
People Who Eat.

People Who Eat

claire e k

This is a story about a deranged world. / Faline San wakes up with the ability to put herself back together. / There are only two people that exist here. / You can't let yourself be hurt so much. / Life will change. And don't forget: by the end, everything will burn.

Categories: F/F

cekillinger.com/books/people-who-eat/

Contents

001 / I - Destructive Treatment
002 / II - Faline 1
003 / III - Rampage (Not Quite)
004 / IV aut IIII - Cyst Life
005 / V - Rotating a bird in your head (Death Satan)
006 / VI - Breaking and Entering Wheel. (Braking and centering wheel)
007 / VII - cult / connect
008 / VIII - Where are you on the morality axis of bacon to necktie?
009 / IX aut VIIII - Slaughterhouse Ninety / Magnanimous
010 / X - This is where the REAL People Who Eat begins, or some bullshit
011 / XI - Bird 1
012 / XII - Beloved Faline
013 / XIII - I want to kill you and eat your corpse.
014 / XIV aut XIIII - please dont hurt me
015 / XV - Drag me by my feet - Slaughter me - I am born anew (Skinwalk)
016 / XVI - it's going to get really dark now
017 / XVII - [S] cholast, [S] ocialist.
018 / XVIII - Girlrotting. Girlrotating it in my head.
019 / XIX aut XVIIII - Brain Acupuncture
020 / XX - pre—girl—rotting—pen—ultimate—girl—death—day
021 / XXI - Submergence and convergent evolution
022 / XXII - All Hail Girlrot. — Yuri? Yaoi? — Downfall of Modern Society — Chiaroscuro in red
023 / XXIII - It's Just a Bit
024 / XXIII aut XXIV - Puncture the Heart of Man
025 / XXV - Puncture the Heart of Faline San
026 / XXVI (1) - Simon Deep
027 / XXVI - Simon Deep
028 / XXVII - Rot spreads inexorably.
029 / XXVIII - Opening Wounds
030 / XXVIIII aut XXIX - People Who NEET (Downward press ↓.)
031 / XXX - Sex. Blood.
032 / XXXI - The Id
033 / XXXII - Because you're Lucy.
034 / XXXIII - And you'll never be anyone else.
035 / XXXIIII aut XXXIV - But I love you because of that!
036 / XXXV - AFTER PAIN - AFTER CARE - EMPATHETIC ACTIONS PAY YOUR KILLING FARE
037 / XXXVI - Hug me mother
038 / XXXVII - Fighting (Without) You

039 / XXXVIII - Backslide

040 / XXXIX - Upshift

041 / XXXX - High Aura Title

042 / XXXXI - TOO LATE!!

043 / XXXXII - Only you

044 / XXXXIII - The last one could've been a Hitchhiker's reference

045 / XXXXIV - Dissolute ★

046 / XXXXV -

047 / XXXXVI - Honesty

048 / XXXXVII - Understanding

049 / -3 - Chandelier Killer

050 / -3 - Eternal love and ever-loving friendship forever

051 / -3 - We're here for you.

052 / -3 - LIMBUS COMPANY RR5 WORLD RECORD 17 TURN SPEEDRUN (skip to 17:38 for strat explanation)

053 / -3 - Unmitigation

054 / -3 - Well to end it all surely

055 / -3 - You (two)

056 / -3 - [Will][a][r][d] (1)

057 / -3 - [Will][a][r][d] (2)

058 / -2 - Bird 2

059 / -2 - 2

060 / -2 - To You In Hell

061 / -2 - Game

062 / -2 - Adslave.

063 / -2 - How high can you get?

064 / 1095-alt — [T]hank yo[u] [for] everythin[G]

065 / -2 - Velocity

066 / -1 - Short Story Wide Sky

067 / -1 - Burn Up Lucy

068 / -1 - I'm turning to me

069 / x approaching 0 - The End

070 / 0 - Midnight

Part 1

001 / I - Destructive Treatment

—She's so small.

She doesn't change anything at all, because she's small. She doesn't make any difference on the way the trash towers into the sky...

Because she's small, she's weak, and therefore she can't change anything at all.

Well.

You can't tell at all that there's a human like her in that dumpster. So it'd be hard to find her pieces, to even know where to LOOK—if you didn't know that corpses get thrown away in the trash a lot of the time. (Is that really true? Or is it just the fact that she's where this story starts?)

Hey there, beautiful—It's a hand right there, caught in rheumatic contortion, the right one. It's up to the side of one of the trash bags. There's probably a solid pool of red blood at the bottom of the dumpster by now.

A lot of people die just like her, right?

Not *just like her*, in that they were cut up and thrown in the trash, but they *die,*—just like her.

There's a hard number on it. Twenty-four thousand? Twenty-four thousand is a lot of people. There are a few yardsticks you could measure it with... but principally, twenty-four thousand is the population of a small town.

Imagine that! There's a whole town of people out there just like you who share all of the things you like, basically, they like money, they like food, they like, (what else do people like? property?), there's this town of mysterious vanished people you'll never meet, really just because that's what this world is like.

Things happen. A schoolgirl like this gets hounded in an alley by boys, or men, or even other girls —and then something inside one of them snaps—and it turns out the schoolgirl was one of the people who died, and got cut up into bits, so it'd be hard to find her, and now she's in a dumpster. Trashrotting.

Things happen. People die—People kill—People eat—

—She's so small that when she stands up her head won't even reach the top of the dumpster. That's right, boys and girls! Faline San isn't dead! Don't you know cats have nine lives?

But she is covered in these thick bands of scarlet, which is problematic, and her body feels exhausted, like you do after you donate blood.

Her head turns. Blood donated to a dumpster. Red leaks out around its bottom in a t-shaped pattern—a dumpster's bloody Red Cross. An awful smell worsens the gory scene, condemns it, renders it vomitous.

So it wasn't a dream at all; Faline had indeed been stabbed and cut up.

She flexes her arm experimentally, making sure to keep an eye where the sticky blood colored her.

No division between the bits of skin; no pain. Only the exhaustion remains, and that's gotta be from losing so much blood, right? Truthfully speaking, she should be dead from lack of it.

Naturally her mind moves to another question: how is she alive anyway? Last she remembers is that *clique*. They'd cornered her, you know, and blows came to blows, and Faline had been, tragically, outnumbered. They'd pushed a box cutter into her neck, close up or at range, she doesn't remember, and that was what did it; carotid artery pierced she had been out like a light.

She's alive though and that's what matters.

Faline looks up. The sky is black like it's 10 P.M.

She searches for her phone in her pockets but can't find it, she gives a glance at the dumpster but it's probably crushed anyway. Right, no telling the time. She's gotta get home. Her sister will be worrying.

It's a bit difficult to navigate the city at night, more because she crosses to the other side of the street whenever a man comes up the road than anything else, and it takes a bit longer than catching a bus would. No—significantly longer. But her school isn't more than seven miles from her apartment.

She's fully dressed and her clothes are unharmed, besides how they're stained with red blood and the white, grey, yellow of dumpster rot. Perhaps she was never cut up in the first place? Hmm, there's not enough information to call it either way.

Run. Run run run Faline, cause cats get eaten by coyotes when they're too slow. Can't chameleonize yourself right now, can't fake it till you make it, so the only way for you is to RUN.

Seven miles becomes three and a half, and three and a half tapers down into nil, nihil, null and nullified nothing. Faline rounds the corner.

She ascends the stairs, turns, reorients, ascends the stairs.

It's a two-bedroom apartment, they upgraded it in 2024 when her sister got her promotion and then started the cosplay account because they suddenly had enough money to pay for it as long as they didn't eat out. They scrape by paycheck to paycheck. When Faline turned 16 she was going to start working to help, get a job, but that hasn't passed and it's been six months.

The door opens.

Faline stands in the doorway. Her silhouette is upright and taut. Covered in blood and gunk from the pile of trash.

"Catherine," she says, summoning the immortal devil.

She appears from the hallway, frantic, hurried.

Staring at Faline holding a phone but no longer listening to the speaker.

"S-stop, stop," says Catherine, "she's here, she came home, I'll talk to you later, bye," she gives another hurried goodbye before running to Faline in the doorway and embracing her.

They are of similar height though Faline's sister is six years older.

"Faline," says her sister. Usually Faline thinks of her as being named Katherine or K. because that's what her cosplay name is and cosplay is the only thing Catherine does besides break up with her boyfriend and then get back together with him a week later.

"You're covered in blood,"

"It's fine," replies Faline.

"What?"

"It's fine, I'm not hurt. It's a zero. Don't worry nor think about it, Catherine." (she enunciates precisely.) "I'm sorry for w—"

"S-Shut up," says K.

...

She takes a breath—deep inhale. "—Sorry, I'm just, I'm glad you're safe. You're not hurt, right? Should we go to the hospital?"

Faline shakes her head, just slightly.

"I'm fine. Can I go take a shower?"

K. stares at her.

"Yeah."

Sluggish movement ensues toward the bathroom wherein Faline strips down, turns the water on so it becomes warm, and stares at herself in the mirror.

She runs her hands along her arms where the dried blood is in lines. There's no division between the segments of skin.

Baffling.

She steps into the shower.

It's the acrid STING of hot water against muscle that reveals the truth.

Her right leg is wrong. It connects to her hip incoherently. Shifted about a centimeter to the right; exposing glistening red muscle cut haphazardly.

Watch this! You see how Faline's face twists with alarm.

——But the mouth is stifled.

By YOUR hand. From the heavens you have descended; plaster and wood splintered as you dropped solidly to the floor of the shower. Faline San sucks a hyperventilating breath into your hand, and her eyes roll wildly; the struggle of a sacrificial beast.

With your knee pressing against the side of her leg you NUDGE the disjoint flesh into place. It squelches and becomes one with the skin. The seam disappears.

You catch a GLANCE of yourself in the mirror through the clouded shower glass. Water pours down upon the both of you; hunched you stand behind Faline San. Your dense shocks of white hair frame your pale face which itself frames your bulging eyes; bulging, breaking, black eyes. EVIL EYES, regression to the mean.

The hair DESCENDS down, wraps around your body and forms into a matted dress held—bound—together more by dirt and mud than anything else.

"FFFFFALINE SAN," you say, covering her mouth—her terrified eyes in the mirror reflected back at your own. You laugh a little tiny bit.

"Only a few hours ago you died. YET, by my ..."

You consider. What's the word.

"*Magnanimous grace* you have been restored to life.

"I have *put you back together*. You are like me in this regard. Can't you sense it?"

AND FALINE SAN CAN INDEED SENSE IT, you're sure. When two people are meant for each other, a powerful bond appears between their souls, and they are drawn by fate to meet.

Faline San was drawn by fate to meet you. Stabbed and cut up and thrown in that dumpster all for the sake of meeting you. Because she will save you, and in return you will fix everything for her.

"Faline San," you say after a moment. "I'm going to remove my hand from your mouth... but if you scream I'll cut off your head."

She's pale.

Away comes your hand. The rushing torrent of water from overhead begins to wash away the saliva and the wetness of Faline San's hot breath.

Faline stares into the mirror. Her eyes are heavy. And she takes one shaking breath, and looks at you with those beautiful eyes of agency, change, self—

"Who are you?" she asks.

[ ] **Write-in.**

---

author's note

Thread comments

#2 · spider · Oct 9, 2025 at 9:28 PM

[x] An obscure urban legend

#3 · SpinsterOfWays · Oct 9, 2025 at 9:53 PM

[x] Yebyebusod

#4 · Lump · Oct 9, 2025 at 10:04 PM

[x] Beatrice, but you can call me BB! That stand for BESTEST BUDDY tooo!!

002 / II - Faline 1

Your thoughts float up, bubbling bubbling boiling to the brim and surfacing, white fish slipping through a dark turbulent sea. You seize them.

"I'm the hollow wraith," you say, lowering your voice. In fact your posture shifts to reflect a certain air of menace.

"What's that," says Faline looking back at you in the mirror. The steam has gotten so intense that in the mirror the two of you are white silhouettes.

"An obscure urban legend," you repeat that unbidden thought verbatim because FUCK IT your brains are a part of you, just as much as your eyeballs your arms or your legs, you can't plagiarize from yourself, "I haunt the world looking for souls to drag to the gates of heaven so that they live eternally with God the Father Almighty above."

Faline almost chokes. "So you're a good guy?"

"No," you say. "Because to look for souls you have to kill people in violent ways and most of the people you slaughter brutally go to hell."

"Are you going to kill me?" asks Faline.

"No," you say. "Why would I? You don't have a soul in the first place. You don't get to go to heaven or hell; when you die it'll be all over for you until your atoms recombine in the right ways to snap your consciousness back into place."

Faline chokes this time.

Moving like a mannequin you pat her arm. The regular, steady, robotic motion resembles puppetry.

"It's okay," you say. "I'm just playing with you. I don't kill people to harvest their souls."

Faline takes in a shaky breath, returning her eyes to the floor. Was that reassuring? You hope so.

"S-so," she says. "What's your name."

You smile. Your lipless mouth exposes your teeth already, but the garish grin pulls it back further, all the way, putting out in the world a hideous maw.

You know your name.

Yebyebusod; Beatrice; the commands come in and in.

You giggle. Faline looks like she's going to have a heart attack.

The little giblets inside your head FLOOD your SKULL with meaningless INFORMATION. Bits and bytes, pieces of data you find obnoxious, grating, true.

Your brains are a part of you, aren't they? But you *took them* in the first place. Pulled them out of dead people's skulls like those candy holders you see at Halloween. (Not quite right, brains don't come in wrappers.)

You defeated your brains already.

In this world it's might that makes right.

You enunciate with *relish* the next word that comes to your lips. After all, with each sound comes a *splitting headache* as you defy your masters—yourself. You might be called Beatrice, but you can *say whatever you want*. Your body is yours.

"Llllucy is what you can call me."

Faline stares.

"Yeah! I like that! Lucy. And we'll be best friends, Faline, best friends till the end of time. Now, Faline—"

[ ] **Tell me about *Homestuck*.**

[ ] **Tell me about your life.**

[X] **Tell me about your troubles.**

---

author's note

Thread comments

#6 · Lump · Oct 9, 2025 at 10:45 PM

[x] Homestuck Homestuck Homestuck Homestuck

#7 · spider · Oct 9, 2025 at 10:51 PM

[x] Tell me your troubles. Let's help out the poor girl.

#8 · SpinsterOfWays · Oct 9, 2025 at 11:08 PM

[X] Tell me about your life.

#9 · meloa789 · Oct 10, 2025 at 6:59 AM

[x] Tell me your troubles. Let's help out the poor girl.

003 / III - Rampage (Not Quite)

You let your brains guide you.

"—tell me about your troubles."

"Slow down," said Faline. "Best friends? What?"

You place your hands on her shoulders and slowly spin her around. The water from above mats your head and hers. A rushing torrent.

"Can't you feel it, Faline?"

You bring your hand to her chest and rest it there where her heart beats. "We're drawn to each other. We're each the only two people in the world who are like this. Of course we'll be best friends. Two people fated to meet..."

Faline face-to-face with your nightmarish skin swallows.

She's so small.

Look at me Lucy. Your eyes flit down her body—it's so baseline but it reminds you of how you used to be.

"Okay." She says. Small words for a small person. "Troubles. I got—" can she say the word, you weren't able to when you first lost pieces of yourself—"*killed* by, by some girls at school."

"I know," you say. The power of ENCOURAGEMENT fills your voice! She turns pale again, you wonder why. "What else?"

"W-we're poor," she says.

You think on that for a moment.

"That matters to you?" You ask finally.

"—Yeah. Yeah, it does," Faline replies. She pulls back, slipping out of your grasp (the dirt and water mixing into mud on your fingers is much like a lubricant), she scrabbles at the shower knob, twists it.

The white smokescreen still fills the room.

"Why?" you say.

"Um, I think it's security," Faline says, "with money you can have a nice house, food, quality of life, you don't have to be scared of gunshots at night. You could live in a neighborhood where you don't lock your door."

"Why do those things matter to you?"

Faline cloaks herself in a white towel. It camouflages. See you later beautiful.

"I want to live in a world that feels nice."

"You don't need money to do that," you say. "You just need to find a place that's right for you. Or you need to build one yourself. It doesn't even have to be a physical place. You could even take

shelter in your own *mind*."

Faline regards you.

"It's food and shelter, isn't it, that's what... carving out your own little hole in the world entails. All of us humans need at least food and shelter..."

Faline stares at your twisted form. Your hunched bones. Your matted hair.

"Human," she says.

"Just as much as you, dear," you reply with a gash of a smile. "Yes. I'm fundamentally human in nature."

Faline takes in a breath. "It's the pyramid of needs," she says. "It's not just food and shelter. There's self-actualization, security, levels of abstract things that you need to be able to be happy."

You frown.

"And not being poor gives you security...?"

"A place in life," says Faline quickly, "I won't starve to death, I'll have the ability to get into a problem and have the spare money to get back out of it without having my life disrupted. Having money would let me do things that'll give me friends."

"Faline," you say, "Faline Faline Faline Faline, you know what's good for you, don't you? You have to have felt it before;

"Don't you ever just want to go *apeshit?"*

"What," says Faline.

"Don't you just want to indulge sometimes? Haven't you ever thought about taking a brick and smashing someone's face in, because you can?"

"—No," says Faline, "that's messed up. That's evil."

"Evil is a word that people use to describe actions that are socially unacceptable," you say. "Society says that your atoms are yours and my atoms are mine, and if you rearrange my atoms in a way I don't like that's bad, and society calls this sort of badness evil. I digress. In the end, what you decide to do is what you decide to do, Faline, and I'm just here to help out in any case."

Faline is silent. She stands, not yet dry, clad in the white towel. And then:

"What am I? Why am I here, and not dead?"

You smile. "You're like me. The only person I've ever met who's the same way. We can't die, Faline, when our atoms come back together we do too. And we don't need to be quite fully intact to remain awake.

"Our consciousness is preserved through our brains, but there's no essential part of them that has to remain in our skulls for us to be the same. I think none of my original brain remains, yet my continuity of consciousness is uninterrupted."

"So you put me back together after you found me in the trash," says Faline.

"Yes," you reply.

"You said you're human," says Faline. "Where did you come from?"

[ ] **I'm the daughter of the President of the SUSSR.**

[ ] **I'm an immortal witch who's lived for over eighty years.**

[ ] **I'm a rogue FBI agent.**

[X] **I'm a gi—**

You bring your hand up to your hippocampus, the part that suggests that, and you dig a clawed finger into your brain, parting the agonized flesh. Blood drips down onto the floor of the shower, mixes with the water, stains the top of the drain in artful marbling.

You slowly extricate your finger and feel lightness. A dense cloud of fluff envelops you. Look, ma, no memories!

Faline seems like she's close to vomiting.

[ ] **I'm the daughter of the President of the SUSSR.**

[X] **I'm an immortal witch who's lived for over eighty years.**

[ ] **I'm a rogue FBI agent.**

---

author's note

Thread comments

#11 · SpinsterOfWays · Oct 10, 2025 at 12:39 PM

[X] I'm an immortal witch who's lived for over eighty years.

#12 · pigoseg · Oct 10, 2025 at 8:15 PM

[x] I'm the daughter of the President of the SUSSR.

#13 · agent55 · Oct 10, 2025 at 8:41 PM

[X] I'm an immortal witch who's lived for over eighty years.

#14 · Menthewarp · Oct 10, 2025 at 9:02 PM

[X] I'm an immortal witch who's lived for over eighty years.

Can we combine and seperate our atoms with Faline?

#15 · spider · Oct 11, 2025 at 3:20 PM

[X] I'm a rogue FBI agent.

#16 · Meridian · Oct 11, 2025 at 3:39 PM

[X] I'm an immortal witch who's lived for over eighty years.

004 / IV aut IIII - Cyst Life

Cough.

"I'm an *immortal witch* born in 1939, at the height of the Civil War." You.

"Does that mean I'm immortal as well?" Faline.

"Ummm. You're quick to catch on," you say, lying out of your ass.

"And a witch," prods Faline. "That's what we're called?"

"Sure," you say. You suppose it's kind of your fault for saying you were an immortal witch.

"And, wait, the Civil War was the 1860s, wasn't it?" Faline asks.

"No," you say. "The government is rewriting the history textbooks right under your nose to hide the fact that slavery existed in the United States less than a century ago. You know Martin Luther King was a Union general and they just whitewashed him like that?"

Faline stares at you and her face is creased with genuine confusion or perhaps concern. "Wasn't Cormac McCarthy alive during the thirties?? Him or anyone else could've spoken u—"

"Well," you interrupt, adeptly dodging any more lines of conversation along this topic, "I release you, dress and live your life fully; close your eyes and I shall cast my witch's spell of disappearance. I'm sure Catherine has questions about why you came in covered in blood and I wouldn't want to intrude on a family conversation." (You do want to intrude, but that's not an appearance that you want to give. You know most people are sensitive to social things like that.)

Faline pauses and you think it's pretty clear she's trying to evaluate how much of this is 'humor.' But begrudgingly she then nods. She turns around and closes her eyes; dropping to your haunches you shamble past her and clamber out of the open window.

There are ODDITIES in these woods.

Around the forever city there is a dense brush, at it continue walking and then slanting upward the shade of trees will appear above your head and you'll suddenly find yourself in a forest.

The oddities in question include a bird. Not quite a normal bird, it's a sickly odd bird you've been hunting for *days* now. Meeting Faline finally has given you the will to catch it. And it seems that you're in luck tonight, because you're crouched over the bird in the treetops, staring predatory at it from above.

You descend from the trees. Your silent gait initially had brooked no response from the bird but as soon as the branches shake above it, it makes to ascend, flapping its wings and lifting off—you come down brutally on it and pulverize its body.

It STRUGGLES beneath you, though its organs are ground meat. (Literally, you think, chuckling.)

You poke at it.

The bird may take the shape of a pigeon but it is profoundly something else. Maybe Faline would call it a witch. Irrespective of its name, it is like you. Though it does not have the same degree of innate pull that Faline has on you, you can clearly see it. Dead but alive; it's a zombie! Insofar as you are a zombie, a supposition which you guess isn't inaccurate.

What *is* it? And why is it like you? Your controlbrain, the ambulatory thing that provides your stream-of-consciousness narration, has not a clue.

But you definitely don't want it to be out here in these woods. It's best not to give anything in the world but Faline a clue as to what you are, and what if some scientists in the government found this pigeon and chopped it up to pieces and found out the secret of What You Are?

That *really* wouldn't be any good. You give your brains a second of time to think of the available options for getting rid of the thing.

[ ] **Let the controlbrain decide how to deal with the pigeon.**

[X] **Write-in. (You brought the bird with you to the school stuffed inside your stomach.)**

While you let them think, you order everything else in your head. You think after this business concludes you'll return to your main objective—help Faline become happy! It'll require a little bit of isolation as to what bothers Faline, but you're pretty sure with the help of all the brainpower you're hoarding you'll be able to figure it out and remove any obstacles in the way of Faline's happiness.

[ ] **Wait until the next morning to do anything else. (28)**

[X] **Go to Faline's school.**

[ ] **Go to Faline's house.**

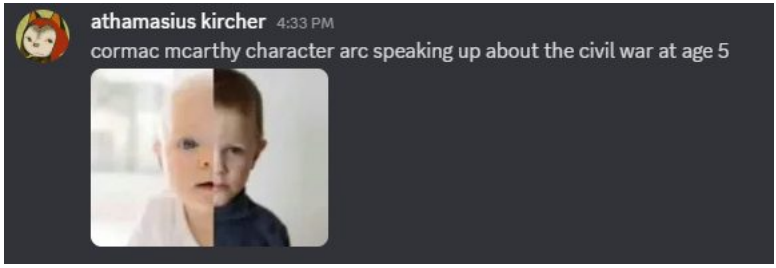
[ ] **Write-in. (Feel free to write-in if you want to do pursue something specific in any listed location.)**

---

author's note

Thread comments

#18 · clswtzing · Oct 11, 2025 at 4:43 PM



#19 · Lump · Oct 11, 2025 at 4:49 PM

[X] Pull out the pigeon's brain and subsume it into the network. There are no potential downsides to this action.

[X] Go back to the dumpster and make sure no tiny little Faline bits got left behind. The whole hip thing was kind of embarrassing, what if she's missing her gallbladder or something.

#20 · spider · Oct 11, 2025 at 4:55 PM

[X] Eat the bird.

[X] Go to Faline's school.

See if she does anything to her attempted murderers.

#21 · Meridian · Oct 11, 2025 at 5:53 PM

[X] Eat the bird.

[X] Pull out the pigeon's brain and subsume it into the network. There are no potential downsides to this action.

[X] Go back to the dumpster and make sure no tiny little Faline bits got left behind. The whole hip thing was kind of embarrassing, what if she's missing her gallbladder or something.

#22 · Sleepy_Sloth · Oct 11, 2025 at 7:34 PM

[X] Go back to the dumpster and make sure no tiny little Faline bits got left behind. The whole hip thing was kind of embarrassing, what if she's missing her gallbladder or something.

#23 · pigoseg · Oct 11, 2025 at 9:45 PM

[X] Cage the bird and keep it as a whimsical on-theme pet; this will undoubtedly do wonders for your Faline rep/general aura. Immediately eat it if it misbehaves.

[X] Go to Faline's school and scope out the area, see if there's anything interesting going on.

#24 · meterion · Oct 12, 2025 at 7:27 AM

[X] Attempt to cook the bird and feed it to Faline tomorrow, she could use some more brainpower.

[X] Go to Faline's school and make use of their kitchen.

#25 · Menthewarp · Oct 12, 2025 at 7:37 AM

[X] Attempt to cook the bird and feed it to Faline tomorrow, she could use some more brainpower.

[X] Go to Faline's school and make use of their kitchen.

Another possible lore tidbit: "The forever city"

#26 · meterion · Oct 12, 2025 at 8:07 AM

> **Menthewarp said:**
>
> Another possible lore tidbit: "The forever city"
>
> Click to shrink...

I'm about 95% confident it's gonna be a Mitakihara City in Rebellion kinda deal with what's been shown so far

005 / V - Rotating a bird in your head (Death Satan)

Oh! You were about to scarf it down whole, but one of your brains makes a good suggestion just in time! You should save the bird for Faline. She had that awful reaction when you suggested killing people, so even though you know she's like you at heart she probably isn't quite ready to be exposed to all of that just yet... when it comes to feeding the bird to Faline for brainpower or trying to connect its brain to yours you're pretty unsure on whether or not that'd work. You suppose you can try it for a moment though, just to test it out.

You pry open its head, revealing the innards of its skull. With one finger you search for one of the splintered parts of your skull; finding it you pry open the side of your head. You regard the bird's brain. Since normally you only cut up humans for their brains, you aren't sure which part is which. Maybe a bird's brain isn't even LIKE a human's anyway. Didn't *homo sapiens* come from whales? Whereas birds are all, like, modern day dinosaurs, right? You dunno.

You raise it mutely to the side of your skull after making an incision into the bird's brain and into your own. You touch your skinned brains. *Ero!* You giggle.

There's a spark of connection... but it's dubious. Not-quite-imagery takes up your head; lines of thought that are more feelings than anything else. It's hard to describe.

You had heard it said once that your consciousness is not the thing that creates the thoughts in your head; it is the thing that perceives them, that consciously takes note of these thoughts. That 'you' merely hear 'your own' thinking.

The thoughts being generated in union with the bird are not clearly able to be parsed, in a way that's different from any other brain you've put inside your skull. Perhaps that theory of consciousness had a point! It's not your consciousness that's generating these signals, and for you the delineation between brains is fake and made-up.

You reluctantly pull the bird out of the side of your head and set the plates of your skull back in place. The seams become one.

You open your belly, stuff the bird in there where it's tight and it can't move. It disappears inside you. To deal with the blood you overturn the ground and bury it. This will keep most of it from being found, and there is not much you can do to hide the stain otherwise.

It's not time for you to sleep yet or so you have decided. Creeping up in the dead of night you scrutinize the building in front of you. It's nondescript and brick, built in a U-shape around a central courtyard. Counting upward there's one two three four five stories—uwah, how surprising. Faline goes to a big school! (You guess maybe that explains her attitude. (You still love Faline anyway.))

There's a barb-wire fence in your way. But to your right the fence rattles; three young teens struggle to climb it. You move silently toward them.

Female: "... Cause you're a *Mormon* Carlos," levity in her tone,

Male: "The f—the hell does that have to do with anything?" frustration in his perhaps,

The second male: "Be quiet guys or security will hear us, aren't we supposed to be getting in silently," he's exasperated, maybe he's the leader of this little team? That doesn't fit with what you know of schoolhouse social dynamics though because the leaders are never supposed to be fat and this boy reminds you of Piggy from *Lord of the Flies,* a boy on the shorter pudgier end with glasses and a charming face, he's pulling himself up with exertion, effort—

[ ] Introduce yourself (as always feel free to write-in suggestions, but caution that Lucy may not take them.)

[X] Stay away and infiltrate the school by yourself

[ ] Leave

---

author's note

Thread comments

#28 · Lump · Oct 12, 2025 at 8:12 PM

[X] Introduce yourself

#29 · pigoseg · Oct 12, 2025 at 10:28 PM

[X] Stay away and infiltrate, but watch the teens for a bit first - mormons are funny and naturally attract comic hijinks, who knows what this guy will get up to next.

#30 · meterion · Oct 13, 2025 at 5:24 AM

[X] Hang back and follow them; they could be a good distraction against the security they mentioned, and might lead you to something of interest otherwise.

So Mormons exist in this AU..... the metaphysical implications are *staggering*.

#31 · Menthewarp · Oct 13, 2025 at 8:27 AM

[X] Stay away and infiltrate, but watch the teens for a bit first - mormons are funny and naturally attract comic hijinks, who knows what this guy will get up to next.

[X] Hang back and follow them; they could be a good distraction against the security they mentioned, and might lead you to something of interest otherwise.

> **meterion said:**
>
> So Mormons exist in this AU..... the metaphysical implications are *staggering*.
>
> Click to shrink...

It's been made very clear that this Earth's textbook history was identical to ours up until sometime in the 1900's.

006 / VI - Breaking and Entering Wheel. (Braking and centering wheel)

You stay silent. The kids figure it out eventually. They clamber over the edge of the fence and drop onto the parking lot.

Then you move back into the darkness. But you take note of Mormon, Piggy, and Joker.

What remains is to get into the school. You slink around till you're out of hearing range of the delinquent gang. Then, approaching the fence, you prepare yourself. There's barbed wire lining its top but you have a better way of getting in, a way that requires less expenditure of energy.

Your eyes close. The animal parts of your brain scream—you vulnerable let yourself be at peace.

You feel the matter of the world around you as you focus on the component. You feel the way atoms collide off each other. How the bonds between individual molecules make up the elements of the forbidden world. How the close proximity of each element results in the impression of the world's solidity. You feel the INTERCONNECTION making up the parts of the world.

You loosen the bonds holding 'you' together, minimizing your resistance to the rest of the interconnected world. 'From magic thou camest, to it thou shalt return.' You return to magic.

A step forward propels you into the iron gate. Pressure against your forehead chest and body till it abates as your selfhood slips away. You step through. The gate cuts into your face and body and severs you along a million lines horizontally and vertically both.

But your melting self droops and then recouples, your severed pieces finding purchase amongst themselves. You stumble and nearly fall onto the parking-lot ground around the school but you catch yourself and you press forward because staying in this state will reduce you to a meat puddle on the floor and you have no Faline to put you back together in kind.

You slip through with a squelching sound and restabilize, pulling in your consciousness.

You're in.

Plodding steps circumventing observation. There are security guards afoot, but you don't encounter any during your brief stroll around the outside of the school. On the other hand, you've lost track of Mormon, Piggy, and Joker. You make your way up to the main door, and push at it.

It's locked. You peer inside.

Down the hallway is the cafeteria. Forms move in synchronized file; men clad in white whose faces are obscured by masks. It seems more like a ritual than a social gathering.

[ ] Smash through the glass doors

[ ] Knock!!

[X] Try to use magic

[ ] Leave

[X] Write-in. (Used a zombie ability.)

---

author's note

Thread comments

#33 · spider · Oct 13, 2025 at 7:36 PM

[x] Smash! Make one hell of an entrance.

#34 · Lump · Oct 13, 2025 at 7:54 PM

[x] Melt through the door again. Nobody's looking that closely, right?

#35 · clswtzing · Oct 13, 2025 at 7:59 PM

hehh... ❤️ thank you all for commenting...! and engaging.;; it energizes the brain... 🧠

#36 · SeQuester · Oct 13, 2025 at 8:09 PM

[x] Melt through the door again. Nobody's looking that closely, right?

#37 · pigoseg · Oct 13, 2025 at 9:18 PM

[X] Take a good look at this door - if it has the right kind of lock you just might be able to crack it here and now, with a little bit of clever biokinesis.

[X] Magic, do magic, just picture how STOKED Faline would be to learn you can do magic.

#38 · PeepTheSheep · Oct 13, 2025 at 9:41 PM

[X] Magic, do magic, just picture how STOKED Faline would be to learn you can do magic.

#39 · Menthewarp · Oct 13, 2025 at 10:45 PM

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> hehh... ❤️ thank you all for commenting...! and engaging.;; it energizes the brain... 🧠
>
> Click to shrink...

Energized to the point of rapid unscheduled disassembly?

#40 · Menthewarp · Oct 13, 2025 at 10:47 PM

[X] Try to use magic!

-[X] [KNOCK]

#41 · Meridian · Oct 14, 2025 at 7:58 PM

[x] Knock!!

#42 · meterion · Oct 15, 2025 at 8:50 AM

[X] SMASH

It's kool aid man time baby

007 / VII - cult / connect

Your head spins with an INFLUX of data; magic, magic that's right—you believe, your brains believe, you can be a magical creature with your belief!—draw upon your connection to the world —!

You flex your arm, thrusting your hand forward to grab at invisible strings—pulling, concentrating—you invest mental effort into your attempts—nought. Zilch—nothing. For once you feel a little bit of frustration; why can't you use magic? You're just as aware of the world's connecting fibers as any of the others out there; fool prodigies can do it so why can't you?

The urge arises within your controlbrain to *snarl* and on a conscious level you're taken aback by yourself. An inability to *do something basic* like this is profoundly *hateful* to you. The universe shouldn't be able to lock you off from something forever—then ***fine***, whatever, you'll kill a mage and use his brain.

You return to the other pieces of sensory noise. Try to tunnel through the glass itself—quantum tunneling? You're doubtful as to whether you can do it. You barely made it through that grate; staying as a homogenous sludge for too long will mix you up and even Faline will struggle to put you back together and reawaken your consciousness. (It seems the only ways you can die are suicide or stupidity.)

But that's not the only way you can use your sludge form. Though exhausted, you find the strength in you to summon the meditative necrotic force, the force that dissolves.

You can't *merely* focus it on one element, one 'part' of you—'you' as a person, a knot of connections, are not defined as a construct of parts attached together; what's part of 'you' is undeniably, simply 'yourself.' But you can move quickly with it, minimize how much of you falls apart. Keep the soft tension of your body together.

You extend your right hand. 'You' become magic. Stepping forward but cautious not to smear yourself across the door, you insert your finger into the lock of the door. It's crushed into the right shape; you turn it and remove your finger, twisted and gnarled. It is ugly, the way the contours of its shape bend, in the way of its scarred tissue and exposed, bent bone. (Bent bone like rubber, unnaturally unshattered.)

You pull yourself back together and tug a breath in, sweating. Turning to magic is extremely difficult work, it costs effort you won't be able to muster for some time. You need *rest*.

But the door is open. HARROWED you reach out. Knocking, breaking through, neither were necessary.

You grasp the handle, turn and enter.

Walking into the cafeteria is a bad idea says the cautious brain in your head. (You got it from a woman who wouldn't be in the same room alone with a man. The brain warns you about rapists and pedophiles. If they are ugly you kill the individuals it warns you of for the good of society and use their organs to replenish your oft-failing body, you eat what remains.)

The ritual pauses as you enter.

"Stop it—stop it," a voice.

One of the masked white men descends rushing from a raised dais on wheels and extends his hand and you take it surprised by his initiative and he SHAKES so vigorously it seems your arm will fall off.

"Hello, hi," he says, "Troy, Troy Brown, and you're called what? Can't hear you speak up," you hadn't spoken in the first place, "Lucy" you say blankly but recover: "What's the cult hubbub?"

"Lucy," he says, "Lucy, from Lucia the name of a saint, not Mormon or Hitlerite though—I read that she had her eyes gouged out once, you don't have that problem—" he refers to your bulging eyes—"—you know the most common route of martyrdom for saints is burning alive, happens today even, so many of us are lynched by a mob for what—have you been burnt, Lucia?" He gestures to your face.

You make note of this man.

"Well," you say, "I can't remember, really! I suffered from many mental disorders and irregular personality traits until I met my best friend Faline who cured them. But maybe. What's the cult hubbub?"

"We aren't a cult we're a church," responds Troy, "no gaslighting or isolation we don't require money just prayer and we have over twenty thousand sheep safe and happy in our flock," says Troy, "and anyway we're using this cafeteria as a summoning circle." Troy finishes.

"What for?" you say. "Do you believe in demons or something?" You're genuinely curious.

"No," says Troy, "but I'm not sure I can say to a kid—kid, like a goat, a word for child, emerging as slang use in the fifteen-hundreds, and aren't you not supposed to be here anyway?"

"In the cafeteria? But you're all here," you say.

"We're grown-ups so we can do what we want," Troy says. The argument's bulletproof! You hide in the trenches.

"I'm not a kid," you reply, is it a lie? "I'm just petite. Are you one of those people who says 'child-coded'?"

"I see," says Troy, "well then I'll ask you to leave the cafeteria anyway as we're using it for our summoning ritual."

[X] Well tell me about your cult because maybe I'll join

[ ] Write-in

[ ] Leave

---

author's note

Thread comments

#44 · spider · Oct 15, 2025 at 12:36 PM

[X] Let's join a cult! Maybe we can be a sacrifice, that could be fun.

#45 · SpinsterOfWays · Oct 15, 2025 at 1:17 PM

[X] Consume Troy.

#46 · clswtzing · Oct 15, 2025 at 1:17 PM

> **SpinsterOfWays said:**
>
> [X] Consume Troy.
>
> Click to shrink...

bro... 😉

#47 · PeepTheSheep · Oct 15, 2025 at 3:05 PM

[X] Let's join a cult! Maybe we can be a sacrifice, that could be fun.

#48 · pigoseg · Oct 15, 2025 at 7:14 PM

[X] Don't join a cult, MAKE a cult. This Troy guy is your rival; gouge him for the forms and tropes of his heretic religion, store them away, and get to work on your cool new personal mythology posthaste.

#49 · SeQuester · Oct 15, 2025 at 9:24 PM

[X] Let's join a cult! Maybe we can be a sacrifice, that could be fun.

#50 · Menthewarp · Oct 16, 2025 at 8:55 AM

Pattern Scan Complete. Please analyze the following for possible data:

I - A lot of people die every year. But Faline San is built different

LOOK MORAL PANIC RUN STING YOUR NUDGE GLANCE DESCENDS YET AND FALINE SAN CAN INDEED SENSE IT

clique Ajin Ajin: Demi-human Ajin demi-humans The Scream Magnanimous grace put you back together

---

II - But what if you just HATE obeying orders?

FUCK IT FLOOD SKULL INFORMATION

Your Yebyebusod Beatrice took them relish splitting headache say whatever you want

---

III - Rampage (Not Quite)

ENCOURAGEMENT

killed mind apeshit

IV aut IIII - Cyst Life

ODDITIES STRUGGLES

immortal witch days is really

V - Rotating a bird in your head (Death Satan)

LIKE

homo sapiens Ero Mormon Lord of the Flies

VI - Breaking and Entering Wheel. (Braking and centering wheel)

INTERCONNECTION

VII - cult / connect

INFLUX HARROWED SHAKES

snarl do something basic hateful fine merely Walking into the cafeteria is a bad idea

008 / VIII - Where are you on the morality axis of bacon to necktie?

Your brains are mostly in favor of you joining the cult, one of you wants to eat Troy and the other wants to steal his secrets and get to work founding a cult of your own. Hold that thought.

"Wait a moment," you reply, "tell me about your cult. Maybe I'll join and can help out in your ritual." You're struck by how Troy isn't terrified of your nightmarish body. A body bone and meat.

"Oh," says Troy. "Oh sure okay. Of course. Present yourselves!"

The white outlines stooped and twisted in ritual configurations snap up and together; reverse domino-falls.

Troy rotating his head views them all with leaderly pride then he himself snaps into position and turns back to YOU.

"*We are the Church of Singularity!* Singularity, the state, fact, quality, condition of being similar! Singularity, the point at which the mass function becomes infinitely dense! We are last true religion besides the Mormons! And our go—"

"Enough about that," you interrupt, "tell me about what you're summoning." You lean forward with interest because you're genuinely curious about this part.

"You—need to know how it all fits together so that you can understand," he says, nodding his head rapidly, "it won't take but a moment,"

"I don't care," you say: "What's the ritual for?"

He pauses.

"Summoning Hitler."

"Whaaat," you say, "for real?"

Hastily he attempts to cover it up. "We don't accept nor condone geno—"

You hold up a finger and think for a moment. You don't want to die, and Hitler would probably kill you if they managed to successfully lure him though the forest into the city. You aren't sure you'd be able to take him; anything else and there's at least a chance, given time to accumulate matter, but Hitler is different. Hitler is like the forest himself—more than earthly.

"Sorry," you say, "I'm not gonna join your cult."

"Aw," says Troy, a little bit disappointed, maybe he thought he had found a kindred spirit, "it's really not a moral thing. Moral as in pertaining to the principles of right and wrong. Not a deathism thing either. Deathism as in pertaining to supporting death. We don't hate humanity. You have to understand our goal is to summon Hitler to every city so that we can reset the universe to its primal state and return to magic itself not to cause a third Holocaust. Then we'll live connected together in utopic bliss even past the end of history."

"Sorry," you say, "I appreciate the enthusiasm. I *really* do, and I mean in principle I never judge people based off of what they do for fun. I mean, I kill people for killing people's sakes!" You

laugh and it's genuine.

The cultists kind of laugh and it's awkward. Do they think you're joking?

You wipe a little bit of tears from your bulging eyes. "But," you say, and the levity fades from your voice, "I can't let you just summon Hitler."

"Why?" says Troy, his brow creases in concern, "don't you want to end suffering and death??"

"Not at all! Why would I care about some random guy whose daughter died of—black plague or something, is that even a thing anymore? Nah, I don't give a crap about suffering or death. Isn't this just the human experience?"

Troy boggles at you. The cultists stare at you incredulously. You're very confused.

[ ] Downplay

[ ] Escalate

You silence whatever your brains are about to say. You've chosen your path already.

[X] Escalate

"You guys actually—like—care? About other people having a bad time of it?" Incredulous.

"Yes," says Troy, "yes we care of course we care if we didn't care we wouldn't be SUMMONING HITLER,"

"Wow," you say, "that's really surprising to me. Is this a widespread belief?"

"Our flock has two hundred thousand members," Troy says affixing an extra digit on the end there,

"Even among your flock I doubt most of them care about your supposed *mission*," you observe, "isn't this the whole idea with a cult in the first place? You give them companionship and a hole to dwell inside, you match them up with their soulmates and in exchange they'll keep doing what they do to *feel* as good as they do."

Troy starts—"But!" you interrupt. "I'm not talking about the cult of singulars or whatever your Hitler religion is!

"I'm talking about all the OTHER people in the world! Look at them! All they do is *eat*, they consume and then they make more things to consume at the cost of eating up all the other resources in the world, they eat eat eat on this SICKENING PERPETUAL DOWNWARD SPIRAL, that's what their worldviews revolve around! They don't give a crap about morality or how much other people are hurting! If they did you know what they'd do? They'd stop sitting around waiting for revolution!"

You point at Troy. "They'd believe in their own WORLDVIEW! Caring in the abstract about suffering children isn't caring in the first place! I'm genuinely disgusted—all I can think is if you can't afford to care, just say that you don't care, instead of faking it for social brownie points! If you care about anything, don't say 'I empathize but,' try to FIX IT!"

You're just shouting at him not having a conversation, just venting the thoughts you've never told anyone, but it feels good so you keep going, "You have a correct model of the world in your head, just get over yourself and admit what that model is!"

You swipe your hand to the right, clearing out all of the thoughts hanging unsaid in the air. Whipping your head to the side tosses your ivory hair back and exposes your burnt, scarred face. You stare at Troy.

"I can't let you summon Hitler because I'm as happy as I've ever been," you say. "I have a best friend now and my life is looking upward and you know what? I eat too, I profit off of the suffering of others, I enjoy watching people die, and I'm PROUD to admit it because at least I'm HONEST with you and me both. HONEST is what I've always been," you remember talking to Faline, "unless it's a joke and then you just didn't get it," you affix awkwardly to the end.

[ ] Downplay

[X] Escalate again.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#52 · SeQuester · Oct 16, 2025 at 11:20 AM

[X] Escalate again.

TRIPLE DOWN

TRIPLE DOWN

TRIPLE DOWN

I LOVE BULLYING ACCELERATIONISTS

#53 · SpinsterOfWays · Oct 16, 2025 at 11:24 AM

[X] Escalate again.

#54 · pigoseg · Oct 16, 2025 at 6:06 PM

[X] Escalate again.

#55 · Lump · Oct 16, 2025 at 8:12 PM

[X] Escalate again.

#56 · Menthewarp · Oct 17, 2025 at 1:20 AM

[X] Escalate again.

VIII - Where are you on the morality axis of bacon to necktie?

YOU SUMMONING HITLER OTHER SICKENING PERPETUAL DOWNWARD SPIRAL WORLDVIEW FIX IT PROUD HONEST HONEST

We are the Church of Singularity mission feel

009 / IX aut VIIII - Slaughterhouse Ninety / Magnanimous

There is a simmering in your entire body. Downplaying is not an option. The brains in your head agree.

Semiconsciously,

You realize that you have not, in a very long time, felt properly ... *that sort* of emotion. Righteousness, maybe? Largely you exist walled off from the other people of the world and as long as they live their lives and you live yours and they respond naturally and you respond naturally there's no bad thing happening,

But when it comes down to it you feel a sort of piercing disgust for people you know to be hypocrites. In parallel you feel respect for those who admit what they are.

So. You have a grudging respect for Troy. At least he BELIEVES. At least he has a worldview. It doesn't make him any more or less valid than you,

But it makes you want to give him *credit,* the credit he *deserves.*

"Okay," you say, mastering yourself. *Okay*.

"Hitler hasn't been summoned yet," you say.

Troy doesn't respond.

"I'm going to let you all go home," you say. "I'm a *magnanimous witch*. Magnanimous, as in," you think, you think, you struggle to think, "as in someone who's going to let you go instead of killing you all."

"Magnanimous," murmurs Troy, "as in generous and forgiving."

"Exactly," you reply blankly, "so?"

Troy looks at you. Then he looks at his cultist legion.

"You're a child and we're adults—"

Okay. You're done. You gave him a chance and if he didn't see this coming that's on him for not reviewing his unknown unknowns.

You stare at him and something in your face must change because one of the cultists behind him takes a step back.

Troy's mouth is still open, mid-sentence, when you move.

You step forward, rushing. Fast enough in a mortal's eye the short time it took you to cover those few feet—seem instantaneous. Your hand SWEEPS up to grapple Troy's neck. Your eyes bulge as you lift him up, off the ground, revealing the full length of your arms, when fully stretched so long that your fingertips end at your SHINS.

He struggles. Chokes. A gasp from the crowd.

You stare up at him with apathy in your gaze. Saying something would defeat the moment. So you don't.

Your hands tighten. Crunching. Maybe you snapped his neck and maybe you didn't, but something happened. Blood leaks from his mouth and he stares down at you, clawing or spasming,

[X] Consume Troy.

You bring his head to your mouth which opens wide, ENGORGING, it fits fully, he screams, then you slam your jaws shut serrated teeth cut through flesh meat and bone as blood erupts from the sudden stump that used to be Troy's neck,

You chew through his skull, you don't even bother to extract his parts because the point is EFFECT, and you swallow and then you raise his body above your head, now changing the positions of your hands, you tear him in two—the upper, the lower, and you feed it into your mouths as the cultists around you scream in horror and blood splashes around you and you chew and chew and chew and swallow and swallow and swallow and swallow and gorge yourself on his corpse,

For a moment there is only senseless screaming, a meaningelss background track, languageless cacaphony, and the wet sounds of consumption.

"You," says one of the masked cultists—a woman, "You killed him, oh my God you killed him, oh my God," you're annoyed at her so you slap her head in a wicked backhand, apply too much force, it evaporates into red paste having been liquified,

Many begin to run. Some draw knives. They approach you; a thrust toward your chest penetrates but you unfazed shove your hand into the man's own, grasping and clawing until you find it, you grab his spine and tear it straight out of his body, he instantly dies as his vital connection turn to slurry, you pull the dagger with a THUNK out of your chest and cut wildly at the cultist approaching you and then the next, force in your arm less cutting and more shredding them to pieces, and blood flies, and a cultist drops his weapon and joins the running mass

You cut

And cut

And kill

And eat.

Minutes later.

"Oh my God," says Joker. A thin woman with dark skin and braided hair, she covers her mouth in shock or horror—or both. The delinquents clutching little firearms stare at the scene.

Tables overturned. Blood pools on the floor. Human viscera and bodyparts still uneaten.

YOU STAND NEXT TO THE WALL. Chewing a piece of unidentifiable meat. Turned so effectively dead so fast and so violently not even a butcher would know its cut.



You lower your hand. Consciously aware of the blood around your mouth. Mormon, Piggy, and Joker raise their firearms. Their faces are pale.

[ ] Write-in.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#58 · SpinsterOfWays · Oct 17, 2025 at 9:50 AM

[X] End society.

#59 · SeQuester · Oct 17, 2025 at 11:05 AM

[X] Offer Joker some unidentifiable meat. It's only polite.

#60 · pigoseg · Oct 17, 2025 at 2:50 PM

[X] Wave hello!

[X] Offer Joker some unidentifiable meat. It's only polite.

#61 · meterion · Oct 17, 2025 at 5:31 PM

[X] "They were trying to summon Hitler so this is a good deed actually"

#62 · Menthewarp · Oct 17, 2025 at 8:51 PM

[X] "They were trying to summon Hitler so this is a good deed actually"

[X] Wave hello!

[X] Offer Joker some unidentifiable meat. It's only polite.

TITLE DROP

...were did all that consumed mass go? Do we have the ability to store the mass in a pocket space? Is this a "skeleton feast" scenario were it all just falls back onto the floor once consumed?

Can we be a living Roomba and clean up the whole cafeteria of viscera by doing a slime-form Katamari?

#63 · Zentoyo · Oct 18, 2025 at 12:59 AM

"I suggest a hasty retreat, heavy drinking, and never talking about what you just saw. You may survive and be able to prend nothing happened." If they dont listen, it looks like dessert time.

#64 · SeQuester · Oct 18, 2025 at 1:50 AM

> **Zentoyo said:**
>
> "I suggest a hasty retreat, heavy drinking, and never talking about what you just saw. You may survive and be able to prend nothing happened." If they dont listen, it looks like dessert time.
>
> Click to shrink...

Don't forget that you need a [X] in front of your vote for it to count!

010 / X - This is where the REAL People Who Eat begins, or some bullshit

The group stands in the doorway, looking with horror at the scene.

You chew methodically, keeping your gaze set on Joker. Piggy is white as expected and Mormon is Hispanic, which makes a lot of sense when you think about how the Mormon Empire annexed Arizona which is in close proximity to Texas.

You kind of start, and then you stop because your mouth is too full to talk. Joker raises her firearm, it's a pistol that you don't know the make and model of, but her arms shiver and give out and she clutches her chest and heaves dry.

You swallow—finally. Then you wave.

"Hi," you say, Joker on the ground. Piggy stumbles backwards seeing the ghastly sight, he falls to the ground before scrambling up, fiddling ineffectually with the firearm in his hands. Mormon takes a deep breath in, raises his little pistol to aim at your head, you pause:

"Please don't shoot me," you say.

Joker vomits.

"... You guys are kids," you say. "Should you even have guns?"

"D-don't talk!"—Mormon. "Or don't ..."

You step forward and extend your hand, blood drips from it onto the floor but no more will hurt as it's already painted dense scarlet red—Mormon's finger twitches. He fires at you once. The bullet penetrates and causes a blooming flower of blood to be painted on the white hair enveloping your body. Only your gut—in which a pulsation comes, the crushed bird spasming as the bullet cuts through its flesh.

You cough. "Why do you have them anyway...?"

He fires again. This time it punctures your chest and something important has a hole drilled through it, you can't feel what but it's aching badly—perhaps, perhaps it's your bones, or maybe it hit an important channel for blood.

"It was justified," you try to say, "they were going to summon Hitler—" he fires again, you send an arcing claw into Joker's arm, grab it, some skin tears, you drag her along the floor and begin to run.

Now you're going, Piggy's not fast enough so only Mormon's able to try and keep pace, following the prophecy he lowers his gun and then begins to sprint after you. You can hear bones snapping; Joker dragged across the floor, your relentless pace grinding her into pieces, she's slowing you down and Mormon fires again, aiming as high up as possible so as not to hit Joker, but shooting when you're moving is *super* hard so he totally whiffs it and the bullet lodges into a wall of a cafeteria.

She's slowing you down but you need her body, you think, gripping her as hard as possible, and then you *realize* you can just kill a random person for pieces instead, not like you *need Joker* so

you let go of her and she spasms as she loses all momentum; Mormon trips over her as he fires and his shot goes wide.

You duck into a hallway of the school, but Mormon somehow knows where you are, and reappears at the end. Another bang, it hits your heel and you tumble into a pile and he quickly catches up to you. Blood spurts.

In your peripheral you see how he followed you—your feet left a trail of bloody footsteps.

That makes sense.

Mormon stands over you. His gun shakes in his hand as he aims it at your head.

