“Let me see it,” I shout when I come down, flipping up the hood, ripping out the tube. “Let me —”

I make it two steps out of the scanner, but I can’t hold back the nausea. Tethi, bless him, is holding a bucket. And when I look a little better, he hands me a little bottle of water. “I’m sorry. Not to have warned you, primed you, whatever. But there’s nobody I can go to. You have no idea what a relief it is that you found it too.”

“No, *no, no, no...*you don’t understand,” I insist weakly. Retch again. “People see things in there all the time, but it’s just delusion, it’s...” What was the word the Weather Bureau used? “It’s maladaptive...”

“I thought that too, for a while. It’s how I justified selling it.” He smiles faintly, and I’m aware now of how foolish I sound explaining the Mirror Sea to a Chalker. Maybe a Chalker? *There are layers to it,* he’d said. “It’s in the printer,” he says now. “You said you wanted to see it.”

Another copy of the Sunflower Sieve egg thunks into the tray. Fresh, icy understanding spreads to my fingertips as I pick it up. And I pause. Saying it makes it real. “I meant…their city. That place. I’m…it’s crazy how much I can’t remember already. I need to see it in soberspace.”

“You can’t. Not really.” He taps a hefty grey box near the monitors. “This right here is a convolution coprocessor. Every Mirror Sea display in the city uses one to find interesting correlations. But a good neikonaut can blow a whole room of them out of the water. I’ll show you what it can piece together, but prepare to be underwhelmed.”

He has a flat view of the Sea up now on one of the monitors. He flicks his wrists, panning and zooming. “Look. This was the night I found it.” A dull grey Sea, roughly nothing, though the poor contrast of his monitor doesn’t help. Infrequently there are dim, spectral intrusions of sunlight, that’s all. “Uhh, *here.*” More nothing. Then a dim, silent, spherical flash of gold light.

I’m locked and loaded to insist that this doesn’t prove anything. But then he plucks one of the Sieve eggs off the table with a theatrical flick. “*This* is what I saw and printed that night. Now, time passes, day, night, day, night…watch carefully, they test-fire it a few more times…”

“*Test-fire* it?”

The feed slows. Night falls on Shanghai, and night falls in the Sea, except for one insistent little pinprick, a tiny sun that won’t set. And then another, and another, three more now. It’s tentative, like a flame in wind, and then fierce, like a flame in wind, until the Sea is laced with a whole network of golden fissures. “That was the night that *this* leaked online.” He picks up the second egg now, offers both for my examination. They’re *different*, subtly so, in the details of the flecks and the tubules. A parallax view, the same egg discovered twice...

“Someone else is seeing this,” I mutter. I take it back; *this* is what makes it real. “I thought, that night at Double Descent, that you dropped it. That someone else picked it up and put it online.”

“Then you don’t yet know me very well.” He wags a finger, smiling, trying to be funny. “Don’t let go of what you already have. That’s just about my number one rule.”

I don’t smile back. I focus just past it, a flash of something reflective, and probing it as the diving-bell. The hollow, barely-recalled horror of wondering which side of some ragged mirror I was on. *You looked too hard,* hisses something awful inside me. It insists that I caused this, even though *I know* that doesn’t make any sense. It’s got Tethi too. It’s what he’s been trying to drink away…

“Mona?”

He catches me just before I hit the floor.