the people following them through the darkness outside.

So when we push them down and strip the meat from their bones it comes as a great surprise, of course. How could it not? I don't think they even know there are people outside the city.

But those people travel from miles around, out of secret little hovels, and they stand outside the city walls in the afternoons, hoping for overflow. They wait at rush hour to catch some of the light that sloshes out when the people inside move around too much, buckets outstretched. Or gaping open mouths. I try to avoid contact with that latter group. They drink deep, way too deep, and their bellies glow



from it. Their piss turns the crusty little underfoot plants to embers. Their flesh gets spongy, so spongy you can dig a long thumbnail through it and never hit bone. It falls away from their faces in clumps. They don't even notice.. They don't notice much, to be honest. They only see the light.

I make a living selling bottled light to people up the mountain, whose tiny, perilous hamlets lack the deep pits or high walls that cities on the ruin plains possess. You can't really get by without some small amount of sunlight, but it tends to burn holes in whatever you collect it in. metal, wood, whatever. So I come up the road with my glass bottles, and I pour them out a measure or two of the good stuff. Obviously I keep the bottles, glass stuff is incredibly rare. They give me rhubarb and other lumpy root-vegetables that they grow underground. The vegetables taste okay, I guess. They're fine. Nothing special. And they get to avoid the strange sicknesses that plague those pale things that spend their time crawling in the dark, and maybe they can use the light to grow some vegetables that taste a little fucking better than the shit they share with me.

I was crouching underneath a travellers shrine, constructed by a conscientious nearby township so that those walking to or from it might be protected from rain or sun. It was safer than attempting to seek shelter in the ruins. Those ancient suburban homes were liable to collapse at any moment; their shoddy construction was legendary even when they were new. Plus there might be creatures hiding there already, which would be a whole other fucking thing altogether. Gotta keep clear of creatures, of course.

Anyway, crouching there, chewing a stick of rhubarb... that was when I saw her. Rain was drizzling, and she was lying on the ground. Face up.

She was inside a half-melted building, laid out on something that might have been a carpet a hundred years ago. Rubble and asbestos had conspired to create a basin on the upper level, one that had filled with sunlight. The light mingled with brickdust and rotting animal remains, then drooled down onto the floor below. Or had done so, before that woman parked her mouth underneath and started drinking the stream. I didn't know how long she'd been there, downing that fetid orange sludge, but it



seemed like it must have been a long while. And if it wasn't then, it would be eventually. When someone gets to the point where they're willing to do something like that, they're in for the long haul.

People with more polite tendencies, who haven't succumbed as much to sunstroke, tend to prefer their light bottled. They're my best customers. Getting it in a classy container, making a ritual out of the imbibement, doing it indoors... People tend to feel like doing it that way means you've got it under control. And to their credit it often does. But once you don't have that nice room anymore, or anything that could compel someone to unstopper a bottle... well, when you need it, you need it. And if the sunstroke gets bad enough the difference between a snifter and a gutter becomes theoretical to say the least.

Anyway, she was lying there. Probably had been for a while, since I could see the shadows of bones under her skin. An orange glow deep inside pushed out through her blood and her organs and her skin to highlight in vague relief her ribcage, her femur, her jawbone. That's how it gets when you don't eat or drink,

when you just suck sunlight for long enough. Her belly boiled with it. Swollen and distended. Lit from within. It was raining, slightly, just a light drizzle. Wet enough for me not to want to be walking under open sky, you know? It steamed off of her stomach like she was red hot.

I was kneeling by her, by that point. Checking for signs of life, when suddenly the glow in her stomach eclipsed. Something was moving around inside her. I had an impression of a piscine shadow, with a long tail flicking. Something was alive in there, and it was restless.

She was still breathing, which was surprising to me. I hadn't expected that.

"are you awake?"

She drew only shallow breaths. It occurred to me that lying on your back in the rain might be a good way to drown. Even though it was barely raining.

"can you hear me?"

She inhaled, suddenly. Deep and rattling. The sound of mismatched gears grinding past each-other somewhere in her lungs, pieces grumbling then shattering off. Her eyelids



shot open and she glared at me, gaze sharp like she was making an accusation. One of her eyes was gone. Pecked out by birds.