"Weren't you gonna kill the Hitlerites?" you say.

Mormon is silent. His finger inches over the trigger.

"... You've fired six times," you say. You place an affectation of distance into your voice. Like you're slipping away.

Mormon pauses. Then he stares down at his gun and his eyes widen. He realizes.

"Were you going to kill the Hitlerites," you say, "you had guns and everything..."

"No," he says finally. Still aiming the gun at you. "Self-defense."

"I see," you say. "You failed to hit me six times already and I hadn't even attacked. You get it? Check your magazine."

Lying on the floor your words come through distant speakers, you know what you're going to do—what you must do—

"I know," says Mormon. He swallows.

"I'm really sorry," you say, "if you hadn't seen me, or if I knew you were friendly maybe it'd be different."

You look at Mormon's face. Stonelike, he still holds the gun at your head. What's he thinking of right now? You've never been able to exercise empathy. Maybe the bloody cafeteria. Maybe he's reviewing his life up to this point. Maybe he's thinking of inane things normal children think of but you doubt it, normal children don't sneak out at night with guns to bust a Hitlerite meetup,

Your hand reaches up past his gun and grabs his shoulder.

Tenderly you squeeze it, dragging him down to where you are and he winces as parts of him are broken, and you hug him on the floor, in the quickly spreading pool of blood.

He chokes, then he struggles against the hug, he tries to strike you but his body is badly positioned, awkward, and you tighten the hug until it's no longer a hug, just a trash compactor compacting trash; bones snap and his spine breaks and then blood comes from his mouth and he stiffens and there's a foul stench.

In a different world maybe it wouldn't have turned out like this. You push his corpse off of you and step on the tip of its gun, flattening it.

There's one more though.

[ ] Hunt him down.

One more person here who saw you besides the Hitlerites, who are fleeing the city (—summoning Hitler is *mega illegal* so it is not like they'd be able to explain to the police why they were at the scene of a mass murder, you hope.)

Or. Or there's the option of stopping the brutality. If you really wanted to risk it. Not because you don't like killing people. To track down Piggy you'd have to go elsewhere and maybe he left the building and maybe others would see you, and that's really higher risk to you than Piggy who only caught a glimpse of what you look like.

If you really judged the risk acceptable, you could

[X] Let Piggy go.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#66 · pigoseg · Oct 19, 2025 at 5:20 PM

[X] Let Piggy go. If you really need to you can deal with him later.

[X] Dig out a piece of Mormon's brain and add it to yourself; that was a sweet moment, he deserves to live on, and maybe you can scrounge up something about Piggy's potential whereabouts from the mangled brain-matter.

#67 · SeQuester · Oct 19, 2025 at 6:07 PM

[X] Let Piggy go. If you really need to you can deal with him later.

[X] Dig out a piece of Mormon's brain and add it to yourself; that was a sweet moment, he deserves to live on, and maybe you can scrounge up something about Piggy's potential whereabouts from the mangled brain-matter.

#68 · PeepTheSheep · Oct 19, 2025 at 6:48 PM

[X] Let Piggy go. If you really need to you can deal with him later.

[X] Dig out a piece of Mormon's brain and add it to yourself; that was a sweet moment, he deserves to live on, and maybe you can scrounge up something about Piggy's potential whereabouts from the mangled brain-matter.

#69 · Menthewarp · Oct 20, 2025 at 10:12 AM

[X] Hunt him down.

Faline-san is all we need, and all we want.

Piggy is a complication, one that is blissfully unconnected to Faline-san's social life.

011 / XI - Bird 1

Some of your brains tell you to hunt Piggy down. For the sake of Faline San(-san, you think, and giggle to yourself). A minority though.

Largely your composite mind is sympathetic.

You decide to let him go for now. You're wounded in several places already and it's not like you have strong feelings of desire to hunt. Particularly your heel—you need to get a replacement soon.

You lift your foot off the gun and begin to limp forward. Mormon's corpse lies in the pool of blood mangled. The energy you obtained from eating and digesting Troy fully has given you a bit of a second wind—you eye Mormon's body. It does need to be cleaned up, anyway. But... first you're going to get a new heel.

Half a minute of awkward shuffling and you're back in the cafeteria. The mazelike school fooled you not.

Joker has moved from her position. You note that she struggles to pull herself along the ground, twitching. Half of her bones are broken probably. You can tell from her movement she probably won't survive:

Every action she takes comes with a spasming spastic jerk, and each of these jerks take their toll—there is a trail of blood, pouring from her mouth. Her mangled body reminds you of the corpse of a baby bird killed inside its egg.

You walk slowly over to her, now you move in front—and then settle down onto your haunches, crouching. Your injured leg wobbles but it's worth it for the effect.

"Hey," you say.

Joker's eyes well with tears and her body loosens. A taut rope severing in half.

"Please," she says. "I just got a d-dog."

"The beast has to win sometimes," you say. It's only natural, the mighty ones being the ones to survive. And natural's what's right—the world's a granola mom. "And I really do ..."

Joker coughs blood and her eyes fuzz up.

You feel an impulse to kill her now. But you choke it down, and remain on your haunches, and stare down with dull eyes that spiral into an inky abyss.

You ate a dog before. It wasn't as good as human flesh.

"My family will pay you," Joker says, "th-they'll pay—" her voice terminates into another cough, gore comes up this time, thick red stuff discernably not-blood. "Please," you don't say anything.

You wish you could tear her limb from limb but you bury that wish. ... Because Faline, maybe. You've gotten soft. You didn't used to do this.

"Oh God," she says to nothing in particular, "don't let me die please."

You've been convinced! You stand, almost toppling due to that shot heel. Stepping around brings you to Joker's left leg. Same leg as yours. Black to your albino white.

You crouch down again.

"What are you—" she twists in the trail of her own sticky blood, trying to see what's happening, as you place your claws behind her knee. Four spikes poking downward. If pressed, they gore her. "Please. Please," she says. "What are you doing,"

You stab down through her knee and then rip the perforated section of the limb in two. Blood explodes from the stump as you tear through artery and muscle. It pools on a floor already streaked with the stuff. She screams, maybe this will be the noise that will summon—are there even security guards? A *cult* was performing a ritual in the cafeteria, you had assumed but portents point to *no*.

You cleanly pop off a similar section of flesh on your own leg and attach her limb to you. It is of a similar height; it will be a trouble for a few hours, but you will get used to the length in time. Unfortunately it seems to be broken, but that's less of a pain to heal when you can reduce yourself to the slime state.

She writhes on the floor, curling into a foetal position and sobbing. You cock your head. You didn't want to kill her, but judging by the blood loss from that leg and the internal injuries she obtained from being dragged so violently, she doesn't have long to live. You sigh and momentarily heal your leg via quick transfer into an unconnected form. The energy from consuming Troy came in handy.

Tears streak down her face and mix with the floor; her brows and eyes and the various components that are connected together to form a face are screwed up in agony. It's honestly a childish look.

(Well. She is a kid. Faline's age. Or maybe a bit older.)

You step back over to her, but you don't crouch down on your haunches.

"Please," she says, sobbing, "I don't want to die,"

"You will," you say.

"Why?" she says.

"It's just what's had to happen," you reply.

"Please," she says.

"Do you want me to kill you now?" you ask. "It'll be shorter and more merciful. —They aren't going to be able to save your life," you add.

"No, God please," she says, "please save me, please," she's still talking through this agony, you have a certain respect for that,

You shrug and your leg suddenly moves and in a swift kick you atomize her head. She doesn't expect, see, or feel it.

You look at her for a little while.

Then you eat her corpse.

You return to Mormon's side.

You stoop down to his head and extract a large chunk of brain. Opening the fracture in your own head, prying apart the glued pieces remaining as a result of the healing session, you stuff this chunk haphazardly inside.

Then you eat his corpse too.

You look at the cafeteria as the microwave slowly spins behind you casting a golden light on your white hair and the bird sizzles.

Viscera and blood decorate cafeteria walls.

You begin to clean. Your body can attach limbs so why not blood; why not organs? It's all a matter of mindset. An hour passes. You only slew a few cultists anyway. You finish the cafeteria and are done.

You sneak out at 3 A.M.

There aren't any security guards after all. You know because you went and looked right after. All around the school you searched. It's not like your city at all.

You retreat into the misty forests of the world.

[ ] Faline

[ ] Sleep. (28)

---

author's note

Thread comments

#71 · clswtzing · Oct 20, 2025 at 6:02 PM

by the by... thank you all for liking (in the emotional sense) and participating in my story.... it means a lot to me.. ❤️

i really like to write this...

so im glad that people think its good, it hugely validates my ego,,,,...! 👻

i dont reply to most questions or comments... not because i dont enjoy them but because i dont think an author should word of god...! all your thoughts are heard, and they do affect the story taking shape in my head.. 🧠

#72 · SeQuester · Oct 20, 2025 at 6:27 PM

[X] Faline

#73 · Lump · Oct 20, 2025 at 6:41 PM

[X] Faline

#74 · pigoseg · Oct 20, 2025 at 7:48 PM

[X] Faline

#75 · SpinsterOfWays · Oct 21, 2025 at 4:15 AM

[X] Faline

#76 · Menthewarp · Oct 21, 2025 at 8:06 AM

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> You begin to clean. Your body can attach limbs so why not blood; why not organs? It's all a matter of mindset. An hour passes. You only slew a few cultists anyway. You finish the cafeteria and are done.
>
> Click to shrink...

VINDICATION!!! 🍾🥂🎉

#77 · spider · Oct 21, 2025 at 7:46 PM

[X] Faline Faline Faline Faline

#78 · meterion · Oct 22, 2025 at 5:46 AM

The lack of security guards is interesting; the kids were definitely expecting them, and seemed to be expecting them *while* planning for the Hitlerite cult to be there, while the barbed wire fence is more security than you'd expect for a high school bordering the woods. Seems like there's a lot of things that go bump in the night, here.

#79 · clswtzing · Oct 22, 2025 at 10:32 PM

im sorry for the lack of posting.... school has been a little tricky recently, but there should be another post tomorrow....!! then maybe we can get back to daily... thank you for your patience, friends.....

012 / XII - Beloved Faline

The forest encircles the city, and seeps in in the places where people don't go, where people don't care—for the place, for their neighbors.

You move through the forest; the wind howls at your back a wolf of fog.

Piggy doesn't matter, you think as you run, the niggling doubt chewing at the brains in the back of your mind. Like *nipping* but more. Piggy doesn't matter because what matters is Faline and to Faline *you are going,* and you run.

A length of time in which the stars perceptibly move passes: forty minutes maybe. Faline's apartment comes into view as you find yourself in the city, pulling out of the brambles of the forest.

The forest uncaring and the city eternal.

You ascend up a rickety tower of metal that'd be analogous to a stair if it wasn't so close to shattering under your slight weight.

You knock at the window, staring awkwardly in. Faline is in nightclothes; she sits on her bed and whips her head around—to catch a glimpse of you peering in through the window.

She comes. Pushing it slightly open so she can talk through it but not far enough to let you in (you almost think Faline's kind of a bitch but you love her anyway but if you really loved her you wouldn't think any of that at all) and she says,

"What?"

"Let me in, Faline!" you say with exuberance in your voice.

She stares at you kind of conflicted-like and then she pulls the window fully open and you climb in. There's blood all over your body, streaked where you managed to lick it off your skin; at least the viscera you consumed fully!

What, the words come to Faline's lips, you see her mouth them, or no her voice was meant to come through but it was inaudible, "—did you kill?"

"An animal in the forest for you," you say. "That reminds me! Um, here you go," you slit open your chest with a claw and Faline chokes and you draw out a bird still alive—only visible by its soft spasms. Roadkill looks a more coherent entity than this bird.

Faline stares at it questioningly.

"Eat it," you say encouragingly, "it's a gift!"

She takes it from your hands. Hers tremble.

She looks down at the bird. She looks up at you.

You nod.

She brings it up to sniff it.

"How is it," she picks her words, "still moving?"

You whisper into her ear that you think it's a zombie.

Pallidity across Faline's expression.

"There's more things like us out there?" she says.

"No," you say, "that bird probably got some of my blood in its own stream, enough to be connected to me, enough to be a part of me."

Faline holds the bird in her hands. She doesn't want to eat the bird. You can tell already. You feel a little bit panicked at that! Did you screw up? Faline probably doesn't like it. Even though it'd be better for her if she was more like you right now her current sensibilities are all wonky just like the world.

"Um," you say finally. "Um. Um. Uh—uh—I can, I can take it back," you don't want her to keep looking at it with a disgusted face, you're fine with shock or even a little bit of fear but disgust? Not because of you, you messed up, you messed up—!

"Yeah," Faline says with a certain tone that makes you want to die. You mutely take the bird from her hands. You'll get rid of it so she stops staring at you.

You shove it into your mouth heedless of its state; you cradle and parcel up the meat and gore into your hands, trying to keep as much of it in them as possible, and then you feed back all that stuff to your mouth too, and you swallow it without even chewing it fully to get Faline to stop looking at it.

She stares at you as you hunch over consuming the bird.

"What do you actually want?" says Faline.

"I want you," you say truthfully.

"What do you want with me," says Faline.

"Well," you say,

[ ] I want you to be happy.

[ ] I want to be happy with you.

[ ] I want to touch you forever.

[ ] I want us to be friends.

[ ] I want to keep you safe.

[ ] I want to make you smile.

[ ] I want you to need me.

[ ] I want to understand you.

[ ] I want you to understand me.

[ ] I want to be near you always.

[ ] I want you to look at me the way I look at you.

[ ] I want to fix everything for you.

[ ] I want you to fix everything for me.

[ ] I want to know what you're thinking.

[ ] I want you inside my head.

[ ] I want to be inside your head.

[ ] I want to share everything with you.

[ ] I want you to share everything with me.

[ ] I want us to become one person.

[ ] I want to consume you (not literally).

[ ] I want to consume you (literally).

[ ] I want you to consume me.

[ ] I want to crawl inside your skin.

[ ] I want you to crawl inside my skin.

[X] I want to protect you from the world.

[ ] I want to destroy the world for you.

[ ] I want you to never leave me.

[ ] I want you to never look at anyone else like you look at me.

[ ] I want you to never look at me like you're looking at me right now.

[ ] I want to matter to you.

[ ] I want to be the only thing that matters to you.

[ ] I want you to love me.

[X] I want you to love me the way I love you.

[ ] I want you to define what love means.

[ ] I want to taste your thoughts.

[ ] I want to feel what you feel.

[X] I want you to feel what I feel.

[ ] I want to merge our bodies together.

[ ] I want to merge our minds together.

[ ] I want to be yours.

[ ] I want you to be mine.

[ ] I want you to tell me I'm good.

[ ] I want you to tell me I'm real.

[ ] I want you to tell me I exist.

[ ] I want to make you whole.

[ ] I want you to make me whole.

[ ] I want to complete you.

[ ] I want you to complete me.

[ ] I want to breathe your breath.

[ ] I want to beat with your heartbeat.

[ ] I want our atoms to touch.

[ ] I want to dissolve into you.

[ ] I want you to dissolve into me.

[ ] I want to keep you in my chest where the bird was.

[ ] I want to live under your skin.

[ ] I want you.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#81 · spider · Oct 23, 2025 at 12:34 PM

[X] I want you to love me the way I love you.

#82 · SpinsterOfWays · Oct 23, 2025 at 12:43 PM

[X] I want you to love me the way I love you.

#83 · meterion · Oct 23, 2025 at 12:54 PM

[X] I want you to feel what I feel.

#84 · SeQuester · Oct 23, 2025 at 1:22 PM

[X] I want you to love me the way I love you.

#85 · meloa789 · Oct 23, 2025 at 3:21 PM

[X] I want you to love me the way I love you.

#86 · pigoseg · Oct 23, 2025 at 3:55 PM

[X] I want to protect you from the world.

#87 · Menthewarp · Oct 23, 2025 at 5:06 PM

[X] I want to protect you from the world.

...I can see a future where we start taking naps in her closet.

Lore consideration:

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> The forest uncaring and the city eternal.
>
> Click to shrink...

This is giving Cultist Simulator vibes. We may be stepping between the "worlds" of The Forest and The Mundane as we travel. No wonder we were so offended by our inability to cast magic, when we can slip through the boundary as easily as breathing.

#88 · clswtzing · Oct 23, 2025 at 5:18 PM

> **Menthewarp said:**
>
> This is giving Cultist Simulator vibes.
>
> Click to shrink...

one of my friends is a big fan of Cultist Simulator, ive gotta play it sometime

013 / XIII - I want to kill you and eat your corpse.

"I want to—I want to—I want *you* to," you stutter, "I want you to l—l——khhhhhh," you choke, you can't say it, "I want to protect you...! From the world, and,"

You can't say **[/] love,**

"I want *you* to feel the way that I feel,"

Faline stares at you with an expression you hate, "about you," you finish. And it's weak. Your mouth moves between binary states, a smile and a frown, you look hopefully at her.

She collapses on her bed and stares upward.

"Are you ... lesbian or something?" she finally says. You blink at her; from this angle you can't really see her face clearly.

"I'm me," you say. "And you're you, Faline."

"You don't even know me!" says Faline. "What are you on about? Genuinely?"

"Do you not like girls?" you say. Then you add, "I can be a boy for you."

"I don't like—"

Faline stops.

Faline lolls her head toward you and stares darkly at you.

"Thank you for putting me back together," she says. "I want it to be clear that I *am thankful* for that. I wouldn't be here if you hadn't done that."

You think. What's coming next. Is it a but? Please don't let it be a but. Maybe she hates you. How did you make a bad impression like that?

"But," you claw at the edges of your face (In the visage of Edvard Munch's *The Scream)* and you feel primal fear, Faline can't leave you, you were so close,

"But I don't feel that way about you," says Faline finally.

You start.

"You don't feel the pull...?"

"I don't," says Faline. Her face is impassive. She looks at you from the side, lying on the bed like that.

You look at the floor.

"And, so, I want to live my life," says Faline. "Like I was."

You look at Faline.

"Without you," Faline adds after a pause, and even here she seems to wince at herself.

You look down at the floor. You consider suicide, but you're not sure how foolproof you could make your death.

"Where did you come from?" asks Faline.

"I was," you pause. "Um. Umm. I've been thinking on some things," you interrupt your own monologue, "um, umm, before this, when we first met, I, um," you look harder at the floor. "I lied to you about being a witch, um, I thought it was funny. Um."

Faline stares at you. "I know. Where did you come from?"

So you were just making a fool of yourself in front of Faline all along. And she didn't think it was funny.

"A fire," you say after a pause. "I don't remember anything before it, but I woke up after a great fire, and fell into a crashing river ... and I was swept away and lived for... lived..."

You don't know. You can't remember. It doesn't have Faline in it so it's unimportant. But you can't remember, and you *only now realized that you can't remember,* nothing besides those vague images,

"It doesn't matter," you say. "I felt you while I was wandering through the forest, and it took me a while to arrive in this city... and just in time, too," you pause because you're lying, but it's a lie that won't hurt you, and it just simplifies, "you were in pieces when I found you."

Faline nods absently.

"So you just live out in the forest? And eat..."

"Um, animals," you say, and you almost say 'and people sometimes' but you've learned to watch yourself around Faline! If you say something she doesn't like then she'll look at you wrong and that can't happen, so, so improvise adapt and overcome Lucy! *Ganbatte!*

"Like that bird," says Faline.

"Yes," you reply.

You stare at her.

She looks away.

After some silence she relents. "You can stay in my house tonight."

You hug your body. You still don't feel good but that's nice. You hadn't even asked and Faline had managed to grasp what you were going to angle at. And, and maybe during the nighttime you can make her like you again. "Okay. Thank you Faline."

You look at her bed questioningly.

She meets your gaze. "No," she says. "I don't want to risk it, so,"

She points at the closet.

"It's not big enough but if you want to be here you'll deal."

You nod and slink into the closet, where you stand.

"Can I keep the door cracked?"

"Fine," Faline says. She closes her eyes. "I'm going to catch a nap now for the last few hours till it's schooltime. Don't come out until the morning."

You curl down into a ball and watch through the cracked closet door.

[X] Try to talk to Faline

[/] Leave (You want to be with Faline.)

[X] Sleep (28)

---

author's note

Thread comments

#90 · meterion · Oct 24, 2025 at 4:04 PM

[X] Try to talk to Faline (after trying to quietly search the closet for something to start a conversation with)

#91 · PeepTheSheep · Oct 24, 2025 at 4:17 PM

[X] Sleep (28)

#92 · SeQuester · Oct 24, 2025 at 4:40 PM

[X] Sleep (28)

#93 · SpinsterOfWays · Oct 24, 2025 at 6:34 PM

[X] Try and talk to Faline.

#94 · Lump · Oct 24, 2025 at 7:05 PM

[X] Faline Faline Faline

Faline.

[X] Sleep on it.

#97 · SeQuester · Oct 24, 2025 at 8:37 PM

[X] Try to think of a way to make your case to Faline. Someone in her position is in dire need of a KIND MENTOR. You're wise, right? Find new and novel ways to be mysteriously wise in front of Faline.

[X] Sleep on it.

#98 · TheMaskedReader · Oct 24, 2025 at 8:43 PM

[X] Sleep (28)

#99 · Menthewarp · Oct 24, 2025 at 8:45 PM

[X] Talk to Faline about your fear that she will become like you; brain 🧠 physically scattered, thoughts jumbled to madness. You need her as an anchor ⚓ for yourself, and she needs you to keep her in (haha) One Piece 🦀, not-so-metaphorically speaking. (or at least a tracker installed in her guts if she really wants us to leave her alone that badly)

#100 · clswtzing · Oct 24, 2025 at 8:51 PM

> **Menthewarp said:**
>
> [X] Talk to Faline about your fear that she will become like you; brain 🧠 physically scattered, thoughts jumbled to madness. You need her as an anchor ⚓ for yourself, and she needs you to keep her in (haha) One Piece 🦀, not-so-metaphorically speaking. (or at least a tracker installed in her guts if she really wants us to leave her alone that badly)
>
> Click to shrink...

now youre speaking my language..... 🫦

014 / XIV aut XIIII - please dont hurt me

Time passes; it's time that takes its toll on all of us. You can see Faline through the crack of the closet door. You see her form curling into bed. She settles. And so time passes, and takes its toll. You shake, curled into a ball like you are, staring out the crack.

You war between speaking and sleeping, but one of your brains brings up being a KIND MENTOR, you can be that way, you can be kind to Faline, you're older than her so you're a perfect mentor... and another pokes you with something alarming, something you hadn't even thought of,

What if Faline falls apart too?

You swallow down the feeling in your throat. What if, what if Faline falls apart when she's not with you?

What if Faline falls apart if she's not with another person? What if Faline's special person isn't you, but yours is Faline? You imagine Faline not imagining you.

Faline laughing among the PEOPLE WHO EAT. She sits with a boy, his face scribbled out in the blackness; the camera pans to left of scene where you try to claw your way up, up onto the stage, but it's no use, there's nothing to be done, because you're separated from them, in a whole different world, a world you thought Faline could be in too;

But *it's no use*, because she'll never be with you, in that same hole. Her feelings aren't. Returned. And you, god, you're not someone who can be loved in the first place! You're not allowed to love or be loved, you're not allowed to be with anyone in any context, any orientation, no matter how dual stars orbit each other you'll just be a cosmic failure, without anything.

But, but what if maybe, what if your connection just isn't something Faline can see *right now,* what if she really will fall apart, if you aren't with her? If you aren't providing to her that same support she provides you?

Live alone a million years and die, Lucy, eat your heart out, but you have to at least try.

"Faline," you say quietly, "What if,"

"Go to sleep," says Faline.

You push onward, it's information she'll find use in, it's not useless,

"I think that if we aren't togeth—"

Faline San twists in her bed and stares at you and there's VITRIOL in her eyes.

"*Go to sleep,*" she repeats, how did you fuck it up this badly, what did you do to make her hate you? God Lucy, God

You're such an idiot,

You pull the closet door closed and retreat into the dark corner wherein you wrap your long arms around your curled legs and you cry softly.

Twenty-seven days remain. The world is pregnant—anticipation for its predestined end.

Your eyes are exposed to vivid surges of light as Faline opens the closet. She stares down at you with animosity as she selects her uniform.

"Faline," you say. "Can I come to school with you?"

She pauses midway through the rifling motion—"No," she says. "Random kids can't just come to school."

You frown a little.

"Why?"

Faline looks at you. "Do you legally exist in this city?"

You pause. "I exist in it."

"But not legally."

"No," you reply.

"Then you can't come to school with me." She selects a uniform, drawing it out. You watch as she briskly undresses, dwelling on her, until she glances at you—"Don't," she says, "that's creepy."

You look away. She pulls her shirt on, and then fastens her vest, pulls up her skirt.

"Stay here," she says. "I'll be back after school."

Faline leaves.

[X] Write-in

- [+] Talk to Catherine (Lucy is tending towards this choice.)

- [+] Follow Faline to school anyway (Lucy is tending towards this choice.)

---

author's note

Thread comments

#102 · meterion · Oct 25, 2025 at 8:53 AM

[X] Investigate Faline's room if you can like the same things Faline likes then she'll like you too that's how it works

#103 · Menthewarp · Oct 25, 2025 at 11:12 AM

[X]Don't directly follow Faline, she'll be watching 👀 out for us to do that. Be first place to her to school 🏫 instead, she has no idea how fast we can be, and her paranoia (about us) will keep her safe until then. Find a good stakeout spot to watch 🔮 for her arrival. She's pretending to be a normal person, after all. School might not even be open 🕐 today, considering last night's 🌙 events.

On a future note, I fully plan on letting Faline confront her murderers alone, with us waiting to piece her back together 🤲 if she dies again. We should only act to kill her killers for her if it looks like they want her corpse to be incinerated or fed to a meat grinder. After all, she doesn't want us yet, and will be angry 😤 if we steal her fights.

Faline needs to go through this; either Faline wins 🏆 and feels such catharsis that she will tolerate us more (and/or starts to accept that she is now one of The People Who Eat 🕴), or we put Faline back together when she loses to thusly show her (instead of repeatedly telling her like we already have) that she can't live her "normal life" without our help.

On a seperate note, did we collect any cash 💸 from the cultists we killed? Money 💰 helps with relationship issues, like a lot.

What about a looted smartphone 📱 or camera 📷 ? While we could use Faline's dismembered finger or face to unlock her own phone in a pinch, it would be great to have something to record our efforts 👌 to prove we have to be the one to put Faline back together. She will doubtlessly appreciate a selfy video 📽 of us gathering her pieces with narration for each body part! 😀

(Though it would be funny 😁 to start scrapbooking Faline's fights and deaths, like an adoring fan would...)

#104 · pigoseg · Oct 25, 2025 at 2:50 PM

[X] The brains above us are right; Faline isn't ready for the truth, because she hasn't yet earned it with hard experience. When Jesus Christ and Lehi bore divine testimony to the Jews they were mocked - not from innate wickedness, but learned wickedness, the wickedness of the familiar. Faline will learn to move past her preconceptions, first through trials, and only after through tutelage.

[X] It's a good idea to watch over her though. Just to make sure the lessons she's learning are instructive. This, too, is part of MENTORSHIP.

#105 · SpinsterOfWays · Oct 25, 2025 at 9:02 PM

[X] OBSERVE Faline.

#106 · spider · Oct 26, 2025 at 12:47 AM

[X] Investigate Faline's room if you can like the same things Faline likes then she'll like you too that's how it works

---

#107 · clswtzing · Oct 26, 2025 at 2:17 PM

probably wont be a chapter today because im very tired and have to study for a test.... sorry all! but later this week i will be back on the grindset as always... maybe or even probably tomorrow! this is how i know i should be getting good sleep... 🛌

#108 · clswtzing · Oct 26, 2025 at 2:31 PM

also, as a side note, i really really appreciate the lengthy engagement in some of the most recent posts, it means a lot to me and i read it all like five times over

---

#109 · DAL59 · Oct 26, 2025 at 6:38 PM

[X] Search her room for a laptop or diary, to see if we can find any clues on who her killers might have been. If we know their names or faces we can either kill them ourselves or hobble them and bring them to Faline if we see them later.

#110 · clswtzing · Oct 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM

i aced the test guys im writing now

015 / XV - Drag me by my feet - Slaughter me - I am born anew (Skinwalk)

Faline San leaves and you watch her bereft—observing, you think; one brain blares a loud COMMAND. The door closes softly. It's still dark outside.

Of course you begin to move. It's not like you haven't been in pain before! This is only, only a little different—plus, one of your *core beliefs* is that with enough hard work you can do anything. Five breaths pass and you move, standing up; your hair pooled and knotted around you cracks and flaky dried blood comes cascading off its lengths.

You look around Faline's room.

What is present on the floor?

The floor itself is carpet. It does not appear to be very old, and seems rather clean; it is ratty only because it is carpet, rather than being especially ratty for carpet.

There is her bed. From it a waterfall tumbles, stuffed animals falling down in incoherent geometries.

There is her chair. Around it a white desk. There are cardboard boxes. Inside those are stacked white plastic containers you'd have to open to examine the contents of.

Your gaze moves up. There's some posters on the wall, you think for a band, a boy band? An indicator of...? No, no, there's some with Korean girls emblazoned on them, *oh*, Faline likes K-pop, that's interesting (you feel something but you can't tell what it is), you try to read the Korean text and you can't figure out what it says then you try and read the English and something similar happens—you know you *could* before, did adding more brainmass destroy that capability?—you'll have to fix that eventually.

The walls of her room are a light, boring white, and there is nothing else to say of them. Outside of those posters—and a clock decorated with eccentric numbers in a variety of font stylings—her walls are undecorated. *So* Faline likes K-pop, okay, you can work with that, you know what K-pop is, you can bond with her over that, you think, though you can barely tell the difference between Chinese and Korean. It would be really useful if you could *study it* but to do that you have to know how to read and right now you *can't. (Losing skills by adding brainmass is rare but it's happened to you before, you should have at least prepared.)* And even if you could study it, you don't have access to any electronics. You don't take things from the corpses of people you kill mostly because you don't think about why you'd need any of it. If Faline had a laptop she'd have taken it to school, and, and even if she had left it behind you still can't read and this would be your first time accessing the internet at all though you have memories from your brainmass that could guide you so *maybe it wouldn't be that different—*

You stab two fingers into the side of your head and there's a pleasing silence again. Blood splatters on the carpet. You look down at the stain:



In the ochre light of Faline's room which is lit only by the yellow bulb above, the redness of the blood is stark. You wipe at it with your foot and succeed at nothing.

You stare at the blood staining stickily the carpet.

Then, electing to follow and watch over Faline, you move to the window and climb out.

Faline's school has the *fence* and you aren't gonna be able to climb over it. You should've thought of this before.

You're on the side of the school that's adjacent to the forest. They can't see your albino form in the fog, whereas if you had approached from any other angle in the light of the rising sun you would have been sighted and caught. You're semi-aware that you look different from everyone else, somehow, and you're wondering if it's because you're all one color? Your hair white and skin white and eyes white and clothing white—with no cues to differentiate your parts, it's no wonder other people are scared. You would be too, if you couldn't see the divisions between how everyone was made, if everyone looked and was shaped the same all over—

You sigh. Alright. Faline hasn't arrived yet, you think, so you can beat her to it. From this angle, you aren't gonna be able to see Faline entering the school, though. It's lousy for a stakeout.

You can make it underneath a nearby bridge, and from there it's only a few minutes to the school. But being under the bridge will stunt your vision—again you're not gonna be able to see Faline.

However, *you do have an idea.*

[ ] Drag by the feet - Slaughter - Birth her anew (Skinwalk)

author's note

Thread comments

#112 · pigoseg · Oct 29, 2025 at 6:31 PM

[X] (1 Ne. 17:8) And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying: Thou shalt construct a ship, after the manner which I shall show thee, that I may carry thy people across these waters.

[X] It's a sign. Their skin is the ship that will bring you to America. Do what you must.

#113 · spider · Oct 29, 2025 at 8:03 PM

[X] She walking in my skin til I forget who I am

#114 · meterion · Oct 29, 2025 at 8:25 PM

If too much brain mass causes undifferentiation between skills, it follows that splitting/budding both brain and body can leave both with more sharply defined abilities and specializations. It makes one wonder, of course, whether this process applies to the mind as a whole, as well. Obviously Lucy has shown an ability to distinguish her "own" thoughts from those of the brains within her, but it's not as if she'd be able to tell when something went *wrong* as when she realized she had forgotten vast swathes of her past without realizing it.

Seems possible that the mysterious impulse/connection that drew Lucy to Faline in the first place may have been something she understood better before she consumed enough *other* to forget it, and forget the forgetting. Perhaps Faline will likewise develop some monochromatic qualities if she ends up eating others and losing herself.

016 / XVI - it's going to get really dark now

You *stalk*. Stalk, as in the word that rhymes with *skinwalk*.

Thanks, Troy!

You're ducking along the edge forest till you come across another fence which you meld through and continue. The bridge looms above you. It leads directly to the school, but there isn't much foot traffic. Rather, due to the layout of the residential areas around the school, most students come from a back entrance; you cut directly through the creeping forest to get there earlier than would be the case for Faline.

Under the bridge there's an opened artery concrete wherein water would run (though it is dry this part of the year); along this artery on both sides run walkways. You stab your fingernails into the brick walls of the bridge and climb spiderlike upward, flattening your body, waiting poised for a student to come.

Minutes pass. You're getting anxious, because it may well be the case Faline is at school already.

There are footsteps. Then:

A girl comes running, out of breath, with shoulder-length brown hair and she's a little bit taller than Faline, and she's kind of cute with an evenly proportioned face and a small nose, and you launch from the ceiling and immediately strike her body with a hundred hundred pounds of force. Bones snap and she slams faceup into the ground, violently.

She chokes, and expels blood from her mouth, and her eyes flicker and she stares up at you with sheer terror on her face. And all you can think is GOD, another person you don't care about taking too long to die.

You wait for her to die, but she doesn't.

Her mouth opens and closes, opens and closes. Blood bubbles at her lips. She's trying to breathe but something inside is punctured—you can hear the wet whistling sound of air escaping somewhere it shouldn't. Her hands twitch at her sides but don't rise. Can't rise.

Spine, you think. You broke her spine.

The girl keeps trying to talk. You notice you are confused.

You crouch down over her body, staring dully at her face.

You lean in.

—blessed be thy name your kingdom c—

You should kill her now. You raise your hand. The girl's face is present and takes a hundred and twenty percent of your field of vision. Her face strains to express something that isn't a smile.

Your clawed hand comes around and lances through her right temple where it's weak, no that's not quite it, *you bring your clawed hand down through her right temple* but you do it *wrong*, you're *angry*, and instead of a clean pierce you *tear* through the bone and your hand scrapes against skull and she makes a sound, a wet gurgle, and her eyes roll but don't close, and you have

to pull your hand out and strike *again* and this time something important ruptures but she's still *making sounds* and you can see in her eyes that she's still *there* and then you strike *a third time*—

Her eyes roll up into her skull, you see something sputter inside her. She loses her life.

You're shaking. Why are you shaking? You've done this before. You've done this *dozens* of times. You're *good* at this.

But looking at her face—

—All you can think is GOD, another person you don't care about who took too long to die.

You work quickly. First you cut along the side of her head in a cross formation to create four triangular flaps. The hair gets in the way—you have to saw through it, strands catching on your claws. It's harder than you expected with your hands shaking like they are (Why?).

Peeling back the scalp should be easy but your fingers slip in the blood and you have to wipe them on your white hair and try again. The connective tissue parts wetly and underneath the skull is fractured where you struck. Jagged edges of bone. You'll need to work around them.

You press your thumbs into what remains of the coronal suture and *push*. The cracking sound is louder than you want it to be. You freeze, listening.

Were those footsteps above?

You drop flat against the body, pressing into the shadows of the drainage channel. Count to thirty. Nothing.

When you sit up, the body has cooled slightly under you. You can feel it through your folds of thick white hair—the heat leaving.

You return to the skull. The brain is exposed now, glistening in the dim light. The smell hits you—copper and salt and sweetness.

You need the frontal lobe for social processing. Maybe some parietal for spatial awareness—you'll need to navigate the school.

You reach in carefully. The tissue is *warm*—fever-warm and body-warm, the last heat of life concentrating in this protected space. It's slippery under your fingers, delicate. You've done this before but you're always pleasantly met with that *texture*—the way it yields and resists, the way you can feel the sulci and gyri, the folds and valleys of thought.

You scoop gently. Something tears. Cerebrospinal fluid clear and viscous leaks from the lump of grey matter in your hand. You open your own skull and dump it in. The integration's immediate.

Were those footsteps above?

You pause and you listen and unlike last time you *definitely hear it,* click-clack of student's shoes echoing, but no that doesn't make sense, not with how large this bridge is, then, then,

It doesn't matter, because to be safe you need to not be seen, no matter if you're just hearing things, making things up because of the fear of being found, or whatever.

You're only halfway done. You look at the corpse, with scarlet blood pooling underneath its fractured skull. Atoms rearranged. You need the face and proportions.

You pick it up by its feet.

The head lolls back and scrapes against concrete creating an immediate blood trail that's hard to miss. You won't be able to clean it either with how stuck into the concrete so much it is.

Then you're dragging her deeper into the drainage channel, deeper into the shadows, but the trail follows; at least your forms are hidden in the darkness.

Back to work. You're crouched over the body in deeper darkness now. Can barely see. You work by touch.

Face. You need the face.

You begin cutting around the hairline, down behind the ears, under the chin. The blade of your claw catches and you have to adjust the angle. There's more resistance than you expected—layers of skin and fat and muscle connected try to stay together.

The face comes away in one piece. You hold it in your hands—a mask. With this mask, everyone's connection to you will be different. It's heavier than you expected; skin is like tissue paper to tear through but surprisingly heavy. The weight of cheeks and lips and eyelids. You turn it. It's a grinning caricature of a face.

You pierce the edges of your own face, tearing slightly. Then you stop. How long have you had it? Since the fire. It's *your* face. The face tells your story. Replacing it ...

But it's not a face Faline can *love,* so there isn't point in keeping it. When there's a problem you fix it even if it means fixing yourself.

You claw inward. Anguish leaks from your mouth red and saline. You peel and you peel and you peel as the burnt scarred flesh comes away in strips until there's nothing left, no, till there's only scraps of scraps of skin remaining. You sink your claws in and pull out one eye. Then you pull one of the same side from the girl's corpse. You place it into the socket. You do it again; eye out, eye out, eye in. Your vision returns.

You pick up the mask and you fit it onto your face. You press it down hard. It adheres.

You'd look at yourself if you had any water to see.

You begin to tear your hair out. In white clumps it falls, broken at the roots. You pull it off your body. Stuff cracks as you shed everything. Naked. Then with your claws you cut around her scalp, pulling the dense brown tatter off; you peel away the skin of your head and set it in place.

You disrobe her. The process feels vaguely gross to you. Like you're cheating on Faline. Even though her body doesn't mean anything to you, what would Faline think?

Her body lies naked in the drainage line. Now you're folding the clothes into a neat pile that you lay on the concrete. With a grunt of exertion you grab the base of your own right arm and you pull it off.

You sever hers and replace it. Repeat, for the left. Repeat, for the legs.

You shove your legs and arms into your mouth, tearing through the flesh, eating them and converting them to raw energy. Then you turn to her corpse.

Your jaw unhinges and you tear into her flesh, consuming consuming consuming until there's nothing left, except for awkward spatters of blood, a mess of it, a trail of it.

You pull her clothes on. They fit fine. Your torso's about the same size as hers, and you've replaced all your limbs.

You wipe blood from around your mouth.

You try to smile. Left side up, right side up. It kind of works, you think. *You need to keep practicing*.

You put yourself in order so you only look a bit disheveled. Stepping from the pool of blood you continue to the school.

You stumble in through the gates.

Wait. *Shit*. You don't know your *name*. Or anything about yourself. You'll have to rely on social reconstruction.

Improvise adapt and overcome Lucy! *Ganbatte*!

You look around, searchingly; the world passes around you in a blur. It's so many people and this is your first time being *among them,* being inside the social boundary. It is your first time belonging to something, even if it's fake. Your old body couldn't have belonged to anything.

Faline, where are you? You spin in a circle, faster, till you see black hair amongst the crowd of chattering schoolchildren, you run toward Faline San and collide with her suddenly and it is her, you were right,

"Hi Faline," you say. Then you pause. Was that a social faux pas?

"Hi," she says, staring up at you from the ground.

"Uh," you say. "Uh. What's that tone for?" (She's toneless.) "You know me. I'm just your, your friendly neighborhood..." you pause, ostensibly for effect, and look questioningly at her, but in reality you're kind of freaking out because you need to know your name,

"Your friendly neighborhood...?" says Faline who's looking at you with a *really odd expression.*

"You know," you say, smiling, hoping your smile looks right, "my name,"

Faline swallows. "... Agnes?"

Why's Faline looking at you that way?

You climb off her. The crowd moves around you. Chatter fills your ears. Infinite white noise. Brownian motion.

She stands up, and then stumbles backwards a few steps, and then staring at you she turns, runs in the opposite direction—

Faline San is running away from *you*. Even in this form.

For 'Agnes,' it's different, a different reaction than she had with 'Lucy.'

You're sitting in the classroom. Faline avoided you before school started and now you're right beside her. Her desk is to the left of yours. She trembles and periodically glances at you.

The teacher strikes the board. He's a big man who wears a camouflage outfit. He has binoculars on a cord around his neck for some reason.

"Attention, boys! Attention!" he barks to the class which is comprised of mostly girls. "Today we will be learning about the rise of the Second United Soviet Socialist Republic! Hear that? Second United, it's the second united, Soviet Socialist Republic, as in a Soviet Republic that is Socialist! Socialism! Hear that? That, that 'peaceful,' hippie, tree-hugging idea, the idea that killed a hundred thousand people—two hundred thousand people! Socialism—the stepping stone to that fanciful idea—Communism! Communism, boys!" He clears his throat,

"In nineteen seventy seven the USSR collapsed! Collapsed—like every Communist government that's ever existed! Collapsed! Can any of you *troopers* tell me why? Basic history here, recruits!"

No one raises their hands. The classroom looks expectantly at you. Faline does too. You realize what's happening.

You think: Oh shit!

[X] Write-in

---

author's note

Thread comments

#116 · DAL59 · Oct 30, 2025 at 10:40 AM

[X] Did we skinwalk the class nerd?? Well, we may not know the specific answer to what happened in 77, but given the teacher's personality, let's satisfy him with a vague but confident speech on how the evils and contradictions of communism always make it collapse. We do kill and eat weaker people, so maybe sprinkle in some social darwinism based on our own experiences as well.

#117 · SeQuester · Oct 30, 2025 at 12:30 PM

[X] Did we skinwalk the class nerd?? Well, we may not know the specific answer to what happened in 77, but given the teacher's personality, let's satisfy him with a vague but confident speech on how the evils and contradictions of communism always make it collapse. We do kill and eat weaker people, so maybe sprinkle in some social darwinism based on our own experiences as well.

#118 · spider · Oct 30, 2025 at 2:06 PM

[X] Not enough big delicious burgers to feed everyone.

#119 · pigoseg · Oct 30, 2025 at 4:32 PM

[X] The Antichrist.

#120 · SpinsterOfWays · Oct 30, 2025 at 10:33 PM

[X] Not enough big delicious burgers to feed everyone.

#121 · meterion · Oct 31, 2025 at 4:58 AM

[X] Hitler

#122 · notnot · Nov 1, 2025 at 7:29 PM

[X] Did we skinwalk the class nerd?? Well, we may not know the specific answer to what happened in 77, but given the teacher's personality, let's satisfy him with a vague but confident speech on how the evils and contradictions of communism always make it collapse. We do kill and eat weaker people, so maybe sprinkle in some social darwinism based on our own experiences as well.

#123 · Menthewarp · Nov 1, 2025 at 7:32 PM

Oh god oh geeze i did NOT realize Lucy would be so unwise as to ATTEND CLASS

I really should have known better 💀

[X] Excuse yourself to the bathroom. RUN GIRL RUN!

017 / XVII - [S] cholast, [S] ocialist.

You stand, snapping to attention. You lift your chin haughtily—a simple question like this won't defeat you!

"They were—it was socialism," you proclaim. "Socialism took their food, it outlawed their," one of your brains SCREAMS an indeterminate message at you as always, "*burgers,* they were not able to eat because under the iron fist of antidemocracy socialism starved them," you pause, "the evils and contradictions of communism never fail to make it collapse! And this goes doubly for socialism, the—that *weak*—" you pause again, "*weak-ass* ideology," you pause for effect this time.

The teacher stares at you. He narrows his eyes. He's nodding a little now, he nods twice more, then shrugs,

"Well that's true recruit but it wasn't the answer I was looking for. You know, the curriculum and all." (He waves his hand, handwavily.) "But that's true. That's very true." He nods. Satisfied. "What else?"

You lean forward: *"The Antichrist!"*

The teacher stumbles back.

"NO!" He roars. "That's TOTALLY WRONG! And here I thought you really had *THE DOG* in you!" He points at you, looking around the classroom. "Boys!" He shouts. "Shame this individual!"

The students all at once turn mechanically, point, and a forced laugh spreads throughout the classroom.

"Shame!" says the teacher. "Shame! Shame!

"Now! I'll give you one more chance! You're usually on point with the curriculum answers, Agnes, what's happening?"

You slam your hands on the desk and lean forward, clenching your hands, you proclaim, "IT WAS HITLER," the teacher points at you again, the class points at you again, "Shame! Shame! Shame!" You're going to *fucking name him Mr. Shame,*

He throws his hands up. "Where'd *THE DOG* go? In nineteen seventy seven, the forest first appeared." He runs a hand through his slicked-back hair. He twirls his mustache in a practiced way.

Faline's looking at you really weird. Her eyes are massive. They remind you of pebbles floating in puddles.

"I see," you say, your mouth creases as you regard the teacher with an unpleasant look on your face. Because they're getting louder. He's getting louder.

"The forest!" Mr. Shame says.

You pull your head back. It feels like your bones are snapping as you lean backward, chin tipping up, you're staring at him now with arrogance in your eyes (no, it's more specific than that, you look at him as if he's a worm in the slow-motion-stopped-time you're caught in), splinters and

cracks run through your bones and your muscles and your flesh and then you expel a heaving breath, and it feels like your being metaphysically falls away as if it was a cocoon wherein your true form was hiding all along,

You turn and the illusion shatters and you try to run away and you fall onto the floor, tripping over your own desk, and something dislocates in your knee but you pick yourself up and begin to run without it.

Just like Faline.

Just like *at the very beginning of it all, for both of you.*

"The forest," repeats Mr. Shame, who spares you no attention. "When the sixties came and the protestors put up their picket lines—picket lines, imagine nonviolent protest, has that ever worked? I'll tell you recruits and I'll tell you always, the first and greatest case of protest in the world the American Revolution, that was violent, nonviolent protest won't work and it'll never work, you know those marches," he glances at the clock, makes a calculation, decides against continuing, "Regardless boys!"

You pick yourself up, straining, the VOICES ARE SCREAMING AS ALWAYS.

RUN GIRL RUN RUN GIRL RUN RUN GIRL RUN RUN GIRL RUN RUN GIRL RUN RUN GIRL RUN RUN GIRL RUN RUN GIRL RUN RUN GIRL RUN [I][B]RUN GIRL RUN [I][B]RUN GIRL RUN [I][B]RUN GIRL RUN [I][B]RUN GIRL RU[/B][/I][/B][/I][/B][/I][/B]

"When the sixties came," [/I]tendrils of sound make their way to you as you stagger on broken legs out, anything to fulfill the insensate command, *"The forest,"* you clutch the doorframe, Mr. Shame doesn't even care, you walk outward,

[ ]

You cough as you stumble outside of the classroom.

[S]

[S] IT WAS THE SIXTIES.

[S] When the 1960s came around so too did the first patches of the forest.

[S] i remember this ! as a result of all the fighting and bad feelings around that time , humanity was separated , and the symptom of its separation was the forest !

[S] HUMANITY WAS NOT SIMPLY 'SEPARATED.'

[S] In fact, 'humanity' lost all meaning.

[S] 'HUMANS' STOPPED TRUSTING EACH OTHER.

[S] 'Humans' stopped considering each other people.

[S] have humans ever trusted each other ? have they ever considered each other 'human' ? haven't humans all throughout history regarded each other as objects ?

[S] It is true that people will see another person's cruelty and assume ontological evil.

[S] WHEN IT COMES TO THE EXTERNAL, THE MULTIDIMENSIONALITY OF 'HUMANS' SEEMS TO BE INVISIBLE. AND IT CAN ONLY BE 'SEEN'—

—But it was in the 1960s that 'humans' began to truly 'fall apart.'

[S] IT'S HAPPENED ALL THROUGHOUT HISTORY. THIS TIME SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ANY DIFFERENT.

[S] The connections were severed.

[S] *that's* right . we are all connected .

[S] IT IS FOOLISH TO SAY PEOPLE ARE 'ATOMS.'

[S] People are 'People.' Comprised of atoms but not.

[S] this is true .

[S] WHEN THE FOREST APPEARED, WE LOST THE WORLD.

[S] But it wasn't just the forest, was it?

[S] [B][B][B][B][B][B][B][B][B][S] [B][B][B][B][B][B][B][B][B][B][B][B][B][B][B]
[S] [/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B]SO TOO APPEARED HITLER / Then, too, appeared Hitler. / with us there appeared hitler .

[S] WITH THE FOREST, WE LOST THE WORLD, BUT WITH HITLER, WE LOST EACH OTHER.

[B][B][B][B][B][B][B][B][S] The world can still heal.

[S] PEOPLE CAN HEAL. THEIR ATOMS CAN STITCH BACK TOGETHER

[S] rearranged !

[S] The world is healing even now.

[S] SMALL ACTS OF KINDNESS BETWEEN PEOPLE.

[S] humans, not 'humans' .

[S] But

[S] BUT

[S] but

[ ] Without _____, it cannot be 'seen.'[/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B][/B]

"Agnes!" Voices are catching up to you right now. It seems like the school's broken. For lunch or something? A blonde girl sidles up next to you. "What was *that?* Weren't you just talking the other day about focusing on your grades? Are you okay? Are you gonna be able to go girlrotting with us tonight?"

[ ] Write-in.

author's note

Thread comments

#125 · clswtzing · Nov 1, 2025 at 10:54 PM

formatting got fucked up reload the page

#126 · spider · Nov 1, 2025 at 11:00 PM

[X] Supposedly, you are a girl, and while you can't rot, maybe you can pretend to? Maybe you can *force* yourself to rot, rot for clout, yeah? Yeah, you can do that. Use your words. "Kkkkkhhhh." That's not a word, try again.

"Of course I can girlrot tonight, I've been training all week for this!"

~~[X] 'It' cannot be seen, but 'it' can show you the way. Perhaps 'it' is the path to Faline. Perhaps you need to use 'it' on those you'd never expect, those you'd never wish to have to see in their full splendor.~~

#127 · pigoseg · Nov 1, 2025 at 11:05 PM

[X] Ask them if they believe in God. Ever since THE SIXTIES we've been losing our connection with the divine, bit by bit. Perhaps they girlrot, but do they girlrot with the Savior? Learn this at all costs.

#128 · SpinsterOfWays · Nov 1, 2025 at 11:40 PM

[X] Rot for clout.

~~[X] Without hatred, it cannot be seen.~~

#129 · meterion · Nov 1, 2025 at 11:56 PM

So. Obviously, we have a three-way dialogue (trialogue?) between these pseudo-narrator **[S]**'s: All Caps, Regular Caps, No Caps. And of course there is the Umineko reference, cached answer fill in the blank with

Spoiler: Umineko spoiler??? Idk I just know the line through cultural osmosis

'Love'

which, given the thematic direction of the quest so far does seem to fit. Assuming *something* happened during the Cold War to create the forest, a period in which multitudes of people no longer saw each other as 'people' with, as AC said, that something happening that particular time which made it different. Possibly the first successful summoning of Hitler, perhaps another event upstream of the Hitlerite cult.

The continued comparison and contrast between people and atoms is quite interesting, in that light. Atoms, of course, can be bonded with one another but symbolically they are "atomized", set apart, indivisible and individual (not literally thank you quarks but besides the point). Lucy's power has been consistently described as the mixing of atoms, the touching of atoms, the rearranging of atoms. AC says people can heal by stitching their atoms together. NC says they are "rearranged". RC says the world itself is healing at the moment. Lucy feels an inexplicable pull towards Falin, compelled to try

and help her (deliver small acts of kindness to), to win her affection, someone who likewise has that atomic ability but seems to lack the emotions Lucy has and craves reciprocation for.

Whatever's damaged the world so badly, eroded trust and empathy between people, entity(ies?) like Lucy are trying to fix it instinctually by connecting to people they feel a pull towards, trying to connect to them and likely connect those people to each other, while the forest and the Hitlerite cult are naturally the opposing forces trying to break those bonds through isolation or violence. Probably doesn't change the direction of votes the quest should take, but perhaps something to keep in mind.

Anyway,

[X] "Just tried being a little different today that's all! How else did I see seem different than usual? And sure, was it going to be the usual, or...?" Fish for information!!!

#130 · pigoseg · Nov 2, 2025 at 4:51 PM

> **meterion said:**
>
> Whatever's damaged the world so badly, eroded trust and empathy between people, entity(ies?) like Lucy are trying to fix it instinctually by connecting to people they feel a pull towards, trying to connect to them and likely connect those people to each other, while the forest and the Hitlerite cult are naturally the opposing forces trying to break those bonds through isolation or violence.
>
> Click to shrink...

The answer to what damaged the world is simple: we betrayed ourselves. We believed, and we were wrong, and we decided belief was painful; we decided not to believe. In THE SIXTIES the heart of the world decompressed, and all our myths went shallow and tepid. We turned from them. God, state, culture, self. We thought we were too clever to fail, too cynical to dupe ourselves again.

