A figure, sitting in a leather backed chair with tarnished brass studs pinning the creaking red canvas to the wooden framework, clears his throat.

“Hmmm, you’ve been doing quite a lot haven’t you?” He says with a voice like an ancient powder grinder struggling as an inexorable force turns its cogs. “I think it is about time you and I had, a friendly chat.” A wheezing chuckle rises from the creature’s throat, it is interrupted by a fit of hacking extended coughs that leave you wondering if it will continue to breathe.

It resettles into the chair and eyes focus on you again, they are cold eyes.

“Your past is such a strange… sculpture, that I just had to take some interest in you. You form it from the still warm, half liquid wax of the present. You struggle, just like the rest of the creatures, to shape it before it is cooled, but you are different. Most only shape their own sculptures, but you, you shape many.”

The figure creaks in the chair, limbs folding and getting comfortable, but the eyes are still sharply focused.

“You mold your wax into other sculptures and convince the sculptors to help you create something larger than what you could craft before. The wax moves over the sculptures erratically, runnels leading to consequences and bleeding into other streams as they harden into the past. The wax pools and each of you strive to create something shared, something new, that has not yet been seen in this land, a harmony, if you will.”

Another series of creaks, and a small fire lights up at the creature’s mouth. A pipe.

“But you do not know the consequences of this connection. It can be…disastrous. Too many hands trying to shape the wax selfishly can create horrors beyond your comprehension. Think back on what you have done and on who has lost and who has gained.”

Smoke billows outward in an expanding ring.

“The formless future changes into the liquid present before coagulating and calcifying into the immutable past. Your choices are not entirely your own anymore, you have spread them out over many persons.”

Another roll of smoke, and the creature shifts, looking at something that only it can see, before returning its gaze to you.

“Our chat must draw to its…conclusion.” More smoke drifts out from the figure in the chair. “Your time is short, and the wax is dripping ever faster as it makes new and unintended shapes and paths. Will you make the right decisions with the time you have? Or will your sculpture be a caution to hubris? So many things to decide, and so little power to decide them. Removing the illusion of control is the first step in the descent into madness. It is a hard step, but necessary. Do you have the strength to take it?”

The vision fades, when you awake in your bed little remains except the words. You drift off back to sleep, you barely notice the faint smell of tobacco still clinging to the air in your nose.