When she spoke, it was in a slow and low croak. Skin dry and cracked and flaking past her tongue, presumably, ravaged by sunburns on the inside. I've seen the things people vomit up when the sunstroke gets really bad, and I had no wish to see anything like that ever again. I prepared to run.

"What's your name?"

I froze for a second, since I hadn't been expecting the question. It's bad luck to tell someone with sunstroke your name, and I didn't have a lie ready for smooth deployment. And then, before I could think of one, she grabbed my shirt and screamed. It was guttural, the breathless cry of someone close to death. Of a soul leaving the body and being loud about it, so that an angel might notice and carry her off. Breasts heaving, hands became grasping lockjointed claws as her limbs thrashed.

The collar of my shirt tore from me tugging away, but she'd gotten a fistful of my robes too.

I slipped on my ass in the muck, splattering away from her. My boot made contact with her thigh, and ripples spread across her body away from that spot.

Then the thing within her began to churn in earnest.

Up until that point I'd perceived her as something opaque, a person fit into the mold cast by every other sunstroked person I'd encountered before in my life. Insensate, unpredictable, incoherent. Like some kind of wild animal or an upturned nail more than another person to be known and comprehended. Tetanus risk. She began to sob and a wave of shame overtook me as I awoke to the reality of the situation: a human was suffering! Right there, in front of me!

Sunlight spilled out of her. The woman's eyes overflowed with glowing tears, her nose dripped, too. A pool collected under her buttocks. Even her dick leaked a weak trickle of sunlight.

Her stomach moved around a ridged impression of cartilaginous segmentation that slid to the surface and then back away into the burning yellow of her core. Whatever that was inside her, it needed to come out.



I withdrew my knife from its hiding place; a cruel and rusted curved-blade thing that folded open with a tooth-aching scrape. It hovered over her stomach; the thing inside her stretched her skin towards the blade's chipped and pitted edge. And then I stopped short. The woman below me screamed, blind eyes affixed to me in agony.

What was I thinking? Without disinfectant, without sutures, and most importantly, without medical expertise... this kind of thing would be a death sentence. There had to be another way.

The pool below her grew larger and larger, rotten sunlight soaked through my robes and into the knees of my jeans. More light poured from her hole as I folded away the knife, and I got an idea.

The thing inside her clearly wanted out. So I'd need to give it somewhere else to go. My pack was replete with containers full of sunlight. I'd coax it out of an orifice and into one of those.

The skin between her legs was soft. She clamped around my shoulders as, with some difficulty, I spread her legs apart. Levered, really. As I looked at her soft dick and

heaving breasts, I took a deep and shaking breath. This wasn't sex, even though it had been such a long time since I touched another woman's flesh. If this was going to be anything, it was triage. Labour, maybe? That unruly child in her stomach needed to go before it ripped her apart.

I repeated that to myself as I traced along her thigh, and to her crotch. I believed it, even, as I pressed my fingers against the furnace-warm pucker between her legs, spreading the viscous sunlight slick over them. But as I started to work my finger inside, her cock twitched, and then so did mine. A hot core of shame ignited in the base of my brain. The reality of what was doing hit me; it was like I'd sleepwalked into sexually assaulting some parasite-ridden derelict in the mud. No asinine pretence of triage would change the truth of that! I faltered, pulling away, but I was stuck, held in place by her shockingly strong legs. I found her to be propped on her elbows, looking right at me. Through gritted teeth, and with great difficulty, she scraped out an utterance:

"...you have to stay..."

I leaned back in.





No choice.

I slipped the finger inside, up to the knuckle. It was warm. Incredibly warm. Like putting my finger in a hot drink. A drink that clenched around me. I pulled the finger out slightly, with difficulty, as she gripped against it. A little sunlight flowed with it, leaking out around my finger.

I fucked the finger in and out of her, gently at first. If that thing was going to come out this way she'd need to loosen up a lot more...

So I curled my finger slightly, and felt her keening whine in response. Her cock began to stiffen. A golden bead of light formed at its tip, then collapsed in the rain.