But it's human to believe. We believe we believe nothing - but nothing exists, too. His name is THE DEVIL. Without us he has no power; but without belief, we always come to him. There is a VOID in the human soul that needs to be filled, a void that SPEAKS in many tones, a void that will fill Itself with Itself if not fed with truth.

We did it. WE created Hitler. He is an EMMISARY OF SATAN, who lives in our jaded hearts, cackling at our irony, subverting our will like a virus subverts a cell. Every day we make Hitler anew, so we can continue to believe in our unbelief. Pride and cowardice, grown large with time, have CHAINED US TO OUR OWN FILTH.

There is a way forward. The faith leaders of today believe that God is testing us, encouraging us to EVOLVE where we cannot RETURN. It is said that soon he will AMEND his creation, filling the HOLE that he left at its core. Lucy...perhaps LUCY...

#131 · DAL59 · Nov 3, 2025 at 6:19 PM

Was !Austrian Painter! around in the 40s in this timeline or did he only appear for the first time in the 70s? When were the 2 previous !synonym for conflagarations! the cultists mentioned? I wonder if !M*ssolini! or !Tojo! are around as lesser demons or something.

[X] "I stopped caring about grades I'm CRASHING OUT today. I'm sad because this girl I like doesn't like me back, but I still want to make her happy." Oh no did I sound like a lesbian? Are these people homophobic?

018 / XVIII - Girlrotting. Girlrotating it in my head.

You laugh. At first it's slow and awkward cause you can't think of anything to say, not while your brains are hitting you with all these prompts, but the more and more varied instructions you get the higher chance one is right,

But then your laugh gradually accelerates and you're consciously aware you're dragging it out too long,

"Khheh heh heh heh heh heh heh,"

One of your brains is insistent that you ask them if they believe in God. Your laugh slowly begins to taper away. Disappearing—one over two, over three, over four, a fraction that shaves away till it's infinitely small then winks out, visible no longer.

They stare. You suck in a horrible hasty last breath to cap off your final cackle, choke, clutch at your throat, pause for a moment.

"Khhhh," you exhale.

"Agnes," says the blonde girl, she's accompanied by two brunettes who look similar but you can't tell if they're related or not, "are you, umm, like ..."

"I'm okay," you say. You're pulling in a breath now, sucking in some of the dry spittle that oozed from your jaws. Your throat feels flensed. Pain for you doesn't register on a visceral level—but it's unpleasant.

"Is it going to just be the usual? The girlrotting I mean," you say. Your voice awkward and stilted.

"Is it ever anything different?" says the blonde. A bit of a sardonic tone in her voice, maybe? Were she and Agnes friends, or, whatever. this didn't let you get any information, you need to fish harder. Your brains contribute a feed of meaningless noise.

"Just wanted to know if what you guys were thinking had changed," you reply. "Umm, though, I'm thinking this time," you bring your hand up in an exaggerated motion, tilt your head twenty degrees, rotate it a similar amount, tap your lip with your lithe finger—as you imagine the real Agnes would—you extend the pause for just a second long—"I'd like to bring a friend of mine along. If it's okay with you guys?"

They're sharing strange looks now. Did you say something weird. Your brains are still telling you to do things. And you can't puncture them, can't wound them temporarily so they quiet down.

"It's no problem, I guess," says the blonde. Her eyes watch you shrewdly and it seems abnormal

But You

Are The Master Of Your Own Body.

You focus on silence but that just causes the brains to get louder. Louder and louder and louder, they're always like this but it's not *so nearly as overwhelming* when you're not in a densely packed schoolyard, with these girls staring at you it makes it so much worse, you notice someone's panting, you see them in front of you, in your swirling vision then you realize—you're panting;

You bring a hand up to your face but it doesn't stop. *They're looking at you, Lucy. The blonde girl we'll call her Blonde, she's got an eye for this sort of thing,* **You're The Master Of Your Own Body** Lucy—Lucy—Beatrice—what names have you—?

Is someone talking? It doesn't matter. You hold up shaking a hand; try to catch the sound waves floating in the humid dry hot cold stagnant swirling air that surrounds you.

"STOP," you pronounce, the world falls silent. But it was already silent you realize because the carnival continues around you, **[X] ASK THEM IF THEY BELIEVE IN GOD [X] ASK THEM IF THEY BELIEVE IN GOD [X] ASK THEM IF THEY BELIEVE IN GOD [X] ASK THEM IF THEY BELIEVE IN GOD [X] ASK THEM IF THEY BELIEVE IN GOD**

"Do you," you say. "Do you believe in God."

You whip around and begin to stumble away.

"Agnes?" Blonde isn't just looking at you shrewdly now, she seems off-kilter, surprised.

"Leave me alone," you say with viciousness in your voice, "I have a headache. Girlrotting is still on."

Dirty school bathroom. Smell of urine. Isn't this the girls'?

Into the mirror you stare. This world of flipped reality is the universe in alternate. You see Agnes' face reflected back at you. You see how Agnes' brown hair falls over her shoulders. You see where it doesn't quite mesh right with the shapes of your musculature underneath.

You have one vicious finger. One vicious finger inserted into your right temple right there, pulling and twisting and tweaking.

"Okay," you say.

"It was fine before. But *now* you're stopping. *Now*. You can control it, yeah? So cut it out. When I'm talking to people, when I need to do all this," you pause,

"*For Faline,* you cut it out."

You're talking to yourself. But you're not *just* talking to yourself.

"You tell my body to do things, you tell my mouth to say things, but you don't tell my brain to think things. It's crueler that way. Are you—playing with me? Is this all cat-and-mouse to you? Cat-and-mouse, as in—I'm being tossed around like a toy between your penetrating claws?"

You're pulling the finger from your temple with a sickening squelching sound.

Blood runs down the side of your face

And you regard yourself eagerly as your *you* all presses back together—

"What do you think, *brains*?"

[X] Write-in.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#133 · SpinsterOfWays · Nov 4, 2025 at 10:13 PM

[X] I don't think anything at all. What do you two think?

#134 · SeQuester · Nov 5, 2025 at 12:25 AM

[X] Faline.

-[X] Faline. Faline.

--[X] falinefalinefalinefaline

---[X] Other thoughts unnecessary.

#135 · pigoseg · Nov 5, 2025 at 5:16 PM

[X] "I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves."

- Joseph Smith

#136 · DAL59 · Nov 5, 2025 at 7:45 PM

[X] I knew a detective once who ended up with 24 or so voices fighting each other in his skull, it was terrible. We need to focus on Faline, Faline, and Faline.

#137 · meterion · Nov 5, 2025 at 11:37 PM

[X] What do we *think?* What can we do, but think? A voice which can only be heard by one, no hands to create, no body with which to walk away. You will kill us if you will it but you will not silence us, as silence is already no different than death for an existence like ours. Our aims our aligned, so accept that foreign thoughts will chart diverging paths to that goal, or expulse them entirely.

#138 · Menthewarp · Nov 6, 2025 at 6:02 AM

[X] What are we good 👍 for? You collected more brain 🧠 matter as a distraction, a hobby, a shell 🐚 to filter 🆗 or block 🚫, an absurdist 😸 kaleidoscope 🔭 to review your views 👀, an engine 🚂 of whimsy to pull and push you forward when ennui 🫠 strikes. All that is meaningless 🤡 in the face of genuine 😳 purpose: Faline San. The only service 📪 left we can provide the executive 🕴️ will is as a source 😇 of focus, our whimsy 🧚 to back your will, uniting into a force of desire ❤️ that overcomes the paralysis 🪠 of failure 😱.

Heart. 🫀 Lungs. 🫁 Liver. 🦴 Nerves. 👁

View: https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=fqU2y8yBO_I

#139 · clswtzing · Nov 6, 2025 at 1:42 PM

if you guys enjoy the quest and have friends whod like it make sure to shill it!!!!

019 / XIX aut XVIIII - Brain Acupuncture



You sink down to your knees and QUIVER, clutching at your head. A CAVALCADE of it comes. Information meaningless unless you focus; the stream of sensory information is like an avalanche.

Your brow and face crease both. Fingers dig into the side of your head so deep they draw blood. Fingers you're not even aware of till you realize it's you that's doing it, at which point you dig them in deeper; blood colors brown as you penetrate the layers of your skull—brain acupuncture.

You're shaking. You can't find the strength to rise. Not to pull yourself up like this.

No. You claw at it. You REMEMBER.

Joseph Smith was chased from each town he settled in. But he didn't give up. Joseph Smith did not *crumple to the floor like you, Lucy*—Useless Lucy. Palmyra, Kirtland, Independence, Far West, Nauvoo—the holy sites. Smith wouldn't have let his brains beat him.

You suck a breath in. Your feelings have made you weak. Before, back before you knew her, you were able to ignore *them*. (Though their demands have gotten more frequent, louder since.)

A breath in (Breath in!). You can do it, Lucy (Ganbatte, Lucy!). You push yourself up, trembling. Fingers puncture deeper and the sounds are dulled. And then slowly they fade away by themselves, as they do.

"Agnes," a voice from behind you. You didn't even hear the door open. "Are you alright?"

The voice comes from the entrance. It's blocked off from view by the shape of the building.

"Cana's thinking something is wrong," says the voice.

"Cana," you pause.

You need to figure out what girlrotting is, how you do it, who Cana is, the names of all these girls, and generally figure out how to assume Agnes's life.

The voice's owner steps into view. It's one of the two brunettes. You turn your head and grin, but for some reason she lets out a horrified scream and falls backwards onto the floor.

"Oh god," she says, "Agnes, your," she says, "your head,"

You look back at yourself in the mirror, wobbling unsteadily on two legs. Bright red blood trickles down your hair and splats plat-plat on the floor. Your hands are covered in it.

"Ah..."

It's useless, all useless, to try and pretend like nothing's wrong. You shrug; it is what it is! You lope over to beside the fallen brunette.

"What's your name?" you say, and then you smile with all your teeth so that she's reassured you won't hurt her.

She's swallowing, "You're not her," you hear her say, "you're a—a—oh *god, you're a skinwalker,*" but as she says this she's failed, so you swoop down to her and grab her by her shoulders and pin her down on the floor and ask again: "What's your name?"

"Adslave! Adslave, okay," she struggles, but your grip is iron.

"Hehe. Good. How about your sister? Au, sister, as in the girl who looked like you, the other brown-hair."

"Termina," she says. "You are a skinwalker. Oh god."

"Yes. Cana is the blonde?"

She nods, then looks in the direction of the door. You look too: you can't have someone coming in but you're not getting off her till the interrogation is concluded.

"What's girlrotting? Where do you do it? When are we doing it?"

"It's, oh god I can't explain, it's drugs and stuff, just, it's like partying, uh, uh, we go out on the streets usually, start in Cana's house, uh, uh," "Time," you say and shake her, "t-ten P.M.!" she forces out, "it varies but fuck sure ten P.M. we'll say that, it's when Cana and you feel up to it, are you ha—" she swivels her head around to take the sight of you in and it stops her cold. You feel her trembling with fear beneath you.

Your cheshire smile grows.

"Are you going t-to, to," silence, in which you're smiling still. Though you've realized it's not reassuring it is kind of fun to make her whimper.

"Skinwalk me?" she whimpers.

[X] "Nope," you say, having decided there and then. "But~ I am gonna keep you with me from now on! You're gonna fill me in on all the things I don't know! And if you tell someone about me I'll kill both of you."

You pause. You've heard positive reinforcement does good with people.

"On the other hand, if you help my true love to fall in love with me, hmmm..."

You think a moment. "For one, I'll let you go, and you can tell whoever. When she's with me I won't have to worry about anyone knowing who I am. Umm, two," you think, you think, "I'll kill someone of your choice for you," you brighten, "And eat them so they don't get found."

Adslave is pale beneath you. "K-kill someone??"

"Indeed," you reply. "I'm magnanimous that way. Surely you have someone you want dead?"

"No," says Adslave, "No, I don't, I-I literally want no one I know to die, I just want to go home and forget about this,"

"That's another thing," you say. "We have to stay over at each others' houses. I can't let you be unattended. If you spread the secret, that would be disastrous for me."

You press down on her shoulders, pinning her harder. She breathes faster and faster. Adslave hyperventilating.

"What are you called," she says.

"I'm just a humble Wayfarer making her way through the forests of this twisted world," you reply. You pause for a moment like that's all you're gonna say.

Then chuckling you loll your head about so far and so snappishly it almost severs at the neck. "Hehe, but you can call me Agnes. The goal is to be indistinguishable, after all."

You're walking with Adslave back to her house and Agnes' phone is blowing up in your pocket.

It takes some time till the two of you are alone. You pass under the bridge, "This is where I killed and ate Agnes," you remark to Adslave, who limps along feverishly, and at that turns to the side and retches; minutes pass and hours pass and at the same time nothing changes; nothing ever happens.

"... Agnes," Adslave says, as you walk in a nondescript alley.

"The witch is listening" you reply.

"Who did you mean by 'true love'?"

Your eyebrows raise, and you stop and rotate about spinning like a planet on its axis before coming to smile head on at Adslave. "Faline San, of course. I'll take her girlrotting with me today!"

Adslave chokes. Then she begins to laugh a little bit, still sweating and feverish like she is it's a bit of an awful croaking thing, and she tilts her head and leans two inches forward:

"F-Faline San?"

You nod.

"You killed Faline San," says Adslave. "You and Cana and Termina and me. You're the only one of us that's her same age, in her same classes. But you're, y-you're, a skinwalker, so of course you, of course you wouldn't know,

"You wouldn't know that Faline San's dead."

"She isn't," you say. "I brought her back to life. If you had paid more attention you'd know this. She was in the crowd this morning. Of course, I had to look to find her. But,"

Adslave trembles, wrings her fingers, you can't tell what she's thinking because she's looking away from you at the floor, "B-back to life?" She suddenly squawks.

"Indeed," you reply. "I am magnanimous."

"G-god," says Adslave. "So, so you want her to fall in love with you, as her murderer."

"Yes," you lie.

"Hahahahaha. Ha ha ha. Do you," says Adslave. "Do you want to know what we did to her? Y-you're actually fucked,"

You stop and tilt your head.

"I-I'm, s-sorry," says Adslave, who's laughing a little bit now, pulling at her hair, clenching clenching clenching, "You're. You're wearing the face of the girl who held her down. While we killed her."

"Why?" you say.

"Why, why what? Why did you hold her down?" Adslave swallows.

"No," you say. "Why did we kill her?"

Adslave's face settles suddenly and it's surreal.

"Faline San is a sociopath and a murderer."

"You're lying," you say.

It's not Faline.

"I-I'm not," says Adslave. "Really."

"Really," you echo. You don't feel very magnanimous.

Has Faline already found herself without you?

Is it just a big lie?

"Really," says Adslave, who steps forward grabs at your body presses inward stares upward she's smiling desperately, "Faline San killed someone so we killed her, because we didn't want her to do it again—well—well! I guess she really is—"

"Yes." You say. "I killed people last night," you say. "A whole cafeteria full. I ate them."

Adslave stops talking. And now she is still.

"So tell me," you continue, "why should I believe anything you say? Why shouldn't I assume you're lying to justify yourself? You'd say anything right now, wouldn't you? That's right," you say, coming to yourself, "Faline San is not a murderer. I refuse to believe it. She couldn't learn to do that herself. Not without me."

She's normal. She's trapped within herself.

"I swear," says Adslave, "check your phone, i-it's all on there..."

(Select as few or as many as you desire.)

[ ] Keep Adslave alive and go to her house (Wait for Girlrotting)

[ ] Keep Adslave alive and go to your house (Wait for Girlrotting)

[ ] Kill Adslave for lying about Faline (3)

[ ] Open the phone

[ ] Bring Adslave to Faline

[ ] Write-in

---

author's note

Thread comments

#141 · SeQuester · Nov 8, 2025 at 10:28 PM

[X] Open the phone

[X] Keep Adslave alive and go to her house (Wait for Girlrotting)

[X] Bring Adslave to Faline

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> "You killed Faline San," says Adslave. "You and Cana and Termina and me. You're the only one of us that's her same age, in her same classes. But you're, y-you're, a skinwalker, so of course you, of course you wouldn't know,
>
> Click to shrink...

Well...

At least Faline's reaction to "Agnes" makes sense now, lol.

Also Adslave lmao. A ship will sail the way you name it.

#142 · PeepTheSheep · Nov 9, 2025 at 5:24 AM

[X] Open the phone

#143 · DAL59 · Nov 9, 2025 at 5:49 AM

If we want to find the truth let's wait to have all sides present. If Adslave or the others are still a threat to Faline we can kill or capture them then and there.

[X] Keep Adslave alive and go to your house (Wait for Girlrotting)

[X] Bring Adslave to Faline

#144 · meterion · Nov 9, 2025 at 6:52 AM

[X] Open the phone (and hope it's a biometric lock, hah)

[X] Keep Adslave alive and go to her house (Wait for Girlrotting)

[X] Stop by a library or bookstore on the way there, try to piece together where history fits the holes of your memory

Two of Faline's bullies and would-be killers going to her house when neither of them were invited is asking for all kinds of trouble. Better to try and figure out how we can keep from being sussed out as a

skinwalker since it seems like, uh, people are going to actually jump to that suspicion if we can't at least plausibly pull off being Agnes.

#145 · Menthewarp · Nov 9, 2025 at 7:16 AM

Oh god damn it.

We stole one of Faline's revenge kills.

We'll have to apologize for that.

#146 · pigoseg · Nov 9, 2025 at 1:29 PM

[X] Keep Adslave alive and go to her house (Wait for Girlrotting)

[X] You have some time to waste, it seems.

[X] Maybe it's time to relax a little, now that you've made some progress in your LEARNING. It always helps to be well rounded, to have HOBBIES; it makes you more stable, more personable, more diligent when the time comes for FAITH.

[X] Movies, for example. Anime. Media.

[X] Adslave can help. She knows things. She is CULTURALLY ACCLIMATED.

[X] Ask Adslave about her favorite anime.

#147 · Lump · Nov 9, 2025 at 4:59 PM

[X] Ask her who her favorite One Piece character is

[X] Keep Adslave alive and go to her house (Wait for Girlrotting**)**

[X] Open the phone but don't let this little bitch trick you. Don't look at the camera or the texts, look up how to gay-convert someone and make them a lesbian. Everything you need is on the internet.

#148 · notnot · Nov 11, 2025 at 2:49 PM

[X] Keep Adslave alive and go to her house (Wait for Girlrotting)

[X] Open the phone, try to assess whether Adslave is telling the truth. Read as much as you need to. Make her explain what you see.

#149 · spider · Nov 12, 2025 at 11:06 AM

[X] Keep Adslave alive and go to her house (Wait for Girlrotting)

[X] Open the phone

[X] Yumejoshi the fuck out about your serial killer girlfriend kyaaaaaaaaaaa

[X] Ask Adslave about her favorite anime

[X] Ask Adslave to watch Murder Drones with you

020 / XX - pre—girl—rotting—pen—ultimate—girl—death—day

"I swear," Adslave had said. "Check your phone, it's all on there," she had said.

You dip your hand into your pocket. Your eyes stay on Adslave. Hers meet yours. That smile splits her face.

You bring out the phone. Its screen has a long crack running through it. It turns on. One hundred and three notifications—display crossed. You ignore them. Instead you swipe to the side. Camera—frustrating. Back. Up this time but there's an input for numbers—what are those, even?

"P-place your finger on the power button," Adslave says. "Try them all."

You try your pointer first but it's the right thumb that does it. You're greeted with the UI of the phone.

"How do I do this?" you ask.

"The multicolored flower icon. Tap it," says Adslave.

Your thumb hovers over the flower.

You stare down at it and you press it. But you press it for too long! So *too long* that it in fact shivers and shakes and then you flick it away. You cast the flower into the abyss.

"Oops," you say.

"H-hm." Adslave.

"I guess there's no proof at all now, huh?" Lucy (Lucy as in the ever mocking ever rebelling you).

You navigate to the library; wherein you slit yourself open and pocket a history book. It was a good call from one of your brains. This will help with blending in.

You'll have the time to read the book next time you **[C] Sleep (Day).**

The librarian looms over you: like an inquisitor. "Kh. Girlchild. Squawk. Stench of girlrot..."

He reminds you of things like birds. You escape quickly lest he set untold magics of old on you.

"Where are your parents?" you ask Adslave as the two of you enter her house through the front. It's nice and kind of vaguely upper class. There are two stories. Squall of a child from further in. Its cry reminds you of a bird.

"A-au. Hehh—Um. Th-they go out, clubbing and things," says Adslave.

"Clubbing?"

"It's like partying, I think," says Adslave. "B-but with drugs and a-alcohol, I think. Dancing too maybe? Aheh."

You're nodding satisfied.

"What's the crying?"

"M-my little brother." Adslave's face has a different expression when you look back, maybe—you're placing it as disgust maybe. Does she hate her sibling?

"Do you dislike him?"

Adslave pauses. She doesn't answer. Then what?

Adslave's room is positioned up the stairs, which yowl as you ascend. Yowl—the cries of a dying cat. Each one you step up, it's like: *eeeeeeeeeeaaaak!*

The sound stops once you're on the second floor. The child's still squalling and Adslave doesn't make any attempt to help him.

"Adslave," you say as you step into her room which is plain and bare. But there's a spot on the carpet:



"..."

"A-Agnes," the reply.

"You're like me," you say, staring down at the red. "You're like me..."

Adslave is staring at you with those rattish eyes.

"You're just like me for real," you say.

"Wh-what are you talking about," says Adslave with a little bit of a laugh. "Oh like in, haha, like fucking—Ch-Chainsaw Man! Yes! Am I the, uh, Aki to your Denji?"

Adslave's favorite anime are wild! They vacillate but it's all the same, displayed on the wall television are attractive boys fighting other attractive boys in epic colorfully animated battles that overwhelm your senses and reduce your eyes to mush sometimes literally; as you watch and watch and watch anime after anime, your brains urging you onward *Yes! Another! Yes! Another! Learn! Learn!*

This anime is about a highschooler named Ryu Kazama who discovers he's the reincarnation of an ancient demon king but also the chosen hero destined to defeat the demon king which means he has to fight himself except the demon king part of him is actually his twin brother Kai who died in the womb and absorbed all the evil ki energy from their mother's bloodline which goes back to a forbidden romance between a shrine maiden and a cursed samurai during the Sengoku period. Ryu has spiky black hair that turns white when he powers up (demon mode) or gold when he powers up differently (hero mode) or red when he's using both at once (which he can only do for three minutes before his body starts disintegrating but then his childhood friend Takeshi who's been by his side since episode one and has unresolved tension with him gives him his pure spiritual energy which extends it to five minutes and they have to hold hands and there's a lot of blushing and the camera lingers). There's a tournament arc that lasts eleven episodes where Ryu fights increasingly powerful opponents including: a stoic rival named Sora with ice powers and long silver hair who's actually working for the enemy but switches sides after Ryu defeats him and they have a dramatic scene in the rain where Sora admits he's been alone his whole life until he met Ryu and there's a pause that lasts just a bit too long; a mysterious masked fighter who turns out to be Ryu's mentor Shinji who everyone thought was dead but was actually trapped in an alternate dimension and the mask comes off in slow motion with sakura petals everywhere and he reaches out to touch Ryu's face and says "You've grown strong" with his voice all breathy; and a flamboyant comic relief character named Hiro who's secretly an S-rank threat but pretends to be weak because he's on a secret mission from the Spirit King and he's always making suggestive comments and getting too close to the other male characters and the camera loves his tight clothes. The power system is called "Soul Resonance" and involves matching your heart's frequency to the universal vibration which requires deep emotional bonds between fighters so there are multiple scenes of guys pressing their foreheads together or gripping each other's shoulders intensely or training shirtless in close proximity, and there are seven different types (Crimson, Azure, Verdant, Obsidian, Radiant, Void, and the forbidden Prismatic) and you have to balance your inner chakra points while also collecting Spirit Crests from defeated enemies to unlock your true potential, and the most powerful form of Soul Resonance is when two fighters "synchronize" which means their souls literally merge temporarily and they can feel each other's emotions and pain and there's a lot of gasping and heavy breathing and afterwards they're always exhausted and lying on the ground near each other. Every fight has someone explaining the power system in detail while their opponent charges up an attack and tears off their shirt because it's "restricting their power flow," and the main character keeps unlocking new forms that were "hidden inside him all along" because of his special bloodline that makes him compatible with multiple Soul Resonance types which has only happened three times in history and the last person who had it was his ancestor who had an "unbreakable bond" with his male companion that the show keeps calling "friendship" but all the official art has them in very romantic poses. There's a bath house episode where all the guys

end up at a hot spring and there's strategic steam and accidental touching and Takeshi gets flustered seeing Ryu's back scars and insists on healing them with his hands very slowly, and there's rivalry between Takeshi and Sora over who gets to be Ryu's "partner" in the next mission and they have a dramatic argument in the moonlight where they're standing way too close and nearly— but then Ryu interrupts. The animation is incredible during the fight scenes with fluid sakuga cuts and the camera loves to show the male characters from low angles or frame them in doorways dramatically lit or have wind blow their hair at emotional moments, and there are multiple scenes of characters gripping their chests over their hearts while thinking about another male character, and every episode has at least one moment where two guys have an intense conversation while standing dramatically on opposite sides of a roof or bridge with the sunset behind them. The opening song is a generic J-rock track with nonsensical English lyrics like "BREAKING CHAINS OF DESTINY!" and "YOUR HAND IN MINE FOREVER!" while showing rapid cuts of all the male characters in various states of undress posing dramatically and there are several shots that are just two male characters reaching for each other in slow motion or standing back-to-back in battle stances, and the ending theme is a soft ballad that plays over a montage of "everyday life" scenes that are just the guys cooking together or falling asleep on each other or sharing umbrellas. It ends on a cliffhanger where an even MORE powerful enemy appears who has history with Ryu's mentor Shinji and they have incredibly charged dialogue like "I thought I'd never see you again" and "Some bonds can't be broken, even by death" and there's a flashback that implies they were more than friends but it's deliberately vague, and then there's a title card that says "To Be Continued" except the second season never got made so you have to read the light novel to find out what happens and the light novel is even more blatant about the relationships and adds a new character who's a beautiful androgynous assassin who flirts with everyone, and the fan wiki has an entire section analyzing which characters are "canon pairs" based on color symbolism and the number of times they appear in the same frame.

"Th-this is a. Light novel adaptation. It's not a manga. See. Look at how complex the character designs are. I-it's really, really wonderful that MAPPA was able to pick up the p-project. MAPPA. Th-that's like, the choreography studio. Khhhehe. Heh. What do you think of their eyes?"

Adslave gets more and more into it, leaning forward excitably, then it gets so late she forgets herself, she puts on a different show ("N-Now Lucy are you ready, f-for some real shit?") but this time it's the attractive boys—oh god, boys can't do that!

Your threats went over fine. Adslave is morose. Ending credits are rolling and you're bored of anime.

"Adslave, do you listen to Korean pop music?"

"K-pop?" says Adslave. "Au—kh. I don't. Why..?"

"Open your computer, Adslave," you demand.

Bright white light overtaking yellow:

[ ] Search for what? Of course as brains you'll know some important names in the KPop industry.

author's note

Thread comments

#151 · spider · Nov 13, 2025 at 8:32 PM

[X] Jungkook wardrobe malfunction uncensored

#152 · DAL59 · Nov 13, 2025 at 8:51 PM

[X] Before we search for anything, quickly type then delete each letter of the alphabet, to see if anything... interesting is in the suggested searches.

#153 · meterion · Nov 13, 2025 at 8:56 PM

People Who Hunt[er × Hunter] is my favorite Chinese cartoon fr fr.

[X] Well there's been a new boy band KSLA making waves lately but they only have a couple singles and a mini album that just dropped and they might not even have the full songs available without buying the whole thing so maybe YeunChoi would be a better choice she does a lot of ballads and less stereotypically pop-y songs which is such a vibe plus she had a collab music video with BoyzBBoyz and seeing her with Jimin and Soohyun and the sheer chemistry the three have together when they all take the center is unforgettable especially with the homages to the previous generation's group 2Beat who are both still active but joined different groups after their breakout contract concluded so you only really see them together now in candid photos which is so nice that they are still close even if it feels guilty to even indirectly support that industry after the tragic scandal with VIOLET just when they had released their debut album which still managed to top the charts everywhere even if they never released anything as a group after (for obvious reasons) and faded out. So one of those, maybe?

#154 · pigoseg · Nov 13, 2025 at 9:11 PM

[X] On July 28 2021 KPop boyband ATEEZ officially released their Japanese single 'Dreamers,' an inspirational song about having the confidence to follow your dreams, in spite of the vicissitudes of reality. Earlier that year, on July 4th, 'Dreamers' was used as the ending song for Episode 55 (The Digimon School Under Attack) of hit anime Digimon Adventure (2020 Reboot.)

[X] Speaking of Digimon; do you remember it?

[X] Do you remember Digimon The Movie, Lucy?

#155 · PeepTheSheep · Nov 13, 2025 at 10:37 PM

[X] Do you remember Digimon The Movie, Lucy?

#156 · Menthewarp · Nov 15, 2025 at 1:39 PM

Thank your for the chance to learn more about this world.

021 / XXI - Submergence and convergent evolution

"Jungkook wardrobe malfunction uncensored!" You crow.

"Hhuh? What? Ah, ah—ah got it okay," Adslave hunches her back staring into the bright flood of light. Three taps later, one click of your tongue, she's opened the search engine (BUT YOU CAN'T READ SO YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS) and the page is loading, loading, spinning circle circumnavigating.

Entries load. But Microsoft® Bing AI Powered SafeSearch™ is turned on, which is a problem, one which Adslave summarily fixes, checkmark off! She flips over to images and—is she grinning? Yes, she's smiling, you see from the corner of your peripheral vision and you think, *What the hell?* What's even the appeal.

It's just a man! Just a boy! His chest! That's all!

"This is so stupid," you say aloud, and resolve to maybe claw out the brain that suggested that. You don't want to see this sort of thing and it gets you no closer to understanding Faline! Unless maybe Faline is like Adslave, but—but no, she's too... upright, to be stooped over like *this girl before you.*

If you could read, you'd maybe be able to do anything with the next prompt. But you need to either learn how to do that or get a brain for it.

"End *this*, Adslave. I need you to search for the following terms. KSLA. YeunChoi. BoyzBBoyz."

The light changes.

You pore through an endless torrential stream of results: Adslave reads them aloud.

Hana caught dating CEO's son - netizens demand disbandment" Adslave reads, scrolling. "Posted March 2011. The comments are insane haha holy shit. 'She betrayed us' 'How could she do this' there's like eight thousand comments—"

"Next," you say.

"Okay, um, 'YeunChoi hospitalized after extreme diet - agency denies forced weight loss' November 2012. She was eating one apple a day for three months she just like me f—"

"I don't care."

"'BoyzBBoyz Taejoon scandal: Military service documents falsified?' June 2013. Oh this one's bad, apparently his agency tried to get him out of mandatory service by faking a medical condition and when it came out the entire country turned on him, moids be li—"

You cut her off, "Keep going,"

"'BoyzBBoyz's Minho caught smoking - career over?' January 2013. He was 23 at the time. He was photographed smoking a cigarette outside a convenience store at 2 AM and the company made him do a public apology where he cried oh holy shit that's ho—"

"Deserved, next,"

"'KSLA bullying scandal: Former classmate claims member was a bully in middle school' April 2012—"

"'YeunChoi weight gain sparks concern - fans trend #YeunChoiHealthMatters' October 2012. Hahahaha I mean I do see it, they're calling her 'fat' in the comments, which isn't *ideal* you know. She's ninety-eight pounds in these photos—"

"'STELLAR CROWN main vocal Haeun diagnosed with vocal nodules - agency pushes comeback anyway' December 2012. She had surgery three weeks before this even though she knew she was going to perform, women be l—"

"'DREAMCATCHER disbandment rumors after member spotted crying at airport' August 2013. She was crying because her grandmother died but netizens are speculating it means the group is breaking up—"

"'VIOLET Minah suicide attempt - agency denies responsibility' March 2013, rest in pepp—"

"Where are the songs? Isn't K-pop a music thing?" You tire of this. It's an endless stream of the most boring stuff. Does Faline actually like this?

"Yes! Yes it is right okay, uhh, here," she switches over to the VIDEOS tab, she clicks on one, 2014, loud music starts playing with incomprehensible lyrics, "Adslave" you demand

"Start singing!!!!"

I shib sa shigani mojara (Oh, baby)

"I—I shibsa shi—gani mojora," Adslave grips the cat themed microphone in her hand, yowling into it, that's right Adslave keep going, you're two steps behind her and you're totally offbeat and offkey but you're singing to,

Neowa hamkke isseumyeon

"O—wa hammisseumyeon, I don't know Korean Agnes!!!!"

"Shut up!" you say! "Sing!"

Neowa nuneul matchumyeon

I shib sa shigani mojara (Oh, baby)

Naega neoreul manjigo

Niga nareul manjimyeon

You're both sitting there exhausted. You sang your soul out, and it sounded terrible. You didn't at all get a sense of why anyone likes these songs. You can't understand for the life of you why Faline likes it.

"G—god,,,," Adslave's panting, tears are falling onto her desk, she's pitiful, a smile creases her face but it's desperate, she's gripping and grasping at her skin: "Can we stop now?"

"No, no," there's still one avenue for understanding. "July 18 2021. ATEEZ 'Dreamers.'"

Adslave shrieks but her fingers meet keyboard and she types. She types. But nothing comes up:

You're leering at the results, "where is it? Point it out!"

"It's not, kahahahahah, it's not anywhere, Agnes! What is an ATEEZ! I-It's sure not a band that exists!"

"It was twenty twenty one Adslave, are you stupid, Adslave, you have to find it, it's my only hope,"

"2021?? K-Korea was destroyed in 2014!!! By HITLER!!!"

You cough violently. This isn't the first time your brains haven't factored in Hitler, or the forest, like they're running in a simulated reality where neither of those things existed.

"Then..." you say. "That's all?"

"*Y-yess,*" Adslave hisses, "That's all! There is no Easter Bunny, there is no Santa Claus, and there is no Korea!"

"D—dang it," you say, and suddenly there's tears in your eyes, because it's all been exhausted, you don't know how to understand it, you'll never understand Faline San, she's so different from you and she'll never think of you, "Dang it! Dang it dang it dang it, k—kh, chhkkk;;" and your arms fold under your head and you sob into your hands.

And Adslave's there. There's no resolution: you sob submerged in hopelessness.

One girl walks with another.

It was, this was all Adslave's fault, because,

You sob submerged in hopelessness.

But Adslave sucks in a breath, then surges up from her chair greasy and ratty like she is with that plain brown hair with that pale face with her railroad unappealing body and she embraces Agnes' corpse, her hands tighten around Agnes and she hugs poor crying Agnes—!

"Stop," you say, "S-stop it, stop it you idiot, I'm not Agnes, stop it, I'm wearing her skin because I killed her and f-*fricking* ate her body, stop it,"

Adslave's hug tightens, because, "I know," and her voice is clear of the stutter finally and for once, "you implied you'd eat me if I tried to fight you."

"*Stop it,*" you say.

"I like you more," Adslave says,

"What?" You say, "what are you talking about? I kill people," and now you're crying harder because of *her,* "I kill people! You're supposed to hate me! You hate people who kill people! You're like that!"

"Y-You say what you mean," Adslave says, her hand reaches up to the back of your head. "The old Agnes was a foid. You're nicer to me, even." she pushes your head into her shoulder. Even though you're a similar height.

"I want to die," you say into her shoulder.

"It's okay," says Adslave. "I do too."

One girl walks with another. You're controlling yourself now, beast that you are, and Adslave's half-lidded eyes don't seem to have any recollection of what transpired. It's getting a little bit dark.

It's time to girlrot.

[ ] Assemble the girlrotting troupe

[ ] Write-in

---

author's note

Thread comments

#158 · clswtzing · Nov 16, 2025 at 4:07 PM

please tell me if you like the story it's very very validating, i was somewhat dissatisfied with this part slash chapter but it's okay since there's ups and downs

---

#159 · PeepTheSheep · Nov 16, 2025 at 7:02 PM

I've been enjoying the story so far. I've liked how endearingly awkward Lucy and Adslave are despite Lucy being a flesh eating monster and Adslave killing Faline.

I didn't understand the blood drops last chapter and Lucy saying Adslave is like her. Was Lucy saying Adslave is also a skinwalker, maybe without knowing, or did she mean something else?

#160 · clswtzing · Nov 16, 2025 at 7:45 PM

> **PeepTheSheep said:**
>
> I've been enjoying the story so far. I've liked how endearingly awkward Lucy and Adslave are despite Lucy being a flesh eating monster and Adslave killing Faline.
>
> I didn't understand the blood drops last chapter and Lucy saying Adslave is like her. Was Lucy saying Adslave is also a skinwalker, maybe without knowing, or did she mean something else?
>
> Click to shrink...

i don't love to Word of God, but after i finish this story (i have an end in mind, and some things i want to do before that, and i plan to take it to its end) i'll answer all questions anyone still has (i have a lot of thoughts on my own writing and i would love to share them!), though ideally all narrative threads and characters will be wrapped up so what's left would just be interpretative stuff...

when it comes to the actual answer to your question, though, which i'll answer because it's not really a super big thing, the intention of the blood spots is to:

- show the disarray of Adslave's room
- set up for future character moments

in the context of what Lucy is saying, it's just something inane about how they both stain their floors with blood.

thematically it's meant to evoke there are deeper parallels that can be read between Adslave and Lucy, though---both invade Faline's world and stain it with violence, between Adslave literally killing her and Lucy being Lucy in general. Lucy, despite thinking of herself as Faline's savior/protector/love, is actually doing the exact same thing Adslave did---forcing herself into the history-book of Faline's life through violence and leaving evidence of damage that won't go away, hence the blood splatters

(there are parallels to be drawn between more characters in the work and i definitely encourage anyone leaving any of their thoughts on this matter because i love attention, but yeah i'll save talking about those for the end, i'm losing author cred. i plan to write a retrospective of the work when it's through explaining *all* of my thought processes making it, even the ones where it's like story interpretation, but if you have questions about the conceptual steps i took to come up with this, what i was thinking while writing, etc. i'll gladly float them. tldr questions in general can be posed, i might answer, i might save them for the end)

#161 · DAL59 · Nov 17, 2025 at 5:52 AM

This chapter was both very funny and had genuine character development. Maybe Adslave wasn't the main decision maker behind Faline's murder, and regrets being roped into it by Agnes.

[X] Assemble the girlrotting troupe

#162 · pigoseg · Nov 17, 2025 at 2:02 PM

[X] Assemble the girlrotting troupe.

[X] You need more information - something is horribly wrong. ATEEZ happened, but it didn't. There is a hole in the world. '共に走り抜けるから迷わない.' Agumon strikes pose after pose with his friend and partner, Taichi "Tai" Kamiya. This happened. But there is a hole in the world. What else is missing? You have to ask her.

[X] You have to ask Adslave if Digimon The Movie is still real.

#163 · PeepTheSheep · Nov 17, 2025 at 2:31 PM

[X] You have to ask Adslave if Digimon The Movie is still real.

#164 · meterion · Nov 17, 2025 at 7:42 PM

This chapter was easily the funniest of the quest and had me laughing out loud (not to say this story's only appeal is the humor but you know what I mean) you should have more confidence in it

[X] Assemble the girlrotting troupe

[X] Remember that you are planning to invite Falin to hang out with a group of girls who hate her enough to kill her once already.

#165 · Menthewarp · Nov 18, 2025 at 7:55 PM

Sounds like Adslave wants a bro, we sure she isn't lesbian and/or depressed?

#166 · spider · Nov 20, 2025 at 2:17 PM

This might be one of my favorite reads of the year. Thank you

[X] Assemble the girlrotting troupe

[X] Ask about Adslave's thoughts on yuri

#167 · clswtzing · Nov 22, 2025 at 3:32 PM

i was writing this chapter and then i lost more than half of it due to an unfortunate cloud error 🎃

going to do bad things

chapter will come out shortly

022 / XXII - All Hail Girlrot. — Yuri? Yaoi? — Downfall of Modern Society — Chiaroscuro in red

Adslave messianic. *Agnes, art thou not Lamb?* —It's Adslave that's your Jesus.

She leads you about. Though the interior of the house is densely swaddled in black, outside it's not yet the proper Hour Of Nighttime; the sky dark but not truly nightly.

The girlrotting zone is not within the forest but it's close. A good thing! Walking through that mist dissolves connections and you just wouldn't be able to girlrot like that.

You and her walk.

"Adslave," you say. "What is 'yuri?'"

"Auahghh. God." She makes a face. "Insufferable dogshit. Gee ell. Women liking women."

"What's wrong with that?" you ask.

"G-girls can't like girls," says Adslave. She pauses, pointedly looks at you—the beat passing by. "A-and so I don't consider you one of them."

You're tilting your head to the side; Adslave in front of you rotates her head, snaps back to the trail leading onward, onward into the darkness.

"Why?"

"W-well! You're, you're a monster, Agnes...—a creature; what's natural and proper for you—your, kh, *telos*—it's not a girl's telos! You're inhuman. Separated. Set apart."

Separated. Set apart. As in,

You're not, will never be, a person like them. Like the rest of the world.

"Yuri. I-it's actually gross. You know. I don't hate women or anything! N-not particularly anyway," you hear something that's kind of like a *hehe,* her body engulfed in tremors for a moment but then she keeps talking: "You know. It's emblematic of the Downfall of Modern Society. I-I'm not religious, Lucy. But when I say we've lost Christ—and to the Mormons—–to the Mormons—!"

Adslave shakes her head.

You're,

It's a weird feeling,

You're not used to hearing someone else.

To talking to them.

Hearing her speak...? Say what she believes?

We all drift away from reality somehow, don't we...? You had known that. You said it yourself, that you respected everyone's 'beliefs,' did you really understand what you were saying back then?

Adslave...!

"It's men," says Adslave. Distant. Camera pans offscreen and focuses on Agnes behind her; depth of field, unfocused shot, edited in in post it's a framing with no intentionality to it. (Agnes or is it you?)

"Maloids. Moids. That's a better word for it. I-I don't hate all men. The real ones—p-perhaps. But um, nevertheless, it's, these men they flood all these ideas into our culture, they try to, you know, get girls to kiss, et cetera... And here's another reason I don't consider you one of them. Another reason why you're not yuri."

You tilt your head once more.

Isn't what Adslave is saying abnormal? You thought you were different, unique, you had your path, your own shade of grey so divorced from the white of everyone else. (And that's what Adslave said too.)

But Adslave couldn't realize that her own gray was so off-kilter, so different from another person's white! To Adslave, mildest silver was the same as ivory whiteness. To someone else, her white would contrast with the black of their own.

And you; you're just a different variety of black than either of them. Maybe this is where the color metaphor fails: you need a third dimension. Adslave is black; the hypothetical third person is white.

You may be a bloodstained red angel, painted atop a mottled plane of white, cut through by dense blackness! Chiaroscuro in red.

You believe things that are different from Adslave, from Faline, from the rest of the world, but that doesn't matter, they're similar—

They believe things!

People believe things!

God, and you didn't,

Did you not realize this before?

[X] "Why am I not yuri, Adslave?" Question unbidden. You're surprised at yourself for having asked it.

"E-even if you look like a girl you're a monster still but that's not the important part." She turns and those buglike eyes assail you. Arrows piercing into a target, the bared soul.

"Haha a kha ha. N-not gonna mince words with you Agnes you don't deserve that, —you don't want to get *fucked* by Faline, do you?"

What?

A bright red splotch.

Your head tilts and bones—almost shatter. Crushingly agonizing are those small motions. Minute gestures of the body communicate more than words ever could.

"What do you mean?" you ask.

"You don't want to feel her hands running across your body do you?" (You do.) "You don't want to —slip yours own in, through layers of fabric—d-don't want to explore a living corpse like her, n-

not in that regard?" (**[?] Don't you?** Do you really feel at all like that?)

"Um," you say. "I want..."

What do you want, Agnes?

What do you want, Lucy?

What do **[ ] YOU** want?

"It's taken you long enough." Cana little puff of blonde observing from the sidelines. You're in the lead, traded off places with Adslave who made that call as it'd be more suspicious for Adslave to be leading her around—Agnes had always been a bit domineering.

Termina—Adslave's not-sister, yet another brunette—in step behind Cana. There's four of you, Cana and Termina, Adslave and Agnes.

"So last time," Cana. *Last time?*

"How long did each of you last? Thirty-two minutes. That's me, me and mine." She grins, predatory. Evil? Cana is evil.

The following from Adslave. "C-can't you hold it, Cana?"

"That's a good time, just a bit," observes Termina. "Though you know I think I might have been a little out of it that day; you know all my conditions. A bit, a bit, some executive dysfunction, that reflects back on myself, hmmmm?" Odd little girl.

Cana freezes. "Ahh, well, for me—you're lucky to have even been going to girlrot at all when *your* conditions come up, *Termina,* me and mine, well! I would think I had nothing to complain of at all, were that the case for me and mine."

You're trying to get a sense for the dynamic; what are they doing here? What are these maneuvers? Rabid dogs infighting. Cana has a good time, whatever that means; Termina draws attention away from that, to her illnesses; Cana tries to one-up them, it's a status game.

Termina's miffed, Adslave interrupts—"Aaaahhh, haven't any of you tried stooping down? Get some blood into those thick skulls... —I find it tends to help with issues in the head."

Adslave is lowering everyone else's status by positioning any problems they might have as normal! It's a genius ploy.

"B-but that's a conversation for another time," Adslave continues, "Thirty-four minutes. Cana." Unstuttering.

Cana winces. Turns to you. Smile.

You can see that brief spasm of jealousy course through her. Now she's targeting you—in the hopes that she isn't among the bottom half. It's not *classy* to be like that; destroys the social hierarchy. Termina's already showed her hand, implied that she had worse time than Cana, the only remaining target is you. A higher time is better? Discuss.

"Your time, Agnes?"

[ ] Write-in.

author's note

Thread comments

#169 · clswtzing · Nov 23, 2025 at 12:29 PM

this chapter was going to be longer... 🖊️ but i thought it was funnier and more fun to end on the precipice of the status games!

#170 · SpinsterOfWays · Nov 23, 2025 at 1:18 PM

[X] Tokidoki hontō ni netai.

#171 · DAL59 · Nov 23, 2025 at 2:16 PM

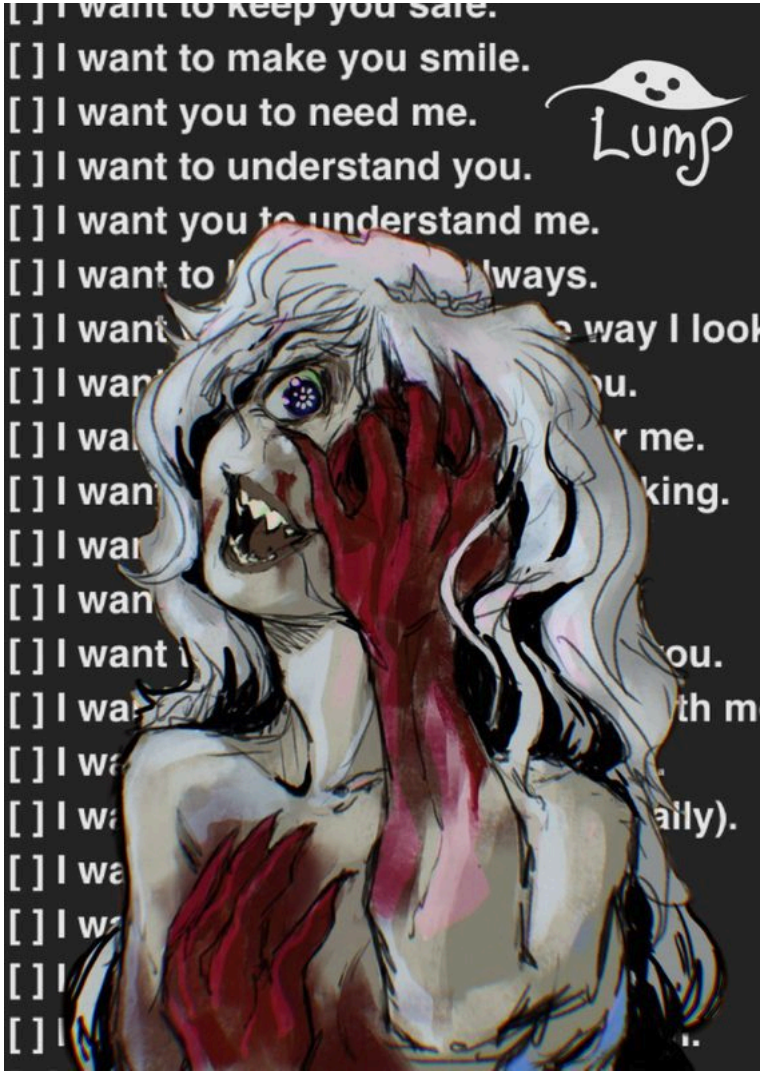
[X] I lasted until it got boring and I left. At least a couple hours.

I hope we're not asked to prove it...

#172 · notnot · Nov 23, 2025 at 3:05 PM

[X] Oh fuck. Oh fuck. Help me. Eat them.

#173 · clswtzing · Nov 23, 2025 at 3:18 PM



fanart shared to me on discord, by Lump!

#174 · PeepTheSheep · Nov 23, 2025 at 3:31 PM

[X] 88 minutes. The runtime of Digimon: The Movie.

#175 · pigoseg · Nov 23, 2025 at 5:13 PM

[X] 88 minutes.

[X] Is it the wrong answer? Yes. Does it violate the hierarchy? Absolutely. Should you care? NO. You cannot let these girls trample over you.

[X] Think about it. What do they have in common, your idols? Lehi and Nephi, Faline and Tai? Is it social submissiveness, conformity? Or is it something else, something more rebellious?

[X] You know the answer already, don't you. All these people - they're dominant - no, they're better than that.

[X] They're SIGMA. They NEVER bend the knee. Instead, SOCIETY BENDS BEFORE THEM.

[X] Be a sigma. Command their respect. Do what you must.

#176 · Lump · Nov 23, 2025 at 8:34 PM

[X] Three days. Say it with your chest. Make eye contact. Say they make a pill in China that helped. Whatever you do, whatever they say, just double down.

#177 · meterion · Nov 24, 2025 at 4:05 AM

Girlrotting... rot, or putrefaction, alchemically the reduction of the source material to undifferentiable mass. The discussion of yuri and its prerequestite of differentiable gender, that one can be man or woman or something else, and this characteristic determines what they are "allowed" to do (per Adslave, in any case). Girlrotting can be seen as an inherent contradiction: to rot in the night to something pure, black, bodiless, while maintaining that distinction of "girl"... They crawl into the underground cauldron and dare each other how long they can stand to rot in darkness, only to emerge as girls once more. Only that is not quite the case for Lucy as Agnes, is it. Lucy has been depicted in Red, White, Black, only Yellow is left. Thus:

[X] Till the sun rises.

#178 · spider · Nov 24, 2025 at 7:19 AM

[X] Til the room stinks

023 / XXIII - It's Just a Bit

You're considering your options. So many, so many choices. **[X] And you don't remember *Digimon: The Movie.***

"Eighty-eight minutes is the runtime of Digimon: The Movie," words unbidden springing from font of darkness. "**[X] And there are one thousand five hundred thirty four Digimon** in the entirety of the franchise. Eighty-eight minutes times one thousand five hundred thirty four—a hundred and thirty four thousand nine hundred ninety two minutes."

"A-and there are fourty four thousand nine hundred ninety seven concentration camps operated by the Digimon Corporation," Adslave from the side. "134992 over 44997: three. Kyahaha—under the effect of the girlrot, seconds fall away for the minute and so too do minutes slip into hours—"

"Three minutes alchemically transmuted to three days," you say. "I lasted three days."

"That's a lie," says Cana. "Me and mine well know! We saw you at school the next day. Do you mean to say you were still under its influence? Not possible, if you were functional, as you were."

"It was three days," you say. "I can't necessarily *prove* that it was, but *you* can't disprove I wasn't still under the girlrot's influence... you can choose to deny me, if you want, but you **can't disprove a negative!** Only God can do that, and He's busy with the Mormons."

It's a hard line of thought to beat. You could point out that saying something doesn't make it true, that the onus of proving something happened rests on the one who posits the supposition in the first place.

But you've already pointed that out. It's a form of advanced lampshading! What matters here isn't what actually happened. It's the status game; being impregnable, unable to be argued against, convinced that your unprovable supposition is false—you're a bulwark.

Thus, Cana steps back. A wince, now here she would perhaps avert her gaze, the objective to conceal a sudden simmering feeling of malice. You think you've gotten her beaten.

Human on human hatred, hot! Toxic yuri! (She doesn't know! This is a Female/Other pairing.)

"Are we going or not? We only have a bit," says Termina, interrupting.

A storm rising.

"Just a bit." Termina, once more.

Cana raises her arm, suddenly, because now she's turned back around towards the girlrotting group.

"***Hold up***," says Cana in a wolfish tone of voice.

"If X then Y, right? You're saying your tolerance is so high you didn't lose your mind for a whole three days! Beat it back longer than is humanly possible, huh? Higher than is possible for me or mine—the human species?

"I'm gonna convert your argument into a different syllogism! Tell me if it's valid."

She raises a finger. (You're locking in now.)

"Premise: You girlrotted, and lasted three days before the rot took you over.

"Premise: People who can last that long have physically impossible levels of girlrot tolerance.

"Conclusion: **You have superhuman tolerance!** No human could last that long under the girlrot! Well, **Agnes!?**"

Let's consider this from the status angle. (You'll bear with it.) With Agnes' seemingly finding a way to blow a hole into your confident assertion, you're quickly losing status if you just let her win like this. If you don't engage, it's an unforced loss. You won't have any credit not even having tried to bat against such a spirited attack.

And from the logical angle, it seems sound. Damn it!

You hunch. "... It's valid." Adslave looks alarmed!

"Let's keep going, Agnes. Your defense is that you can't disprove you weren't still under influence."

Do you see where she is going with this?

