Paper Walls - Notes

I feel like there are multiple stories here. One where Keith narrates his journey to meeting Skylar and starting a relationship with her while he fights against himself and another one where Skylar and Mackenzie talk about Keith and their understanding of him after he goes missing/ commits suicide. The first is a light-hearted romance where Keith overcomes himself and the second is a darker vision of understanding others and being united by a single life done in the context of the funeral of one of a group of friends.

My current idea is to tell the story in chapters. All set from the perspective of Corona/Mackenzie Anson who has to deal with Keith Buchant knocking on her window at 5am on a Monday/Sunday morning and reciting the tale of how his date with Skye Clarke went.

During the week or next week she then has to deal with Skye herself showing up at her door. Corona is the Bilbo Baggins type who really just wants to be left alone, yet she is particularly good at listening to others and helping them through their problems. Corona will have to deal with her own issues with Skye and Keith for the final chapter where the latter is dead and she reconciles with the former after the funeral.

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‘*Accidents out on the highway to somewhere they tell us about when we’re young. Rescuers working to clean up the crashes before she can see what they’ve done. Nobody told her she’d lose in the first round, the last fight was fixed from the start.*’

‘*Night life, the high life. She just wants a good life so someone remembers her too.*’

I love the idea of Harrison not having much dialogue but singing in the story.

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” The paradox of Keith Buchant” she began, “was that despite being a man of many opinions, he would never actually tell very many people any of them. Instead he would stare blankly at them and shrug or offer a laugh before steering the conversation in another direction.”

To be honest, this reads like a light-hearted romance where Keith is fighting against himself to even make contact with Skylar.

**Keith Buchant – Chapter 2**

It was in the summer of his eighteenth birthday that Keith Buchant decided; of the major problems he had with his life, it was the fact that he was in control of where it was headed that was to be regarded as the most serious. His logic being that his dearth of experience and chronic bad luck would lead him to making the wrong choices at every opportunity.

Keith took on an atypically fervent, yet still systematic, vigor as he went about addressing what he viewed his fatal flaw. He endeavored to, as best he could, offload his decision making to process onto others and being only too happy to accept their advice. Over the forthcoming months after his revelation, he managed to settle himself firmly into the role of the counseled even when the matter at hand was of the foremost importance in his life. Keith did this to the point of nigh on complete codependence with those in his surrounding circle and in the process managed to divide **[need a more mathematical term here]** that circle into one whose borders enclosed but 2 units. This would, in turn, shatter his confidence when not amongst his ‘best friends’, leading to Keith becoming a walking cacophony of social avoidance when he was not with them.

[I could always Mackezify this paragraph to fit In line with Keith’s entry to Mack’s house]

And so the paradox of Keith Buchant became that despite being a man of many opinions he would never actually tell most people any of them. Instead he would stare blankly at them or shrug and offer a chuckle before steering the conversation in another direction. If one were to ask Keith himself, assuming he didn’t just dodge the question by pulling from his weathered playbook of social avoidance, he would simply sigh and utter the following quote “I am not a person of opinions because I feel the counter arguments too strongly” and hope for that to kill the debate. In the instances which it did not he would nod appropriately during the forthcoming lecture, all-the-while intensely debating himself about the issue.

Not even his usual utterances were spared from his mind’s eye. So it came to be that on one day he would, in the process of going about his usual routine, be about to deliver this most tired of authorial references when he was pulled into the throngs of internal debate once more. Keith wondered under his breath whether that was something of a commentary on his life up to that point, a headline of sorts, to be placed atop the roll of footage he would see in the process of death. ‘The life and times of Keith Buchant: He was not a man of opinions because he felt the counter arguments too strongly. Also he stared stupidly at those who asked him for one.’

Spelling out the title to himself allowed him to snap out of his reverie and he realize that he had trailed off in the middle of conversation to stare at the table and whisper intensely with himself. He looked up to find a young woman whose doe eyes looked back him with a cocktail of bemusement and genuine concern for his sanity. Keith apologized profusely for his poor etiquette before doing a quick scan of the mental playbook for a way out of the situation. His fear began to mount as he realized he may have to tell the woman something to assuage her doubts about his mental stability. That would be the socially correct thing to do, yes? When she read his expression - and observed what Keith could only assume was confusion on his face - she set her coffee down and touched her hand to his before looking at him, her eyes impossibly blue, and offered him a reassuring smile.

“Relax, Keith. Take a deep breath” she had said. He took several. “Now start again. You were telling me about your complex opinion on pennies.” Keith had two choices: he could angst again and probably hyperventilate while doing so – though that would get him out the situation he’d gotten himself into - or …

“Well, Skylar, it’s like this” he began.