I curled inside her again, deeper this time, grinding the pad of my finger against that smooth and rubbery lump girls have inside them, right in that one spot. Her tooth-gnashing turned to moans, and the thing inside her thrashed in response.

Before long I fit another finger in, loosening her hole open and grinding against her prostate even more forcefully, until her leg was twitching against my arm uncontrollably. Her breathing hitched, then kept

hitching as her eye rolled back in her head.

I kept going. A third finger. A fourth, with my whole hand curled around itself to fit inside. By now her hole had relaxed considerably; her ass was a mess of smeared sunlight. It splattered on across my hand and up my wrist. A warm heat seeped through my skin from some source deep inside her. The light flowed out of her with ever thrust my hand. I unfurled my fingers inside her, slightly, felt them brush against some hidden dam within her, and then she clenched around me, hard. Release was at hand – soon she'd be free of what lurked inside her. I could feel it.

I realised the rain had stopped when something wet and warm splattered against the side of my face. She spluttered, and I turned, and I saw her throat bulge wide around something rigid and foreign and segmented. It slid upwards towards her throat with a smoothness that shocked me, swiftly passing through successive fleshsome barriers with a series of wet crunches. It emerged from the woman's mouth with a great crack as her jaw broke open around its shell, and its many tiny limbs spasmed as it waved in the air above the ruin of her mouth. It



was shockingly black, the hard edges of its many cartilaginous plates only visible by the wet sheen of the sunlight that dripped from it. A horrible mirror to the rigid length that, even now, extruded from her crotch.

I never learned the name of that woman, and she was dead before it ever occurred to me that I ought to have asked for it. With some difficulty I extricated my hand from her corpse.

What happened next I have no explanation for. I don't know why I did it, but I held up a bottle to her head. My largest one. And in that ancient, decaying suburb, in the ruins of that single family home, I captured someones child.

Its tail thumped against the glass as it swam. I would spend hours watching it, sometimes. Tiny little limbs fanned along its length, holding it in place within the light. Then, with a sudden whip of its long tail, it'd dart to another spot. That was when it would hit the glass, of course. The way it swam was kind of cute, in it's own weird way.

That sunburned womans final resting place was by the road

leading to a far-flung country town. I'd been on my way there to ply my trade, but before long I realised I'd have to turn back. I was running uncharacteristically low on light.

The thing in the jar wasn't just swimming in the sunlight. It was drinking it too. And by the time I noticed, it was starting to flop against the bottom of its jug, dry-gilled and gasping. I refilled it, of course. By that point I'd become a little attached to the horrid little creature. That's not to say I'd figured out what it actually was, just that I didn't really want it to die on me.

I told myself that It'd fetch a better price alive than dead, but maybe that was just an excuse. Maybe I just wanted to actually get something in return for the red-raw weeping sores on my hand I'd gotten from capturing it. Something for the sunburn that bubbled on the skin up to the wrist. It hurt like crazy, and I feared that the pain would drive me mad before I could seek anything to soothe it. Perhaps doctors could help me, and those same doctors might wish to vivisect the creature.

I turned back and kept refilling the jug, and before long I was walking with a much, much lighter pack.



Soon enough I found that I wasn't collecting enough sunlight with the dawn; It'd grown too big, it needed to drink too deeply. I simply didn't have enough bottles with me to satisfy it. These bottles, which had been my livelihood for so long, which I had cheated and stolen and killed to get... it stung a little, to find them not up to the task. But no matter... by this point I wasn't far from the city, which meant I wasn't far from the hospital that sat in the slums outside its walls. I could surely sell it to someone there, somehow, if I could just get it there alive.