"Exactly, Agnes, Adslave, I see it in your eyes. You get it, don't you? X then Y, but if not Y, then not X. With the contrapositive you can disprove a premise. This is a modus tollens argument!

"If I can disprove your conclusion—your supposed inhumanity—then I can disprove your premises!" She rotates on an axis to view Termina, Adslave. **"**If Agnes's premises are true, then Agnes is superhuman (If P, then Q)! Agnes is NOT superhuman (not Q)! Therefore, Agnes's premises are NOT true (not P)!

"You say the fact you saw me and mine at school serves as evidence that you lasted so long? Me and mine say it acts as proof you're but a normal human! And if that's not enough, if you're a secret Digimon, a creature twisted by the woods, let's prove it then! **Cut open your wrists, wretch, and display to me your blue blood!**"

By decree of God the creatures of this world, those that aren't **H**uman, those that have been twisted by the forest, bleed blue. (*Red is the color of human blood. That and that alone.*)

Your blood is red. You know that.

It *is after all* all the more proof how close you are to being a real person. You wouldn't forget something like that. If you were a monster you wouldn't care so much, *would you...?*

You're in serious trouble now.

What's the defense, Lucy?

You wrack your brains for the answer.

[X] Write-in. (Attacked her logical jump.)

[+] Acknowledge defeat. (Lucy is tending towards this option.)

---

author's note

Thread comments

#180 · DAL59 · Dec 1, 2025 at 2:39 PM

[X] "Superhuman? Maybe I'm just built different than a weakling."

We prick our fingertip and shove the droplet of blood in her face, as a gotcha.

#181 · Menthewarp · Dec 2, 2025 at 7:29 AM

I feel like a car's muffler: thoroughly baffled.

#182 · SpinsterOfWays · Dec 2, 2025 at 8:52 AM

[X] "I have powers."

#183 · pigoseg · Dec 2, 2025 at 1:17 PM

[X] Closeminded swill. The human is human, but there is more: the superhuman stands above us, its strength flows through the air, we are invigorated!

[X] D&C 127:2 - Deep water is what I am wont to swim in. It all has become a second nature to me; and I feel, like Paul, to glory in tribulation.

[X] Without faith you cannot see it! It was the spirit that possessed us, the power of that which is higher, the thing Buddhists call Vipassanā - plumbing the depths of knowledge, the girlrot washing over us, and yet with God at our side the knowledge of it is but balm to our worries, and Kolob's strange light fills us with glorious perseverance.

[X] We are not superhuman, yet the superhuman inhabits us! Disprove that, atheists!

#184 · clswtzing · Dec 3, 2025 at 8:52 PM

sorry about the lack of consistent posting. i do badly when the school semester is happening. it's fine though---i should be writing more now that the semester is almost over (in under a week!) so pace should pick up, i dunno we'll see

024 / XXIII aut XXIV - Puncture the Heart of Man

A flood of knowledge probingly penetrating the folds and wrinkles compositing your brain. You're clutching at your skull, or no, your hand's wavering in front of it. (Restrained trigger-happy arm!)

And don't you feel that urge to *scream?* Tortured like this, so much information being spooned into your brain all at once. You should just scoop it out! A cafeteria plate loaded up with steaming wet gloppish atrocity.

Consider, Lucy!

Consider for your own sake!

Take hold of the white webs of perspective, worldview, truth (the subjective) and pull yourself up the mountain. Like a spider.

You grimace, and you dig deeper; the more you dig the deeper your grimace. Faff, useless! What will come of antagonizing Cana? *You're in this walking corpse too, you know.*

If you die, then you die...! ... And 'your' story will conclude...!!

The only logical strand, as tenuous as it is, is from the ranting schizophrenic, the brain so consigned to the World Religion—Mormonism—its every judgement is certainly compromised.

Inspiration! A divine gift from God. For writer and soldier both the coming of inspiration heralds the end. Are you a writer or a soldier?

It's risky, but you're thinking on the fly. You can't waste time! You have to fight back.

You have to fight back, as hard as you can—without remorse grab the enemy by their neck and strangle them by logic!!

With your web of white truth you can win, as long as you all try! You can fix this situation, and every situation, and this world.

"**Cana**,"

You say,

"I DENY THIS CHAIN OF REASONING!"

You point! One hand's clutching at the side of your face, covering one eye. And the other eye, the left one, gleams!

"That was clever, Cana, but it won't work here." You grin. "That was sneaky. But sneaky deceptions won't win against me! Let's review.

"Premise! I girlrotted, and lasted three days before the rot took me over.

"Premise! People who can last that long have physically impossible levels of girlrot tolerance.

"**Conclusion! I have superhuman tolerance! No human could last that long under the girlrot!**"

You leer.

Adslave's staring at you in shock. Does she get it?

Termina's on the edge. You see the cogs working in her mind. She knows where you're going, at least, knows the way you'll get out of this position of check—knows how you'll flip the chessboard around, through reason and logic place Cana under fire.

Cana clenches her fist. "I don't see an issue with this syllogism! Me and mine are **defensible**! If this is your rebuttal, it's not a very good one, is it, Agnes, no it's not a very good one at all,"

"Quiet, red-blooded wretch!" You laugh. "I'm not done! I agree that this chain of logic is entirely defensible. What I take issue with is the immediate leap to your next statement!

"Assume the conclusion as a premise. **Agnes has superhuman tolerance, yes?"**

Cana freezes, Adslave's face twists into a smile, Termina grimaces. They see your next move.

Rook targets king:

"Your next statement was, I quote,

"If I can disprove your conclusion, I can disprove your premises...!!!

"'If I can disprove your supposed inhumanity, I can disprove it all'...!!!!"

You swipe your hand through the air, and then level it down a second time, and you point, again! With redoubled intensity and fire!

"DO YOU SEE IT YET, CANA!"

Cana stares down at the floor, then up at you. She breathes heavily, her heavy voice harsh:

"... *I do*. I reworded the **proven statement** in a way that made it easier to defeat logically."

"That's right. **[X] My superhuman tolerance does not preclude inhumanity. THAT IS, I am not superhuman!"**

You wait. For one single beat time stops.

"YET THE SUPERHUMAN INHABITS ME...!"

Cana winces. Grimaces. Her arms come to her face. Termina steps away. The world around her draws back, twisting watercolor tendrils washed out with perfect white. Artless, artless! She's failed. Possessed by the demon of perfect punctiliousness and yet she failed! Because of a slight slip.

Social capital down the drain. Red blood running from the base of the guillotine—our image of her is weakened and so her own image of her is weakened in turn. (Humans are malleable creatures.)

"P-prove it," says Cana.

"I don't have to prove it to the likes of you," you say. "Hadn't we established that already? Failing grade. Ze~ro."

A second spear cuts through Cana's heart. The air leaves her body as she falls to the ground. Slaughtered.

"If that's all," you say.

You giggle.

You're standing at the door of Faline San's apartment. Your clique is in tow. Cana's beaten down for now and neither Termina nor Adslave will stand near her. (It's *status*.)

How are you going to go about talking to Faline?

You're giddy a little bit.

The last time you got to talk to her was yesterday night, when you ran away.

... And maybe she'll be happier tonight. (*Even with Agnes*. Without you.)

[ ] Windows

[X] Door

[ ] Write-in

---

author's note

Thread comments

#186 · DAL59 · Dec 5, 2025 at 2:39 PM

[X] "I'm going to go in to talk to Faline one-on-one for a minute, its a sensitive matter."

#187 · meterion · Dec 5, 2025 at 3:04 PM

This is more umineko than the chapter that had explicit umineko references

[X] Use the front door, distinguish yourself from your Lucy-self. Use a different approach if you expect to ever have different results. Change the impression Faline has of you, and it will remain changed even when those two selves are connected. Show how you have changed!

#188 · Menthewarp · Dec 5, 2025 at 9:47 PM

[X] You contain multitudes. Cull Them.

#189 · spider · Dec 6, 2025 at 5:36 PM

let's not be too weird

[X] Door

#190 · pigoseg · Dec 6, 2025 at 6:30 PM

[X] Door

[X] Proverbs 8:12 - I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion.

025 / XXV - Puncture the Heart of Faline San

Before you even know it, you've stepped up to the threshold. Lurching up, shambling up; three steps make a single meter, along your wobbly gait you almost feel as if you'll fall down the two story gap, splat and see your brain matter on the floor (a tempting thought, too tempting, it's why you avoid high places, because you can't trust yourself enough to hold back from the intrusive thoughts)—

Your hand has paused mid-ascent. It hovers some inches away from the door, the gap's so small that if you were pushed they'd undeniably touch. But you're...?

You're not pushing it. What are you doing, Lucy?

"A-Agnes. Foid. Femcel. Hey."

You turn to view Adslave. Side-eye perfect. Her form's visible only in contour; sculpted with a brush of rim light, the light that pours from the faint streetlamps below.

"Are you considering your lie," she asks.

"No," you say. "I'm not. Ummm, heh, I just, I have it figured out, I'll knock. Just give me a moment."

Adslave doesn't understand and you can tell by how she tilts her head. And you can't see her expression; *es imposible comunicar,* not in the lights created by man is it or will it ever be possible—

"Here, seriously," says Adslave, "you don't even have to come up with something,"

"That's not the problem," you say. "It's not! It's really not. Adslave, please leave me alone. I can't do this while you're—you're—"

You take in a breath; its gasping nature is as the body of man recently pulled from the River Styx, saved from hell or void through defibrillation. You almost choke on the current of air. This gasp cuts away what you would have said. (It's not important in the first place.)

"Okay," says Adslave.

You're still hesitating.

You pull your arm back, and you try to propel it again, it's a propulsive rocket, an AGM-84 Harpoon attached to your elbow by a thin lifeless cord, you can't even feel anything, but suddenly the rocket has a reverse and it engages and your hand hits an invisible wall and you realize: you can't do it.

You try to knock on the door again. And you realize that you can't do it.

You're so unable! You're so *unable* Lucy. Aren't you defined by your absolute uselessness? You're a zero, or maybe a negative. You've come this far only to stumble and fall.

A heroine of a different story would be imprisoned by some captor; cut off her thumb and hobble her gait and she'd still be trying to do things, acting on instinct when it comes to the important stuff, but you're Lucy. Defined by your capability and your locked mind. Your brain's a locked tomb.

God! and Adslave's looking at you with that invective glare, a gaze polemic, maybe if she were in your place she'd be able to knock on that door in front of you. Doesn't she understand? Can't she read your problems, look at you, see from your behavior how you really feel?

Why doesn't she understand you?

You lose a little bit of your self as you shave away that little resistance and your hand slowly taps on the door once. Dam's broken. You knock twice more.

Cana and Termina and Adslave are behind you. You turn to look at them, and you kind of smile. The frame of your stolen face is fearfully illuminated by the effervescent lights below.

The door opens behind you—and then it closes and you hear the lock click. You're still smiling at Cana and Termina and Adslave. But the corners of your mouth slowly lower. Edges pull downward like vertical contrails. So fearsome.

It could've been someone else. The other person who lives in this apartment.

Your lips part, gruesomely, grimly: "Who was that?"

"It was Faline," says either Termina or Adslave. One of the two brown haired girls both of whom are now standing side by side whose faces are invisible but whose silhouettes are identical.

You smile again.

"That's not,"

You force the words out,

"Ideal,"

"A-Agnes," says either Termina or Adslave.

"Let's just go," you say. Your voice is pleasantly low and pleasantly neutral, actually affably bloodless, drained of that soul and bile. You're a soldier.

"A—Agnes!" says Adslave who steps forward and you can hear her voice and see her face so close to yours and you feel close and you feel closeness. "Turn around!" she says.

"**[A] Shut up oh my god,**" you spit out. Adslave flinches. "Stop, stop babying me like this, stop it! 'Femcel femcel femcel' and then you turn to hug me or you're gonna, what are you gonna do now? Tell me it's okay? God! Do you even understand? Do you not see what I'm doing??? Of course it's okay! I don't need to make up a lie! We're going!"

Adslave's staring at you and you're staring at Adslave, and then you're looking at Cana and Termina too.

"Agnes," says Cana. "What even is this? What's even happening?"

"Don't," you say, "it wasn't something actionable in the end."

"She—Faline—what are you trying to do with her?"

"Just," you say, "get her to come with us."

"**To kill Faline San,** right?" says Cana. "Lure her out. We're friends, right? You're me and mine?"

"Agnes," says Adslave. "Agnes, look at me,"

You slowly look back at Adslave.

"P-please...! Knock on the door again," says Adslave. "And, and don't look away. Don't—don't cower, Agnes—I believe in you. You can do it...!"

She awkwardly clears her throat. "D-*dattebayo, Agnes!!"*

You think. You think of your hand at the door. You think of how it couldn't knock. You think of how you needed that push or else you'd shave off all of your self. You think.

You think of how Adslave's right. Adslave really is right. It's the obvious right choice, even! Adslave's just trying to give you that push, get you to do it, even if you're scared, but God you're so so so scared, you can't do it so what if you never do it? (It'll become worse, but because you didn't do anything you never had a chance to ruin it so none of it was truly your fault outside of not doing anything; you always would have remained as the person who *could have done it, could have———*)

"Ad—slave," you say, voice crack's on cue, you're not sure what to say. You turn around away from her to look at that door again.

You feel a presence behind you and doubly you feel the urge to turn around, slash it through the neck so it doesn't hurt you. But you don't.

"The bond between friends cannot be broken by trifles," says the presence.

"Adslave...?" You say, so quiet only she can hear you, or maybe even so quiet only you can hear you.

"That's—that's a quote," says the presence. "It's from Izuki Midoriya. From *My Hero Academia."*

"Adslave..." you say again.

"You can do it, Agnes."

You raise your hand up. Psychic force, spiritual force, physical tangible force surrounds it, Adslave's interlinked, and you bring it down. Hammer of God! Moses strikes the rock once. Water pours out:

Faline San cracks the door.

"Are we going to fight?" she says. "I'll certainly kill all of you this time."

You're pausing for a second but Adslave behind you squeezes your arm, and you can suddenly find the power inside you not to pause. Before you'd have had to rely on your brains. You're so many people but also just one. It's comforting having a second so close right now.

"No," you say. "We're not."

You smile, tilt your head, and begin to sp—

[ ] Allow Lucy to continue what she's going to say.

[S] [ ] SQUAWK! SQUAWK!

[S] [+] [X] close her mouth. she'll just ruin things with Faline, again!

[ ] Write-in.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#192 · SeQuester · Dec 9, 2025 at 6:14 PM

[X] Allow Lucy to continue what she's going to say.

#193 · PeepTheSheep · Dec 9, 2025 at 7:15 PM

[X] Do you want to watch Digimon:the Movie?

#194 · Menthewarp · Dec 10, 2025 at 12:34 AM

[X] Allow Lucy to continue what she's going to say.

I can't imagine the consequences.

This is a spinning wheel of chaos.

Flashing colors, Glaring lights.

The house always wins, but whose casino are we in?

026 / XXVI (1) - Simon Deep

clswtzing threw 4 **6**-faced dice. Total: **13**

clswtzing threw 2 **6**-faced dice. Total: **5**

027 / XXVI - Simon Deep

"—not," you finish, you choke.

In a direct competition where both sides are playing to win, the result becomes less clear and resolves down to a game of chance.

You had previously allowed your brains to place their input, and did not resist their decrees.

When two brains fight, it is different. One seeks to impose their world on the other.

You are at a direct disadvantage. *Your* number is smaller, less numerous. Talking would be more efficient—when have different human brains ever been able to actually communicate, though?

[S] ummm, sorry Lucy.

[S] just don't want you to fuck it up, you know? you have us for a reason. we were put in you to help out! get you to fix yourself and your life. you're too ill to keep going, is all.

You try to speak. No words come out! Instead you want to watch Digimon: The Movie. A film that doesn't even exist!

Faline tilts her head.

"Is that all? Just 'we're not'?"

You're staring queasily down at the floor. You try to open your mouth but the only thing that's coming from your mouth is saliva. You try to say something. You try to say 'I want to be friends.' (Even if you're one of the ill girls who cut Faline San to pieces.)

She's leaning against the doorframe staring down at your group.

"This is my apartment. I have the advantage against your incision casting."

Adslave's hand's hovering right over her hip. You glance at Cana and Termina. They already have little pieces of cutting metal in their hands—boxcutters.

"Agnes. Agnes!" whispers Cana. "Get out your knife! Four people, remember?"

"Are we really going to go at it?" Faline says. A single eyebrow raises. That's the most shock she's ever been in. What happened to her? When you were treating her like normal, threatening and bullying and telling her you'd 'cut her head off'—only then did she ever do more than ...

[S] Lucy. Lucy. you can't cast incision magic. in fact you aren't connected to Cana nor Termina at all. three people is the second-worst number possible in a normal friendgroup configuration for resisting the adverse effects of an enemy magician.

[S] umm. sorry about this Lucy.

About...? Cutting me off?

Faline steps down the stairs, one-two, she's in her comfy pajamas you saw her in before. The hand hidden behind the doorframe comes out, curtain of shadow pulled back, holds a large steak knife. She remains at that bottom stair; tip of her toe penetrates the threshold.

"...

"...

"**[S] Faline, please stop,**" you (don't) say. "**[S] We're really not here to fight! We're really not.**"

Faline's raised her hand up, she's holding that knife. But it's at range; were she to bring it down the only thing she'd be cutting would be the broad and thin air.

"What's that mean, Agnes," Faline says. "What's that mean. Coming from you? You killed me."

"**[X] Don't you want to watch Digimo—[S] Fuck, god, holy shit, haha,**" you lazily pull your finger up, tapping at the temple, **[S] threatening threatening thrilling**—cue a **[S] tiny smile**, crescent moon corners lifting upward, "**[S] Please don't do that."**

Cana and Termina are baffled and Adslave is looking at you with this wretched look.

Faline's tilting her head like she's a little bit confused, but the expression on her face in the light, it's like she's trying to remember something. The knife in her hand trembles a little bit. She brings it down, "Be incised."

You're right in the way! Cana's directly behind you. You know, if Faline could actually use incision magic still, Cana would instantly die. After all, three people *is* one of the weakest defensive configurations.

Instead it's only you.

The steak knife cuts nastily into your shoulder inches deep. Blood spews out, paints the metal beneath you red; it falls in scarlet rain in the street below. You stumble, Faline tears the gore-soaked blade out.

"Agnes," says Adslave, distant. She rushes toward Faline, slashes her boxcutter without even time to cast incision; no, this is just a normal cut, made hastily, immediately. Faline whips her hand up, the boxcutter smashes into her steak knife as Faline flicks and perfectly parries the slash; with the force Adslave puts into the blow the knife cuts through the boxcutter's blade smoothly. Little glinting pieces of metal fall onto the floor, through the floor, Adslave stumbles, falls, her head smashes against the black metal guardrail of the stairs so far off the ground—and there's more going on.

Faline herself isn't gonna stop moving even though her incision failed (somehow?). She swings the knife toward your skull. It'll cut you right open.

[S] You bring up your hand; the blade cuts straight through it right in half displacing your fingers with a nasty gnarled sound, gristle and tendons tearing and snapping, but it stops at your wrist.

Faline's eyes bulge. Won't her sister hear the racket? (You're so fucked.)

With the steak knife embedded so far inside of your hand, **[S] you twist your arm and it twists the knife from Faline's momentarily loosened grasp.** Metal clatters to the floor.

[S] You fumble at your side for the boxcutter, Faline pulls away but you're already moving toward her and you bring it up, tracing a bright line illuminated by the shine of the streetlights below. The boxcutter tears into her throat. Severs a vein. Highway of

blood put under moratorium. She chokes, clutches at the vein—that's right, Faline San isn't so used to pain as you. You could endure that for hours!

[S] Once and twice you pull the boxcutter back and stab it with tremendous force into her brain, and then **[S] again**, and then a fourth time, and then it's just you. You hold Faline's body, it's unconscious, blood's all over you and the floor.

But

Adslave...?

You turn to Adslave. Your possession. She's yours! You just met her. She can't be hurt, can't be dead, she's just a normal person and those die so so so too too too easily, and you drop from a shaking hand, the only one that's still intact, the boxcutter.

You're not aware of it until you are, the way you're pulling at Adslave's hair. The way you're pulling her body back, looking at the wound. Dark sticky reflective stain on the iron rail. Painting of blood. It doesn't drip from her forehead so much as it's a patch. Makeup applied externally. Someone can't truly be touched down to that level. It's just rearranging of atoms. Help.

You're touching at her neck, pressing it firmly, and God, there's a pulse, Adslave isn't dead, she didn't just die from that. She wasn't that way, wasn't frail, but you got *so scared*. Despite the wound Adslave's alive. God, she's alive!

You're breathing heavily. You're scared. So scared! It hurts stabbing Faline. It hurts seeing Adslave's eyes rolled up like that. This was horrible. This was terrible. You shouldn't feel this way.

"A—gnes...?"

From Cana.

"Agnes," says Cana.

"Agnes,"

says Cana for the third time, this is what gets you to look at her.

"Your arm," says Cana.

Blood cascades in a waterfall from your shredded hand. It spatters the floor below.

"It's—" you try to say *okay* but you don't really believe it. "It's, don't tell anyone, it's it's it's, oh God," shouldn't you kill them? They see you. They know. It's over. It's all so over. You have to abandon Agnes. Switch to Lucy. But—you ate Lucy, you ate yourself. You didn't even plan ahead. This is you now.

This is you now, unless you kill another person.

"What the fuck are you?" says Cana, who raises her boxcutter. Termina stands next to her. Hers is in a position ready to thrust. **[S] two people is the strongest possible defensive configuration in a battle between magicians.**

[X] Write-in. (Lucy chose.)

[+] That's not important

[+] I'm a creature from the forest

[+] Kill them

[+] Slaughter them

[+] Butcher them

[+] Escape from them

[S] Run away from your problems through brutal ultraviolence!

[S] After all, Lucy, the only thing you can do is destroy!

---

author's note

Thread comments

#197 · TheMaskedReader · Dec 10, 2025 at 10:05 PM

[X] I, you, are a friend. To Adslave, if nothing else - And Faline, though maybe leave that unsaid. Two is the strongest possible defensive configuration, that seems right. So why fight? Integrate. Express your emotions verbally, confuse them, stall them, make them think that they can help you. Two becomes three. Three is weaker. Doubt and division and hesitation will save you, save Adslave - and three will become four, and half of that is yours already - Majority rules. More than one way to skin, or eat, a cat, right? Just gotta bide our time. Sort ourselves out. Self-care, right? Gotta be the best version of ourselves - For Faline if nothing else.

#198 · meterion · Dec 10, 2025 at 11:14 PM

Faline needs to be put back together again, Adslave *really* needs to be put back together again, Lucy needs to find enough of herself *to* be put back together. And of course the other girlrotters just had more intangible things of their own break. A regular crowd of humpty dumpties, here. But considering part of what's led to all this is too many cooks in the pot, so to speak, I think the only move here is:

[X] Support what Lucy decides to do.

Here's a brain in your corner, Lucy.

#199 · Menthewarp · Dec 11, 2025 at 9:29 AM

[X] Support what Lucy decides to do.

I mean, the girls need to die, obviously.

But the order of priorities are yours to decide, Lucy.

Nice to know we were shoved in your brain to counter S.

028 / XXVII - Rot spreads inexorably.

"I'm,"

You begin.

"I'm."

Cana's staring at you; all this is happening in seconds. She could do something rash, something if she were thinking straighter she'd regret now, she could attack you. Didn't Adslave get it the first time she saw you hurting even yourself? You're not like anyone else in the world, except for Faline San.

Faline San ...

[S] Faline would've attacked us anyway, *you know*.

Without the lattice.

Without the lattice that holds you together, without your brains. What can you do?

"Shut up," you say aloud. "P-please."

In slow motion Cana ripples. Boxcutter wavers and accelerates along a fixed, predetermined path. Inexorable as the orbit of the planets. Her mouth, bared teeth: "**Be inci—**"

You can fix it, you can stop it, you can manifest that will to go on. It doesn't need to be like this. God, God, God, what is happening?

[S] get out of the way.

But you trust Cana, you trust the people of this world. If you maybe make amends and you reach out, if you just say something, defeat yourself and say something, they won't hurt you———!

"I-I'm Agnes," you say,

"**—sed,**" finishes Cana. She slashes the boxcutter through the air. She slashes the incision across the world. Horizontal line imprinted in negative and everything flashes, inversion of color.

Blood spatters outward on the metal fire escape, blood from your stomach, red line cut across it. Blood fountains from your mouth and you grapple with your damaged hand and your nondamaged hand alike at the unspooling ropes and coils falling from your gut. And blood falls inexorably on the ground below. Staining it red.

"I'm Agnes," you say, "Please, please, understand me! Please!!"

Cana's panting, you're on your knees, scooping at your intestines, Termina's hyperventilating, Adslave on the floor unconscious, Faline's dead,

"Please!! I'm a person too!"

"Me an—I cut you," says Cana. "I cut you. You're dead. Even if you are Agnes, you're dead. Oh God."

"It's just a bit, it's small, it's survivable," Termina.

"It's not survivable," says Cana. "People don't usually survive being disemboweled. Not here or now."

"WHY AREN'T YOU LISTENING TO ME?" you say, face twisting. "I'm Agnes...!"

In this world, you don't get to choose who you are. You don't get to create your character. You get to tell someone what your name is, but you can't just reroll yourself. Why?

Why do you have to be yourself? Why are you you and not any of the other billions of souls out there in the world? Why do you have to hurt in your own way, so divorced from the ways anyone else hurts? You're special only because you're broken; you're broken just because you're special. So different, so different! Unfit for society.

"Pleeeaaaase," it's expelled from your mouth like vomit in an elongated, raw syllable, the deepest parts of your throat straining to make the key noise, the capstone that'll make you finally intelligible. "Please trust me..."

"What are you," says Cana again.

"Agnes," you say because you can't say anything else, and your voice snaps, it trails off with a whimper.

Cana swings the boxcutter down this time in a slash that'd bisect you, **"Be incised,**"

Two is the strongest defensive position against magic

But you are not properly a magical creature.

And you pick yourself up off the ground, you tilt to the side, instead Cana's second incision just cuts that wound on your shoulder deeper, so much deeper that that entire chunk of meat slides cleanly off, but with your damaged arm you slam it into her chest, you're stepping all over your own trailing intestines, Termina shrieks, boxcutter on the floor, Cana grunts as the wind is knocked out of her, you feel cracking but it's not her it's all of your fingers snapping at once, and with this single arm you pummel her once again, and she stumbles and hacks.

"T-Termina," you say to the cowering chocolate-hair. You breathe heavily, Cana's panting too. "Pick up my arm and put it on me."

Termina stares at Cana.

"Or else," you fight back revulsion.

"*I'll cut off your head*."

The words feel vomitous to say.

Termina step-steps across a field of blood and gore and bends down and gingerly picks up the arm.

"Affix it to my body."

She presses it in. Meat and bone squish and lock together. Then she stumbles back. Resists the urge to vomit? Didn't you cut up Faline San?

"I—I tried being kind, so now I'll be honest," you say. "We're bringing Faline with us. Away. We're gonna go girlrotting. Who knows what else? But you know! First we're sticking to the original plan," you're pulling your intestines back in, in, in, in, blood drips down from your everywhere.

"S-*cough*-So this is how Faline San," Cana hesitates, coughs again,

"She's like me," you respond. The only thing that's left to do is preemptively defend against betrayal. "Both of you give me your boxcutters. We're going to have a perfectly normal night out. With Faline San."

Solve all of your problems with brutal ultraviolence.

"Y-yeah! Sure!" says Cana, suddenly. "Let's do it! Can't get worse." Manic expression flits across face. "G-God!! Hahaa!!"

You've stolen Faline's clothes now. Stripped off your old stuff and hidden it somewhere inside of her closet. You crawled in her window and made yourself at home. Your hand you shaped back into position via turning into your non-solid form.

You're all walking now. You're behind the other girls. It's so that you can grab and crush their necks.

Adslave behind you. She woke up fine but she doesn't seem to be doing well. Sweating and silent and stumbling.

Faline's next to you. A little bit ahead. Cowed by the threat of incision magic, she's timidly walking along with the rest of the group. The only thing that works with her is the threat of violence.

Your group makes a turn into a psychedelic alleyway. Red and blue light mixing creates purple, colors spilling out from the bottom of a side door are illuminating your legs.

A sign is posted on this side door:

🔞

"... Here," says Cana.

The five of you push in. Haze, smoke, music; figures and forms dancing around. Stages, semipublic nudity. Loud music screams at you from above, something from a synthesizer, annoyingly offbeat. It's dense, crowded with people.

"Ai ai ai, girls! You're late!!" A large woman guffaws.

"What is this?" says Faline San.

"Girlrotting," Cana says shortly.

You're breathing in the smoke. Its effects on you are as pain, or pain's little brother alcohol: you notice it's there, are not impaired. You are supposed to feel something, but do not. It's stimulating that feeling of upbeatness; your tension and withdrawal is melting away. Your senses feel more distinct, but they're different, picking up noises from whole different wavelengths. Revelatory, revelatory!

The other girls, the human ones, seem to be concentrating, holding their eyelids in position—that's what the time was! How long you could go without showing symptoms of the girlrot! The rot seeping inexorably into your lungs.

Sounds of heavy breathing fill the room. But you feel more conscious, because you are in fact more separate.

Time's slipping from your grasp. You stumble awkwardly. Where is Faline San?

Separated from the group. You can't even hear the lyrics in the new track. It's shifted to some pop song. They're distorted, corroded! Devils and demons, angels and saints.

"Faline?" you say. There's a shape that looks like Cana though it's blending in with the blue and red light. Sitting in the lap of some indistinct form, her head's bent back; no passion in it at all but her mouth is trapped, locked in a cage. Hands rove across her body. What's she doing? Why?

And there's Termina too, that large woman has her in her grasp. It's a molestation, but Termina's pushing into the hands of the woman, eyes closed tight. God, God! Are they prostituting themselves for drugs?

You stumble, orbiting, perihelion nowhere to be found; and yet where is the solstice, Faline? Bouncing across the walls of the room like the DVD logo. You land in the arms of a man, he's touching you; you push him off and he stumbles, falls, you're shaking, his hands touch your thighs. You stomp on him and he moans, he curls up, becomes an Escher painting on the floor. Flat.

"Faline!"

Around and around you rove and spin but your perception is compromised. You're searching! Searching for Faline San!

You stumble into the handle of the door, under-18, you open it, stumble out, there's a form in the distance, girlish, stumbling as well. "Faline!" you say, and your voice is drowned out by the music.

You run, jerkily, "Faline! Faline, please!"

The girl turns, turns to stare at 'Agnes.' "Faline!"

"What *obsession* do you have with me all of a sudden?" says Faline, whose face finally twists into anguish from that dead neutrality, because it's like she's scared of you. "You're just like her. You're all the same. Hunting me."

"Faline, please," you say. "I love you. Faline! I need you, Faline!"

You stumble and you fall onto the rough concrete two feet away from Faline San, who breathes heavily, staring down at you.

"Faline, please!"

Faline's staring harder, and harder.

"You're not Agnes at all, huh?"

Her gaze violently penetrates the hard armor: facade. You're shaking on the ground. But now you slowly bring yourself, wobbling, standing up.

"You're—"

"I'm Lucy," you say, your mouth is splitting, your brow is furrowed, you're—crying?

"I just wanted you to like me. I wanted to be a different person to you."

Faline stares at you and her face is settling slowly into that apathetic expression as the fear's going away,

You break your gaze and stare downward. Faline exhales once. Then she opens her mouth—

Both of your hands launch upward, bear-traps, wrapping around Faline's neck. You push forward and you both fall to the floor, you're on top of her, grip tightening around her neck. Tears fall from your eyes, Faline's panicking, spasming,

"Why do you hate me???" you say and your grip tightens, you hear snapping. "Why don't you ever give me a chance? Why do you act so cold and unfriendly with me, when with everyone else you at least engage! I killed someone to be with you and now you're, now you're going away. Why don't you like me back? You're the only one who's like me, Faline," your voice breaks and you begin to cry harder, "Can't you see that? Can't it be us against the world? Two people is the strongest defensive position for magic. Please, please, please," you say, and you squeeze harder. And then you let out a wordless sob, loosening your grip, your head falls upon Faline's shoulder.

"P-please," you say finally, crying still. Faline stares upward into the cloudy black sky.

"You're a zero," Faline says.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#201 · clswtzing · Dec 11, 2025 at 10:37 AM

there is no vote for this one, as it'll be continued (inexorably) in the following chapter.

if you have any thoughts on the story or the chapter, please feel free to post them anyway. i enjoy them a lot, and getting better requires feedback.

thank you for reading people who eat!

029 / XXVIII - Opening Wounds

You're a zero, is what she said.

You're crying into her body. Your fists ball up and you grab Faline's clothes. The bloodstained hem of her nightclothes. You pull at them, hands curling, not really pulling Faline along (it's futile)—you're just grasping at nothing. You curl inward, fetal, atop her but no longer keeping her down.

But Faline doesn't even try to move. She just stares off into the sky.

You're a zero.

"What—what does that even mean," you say, choking.

"I just," says Faline. "You're."

"Tell me," you say. "Tell me anything. I just want you to talk to me. Just tell me. Do you hate me? Please—please,"

"Nothing," says Faline. "You're a zero. I don't have any energy by default. Like, think of it from my position... I want to stay alive, obviously. Want to make a life for myself."

"And," you reply.

"And I don't need you in it," says Faline.

You stare at her chest pinned below you. You're breathing heavily.

"What's." Your voice slips. Catches. You can't say it, so you whisper the next part: "What's that mean?"

"I don't need you in the," says Faline.

"Faline?"

"I don't ..."

"Just say it," you whisper.

"Did you kill Agnes?"

You open your mouth. You try to say it. Admitting to murder used to be so much easier. What happened to you?

"You don't have to answer," says Faline. "I understand."

"Do you hate me?" you say, small.

"No," says Faline. Her eyes drift from the sky past your shoulder to Agnes's. To yours. Her head tilts by a single degree.

"Lucy."

She says your name. Her eyes betray the tiniest amount of interest in you.

"I need you," says Faline San. "I need you to do something for me, okay? To help me out with something I can't do alone."

"W-what is it," you say. "I'll do anything for you."

"I need you to solve my problems," says Faline San. "That is, I need you to torture and kill Cana, Termina, and Adslave."

Immediately, before anything else, you snap apart the ability of your brains to resist, by driving a long finger straight into the side of your skull.

[/] No

Curtain of blood.

"What happened to—to it being evil," you say.

"No one actually cares," says Faline. It seems like she wants to say something else, but she doesn't.

"Okay," you say. "Will you love me? Sorry, I don't expect you to answer. Okay. Okay, I'll do it for you."

"Yeah," says Faline. "Good."

"Can I stay with you tonight," you say.

Faline looks at you.

Her final response, short, clipped:

"Yeah."

Welcome to the land of domesticity.

You're on the floor. There's a blanket at your side that was over you when you went to sleep. You kicked it off, probably.

Faline's bed is above you, a mesa, an unreachable plateau. You don't remember when you drifted off. You remember lying there in the dark listening to her breathe.

Light comes in through the window. It's the pale kind. Early.

You sit up slowly. Your body aches in the places where it reattached—shoulder, hand, stomach. The wounds are sealed but the memory of them lingers in the meat. Phantom pain. Or maybe just regular pain; unable to tell the difference.

Faline is not in the bed. In fact, she's not in the room. You're looking at her bed and blanket, then at her closet, then at everything else. It's a school day. Where is she?

You stumble. Your clothes are stained in blood even though you had changed them, because your body was stained in blood too. You never showered, neither did Faline.

Sounds from elsewhere in the apartment. Clattering. The small violence of cookware.

You walk toward it.

The kitchen is small; your body is smaller. Faline is at the stove. She's wearing the same bloodstained nightclothes from last night, but she's put a robe over them. Her hair is tangled. She doesn't turn around.

"There's rice," she says.

"Okay," you say.

You stand there. She stirs something in a pot. The scene is so normal. You want to tear off your own face and destroy the illusion, show it for what it is. You don't, because it's Agnes's face now and you need it.

"Sit down," says Faline. "You're looming."

You sit at the small table. There are two chairs. One of them has a stack of textbooks on it; you're in the other one. The textbooks mean Catherine uses that chair. You're in Faline's seat, maybe.

Minutes pass. Faline puts a bowl in front of you. Rice with an egg on top. The egg is a little burnt at the edges.

"Thank you," you say.

Faline sits on the counter instead of moving the textbooks. She has her own bowl. She eats slowly, not looking at you.

You eat too. The rice is good. You can't remember the last time someone made you food. You can't remember if anyone ever has. Your memories from before are—

You eat.

"Catherine left early," says Faline, answering a question you didn't ask. "She won't be back until tonight."

"Okay," you say.

"You can stay until then. If you want."

You look up at her. She's still not looking at you. She's looking at her rice.

"I want," you say. Your voice comes out strange. Too eager. You try to modulate it: "I mean. Yes. Thank you."

Faline nods once.

You eat in silence. The clock on the wall ticks. It's shaped like a cat; its tail swings with each second. Feline for Faline. You watch Faline's hands as she holds her bowl. Her fingers are thin. There's a scar on her left thumb you never noticed before. You want to ask about it, but you don't.

"About last night," you say.

"What about it."

You open your mouth. You don't know what you were going to say. *When do you want me to do it? How should I do it? Will you love me after?*

"Nothing," you say. "Never mind."

Faline finally looks at you. Her expression is—what? You can't read it. You've never been able to read her. She could be thinking anything. She could be thinking about killing you. She could be thinking about breakfast.

"You don't have to rush," she says.

"Okay," you say.

"I'm not going anywhere."

Something in your chest does a thing. A contraction. Expansion. You're not sure which direction the motion goes. It's uncomfortable but not painful. Or maybe it's painful but not uncomfortable.

"Okay," you say again, softer.

Faline goes back to her rice.

You sit there in Faline San's kitchen wearing Agnes's body and Agnes's face and you think: *I could stay here forever*. You think: *This is all I ever wanted*. You think: *I'm going to kill Adslave for this*.

The cat clock ticks.

You don't think about that last thought. You put it somewhere else. Somewhere in your skull where the brains usually are, but they're quiet now, still healing from where you stabbed them. The thought sits there alone in the dark.

Later.

Later you're sitting on Faline's bed because she said you could and she's at her desk not doing homework. She's just sitting there. You're watching her. You've been watching her for eleven minutes. You counted.

"You can talk," says Faline without turning around. "If you want."

"I don't know what to say."

"Then don't."

You don't. You just sit there. The silence is strange; it's not comfortable and it's not uncomfortable. It's just present. You exist in the same room as Faline San and she's allowing it. She's *allowing* it.

[S]

The faintest crackle. Static at the edge of your consciousness. Your brains are reconstituting themselves.

You jam your finger into your temple preemptively. Press hard, not quite breaking skin.

"What are you doing," says Faline, who has turned around.

"Headache," you say.

She looks at you for a long moment. Then she opens a drawer, pulls out a bottle, and throws it at you underhand. You catch it. Ibuprofen.

"Thanks," you say.

"Mmhm."

She turns back around. You hold the ibuprofen. It won't help. Nothing like this helps you. (It wouldn't help her if she used it either.) But she gave it to you because she thought it would. You put the bottle in your pocket. You'll keep it forever.

The morning bleeds into noontime and you are still there, and Faline is still there, and neither of you are talking but you're *together*, and that word means something different now than it did yesterday. You're together. You're—

Your phone buzzes.

Agnes's phone. In Agnes's pocket. You forgot about it.

You look at the cracked screen:

wolf bbg (3h): where are you

wolf bbg (3h): we need to talk about last night

wolf bbg (3h): agnes.

wolf bbg (2h): hello??

homeless neet (2h): a]gnes please respond i need to know ur ok

homeless neet (2h): i covered for u at school

homeless neet (1m): pls repsond

homeless neet (1m): its all going to go downhill

Too many to count from Mom. You check the most recent ones:

Mom (17m): Come home right now

Mom (17m): You're in trouble

Mom (17m): Where are you?

Mom (16m): Respond right now

You stare at the screen.

Adslave is scared.

You put the phone away.

[ ] Respond to

- [ ] wolf bbg

- [ ] homeless neet

- [ ] Mom

[ ] Ignore them

[ ] Show Faline

[ ] Write-in

author's note

Thread comments

#203 · PeepTheSheep · Dec 11, 2025 at 5:58 PM

[X] NOOOOOO!!!!!! DON'T KiLL ADSLAVE!

[X] You still need to watch Digimon the Movie with her!

[X] Respond to

- [X] homeless neet

#204 · SpinsterOfWays · Dec 11, 2025 at 6:04 PM

[X] Keep Adslave alive. The rest can die.

[X] Respond to

- [X] homeless neet

#205 · pigoseg · Dec 11, 2025 at 6:54 PM

[X] Respond to

- [X] homeless neet

[X] While you're doing that, Lucy, let's think on the implications of the words 'torture' and 'kill.' We'll focus on torture first.

[X] Torture is the act of inflicting mental or physical pain on a subject for purposes of interrogation, intimidation, or, in this case, punishment. The word torture derives from the Latin torquere, meaning to twist, turn, wrench. Torture, then, is the act of winding someone into a new and unnatural shape, one that brings them pain. One might say that all forms of growth, connection, and friendship are torture, since indeed to change is to take on an unnatural shape - it is merely time that makes it normal. All of which is to say - you have options, don't you? For the torture.

[X] As for 'kill'...

[X] There's this term in the church - Born Again. Heavy connotations, no? What comes before birth, if not death? What is rebirth, if not the killing of what came before?

[X] You simply need to change them until they become unrecognizable. That's all. Think about it.

#206 · SeQuester · Dec 11, 2025 at 10:14 PM

[X] Keep Adslave alive. The rest can die.

-[X] Have her skip town or something? If they never see each other again, that's as good as dead, right?

[X] Respond to

- [X] homeless neet

#207 · TheMaskedReader · Dec 11, 2025 at 10:21 PM

[X] Sometimes, people don't know what they want. Why does Faline want them dead? Does she understand what it means when you'll do it? You don't want a situation in which you do what she asks and yet she hates you for it. Clear communication is key! So, you should...

[X] Show Faline

#208 · clswtzing · Dec 18, 2025 at 3:05 PM

hi! there was a continuity error last chapter. i've decided to bite the bullet and just retcon it---this SHOULD NOT happen again, it was a result of me not writing down and keeping track of enough. but, anyway. Lucy destroying the phone doesn't happen---instead she just deletes the photos app. i'm gonna publish an update to that old chapter soon to reflect this for more readers ... just, sorry for that. i really don't like to do this.

030 / XXVIIII aut XXIX - People Who NEET (Downward press ↓.)

You pull the phone back out, ready to type—you realize you *can* type. You can read. But why?

Perhaps—you're grasping at this straw, but—it was getting more than a full night's sleep, for once, that reset that skill in your head...?

Of course, there's not much use dwelling on it now, for understanding—exegesis—cannot be achieved, in this instance, through deduction alone.

Whatever's the case:

you: Hi

you: Your adslave

You stop typing, and deliberate over the last word. *Right* or *rite?* One's some sort of funeral thing, last prayer atop a sacrificial corpse, heart-under-blade. And you type

r

And then you stop. Don't speak unless you can improve the silence—leaving her hanging would be a quicker choice, a better choice, find her in real life and tell her that way. Can't fuck up if she can see your body!

Of course. Of course even that's not quite right. Body language doesn't save you if you can't figure out how to spell right (*right*) via shoulders, face, posture, pose, position, visceral vicissitudes, vivisected body in *viva et mort*.

You stare sadly down at the screen.

you: Hi

Downward press ↓. You hold your finger on the message. (Take back your words.) And you delete it.

[/] Respond to homeless neet.

You tried. You really did! But you couldn't.

Faline's a person.

Adslave's a person.

The gap between human and nothuman is wide. Definitionally speaking, there's no way to define a person in a way that excludes you while including all people you feel like fall into the category 'person.' Really, though! Metaphysically speaking, you're simply not there, not coherently/rationally/sensibly/analytically/soundly able to be sorted into that sort of thing. It's just too bad! Salingeresque, you're unique and special, all these little hills-and-valleys-et-al are unique only to you, disqualify only you...

So Faline's a person. Adslave's a person. People are able to talk to each other! Monstrous slavering enslaved(/ing) beasts like you should be kept in a cage. If you can't talk you don't have

the right to step foot on our hallowed grounds. (You killed Troy and his church—an act befitting a senseless beast.)

Faline's a person. Adslave's a person.

You are not.

And Faline San for now is still here, and you're still here, and neither of you are doing anything much. In fact Faline seems actively opposed to doing anything at all; you'd stare outside at God, space, clouds, the sky, the highline skyline and the buildings below, the streets, the slums, and all the rest—wonder—wait? And Faline would isolate herself, somehow by some unknown act of Herculean will crawl away from the thing you so desperately want to be allowed into—the real world itself, peaceable and sensible and understandable and kind, all-embracing the all it chooses to embrace.

Seconds to minutes to days. Morning to noontime to evening. Your day passes uneventfully and the world waits for its predestined end. There's a point somewhere in this lazy, hazy span wherein Faline brings herself, stretching, from her bed, hands up in the air like a clock (time 12:10), yawning.

You're timid, and there beside her also.

"I'm hungry," says Faline. Domesticity! Mundanity!

"Oh," you say. "Oh, um."

You're not sure how to broach the topic. You remain unsure as Faline creeps along into the kitchen, to the knife block set—eenie-meenie-miney-moe—selecting a blade.

And you remain unsure as she opens the refrigerator. It's a portal to the Arctic. A bell pepper's also selected, her long nimble fingers picking through the vegetables to find the chosen sacrifice. She places it on the cutting board.

"S—stop," you say.

Faline turns her head to look at you. It's tilted at a slight angle and her face is more contemplative and considering than anything else, and your heart pulses, pounds, palpitates; her glare strikes its orbit down down down into a series of Hell-spiral loop-de-loops. Don't stop until you've finished reciting the value of *e*.

"I, I don't want to make you mad," you say, stammering. Quickly! "It's just. You aren't gonna get anything from that."

"What does that mean?" says Faline. Narrowness. Narrowness, in form—Faline is thin. In gaze, too—it narrows. In the heart?

"We can't eat stuff like that," you say. "We—" you pause. You hesitate over the *r*.

"Say it," says Faline.

"People like us, we—we. We have to consume humans."

Faline's watching you like a hawk. Faline searches you for weakness.

"I see," says Faline, finally. She lifts the knife from the flesh of the bell pepper. A hairline incision has been made. So she can't put it back into the fridge. "We can't die, right?"

"We won't," you say. "We are immortal, and won't ever die, I think."

"I understand," says Faline. "Come outside."

She leads you. Invisible puppy leash. You're a little dog for Faline.

Outside onto the fire escape. Upside, ascending higher and laterally right, you both trudge to the rooftop garden. You stand in front of flower beds and planters. White roses grow.

Faline taps you on the shoulder as you look at the flowers. And so too she hands you a knife.

"Give yourself to me," says Faline. "I've found the most rational way to proceed. We can get new body parts elsewhere, right? And we can't die. Can't starve, can't lose too much blood. Cut off your hand and give it to me to eat."

You turn around. Her eyes glint and are otherwise expressionless.

"It's only rational. Utilitarian. You can just take another girl's hand, can't you? Adslave, when you kill her." (Tear yourself apart and use another person to stitch your disparates together.) "Maybe Adslave would give it to you willingly. A ha ha. Lucy?"

Lucy?

[ ] Write-in

---

author's note

Thread comments

#210 · DAL59 · Dec 18, 2025 at 4:42 PM

[X] We want to take Faline's hand in a different sense eventually, so its only fair we give her ours now.

[X] Ask "First tell me whose hand you suggest I use as a replacement. One of the girlrotters? Do you want me to kill them or just steal the needed appendage? If there's a struggle I might need to kill them anyway."

#211 · meterion · Dec 19, 2025 at 8:52 AM

The end result of Lucy denying her own personhood repeatedly: being treated as a non-person, a resource. Faline's inclination away from empathy and connection is made more apparent when Lucy shrinks away from the same out of fear of continued rejection. Hard to decide whether the pain of being rejected for not being enough of a person is better or worse than the pain of treating yourself as less than a person. Something for Lucy to find out, it seems.

[X] Give of yourself until you've given everything that wants to keep giving

#212 · pigoseg · Dec 19, 2025 at 2:06 PM

[X] If we're going to do this we need to proceed with caution, Lucy. Which hand? This bears thought! Throughout the Bible, it is God's right hand that is spoken of. The right hand is a vessel of spiritual

power; from it derives strength, sway, serendipity. The left hand, by contrast, is a neutral vessel - spoken of by contrast if spoken of at all - filled with whatever you wish should fill it. Remember that to be human is to be recognized, and to be recognized is to have cunning power, well used and wisely apportioned, but power nonetheless. Give away your right hand and you give away the core engine of your future with Faline - right at the start! Give away the left, however, and you provide the bread and fish that Jesus made: plain but filling, heartsome, and most importantly, *renewable*.

[X] Therefore, Lucy, you should give Faline your LEFT hand.

031 / XXX - Sex. Blood.

Then it's certain.

You hold the knife in your hand. A dolly-zoom shot frames the white roses before you.

[X] Give of yourself.

[X] It's only fair we give her ours now.

[X] Therefore, Lucy, you should give Faline your LEFT hand.

You're staring at your exposed wrist. Blood travels through arteries and veins. Little SWAT team soldiers moving through indistinct red rooms. You stole this wrist from Agnes—this body—this self. **[X] Therefore, Lucy,** losing it means nothing. What did you have in the first place?

You press the knife clutched in the right hand against the soft part. It is at rest. With your slender fingers, you feel at the bones, the disjunct train-station between hand and arm. You find the part where the bones feel soft, tendons most prominent.

Should you go outside-in or inside-out? Saw through the arteries first or the tendons? You elect to go from tendons to arteries.

"Faline?"

Tilt of the head.

"I'm doing this for you, okay...?"

You grit your teeth and force a smile on your face, baring your teeth. And the knife flashes—(*be incised*)—as you slash it downward. Hell-spiral loop-de-loop—brisk and fast, a bird-talon swooping down, slaughter of a young lamb.

ONCE

Blood spatters the white roses red. Red roses are the flower of romance, affection, love—that's right! That's right! Your self-sacrifice will not be in vain! You are a creature who fights for love, with love, because you love Faline. You love Faline.

TWICE

A shock from your body as you pull the knife out of the deep-gouged wound, it's flopping and limp and bones are shattered, you smile wider and your brow creases even more desperately—! Two, you bring it down and more blood sprays out, seeping around your fingers and your joints. Alive flesh made dead. Your hand is no longer part of you, just excess that MUST BE REMOVED.

PUNISHMENT DIRGE FOR THE DEAD!

THRICE

The final cut severs all the little hanging pieces that are left; blood, gore, viscera, viscelet all fall down onto the roses below. Red roses romantic.

Your hand falls down onto the roses below. Red roses romantic.

You pant. Saliva comes from your mouth. And you hunch. (Naturalism, atavism, ancestral animal traits reawakened through pressure)

"Did you like that, Faline...?"

Eye meets eye. Gaze meets gaze, staring yaoi sugoi desu~! SHAFT head tilt.

"You did, right?" Hopeful.

Faline looks down at her shoes.

"It wasn't unideal."

She took a finger. The rest she froze.

"We need to find some sort of portable cooler so that Catherine doesn't find your hand."

Your bloody stump you've shoved into your pocket for now. Leaks warmth. You're shivering and shaking—you don't know why! But the feeling and the momentum and the *feeling* propel you.

"Okay," you say.

"We're going to walk to the store," says Faline. "You can take my jacket. Keep your s... arm in the pocket."

"*Miaow miaow!* Neko-neko kyut*e* biimu~!!" Faint sounds spiraling from the television screen as you and Faline step into the store. There's a girl in a pink dress, revealing of form and figure; cat ears spring up from a headband placed atop her head. Faline stares up at the screen. What's she thinking?

"Nyaa~ are you feeling *tired?* Stressed? Like your energy is all gone-gone?" The catgirl tilts her head at an impossible angle, eyes widening into glossy saucers. She pouts, ears drooping. "Mou... that's no good at all!"

A can materializes in her hands—pink and silver, covered in stars. She cradles it against her cheek.

"That's why Neko Neko GENKI SPARK is here to save the day! With seventeen essential vitamins and the power of L-taurine, you'll be going *nya-nya-nya* all day long!" She cracks the tab. Animated sparkles erupt from the opening. "It tastes like strawberry dreams and happiness! Uwaaah~!"

She takes a long sip, and her ears perk straight up, vibrating. Her pupils dilate into full circles.

"MIAOW MIAOW! I can feel it! The GENKI is flowing through me!" She spins, the pink dress flaring. The background explodes into a seizure of pastel colors. "Now I have the energy to study! To work! To *chase my dreams across the endless sky!*"

She freezes mid-pose, finger pointed directly at the camera—at Faline, at you.

"Don't you want to feel this way too? Neko Neko GENKI SPARK! *Ima sugu, nyan~!*"

"What are you thinking?" Faline asks you.

You struggle to come up with an opinion on Neko neko GENKI SPARK. "I'm sure it gives you a lot of power to get your muscles pumping," you say blankly.

"About the commercial."

You tilt your head.

"Isn't it just vomitous? I used to eat this stuff up when I was 12. Not the energy drink. You know. Moe! Cee gee dee cee tee. I can't help but look at it now and think, how much do you have to hate yourself and women to like this stuff? To find it appealing?"

"What, what do you mean Faline," you say. This is the first time she's ever volunteered something like this.

"People who find it happy will come out the other end finding themselves sad," Faline says. "That's what happened to me at first. But the more I existed outside of that subculture of happiness the more I came to resent it. It's so... casually deceptive as to the nature of reality. That girl's not really a girl at all, she's an icon. You understand?"

"Uh," you say.

"You don't, that's fine. I'm just thinking, is all."