**Skylar Clarke – Story 2**

When he walked through the door to the women’s bathroom Skylar Clarke knew she was in love – or as close to love as Skylar could understand at the time. It was not that he was particularly handsome or tall or exceptional in any of the superficial ways that Skylar had been attracted to then. It was that Keith Buchant had a quiet intellect to him, though occasionally she could see the steam escaping from him his brain when he thought too hard. That was the point: Keith thought. He was a thinker. So different to anyone that Skylar had met before that she had almost wanted to see him so frequently purely for novelty of the experience.

They had scarcely made eye contact when a scream erupted behind her and she had watched Keith’s expression shift as he realized his folly before spinning on his heel to exit the room. As he did so his shirt sleeve catching on the door handle as he did so. Keith had managed to dislodge himself before the security guards, who were racing towards the scene, had managed to reach him. He shot her a confused look as he took off into the mall.

Skye snuck a quick look in the mirror. Make-up? Fine. Hair? It’ll do. Teeth? Nothing stuck in them but they looked a little yellow, she should have them whitened. “Okay, I’m fine.” She said before taking off in search of him.

If there was one aspect of her new P.O.I. that Skylar Clarke found particularly surprising, it was that he was deceptively quick.

**Mackenzie Anson – Chapter 3**

It was a Thursday night when **Mackenzie** Anson realized that Hell had well and truly frozen over. She checked her watch immediately, 8pm, before looking up to find Skylar Clarke shivering at her door. The girl stood on the Anson family welcome mat that read ‘Friends welcome. Relatives by appointment.’ (A rather beautiful holder from the last visit that Mack’s extended family had paid to her place.) The girl was neither to Mackenzie so what the hell was she doing here, sopping wet no less?

“Hi.” Skylar said

“Hi.” Mackenzie responded before silence descended upon them.

“I’m not sure if we met. I’m Skye”

“Mackenzie.” They hadn’t met formally but Mackenzie knew the girl at her door well enough not to like her.

Skylar paused slightly as if she was unsure how to proceed.

She would have been perfectly happy to stand there and stare at the girl while she froze her skinny little ass off but she had to get her inside before Mackenzie’s mother caught wind of the situation and spent the next hour fussing over her while simultaneously berating Mackenzie for her lack of empathy.

“Come inside” she said with a sigh, relenting.

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Chapter 1 – Mackenzie’s place

When he stumbled his way in through her open window at 04:51 am last Monday, reciting the tale of how he managed to crack his latest pair of glasses and his injure his right arm in the 36 hour period since she’d had last seen him, Keith Buchant was quick to mention two points. Firstly: The woman involved, there’s always a woman involved with him, was mind-blowingly beautiful with a set of “sparkling” blue eyes, that he could, “get lost in for days” and second: he hadn’t actually managed to get her number, which was surprising given how chuffed he was with himself.

Mackenzie’s first instinct when she got up was to grab her hockey stick and bludgeon the hell out of the thing that awoke her from slumber. Keith was lucky that she had recognized him before she could try or he’d have more than just a fractured collarbone - he’d have a bashed in face as well. Her second instinct was to bludgeon him anyway for scaring her half to death. Seriously – who the bleeding heck wakes people up at 5am to tell them about their escapades with some girl?

‘Whatever, Keith, you fucked a girl. Welcome to the rest of your life!’ she had wanted to scream at him except:

1. He didn’t even get her number (which would repulse her if they did actually have sex – that level of exploitation was something she thought Keith above.)
2. This was Keith Buchant she was talking to. A girl only had to bat her eyelashes at him before he began composing poetry about her which Mackenzie would have to suffer through.

Despite herself, Mackenzie made them both a cup of tea before sitting him down and taking a look at his injuries.

When she regained a degree of functionality, Mackenzie was relatively impressed that he’d managed to have a full conversation with a woman other than herself for any extended period of time without tripping over his words, much less spending the 8 hours he claimed to have spent with his blue-eyed doll.

**Harrison Grey**

When Keith Buchant had recounted the story behind his latest set of broken glasses he made sure to mention two critical points. Firstly: the woman involved was mind-blowingly beautiful and secondly: he had failed, at that point in time, to get her number.

“No, that won’t do at all.” Keith Buchant closed the link to the job listing in front of him. A review and an opinion piece. “I am not a person of opinions because I feel the counter arguments too strongly”. If there was one thing that all the threads could agree on it was that: that quote had defined his life up to this point.

meet a woman on whom his

and in the progress of delivering this most tired of references to

On the day that Keith had decided to leave home he decided to afford himself one more internal debate

It was line that Keith himself thought of as a kind of headline for his life up until this point.