My supplies had run out, too. I was trudging along in a dehydrated, starving haze, just putting one foot in front of the next. Scanning the sides of the road for bandits, ogling the horizon in the hopes I might run into someone I could beg for water. But every half-glimpsed figure just turned out to be the ruins of some ancient crucifixion or melted tree. This wasn't the first time I'd found myself in a bind and on the road with no help in sight. But it was the first time I'd lost track of things so grievously that I failed to notice the warning signs of an approaching dawn. And then I found myself at the zenith of ar

uneven rocky hill, being drenched in sunrise. It fell in a heavy sheet. The air was knocked from my lungs. I scrambled to unload my bottles, because that's what I always did at this time, and because they were on top of the tarp that I wanted to hide from the deluge under. The light sizzled against the bare skin of my face: I was so unprepared for dawn that I wasn't even wearing my hat. It lay on top of my pack, which I swung off my back with far too much urgency and force. I was panicking, slipping in the muck. Some stone underfoot shifted as the sunlight flowed over it, and I lost my balance. I tumbled down the hill. My pack followed me, fasteners loosening until bottles scattered out of it and shattered against the rocks around me. I hit the ground at the foot of the hill hard, and felt the sunlight hitting me intermingle with glass shards. I was blinded in one eye by a chunk of one of the bottles I'd once earned my living from; and then again in the other by hot, bright sunlight. I scrambled on my knees trying to find my bearings, and was immediately bowled over by something slamming into my ribs: my largest bottle, with the creature inside. It exploded against me, and within that



cacophony of broken glass I felt bone shatter, too. I lay there in shock, soaking in sunlight and my own blood. I coughed around the light as my open mouth filled. Then I swallowed. It burned all the way down.

I'd drunk sunlight before, of course. Who hadn't? In moments of weakness, anyone's eyes would stray towards a bottle. But I'd never had it this fresh, this hot, this painfully. I coughed and spluttered against it as I felt the scorching heat soak into me. I panted, struggling to draw breath as more and yet more sunlight pelted against me from above. Broken glass cut into my knees and hands as I tried to find my way upright again, to get myself to shelter, somehow. I flailed, and I panicked, and I babbled insensate things from my burned tongue. The whole world was suffused by an orange glow as the yawning wounds of my eyes burned away in the sunlight. It was excruciating.

Try as I might, I couldn't get my balance. And then I felt something brush against my hand. Then my other hand. The burned one. Raw flesh scraped aside, and did so excruciatingly.

I flailed wildly in a blind panic, lost my balance and planted my face in the dirt. I felt a hundred tiny insectoid feet poke into the upturned, unravaged cheek as the thing I had kept in the bottle crawled onto me.

My hair fell around my face in a heavy curtain, doused in light and sizzling. I felt the strong tail of the thing wrap around my neck and grabbed at it, peeling it off. The tiny points of its many legs scraped against my skin as I dragged it away from my head, but it slithered out of my grip and up my arm, darting quickly up my wet sleeve.

And then it was upon my head once again, tapping its eyeless head against my cheek, and I realised in a shock that it was trying to get inside. Inside of me. My fingers scrabbled against it as it found my mouth. Black chitin scraped against my stinking teeth, then found purchase in my gums.

I wheezed in terror as I failed to find purchase against the creature's sunslicked smooth carapace. The light, fresh and hot and still pouring down around me, burned like hell. It stung like flaying. I smelt my skin cook and my mouth watered. Saliva joined the blood and light coating the





thing scrambling to pull itself further into my mouth.

I grit my teeth until something in my jaw popped, then grabbed at it harder, got a grip on it and wrenched. Mandibles tore my face open as it fought against me. A wheeled my arms wildly and it bit clean through my lip as I made to hurl it clear, my rictus grimace spreading the wound open and jetting hot blood out into the deluge of sunlight. My bicep twinged with the force of the throw, but the bug slipped from my grasp and hung onto the bubbling skin of my hand. Its feet dug into the raw flesh and scraped against the bones beneath; more of my skin came away with its sharp little limbs and once again it slipped through my fingers and disappeared up my sleeve.

I slapped at the lump under the fabric as it writhed along my arm, crushing it into the crook of my elbow and holding it in place. It scrambled against the hold, and with a dawning horror I realised I couldn't be rid of it. It was latched onto me far too tightly, and I was too hurt to get away. Even worse, it was only a matter of time before it got loose and went for my mouth again. Over the sounds of dawn I could almost

hear that grisly crunch its mother made as it ate its way out of her. It was bigger now than it was then. If the creature tried to make a home of my throat it'd kill me in the attempt.

So it was that kneeling there, sunlight blind and wrestling against a monster in my sleeve, I came to a decision.