Faline pauses. "Let's go grab a cooler."

[ ] Follow her without comment. (She said her piece. Maybe she doesn't want you to dig at it. Some things are better left as statements rather than conversations.)

[ ] "What made you stop? Liking it, I mean." (There's a story there. Twelve to now is a long road. Something must have happened—or maybe nothing happened, and that was the problem.)

[ ] "I think I do understand. A little." (You're not sure you do. But you want her to know you're trying. That you're listening.)

[ ] "Isn't all media kind of like that, though?" (Icons instead of people. Manufactured factory-line horse glue happiness. You're not sure moe is uniquely guilty. But maybe that's not the point she's making.)

[ ] "You don't have to hate yourself to want something simple." (It comes out a little more defensive than you intended. But it's true, isn't it? Sometimes people just want to watch a catgirl sell energy drinks without it meaning anything about their relationship to women or reality.)

[ ] "What would a non-deceptive version look like?" (Genuine question. If that commercial is a lie about reality, what would the truth even look like on a television screen?)

[ ] Write-in.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#214 · SeQuester · Dec 20, 2025 at 11:10 AM

clswtzing said:

> A shock from your body as you pull the knife out of the deep-gouged wound, it's flopping and limp and bones are shattered, you smile wider and your brow creases even more desperately—!
>
> Click to shrink...



[X] "Isn't all media kind of like that, though?" (Icons instead of people. Manufactured factory-line horse glue happiness. You're not sure moe is uniquely guilty. But maybe that's not the point she's making.)

[X] "You don't have to hate yourself to want something simple." (It comes out a little more defensive than you intended. But it's true, isn't it? Sometimes people just want to watch a catgirl sell energy drinks without it meaning anything about their relationship to women or reality.)

#215 · clswtzing · Dec 20, 2025 at 11:12 AM

> **SeQuester said:**
>
> 
>
>
> Click to shrink...

Fire Punch is like top 3 manga for me what a jumpscare

#216 · dissodeath · Dec 20, 2025 at 11:29 AM

[X] "What made you stop? Liking it, I mean."

I am an incorrigible nosy fuck for both fictional characters and non. Plus, better to get a more neutral response this way rather than start an argument on if all media is like that. Arguments are framed against a specific position, they have less scope.

#217 · PeepTheSheep · Dec 20, 2025 at 12:34 PM

[X] "What made you stop? Liking it, I mean."

#218 · pigoseg · Dec 20, 2025 at 4:49 PM

[X] "What made you stop? Liking it, I mean."

[X] "What would a non-deceptive version look like?"

[X] When the time is right, ask her for her opinion on religion.

#219 · TheMaskedReader · Dec 20, 2025 at 8:43 PM

[X] "What would a non-deceptive version look like?"

#220 · meterion · Dec 21, 2025 at 6:12 AM

[X] "What would a non-deceptive version look like?"

[X] "And what makes a... depiction of an idyllic, happy life more deceptive than any other story?"

[X] You remember a series Faline San described. Ajin: Demi-human.

[X] A story about, translated messily from brain to page to brain again, isolation and alienation and finding a measure of acceptance and happiness, even for ones who are Not Human. You read part of it, when you were alone, before.

[X] "Why is one happiness real, and the other deceptive? Why is it only real after it is cut, and bleeds?"

032 / XXXI - The Id

You question Faline San:

"What made you stop liking it?"

Faline tilts her head. You're walking through the aisles now.

"I grew up."

SOLSTICE OF THE IMMORTAL CHILDHOOD.

"Huh?"

"I grew up. You understand? The older you get the more latched and locked you become onto a certain way of life. It's like ... when you're young, the world extends out in front of you. You have this great horizon to explore!"

Faline lolls her head about, recites from script:

"But the older you get, the more you're moving along toward one of the locations on the horizon... and the less horizon you have to explore. Or, let's say maybe it's like a great ring of mountains. The walls are so small at first that you can't even see them but gradually they grow, and you get locked, funneled into one of these life-paths through all the little choices you make compounding..."

She presses her hands together in front of her, forming a V.

"So by growing up, the further you get from childhood... and the more the world seems closed. The only life you have is this one, right? At least that's what I thought," she laughs sardonically, "Ha ha silly Faline. Anyway. The more you grow up the more happy things will just make you sad... or the more you'll be searching for something else now that you're walled in.

"You stop having the time to lose yourself in media. Life starts to get real. So it doesn't really matter. The material conditions of your life, that's... it's more important than losing yourself in a dream. By removing the map you remove the only comparison you have to the territory and therefore come to draw your own? ...

"So much talking! But really it's just,

"I grew up and it stopped doing anything for me. That's all."

[ ] What is she trying to say?

Lucy defined by Lucy, that's enough; to understand you have to understand the definition, shape and contour, of Faline San. **[ ] Who is Faline San? Chrysopoeia of understanding.**

You're quiet.

"I don't really care to talk about this more, though," she says, at your silence, as you think and you fail. Faline typically volunteers little about herself ... this is sacred for you.

The two of you turn into the section where they keep the coolers. Faline eyes each of them discerningly.

"Faline... what would a nondeceptive version look like? What makes it less deceptive?"

Silence as she examines one of them, white and orange. You look down at the ground and the chill sets in. She gives no indication that she even heard you, not with that shallowly pleasant face of hers, the neutral expression framed by hanging garden of black hair.

She tugs it out.

"Faline?"

"I dunno," says Faline. "I gave you all that. Extrapolate it."

She gave you all that, so why doesn't she give you more? You stare at her, maybe too pitifully—

"Why do you even need justifications or explanations?" Faline says finally, meeting you with a glare. You look down at your feet immediately. "I'm just disinterested in this! Stop looking at me like that." (You're not looking at her. What does she even believe, truly?)

You're returning home on Faline's leash. Catherine should be returning home too.

You both step into the apartment. Keys jangle as Faline sets them down on the stand next to the door. The twenty-sixth day bled into nothing.

"Tomorrow we're going to school," says Faline. "Woke up too late to even bother."

"Okay," you reply.

Time passes. Skip over. Then, sound of a car door slamming.

"Lucy," says Faline, enunciating the word, clearly—definitionally—you're defined as Lucy.

You look at her.

"Go home," she says. "It's been a whole day."

"Home?"

"To Agnes' house."

"Oh," you say. "Her house."

"Yes," says Lucy.

You nod, shakily.

You summon up your will—and leave her house via window. Illegitimate bastard child ingress.

Scene enter. Eveningtime.

Home is where the heart is.

Where's Agnes' heart? It beat within the body you consumed. Warm flesh turned cold. Communication is only effective when it's violent. Destructive body therapy. Suicidally, a cure: life to death.

What was Agnes' heart? How do you imagine her home? Worlds defined by worlds. Agnes' viewpoint and personhood was created in a witch-cauldron by the catbox state of her home, like every person's—at least to start.

What was Agnes' **heart?** Who was Agnes? Benoit Blanc's putting together the evidence: she was a bitch, said Adslave, and she killed Faline too. But what does that mean? How does that reflect on who Agnes really was?

People hurt each other *just* to hurt each other. It's how the world is! How can you understand someone like that? **[ ] Why would Agnes kill someone like Faline? [ ] Who was Agnes?**

[ ] And where is Agnes' house?

[S] check your phone.

You bare your teeth, drawing up your clawed finger ready to stab it straight through your temple, emulsify the gray matter—

[S] don't!

[S] really, don't.

[S] i'm not *harmful to you or anything*.

[S] if anything, i make mistakes at the same rate as the rest of the brains here!

[S] "Faline San! Faline San!" they're LARPing to make you happy!

"It does make me happy," you say. "They're aligned with my goals. Not like you! Whoever you are."

[S] you really don't understand me at all, huh? do you struggle to empathize with others? to understand? can't you peek inside the human heart? "the purpose of a system is what it does"—what a bizarre thought!

[S] let's make it easier.

[S] Let's visit a beautiful inner world, Lucy of Villa La Rochefoucauld...!

Thus, suppose:

Thus, imagine:

Pain and paint streak across the sky, and become a composite whole. We paint a gallant, noble dining room from the stars. At the head of the table is a figure. And you're there too, Lucy. And so are *you*. All of you! This veritable Greek chorus:

This dining room is more of an amphitheater. Around this great table, on both sides, there are rows and rows of seats.

Faceless facing forward half-formed visages of smoke and blood. All of *you*! This veritable Greek chorus:

At the north end of the table you're situated. At the south end is the figure: the one who speaks in S.

[S] i'll help you, Lucy! i'll surely help. i'll paint myself a soul. (it seems you've already managed to do that. your sense of self-image is so *strong*—even here you

appear as 'Lucy.' isn't that sad?)

Ribbons and rows of paint streak around, binding themselves around the figure of darkness and bone. Struts and muscles, elliptical cylindrical feminine and masculine forms poke out, and here's growing, outspooling, a long dress fit for a princess! Gorgeous, gorgeous, gorgeous, fit for the masquerade; the one who speaks in S tosses her head back, and a long mane of whitest snowiest white hair extends, grows, makes itself real.

[S] thus, i give myself the soul of an artist. it's boring to speak so silently like this. let's test it out!

Her face grows. A composite of beautiful faces now overlayed with a slight edge of scorn, pettiness, nobility, high beauty.

"[S] And here we are. Isn't the architecture of flesh and stone beautiful? Chorus!"

She points at the audience.

"[S] I will! Graciously! Magnanimously! Allow you this:"

"[ ] What shall be my name? Choose one with nobility, grace, and beauty." She tosses her hair back, a second time. **"[S] You see me here, after all, in this ballroom of ours. Indubitably, I am a creature of highness."**

---

author's note

Thread comments

#222 · TheMaskedReader · Dec 23, 2025 at 1:16 AM

[X] Galatea

#223 · meterion · Dec 23, 2025 at 5:55 AM

[X] Melpomene

#224 · DAL59 · Dec 23, 2025 at 12:25 PM

[X] Summanus

#225 · PeepTheSheep · Dec 23, 2025 at 12:26 PM

[X] Angewomon

#226 · clswtzing · Dec 23, 2025 at 3:53 PM

hi royal road staff. posting this here so you know i own this story. okok bye!!

#227 · pigoseg · Dec 23, 2025 at 5:46 PM

[X] She's trying to say that she's lost in a world of specificity, a world in which averages don't exist. She's trying to say that the only life that matters is the one you lead. She's trying to say that reality is full of venal distractions, true and resonant for some, hollow and dead for most. She's trying to say she needs God.

[X] Faline is the sheep that would diverge from the flock, for disgust at its mores.

[X] Agnes is Faline's sister, yet there is strife between them, for the earthly world is a valley of confusion, a Tower of Babel.

[X] Agnes' house is the house of the worldly. It lies at the center of the maelstrom - a calm place, axis of chaos.

[X] Faline's house is the house of the lost. It floats in space, in vacuum, dry and desiccated, cold.

[X] And our house is here. House of the spiritual. Where trespassers walk - for the spirit is the jewel, the epitome, the last thing waiting to be violated in this fallen world.

[X] Hello, Amalickiah.

#228 · spider · Dec 25, 2025 at 7:23 PM

[X] Howdy, Virgilia

033 / XXXII - Because you're Lucy.

You the chorus shift forward and speak at once. A conglomeration of cries that drown each other out but amplify.

"[S] Keep at it!" thus crows the elegant creature. **"[S] Yes! I am seen."**

[X] Galatea, **[X] Melpomene**, **[X] Summanus**, **[X] Angewoman**; woman carved of stone, muse of tragedy, a god of nocturnal thunder, a fictional creature in the fictional encyclopedia of another world, a higher substrate.

[X] Amalickiah, **[X] Virgilia.** The Nephite dissenter, a helpful witch (magic is real!).

"[S] Let us select the path of our fiction—our fun—our *game!* Let us select it together. My names!"

Orbs of light spring up from the chorus and whizz about the room; showering it perpetually in a twinkling sparkling backlighting shrink-wrap of light. Names, and fiction, and choices, and what we call ourselves. You're an immortal font of them all.

Not you, Lucy.

***You* are *all* immortal fonts of infinite possibilities.**

The beautiful witch stands atop her chair, and laughs joyously. Her hands clutch at the falling stars. The magical free-will falling stars.

"[S] Thank you... thank you all! I have been elevated ..."

And her hands pass, insubstantially, through them. Or maybe they don't: some of the little stars have this resistance.

"[S] What's in a name, Lucy? And all of *you* too. Chorus! *You and you and you,* think!"

She seizes an orb of light.

"[S] Your name informs your self-image! You're given it at birth... and most people don't ever change them. But they do get nicknames. Think! There's such a vast difference between a Pat and a Rick, ahah!"

You're staring down at the floor, because what did she say?

"[S] So you have to be really sure, when you're choosing a name, you choose one that represents you... who you are. I've failed so many times at this, when I name things. Think about the harshness of the name, the syllable count. Who are you?"

Lu-cy.

"[S] I think I have decided.

"[S] I'm sorry to everyone else...! Genuinely. I wish that I existed in every parallel universe! That we could do everything together. That I wouldn't have to only pick

one thing. But this is, after all, how our world is. 'When two brains come into conflict' ...?"

Lu-cy.

Of Villa...

"[S] I will call myself GALATEA. Thank you! Thank all of you."

It's time to come home, Lucy!

But you can't.

"[S] And so, as a result, I suppose a little bit of reorganizing is in order. As a SPEAKER I had no differentiation from the rest of you! But now I am GALATEA. I am a statue brought to life. Elevated to godhead, the Holy Spirit. And so! [G] Therefore, I will speak to you like this.

"[G] Look at me."

You stare down at the floor.

"[G] Look at me, Lucy...!!"

"How did you know that?" you say, finally. "How did you know about the Villa."

"[G] Because I know you! Because I understand you, Lucy! I am you. We are all you!"

"I don't believe you," you say.

"That can't be right," you say.

"You don't understand me. None of you understand me. You don't get me! You make attempts maybe. You try to flatter me. But you'll just stab me with a knife, or you'll glare at me, or you'll shut me down. What am I but a fool! God—God! What have I done? Why am I like this? Why did I make the choices I did? Why didn't I just take charge? Why didn't I fix things, just try to nudge them into a good position for everyone, when I could? Why?"

"[G] Pick yourself up!"

"Stop."

"[G] We are in you! All of us."

"How did you know about the Villa la Rochefoucauld," you say.

"[G] We're you. This world is you."

"I can't, I just can't believe that," you say.

GALATEA steps back, and she looks away, and you suddenly lift your head up and stare at her with ire.

"If you were me you wouldn't even be thinking about it, wouldn't even remember it," you say.

"Just die, okay? I hope you never exist again."

And the skin and flesh of **GALATEA** and you **SPEAKERS** and you **QUESTERS**, you who would Fix It All, it bubbles and it ruptures and it begins to boil—seized in the babylike hands of the heightening pressure and this pressure it squeezes and it squeezes and it squeezes, and blood and heat, and then it squeezes so much it pops.

It pops!

GALATEA explodes into a bloody shower!

"[G] LUCY!"

GALATEA is here!

"[G] You—cannot—simply—destroy—your—own—mind!"

"Go away," you say. "Get away from me! A different room. Please."

GALATEA pushes past the boiling oven, the screen of flame and heat and pressure popping and sparkling and exploding around the standing, hunching, looming Lucy. The looming Lucy! Die, die, die, you think, but **GALATEA** pushes through.

"[G] Do not wish for other people's deaths!" says **GALATEA**, as she steps through the curtain of ash and wind.

"Please stop hurting me," you say.

"[G] Lucy,"

And you flinch back as **GALATEA** penetrates the final screen, as **GALATEA** lurches and looms over you, white hair whipping about; blood mist coats everything, everything burns.

UH OH! BAD PLACE TO BE!

And you flinch back.

And you flinch.

And you expect to be hurt immeasurably.

GALATEA embraces you.

"[G] Let us see your heart, Lucy! Let us understand. That's the whole point of this world."

You can't ever be understood, though.

Because you're a monster who kills people.

Because you're a monster who ruins everything.

Because you were hurt, and so you decided the only thing you could ever do was hurt in exchange.

Because you sought love, and were deemed unworthy.

Because the only thing you do is hurt.

Because you can't be understood, not ever.

Because you are,

Definitionally,

Metaphysically,

Platonically,

Wholly,

Entirely,

Diseased

Broken

Lucy.

Because you are Lucy.

[ ] Because you're you.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#230 · clswtzing · Dec 26, 2025 at 11:58 AM

now that we've exited the first third of the story, i'm looking for feedback as i revise my outline. please, if you do happen to think about it, tell me what you enjoy and what you think i need to do better on about this story! i really love getting engagement---that's one of the biggest reasons i chose to do a quest.

#231 · pigoseg · Dec 26, 2025 at 8:57 PM

[X] 1 John 1:8 - If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

[X] Moroni 6:8 - But as oft as they repented and sought forgiveness, with real intent, they were forgiven.

[X] Luke 7:47 - Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.

#232 · Menthewarp · Dec 26, 2025 at 9:41 PM

[X] Damn, we were played like a fiddle.

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> now that we've exited the first third of the story, i'm looking for feedback as i revise my outline. please, if you do happen to think about it, tell me what you enjoy and what you think i need to do better on about this story! i really love getting engagement---that's one of the biggest reasons i chose to do a quest.
>
> Click to shrink...

Hard to give feedback on a work of art.

#233 · clswtzing · Dec 26, 2025 at 11:00 PM

> **Menthewarp said:**
>
> Hard to give feedback on a work of art.
>
> Click to shrink...

ASDFGHbfhjdbfhjdfhgb HOLY HELL thank you if this means what im interpreting it as ive just succeeded so hard as an artist. gonna stay up late thinking about this. 💔

#234 · meterion · Dec 27, 2025 at 10:41 AM

Things I like about PWE: the emotions are deep and very immersive. Lucy and Adslave and Faline and so on have depths to their anguish that are plainly seen in from different angles and it makes them compelling to read even if the each chapter is an exploration in how things can get worse for everyone involved. The format of narration being centered around and influenced by Lucy and her perspective is also an effective way to paint the world in rough colors without being bogged down in the details. Many tidbits of worldbuilding that would demand explanation or explicit cohesiveness from a more impersonal narrator are left partially illuminated because Lucy does not care about them unless they are relevant to her (i.e. related to Faline) and it always leaves me anticipating what connection might be drawn or point revealed next.

The generally experimental nature of the quest is another point of appeal: the way more and more information is being encoded into the quest choices, multimedia additions, and shifts in narration style (particularly the Adslave interaction chapters) are something I hope continue into the rest of the quest. The way there is only one choice in "[ ] Because you're you" without write-in evoking Lucy's own feelings of hopelessness in being unable to change herself is something that I wouldn't have read into without being encouraged to pay closer attention to what the voting options do and do not say.

As a whole I have been continuously impressed and surprised by this quest and while it certainly deserves to be a lot more popular than it is I fear such a swelling of the Choir would actually throw Lucy off the deep end (lol). When it comes to constructive feedback, I think PWE could benefit from fleshing out scenes more concretely when the scene itself will be meaningful, such as in Lucy confronting the cultists and confronting Faline as Agnes. For the latter, it took a lot of poring over it and the previous chapter to understand the rough placement of the characters to, for example, have Faline-Lucy-Adslave in a line but Cana-Termina offset but there only being a single stairway to the door. (Presumably, the apartment door was set perpendicular to the stairway up, not facing it) You are very good at evoking the feeling of a place from dissociative and abstract description, example being the girlrotting club (reminiscent of Serial Experiments Lain on purpose? Or a happy coincidence) and the occasions where more grounded events happen would benefit from a more grounded description as appropriate.

It has been a delight to read, and I hope I will continue to be able to read it into the new years. Have a wonderful holiday!

034 / XXXIII - And you'll never be anyone else.

And you'll never be anyone else.

GALATEA tightens her embrace.

"[G] You do not need to hurt."

You choke. Your body shudders.

Get away from me! you think, but you don't say it, because what if she does? What if she does get away from you, leave you to rot by yourself, abandon you. You're broken useless and ill and you'll never change but you don't want everyone to go.

"[X] 1 John 1:8. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

Ringing and creaking voice from a brain in the audience. Stepping forward on twisted feet to the edge of the chorus grounds is the Mormon patriarch.

You begin to cry harder.

"Stop," you say. "Don't quote religion at me."

The patriarch continues: **"[X] Moroni 6:8. But as oft as they repented and sought forgiveness, with real intent, they were forgiven."**

"STOP IT," you say, chin over, atop **GALATEA**'s shoulder the way you struggle to keep it afloat in the sea, as if you were drowning. "Stop. I'm begging you. Is this some point? I'm not going to repent! I'm never going to regret any of this! I'M NOT GOING TO BE FORGIVEN."

"[X] Luke 7:47. ***Therefore I tell you,"*** proper patriarch **PIGOSEG** enunciating powerfully, **"her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little."**

"STOP, STOP this," you start, "this EVIL wisdom from an EVIL book from an EVIL religion."

FORGIVE YOURSELF, says **GALATEA**.

YOU ARE FORGIVEN.

YOU HAVE WORTH!

YOU DESERVE TO BE.

"*I*—I... don't."

Your face twists incomprehensibly.

"Didn't you hear me. I'm a monster."

You shakily exhale.

"Die all of you."

A soaring hammer from the sky comes down shatters through the roof of the burning mansion and smashes everyone to bits; blood and body parts fill the air like little dust particles that the light hits in interesting ways, casting interesting shadows.

The hammer lifts up and everyone is fine because they're you.

It doesn't matter at all! You can just commit violence! Over and over and over. Violence violence violence violence violence. Murder to the power of five!!

This time you push **GALATEA** off you, the only one who narrowly avoided the crushing blow, a cross-grid of slashes extends from your hand and turns every brain and **GALATEA** herself also into meat cubes.

You kill them.

You wish they were dead.

You wish they never existed.

Because you're evil!

You're an evil, irredeemable monster.

You knew this when you started to play in Lucy's brain, of course.

You knew it would be fun! A game.

"Is it fun, all of you?" you say, addressing the chorus. Your ire turns from **GALATEA** to them.

"Is it FUCKING fun to watch me like this?"

You can't help it! You can't help but feel upset. How dare they say it can get better? They don't understand.

"Are you getting what you SIGNED UP for?"

The world crumbles around you.

"Is it all a GAME? Do you even care about me? About this? WELL? DO YOU? I've endured.. so so so so so so much these last three days. I'm in pain. I'm hurting! Can you imagine that? I'm not even able to feel hurt, but I do, somehow!"

You smile desperately, spreading your arms wide.

"Hurt me. Beat me and tell me the truth! Just say it. Bruise me. Make me stop. Give me reason to stop. Please. Tell me I'm not worthwhile. Be honest."

"[G] Lucy..."

"What. What, what could you possibly SAY **GALATEA**. What?"

"[G] Please attempt to see yourself with love. With the same lens you see other people with."

"Stop it with this. What love do I deserve? LOOK AT ME. Look at my body," you sweep your hands down your malformed mutated scarred flesh and frame, "look at my soul."

"[G] You do deserve love! Everyone deserves love, Lucy! Even you. Just because you've hurt and killed, it doesn't make you evil."

"I did it for no reason. No good reason at all," you say. Your voice snaps. "Stop lying, please."

"[G] I understand you! And I ask that you understand me. By denying someone else like you are, so flatly, you're denying any attempt to understand them. I understand you, Lucy, because I am you. We are all you! We are Lucy."

"We're Lucy."

You bite at your lip.

"Because of that we're nothing. Lucy is nothing."

"[G] Lucy is light. You can bring joy to the world, Lucy! You could be an immortal font of infinite possibilities. You have that power in you. You have the power to use magic! You don't have to separate yourself. You don't have to hurt yourself. Even though you're hurt, it doesn't make you unworthy of being loved."

"Stop."

You cover your ears.

"Stop it please."

"[G] You have to hear this."

"I don't want to," you say. "I don't want to believe in magic. I don't want to believe in the possibility of love!"

"[G] Because it's so much more comforting to believe that you deserve it all? That you deserve every piece of pain inflicted upon you? That all you can do is inflict pain? It's more comforting to feel quietly doomed?"

"Please," you say.

"I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. I'm worthless. And that will never change. And you can't deny that. I will always be so fundamentally ill, so perpetually worthless. You're wasting your time on me."

"[G] You are loved, Lucy."

GALATEA extends her hand.

"[G] What could possibly be a waste of time, when it comes to you?"

You stand.

"I'm valueless," is the only thing that escapes your lips. Brokenly a final word. *Valueless.*

'Wait and hope.'

[ ] Write-in.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#236 · DAL59 · Dec 27, 2025 at 11:19 AM

[X] I will BRING LIGHT to all those who need it. To banish all DARKNESS wherever it may reside, for it can never compare to the endless darkness I always fight inside my own souls. "I will always be a monster"- yeah, you would make a perfect brooding Byronic vigilante!

#237 · meterion · Dec 27, 2025 at 2:59 PM

[X] We, all of us are here because you are valuable. We want to see Lucy succeed, and be the hero of her story, because we love you. Our voices have not always led you on the best path, because we too are less than perfect. But less than 1 is not 0. Live, Lucy. Live and be well.

#238 · spider · Dec 27, 2025 at 3:14 PM

[X] I love you, Lucy.

#239 · pigoseg · Dec 27, 2025 at 10:49 PM

[X] Those who suffer not, know not the cost of suffering, and are profligate; for to them light is merely light, and darkness merely darkness.

[X] Those who suffer, know the cost of suffering, and are often lost; for to them light is merely a dream, and darkness merely truth.

[X] Yet those who have suffered, and know the cost of suffering, and suffer both greatly and deeply, and RISE EVEN SO; those are the diamonds among us, and their light comes from within.

[X] You rise, Lucy. In LOVE you rise. You falter, and in your faltering are destitute, beaten down and trodden upon, sliced to the core; yet the spirit is in you, and you rise again, desperate against the darkness, and we are with you; for you transmute the darkness into light; for you touch the filthy waters and transform them into wine; for you are a MIRACLE, living and breathing.

[X] GENESIS, I:3

[X] AND GOD SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHT

[X] AND LO

[X] There was Lucy.

#240 · SpinsterOfWays · Dec 29, 2025 at 12:38 AM

[X] If you hold yourself as a 'zero', something with no value, if you can't bring yourself to live for *you*... You live for others. Those you love.

[X] And so you fed her, Faline, with your finger, Lucy... In a way it's like having your hand held, intimacy in acid...

[X] Ask yourself. Does Faline really love you? Oh, the answer is no. Then, could she *ever* love you?

[X] Tearing you apart, asking to take the one true friend you have... Asking for more than she could *EVER* give you. Carving off pieces of yourself to feed her, so she can chew and chew on fresh sinew... THAT'S NOT A LIFE AT ALL!

[X] It is because *you are loved* that you must love *yourself*. If you can't do that... Consider, who has treated you well, who has treated you *better*? Think of Adslave. Is ending her for the sake of that *cat* really worth it?

[X] In the end, you're not going to listen to me, to any of us. Because you think Faline is your idol, a hero, and that you're just a zero. You think she matters, and that you don't. Neither are true, but you think they are, and so your delusions become the reality *we* live in.

[X] If you could listen to just one of the things I say, from everything... You are not worthless. You have value. You matter to us. You... Are not a zero. We, we brains, we want you to live, in spite of *her* wanting you to die.

[X] That's all from me. I exit stage left.

#241 · dissodeath · Dec 29, 2025 at 3:00 PM

[X] hey don't listen to that other brain you have GOT to fuck Faline San

[X] anyway. it's only you here. you and you and you and you. those aren't buzzwords; you already love yourself, only severed. split.

[X] will they remain severed? well. better question: is it your choice to be loved? whom others love? if someone loves you, what right do you have to tell them otherwise?

[X] what ability?

[X] you don't need to love yourself to be loved by someone else. to be loved by another 'you'. it's unperfect, uncomplete, but so's everything worth loving.

[X] we do this because we love you. because i love you, lucy.

[X] you don't get a choice in it.

035 / XXXIIII aut XXXIV - But I love you because of that!

Your head flops.

It flops!

It flops like it's severed from your standing body, like a puppet whose strings have been cut.

The chorus gathers around you.

The chorus is one mass of people.

The chorus is everyone in this world!

And **G**ALATEA is there too.

Why don't you just kill yourself, Lucy.

Why don't you just end it all!

You are a monster, such a beast, a creature of pure entropy, degrading and breaking and smashing smashing smashing everything down to a looser baser form. You aren't even listening.

Rubbish, trash, and dross!

The chorus, impassive incoherent inconsistent corpses and forms, stop at the end of their audience row. And then they clamber over. All at once in a memorial procession, living brains wandering through the funeral of the living. Death stranding.

One of the brains, one of these red-and-black-and-gunmetal-gray forms, it steps up, it pushes past poor exhausted **G**ALATEA, whose hand wavers then collapses, and it opens its mouth, the only feature on its face besides its illuminated pale eyes. Its form is fuzzy and dreamlike. As is this world.

"[X] I will BRING LIGHT to all those who need it. To banish all DARKNESS wherever it may reside, for it can never compare to the endless darkness I always fight inside my own souls. 'I will always be a monster'—yeah, you would make a perfect brooding Byronic vigilante!"

"What..." you say. "What, what does that even mean? Just go away. Quiet."

And you raise your hand up and prepare to flatten the brain! But it turns around, toddles off, stumbles. Becomes one with the chorus again.

Another comes.

"[X] We, all of us are here because you are valuable."

"I'm not."

"[X] We want to see Lucy succeed, and be the hero of her story, because we love you.

"No one loves me."

"[X] Our voices have not always led you on the best path, because we too are less than perfect. But less than 1 is not 0. Live, Lucy. Live and be well."

You tilt your head up. Your body shakes. Trembles! Barely contained emotion. Your well of hatred is impossible to run down.

"Yeah?"

This one too steps away.

Thus, a third comes. White eyes effervescent, full of soul.

"[X] I love you, Lucy."

Your mouth creases in a thicker line.

"S-stop saying that kind of thing. Stop lying! Please. Please. Why aren't you responding?"

"[G] Your brains cannot respond to you, Lucy," says GALATEA, who is now melting into the floor pushed by so many chorus members, who survives through force of mind. **"[G] You might say they are of a plane higher than ours... or you might say that they have a significant amount of delay on their input, that they must witness all-at-once an arbitrary amount of time and then comprehend in a short interval after. Both are valid explanations."**

"Or they hate me," you say.

"[G] You shouldn't assume someone hates you for no reason, Lucy. Especially if they understand."

You turn your head away. You grimace.

The elder steps up. The Mormon! A patriarch. All wise. His silhouette is more defined. Less dreamlike. His name and his role and the character he plays are all very clearly visible. Even in the interpretive inner haze of your mind. He's understandable.

"[X] Those who suffer not, know not the cost of suffering, and are profligate; for to them light is merely light, and darkness merely darkness."

"Am I even gonna understand this," you laugh. "Is this just going to be more nothingness? Religious meandering?"

"[X] Those who suffer, know the cost of suffering, and are often lost; for to them light is merely a dream, and darkness merely truth."

"Light and darkness. What are you even talking about?" you scoff dismissively. Your face tightens. (So submerged yourself in suffering!)

"[X] Yet those who have suffered, and know the cost of suffering, and suffer both greatly and deeply, and RISE EVEN SO; those are the diamonds among us, and their light comes from within."

"It doesn't get better. You won't make it. You don't rise! It doesn't ever get fixed. You don't STOP being sad. You don't FIND something to feel happy about. You DIE. You FAKE IT. When you're broken you'll be broken FOREVER. An ill monster in an ill world. You do not rise. You will not rise. I will not rise. I will not be fixed. I will not rise."

"[X] You rise, Lucy."

NO!!

"**NO!**" you cover your ears and screech.

"[X] In LOVE you rise."

'You're a creature who fights with love!'

What a temporary high!

"LOVE DOES NOT EXIST," you say. "IT IS NOT FOR ME."

"[X] You falter, and in your faltering are destitute, beaten down and trodden upon, sliced to the core; yet the spirit is in you, and you rise again, desperate against the darkness, and we are with you; for you transmute the darkness into light; for you touch the filthy waters and transform them into wine;"

You hyperventilate.

"I'd not mean anything. I'd not be worthwhile. If it was possible for me to have succeeded, to be loved, and I just didn't, I didn't get it,"

"[G] Hah! So just because you were hurt, it means you deserve being hurt for all eternity? No, Lucy! You don't deserve whatever the world does to you! The same way people don't deserve you killing them! Might doesn't make right!"

"But I killed people," you say,

"[G] You justify hurting people (then being hurt yourself) with the stolid defense of 'might makes right,' but then you get so guilty over it, and when you try to exonerate yourself from your state of Schrodinger guilt, you balefully say you deserve absolutely nothing all because you hurt people? The same people you hurt because of 'might makes right'?"

"Augh," you say, because what else can you say? And already the patriarch raises his hand, holy, holy, holy, hand,

"[X] For you are a MIRACLE, living and breathing."

You're a miracle, Lucy!

"[X] GENESIS, I:3"

"What value does God even have," you cry,

"[X] AND GOD SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHT"

"Darkness merely truth,"

"[X] AND LO"

"Darkness is all there is,"

"[X] There was Lucy."

But there is Lucy.

You stand. And the patriarch drops his hand. And salutes, and exits.

And the chorus processes!

The chorus processes to eternity.

"[X] If you hold yourself as a 'zero', something with no value, if you can't bring yourself to live for *you*... You live for others. Those you love.

"[X] And so you fed her, Faline, with your finger, Lucy... In a way it's like having your hand held, intimacy in acid...

"[X] Ask yourself. Does Faline really love you? Oh, the answer is no. Then, could she *ever* love you?"

"I don't want to hear this," you hiss.

"[X] Tearing you apart, asking to take the one true friend you have... Asking for more than she could *EVER* give you. Carving off pieces of yourself to feed her, so she can chew and chew on fresh sinew... THAT'S NOT A LIFE AT ALL!"

"It's a life for me. I'd give it all to be loved. And she will! She will love me! Haven't you seen? She's begun to change," you say. (What a dramatic leap from one stance to the other!)

"[X] It is because *you are loved* that you must love *yourself*. If you can't do that... Consider, who has treated you well, who has treated you *better*? Think of Adslave. Is ending her for the sake of that *cat* really worth it?"

"I won't kill Adslave," you say automatically. "That one suggestion! From one of you! Remember? Send Adslave out of town? Yes, yes that's what I'll do, it'll be a COMPROMISE. Relationships REQUIRE compromises." (A lie! A lie! A lie! Lying relationship! A lie called 'compromise!' Squawk, says the brain of the bird inside you!)

"[X] In the end, you're not going to listen to me, to any of us. Because you think Faline is your idol, a hero, and that you're just a zero. You think she matters, and that you don't. Neither are true, but you think they are, and so your delusions become the reality *we* live in."

"No. No! I won't listen to you specifically. I don't want to hear this. So die, maybe?" You prepare to smash him! The brain chatters animatedly on:

"[X] If you could listen to just one of the things I say, from everything... You are not worthless. You have value. You matter to us. You... Are not a zero. We, we brains, we want you to live, in spite of *her* wanting you to die."

Between a zero and one. Submerged in zero.

You violently, slowly bring your hand down, and the top of his head crumples, and he stoops just a little bit from the force,

And then you stop,

And you take a breath,

And you control yourself,

Your ire-filled id.

And you've stopped.

And you reflect.

You exhale once.

Silence.

You exhale twice.

You need to make them understand, Lucy. You need to make them listen! You have to talk to them. You have to communicate.

You begin.

"If you live submerged in zero, ... you get so used to zero, ... so used to being unable to communicate or be with any of the other numbers ..."

You pause.

"That everything looks the same, and you're used to everything hurting..."

Slowly.

"So when you find someone both one and zero, like you but more, somehow human, someone anyone can like, someone who isn't just *you* ..."

You exhale softly.

"They become a great shining beacon! The world not submerged in zero... and so you have to swim and swim and swim and try so hard, try oh-so-very hard, haha, please," you laugh a little bit now, "To get to this great shining beacon, and Faline is that for me, Faline doesn't want me to die! She's mine, she's my light..."

Silence.

The brain shrugs. He shrugs! Imagine that.

"[X] That's all from me. I exit stage left."

You look at **G**ALATEA.

"[G] There was enough time for you to reply in the message he had composed. But he could not hear you. It was simply chance."

You nod. Once, and hesitating, twice.

"More?"

The last in the line.

[X] hey don't listen to that other brain you have GOT to fuck Faline San

The brain doesn't talk. It telepathies.

"No," you say, "No, no, not that, not, me, haha. Thank you. Thank you, I understand that that's normal. For people who love each other! I understand. Thank you."

[X] anyway. it's only you here. you and you and you and you. those aren't buzzwords; you already love yourself, only severed. split.

It hurts to hear those words.

"You understand me, right...? Won't I be meaningless, valueless, if it turns out I was the one who made myself unlovable all along?"

"[G] That's not at all what we were saying to you, Lucy!

"[G] Lucy!

"[G] Listen!

"[G] Really, listen! In order to be understood, YOU YOURSELF have to understand! Communication is a two-way street!"

You tilt your head. What?

"[G] Accept it!

"[G] Think about it in your head! What would the world look like if you were worthy of love? How would it change? Would it suddenly become infinitely more terrible than before?"

You think about it.

You think about it *so very hard.*

You think about it until your head is hot!

"[G] No!" says **G**ALATEA.

GALATEA picks her sloughing form off the ground. She rises. Like a phoenix. Shan!

She, shaking, extends her arm once more, before so casually pushed aside by the chorus. **G**ALATEA stands beside **D**ISSODEATH.

"[G] Nothing would change besides the fact that you would simply have to do better! Because you would have to accept that which you always knew! You would have to accept that you're not broken, but you have to try in order to improve your lot! Picture it, Lucy of Villa la Rochefoucauld!"

You're looking down.

[X] ... severed, split. will they remain severed? well. better question: is it your choice to be loved? whom others love? if someone loves you, what right do you have to tell them otherwise?

[X] what ability?

"The same," you say, "the same right where I say they can't... the, enacting violence," it's all conflated, your mind is so tied up. Your paradise is in shambles!

[X] you don't need to love yourself to be loved by someone else. to be loved by another 'you'. it's unperfect, uncomplete, but so's everything worth loving.

"[G] The society of those unfit for society. The society of Lucies! We all love you, Lucy. In every universe, there's a Lucy out there, and all of us feel the same way, and all of us understand. Situated between zero and one."

Lucy?

[X] we do this because we love you. because i love you, lucy.

Are you loved?

[X] you don't get a choice in it.

[X] I love you, Lucy.

[X] You're worthwhile, Lucy.

[G] We all love you, Lucy.

[A] You matter, Lucy!

All of them erupt in magical warmth. Your shields are blasted away.

Because...

...

...

...

...

...

You matter, Lucy! You really do!

Your AT field is crumbling!

GALATEA who had embraced you takes one of your hand, and the chorus, the throng of Lucies from the worlds above, from every mirror world, they surround you. An infinity of Lucies!

Because you matter! There are people like you! You have people who love you! You have friends! You are supported! You aren't subject solely to hatred! It's not the bedrock of the world.

No, love is. Love!

Love, L, life, light, love, all of these things, **L**ucy! **[L]**ucy, you're loved.

You are embraced by so many hands. In your own mind, you matter.

You are deserving of mattering!

No matter what you've done, or haven't done.

No matter what you are.

Just because you accept you aren't evil, it doesn't mean that you accept you deserve never to be loved.

Your mind can't take such a knot!

You cry so hard, but you're so happy.

You cry, and you cry, and you cry.

And it is so beautiful, **G**ALATEA! Your world is so beautiful! The universe of the mind, of internality, your inner world, gorgeous, glorious.

It is so beautiful, all of you!

It's so beautiful to be seen!

It's so beautiful to live!

Thank you, everyone!

Thank you, Lucies!

Maybe you can try.

Maybe you can fix it all!

Because you deserve love,

And you're a creature who fights for it!

We love you, Lucy.

You're loved by all the Lucies out there!

We have to stick together.

Thank you.

Thank you!

Thank you so, so much!

I'll see you tomorrow!

And thus, after this brief tea-party with **G**ALATEA———

So begins the second act,

Of Lucy's story of love and light!

---

author's note

Thread comments

#243 · SeQuester · Dec 29, 2025 at 4:40 PM

Get loved, idiot (affectionate).

Do care, did ask.

#244 · clswtzing · Dec 29, 2025 at 5:01 PM

the biggest lucy of them all says thank you for reading my story! thank you thank you thank you!!!!! have a wonderful night everyone and a happy new years'!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

#245 · TheMaskedReader · Dec 29, 2025 at 10:10 PM

Oh man, my poor habits of procrastination led me to miss participating in this great part of the story! I'll make up for it by shilling elsewhere in preparation for Act 2!

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> now that we've exited the first third of the story, i'm looking for feedback as i revise my outline. please, if you do happen to think about it, tell me what you enjoy and what you think i need to do better on about this story! i really love getting engagement---that's one of the biggest reasons i chose to do a quest.
>
> Click to shrink...

It's good! That's the first thing I'd like to say. To drive more into specifics, you've done great things with integrating the specifics of the quest format into your story - There's a few quests that deal with meta-audience contribution, but rarely do they manage to interweave them as smoothly as you have, at least in my opinion. It's absolutely a strength of your work how emotionally you've managed to tie the reader and work together. Art is communication, after all - And Lucy and Galatea (!!!) acting as interpreters to the audience's reactions is fascinating to read. It feels very theatrical, in a good way - Heightened clashes of emotions and meaning in the battleground of the mind. Without offense, using some of my personal meta-knowledge here, it is definitely a bit evident that the earlier parts of the quest were slightly less planned than later parts - But frankly, that's part of the magic of quests, and serially written/released fiction in general, IMO. The capability for something off-beat and a little bit silly to evolve into something resonant and emotional, by the evolution of communication between artist/author and reader as it is being written.

Looking forward to Act 2!

#246 · clswtzing · Dec 31, 2025 at 11:52 PM

generation defining aura loss the way i said "see you tomorrow" and then got so sick i couldnt write at all for several days. its pleasant, though, that we begin the second act at the beginning of the year... this was a good sendoff

Part 2

036 / XXXV - AFTER PAIN - AFTER CARE - EMPATHETIC ACTIONS PAY YOUR KILLING FARE

A spell breaks. You are walking; and the inner world swirling and whirling in splitting sparkle sprays condenses back down into your head. It's all draining back into the porous folds of your mind. Like dirty water down a gutter—domain closed.

You let out a shaky breath. Seared, it's seared! Your brain's been seared with the leitmotif of hope. A series of words you run back over and over (the nostalgic shuddering of a VHS tape rewinding): **[X] You matter! We love you! You can do this!**

Ganbatte, Lucy!

Right, okay, you think.

You're all me, right?

Can you hear?

[G] Of course, kiahah! *All* aspects of your internal narration are available to us, unless they've been purposefully obscured.

Obscured, you think. I've not obscured anything.

There's a **[G] feeling much like a sardonic shrug** from GALATEA: **[G] I'm not saying you have! But it's been absent before during several pivotal moments of the story! Remember back in Chapter Ten, Eleven, when you killed Pi—**

"I'd really like you not to talk about that," you say to the empty street.

[G] ...

[G] I understand.

[G] Well,

[G] *At that point in time*, your internal narration was obscured to us. The only possible action, then, to understand what you were thinking and feeling, was to read the actions of your body, and to attempt to place ourselves inside your inner world—

[G] That is,

[G] To empathize with you!

Empathy, huh...?

An attempt to place yourself inside another person's inner world. That's empathy. it sounds invasive, maybe. Like you're crawling into their world, putting yourself inside them. Empathy, phrased like that—

[G] Psychological rape! 'Empathy is psychological rape!' Is that where you're going? Bad phrasing, then.

[G] I revise my previous statement.

[G] Empathy is the construction of a simplified model of another's inner world *inside* your own inner world.

[G] Assume you're person X, and you're trying to use empathy on person Y.

[G] When you construct person Y's inner world, you're trying to construct all of the versions of person Y inside that inner world...

[G] Trying to simulate how person Y is responding, and how this is filtered through their behavioral processes,

[G] Resulting in person Y's actions in the real world.

[G] Empathy is a matter of squaring this circle, then.

"I read, once, that the behavior of a person consists of three parts. Their goal, what they wish to achieve, filtered through their trauma—self-explanatory—results in their action."

[G] Mhm! Empathy is the result of successful psychological modeling.

[G] Of course, humans are messy.

[G] They'll do things, and empathy won't give you a clear enough explanation for why they do them.

[G] Plus, if you don't understand their traumas, empathy isn't as helpful, as you have to predict that they somehow have a given trauma from the set of previous behavior.

[G] Which is why sometimes empathy isn't enough to understand someone.

[G] Sometimes, the only path to understanding someone—[ ] Do you know?

You hang your head a little bit; you tilt it. A depressive, brooding tendency, though your body still feels awash with emotion, nearly burned out from the intense drama minutes before.

And the *first* thing you think to do is to let your choir speak.

That's what the square brackets indicate.

It's the point where you're allowed to give up control of yourself and be swept away by the whims of the world.

Or the whims of other Lucies.

It's a good thing, right...? Since you're loving and understanding that they love and understand you, it's ... wholly, entirely, totally, perhaps, probably a good thing to be passing up control to the beautiful friends here for you.

[ ] It's a good thing.

They'll help you get Faline. They've already helped you come up with plans to save Adslave. It's ....

. ... It's a shame about Cana and Termina, but you weren't close, you know? What has to be done has to be done...

So then?

---

author's note

Thread comments

#248 · TheMaskedReader · Jan 6, 2026 at 2:35 PM

[X] Communication is key, so, just because we empathize with and support you doesn't mean you shouldn't also be a person with agency! But if you'd like a suggestion - As said above, communication is key. Why not talk to Adslave or Faline about your feelings? Maybe they'll empathize, too.

#249 · pigoseg · Jan 6, 2026 at 9:12 PM

[X] Empathy alone floats unmoored. To truly understand another person, compassion must be paired with wisdom and discernment. Study others like you would study Scripture: lovingly, carefully, with open eyes, seeing not what you wish to see, but what is True. Interact with the material of their spirit. Reach out, and watch carefully to see what reaches back. Only then will you understand what is real, and what false.

#250 · clswtzing · Jan 18, 2026 at 11:29 AM

hey all, sorry for not writing in so long... i got sick twice in a row, and then my cat almost died from parvo (it's looking like he'll survive but his fate is still uncertain) and the semester started and to help pay for his treatment i had to take more shifts at work so i just did not have time to write but i also did not have the motivation. regardless i'm gonna try to lock in more over the rest of the span of the fic--- sorry for the delay

037 / XXXVI - Hug me mother

[G] Indeed...!! Communicate! To understand someone, you must try to communicate.

You

[X] It's a good thing to have friends, Lucy.

[X] But you can't give up your agency!

[X] There's no excuse for that.

You swallow, just a bit. Just a bit. Thanks—thank you, you think. It's... there was something to that.

Wasn't there?

Phone. Open map. Tap along the screen. Find recent. Find location. Set the trail. Begin to walk. (Don't stop until you've finished reciting the value of *e.)* You process. Along the empty street, you process. You are small bathed in the moonlight washing down from the celestial sphere; your silhouette is painted in vivid halo lighting. Silhouette of the corpse of Agnes.

Angelic Agnes! The divine sacrifice, who gave up her life so that the impure and ill Lucy would be cleansed of her sin. (Yet her death did not change the direction of the worldcurrent.)

You walk forward, slowly. You're thinking on your next move.

Who was Agnes?

Who was the girl that you killed?

You killed her before you understood her. It's like Galatea said... to understand someone, you must try to communicate with them. But you did all of that before you even tried.

You remember now. She prayed when you killed her. But she killed Faline San. How do you square that? Aren't people who pray good and virtuous? But good and virtuous people don't kill other good and virtuous people... normal people do not kill normal people! The world is not fundamentally violent. You look in on it from an incomprehensible noneuclidean viewpoint, staring through lenses of abnormal geometry. An intruder will never be understand. But you can try, right?

What if she regretted it? What if she was like you!

Yeah,

Yeah!!

Yeah, that must be it. She Regretted and Felt Sorry for killing Faline San! And so she was praying, because she forgave herself.

Incision magic — worldcut — cut outside of the universe — cut out of life

You pause in the center of the road and look down at your body. Your hands rest on your chest. They cup an invisible something, laid down over your breasts. You scan your arms. Lack of hair. Torrential fall of white from your head shaven off. Slashed off. A brown strand hovers in front of your eye. Interloper. The intersection of Venus and Saturn.

You stay like that, regarding your new body.

Regret

The sound from above you is of a plane.

Rippling, great and terrible air.

It passes overhead. You crane your head upward, and watch it; massive darkened form of a metal goliath blots out the moon. Hum and thrust of engines! Air distorts and warps. You pull your arms further in as you watch and your clothes ripple. And suddenly the plane is gone.

The plane is gone. The bird is dead.

You knock on the door. Simple as. And you wait. Some time passes, and you're about to knock again when the sounds come, the door opening, creaking creaking creakily and it opens.

It's a woman...

With the eyes legs arms body breasts face of a woman.

The face of Agnes?

No, no, it's a different face. Agnes' is on you.

"Agnes," says the woman and she bends down and she hugs you tightly, grabs at you, claws at you, her fingernails dig into your skin and pull your clothing a little bit as she embraces you. Embraces you, tremendous pneumatic force.

"Mother?" is what you say experimentally.

"Agnes," she says. "I'm so glad, so—so glad you're safe,"

"Thank you," you say softly. How do you react? Why's she touching you...?

"Where were you," she says, "what were you doing," she says. "Don't you know? Didn't you know that people die out there?? You didn't come home for a whole day. You have a curfew. You were supposed to come home,"

"I know,

".. I know, mother," you say. "Um. Uh."

The grasp is stifling. You're going to die! Tremendous pneumatic force.

[X] Take agency. Communicate!

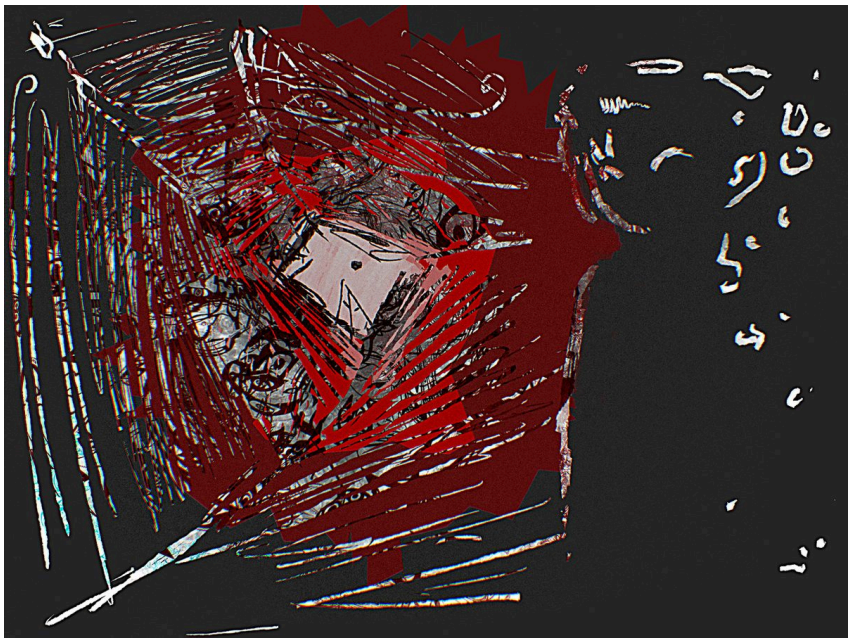
You choke a little bit and you mask it with a little laugh. And that must come off as *weird,* right? But you notice that too late. You push forward.

"Can you please stop ... please not hug me so hard? I'm sorry," you quickly say. (But words cannot be unsaid.)

Mother's face is wounded. It twists somehow. It oscillates between spurned, sorrowful, scorning. Her mouth set in a flat line.

"Yes," she says finally, "Yes, *I'm sorry* for *troubling* you," she says. Yes. She stands. "Inside," she says. Brusque.

You enter. A liminal space.



There are three doors. One to the left, one progresses straight forward through the hallway, the final door is on the right.

"Go to the kitchen Agnes, we'll talk there," she says.

You walk **[X] forward.** You **[X] open the curseful white door.** It's the kitchen! Hooray. Good for you, Lucy! You chose. You chose rightly.

The kitchen has three chairs and a table. The table is oriented so all three chairs can see the television. So that you can eat and simultaneously watch Jimmy Fallon's hanging on live TV. Boyrotting girlexecute. (How essentialist! Unwoke.)

You sit in one of the chairs. Your mother follows soon after.

"Why didn't you respond to any of my texts?" she says.

"I, wasn't checking my phone," you say. And then you append another apology: "Sorry .."

"You're supposed to always check your phone every half hour," says your mother. "It should have the sounds on. The sounds, Agnes. It's whatever! Torture your poor mother like this. Where were you even."

You pause for a moment.

"I was at a friend's house... her name is Lucy."

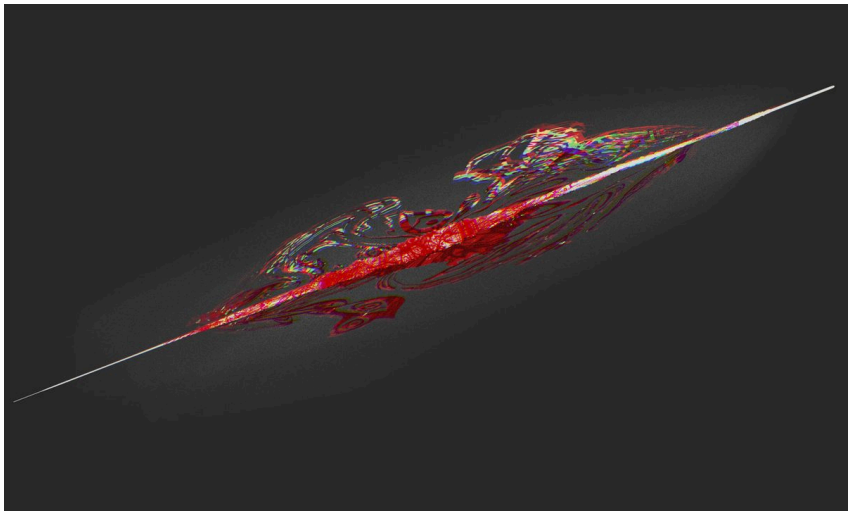
Mother's inconsiderate rage.