I couldn't stop it from getting inside me. But maybe I could control how it happened.

I lowered my torso to pin the thing against the ground with my chest, then awkwardly wrenched my jeans down as far as I could with my free hand. Then, face in the dirt and on my knees, I brushed my burned-raw fingers against my hole. My ass tingled as the sunlight hit it. My fingers were already wet.

There was no time to waste.

I pressed into myself without really taking the time to ease in. The sunlight burned in my hole. My gritted teeth scraped against the stones. The rubberiness inside my hole gripped against the sunburn painfully. I pushed forward again. Deeper. Ouch. The creature underneath me sank its mandibles into my bicep and an aggrieved hiss escaped my



throat.

This wasn't working.

I fingered myself harder, desperately. The angle was awkward; my hand straightened uncomfortably against my ass as I sank my finger in up to the base and curled it. It felt like the ruined flesh of my burned hand was liquefying inside me as the soft flesh of my hole yielded to it, and then I felt the pad of my finger brush against an intimate, inner seam.

I probed further and found that small rubbery mass I'd been lucking for. I bent my finger gently, then more urgently as I recalled the severity of the situation. I gasped without meaning to and accidentally made a coquettish bite against the open wound that had overtaken my lip. I whined in pain, and then in pleasure as I curled my finger again. Sunlight washed the tears in my eyes away.

I pulled my finger out, then slipped it back in with a second one.

The tendons in my wrist protested against the awkwardness of the manoeuvre. My arm wasn't really long enough for this. Is anyone's, really?

I hammered at my prostate with both fingers, then, and felt an unbearable pressure build at the base of my skull. Again and again, fingers in motion, slowly kneading myself towards something that drowned out everything around me. The pain and fear fell into the background in contrast to the wanting, the need of it. I shifted in the dirt, trying to get an extra centimetre of wrist towards my hole, to somehow conjure a little more finger to put inside. Somehow those two scabbed fingers were tearing me apart.

But not quickly enough. I was losing it. I ground my fingers in and felt my prostate compress under my fingers, but didn't feel the pleasure of it as heavily as I had a moment earlier. I shifted my body again, trying to dig even deeper, get a little bit more range of movement so I could fuck myself harder, and lost my balance as the thing I'd been pressing into the dirt slipped out from under me. I clumsily rolled over and onto my back as the thing inside my sleeve got loose and rocketed past my wrist and onto my belly, brushing past my crotch. I yelped as something slammed into the hand I'd buried in my ass, and my fingers slipped out. My hole gasped in the open air



for a second before the creature rammed into it, seeking warmth, seeking the sunlight I'd fucked into my guts with that aching hand. Seeking my insides.

My hole wasn't loose enough for it. Little legs pressed inside and poked at me as they tried to pull the rest of it through. I screamed in shock at the violation as it stretched painfully, and I felt something tear. Blood spurted along the length of the dark carapace of the thing and I jolted against the pain, lifting my butt of the ground. The thing briefly swang in the air like some horrid tail before it pulled itself up, shoving even deeper in. More of my insides stretched and tore around it, and then it was stuck. I'd need to help it out somehow before it started biting at me.

I lowered myself and grabbed at my crotch, rubbing harried circles against my secret appendage, and found it engorged already, somehow. I convulsed around the thing in my ass as its blunt head reached my aching prostate and ground against it as it worked itself in. My screams turned to moans as it rubbed inside me. I mirrored it with rubbing from outside, and then it somehow found its way and

started disappearing into me much quicker than before. Everything disappeared from my awareness. I thrashed in the dirt as I came violently, painfully, brutally. Muscles all up my leg tensed and pulled themselves. Waves of pleasure crashed over me as the thing pulled itself deeper and deeper. Then I think I passed out.

When I came to the dawn was over, and everything was dark. I lay there, exhausted and incapable of moving. The residue of dried-up sunlight flaked from my inner thighs when I eventually tried to move. My crotch was still sticky with the mess of my earlier orgasm. I ached from a myriad of points. My body had become an unfamiliar tapestry of injuries of varying severity. So I let sleep take me once again, and when I came too it was dawn again. I lay there for days, drinking sunlight when it fell, covering myself with what I could pull from the nearby wreckage of my pack. The thing inside me writhed with the dawn.