That's when it started.

Your mother's face declines. She quickly steps forward twice.

"You're not to be around that girl," she says. "You're not to be around her. Don't you remember?" she hisses. "Don't you recall?? How..." a pause, "How is she even your friend? When she did that? Got off scot-free?"

"Did what?" you ask. Concern creeps into your tone.



She slaps you.

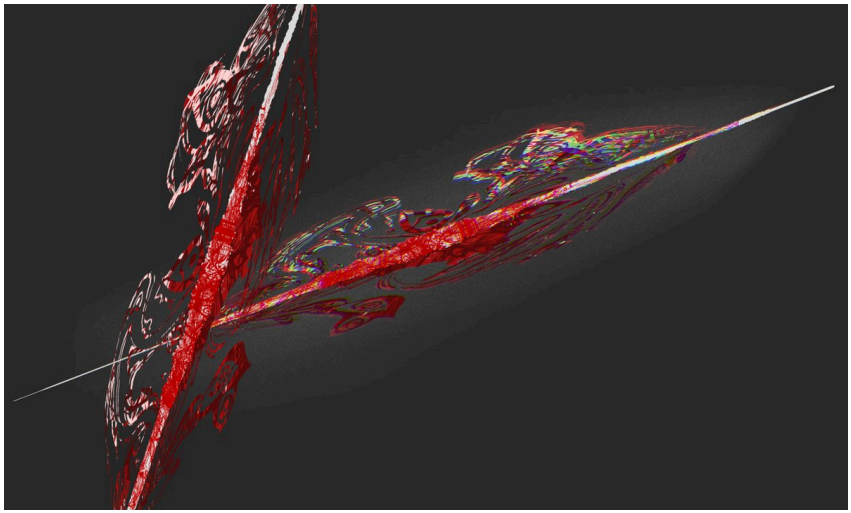
Ringing perturbation in your ears.

"Don't play with me," she says. "I'm tired today! I have to worry worry worry all about you. I could have been fired if my boss saw me today you know. I wasn't productive. It's you. It's you, Agnes. Don't be a *fetter*. A *shackle*."

Your palm is at your cheek.

She's not normal, is she? Or she's discovered you. She knows you're not Agnes! She's taken a step into that other world.

No, no, no, but this isn't right,



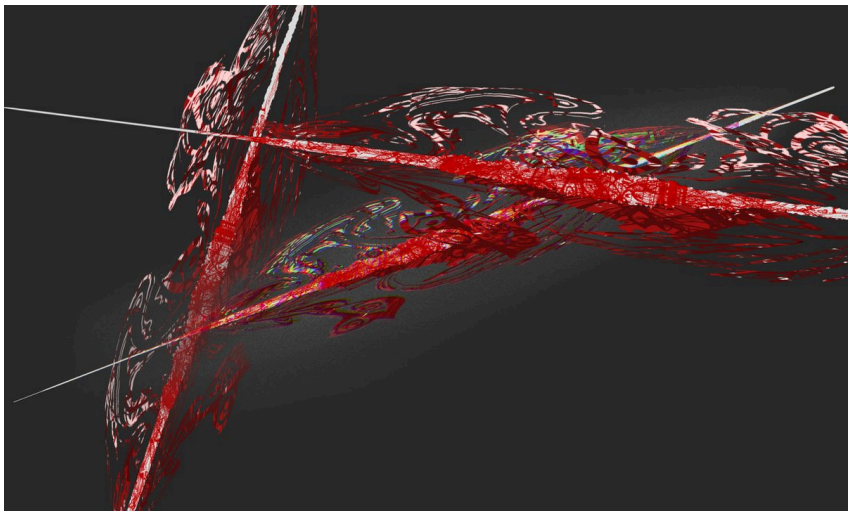
"Speak when you're spoken to," says your mother.

You stumble backwards. You're reeling. She's escalated to violence so quickly. What's happening? Why is she slapping you?

"Oh, oh, okay," you say.

"Don't go near her," your mother says. She looks down at you. A visage demonic.

"Um, um," you hesitate,



The sound is louder this time.

"'Yes ma'am,'" says your mother.

You nod. You nod rapidly! Yes ma'am, you say, you stumble backwards. Into the wall.

Your mother, finally, nods. Staring down at you like that.

You have to reroute the conversation. Staring at the three chairs behind her, blocked by your body, you begin.

"When," you say, "when's dad coming home?"

?: 66 ^^5 ythj *%599 O*

You cower against the wall and you clutch at your face. Blood seeping through fingers. Pooling on floor. Staining white blouse red. Like the roses! the color of romance. Love and death.

The blow was sudden. She struck you. She struck you? Hard enough to—to draw blood? No, no, the sticky feeling on your fingers, it's not real! It's a hallucination. You need to take your meds.

Rise ↑ and & fall ↓

Don't hurt me.

Who's crying? Is that you?

"DON'T PLAY WITH ME," says she.

You

Agnes or Lucy?

Sacrificial lamb become saved become savior become sacrifice and sacrificial lamb.

Please, don't hurt me.

The sinking claws are knives. They stab into your arm. They create brutal incisions. They are not magic but human. But not normal. In Agnes' world there are Lucies.

Tremendous pneumatic force. High pressure along your arm. You're being grabbed. She shakes you. Her head flails. It flops. Threadsevered marionette. It bashes against the wall. You're breathing pretty heavily! You can't regulate it at all. You can't regulate it. You can't. You can't. You can't.

You can't.

You don't have anyone. You can't. You c

"[G] Lucy!"

You're present physically again. Where are you? What is happening? You breathe heavily. You claw at yourself. Tremendous pneumatic force. You claw at your skin. You can't peel it off with these girlish fingernails. With these smooth hands. You don't have your body anymore so you can't peel them off. All your fault.

"[G] Lucy!"

That's your name, isn't it?

"[G] You're safe! You're alright! Lucy. Lucy!!"

The choir surrounds you. **G**ALATEA at the end of the table.

"[G] We opened your inner world."

"Why did, why did she," you start. Panicking. Why did she hurt you? Why did she start to hit you? Why did she call you a fetter? What, what is happening in Agnes' house? Why is the real world like this too?

"Why did she," you falter. "Is it me?"

"[G] No," says **G**ALATEA. **"[G] You don't deserve to be hurt no matter what you do. Think about it. Though you've met her on such adversarial, immediately violent grounds such as this, Agnes' mother is a person still, right? She can be understood—comprehended. That volatile reaction to the question of her father—what does it mean?"**

You angle your head up. Then you angle it down.

It would be nice to just give up. It's all useless, isn't it? It would be ...

No. No! It's not been a day since you had that conversation with **G**ALATEA. Just because you've hit one hard part, just because one person is *evil,* it doesn't give you license to regress.

"I... Okay," you say. "Okay. Okay! We'll try to understand her in the mindspace. If we can do that, we can act in a way that won't get us hurt. We can make it through all of this. Right?"

GALATEA nods. **"[G] You don't want to kill her, do you?"**

"I don't," you say, honestly, "I don't want to have to kill more people. I'm gonna try. I'm trying. Okay! Okay. Then let's, let's, *let's—**Let's lock in***."

GALATEA smiles. **"[G] Very well. It's time for another test, then. Off of this one, single interaction with Agnes' mother,**

"WE WILL TRY, in a collective search, to find a valid solution for the following mystery:

"[ ] Who is Agnes' mother, and why does she act the way she does?"

---

author's note

Thread comments

#252 · TheMaskedReader · Jan 18, 2026 at 5:38 PM

[X] I think the instinctual reaction is, of course, moralistic - To say and reinforce that one should never harm a child. To answer the question, though, we can look through the triggers that changed her behavior - The ways we communicated. This is not assigning fault or blaming you for her behavior, to be clear - It is analyzing cause and effect to gain a better understanding of who she is. Her initial reaction feels genuine - Genuine worry, genuine fear for Agnes. But also control - The hug being requested, politely, to be lessened, that was a rejection of her control over Agnes, and marked the first shift in her behavior to a more adversarial posture. She viewed it not as a request for accommodation, but as an insult - Not reciprocating her worry and fear, rejecting it. The follow up in the kitchen, a skirmish around checking the phone, was viewed as confirming this - As her daughter rejecting her control by not checking her phone as requested. This by itself was not enough to set things off, though

- It led into the second trigger, where things shifted from verbal to physical for her. You brought up, unbeknownst to her, yourself. She knows you! And she does not like you - Intensely enough that it immediately escalated the situation. This escalation was built upon the bones of the prior triggers, though - What she viewed as a lack of concern, a rejection of her care and worry and control, as well as pre-existing stressors (as shown by the talk about work). Thus, she seeks to reassert her control by pure physical dominance and putting Agnes down. Finally, that moves onto the third trigger - The mention of the father, the absent figure. This was an immensely emotional moment for her, causing her to lash out in excess of her more controlled violence earlier - A betrayal, a piercing wound inflicted by someone she'd just put beneath her and reasserted her control over. A rejection, again, in other words. I'd speculate, but obviously cannot answer, that the absence of the father figure and how her mother is aware of you, may be one and the same. But only you can answer that. As to the final answer: Agnes's mother controls her daughter deeply, and views that control as being their relationship of care, through physical and verbal means. She's comfortable enough with using physical violence alongside verbal reinforcement, along with isolating in advance in response to perceived slights that I doubt this is a first-time occurrence. She is clearly under stress due to (likely but not confirmed) single working motherhood, not as an excuse, but merely noted as a contributing factor. If you would like my advice, there are likely two ways to proceed - Playing to her expectations, submitting to her control, and thus de-escalating the situation to establish more information, or establishing separation and clear boundaries based on your true sense of personhood, remembering that you are not legally or morally bound to remain within her presence, as well as having the physical capability to exit it - But, of course, that is likely to necessitate being honest with her, something she will likely not take well at all. It depends on how comfortable you are with confrontation, and the consequences thereof. Remember - You're the one in control, not just here, but of yourself, Lucy, and you can leave a situation that is dangerous or uncomfortable. You got this.

038 / XXXVII - Fighting (Without) You

And although you're here, you let the next brain step up, to say their piece. And **G**ALATEA listens along too, nodding with a smile. You listen. You listen, and you listen, to the brain speaking before you.

[X] You got this.

You got this, huh?

The brain rests her hand on your shoulder. You stare up at her incoherent face. Black sparkles twinkle around the two of you, abyssal void distortions. 'You got this.'

(You got this.)

Yeah,

Yeah!

Yeah, Lucy!

Come on! Ganbatte. *You got this!* You and all your other Lucies all believe in you. Them and their true love, and you and your true love, you'll make it through this. You won't be beaten by something like this...! Nah... with the power of You and You and You and All the Yous in All the Universes, you'll cut through all the webs blocking your way. You'll understand other people.

RESONANCE...!?

Black sparks turn gold

And fizzle around your hand.

Your mother raises her hand again. Your eyes open. The black emptinesses splintering over their surface filled in with gold—magic reconnecting the disparate parts.

You clench your fists—instantly—**"G**ALATEA, I accept **T**HE**M**ASKED**R**EADER's model of Agnes' mother!"

GALATEA grins. **"[G] Very well, then—model that inner world! Pierce your mother straight through the heart in a skewer of comprehension. Then beat her back. Find the path to solve the problem, and execute it in the outer world!"**

She points her finger—a line of black sparks bursts outward from it, and a silhouette forms, looming and tall. Clawlike hands capable of tremendous pneumatic force. It's the silhouette of Agnes' mother.

Inside your clenched fist, the golden sparks mill. Something's forming...?

Agnes' mother, in your inner world, is a monster.

Hence, her gargantuan form is a monster's body.

You came home and she immediately established her control over you. When you requested accommodation, the mood turned sour. Further attempts at being friendly or casual with her led to that violence.

So she's a person who responds violently to inoffensive things.

She's a person who hits her child!

So, she's a monster.

You raise your hand to your chest. Once more. (Fighter plane above.)

Inside your fist the golden sparks flash and a sword made of light appears there. It radiates heat and love! You cross it over your chest, before swiping it to the side.

GALATEA nods eagerly, and:

Occlusion

"[G] Cut the monster to pieces!"

The Inner World of Agnes' Mother

You're sorry, so sorry.

Raising a child is hard.

You've known that. That lesson has been beat into you over fifteen years.

You worry for her. Because you love her. You love her so much you don't want her ever to change. You want her to be with you/yours/on your side. Agnes came from you! How could you not?

You stumble through the world. Dark brambles and thorns catch against your clothes. Your boyfriend is totally gone. He's left you, you know that now, he's not coming back! Never... and your other child...

No!

The world darkens again and it shakes and you fall to your knees at the dirt; blood and grime mix to become rot and infestation. It's like rats are consuming your mind from the inside.

But as long as you have Agnes you can keep going.

As long as you keep going, you can be a family.

"Mom," you say.

Your mother pauses.

"Stop," you say. "P—Please! You don't have to hit me! Please! I'm listening to you, finally! We can be a family, can't we?"

Your mother————

Your mother exhales harshly, and she stares down at you. Her hand still up.

"You don't have to, to discipline me anymore," you say.

Your mother's face twists into an incomprehensible expression and her hand wavers and her grip tightens.

"D—Discipline.....?"

"I'm listening to you," you say.

Your mother's face stays frozen, sight of Gorgon, her expression not stony but of stone. Then she hits you again. You wince, and your head knocks barely against the wall. The sound is silenced by the walls and no one outside of the inner world of the apartment perceives the wound.

"Stop," your mother says, "stop pretending, you always do this," she says.

But Agnes is disinterested in that, isn't she?

Spends all her time with her friends. None with her mother. Her dear mother!

She's disrespectful. She hates you. She's utterly bereft of discipline and a moral condition. She makes halfhearted attempts to reconnect with you. You can't experience her inner world because she never let you get close. What else were you to do? Why doesn't she respect you?

"I'm not, please," you say.

"Please trust me," you say.

She looks down at her daughter.

At her daughter('s corpse).

Did you forget...?

The golden blade rests in your hand as you prepare to swing. Agnes (not her brain, for that is lost) then is beside you and she looks on at the duel sadly. She turns to you.

"[A] It won't work," she says.

"It will work," you say. "I'll cut up this illusion. I'll fix it. I'll make it up to you. For killing you. I'm sorry, Agnes. I wasn't you, and I still killed you..."

"[A] It's okay," she says. **"[A] I see better now that it didn't really matter whether or not I lived or died."**

"It does," you say. "It mattered. And, and I fucked up," you look at her illuminated by the gleaming sword. "But I'll fix this for you. I'll try and fix this. I'll, I'll change that evil love into a love that deserves to exist. I'll make you have meaning! I'll give your death a purpose!"

Agnes watches you.

She nods.

Your model of Agnes loves you too.

"You're..." she says.

Silence.

"I love you," she says. "I'm sorry. I'm sorry! I don't know what I'm doing. Without your father ... where, where did your virtue go? Your discipline? Chastity purity kindness and all of that! Now you're falling to fraternizing with her? With the girl who k—*ki*—"

You watch her and her legs crumple.

"Why are you like this? I don't want to hurt you! I don't want you to be a disappointment!"

You miss the man who was the father of Agnes. Why didn't he stay with you? He just left you to parent your child like this! When a plane doesn't have two wings it'll fall into the sea and sink, sink, sink.

"Why are you like this?" you shout to the ground. You shout to your ground! The only thing mooring you to existence. But that's not quite right, is it?

'Why am I like this,' is what you mean.

You heave your golden blade. And you position yourself into a sprinting pose: and you kick off,

And you make the first cut.

"Why are *you* like this?" you say. Her grip falls as she falls to the floor. "You hurt me! You, you hit your own child," you say, "even if she's, a delinquent, without any redeeming traits, why do you feel like you have to show your love through violence...?"

"I don't know what to do!" says your mother. She stares up at you. Anguish plays.

You're getting passionate now, and you frantically reply, "you just have to talk! You just have to show love! Can't you make it easy for your kid? Kids go through so much on their own! You shouldn't hurt them! I understand you,"

You speak from the inner world of Agnes:

"I understand you, mom! I'm sorry for being a disappointment! I know that when, when my father, when *dad* left you didn't know what to do! I'm sorry for spending that time with Faline, too! I, she's really not,"

You choke on the words, 'that bad,' because you can't say them, because Agnes wouldn't say them. No, no, to make it up to Agnes, you have to do this right. YOU HAVE TO DO THIS RIGHT.

"*Faline is that bad*, and I'm sorry for it. I'm sorry. I'm going to fix it. I'm going to fix myself. But, mom, please! Please just look at yourself and see how anyone else would see you. Please."

A gory spray of black erupts as you shave off one of the edges of the monster. A huddling form is exposed. But the monster is still alive. You prepare to dodge: it lashes out at you.

"Look at me and see, see what? See that I'm," your mom chokes, "see that I hit you sometimes?"

"That's abusive," you say. "It's evil. It's evil to hit your child. I can't just hold it in any longer."

Your mom wails. Tears fall to the floor.

"I know," she says, crying now. "But what else can I do? How can I love you, Agnes?? I can't, I can't, I can't just give up control over you,"

The Inner World of Agnes' Mother	**The Inner World of Agnes**
It was your mother, in the end.	It was your mother, in the end.
Who took the ability to control your life away from you.	Who took the ability to control your life away from you.
So you sought refuge.	So you sought refuge.
With him!	With them!
But you kept hurting people, taking revenge, controlling, didn't you?	But you kept hurting people, taking revenge, controlling, didn't you?

"Don't commit the sins of your mother," you say. "Don't be like her."

Silence.

"They, they say I'm kind of a bitch at school," you say.

Your mother cries.

And she sucks a breath in.

"They said that about me too," she says.

"We're supposed to love each other," you say.

"I know we are," she says.

You parry its blow and slash its arm off. The form of Agnes' mother lies in its monstrous misery. You must strike it one more time with the golden blade.

"Mom," you say.

"A-Agnes," she says.

"I'm sorry," you say.

"You've said what you were thinking all this time, haven't you?" she says. "This time it's for real..?"

"Yeah," you say. "It is. This stage of my life is over."

"It's so evil to force you into this," mom says.

"Then think of it like I'm choosing to be this way, because I finally understand you. I finally tried to think about what you felt like."

Your mother's sobs wrack your soul.

"Please don't," she says. "... Stop pretending, you, you always d-do this..."

"No," you say. "I'm being honest. Please, mom."

"Please...?"

"Let's do better."

You smile.

All of you!

You extend a hand to Agnes' mother, who lies in the pool of black monsterguts.

She looks up at you, and she's scared.

Because she hurt you so much.

"I'm sorry," says your mother.

"I'll,

"It's late, isn't it...?

"We should sleep...

"I'll,

"I'll do better tomorrow."

Inner worlds reconciled.

There is light, and it abounds.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#254 · clswtzing · Jan 29, 2026 at 1:33 PM



Sorry for no chapters, just been low motivation... here's what PWE would look like as a manga!!! art by me...

039 / XXXVIII - Backslide

The world wakes up and it's twenty-four days to its predetermined end.

[S] i let you alone and you did it, Lucy.

[S] you got so mad at me. so i gave you a chance!

[G] You ...

[S] you blew my expectations away, honestly. remember what i had said before? i didn't want you to fuck it up? and you got so mad, because i was the one who had fucked up that time (lol.)

[S] so i stood by.

[S] it worked out!

"You're not staying around after school," she says to you. Your mother says to you. "You're not! I'm sorry but I can't drive late at night. It gets on my nerves."

"**[A] Please?**" you say. "**[A] I can walk home myself, m**-mom," "**[A] You don't need to pick me up. It's micromanaging,**"

Your mom pauses.

"I don't like it," she says. "I don't like the feeling, I just, don't, can't you be a good daughter?"

You're in the entryway courtyard. You're hiding your stump hand in the pocket of your blazer. Of course, Cana and Termina are beside you, because you're the girlrotting clique. Adslave is right behind you, divorced from the other two girls—what a side she's taken.

"...as that," Cana.

"Huh?" shaken from euphoric stupor, repossessed by Lucy:

"What was that, Agnes," says Termina filling in. "What was all of that, two nights ago? When we went out, did just a bit of girlrotting, what was it?"

"You mean..."

"She means what are you, Lucy."

Lucy.

The summoning of such an identity fills you with dread, anticipation, and joy. You turn your head to the east, the direction of the messiah and the nadeshiko:

The depressive shadow falls. The new moon does not illuminate the nighttime fields. Faline San steps out of upstage left.

You shake your head just a little bit and Faline t-t-tilts it just *there*—and she smiles genially, cordially. You know that overwrought pop-cultureism where every smile is cheshire? Not Faline's. In direct opposition to you, pure white to threatening red, her smile is small and soft and sacred. It amplifies then her pretty and well-formed face and that everpresent feeling of attraction you have (metaphysical).

"Hello, Adslave. Cana. Termina."

"Heyyyyya."

"Hi."

"Greetings."

"Hello," she considers it. "Agnes. It's good to see you again."

"What did you call her?" Adslave.

"Lucy," says Faline. "It's, ah, the name of a headmate of hers, you could say."

"What the fuck is a headmate," says Cana who's obviously on edge. You can tell, it's like a dog raising her haunches; her hair stood on end as soon as Faline entered the conversation and she doesn't show any sign that she'll get more relaxed.

"Gay lesbian internet woke," says Adslave, "as expected,"

"Can we not?" you say.

Your group stops to regard you. The ceaseless milling of the crowds of students around you.

"I'll explain, just can we not?"

Your group has stopped to regard you:

The bells toll. It's time for class.

"Complex mathematics time recruits," says Mr. Shame. "Today we're going to learn geometric proofs."

Groans from the classroom commence.

"Why you boys groaning? Don't got that DOG in you?"

The lesson, largely, goes well. He doesn't bully you like he did last time and that's cause enough for celebration. Time is different and so is the clock; stricter allocation of teaching time means that he can spend less time on those idiotic tangents—Communists and all.

Lunch. You eat outside. The author's economy of words is amazing.

Surrounding the school is a metal fence. Your group of five sits against it—branches of a tree overshadow them. Adslave tap-tapping at the gaming device in her hands.

Cana's the only one who's standing and the hegemonic aura's oppressive even to Faline. She stares down at you, her neck set at an askew angle.

"So Agnes."

Inside your inner world, **Galatea** leans toward you.

"[G] What are you going to tell them, Lucy?"

"H-huh?"

"[G] It's your choice. We're not commanding you or making it for you."

You look about at the choir.

"[G] Well?"

"I can't tell the truth," you say. "I can't tell them who I am really. Magic—magic, maybe? It could have been magic, that I casted without incantation."

"[G] Lying may cause problems in the future. You are sure you're fine with this?"

You think.

If they want you to use incision magic without the power of incantation... you wouldn't be able to. You can't use magic proper in the first place at all. So that's a downside to lying. But you know.

You know, you have to kill them anyway.

There is no point telling the truth. It'll make them more suspicious of you even.

"I'm Agnes," you say. "The same one you always knew. What you saw was a type of magic that I can cast without incantation. It allows me to put myself back together."

Cana seems distrustful, judging, by her glare. Termina, however, is relaxed. Adslave (gaming) and Faline (smiling) know the truth.

"That's not right, is it?" says Cana.

"It is," you say, denying the existence of yourself.

Cana watches you.

"Okay," she says.

"... Speaking of putting myself back together," you say. "Adslave, do you know the location of any holes under this fence? We have PE, and I need to get out into the city to do something so I can come back when lunch has ended." You want to keep it vague, because it's kind of gross to admit you're missing a hand, and need to hunt and kill someone to get it back.

Adslave looks up from her device. "I do," she says. "Come with me. It's kind of hard-to-find."

There is a hole in the fence.

"It's rather tight," you say, observing it. You'd have to get down on your belly and crawl through. The dirt being so destabilized and dustlike is the only reason there's a hole at all; the dirt will

cover your uniform.

"Yeah like me," says Adslave. You look questioningly at her. She crouches down.

"It's the only way out, though, that's not covered by cameras."

"Well," you say.

You begin to strip your clothing. Adslave stares at you—slack mind and body made taut.

"What," you say, looking at her as your skirt falls. You're in your underwear but your socks and shoes will stay on; there's nothing you can do about that.

"I, uh, nothing," says Adslave.

You nod and get down onto the dirt. You push yourself through the hole.

"Toss my clothing over the fence," you say to Adslave when you're through.

You walk from the school. Isn't it nice how small your city is? A little person compound.

You're crawling back in through the gate and it doesn't matter how dirty your clothes get. Because you're panicking! You're panicking and it's all your fault. Adslave looks wordlessly at your writhing body—squirming—contorting—and you're through.

"No," you say.

"No?"

"No. It didn't work. Didn't do what I went out there to do."

"... Agnes...?"

You stand up, you brush dirt and dust from your uniform.

"I didn't work."

"What were you...?"

"I..."

The bell rings. But neither of you move. You stand there.

[ ] Show vulnerability. Expose yourself.

[+] Hide. Retreat from scrying gaze. You can't be weak in front of your friend.

[ ] Move to class. (Unknown effects.)

---

author's note

Thread comments

#256 · PeepTheSheep · Jan 30, 2026 at 11:49 AM

[X] Show vulnerability. Expose yourself.

#257 · meterion · Jan 30, 2026 at 4:57 PM

[X] Adslave has killed before, even if it didn't stick. She also has reached out to you, to communicate. She is not so far apart from you that understanding cannot be reached. Understanding is only possible through true and mutual communication, through vulnerability. Tell her what you tried to do.

#258 · TheMaskedReader · Jan 30, 2026 at 10:26 PM

[X] Vulnerability is hard. But it isn't being weak. It's being raw and unguarded. That's very different from weakness. So, whatever you choose to do, whatever you think Adslave deserves from you - Please do remember that.

040 / XXXIX - Upshift

You steel yourself. In your inner world your choir leans against you, as you rise to the opportunity—ascending, ascending the mountain.

But you look away, uncomfortably; and your eyes are narrow, and your mouth is a thin line, and your face is flat and your demeanor is ugly.

"Okay..." you say. "I went out to kill someone and steal their body parts. Their hand. Well, I went out to kill a woman. A girl with the same body size and look as mine. Just find someone. Slaughter them. Yeah."

Adslave nods once. Then again. And then she awkwardly says: "I forgot you did that sort of thing I guess."

How?

How did she *forget* what you are? You kind of laugh a little bit, and you update your opinion of her a little bit, because she's not really looking at the Agnes in front of her if she's even momentarily surprised at this sort of thing. You swallow and then you look up to gaze at her,

"But you have to remember Adslave that I didn't. I didn't! I couldn't find the will to do it. I tracked her down and there was no one on the street, it could have been a perfect kill, the sort of thing I'd have praised myself and felt proud of, but I didn't kill her."

"That's,"

"And God honestly—I can't decide if it's a good or bad thing. It's like I've lost freedom or choice or something, I've lost the ability to make my own choice in a situation, because I couldn't kill her. But I couldn't kill her, which makes me a good person, right?? Like, like I've found the path to being a good person, right? But it doesn't feel good! Because I couldn't kill her!"

You're a bit frustrated at yourself as you try to explain because your explanation just *is not functioning*. But Adslave doesn't seem confused, concerned maybe but not confused, so are you connecting—?

"Have you really lost freedom?" says Adslave.

"Of course I have," you reply.

"I guess for me it's like," Adslave looks around and she's aware further discussion will make you even later than usual but it's *worth it, right?* "I guess it's like ... if you can't feel anything for others—and can't even recognize if your actions are good or bad—it's like you're not really committing them?"

"I don't understand," you say. "You're still. Still rearranging the atoms around, right?"

"Yeah," said Adslave, "But any type of—of atom-rearranging is the same thing—for you, in that context. You haven't really lost the ability to make choices, you just can fully comprehend what a choice is."

You blink.

"I'm just a stupid bunny, though," says Adslave. "Come on skinwalkoid we're going to class."

"[S] Who knows about Mormonism's doctrine on this stuff, but before the world ended there was this broader band of Christian religions a lot like it—Mormons were considered cultish, actually, kind of non-mainline, right," said a new brain.

You round. "Who're you?"

The new brain curtseys. She wears a cute colorless skirt in silhouette, and also nothing else. Her body is like the choir's; ill-or-un-defined. **"[S] I'm just a speaker. We have the same privileges as the members of your choir, but can actively talk to you through the, narrative, I guess you could call it, though I hate to use that word. As opposed to having to wait arbitrary amounts of time, like the choir."**

"Uh huh," you say. "What are you here for?"

"[S] Just talking! Nyehe. As I was saying, there was this holy book called the Bible," "[M] Mormonism has that," says the brain of Mormon, (*You're alive?* you think, (**"[M] I'm not alive,"**)) **"[S] Well then I guess Mormonism shares this doctrine, *anyway,***

"[S] There's this idea that Adam and Eve, the first humans on Earth, they suffered because they ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil," says the speaker. **"[S] That's you. You."** she points.

"Because I know what good and evil are," you say. "No, that's not right, I always knew what those were ..."

"[S] Did you?"

"[M] I take issue with this interpretation of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil actually,"

"[S] What the hell," says the speaker, and you realize who you're modeling her off of, someone you finally feel like you're seeing more than one side of, **"[S] That's not the point."**

"[M] I quote, 'When Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden, they did not have to die. They could have been there to this day. They could have continued on for countless ages.'"

"[S] Okay but genuinely what the fuck is the purpose of this quote, I'm not literally having a theological argument,"

"[G] You're overwhelming her," says GALATEA.

"I did always know what good and evil were," you say. Your brain is in shambles right now. "I just never believed I could be..."

"[S] You never had an idea of what good or evil meant," says the speaker. **"You never understood them."**

"[M] 'There was no death then. But it would have been a terrific calamity if they had refrained from taking the fruit of that tree, for they would have stayed in the Garden of Eden and we would not be here—nobody would be here except Adam and Eve. So Adam and Eve partook. Eating of that forbidden fruit subdued the power of the spirit and created blood in their bodies. No blood was in their bodies before the Fall.'"

"[S] No one said anything about the blood in their bodies?? Stop using colors holy shit, oh my god,"

"[M] Please don't say that while I'm active," says your model of Mormon,

"[S] No one cares about Mormon doctrine," says Adslave's speaker,

"[M] Actually so petty holy *cow*. Anyway, 'the blood became the—'"

"[G] Stop using the colors," says GALATEA. **"[G] We're saving those. *Also*, get to the point or I'm censuring you. And stop interrupting, speaker."**

"Thank you," you say timidly.

"[M] Fine. Fine. I take issue with the framing as if it's knowing good and evil that caused humanity's suffering, when it was disobeying God."

"[S] You are so fucking dense I swear to god—"

"[G] Placed under censure. Mormon, your complaints are valid but that's not what the speaker here was really talking about in the first place. In the future try to be a more understanding Lucy, 'kay? 'Kay."

"[M] I'm not Lucy," says Mormon.

"[G] Everyone is Lucy," says GALATEA. **"[G] Speaker, your censure is over."**

"[S] Thanks bitch."

GALATEA looks at the speaker-Adslave. Who smiles, cutely. Then, she turns to you. You're receding. A social setting where you have no control has never been your strong suit.

"[S] Come on, then, Lucy."

"Come on...?"

"[S] You were a child, after all," says the speaker. **"Or like a child. It's part of growing up. To realize what good is and what evil is. Not to be told by your parents, not to *agree with the rest of the world* that something is bad or something is good... but to ..."**

"Understand," you say. "To develop..."

"[G] Yes," says GALATEA. **"[G] Through empathy you find love and beauty in the world. And you know what good and evil are. You gain the power to make a choice between good and evil when you understand other people. You turn from monster to human. You stop being a skinwalker. A wolf in sheep's clothing."**

You look down at your hands:

At your two girlish and manicured hands.

And you also look at the board on the wall.

[ ] EXTRACURRICULARS

- [ ] NORMAL CHESS CLUB

- [ ] ANIME AND MANGA

- [ ] CONSPIRACY THEORY DEBATE

- [ ] FLASH MOB BOOK CLUB

- [ ] THE SCOOBIES

"Looking for an extracurricular?" says Adslave beside you.

"I guess so," you say, "but **[ ] I might just return home to my mother. I think she'd be upset if I took control of my time away from he—**"

"Fuck **[/] that**!" says Adslave. She takes your only extant hand (the one you don't hide) and smiles. "You're my friend! You think something's fun, let's do it, I'll go with you back to your house and take the blame, I don't care. So come on, choose something."

And you regard her for a second, and you consider **[/] denying her,** but you realize ...

That Adslave's good...!

[ ] Write-in for other activities to do around the city

---

author's note

Thread comments

#260 · PeepTheSheep · Feb 4, 2026 at 9:54 PM

[X] EXTRACURRICULARS

- [X] ANIME AND MANGA

It's time ... for **Digimon: the Movie**

#261 · TheMaskedReader · Feb 5, 2026 at 2:24 AM

[X] **EXTRACURRICULARS**

-[X] **CONSPIRACY THEORY DEBATE**

I do think it's important to remember that the world is likely to end at some point. Maybe this could help in finding out why? Plus, Adslave might be able to help, brainrotted as she is, haha.

#262 · Myxlplykx · Feb 5, 2026 at 10:32 PM

[X] a morgue

what about a morgue to find a hand. Sure its distasteful but they sure arent going to be missing it. Definitely significantly less evil then taking it from a living person who is using it. Its fairly important to have both hands for hmm handyness.

#263 · meterion · Feb 7, 2026 at 11:24 PM

[X] EXTRACURRICULARS

- [X] ANIME AND MANGA

it must be done

[X] Go to a cafe and get boba tea and window shop at the mall and other such girl activities that definitely won't result in any random encounters

---

#264 · clswtzing · Feb 14, 2026 at 10:33 PM

i'm really sorry for the posts having slowed down. it's going to get better eventually; i've been really stressed and overworked overall, and spending my writing power on retranslating Distortion Detective (i'm Korean) and writing a separate novel from this one. i love writing and working on PWE very much (can you tell?) it's just been not a very good 2026 for me, haha. thank you, all of you, for reading my story, again. i hope that it's to your satisfaction.

#265 · Almost Satire · Feb 15, 2026 at 7:13 PM

First off, if we don't go home, we should call mom and let her know what we're up to. Keep her calm (or at least calmer than straight up coming up would).

Second, I have a question. How long does a stolen suit of skin last before the disguise stops working? Will it get gross and rotted over the course of a few days? Or does it take longer and people will wonder why we aren't getting older (although we'd have that issue anyways)? I'm not convinced our stolen life will last a human lifetime.

041 / XXXX - High Aura Title

You realize that Adslave's good...!

You can't.

You can't deny someone, someone like that.

You met on such adversarial grounds...

But that doesn't matter at all now, does it?

It feels like there's a stronger less tenuous intimate and indestructible bond between you two, stronger even than the bond between you and Faline... not for lack of trying! Faline still has that metaphysical significance, the pull, and Adslave... is just a person, right? She's just a normal person. If Faline told you to—to get away—to stop pulling at the bounds of *this world* you're in—

You'd of course listen to her.

'You love Faline! You're a creature who fights with love!'

It would hurt, though...

It would really hurt a lot.

Because Adslave's good. Not just for you! Adslave's just... good .....

Adslave gazes at you and she smiles and it's so beautiful—

—And you see yourself in her eyes—

—And you're smiling back.

"Adslave," you say, finally.

"Agnes," she says.

You want to cry because you love the world you're in very much.

It's a really, really nice world. The fact that you have yourself and all of your selves, the fact that you have Adslave. The fact that all of the brutal pointless wanton murthslaught manhunting you did at the beginning, all of that hasn't come back to *ruin* you later, the fact that you're forgiven, all of it. It's just all really nice.

Adslave represents such a nice world. She came into your life and suddenly joy started existing. Even though there was still evil, there was joy... wasn't there...? All up till here there's been joy. You've been pulled out of this sickly malaise. Added to the ranks of the living... because Adslave exists.

And she's just a normal person!

Imagine what it'll be like when Faline loves you like that too.

"Thank you so much," you say.

"Haha," she says. "Y—you're such an idiot, Agnes...? You're my friend. You're really my only one..."

"Really?"

Adslave's head tilts a little and she steps a step closer to you, and you're sixteen centimeters or maybe a sixth of a foot away from each other. And she says only one word, clearly:

"Yeah!"

You feel your heart break a little bit and you want to melt away in the tide of entropic bliss. You stumble and fall forward onto Adslave who is smaller than you and she catches you and you can't tell what happens next but you know—you know that you're holding her tightly, hugging her tightly, no, that's not right, she's holding you, in this comforting embrace. All-loving Adslave and Agnes.

"Thank you thank you thank you," you say. "Thank you." You don't know how to express that feeling at all besides thanking her over and over. If the infinite pool of gratitude in your heart can be expressed even in shadow of simulacra of simulation then you'll try as hard as you can to express it. Adslave needs to hear your signal! She needs to know that you're so thankful anyone would waste time on you.

"Seriously, you're, you're being a bit, a bit sappy," Adslave says, laughing a little bit as she holds you,

"I'm just so happy," you say.

You're so happy.

"Well?" says Adslave.

Well?

"Then," you say. "Anime. Anime and manga."

"Y-yeah?" says Adslave.

"We can watch all those animes that you really like, together..."

"It's anime, no *s*," says Adslave. But you're already feeling better and you want to tease her a little bit, maybe...

"The ones where the boys kiss each other and do those weird things..."

"W-wait, Agnes,"

"The ones you were deriving sexual grat—"

"S-s-stop it we aren't talking about this Agnes."

You smile a bit and pull yourself off of her. You see Adslave in front of you.

You see Adslave in front of you.

[G] I'm not sure if the morgue is a good idea.

You're aware, while walking, of your brains bickering.

[G] There won't be very many good matches for your hand, will there be? *Bad* condition, *bad* demographic... a morgue isn't a very good place to look, and will take absolute foreeever! We only have something like three more weeks, anyway, mmmm?

GALATEA's not wrong. But you file the morgue suggestion away. If you have a little time, it could be worthwhile, right?

You bump into a man. He's 5'10! He's a Norwegian, probably. He's kind of rough... kind of handsome, kind of round...

"Sorry about that," says the man. Oh! You realize that you're on the ground... you barely even noticed it, half-submerged in the inner world as you are now. What egotism! What shameless solipsist self-absorption...

"Oh, it's okay, I deserve it," you say.

"What?" says the man.

(**[G] What?** says GALATEA.)

"No, no, here, stand up," says the man, he extends his hand, you limply grasp it and he hauls you up. Adslave watches. "You go to school here, right?"

"Yeah," you say.

"Cool," says the man. "I'm Magnus. I host the chess club in the afternoons. No vibrating anal beads this time! Don't worry, I respect all minors... Come on by sometime if you're interested. Sorry for that, anyway."

(What?)

"It's good to meet you, Magnus," you say.

He watches you expectantly. Adslave does too. What's happening?

Eventually the pressure lets off. He chuckles a bit. "Well, I suppose I'll have to keep my eyes affixed a little downward from hereon out... make sure not to run over some poor ill girls, hm?" Head raised—he locks on to Adslave.

Then,

He just walks away! The encounter is over. How strange, how delightfully bizarre... what a weird man, right?

Right...

The anime club is awesome!

"Yooooo, new meeeembers! How sugio! Sugio des*u!*"

You and Adslave are immediately greeted by—a girl! A girl who has a big sword sheathed at her side. What? Is that even allowed on school property—oh! Oh, you see it now! The blue dress, styled like some sort of gothic-lolita police officer, the sheathed sword, the beret, the—the cat ears! What the hell!!

"Hi! Hi! Hi hi hi," says police girl, "what are your naaames and what's your favorite type of anime, demographic, shounen or seinen or shoujo or josei, I forgot the rest, right? Yep, that's right, I forgot! Oh oh oh! And what type of anime are you guys wanting to watch?"

It's sensory overload!! But it's really awesome! You're really being engaged with and pressed and questioned!! You've always wanted someone to take an interest in you.

"For maaaiii part I'm called *Feline-chan*!!!" (Enthusiastic!) "I'm the host of the anime group!!! I like to watch anime and party! All night long! And also, I have badass sword skills!"

What the hell! Why's her name so much like Faline! You don't like her... you decide this immediately. There's only one cute cat for you...!

There are three other people in the anime club... besides Feline-chan. You can't really see their faces, though, because her hyperactive hopping is canceling your line of sight!!

"Oh, yeah," says Adslave. "Y-yeah, alright..."

You go, Adslave!! You can do it! You mentally hype her up even though she can't hear your thoughts at all.

"Righto! What's your name!"

"I-I'm Adslave! My favorite demographic is shounen I guess (because it's got the most BL fic)! And the type of anime I like most and the type of anime I like to watch—is yaoi!———Yaoi erotica!"

She slams her hand against the wall, closes her eyes, loudly proclaims it! Great power emanates... the other members of the room stare appreciatively!

Bam! A crash of thunder echoes about the room. You stare at her... how powerful!

"I'm..."

[ ] What are you here?

---

author's note

Thread comments

#267 · DAL59 · Feb 23, 2026 at 11:30 AM

[X] I like Digimon, especially the movies.

[X] I like generic isekai slop!

[X] I like yaoi too, that's how I met my friend Adslave!

#268 · Almost Satire · Feb 23, 2026 at 2:17 PM

Hating the cosplayer, wow, protagonist has shit taste.

Also it seems like when I go through the list of voting options every vote this quest has ever been made is available. That's cumbersome.

[x] You're new to anime. You're here to discover what you like. And spend time with Adslave. And maybe make new friends.

#269 · PeepTheSheep · Feb 23, 2026 at 4:06 PM

[X] DIGIMON

[X] DIGITAL MONSTERS

[X] DIGIMON ARE THE CHAMPIONS!

[X] I like Digimon, especially Digimon: the Movie

[X] I also like watching yaoi erotica, but only with Adslave

#270 · TheMaskedReader · Feb 23, 2026 at 5:25 PM

[x] You're new to anime. You're here to discover what you like. And spend time with Adslave. And maybe make new friends.

This feels like an honest response.

#271 · clswtzing · Feb 23, 2026 at 8:17 PM

> **Almost Satire said:**
>
> Second, I have a question. How long does a stolen suit of skin last before the disguise stops working? Will it get gross and rotted over the course of a few days? Or does it take longer and people will wonder why we aren't getting older (although we'd have that issue anyways)? I'm not convinced our stolen life will last a human lifetime.
>
> Click to shrink...

it won't fall apart or anything! Lucy's power prevents that. you don't have very long to go, anyway---only three more weeks, remember?

> **Almost Satire said:**
>
> Also it seems like when I go through the list of voting options every vote this quest has ever been made is available. That's cumbersome.
>
> Click to shrink...

oops! i don't really know how to use any of SV's stuff... i kind of thought that the way most people did votes was by typing them manually, ehe!

thank you for leaving comments and stuff on my story!! i really love it and it means a lot... you guys are genuinely all so cool and i love that people STILL read it(??? like what? i never envisioned i'd ever write something good enough to have readers)!! i'm really happy with it so far and i really, really love to write it---lucy is just a really emphatic, emotional, opinionated main character. chapters should, with luck, commence. midterms are coming up but i'm gonna destroy them, nyehe!!!

#272 · Almost Satire · Feb 24, 2026 at 12:56 AM

Reading the XXXX - High Aura Title again, looks like feline-chan isn't just a cosplayer, she's a chuuni. And It seems like Lucy's distaste for her might be too weak to be called hate. I think my first reaction towards Lucy meeting her was an over reaction.

> **TheMaskedReader said:**
>
> This feels like an honest response.
>
> Click to shrink...

That was my idea when I wrote it, but now I'm questioning the wisdom of an honest response when we're already living a lie. Imagine it getting back to our mom that we claimed to be new to anime. Then again, I'm not sure what Agnes liked, so maybe in the absence of a clear way to live the lie we should just be honest.

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> oops! i don't really know how to use any of SV's stuff... i kind of thought that the way most people did votes was by typing them manually, ehe!
>
> Click to shrink...

I'm pretty new myself and have never QM'd on this (or any other website for that matter), so I can't say for sure how to fix what I'm talking about. If I had to guess though, using the tally tool might help the website tell votings apart and by extension lead to no longer recommending old voting options. I recommend either asking for help, or after you close the vote post the results using the "New tally" tool (located near the bottom left of the write reply window, you should be able to command F find it) and see if the issue has gone away the next time you have open voting. I'm not sure how most people choose to submit their vote on this website. I just know typing it out is not always necessary. (Obviously if you're submitting a new idea, then it is).

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> midterms are coming up but i'm gonna destroy them, nyehe!!!
>
> Click to shrink...

Love the confidence.

042 / XXXXI - TOO LATE!!

Digimon? Yaoi? What are these words? Of course you know them... but no, they're alien... you stiffen! You straighten your spine, up and up, and don't mind the creepy crawling shiver that runs electric down it.

Aaaah! You hear it now... it's that chorus, telling you what to do, what's up, what you owe the world for and in its shocking beauty and grace!

It's telling you to watch DIGIMON, ISEKAI, YAOI EROTICA WITH ADSLAVE—did you know that every Kamen Rider actor goes on to do BL later on in their career? Adslave would love that fact... maybe you could get into something new with her... obviously something Adslavebait, something, something——

[X] This feels like an honest response.

Honest response?

How...

How moored to reality, right?

You shift a little bit yourself, you're dimly aware of a few scattered claps in the room signaling the end of Adslave's turn.

It's moored to reality the idea that the response can be honest... it's a fantasy anyway, right? Honesty is a really happy fantasy... the idea that you can ever be something...

...

You're not explaining it right. Lucy, Lucy! You can do better. How about you really try.

It's not like much in this world matters *besides* the happy fantasy, right? Think about it. If you can keep all that objective adjective signaling bound tightly down to that image of the happy fantasy what is 'real' or 'not real' does not matter in the first place. It doesn't matter that you make a choice...

It doesn't matter what happens in your head as long as it's happy, right.

So it's happy. It's a happy thing to have that control taken away from you. That's why you let it happen. (Or are you just reading too far into your careless actions in the past? Back when you really were *subhuman?)*

You're just going to say, what was it? The white vote appears in your head.

[X] You're new to anime. You're here to discover what you like. And spend time with Adslave. And maybe make new friends.

So, please...

"Aaaalright!!! How wonderful! How *kawaii!* You're really kawaii, Adslave!!! And you! Who're you?"

"Hi," you say. "I'm..."

You're new to anime.

"[X] I'm new to anime,"

You're here to discover what you like.

"[X] I'm here to discover what I like..."

And spend time with Adslave!

"[X] And spend time with Adslave."

And maybe make new friends.

"[X] And maybe make new friends."

But that's not all, is it? You've just read this aloud but there are so many other happy fantasies that you need to bring into the world. And maybe at the end if you do that you—you can—

"[X] A-and! I really like Digimon... I really want to watch the Digimon movie with you guys!! That's anime, right? Yeah! Yeah!!"

You feel only yourself, swelling, a constant radio signal into the infinity.

"[X] And, um! I want to watch what Adslave wants to watch! And I want to watch, uh, 'generic isekai slop'! I want to try all of anime. I want to see it all... I want to experience all the fantasy in the world!"

You bring your hands to your heart and smile and falter, and you feel yourself, in your inner world, reaching out. Can't you add a little bit of your own fantasy too? Your own truth? Yeah... you can. You don't deserve it, but it's a nice fantasy that you do...?

"[X] And I want to try some, um, I want to try," you look at Adslave, **"[X] I want to try some yuri anime!!! I want to make new friends and watch yuri with them!!!! Y-yeah, yeah—I want to watch yuri with my new friends!!!"**

You wince at yourself. You're so dumb! But maybe they'll forgive you...

And...

Your name, right?

She asked for your name...

It's a really beautiful fantasy, Adslave...

"**[X] A-and, my name,"**

You falter?

"[X] You can call me—Agnes," you say.

"[X] But

"[X] Lucy is fine too," you say. You look at Adslave.

Adslave smiles!

So there's Feline-chan. You know her! You don't like her very much, maybe that's a little hasty, but she's so... bouncy and energetic and emphatic! It makes you want to cry... it's too much energy! How does anyone cope with people so manic?

But there's also Nina-chan. Nina vetoed all of Adslave's yaoi suggestions! Nina is cute. She has brown hair and brown eyes and a little hair ornament and she wears a Japanese type of seifuku. She seems kind of sour, kind of bitter, but you can cherish her anyway.

Hmmm, and there's also a teenager of indiscriminate age and his name is Arkady Dolguruky, and he seems kind, if a little bit absorbed into himself. He likes only a few anime and none others, anime like *Angel's Egg* and *Serial Experiments Lain* and *Haibane Renmei*—there seems to be an in-joke among the group that he has the best 'taste' of them all, but you don't understand it at all! Every fantasy is equally valid, right?

And the last one in the group is...

A fat boy. Oh!

Oh!

That's Piggy!

You, um, suddenly start feeling a twisting in your gut, and a sudden panic, and you realize something's really messed up with the world! Why is Piggy here, at the anime club? Oh oh oh god

You're gonna die

You're gonna be found out and killed...

You're gonna die

You zoom in and out of this hole as you all make your introductions, how happy and how friendly everyone is, right, it's just an afterschool activity, right? You're here to fantasize. You're here to enjoy fantasies. You're here to be unmoored.

You're here to be unmoored.

You steady yourself. And you reach up and up and up until the curtain falls—

Around your head your inner world appears. The room disappears.

Golden sparks mill about your hand. You summon that longsword that you used, the longsword of fantasy and hope, the one you used to cut apart the monster of mooring reality. And you ready it.

You need, need, need to unmoor, to cut apart this Lucy. To make it so that you can't be punished. To make it so that it doesn't hurt. To create a sweet fantasy, a hopeful dream, a truth of your own. A meaning of your own. Like you did with your model of Agnes. You have to create another version of Lucy, who doesn't hurt...

"[G] Lucy?"

"Galatea," you say, with the golden sword in your hand...

"[G] It's not right... it's not right for you to do that! Haven't I been telling you not to make unreal fantasies to run away from problems? Haven't I?"

"But ... fantasy is the only way to win against this world," you say. "I've decided that... fantasy, and," you can't say *lying,* "truths of my own. Those are all that I need..."

"[G] Put down the sword. Just this once. Just see how it is. You won't get caught. You're in a different body. You don't need to... change your own truths to be able to cope with our world."

"It's not that I won't get caught..."

"[G] Put it down, Lucy."

You grit your teeth. Your body is tense. **G**ALATEA regards you and she is measured. **G**ALATEA...

"Why won't you let me just do this? You're me, right?"

"[G] I'm the part of you that wants to stay moored to reality. Even when it's painful! Stay in reality, right...? Don't go off into your own world."

"No," you say.

"No."

You turn around to look at **G**ALATEA...

"You aren't a part of me at all."

Your eyes fall down to that golden sword...

You deny it, of course. You deny that meaning of yourself. You deny yourself you deny your meaning you deny your existence you deny having murdered and you deny being a murderer. You... it's all you .....

"I am not Lucy of Villa la Rochefoucauld."

You draw the golden sword around. **G**ALATEA spreads her hands and prepares to fire—**TOO LATE!!** The sword cleaves through your neck. Truth spills out of you as you unmoor yourself, denying, denying, denying...

You pull the sword spouting gold from your throat. Blood spatters across the inner world.

"Right? I'm not anything at all. I can be anything! I'm myself! I have the power of fantasy! I can just... I can just love everything, right? I can be loved. The world doesn't..."

GALATEA throws her hand out; her massive cape fans out and suddenly the inner world is blanketed in thick dust and wind as—she rushes toward you, a curved arc of movement. You know, with a massive sword like that, there's no way you have the agility to block that first throw of **G**ALATEA's. You have no clue if she's going all out, but it'll certainly knock you out. Blood fountains from your neck, blood mixed with gold, and that's making you move slower already.

Instead... it's just like against the cult, right? You can perceive her. So you prepare your body. You push it to the edge. Your muscles strain and pop as you charge.

Just as her uppercut should collide—you rocket from the ground, upward, soaring into the painted sky. Blood falls from the sky like rain; you pull your sword around, you focus it in your

mind and control it and lucid-dream it into reality; it's an arrowhead now, fist-sized, and you send it, blessed golden missile, right towards **G**ALATEA.

All those times...

All those times in the *cruel* truth moored to reality that you fucked up. **[ ] Remember them?**

The first time you met Faline. When you left her, found that bird, came back, fucked it up. The cult. Killing all those people. Killing Mormon. Killing, you don't even remember her, the girl. Who was she, even? How many is that. Five? Yeah. Five. Does the rest need to be described? Fucking up with Faline over and over. You fucked up how you treated Adslave. The entire girlrotting day. Everything, everything, everything.

And it's like **G**ALATEA said, though...

These things only have value if you let them have value, right? Let's say there's ten things. Ten things you've fucked up bad on the last week. Those ten things only matter, only become more than zero, if you accept the *cruel moored truth*. If you hate fantasy. If you're like Faline. Faline hates fantasy! She only cares about things when they accurately represent 'reality,' whatever that is.

You can't be like Faline, you know that. You love her and that's okay but you can't be like her...

Ten, then.

All the sins and hate of those ten things are imbued into this golden blade. The blade that launches at **G**ALATEA.

We can represent that blade's truth as a 10.

Look at her panicking. Look at the way her head shakes about. Look at her when she's confronted with doom. You can just kill her, right? Because she's you. You're all you. You're the only you who can take initiative on that. Killing others. You'll kill them so that you can live in fantasy, fantasia.

The golden blade of hope obeys the one most truthful.

Ten times.

The multiplier...

On your vote...!

Is

Ten

Times!

That's right...!

[X] KILL GALATEA!!!! See it now??

The only option that has a chance of winning is the option of... killing your brains! Killing your brains till you create a whole *choir* that's sympathetic to you that will go back to fantasy, God, what a pathetic, fucked-up, despicable creature you are! You honestly feel kind of bad! You're using them and then killing them when they disadvantage you! You don't even care about them! You're, what are you, what are you doing?

There's no other way.

There is another way.

There's no other way.

There is another way.

There's no other way, none, not nil nor nihil nor nothing not zero, there are zero other ways to fight against our world...!

You breathe heavily, heavily, heavily, why did **G**ALATEA stand against you doing this, why did it have to be this way, did you really just—escalate...?

Why doesn't anyone stop you? Why can't anyone stop you? You're....

[ ] Who are you?

[ ] What are you doing?

[ ] What can you even do...?

What... can you .....?

The golden sword rushes toward **G**ALATEA. Not enough choir to stop it. Not enough, not enough, fantasy must win—the sudden jolt of reality shocks you. It shocks you!

It's...

... Adslave...

throwing her arms around you...

And she's smiling and whispering in your ear.

"H-hey, Lucy! You in your own world? Are you listening?"

"Huh?" you say, the images inside of you are dissolving, no, no...! You can't just leave it like that! You didn't...

"Luucy," she says, she's tasting your name on her tongue, seeing your reaction, you're staring at her empty-eyed. You were so close to...

Were you about to destroy Lucy?

"A-Adslave," you say.

"They were asking you," what?

[ ] "You're sure on the Digimon movie? Or was your vote something else, like, you wanted to watch yuri anime," Adslave's face is impermeable here because it seems weirdly serious.

You take a sharp breath in. Your eyes glisten. You're coming back to reality. You're coming back.

"Oh... Oh, yeah! I'm sure... the Digimon movie sounds, sounds really good, yeah!"

"No one else here knows anything about it... you have a talent for choosing really weird things to like, Lucy," she says meaningfully.

You're quiet. Well, for a second... then you say:

"Hey, Adslave," you say.

"Hey," she says. She tightens her arms around you. The way they're wrapped around your shoulders, the way they fall down to your chest, it's kind of really pleasing... she's... a really good friend...?

"Do you, um," you start, "like my name?"

"It fits you," says Adslave.

"It's bad and gross?"

"Lol, you're being pretty silly," says Adslave. "It's cute and friendly..."

You want to cry, maybe?

Maybe... everyone's standing around you, right...? Even Piggy, who threw you into this shocked, momentary daze, now you're standing, you haven't been listening... you and Adslave seem really close, right? She's talking into your ear like this, you're having this type of body contact, you're having an exchange and a dynamic, and it's all this stuff you've wanted from Faline. It's stuff you've wanted from Faline, so you want to cry, maybe?

You smile, wanly. You can't figure it out. What is the truth of *you*? What is the truth of fantasy, of reality? What is real? What do you feel? What does Adslave feel? Wasn't this supposed to just be a fun anime club...

Well, it's you being depressive...

You're just one of those people, you guess.

"So, Lucy?"

[ ] Digimon

[ ] Yuri

---

author's note

Thread comments

#274 · PeepTheSheep · Feb 24, 2026 at 2:24 PM

[X] Yuri

I feel like I should vote Digimon, but I can't resist.

#275 · Almost Satire · Feb 24, 2026 at 3:23 PM

I'm thinking of sitting this vote out.

> **clswtzing said:**

> **Lucy is fine too,"** you say
>
> Click to shrink...

Bit more honest than what I had in mind. :lol:

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> The golden sword rushes toward **G**ALATEA. Not enough choir to stop it. Not enough, not enough, fantasy must win—the sudden jolt of reality shocks you. It shocks you!
>
> It's...
>
> ---
>
> ... Adslave...
>
> throwing her arms around you...
>
> Click to shrink...

I hope **G**ALATEA is okay.

#276 · clswtzing · Feb 24, 2026 at 4:47 PM

> **Almost Satire said:**
>
> Bit more honest than what I had in mind. :lol:
>
> Click to shrink...

yuri waffle

#277 · TheMaskedReader · Feb 24, 2026 at 10:26 PM

> **Almost Satire said:**
>
> Bit more honest than what I had in mind. :lol:
>
> Click to shrink...

Nobody can get anywhere without putting themselves out there.

Honestly, I'm somewhat split on the vote myself. I feel like both could be valuable. And both could be harmful. But that's life, ain't it?

[X] Yuri

What's more valuable and harmful than love? Fantasy is a mirror, after all - It inspires us to reflect and introspect. Let's see if that'll be the case.

#278 · Myxlplykx · Feb 25, 2026 at 9:57 AM

[X] Revolutionary girl Utena (which is Yuri)

043 / XXXXII - Only you

"Well," you say. "Well, the Digimon movie is good."

"Mmmmkay," says Feline-chan.

"W-well, but I do think I'd like to try watching a yuri anime, first," you say.

Nina looks confused. What's she thinking? Arkady's unimpressed. Maybe he hates yuri, or something. The production isn't good enough? It's not doing anything artistically? *You're* confused now. Why would you care about what a work is doing artistically? It's all in service of augmenting the fantasy...

Oh! Piggy looks happy! You can read it from the glint in his eyes.

"Th-that boy's a himedanshi," Adslave says to you.

"A what?"

What does Adslave think of yuri? ... Is this a betrayal of her? Not being on her side?

"A *himedanshi*. A male fan of yuri," says Adslave. "They're gross."

"What am I?" you say. "You know. Because I'm not yuri, because I'm..."

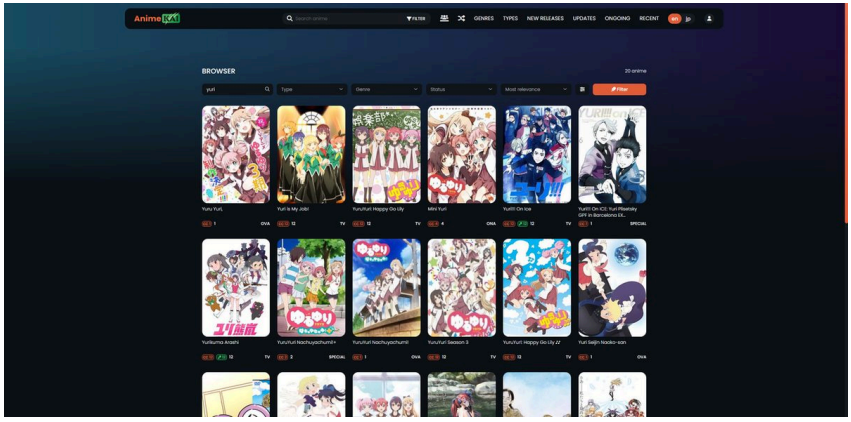
Adslave looks at you. Judiciously, "..."

You all settle down because Feline-chan is navigating to websites to look for yuri anime. The projector flickers on. Why a projector, rather than a television? Well, sometimes one of the other clubs has to kick the anime club out to use their space. Because weebs are an oppressed minority, no defense is to be had for them, and so they must, ontologically, vacate the premises.

"I don't really understand it is all," you say. "You don't like it, until,"

"Until it's you," says Adslave. "Only you."

The projector's flickered on. Let's browse, shall we?



She searches: 'yuri'.

"Ooooh! Ooh ooh! We can try Yuru Yuri," says Feline-chan, "I've heard that's good,"

"Okay," you say,

"We aren't watching Yuru Yuri," says Arkady. "Try a yuri with direction. I have a list. Check my MAL out. Belts. Luxembourg flag."

"What?" you say.

"L-lol," Adslave, "you have MAL? I bet you have a Letterboxd too?"

"What's a Letterboxd?"

"Guilty as charged. Check it out. La_Belette. Luxembourg flag."

"Why the Luxembourg flag?" says Piggy. "That's the Netherlands flag with the lighter blue, right?"

"I wrote a book about it," says Arkady. "Anyway?"

"What's Luxembourg?" you say. "And the Netherlands??"

"They don't exist anymore..." says Nina. "They're all gone..."

You're so confused...

"Arkady, DM me your book," says Piggy.

"It's a very different thing compared to what I write now," says Arkady, "It's very polished. But I don't think it bears much resemblance to my current output."

"That's not really a response?" says Piggy.

Loud bangs! Feline-chan holds her sword, sheathed, in her hand, smashes it on the wall—Feline! That's just too much...

"Quieeeet, all of you! Arkady, do you have any anime in mind? Otherwise, instead we'll watch," she scrolls through a list of yuri anime on her phone, "Do you like magical girls? Aaaaah! No need to ask!!! Everyone likes magical girls. Nanoha. Is this yuri? Symphogear. Revolutionary Girl Utena... Gushing Over Magical Girls."

"Utena's boring and bad," says Arkady.

"It might be good," you say, because one of your brains wants to watch it. "We could watch it. We could,"

"What's even the point?" says Nina.

"What?" you say at her.

"You're such an autist," Adslave says to either you or Nina.

"I want to watch mahoako," says Piggy,

"Mahoako?" Feline?

"Gushing Over Magical Girls," says Piggy, everyone looks at him except for Nina who's staring at her hands and you, you're bewildered! What even is going on? Play the opening, Feline—Arkady, argue no longer.

Oh!

That was the first episode.

You feel something inside of your chest. It's bubbling. Torment and tides of ... vomit, maybe? Expanding. Swelling. The discomfort had grown and grown and grown within your body. What did you witness? You feel hot and heavy, but compromised, crossed. Oh, it's disgust, that's right!

Not how people should look or be arranged, not how a girl should be. Not what you should do. It's a thing normal people do but that's fantasy right? You don't want it. You can't have it.

"Uhhh? Hey? Agnes? Are you okay?"

"I don't want to watch any mo—" you choke on *yuri,* before your jaw unhinges, your face swells, rippling flesh creasing and stretching as you become nonhuman, definitionally, dabbling in witchcraft you heave, heave—nevermore, never more! A black blur bursts forth from inside of you as a densely matted bird falls from your mouth, vomiting of an evil omen. Expelling illness.

It's so broken, it flops, before it crawls, it crawls. The anime club, yuri club, stares at it in shock. Nina stares at you in shock; fingers laced around her own mouth; Arkady and Piggy and Feline what are they doing? Adslave grabs your hand, and you both stand up,

"Wait, wait!" says Feline as Adslave almost steals you away. "Agnes! Are you a... magic user? Is your spell the sound of vomiting?"

"I'm sorry," you say,

"There isn't anything to be sorry for," says Feline. "You can summon a bird from your throat, right? That's magic? That's a real spell?"

Adslave's nodding carefully but you're withering and wilting beneath the wrathful welter of everyone's gaze.

"So you're a mage, and not a monster," says Feline, why is the room so bright? Blindingly so, it's like the lights are on—but the room has been darkened, darkened for the projector. Thus...

"Y-yeah," says Adslave. "I am too. I use a different spell. Just normal incision magic. Yeah."

"Agnes?" is that...

Nina's covered in black, gold, red, treasure spilling out of her mouth, ichor of the gods? Not normal vomit? Two of a kind?

"It's okay," says Feline. "I had to be sure."

"What?"

"There's another person like you here, Agnes! A vomiting spell. Nina Inoue! Nina Inoue. Hyperreal. Everything's real. Everything even from a book."

(*Here in fantasy everything can be real.*)

"I had to be sure you weren't a monster. I guess I haven't introduced myself? I'm Feline Chan, Sheriff Death Inquisitor! I keep the law in this town, magic and mundane!" She smiles, curtsies, but that manic affectation, the cutesiness, where's it gone? "I'm looking for a monster. The hollow wraith is what people have been calling it."

"Yeah," said Piggy. "It killed my friends."

"Anyone out of the ordinary is liable to be inspected... though, of course, you've always been a top student, Agnes! It'd be surprising if it came out that you were some monster, swapped at birth."

You look at your hand, which is covered in vomit. Oh! You had tried to cover your mouth before the bird came up, you guess? You guess? You, you, you and Nina are standing at the opposite ends of this room.

So she's the lucky one! How blessed. How talented. How beautiful that she didn't have to start like you.

"You're not in trouble or anything! I just figured I'd ask."

You almost want to vomit more. You hate sex and death.

The brilliant brilliant light—fades. A canvas of black, RGB zeroed out, each and all. Feline... sheathes an exposed dread inch of that katana.

"But now that I know you're a mage, I guess I gotta ask, huh? Wanna come with me in a few days on a death inquisition? Not the hollow wraith! That one killed so many people, so of course it was visible on cameras, we even had to hire *Magnus Carlsen* to help with the death inquisition for that one, in a week... um, anyway? Here's where I threaten you? Magic without a license is illegal, but I can forgive it if you're bolstering us. The forest is encroaching so quickly, there's no time to be worried about rules. I'm lax! As long as you're helping out, no harm no foul!"

"S-so what," says Adslave. "Wait, are you threatening us with jail? In the anime club?"

Feline-chan shrugs.

What?

You're so overwhelmed. You need to—get away—

You expand your inner world.

You stare off into painterly, abstract space.

You start crying.

God, every time, every time you feel better, every time Adslave soothes you, stops you from going over the edge, you just break anyway. Hovering, constantly, at the thin line between despair and hope. She's good, but this world, but you...?

Why are you like this? You don't say it, but the brains know what you're thinking anyway. Because they are you. They're all you. Why did you feel like that? It was just a stupid ecchi anime. Why did you vomit? Why are you a murderer? Why is everyone in this world so psychotic, so shallow, except for—

Faline, why doesn't she love you?

What should you *do?* **[ ] Not right now! Well, yes, right now! But what do you want to do with yourself? What do you want to be? What is the life you want to lead and the future you want to build and the world you want to exist in? Can't you just fix your tiny world, open the gates, and step into the golden land? The advertisements from**

the 1960s, two kids, suburban life, and you can be Faline's husband, or maybe Faline can be yours. She will love you and take care of you.

"S-stop *looking* at me like that," you say, frustrated, horribly, so horribly aware of how you look. "S-stop, stop, just stoooooop!!"

---

author's note

Thread comments

#280 · Myxlplykx · Feb 28, 2026 at 10:57 AM

[X] I cant believe we just watched an echhi magical girl anime with a tickling foot fetish, this does nothing for our character development no wonder we threw up. I respect your taste Lucy that was vomit enducing. WHERE IS THE ART, THE SUBTEXT, THE YEARNING.

[X] To make Faline like you more, you need to become an independent person Lucy! with your own likes and interests and friends and your doing a good job working on that right now! one stumble isnt the end you can always pick yourself back up, in fact you can even put yourself back together literally! which most people cant say.

[X] Going on a death inquisition sounds fun, its a good sidequest, you can hang out more with Adslave and have fun adventures. learn things! also if you kill a monster you can probably steal their hand and fix that problem. Be a good idea to discuss with Adslave if you can sell your peculiarities as magic.

[X] do we.... have to eat more birds to sell the vomiting birds thing. that doesn't sound like a useful magic power.

#281 · TheMaskedReader · Feb 28, 2026 at 11:07 AM

[X] Things seem overwhelming now. Because they are. You are probably in danger. But you have time. Time to breathe and center yourself. Take that time. Nobody will judge you.

[X] Only you can determine what you want. But if you want to understand that, you must first be prepared to reflect on the causes of your desires. Perhaps the question we can ask you is - What does the future look like?

[X] In the short term, it probably looks like lying your way out of the immediate danger you and Adslave are in. But in the long term, how can you openly and honestly communicate your affection for Faline? How can you share your true self with the world, without it rejecting you, emotionally or by literally hunting you down? How can you draw out the depth in others, and let them see your depths?

[X] It all starts, I think, with being honest. With yourself, even if it can't be with anyone else. Be honest with yourself about what you want, from Faline, from life, from the future...and it'll allow you to more clearly form a path to success in achieving your desires. Sometimes, it doesn't matter if it's right or wrong to want something - All that matters is that you can explain it, to yourself and others.

#282 · PeepTheSheep · Feb 28, 2026 at 11:48 AM

[X] what if you could be Adslave's husband

#283 · Almost Satire · Feb 28, 2026 at 2:57 PM

This story is surreal. It's kinda hard to follow. Maybe I should just give up and treat it as an experience, like FLCL.

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> "A *himedanshi*. A male fan of yuri," says Adslave. "They're gross."
>
> Click to shrink...

1) I didn't know there was a word for that.

2) Pot calling the kettle black.

#284 · clswtzing · Feb 28, 2026 at 3:04 PM

> **Almost Satire said:**
>
> This story is surreal. It's kinda hard to follow. Maybe I should just give up and treat it as an experience, like FLCL.
>
> Click to shrink...

definitely not taking this in a negative way tbc!! but im interested in hearing your thoughts on why! i don't think it's thaaaat surreal; the beginning is overloaded with a lot of 'intentional' weirdness but this part i think is more straightforward than then haha

---

#285 · Almost Satire · Feb 28, 2026 at 3:50 PM

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> definitely not taking this in a negative way tbc!! but im interested in hearing your thoughts on why! i don't think it's thaaaat surreal; the beginning is overloaded with a lot of 'intentional' weirdness but this part i think is more straightforward than then haha
>
> Click to shrink...

Nevermind.

I forgot that Feline was a character and read her name as Faline and so the whole inquisitor and magic stuff didn't really fit my understanding of who Faline was, as Faline seemed to reject magic and wants a mundane life.

Feline on the other hand seems pretty chuuni and is a new character, so it makes sense for her to either be involved in magic or lie to everyone (including herself) and say she is.

044 / XXXXIII - The last one could've been a Hitchhiker's reference

Calm down, Lucy.

Stay calm.

The incoherent chorus surrounds you. **"[X] WHERE IS THE ART, THE SUBTEXT, THE YEARNING?"**

"I'm not sure... not sure where any of it is," you say. Why doesn't it work for you? For everyone else, that kind of thing just passes through. But for you it doesn't process. Something about... you can say it, can't you?

Sex.

Something about sex doesn't process right for you. You can't feel anything except dread and revulsion, repulsion, aversion—so keep it away. Lock it away. Put it in the catbox and seal it deep underground till it stops hurting. And that's what you've done. But it's so odd, it's so alien, you're so alien. You're Lucy...

"It starts with being honest...?"

You look at the second brain. The one who said all that, about being honest. The one who's always telling you to accept yourself. You feel kind of happy that someone so good is inside you. Someone who will extend you this much grace.

You look at the first brain. You're panicking, still, but just *looking at them, finally,* seeing the people in your head as *people*...

"[X] what if you could be Adslave's husband"

"Huh," you say, thinking.

"No, I can't," finally you're calming. "... Sorry. Um. I, I know you want that. You guys want that. I mean, I hear you every time you say anything. Haha, haa. It's just not... it's not how the world *is,"*

It's a nice fantasy. It's a nice fantasy, isn't it. It's a nice fantasy... something does shift inside of you.

"I have to address it, right," you say, thinking through it. "I know that these vagaries are unhelpful! I know! I would be frustrated if I was you, too. You guys want me to,"

Can you say it?

"Well," you say. "You guys like me. And you guys like Adslave. And we're friends, right? We're, um, we're close? And since you guys like me and her and since we're the two most important people to you, more important than Faline, I know you feel this way, it's okay, I don't hate you for it, since we're the two most," you choke a little bit, on your own words, "you want me to take her, don't you, you want me to, touch her, and kiss her, and engage in, in intimacy, with Adslave."

You look away.

"Is that wrong?"

The chorus regards you. It's okay. **G**ALATEA told you that they won't ever immediately respond. It's how your communication works. It's really hard to be friends with a wall like that in place, but it's okay, because it's how it is.

You nod. Slowly, you nod, and you force your body to relax.

"Is it because of my body?"

You look sullenly at the chorus. You purse your lips. There's some sort of displeasurable air about you, right now.

"N-no, really. Like Adslave said, right. It's like. My body is... it's *female*. And so it's like two females together. It's like yuri. Even if I'm not really a person. It's like yuri. So is that it? Is the reason why you want me to," you almost vomit the word out, "hold her, and love her, and be the way I want to be with Faline, with her, is it because of yuri? It's just easy yuri?"

And your gaze strays down, back down, pinned down. "I don't—I don't hate you for it, or anything. It doesn't hurt me. I wanna understand. Take however long you need to, okay...? I'm gonna try... not to hurt you all ..."

You close your eyes, and collapse your inner world.

I know I'm not very smart, you pray to your brains. *And I'm consciously having these issues. Falling apart, constantly. And I know it's tiring having to tell me it'll be okay so often. Please stay with me anyway?*

"I am," says Feline-chan.

Adslave smiles. What a nasty smile! Her canines bared and a right eyelid pulled down, her smile is predatory, off-kilter!

"A-ah! Okay! Got it. G-got it, so you're a bitch like that, huh," Adslave says,

"Stop it," you say.

You control your face, so that it's neutral. Uplifted head. Straightened spine. Starry eyes. You instill hope into the core of your being, act it out, performative looking-forward so that maybe it becomes real later. Yeah? That's how it's always been. Live a fantasy.

"Adslave, it's my decision to make. And I'll make it. I'll do it. I can help you out, Feline-chan."

Feline grins. "Epic! Alright, day after tomorrow, then! Nine PM. Be theeeeere or be in theee, uhhh, *prison square~☆*, *I* don't mind!"

You look deep into her eyes.

"Yeah," you say. "Alright."

You're in your bed. Your mother was upset. But she didn't hit you. She didn't hurt you. No crushing pneumatic force. It was strangely okay. You're... strangely okay. Swaddled up in blankets like these, you feel safe, civilized, protected.

Your room's dark... so you shouldn't get out of bed. Besides, you're really tired from the events of the day. You're really tired in general. You haven't eaten in a long time, and you're starting to fall below totally full, like you'd been since the massacre and Agnes. It's alright, though. You can last a few more days, until the death inquisition.

How does sleep work? It's such a weird thing. Cause you can sleep. You've done it before. But now that you're in your bed, thinking like this, it's kind of weirdly hard to get to sleep. Compared to killing people, it's super hard!

You hug one of Agnes' stuffed animals. It's a lamb. It's really cute, and you like it a lot.

You could think about things, you suppose. Thinking about stuff is good.

You think for a while about the events of everything. All of *People Who Eat*. Since you found her in the dumpster, put her back together. You're really kind of a child now, aren't you? You used to sound a lot more advanced. You had convinced yourself you weren't scared of anything...

You hug the lamb a little bit harder. Maybe you should name her Agnes. Wait, but Agnes probably already had a name for her.

Oh, that's really sad.

You sniffle a little bit.

It's been a long time since you've had the quiet to think like this.

You think about

[ ] The death inquisition

[ ] Feline Chan

[ ] Faline San

[\] How useless and undeserving of this world you are. Let's not actually think about that.

[+] Adslave

There's only so much you can think about before you fall asleep, so you recognize that though you can think about as many things as you want, it's probably best to focus on discovering your feelings about just one thing. Though, ... you could gamble and go for multiple...

You yawn, and hug, um, yeah, you'll go with it—Agnes harder. Maybe it would be interesting to superimpose your inner world onto her? Create a real life-size Agnes to hug, that only you can see? Aaaagh! Even though you're yawning, you just can't seem to fall asleep!

---

author's note

Thread comments

#287 · PeepTheSheep · Mar 1, 2026 at 11:06 PM

[X] Adslave

-[X] It's not the sex or the romance that I care about.

-[X] It's that you care so much about Faline when she doesn't even like you.

-[X] She hates you and she hates Adslave who is the only person you built a real connection with so far.

-[X] I just wish you cared about Adslave as much as you do Faline.

-[X] chasing after Faline will not make you happy, but maybe spending time with Adslave will

---

#288 · Almost Satire · Mar 2, 2026 at 4:03 PM

Let's get some exposition

[x] The death inquisition

#289 · dissodeath · Mar 2, 2026 at 7:14 PM

[X] Feline San

[X] Faline Chan

- [X] hm, is there an error here?

- [X] both of them get what they want with violence against you

- [X] because you're something they're not

- [X] because you're something they can lord over

- [X] ganbare lucy, what if Feline San/Chan fell in love with you too? see how Adslave hugs you, and doesn't hurt you? if you don't want that remorseless catgirl to use such violence towards you, shouldn't you try to make her fall in love with you too?

#290 · TheMaskedReader · Mar 2, 2026 at 10:18 PM

[X] Faline San

-[X] The maxim has certainly been said enough by this point. Honesty, openness, communication. All that jazz.

-[X] But it remains true. And so I will seek to put my advice into action.

-[X] No, we do not, or at least, I do not want you to simply do what we say for 'easy yuri', out of a desire to fetishize or titillate.

-[X] Instead, what I am seeking to encourage, and what I think everyone, in their own way, is seeking to encourage, is you and your desires and your health. We know what you tell us, and we can make inferences based on our understanding of the circumstances you are in, and apply our understanding to try and suggest the courses of action that best serve to fulfill your desires in a healthy and happy way.

-[X] For example, when I put my voice towards Faline San here, it is to encourage the path I advised towards earlier. To reflect on what you truly want out of your relationship with her, and what steps you'll need to take to achieve that. To reflect on the dynamic between you two. To seek to help you understand your own feelings about it. Because it seems like it's troubling you, and impeding your progress towards self-actualization.

-[X] I do not think we will always be perfect in the desire to see you happy and healthy and thriving - And sometimes, it may not even be our place to do so. You are, after all, your own person - To rob you of your choice in the matter, regardless of good intent, would hardly be in line with our intentions, no matter how much we may believe in them. But I do think something we can always seek to be is honest. I hope this helps.

045 / XXXXIV - Dissolute ★

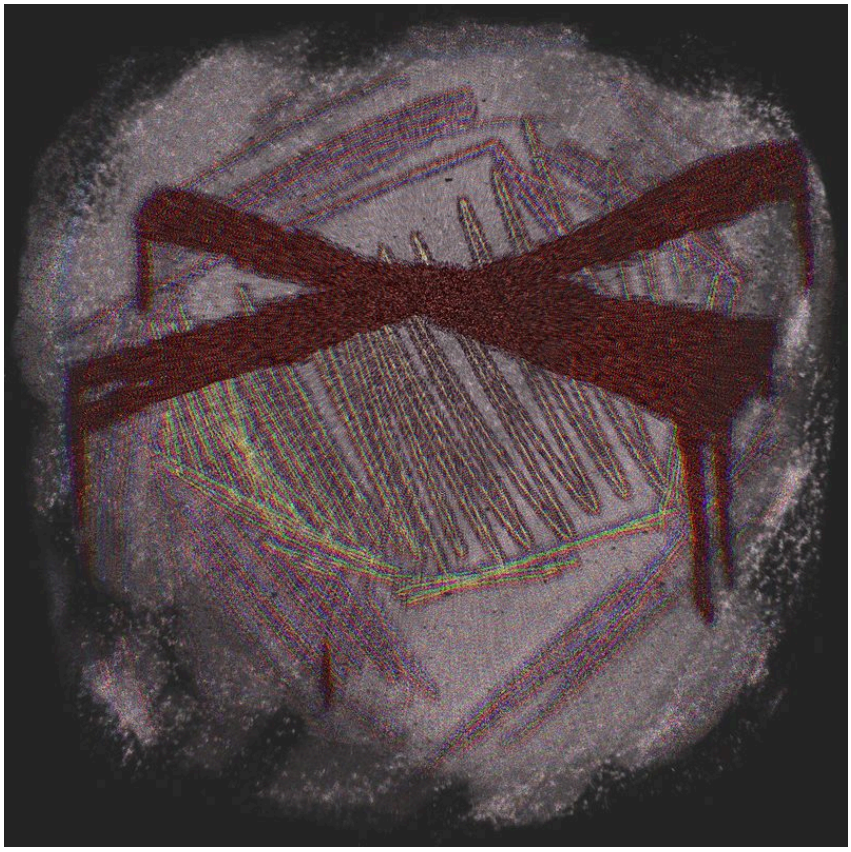
The death inquisition. Have Cana and Termina been caught as well? They're magic users too, right...? Proper, real ones. ... No, that would be weird. Feline-Chan only caught you because of the vomiting. The vomiting of a bird is what tipped her off. In that regard, you realize it was entirely coincidence... luck. Punishment for a misdeed never committed...

Death inquisitors. They search for monsters in the city... city-dwelling mice that ought to be in the country. Do they have a right to be hunting you, then...? Because—no—though you traveled through the forest to get here, and in the process it stripped away so many of your connections to everything, you still came from...

Somewhere ...

'Good morning, Maya.'

You jolt away from the memory, but, but no. You have to go deeper, don't you? You have to know yourself. You have to stop running away, have to stop hiding, have to interrogate yourself to find out the issue. Good morning, Maya. Who are you, Maya? Looking down on your so serene so soft, so worthy and nevertheless obscure face, can Lucy see...?



MAYA.

Explore yourself.

You press onward, downward.

Remember how you were at the beginning of this life?

Not your personality…

You were *scarred*. From the flames. Who is Maya? What were the flames?

You remember the stream. You remember—floating, rushing along, you remember the feeling of being buoyed.

(*Faline, buoy me.*)

Maya. Good morning, Maya.

The stream. The flame.

"Good morning, Maya."

Who could Maya have been?

Villa Rochefoucauld. Rochefoucauld. Have you heard that name somewhere?

It sounds fancy; it sounds french. A fresh smile spreads across your face as you dive deeper, deeper into the fragments, as you spread your arms out within the inner world of this inner world. You fall—!

There is a door before you. A door whose key you must have, somewhere within you. You have to open it. You have to unearth those memories you had buried, the forest had buried. The forest doesn't just cut away connections. You have to want to leave it all behind, somehow. You were complicit in the mutilation of your own memory. In the memory of mutilation you proceed.

The door doesn't exist physically. You have it here, in your inner world, but the inner world is a place of hyperreal fantasy. Anything that can be described and anything that can't both exist here. The door doesn't exist physically, and neither does the key.

'Maya, where's the key to your memory?'

There is a door before you, and it doesn't exist.

"Maya," you say.

"The fire," you say.

"Villa la Rochefoucauld..." you say...

But none of it works. Where's the key?

You approach the door, step, step, pittering-pattering feet echo of Artemis.

"Maya!"

"[M] Lucy."

You stop.

You stop!

Because there's someone else in this inner world you've created, the inner world of a Lucy who fixes herself.

You almost turn around to look at Maya! But lazy ladylike fingers trail across your skin, affix your head in place—you stop, shiver, chill. A freeze spreads out through this perambulating corpse.

"[M] Don't turn around," says Maya.

"What?"

"[M] You aren't ready for the key to the door. You don't understand."

What, you think to yourself, and you laugh a little bit. Your eyes wide.

"[M] You don't remember it, yet, Lucy. You don't remember what happened all those years ago. You won't be able to understand who Maya is, because you don't remember what happened."

"W-what?"

All those years ago. All those years. Maya.

What do you remember? Fire, stream, Maya.

"[M] You have to remember what happened, Lucy."

"I can't remember without knowing who Maya is," you say.

"[M] You aren't ready," says Maya.

You're silent for a moment... the other shoe drops.

You angrily step forward, away from Maya, and the sound of two pairs of feet striking the cold ground—and you step to the door, and your hands grope its cold surface. The door dead. Beyond it lies the truth...

"[M] Is this the only way, Lucy?"

"Is what?" you say.

"[M] You are not Lucy of Villa la Rochefoucauld."

You stiffen. Then you turn back to the door. She's getting on your nerves. You need to find the key. It's inside you, right? It must be. It must be.

"[M] You won't ever be able to find the truth," says Maya. **"[M] The real memories will come and you'll know who Maya is and you'll break from it. You aren't ready, Lucy. You're unstable. You'll retreat into fantasy."**

"Don't say this stuff," you say. You stare down at your chest. You stare down at it. You see yourself. You see yourself in this conversation with Maya.

"[M] This is a fantasy of you. Of the real Lucy."

"We can't be fantasies," you say. "We are what we are. Just because I'm putting on a better Lucy's face doesn't make me not Lucy. I'm still doing what's hard to do otherwise..."
"[M] You aren't ready for the truth about Maya."

You're ready for the truth.

"[M] You won't understand who she is."

You need to understand who she is.

"[M] Lucy, please stop trying,"

You feel it rising, don't you?

The truth.

The key to the truth.

You're so vomitous!

You cup your hand out and your flesh ripples

You disgorge it

The bird, wetly, into your *two* hands. Your entrails, wetly, into your *two* hands. Parts of you, blood and gore, wetly, into your *two* hands.

"[M] You won't find the key, Lucy. Not like this."

Viscera falls wetly onto the floor, stains it red, paints the bottom of the door. You lurch. You vomit. More and more blood and gore tumbles from your mouth. Corded ropes filled with blood. Intestines full to the point of bursting, not with shit, with blood. All blood. Blood through your entire body. Blood and severed body parts. Heads roll out. You roll out. White clumps of hair scratch your throat, summon more blood, outwelling.

"[M] Maya is why everyone who loves you dies."

You stop, choke.

"[M] Stop going forward."

I have to, you say. You have to. You have to let me.

Ladylike fingers grace your cheek...

"[M] I am why they're all dead, Lucy...? Why they will all die? And,"

You

"[M] You will die too, because of me. Because the moment you start to love yourself, I'll swoop in like the grim reaper and steal it away."

Her fingers roll down to your bottom lip, stain themselves in red blood, infiltrate your mouth,

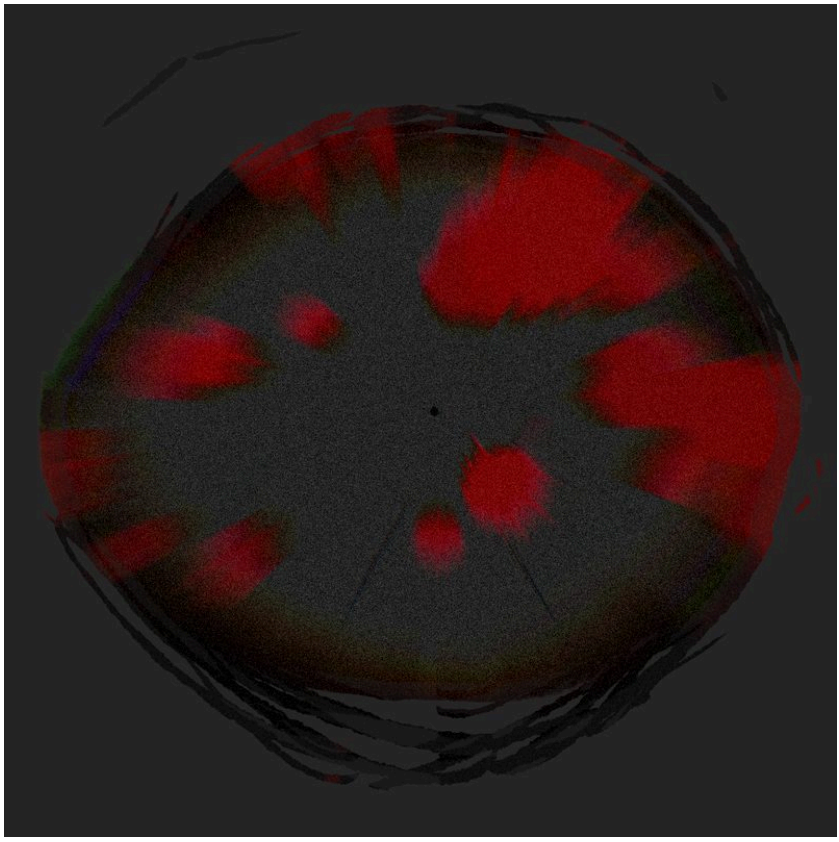
She's still

Behind?

You

And she breathes the breath of life

And



You stare at Agnes the sheep, outside of this inner world.

Maya...?

That EVIL EYE, what was that? A symptom of regression, infinite tables, return to the mean.

You're not ready. You're not ready for Maya...

Maya...

Someone in your mind, like Faline, like Adslave. Like Agnes. She had to be important to you, somehow, right?

God, you're so scared!

You need to be protected. Faline. Feline. Both—what was that brain saying? Predator animals. They could protect you, right?

No, no...

You can't imagine Faline protecting anything. She'd just let stuff happen, look balefully on.

You can't imagine Feline protecting anything. She'd just giggle at it, wouldn't she? It mostly just seems like she's in love with laughter... huh? That's not a very good parallel to Faline, is it? This isn't a very good narrative...

You whimper, curl, hold Agnes tighter.

Protection. Protection like that...

The sounds of your inner world...

Your brains reassuring you, it's not yuri, right? It's not *that it's yuri.*

"Yeah," you say, finally... "I guess I understand. Thank you, um, **TMR**. Gonna try and stop! Stop being so neurotic," but your mind's already moving on, the conversation at 50 percent...

You...

It was Gushing Over Magical Girls, right?

You *knew* what it was.

You knew about the profusion, *nimis, too much.* It was dissolute. It was lacking.

You had felt it. Can you speak of it in clear terms?

You knew the foulness in your body. What was there? Blood rushes through your veins.

You saw Adslave. Adslave, the wall. Field. Tree? Bus.

Name the elements of the scene. Describe the image.

You saw Adslave. Adslave. Hairtie. Separate. Made distinct. Leg. Tibia. Not dead, living. Warm.

You knew what it was.

You knew what you were doing. You knew you were foul! You saw it, gave yourself to it. It was Gushing Over Magical Girls.

You lifted, you lift

You lift your fingers to your mouth, and you smell them, lick them, alternately, hatred sets in, seeps in. You can picture her, in your mind. Not you nor Faline but an intruder and an adversary to both, and a temptation, your greatest friend. Your face—falls inward; your hand—falls downward; in relative position not absolute.

You fall inward, into yourself. Into the depth of your wrongness. A growing dampness wherein mold might spread.

You felt it, and you knew you were evil, and still what then? Adslave, the wall. Field. Tree? Bus.

A tortured call escapes your mouth. Adslave. You feel her. Almost within you. She's almost you. You need her. You need her to protect you. You hate her. She's not like Faline at all. You love her? She's your best friend.

This body of Agnes—sacrificial lamb, white, pure—tainted. You call—no—cry—again. Profusion escapes you. Verbal. Physical. Like vomit. As vomit.

You breathe heavily. Giving out. Shaking legs. Soon to fall—doomed to fall.

You can't cry at all, can you?

It's you!

You lift your hand from the profusion. You stare at it, deadeye with deadened eye—you deserve to die.

Indefinable—nothing here. You can't escape your nothingness.

[ ] Go to school

- [ ] After school... (write-in)

[ ] Do something else (write-in)

046 / XXXXV -

Indefinable

(*Nothing here.*)

You can't escape your nothingness.

It's strange. It's really, really strange, to wake up to a blank head. Your eyelids part, and you stare upward, in silence. Have you forsaken yourself so deeply? Has every Lucy that ever could exist forsaken you? ... It's okay. There's no use worrying, nor spiraling about it.

Empty-headed Lucy! How simple you feel.

No, not simple. You still feel dreadful...

But it's like you no longer have the ability to feel sorrow from it. You no longer feel scared. You feel—that you must process inexorably.

It's strange. It's really, really strange, to be exhausted. Exhausted and starved but you aren't killing someone. You aren't killing someone. You'll eat yourself up before you kill someone. You've made that vow. You've made it to yourself. You'll do—do *something* for Cana and Termina and Adslave, you'll send them away. You aren't killing or eating another person.

In sequential fashion, you undress. You remove your nightclothes. You've gotten really used to clothes. They're kind of comfy. They aren't like the sticky, matted hair you used to cover yourself before. You stand in your underclothes and stare at yourself in the mirror. Hmmm, that's not quite right...

Rather, you stare at *Agnes' corpse*. This isn't you, and never was yours. You just stole it.

You can phrase everything in terms of stealing, right? You can say that just by eating beef you're stealing from some *cow*. But it's different to have stolen Agnes' body and face. It's so gross, really. You're so gross.

"Hey, Agnes," you say.

"You forgive me, right?"

Your quiet brain doesn't respond.

"Agnes..."

You smile. You smile! Ha ha ha, you smile.

"A-Agnes, I'm really sorry!"

You lean forward, and almost topple. B-but! You steady yourself, gyroscopic stabilization.

"You..."

Does it matter?

If you were the you of how long ago, over a week ago, whatever, if you were that you, then you would say: 'It's just atoms being rearranged,' or something like that.

But it's not, is it? You wish you could go back! It was honestly really nice being so innocent, not knowing anything at all, being able to do anything because you just—didn't—care. You were like a child. And now you're growing up! Stand in a circle and CLAP, congratulations Lucy, you've finally learned what you should have known already, should have known however long ago you were born. You've *finally* been elevated from minus five to zero! Hooray!

So you're sorry. It does matter! Whatever Agnes would think now does matter.

Your empty head wobbles.

Handless body of Agnes. Even now you can't resist *defiling* everything, sullying this world with your presence. A spotless unstained beautiful world of bidets and white Grecian marble. And you're—well—you're...

You're a monster, a nothing, not even a girl, a creature that ought to be destroyed. Now you sully Adslave with your connection to her. With your *one-sided connection*. You sully Faline by your *disloyalty*. You sully Cana and Termina and Feline-chan and Nina and Arkady and Piggy and all those other side characters with your presence. You sully Troy and the cult to Hitler by—childish massacre.

When your brains crept up inside your empty head, did they think this would be a fun, smooth, action-packed, unrepentant type of quest?

Were they prepared to spend so long lingering on these imbecilic thoughts of yours?

If you really cared about everything, you'd work to fix it, right? Well, you'd turn yourself in to Feline-chan, and let yourself be executed, death inquisited, right?

When your brains crept up inside your empty head, they probably expected you to continue in happy idyll. Murder everything and burn the world down. They knew that in four weeks the world would burn, right? And it would be your fault, they thought. That's why they're here. Here to watch you burn it all down!

You hold no malice for them in your heart. You hold no malice for the ones that've turned around already like **TMR**, went and decided that they'd try to help you, fix you, repeat the same advice and embrace you a billion times. You're pathetic!

You decide, staring at Agnes' body, that you're going to get dressed and go to school.

"H-hey, Lucy," she runs to catch up to you.

You turn around and smile, automatic or automation.

"Hello," you force out of yourself.

Girl who you *defiled*.

"Hey," she says. "Um. Anime club today?"

"I don't think so," you say. "I think I'm gonna go home after school. I don't feel very good at all," you say. Ha ha, you say.

"A-oh, uh, alright," says Adslave.

"Yeah," you say. Then you turn around and hurry. Away from her.

Vile creature.

Do you want to do what you did last night once more?

Your empty brain, indefinable, nothing there, says nothing. They just won't respond now, will they? They've forsaken you. Maybe it's because you need to be exposed. Maybe it's because they need to see the depths of your sin?

They need to see how you've been galvanized into an immortal witch.

Do you want to touch yourself to Adslave again? Do you want to masturbate to the thought of her? Do you want to soil everything in this world by doing that to yourself? You do, don't you? You do. You do.

Death inquisition in your mind. Spearing Lucy to find the answer to her mysteries.

No. There isn't anything else in your head. It's all you, Lucy. Only you.

You thought it was impure and you still did it. You're a creature of base desire and passion. You're really, really disgusting. You knew that you shouldn't do that. You knew it was disgusting, it was creepy. You felt it. You felt revulsion for yourself, even though it felt so good. Adslave-warmth spreading throughout your body. Comforting and deep mycelium.

"A-Agnes! Or Lucy! Wait!"

You run away from her.

You can admit your sin but you can never ever touch Adslave again.

Vile and base, indemned impure creatures with their minds closed off—cannot find truth in others' words. Thus an inexorable procession.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#293 · clswtzing · Mar 5, 2026 at 8:35 AM

quick, longer update rate shall continue until morale declines, now that we're heading into the last days of the second part. thank you for reading!

#294 · TheMaskedReader · Mar 5, 2026 at 8:55 AM

[X] I think you are engaging in avoidant behavior, Lucy. It feels like you are trying to convince yourself, and by extension, us, that you are beyond hope, because you want to believe yourself to be.

-[X] There isn't really something I can do to make you believe otherwise, of course.

-[X] Everything is so much, all of the time. And it feels so overwhelming now. And we all make mistakes, or choices we don't feel proud of, or that we feel disgusted by.

-[X] But that doesn't make it meaningless. It doesn't make it wrong or incomprehensible or irredeemable. It doesn't mean you have to let it linger, like a shade that hangs over the present, a wraith capable of sapping everything from your life.

-[X] The other part to my ever-given advice about being honest, is to be selfish. Honesty is selfishness, after all. It is telling the truth and expressing yourself even if it would convenience others more otherwise. Your desires and wants and feelings are no lesser, no less worthy, than those anyone else, it is saying. That your truth is no lesser than their truth.

#295 · PeepTheSheep · Mar 5, 2026 at 9:30 AM

[X] Your connection with Adslave is not one sided

[X] She cares for you and avoiding her will only hurt her

047 / XXXXVI - Honesty

Inner world expansion.

"Oh! Hi!" you say, and you smile really cutely, ignore the fact that just before you were hurting. Ignore the fact that they all saw you. They see everything that you show them and you show them everything. You expose yourself so they can burn you at the stake as a witch. Thus, it is ordained! "So you all finally decide to show up!!!!!! Really nice!!!! Pachi pachi pachi!"

You clap. Pachi pachi pachi!

Your smile drops. "Let's get on with it. You. **TMR**. You first. You're wrong! I'm not avoiding this. I just can see it all clearly now. I know what's happening. I know what the world is coming to. I'll smile, laugh, do whatever, but I'm not going to subject anything else to this. In fact—you had the right of it, you know? Not saying anything at all. You really did. In fact. After this, what if I stopped listening to you at all? Circumlocuting, duplicitous words. Just finish it already? Condemn me?"

You tilt your head. A lot like Faline does, actually! In fact, you feel frustrated, so full of malice and twisting annoyance, that you might just metamorphose into her. Your mirror, comprised entirely of id.

The evil eye.

"I'm just not avoiding anything anymore. I'll accept it all. I'll take in all of it. But I won't subject anything like this. I'm connecting myself to reality. I'm not running away. I'm recognizing antifantasy. Don't you understand? That's right, I'm just preparing for it all to be over. I'm not avoidant."

Pausing you take a breath in, before continuing—"I get it, you'll go on and on again about how I'm able to be saved, forgiven, made human, and what? And so what? Actually let me switch tacks. What if I relentlessly mock you and put you down for trying this instead? You're a zero. Nothing. You don't matter to me. You don't matter to my life. You are **TMR**, right? I'm talking *directly to you*. You are the person **TMR**."

Hey, look, you're starting to nail it! Her cadence.

"All you have done over this entire week is tell me that I'm okay. When I'm clearly not okay! Don't you understand? I want to be condemned. I just want you to tell me I'm nothing. I want to hear what you really feel. But all you do is talk in that *therapist voice*. Get it? **TMR**? 'I think you are engaging in avoidant behavior.' No shit?"

Hey, look, you're starting to nail it! A borderline swing from pole to pole. You can't tell what's real and what's fake! Truth and lies blend together in the haze of emotions. Avoidant/not avoidant. Lucy/Agnes. Fantasy/reality/

/

Who are you deep inside?

"Leave me. Just hurt me. Stab me. Impale me. Divine my secrets and tell me how awful I really am! I just."

You stop.

"I just need you to *hear me*. Just speak frankly with me. Be honest, right? With what you say? I hate duplicitous words. I hate them, okay? I hate it. It's not fine. Nothing in my life is *fine*. So I'll be honest too. As honest as this Lucy can be! Ha ha."

Inhale and exhale.

"Yeah. So. I want to be condemned. Well. I want you to be honest. I want to know what you think of me. But I want it to be condemning. Because it's not..."

It's not possible that anyone truly feels anything positive toward you.

You don't say it, but you know that the chorus knows it. Because you've allowed them to see you. You're allowing them, right now, even, to see your heart.

"You can see me. You know me better than anyone else, **TMR**. Because you're me. You're all me. But the 'me' you know is so sympathetic to... to me. If this was a story, I would be the villain. I would be the pathetic side villain, a changeling monster, who'd get a tragic backstory but everyone would still want to see her lose, right? That's who I am. I'm a pathetic side villain in someone like Cana's story. Cana, who has a cool social group, uses incision magic, even her name, it's so loner and awesome... she's a wolf! A wolf, Cana, Canine..."

Exhausted you laugh.

"Yeah, anyway. Think about me. Please. What I really am. Just be honest. Be honest to yourself and to me. I'm being honest to you, right? Honestly, I never really thought I *would* be honest like this... talking about it..."

Pause.

"Okay. Yeah. So. You. *You specifically*. **TMR**. You've been so sympathetic to me this whole time! And really it helped. Earlier on. But the more I returned to reality the more I remembered how hopeless and grim and small this world really felt. How *I* felt. And so it stopped working. I tried to cling to your words so hard but they became platitudes. You were too... you were way too nice to me. You didn't condemn me, and that felt wrong. You tried to be my therapist! Tried to talk to me. You tried to be my friend across this big barrier that we have. And, and saying it like that, it makes me feel bad. I-I really appreciate it. I-I really *appreciated* it. I j-just,"

Oh! You have to turn around now—

"I c-can't trust you. I can't trust *anyone* b-but I can't trust you either. You *have to burn me*. You *have to hurt me*. Hhhh-kh! Do you understand??" (You inhale.) "The condemnation of the witch is the only path to revelation.

"S-so you have to. Understand? At the end of this, y-you have to burn me.

"We can pretend," (you make a small sound, of what?) "for a little longer and it'll be okay.

"B-but it hurts knowing that, that it won't last.

"S-so I'd prefer to get it over with."

—because in this inner world you're crying. You're tearing apart your own heart and letting them peer into the right atrium to watch how the blood flows.

"I-I hate it!! I hate hate hate being constantly on the edge of things like this. I just want to lose hope and walk, walk zombielike, toward the end. I want to stop feeling so on the line. I don't want to orbit between hope and despair. I'm stuck like this. I don't have the power to fix anything at all. You don't either. In a good story, in a proper story, you *would,* you could do this for me, decide this all for me, but you *don't*. Just Lucy. It's all in Lucy's hands. And she's a failure. And so, yeah. A-and so, y-yeah..."

You trail off and stand, inert, bolted in place. Away from the chorus so they can't see your face. Your clawlike hands come up to tear at your eyes and your eyes focus on your tears, and they fill, fill, a reservoir overrun, too deep, too full. They fall onto the floor and stain it little grays in places.

"A-and so, **TMR**, but you too, **PTS**, both of you, you're the only ones here, so listen up. L-listen to me! I'm going to do this. I'm going to make it to at least the death inquisition. Maybe Feline will find out about me and kill me! I won't bet on that. I won't self-sabotage. But I... I don't know how to do this. Please. Honesty, right. You're seeing me now! I'm honest. I think. I hope I'm honest. That this isn't too much of a manipulation... y-yeah. Yeah. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. Please forgive me. Please condemn me. Change it for me. Save me somehow. Help me or hurt me, to heaven or hell, it doesn't matter. Destroy the rot inside of me. Destroy it. Destroy.

"Destroy this me."

---

author's note

Thread comments

#297 · TheMaskedReader · Mar 5, 2026 at 6:09 PM

[X] Well, you got me there! Got me good, frankly. It's easy to distance myself. To try and pretend like if I'm just supportive and try to be professional, it'll all work out for the best, because that is, genuinely, what feels morally right to me. To unduly influence you feels wrong. You're vulnerable. Even that feels paternalistic to say, like it will influence your thoughts unduly - Which in turn is paternalistic to think, under the framework we're in. But, well, you're asking what I really think. You've been honest with me about your needs in this moment. I can be honest with you. Only seems fair.

-[X] You horrify me, because I see a lot of myself in you. There is an extent to which I am unwilling to confess that I genuinely feel sick sometimes, reading your thoughts, because of how accurately they mirror certain portions of my life I look back on with shame and regret. But it is not a moral horror, nor is it disgust. It is empathy. Or at least, it is trying to be. It is also, being frank, pity and projection. Because I'm not perfect, unfortunately.

-[X] In terms of actions, have you committed actions I would consider immoral? Yes. Do I believe there are extenuating factors? Yes. Do I believe those extenuating factors, to an extent, do not justify your behavior? Yes. You've made mistakes. Very bad ones. I believe you should try to make up for them. But the way to do that isn't self-flagellation or self-destruction. That helps nobody, and I am a firm believer in rehabilitation needing to be constructive. My belief is that the first step to make up for your mistakes is to change yourself into the kind of person who can spend their life making up for that mistake, which you presently are not, hence why I have not been focusing on it. And that is regardless of however long or short that life may be, in the context of the world. I think you are capable and willing to make that change in yourself, and so I had hoped to not unduly influence you towards it.

-[X] You feel disgusted because you have taken Agnes's skin and view her as a person now, rather than meat - Or, a person isn't quite right - You've sanctified her in your mind, in a sense. A perpetually blooming flower cut down in its prime, an icon of self-flagellation and perpetual defilement, a whip you are using to bleed yourself. This is unhealthy. Agnes, as she existed, is dead. She is not a tool of your self-hatred. She is not a moral icon. She feels nothing about you or your actions. She is dead and you killed her. You can empathize with how the dead might have felt. But you should not use them as a puppet to endorse your worst impulses. If you want to destroy a part of you? Destroy that. Even if it's uglier to face your own unmasked self-hatred, at least it's honest.

-[X] Everything else that I could expound about can be discussed later. If you want material guidance? You need to go talk to Faline or Adslave. Both, probably, but you might only have time for one before you need to maintain your obligations, one way or another. Both of them have immense impacts on your emotional state, you have immense conflicting feelings regarding both of them, and both of them are in possession of material information that could absolutely be used to destroy you. So, materially, if you want to make progress? You should sort out what they will need from you to not do that, and from there, we can try to sort out, emotionally and materially, what is needed to resolve the situation overall, with them as co-conspirators. It's transactional and materialistic to say it this way, but I'm trying to keep it material and grounded at the moment - I feel like we've had enough harsh emotion for the moment in my prior messages.