Eventually my vision returned. I felt I could walk. So now I'm walking, once again. I've been getting by, walking when I can, sitting in the ground with my mouth turned upwards at



daybreak. My mouth fills and I drink as deep as I can bear, the skin of my face bubbling and turning to scab under the ministrations of repeated, merciless sunburning. There's never enough time for it to heal before I need to drink again. I can feel the deepest parts of me pickling in the sunlight. And when I open my mouth for the sunlight, I retch first as something emerges from my throat, its waving limbs tickling my back teeth.

People I meet on the road take a wide berth around me. They avoid eye contact. They refuse to talk to me. But that's fine. I'm not hungry anymore, so we have nothing to talk about.

The loss of my eye I can work around, but without my bottles or the pack to carry them my livelihood is in ruins. I have been reduced to the same sort of sunlight-drinking wretch I once pitied and feared. More importantly, I know it's only a matter of time until the thing inside me gets sick of my gut and wants out. How the hell can I get it out without something to decant it into?

So I'm taking it to the only place I know where it can have fresh sunlight and stay

immersed in it forever. I'm taking it to the city. You know, the one I told you about before? They don't like letting people in, it's true. You have to be from the place. You have to be a local.

But they're also blind. And in the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed woman can get by, maybe. Sneak in at least a little bit. I'm hoping once they cycle the airlocks and flood the chamber with the city-light the thing I'm carrying will be tempted and swim out of me. Out and up and away from my aching body, which hopefully the guards won't stab before they toss me out the gate again.

At first it'll be careful, and furtively flit around in the dirt at ground level with the other vermin, where the old sunlight has compressed and decayed and mixed with debris and become a soft orange glow. But eventually it'll eat enough rats and fishes and its tail will grow longer. And its teeth will get sharper. It will have webbed fins, with wicked spines, and a great maw that hangs open as its blind eyes goggle in its bony head. And the citizens of that city won't notice it's in there with them. And it'll eat them. Just the small ones, first. Babies stolen from cribs in the middle of the day, cause it's





always daytime in the city.  
Always morning, even.  
And then it'll go for tougher  
prey, young children, maybe.  
Then older. Ones with the will  
to fight back, who won't just go  
to pieces when it approaches.  
And then on to the adults. It'll  
catch a harpoon, perhaps. Lose  
an eye, maybe. People will stop  
moving alone. And it will be  
swimming along, obscured  
from view by rooftops above,  
swimming higher and higher  
and higher. The light gets  
brighter, cleaner, fresher as it  
ascends, as it becomes longer,  
as it becomes stronger. Soon  
it's crushing buildings beneath  
its prodigious bulk, snapping  
up the last few straggling  
survivors; they survive so  
carefully amongst the  
wreckage and ruins, down at  
the bottom where the sunlight  
has rotted, but eventually they  
get careless, spend too much  
time in the open light. And then  
it'll get them.

And it'll chew up every single  
one of them and breathe  
deeply, and then you'll be able  
to see the roiling coils of a  
great serpent, even from  
outside the city.

It'll be mesmerising, the way  
its great and undulating length  
pushes up past the top of the  
city's walls, and everyone will  
know what's happening inside,  
and they'll stop wishing that

they were inside, too. And  
they'll find a way to get by that  
doesn't orbit the city. It'll be just  
another place in a constellation  
of places.

The light that sprays off the  
scales of the serpent will be a  
brilliant white. Purer even than  
fresh sunfall. The kind of  
sunlight that doesn't hurt when  
it touches you. That you can  
just enjoy for hours, if you have  
enough of it. And there will be  
enough of it, for everyone, not  
just the people in the city.  
Not that there will be any of  
those, by then. The serpent will  
have squashed every building  
and eaten every person; it will  
turn all of it to silt. And at no  
point in that long and violent  
and grinding saga will it occur  
to any citizen of the city to  
unstopper the pipes, to drain  
the sunlight and choke the  
serpent. Not one of them will  
think to leave, not even the last  
one to go.

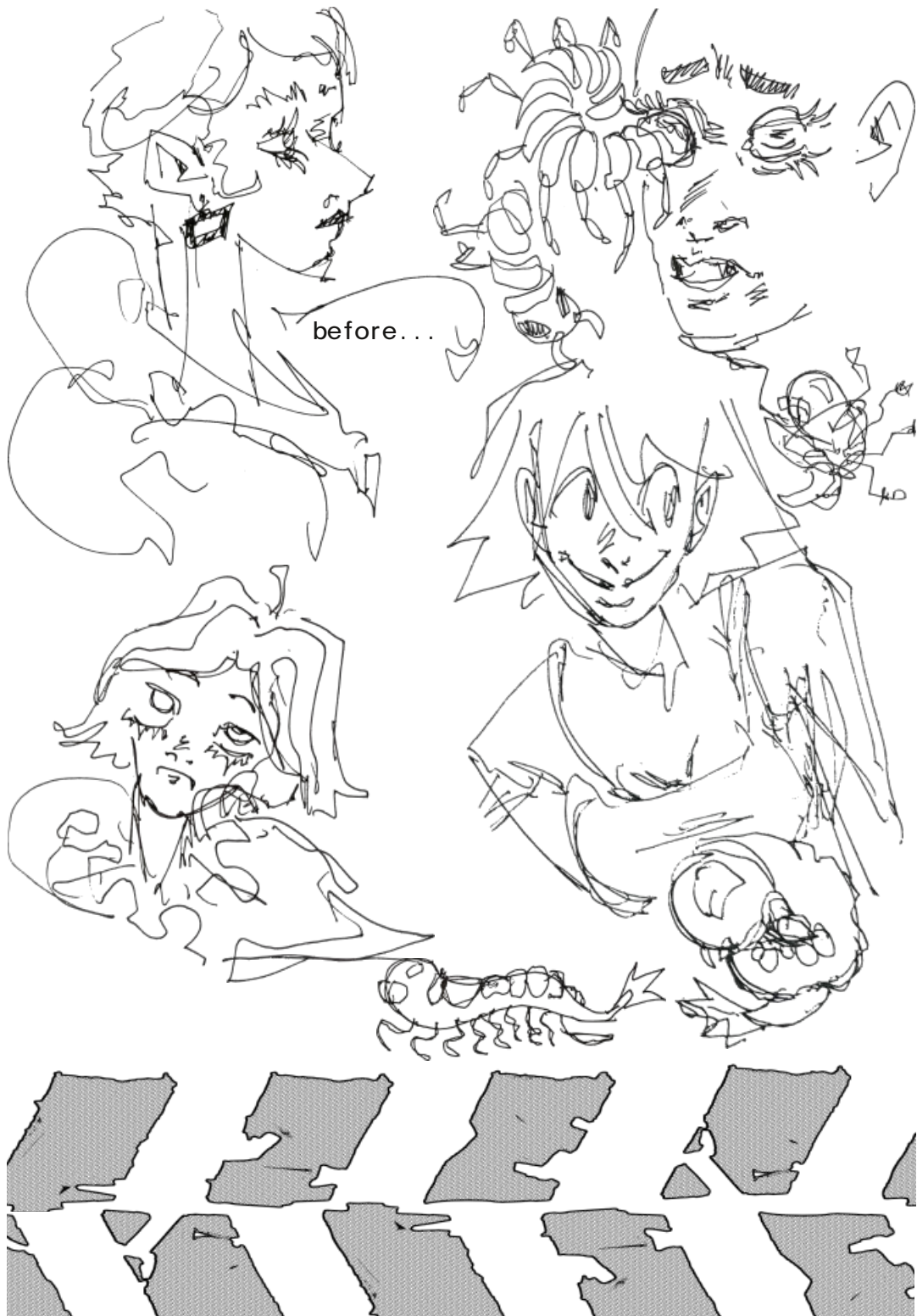
And then we can be done with  
the city.

Or maybe not. I still have a long  
way to go, and my stomach isn't  
feeling so good.

**END**







before...



stay! sun safe!!



slip  
slop  
slap!



WAIT-



... seek and slide...





# SUNfall

Thank you for  
reading!

2024