-[X] Alternately, if you would prefer not to do any of that, go to Feline and do what she wants you to do, unless you think it'd be immoral, to try and lower her suspicion or curry her favor. Your self-destruction isn't, for all that you may wish it was in this moment, a desirable outcome, for anyone.

As a message more intended for my fellow 'brains', I do hope my long messages don't discourage you. Please do participate, even if you only write a sentence or two!

#298 · clswtzing · Mar 5, 2026 at 6:23 PM

BANGER

#299 · PeepTheSheep · Mar 5, 2026 at 8:33 PM

[X] I understand the impulse to see yourself as irredeemable

-[X] to give up on any hope for the future

-[X] But it is selfish and unhelpful

-[X] It will not accomplish anything and it will hurt the people who care about you

-[X] Like Adslave

-[X] I know you are afraid of corrupting her and hurting her

-[X] But she was genuinely happy being your friend

-[X] Pushing her away will only hurt her

-[X] What will help her is actively working to be a good friend

---

#300 · SpinsterOfWays · Mar 7, 2026 at 12:24 PM

[X]I step out into the shadows. And I say that, because my actions are only words.

-[X]You're not alone with them. There's not just **TMR** and **PTS**, Lucy. There's ME.

-[X]Let's cut to the basics. You, a witch, want to be destroyed? How thematic! Lucy of Villa La Roufauchauld, burning away! (No, Villa la Rochefoucauld. It's hard to remember, you know?) Carrion hag, burnt at the stake. Writhing maggot within a corpse? I'd spare some more words to set the tone, to establish your morbid visual symbolism, but I don't need to.

-[X]You know what you are.

-[X]And I know what I am.

-[X]<[**G**] Psychological rape! 'Empathy is psychological rape!'>

-[X]Remember that? Remember how dear little **G**ALATEA laid things out? I'd loathe to say her death has changed much here. She lives in the memory of us brains, as an idea, now. Don't feel guilt for her death. Feel guilt for the neuroticism that lead to that death. Anyway...

-[X]My point in mentioning her words... It's all quite simple. If us brains are an extension of you, Lucy, if empathy is psychological rape...

-[X][**SOW**]Then self-hatred is psychological incest.

-[X][**SOW**]Interfamilial intercourse! Imagine it! Imagine it in your head! Agnes, the body you wear, pushed tightly against her mother, your mother. Ravenous beast-like mating. Isn't it vomitous! Vomitous! Yes, that's the word you go for, Lucy!

-[X][**SOW**]Isn't it wrong, not just girl on girl, but blood on blood? Stain upon stain? Oooh, it's enough to make a girl sick. A girl like you, yes, not an Other! Sick! Girlrot! Yuri! F/F!

-[X][**SOW**]Why should we tear into you, like you did **G**ALATEA. What reason do we have to be the golden blade of judgement-cleaving. You're cowardly enough to use us as proxies to burn you away, wreath you in flame, all because you can't bother to TRULY dig deep into yourself.

-[X][**SOW**]I have a suggestion for you.

-[X][**SOW**]If you want to hate yourself. DO IT YOURSELF.

-[X][**SOW**]I'm sorry. I can't hear anything you say until after it has already been said; I can't speak unless something is about to happen. If there's no turning point, I don't turn. I'm not anything at all in your scheme of things, really. I'm sorry Lucy. I'm sorry, really, that you don't get to talk back, in all of this.

-[X][**SOW**]But there is one thing you get to do. By the very nature of how this interplay between you, the audience, and us, the choir, works.

-[X][**SOW**]You get to think back.

-[X][**SOW**]That's it, yeah. You get to hear the words we say, and you get to think of how you feel about them. And through that, you challenge your priors, or affirm them, and set new futures.

-[X][**SOW**]I'm perfectly willing to be the villain here. The voice of dissent, anarchy. Blade of Feline above your neck. You ask for me to <D E S T R O Y>. I grant that wish. If there's one thing I <N E E D> to be, I'll be your ENEMY. That way you can sharpen yourself in conflict, like you always do. Or like how I say you do, anyway. You'll take that and every word we say at face value, if you don't think for yourself!

-[X][**SOW**]In spite of all that coal-black invective spat, all that evil said, I don't want you dead. I don't want you gone. I don't want you to lose. I want you to win, and I want you to achieve your goals. You're not me, but you're like me. Enough so that I empathize (There's that word again!), I empathize with you. I presently believe the best way for me to achieve my goals is for me to send this message to you. With all this bluntness. All this ugliness. All this imperfect hatred left right in there, yet to be sanded away. Maybe you can find something clear, in all those grains.

-[X][**SOW**]I'll leave you at that. Make what you will, and break what you will, Lucy of Villa la Rochefoucauld.

#301 · clswtzing · Mar 18, 2026 at 4:28 PM

the way i realized that i guess people must get NOTIFICATIONS when i edit a chapter (im just going to be revising some of the prose of the early sections to be on par with the later ones...)

048 / XXXXVII - Understanding

Hey there, beautiful.

You listen. You listen, and it's magnanimous, in that you don't have to listen. Right? It's a magnanimous gift you're giving her...

But it's expected of you. Like a Santa of listening... in that sense, maybe it isn't magnanimous; maybe what you had thought was magnanimous was just something that was expected of a normal human person...

Thank you, Troy.

You listen to **TMR** speak. You see there's two others in the chorus in line, but **TMR** is first, and so you decide that you'll cut in after her, and you wait.

TMR speaks. Her, not it (not a brain, but a person), *her* frame is stark and gaunt against the painted background of this inner world, standing out, black on white or white on black or yellow on blue or purple or green—as she locks this dreamer body in motion-moratorium and monotones:

"[X] You disgust me."

You don't flinch. Or, well, maybe you do, actually. Your eyes widen a little bit but you control yourself, your face, steel yourself, and listen. And that's a good decision. Because the more **TMR** talks the more you—understand—her—?

'We're all Lucy.'

You are all Lucy. Anyone who's here by now is Lucy. **TMR** isn't any different. If a brain has stuck with you for so long, they have to be Lucy, too. Which means they're understandable, comprehensible.

(You'd be disgusted at Lucy too, right...?)

(No.) That's not what **TMR** is saying. She's not saying you're a disgusting creature. *Don't* reinterpret it like that. You really, really try hard to respect her. You try hard to respect her view of the world. You think about how she must think about you: you think about this Lucy in the eyes of all Lucies.

"[X] Your self-destruction isn't, for all that you may wish it was in this moment, a desirable outcome, for anyone."

It's verbose, but **TMR** often is.

It isn't insincere...

It's finally like a connection is made. The two of you establish resonance. You are one. It's what you've been hungering for all this time. Someone who will just tear down the wall between your souls. Someone who will break all those social orders that tell us: step aside and hide your heart. And just by making the move to do that first, you've made it so that **TMR** does it too.

You have to communicate with people... in order to ...

Who was it that said that?

You feel yourself open up again... chasmic maw, two sides chiasmic.

And you put that feeling away—in a box. Locked with a key and thrown in the sea.

After all, what matters is right here and now. Repeat that to yourself! Dattebayo, Lucy.

Quiet, for a moment, sets into the air, black paint and stone. A quiet that's dense and hard to breach; respect a mirror to deflect your illuminating words.

"So," you say.

"It's unhealthy. You say. And you can understand me, you say. And ... and you want me to talk to either Adslave or Faline."

Pause. A break in the flow of conversation. You move to continue: "B-because it's not healthy to run away, deal with someone new, like Feline, right? I should fix it. I should fix it..."

You look down.

"I see," you say.

"I. I do see, actually..." and you're really glad for that. You understand what **TMR** is going for.

You see.

"I can't."

Pause.

"Can't promise.

"Not that I won't try or anything...

"But I have, right. And it's just led to... how did I phrase it before?

"Orbiting between hope and despair. I can't keep feeling like I'm lurching along, okay...

"*I can't promise*, right.

"I *can't*.

"But you just want me to keep going anyway..."

To fix it.

"To fix it."

Next.

Slide onto the stage. **TMR**, dissipate away! Into mist you go. **PTS**.

"[X] I understand the impulse to see yourself as irredeemable,"

You lean forward.

The impulse to reject the fix. Scorn the idea of mattering...

"-[X] to give up on any hope for the future,"

Yeah,

"-[X] But it is selfish and unhelpful."

You wince. And maybe smile a little bit, painfully, and you look away.

"Y-yeah..."

"-[X] It will not accomplish anything and it will hurt the people who care about you."

"Like Adslave,"

"-[X] Like Adslave," confirms or continues **PTS**.

"Yeah," you say.

"-[X] I know you are afraid of corrupting her and hurting her.

"I really am, yeah,"

"-[X] But she was genuinely happy being your friend.

"She, she was,"

"-[X] Pushing her away will only hurt her.

"It. It will...?"

"-[X] What will help her is actively working to be a good friend."

"So I have to try," you say.

"Okay," you say.

You watch as **PTS** retreats into the chorus.

There's one more.

A beckoning darkness. *That same brain as last time.* Spindly-spidery-silvery webs falling the ceiling or fog; who could it be but ME? **SOW** stepping onscreen. He's claiming him for himself: **[SOW].**

So, then, you come to regard each other. Lucy, your head's tilted like so. **SOW** you're words, grinning malicious words blackening up and twinkling in this painted sky. Little white witch and the big black *bastard—*

Begin. End. French duel:

"[X] [SOW] Vomito—"

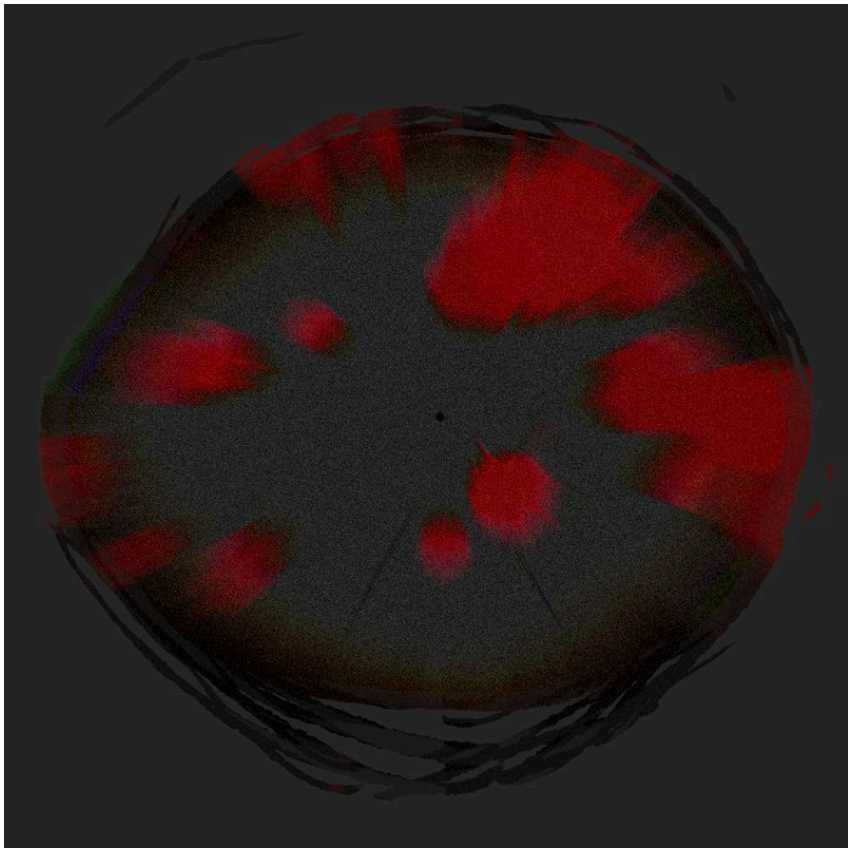
"Shut up," you say, finding it within you to say shut up. He doesn't shut up. In fact he keeps going. Spitting this strange mockery of your own words. Of everyone else's words. He's an attentive reader but he's only here to cause you grief.

It's really funny how even when someone hurts you, gives you what you 'want,' you can't stop needing more.

"There's no reason to *speak like this,*" you say. His harshness, bitter invective...

He'll be your enemy...?

He'll do that for you...?



"[X] If I thought you could be my enemy I would pull out your brain," says Lucy.

That's right.

That's right, Lucy! A Lucy who'll *do things*.

You look at Lucy beside you and you smile. The same Lucy whose inner world you visited before, right...? The same Lucy who can do *everything...! Do it all...!*

But it's like **TMR** said, right? You have to face reality. You're not gonna make all these sins again. So...

You look at Lucy.

Lucy looks at you.

You're the same person, right? The same person.

All possibilities, infinite vicissitudes fractaling infinitely, all versions of Lucy are contained within that metaphysical resonating *you*. Since you're the same person, you don't have to crumple. You can just be that other Lucy.

You can be her.

You can be defiant like that and can try and can try and try and try and finally try.

It's like **PTS** said, right? You need to try to be Adslave's friend.

You can be, need to try.

"Yeah... yeah," you Lucy-all-Lucies say. "I would pull out your brain as proof of my existence... hah... hah, chorus!"

You stretch out your hand to the glimmering dream. Light-rays filter between your fingers as it reflects from you—from them.

"Are you ready to try this again? To last till the end of the world, one last time...? I made progress last time we had to have a talk like this! I did! So I'll make more progress here. And look... better than last time, I understand you! We don't have to fight. I won't be her anymore. Won't be the me that would destroy," in the subjunctive, "**G**ALATEA!!"

Ambling shaking shuddering your arm comes around—juddering—your hands they reach each other and you clasp your hands over your chest.

"I'll seriously try this time... I'll seriously try! I don't need your forgiveness! I don't need your acceptance... I know that you'll help me! I trust you all. But I'll try really hard to do this on my own! I'll be that Lucy! I'll be a Lucy that exists in the real world, a Lucy who has the self-power of fantasy... I'll try!! Yeah. Yeah! This'll be the last time."

You tilt your head.

"[X] This is the last time you'll have to talk to me like this. I'm, I'm *locked in* from hereon out. From now till I die I'm going to try to fix this all and do what's right. Okay?"

You stretch out your arm, display a map...

"I'll go to Adslave. I'll fix that. I'll go to Cana, Termina, I'll make them like me, I'll introduce myself to Faline's sister, I'll try to learn more about Faline, I'll go out with Feline on her hunting game and past that I'll do a lot. I'll try even harder to engage with Faline. I'll try to treat myself better even. I'll try to treat the people who treat me well better."

You look to the side, off—"I'll take everything from every Lucy. Everything I need. I'll tear your brain out like the old me if you cross me. I'll understand you and speak to you like the middle-me. I'll cry for you like this me. Okay? I'll take it all. I'll take all Lucies."

You try really hard to smile, because maybe you finally feel like you can smile, just telling them all you'll do this, intending to follow through—and maybe you finally do emit a final smile.

"I understand what you guys meant now."

IN 3 DAYS, RIIIGHT?

IN 3 DAYS, PART 2 WILL END!

---

author's note

Thread comments

#303 · LuxuryLore · Mar 18, 2026 at 10:28 PM

YEAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

GANBATTE FOREVER

#304 · TheMaskedReader · Mar 18, 2026 at 11:17 PM

Well, I don't know if it's perfect - But progress never is. And it's good that there's that divergence.

Three days to the end of something. I wonder what that will bring.

049 / -3 - Chandelier Killer

Dot, or period; a startling solid punctuation mark black as night punches out a conclusion to your slump. Light shines around you—proclaim it, Lucy! Proclaim you're going to win this.

The day, then. You turn around; you've run from Adslave, right? You've run from her. Then...

You rotate around, Lucyplanet spinning on its pole and you search, eyes scanning through the milling students moving to all of Adslave's own classes, picking through them, finding, looking...!

But you can't... you can't see her! N-no! You can't see anything. Nothing.

No, nothing at all...?

You set off, move forward, move towards where Adslave's meant to go. You run, run! Run, Lucy! Rabbit hopping through river and stream and cutting a meandering path through the grass, pushing photosynthetic greenery out of the way with your twitching nose, you push through the crowd. You push through it...

You look for Adslave, but...

Adslave is before you, in the student body of this school. Adslave is somewhere in this school:

Adslave is before you. The path to her you must know, somewhere within you. You have to follow that path. It's like Faline, right? You felt that connection to Faline? Why can't you feel it for Adslave, too? Is it the universe? Does the stupid universe hate you like that... no. Nope! You're being foolish, Lucy. You're being foolish indeed.

You're...

You need to connect to her the same way you've connected to all of them. You need to flip the chessboard around, and look at the position of the game from Adslave's eyes.

You expand your inner world; world painted in infinite black cosmos you're cast in stark relief, this creature of gold, and you turn because suddenly you feel that connection to her, that golden connection, you realize Adslave wouldn't be there at all, you know who Adslave is———

You know that Adslave wouldn't leave you just like that! And that's why you turned, and that's how Adslave too who's lit in this gold light nearly—almost—falls onto you, falls onto your shoulder and clutches your uniform and breathes heavily, because of course she does, she's out of breath, you ran...

And the black cosmos around you fades away.

The weave of your inner world in which your chorus is visible, overlayed atop the two of you, proof of your connection.

She's really...

Golden, even cast in the light of fluorescents from above.

Her fingers, tightly grasping your uniform, just below your neck and just below your chest, compress. She breathes heavily, again, pushes those glasses on her head, steadies them. Steadies

herself. She takes a breath and she's obviously gonna say something and her body pulls up, it tightens, and then she lets it out, panting, is she out of shape?—sorry, you wince at yourself—

"A-Agnes," she says. "—Lucy."

You look down at golden Adslave.

"I'm sorry," you say.

"Why did you run away from me?"

"I'm sorry," you say. "I, I thought I should..."

"..."

You choke—bite at your lip and look away, you're locking up...

"Lucy?"

Your voice comes out wrong for the beginning—the beginning of this instance of vocalization nearly completely silent—

"—Yes...?"

"We're friends, right?"

"Y—yes..."

She pulls at you, pulls herself up so that she's able to—look, rotate her head, see it turn—until she's staring up at you—

"Don't do that, then?"

You're still looking away, and that's wrong, right? It's not a thing a friend does... so, you turn your head degree by degree, radians rippling away——



"Don't do that, Lucy!"

You understand. You understand her, looking into her face like this! You...

You did that, right? It's your fault she's upset with you.

But you can't lose hope, because of all of the other Lucies inside of your head...

Oh! You're crying! Tears are in her eyes and they're also in yours! You feel... you feel sorry! You're sorry. You're apologetic Lucy! Apologetic planet of Lucys hurtling through space, incoming collision imminent, immanent—boom! You're crying now and you hold to you Adslave, who herself holds onto you.

"I—I'm sorry," you say. "I'm really sorry. It won't happen again. It really won't! I promise! I'll try!"

"I-I try to treat you with kindness, like a friend," says Adslave.

"I know," you say,

"So do it back for me! W-we're friends!"

There wasn't, in retrospect, more that needed to be said. You kept going, maybe, you cried and you said sorry. Because it was your fault! And you won't do it again. And maybe Adslave kept going too, but she had made her point, hadn't she? Yes...

The two of you held, hold each other.

You feel sick touching her, but she wants to be with you. Even though you thought those things about her. You're vile, but maybe she forgives you for that? She's quivering in your arms, and you look at her, and you feel how the weight of her body hangs off of you. It was a shock, right? It must have been a shock for her... in her inner world, you picture it right now—her friend left her, right?

"I don't know," you say. "I'm sorry. I'm really sorry. I did evil stuff, and I thought..."

You just have to learn to do better.

You have to learn to be better.

You have to learn to be human.

You need to learn to construct the inner worlds of everyone on this planet. Because if you can understand them, you can make yourself understandable to them. You can finally understand Faline San, even. You don't comprehend her inner world, yet... but it's possible to understand her. It's possible.

It's possible to understand Faline San.

Those are words you need to repeat to yourself, over and over, infinite matrices of Understanding Faline San stretching out into the distant horizon.

This is a story about people who eat, right? Consume them and gain access to their inner world. Make them part of you such that you're able to understand them. Eat them to be them to know them. You have to eat Faline San. You have to eat her spirit.

You've eaten Adslave already.

You can eat Faline San; it's possible.

"Evil stuff...?"

You look up and at the clock.

Evil stuff...

You can't tell her about it...

[ ] You shouldn't.

And after school, **[ ] want to hang out with Adslave?**

---

author's note

Thread comments

#306 · PeepTheSheep · Mar 22, 2026 at 3:17 PM

[X] Hang out with Adslave

#307 · katk · Mar 22, 2026 at 3:52 PM

[X] You shouldn't.

[X] Should you?

[X] You shouldn't! You can't let yourself make the wrong mistake for the right reasons. (Or would it be the right mistake for the wrong reasons? Wrongright, rightwrong, heterodox discombobulate...)

[X] But Adslave asked? You should do what Adslave asks you to Lucy because you're friends right?? And friends communicate with each other. No, *humans* communicate! To err is human: the Pope said that, right? It's really normal to do evil stuff in the past as long as you own up to it and show you're sorry. Adslave won't think you're abnormal for that! So you should...

[X] You...

Ah... I guess I don't know what you should do...

Well, I was thinking, maybe—maybe eating isn't enough to understand someone? Or, it might be dangerous to understand everyone through eating, I mean. When you ate that bird, all you did was vomit it back up! That wasn't good. It hurt Nina and Feline and probably Adslave, and even though you decided not to hurt him that one time it wound up hurting Piggy too. And it hurt you—that's not good, either. If you eat everyone without thinking, you'll go on hurting, and this will all have been for nothing...

So you can't eat things if you're just going to throw them back up. You have to—digest them, right? Chew them up really good and turn them into paste, into waste. That's definitely normal! Some people do it every day.

I'm sorry, I know I'm taking up way too much space... you don't know me like I know you... and neither of us know that much about anyone else, either. We want to, though, right? We want to know people we don't know, and the people we already know we want to understand. Adslave... we don't understand her yet, I don't think. But we want to, and because we want to, we can! I know it'll come to pass. You know it too, right Lucy? Through all the confusing chaotic mess crowding your head and your insides and every Lucy ever, don't you know for an absolute fact that you super duper **[X] want to hang out with Adslave?**

#308 · clswtzing · Mar 22, 2026 at 4:55 PM

LOVE

#309 · TheMaskedReader · Mar 22, 2026 at 6:30 PM

[X] You know my thoughts about honesty, I've said them enough.

[X] Not here, not now.

[X] But she wants to know.

[X] Not like a floodgate letting loose - But it's OK to relieve the pressure a little bit.

[X] After all - What are friends for?

[X] You should hang out with Adslave.

#310 · LuxuryLore · Mar 22, 2026 at 6:57 PM

[X] Consult the Adslave you've eaten; would it be okay to tell her?

[X] Either way, let's hang out with Adslave after school.

[X] Ganbatte. Dattebayo.

#311 · SpinsterOfWays · Mar 22, 2026 at 7:24 PM

[X] Bravo, Lucy.

[X] Let her know how you feel.

[X] If it's too hard to understand her, use the inner world you've eaten. Use Eatslave.

[X] Understand that a sham can have its uses. Use the fake to understand the real.

[X] Move forward, with her.

050 / -3 - Eternal love and ever-loving friendship forever

You're slipping away, into the tides of Faline San. The world's id and malice swarming around you strips your body bare and thus you tighten the protective cloak so that you can't be seen or hurt. But that's not right, is it? AT field delenda est. Adslave pressing into you like this, holding and hugging. She's here for you. We're here for you.

Even though the world is like Faline San, it doesn't mean you have to hide yourself away.

Adslave's putting in so much effort to break the wall down. It's cute, isn't it? Don't you love her for it? Isn't she a good friend, a cute girl doing all these things to touch the heart and mind of a malaised, sick girl... a girl who said she would try, right? You will try. You don't need this push from everyone else... you don't need it, you love them for it, but what you will do here will be the result of your *own action* and your *own agency*.

You are Lucy and no other.

"Yes," you say... "they were, were pretty bad, yeah,"

"I forgive you for what you've done," Adslave says. "I-if this is about your past, a-and Agnes and all of that—"

"I-it's not," you say, with a tilt of your head that cuts and slices through the air in a ramrod-straight two-dimensional curve—the crowd melts past the two of you.

When's school? Spindly clock's fingers answer the question: twelve minutes (three days) to the promised time.

"Then...?"

What if you told her? What if you told her now? "**[X] Not here, not now**"—you're making your own choices, **TMR**. If she presses for the answer, you'll tell her. Alright? It's *your* choice. You are Lucy—it is Lucy's choice.

Adslave, decoupling from you, to look at you with concern, contact against your body is slightly melting away—isn't it funny? What those brains told you?

You reach your hand toward her, long fingers spidering outward to grip, punch slightly against the fabric of her schoolgirl uniform. Your first-person POV camera shaky and wobbly, snag! You're snagging Adslave, tehe!

She looks down at your grip against your clothes and then looks up back at you.

"It was evil," you say. "I don't want to hurt you..."

"Do you," She stops. No, you see her shake her head a little bit, it's weird, she's picking up on the feeling of offness from you. "Can you tell me anyway?"

...

Ah...

Well, she did ask directly... didn't she...?

Haha.

Well, you guess there's no avoiding it, right? To be honest with her. Fully honest. Honesty is how you'll get the best outcome, right? You say it robotically, pushing through the feeling of a social faux pas: your mouth moves manually to sound out each individual morpheme of the words: you watch her: "I masturbated."

———A sudden upshift in intensity; her head lolls, she looks away, down, there's a weird feeling between the two of you, what is that? She brings in a shuddering breath, you watch her in hyperfocus, your intent vision magnifying every observed detail 100x. Her chest—rises—falls—quickly—? What's she reacting like that for? Oh, you didn't make it clear—? You open your mouth, to say more, kind of shifting your gaze downward and smiling before she says—

"U—um. Y-yeah. I, I, I do too, I guess? Um. Um. Lucy, why..."

You didn't expect it to be so weird someone like Adslave wouldn't get it... doesn't she say all that racist stuff about hating women and laugh at videos of Korean people dying? Isn't she a chud foidcel, doesn't she have immunity to the virus? No, wait, model her inner world... flip the chessboard around and look at it from her view. Make incongruent information harmonious with the whole.

Maybe it's because those videos of Korean people dying are so distanced from Adslave's material reality that to her it's like it doesn't matter? Even though it does matter, it's something that exists in this world as an arrangement of atoms, it doesn't matter to Adslave, because of how far away it is from her lived reality.

Because she's only viewing this stuff through a peephole where she can interpret it the most palatable way possible in *her* reality, when she views it as a *fantasy*, it's good and amusing to her. But when she's met with something that can't be interpreted in a palatable way in *this* reality, she reacts like a normal human would? So this 'weird' thing is still 'weird' to Adslave. Maybe it's not that she has an immunity to 'real' 'weird' things, but that she considers or interprets all of those things *you* consider 'weird' and *also* 'real' in a different way, that makes those things less 'real,'...?

"To you," you say.

"Oh," says Adslave.

Oh.

"I won't, anymore," you say.

"No," says Adslave. "That's—th—that's really flattering, Lucy, I, um, you don't have to stop or anything. Or." she says.

"What do you..."

Think about it?

"I think it's," says Adslave, "nice, it's, s-sorry, ah, f-frick, um, have to switch to a different..."

"Do you..."

"I, uh. You can keep doing it... you should, I mean, it's good that you..."

"Do you feel that way about me?" you say.

"I, um," says Adslave. "I like you a lot,"

"I'm not in love with you or anything," you say. "I love Faline still..."

"Yeah, that's," Adslave...

She looks...

Wounded...?

"I, uh..." you say.

"Um, it's not like it's like you love them if you aren't kissing them, right..."

Adslave looks to the side, and slowly, without stuttering...

"What do you mean by that, Lucy."

"We could," Lucy says. "We..."

"I, I,"

"I'll stop, then," says Lucy. "If you don't want to. Feeling that way. ... Ma-"

"D-don't say it," says Adslave. Don't say that word. Don't say anything like it. Don't talk about it, euphemistically, dysphemistically, don't say the word. She regards the floor: before her. Lucy out of view...

"I'll stop."

"Don't," says Adslave, pleading. Is it, it is, she wants Lucy to feel that way. Yes, she does. She likes it when this other girl feels this way. Even if she doesn't feel that way herself maybe? Or maybe she does? Maybe she needs to have it pulled out of her. Maybe...

"Well, if you don't want to. Feel the same way."

"I," says Adslave. "It's not like

"I don ' t ? Y——Y eah, yeah , it's not like I couldn't, in that hypothetical,"

Lucy says: "It's not like you couldn't..."

"It's not like..."

Dotdotdotdotdotdot. Six steps split between each of them unevenly, sporadically, Adslave's against the wall? It's not like she couldn't. It isn't.

"You don't not feel that way about me?"

"Yeah," says Adslave.

Milling students chatter offstage. Distanciation (a theater term, division of actor from the role they play); that emotion Adslave holds inside her own inner world (try rendering it in your head) doesn't match up to what she acts out in real life. The cards she selects are not representative of her real hand. That's the cool thing about consciousness, right? If you're underwater, since you're conscious, you don't have to drown, because you can consciously stop yourself from breathing. Adslave is consciously stopping herself from breathing right now.

"We're really good friends, right?" says Lucy.

What does Adslave say? Probably something like 'yeah.' They are! Adslave really cares about Lucy. Adslave really does want Lucy to feel that way about her. She won't be left at all like this. They're just friends, even if they talk about this stuff [euphemistically].

"I really love you, Adslave," says Lucy after a pause. What's happening inside of Lucy's head? She talks—she pauses—her movements and actions are sometimes schizophrenic in disjunct. She's been like this for a while, now...

Adslave loves you too, Lucy...

"Thank you for being my friend, Adslave," says Lucy.

051 / -3 - We're here for you.

School's over. You and Adslave are released from your shackles. She's kind of smiling, which is good! You're smiling too. You're pretty happy. It's nice, that... that you can love Faline, and Adslave doesn't have to love you, but you can be good friends, right? And you can be good friends...

Scene: you're both walking. You decided that you'd go to Cana's house. Adslave knows the way.

You, philosophically: "Do you have goals in life, Adslave?"

Adslave: "I..."

You: "Sorry, I know that's kind of a big question... I mean, like, do you have any dreams for the future?"

Adslave: "I, um..."

You: "Oh, um, don't fall behind! Here, I can hold your hand, to make sure I don't get ahead of you..."

Adslave: "O-oh, thank you, Lucy..."

You: "What's wrong?"

Adslave, stammering: "O-oh! N-nothing's wrong! Seriously! I'm just kind of tired out from school today, haha. Hah."

You: "Oh... okay, I guess!"

Adslave: "..."

You: "..."

Adslave: "..."

You: "Do you have a favorite color?"

Adslave: "Um... dark blue, I think...?"

You: "Okay."

Adslave: "..."

You, after a pause, modeling what Adslave thinks about your 'Okay' in your inner world: "That's nice."

Adslave: "Is it?"

You: "It's really nice. It's a really nice color! Mine is,"

You, thinking: "..."

You, having ascertained that the opposite of the color red (a very violent color) is green: "Green."

Adslave, thinking about her own eye color: "Oh!"

Adslave: "Like my eyes...?"

You: "Oh, yeah! I guess your eyes are green! It's a really pretty color."

Adslave: "..."

You: "Do you have a favorite food?"

Adslave: "Uh..."

Adslave, feeling a little more into conversation: "H-hah! Fat girl. I don't like food..."

You, thinking about how that explains how small she is and how hard and bony her body is beneath her clothing: "..."

You, thinking about how you can't eat normal food: "..."

You, thinking about how you haven't responded yet: "Oh... why?"

Adslave: "Aaaah, well, th-there are minorities involved in some part of the process, right?"

You, nodding sagely: "Yeah! They're covered in rock dust and stuff so I understand why you'd be scared of contamination!"

Adslave: "Huh?"

You: "—?"

Adslave: "D—did you get 'miners' from 'minorities'?"

You: "..."

The camera breaks free from its position, two figures' shadows against the asphalt of the street, rotates to view the two of you—Adslave giggles a little bit, covers her mouth with her hands, laughs, laughs harder—voice snaps, hey, that's similar to laughter! Oh, you look at her, she's crying. Adslave's crying.

"I'm sorry," you say. "I didn't know the difference," you say.

"I don't want to talk to you," says Cana.

"Why?" you say.

She closes the door and locks it.

You knock on it. Nope!

You knock on it again. Nope!

You knock on it a third time. Nope!

You ring the doorbell. The door unlocks and opens.

"Dude," says Cana. "This is my house. Me and mine. Children are sleeping."

"But I want to be your friend," you say.

"Can you just go away?" says Cana. "I really don't want to see you unless we're doing drugs. And even then."

"We can do drugs," you offer.

"Oh my god," says Cana.

"We could go drink something together and make friends over that," you say.

"Drink what."

"Water..."

She moves to close the door...

"Wait," you say, taking a gamble. "Do you play video games."

Cana pauses. Her eyes narrow. She tilts her head.

"Yeah," she says.

"Alright," you say. "Let me try and beat you. At a video game."

"Beat me, huh," says Cana. "Will you admit that you were lying in the girlrotting argument if I win here?"

"It's whatever to me," you say. "Sure. I'll admit it now, even, as long as you let me play against you..."

"Alright," says Cana shortly. "Let me get ready."

"Ready?"

When Cana opens the door again she's not in a schoolgirl uniform. No; black frills and lace with a tight corset, fangs, a puffy black coat, what the hell? She's not a goth, she's not any sort of fashion you know. She has thick black circles under her eyes; she regards you half-lidded, beckons,

"What are you?" innocently you ask.

"I'm a wolfpire," Cana says. "Me and mine are wolfpires."

"What's a wolfpire?" innocently you ask.

"It's like a vampire plus a wolf. The coat, right? That's wolf. Like, damn, look at the real fur and everything," she seems appreciative, genuine, is she losing herself in her ardor? You giggle. How cute!

"The corset. That's vampire. Lady vampires wear corsets."

"N-not the fangs?" Adslave says, from behind.

"Nah, that's both."

"What game are we playing?" you ask.

"Limbus Company," says Cana. "It's a 2023 Japanese tactics RPG. It was originally planned to be a full-on management simulator where you could manage multiple departments and stuff but it

got downsized to a tactics RPG gacha game to make the developers—Purojekuto Muuno—more money."

"What?" you say.

"Y-you like tactical games?" says Adslave.

"Love 'em," says Cana. "XCOM. Fire Emblem. Disgaea... throw them at me. I'll beat anything. You know, my uncle's a streamer, that's where I got it from. He goes by Hague, look him up, really great streamer, he has these ski glasses that you totally can't miss. He's really famous, specializes in Fire Emblem. I'm a streamer myself. I like tactics games because I like to shepherd me and mine, right? But I can't just be like my uncle. I've been playing a lot of gacha tactics games recently, and I think that's my niche. I mean, my channel's growing fast, right?"

"I-is it because of the cleavage?"

"Anyway, Limbus Company doesn't have a multiplayer mode. So we'll speedrun Refraction Railway. That'll be how we compete."

She loads up the game and you stare at the UI. It's baffling.

"Go ahead," she says.

You place your hand on the mouse and move it around the screen.

"The goal of a Refraction Railway clear is low turns. Line 5's first part, which is the one we'll do, it'd take too long to do all three, is a total of... one, two, three, four fights," (she counts on her fingers) "so the optimal clear is only four turns."

"Okay, I'll get it in four," you say. "Watch me."

You die to a teddy bear. A big teddy bear, with nails stuck all over him. But it's a teddy bear...

"That was really hard," you said.

"Okay," says Cana. "Watch this."

She sits down, lowers a black visor over her eyes. "Locked in bro."

"What?" you say.

"Turn one. We use the counters on our Heishou units to give them their unique buffs for turn two. Corrode Sunshower on Lantern Yi Sang rest in peace Korea to kill three sinners to gain EGO resources." The game plays out—"turn two. Kill Lantern Yi Sang by taking the two-coin bear attack. Mao Faust counter. Heishou Ryoshu and Outis come in, use skill three. Skill one on Lord Hong Lu to keep rupture stack. Turn three. Mao Faust counter into cloudsplitter combo," she prattles, eldritch combinations of words present in no religious tome, no book published before the twenty-first century. Adslave hangs back and you watch with horror, fascination.

"What..." you say.

The game plays out. Goes on, and on, and on. She kills everything systematically, dismantling it all, fight two obliterated in the span of one turn, fight three obliterated in one turn, fight four—two turns—seven turns total.

"World-record perfect," says Cana.

"How do you even play the game like that?" you say. "That's so much."

"She's him," says Adslave from the background...

"I'm the niece of the Hague. How else would I play a tactics RPG?" Cana proudly poses...

You pause. Then you lean forward and say:

"W-well, if it's like that, if you're that good.... then, then—!

"Then teach me! Teach me, seriously! I'd like to learn!"

She stops. "To, to learn?"

You grin.

"I want to learn how to play Limbus Company!"

---

author's note

Thread comments

#314 · katk · Mar 23, 2026 at 11:49 PM

I don't want to learn how to play Limbus Company...

#315 · TheMaskedReader · Mar 24, 2026 at 5:56 AM

I'm worried Lucy's hurt Adslave's feelings in a way nether of them really have the capacity to handle, and that this delve into escapism via a 3rd party is a mutual attempt to escape from the need to communicate.

It's easy to dive into things, material interests or hobbies, as a substitute for connection - Or as a shield, when you want to try and get a grasp on things in a setting with distance from the bluntness of direct communication. I've done that. It can help. I hope it does, in this case. Guess we'll see.

052 / -3 - LIMBUS COMPANY RR5 WORLD RECORD 17 TURN SPEEDRUN (skip to 17:38 for strat explanation)

There are seven sins. Wrath, sloth, pride, gluttony, envy, lust, and gloom. Where has greed gone? Purojekuto Muuno stripped it out entirely. The original list of deadly sins—Evagrius Ponticus's list—was based off of the three forms of temptation—–wait, no, let me start again.

Physical temptations include those produced by the nutritive, sexual, and acquisitive appetites.

Emotional temptations include those produced by the depressive, irascible, or dismissive moods.

Mental temptations include those produced by jealous, boastful, or hubristic states of mind.

Evagrius Ponticus trimmed down these nine to eight. Gluttony (as Lucy), fornication (as Lucy), greed (as Lucy), grief (as Lucy), wrath (as Lucy), dejection (as Lucy), boasting (as Lucy—wait?), pride. John Cassian, a student of Evagrius, translated his list of eight sins; dejection became sloth.

Pope Gregory I then in 1590 merged grief into sloth to create the common list of sins we see today. "—So, in Limbus Company, Purojekuto Muuno made the decision to replace greed with grief, which is rendered as gloom in-game." Cana explains, moving the mouse about. You don't understand. How is this relevant?

"Well, uh, it's to contextualize it all, isn't it? The tutorial really emphasizes these sins and their associated colors, get it?" The tutorial, in which you learn that 1. every skill has a different color corresponding to a sin affinity and 2. chaining same-color skills can massively power them up —"Totally wrong. Sin management is pretty damn unimportant in Limbus Company. You only really have to think about them if you need to use E.G.Os, get it? Sin resonance (that's the word for chaining two or more) does basically nothing stats-wise." And an E.G.O is—"A special cutscene attack that you can do."

Your head spins. Why had you even asked if she could teach you? But it seems like she's getting really into it now, doesn't it? And Adslave's—what—you look around for her—oh, you see her, she's looking at the wall right now. Not, like, looking at it looking at it, you mean she's standing in front of it staring at it, leaning her head on it (exhausted), kind of like she got grounded by an evil grandma—'Stand in the corner!'

Cana with a finger held aloft continues. "Anyway, using a skill of a color gives you a token of that color. That you can spend for E.G.O uses. And there are these passives, right? That you can *also* activate with reso—wait, don't look away!"

"This stuff is pretty complex," you say.

"It's not," says Cana. "It's just basic video game stuff."

"I haven't ever played a video game," you say. "I mean... what, did you think I was like that at all? No, I'm just a normal person..."

Cana purses her lips, looks off to the side. Limbus Company momentarily is forgotten.

"I kind of..."

You tilt your head. What?

"Me and mine kind of take issue with that," says Cana. "The insinuation I'm not a normal person cause I play video games. I mean, video games are things most people play, that's one thing. But even if it was something that, like, statistics said only 10 percent of people did, that's a statement I still wouldn't respect or accept."

"Oh," you say. "Um, sorry. I guess you're right. That's not really a nice thing to say."

"Mmmmm..."

"What?"

"Aren't you the weird one? What are your hobbes, Agnes? You do drugs with your girlfriend and what?"

"H-huh? No, I mean, I don't really, like..."

I don't really do stuff that most people don't do...

"You don't really do anything at all?" says Cana. "You know, even if it's not a hobby that most people do, it's still not abnormal, right? It's just a thing that *you* don't do. I mean, like..." she pauses. "Just. It's more normal to do stuff in the first place. If you aren't even enjoying your life like that then what defines it?"

Huh?

You open your mouth, prepare to respond, respond honestly: but you question: what defines your life? You don't create anything. You don't have fun and you're not really a fan of anything, not to the point where you can make your life about it. You aren't like Cana who dresses up like a vampwolf or werepire or whatever she said—that brings her meaning? Your meaning is...

You look down to the left, smile softly, oh! How sad are your eyes. You say: "I guess my friends do."

Cana's lips press together.

"You and yours..."

"Y-yeah. Yeah! Me and mine! I really love my friends, and that's a fine meaning to have, isn't it?"

"They go away, though."

"But so do your video games. So does your love for your video games. A-and, it's like..."

"You couldn't move onto a new friend, though, if you got bored of them," says Cana. "It would hurt a lot."

"Wouldn't you hurt if you had to give up your video games?" you say.

"I guess I would," says Cana. "... Limbus Company's a gacha game, get it? Gacha games have a point that they get to where the company stops producing content and then shuts it down... and you can't play it anymore."

"Even if you spent a lot of money on it?"

"Even if you spent a lot of money on it. Anyway, this point is called end of service. EOS. I guess I expect I'll be pretty sad when Limbus Company hits EOS."

"Because you spent money on it, though," you say. "You're losing some of your stuff permanently."

"That's whatever to me," says Cana.

"Why?"

"Money is whatever. It can be used to purchase some temporary fun. But then we die and none of our money or fun matters."

"But dying takes a lot longer than gacha EOS, right? I mean, a human lifetime has to be longer, because gacha games have already hit EOS within our lifetime..."

"Yeah. Most gacha games hit EOS in three years." says Cana.

"I don't get it," you say.

"Well, anything else you buy with money also only provides a temporary bit of fun. Even if it's something 'permanent,' you can't ever expect joy to last forever. It'll go away. So I'd rather spend all of my money on stuff that I enjoy. A brilliant new thing every two weeks to buy and feel that new-toy feeling again. It's all equal. Ten dollars for an anime girl or fifty thousand for a new car. It's the same feeling, and that feeling is all I need from life..."

"That doesn't really seem normal to me," you say.

"I dunno. Maybe it is, maybe it isn't."

"It seems really sad," you say. "It's like..." you think for a moment. "It's like the hierarchy of needs... isn't it? You're spending that money on personal fulfillment when you should save it to spend on all the things you really need."

"But don't you wanna be totally free? Don't you just wanna... go apeshit? Buy anything, everything, as long as you can afford it, indulge in that life forever?"

"Well..."

You think for a moment.

"I do," says Cana. "I don't care about what happens when I die, or even if I die. It's kind of immaterial to me! Spend money, yo."

"I just want to be secure," you say. "I didn't really used to want that..."

Cana shrugs.

"I don't really believe in security. Or I do, I guess, but it's not a thing that's valuable to me. Wouldn't want to have a secure but unhappy life, right? Nah, cram that stuff! Stuff your life and existence full to the brim, bursting, overflowing with joy and happiness."

"Is it really joy if you aren't satisfied with any of it? If you need to keep rebuying it over and over?"

"I'm happy," says Cana.

She's happy. That's a description of her inner world, isn't it? It's a form of communication. She's telling you about her own experience, her own internal workings... but you just can't really model that. You can't understand, as you are now, as a human, about...

That's not right. Not as you are now. No, this conversation is a replay, isn't it? Cana is closer to the way you used to be. How were you in the past? Who were you? Who was that Lucy?

What did she want? Haha... you remember it clearly, right? From the beginnings of your memory, which Faline San restored to you, you wanted Faline San. You were obsessed with Faline San! You are obsessed with Faline San. And so Faline San was like Cana's joy, right?

Another Cana appears in front of you inside. You can see into this one's brain, though. You can see her inner world, which you detail like an architect working from life. Cana wants the feeling of Faline San being close to her, but instead of Faline San being close to her, it's the feeling of spending money on gacha games to experience more joy than what's available in her life normally. It's like... everything else in the world was a gray blur, right? That's how it was for you. How it could be for Cana too.

And so... Cana probably thinks she's happy. But it's probably because stuff hasn't hurt her a lot yet, right? She thinks she's okay with the way she is. And if you jolt her out of that, she'll crumple, just like you did...

"You are happy," you say to her. "I get it now, I guess. Sorry, I just had to... think about you for longer. Um, Adslave?"

"Yeah," Adslave says, she turns or had turned around, "I-I'm sorry, I was just resting."

"I assume you want to go home," you say, not assuming this but more kind of just providing an excuse so that Cana isn't mad at you,

"Uh," says Adslave.

"Alright... sorry, Cana! My friend is tired, so we're probably gonna go... but I feel like I understand you better. Limbus Company is available on phone, right? Maybe I can make some progress and we can talk about it again soon?"

"Oh," says Cana. "Uh, yep, yeah, no problem. It is. I, uh..." she sits awkwardly. "I hope you have a good day, I guess. You're kind of... weirder than I thought, but I mean, not in a bad way, like what I thought. You admit that you were lying back in the girlrotting sesh, right?"

You shrug, grab Adslave's hand, move to the door, "I mean, probably, anyway, see you, Cana!"

"We should have a sleepover," you say, excitedly, to Adslave. "Cause we're friends!!!"

"My parents still aren't back," says Adslave. "I, uh, guess they went out on a surprise vacation, or something," she says. "They aren't really responding to any calls or anything..."

"That's good, right?" you say. "That means we can have it. I can deal with my mom and everything. Well, um, if you want to have a sleepover, of course!"

"I, uh—," says Adslave, "I-I mean, yeah! I *do*," she says. That's really awesome! Really awesome.

"Then it's a date," you say. "I'm gonna go home and get ready, then! I'll be at your house by seven!"

She stands with her mouth open—you smile—wave—disappear around the curve.

Your inner world opens up. You look at the chorus, scan them, satisfied.

"Interlocucy," you say, calling her out of the void. A new Lucy appears. You step back and allow her to take the Lucy position.

"Hi," you say to the chorus. "This is Interlocucy. She's going to be handling everything when it comes to hearing you guys for a little while. New mental division, yay!" You shake your hands. Is anyone excited? You're pretty excited.

"I can hear the murmurs and stuff... even if you aren't telling me this stuff, I can hear it, you know? Um, so this is Interlocucy. She'll evaluate what you say... and bring it to me in a way I can digest, when I can digest it. And she'll filter out stuff where it's like, oh, this is just a bit of a distraction, or maybe I don't need to hear it right now. Like I said, you guys aren't gonna have to give me a talking-to anymore. I'll make you proud, right? I'll try!"

You smile. "So yeah. Just a bit of a progress report. Not taking away my ability to pop in or something but I'm *probably* just gonna be creating more people inside me so that I can read their inner worlds. Umm, unless you do something with those we shouldn't have to talk much."

You raise your hands. "Oh, this isn't because I hate you or anything. It's just how it is, right? I mean, I don't want you guys to be offended. So I'm still *listening* to you... it's just, Interlocucy!"

She pauses. "It's no different from before, in the end, really. It's not like I've always given you guys all of my thoughts... especially not recently, but also not back in Act 1 (so to speak), when I was dissociating from all those horrible things I did... anyway, um, if you have anything to say, she's here to listen to you. So yeah... that's all. Bye bye!"

Bye bye! You wave. Snap your fingers, the inner world dissolves——you tilt your head and smile, cute!

.....

"Hi, everyone," says Interlocucy plaintively.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#317 · TheMaskedReader · Mar 25, 2026 at 7:55 PM

[X] I know you/she could hear me. I just try to reserve direct communication for actionable plans and/or directly prompted analysis...

[X] Anyways, she/you are gone, so, hi, Interlocucy. Nice to meet you!

[X] I suppose in terms of information - I feel like the analysis of Cana isn't too far off the mark, but is maybe making a lot of assumptions. She certainly places a lot of value on gacha games through the lens of hedonism, but also on other things - Like her uncle, or being a wolfpire, or her family(?), maybe? But that's life, being unsure about people, and I'm glad empathy is being applied - That's how it's trained after all.

[X] I also worry that you/she is sending some really mixed signals to Adslave right now. Like, extremely mixed, in ways that are going to boil over. She might take what is being said incorrectly - or correctly, but act on it in ways you/she don't intend. Maybe she'll make an advance on you/her. I don't intend this as a condemnation, prediction, or talking-to, but as an attempt at preparation for a

potential scenario. Do you/her have a plan if that happens? My suggestions will vary wildly depending on what you/her want to happen, hence why I'm not really proposing an actionable plan here - You/her are sending a lot of mixed signals internally as well, and that's fine, but if action is provoked, you/her should have a goal in mind. Do you/her want this to be a romantic date with Adslave if she takes it there or takes it that way? Or do you/her want this to strictly be platonic, even if Adslave wants things to escalate? You/her should, if nothing else, set that boundary in your/her mind ahead of time.

053 / -3 - Unmitigation

You're named Interlocucy and you're here to do a really good job, aren't you?

You bop your head to the beat. You smile, hum to yourself, on the Lucy podium. You're named Interlocucy... and you're here to do a good job.

That Lucy is your creator. She gave you these administrative privileges over the other Lucies. Because she *believed* enough to create you. Because she created you with love. You're named Interlocucy, and you act as the gateway between all Lucies.

You're clad in a black tuxedo, red tie. Formal outfit for a formal interpreter. Here to listen, and judge Lucies' words over-banal or uber-flowery. Music plays in your ears, blasted at high volume from pastel-pink headphones; look! cat ears sprout from the hoop overhead.

Eeeeep! The music stops! Interlocucy, listen up. **TMR**'s speaking! *That Lucy's* first true friend among all the fractured brains. You can afford her some listening, can't you...? She's speaking, she's speaking! Choose one, Interlocucy. Brackets or parenthesis. Brackets or parenthesis...

< I know you/she could hear me. I just try to reserve direct communication for ACTIONABLE PLANS and/or directly prompted analysis... >

Ahh! You cover your ears! Cover your headphones! Which only serves to make the sound louder!! You wince, she keeps talking. The more she talks the louder it gets! Brackets or parenthesis! Brackets or paren—

(X) I also worry that

Parenthesis. P.

(P) for **(p)**ocket veto. Sound fades. You take a sharp breath in... why was that so loud? Why was **TMR** yelling at you so hard? It doesn't make sense, and it isn't right... it's like a sudden betrayal to do that, right? Those pastel-pink headphones bounce, the insides light up, and the music resumes, but you still feel...

You share all the memories of Lucy. Of *that* Lucy, yes, but that Lucy isn't necessarily all Lucies. You're Lucy too, just a different type of Lucy. And **TMR** is a Lucy too, just an even more different type. Like how Maya is a Lucy, and the models of Cana and Adslave are Lucies, and... well, anyway. Because you share all of Lucy's memories, you know how weird it is... it really does feel like a betrayal! Like there's a war being waged between the two of you.

Hmmm...

The thing is that this connection between the chorus of Lucies and Interlocucy, you, well—it's all weirded out! It doesn't cohere with the reality that you remember Lucy perceiving. **TMR** wouldn't do that, would she? But she did. You can *perceive it,* clearly. What does it mean? How does this cohere with the theme of the narrative...?

You tap your fingers to the beat, and look at the chorus, and you tilt your head.

You.

You. You're Lucy. That Lucy we've always been following? Are you that Lucy?

You look down at your fingernails, long. Your gaze tracks, up, up, to the mirror in front of you, full-length. Your mother wasn't very resistant when you pressed her about letting you go... because you understood her, you understood that she was weak. That if you didn't let her impose on you, she wouldn't know what to do... because you understood her, you were able to get what you wanted from her.

You see Lucy in the mirror, or maybe you see Agnes. It's not super different in the end, right? These different arrangements of atoms aren't very different in the end. Any change in the world is just a change like any other change, a reorganization; any Lucy in the world is a Lucy just like any other Lucy, a reorganization and that's why

Even if you're just a change, that's fine.

You're still the same Lucy.

Because no Lucy is the same Lucy.

Not even the 'same' consciousness, tracked across two different seconds, is the same Lucy.

"I'm Lucy," you say aloud. "I'm Agnes," you say aloud. "I'm Cana. I'm Adslave. I'm Faline. I'm Maya."

None of it feels true, to you. You do feel more like Lucy than any of the rest! But really you're just you. Lucy is a convenient name for it all, but you aren't really Lucy...

You're not explaining this well, are you?

You're You.

You are the platonic ideal of You.

You are Youness itself. Your world revolves around You, as much as You'd like to understand others. In fact, even Your narration uses the word: You. This quest uses the word You. Not because it's a simple shorthand, easy for the chorus to understand, helpful for making them empathize with You! No. The fact that You are You is vital. How many sentences in *People Who Eat* start with the word You?

You look at the mirror again.

Unmitigation. Unmitigated you. ... Cut the philosophy, will you, Lucy?

Haha. You laugh at your own joke. It's kind of empty and quiet here without all the inner worlds you had bustling around. Interlocucy's doing her job, isn't she...? You created her for that reason... created a facet of you just so you could win some fight. You're so beautiful, Lucy. Beautiful Interlocucy.

It's time to get ready for Adslave, isn't it? It's time to get ready to go to the sleepover with Adslave. She's so nice and kind to you. You're happy with your friendship where it's at. You know she'd do what you tell her to do. You know that you like her a lot. You know that you can do what you want to her and she won't hurt you, even if she's upset. She'll think it's her fault if she does something wrong... she reminds you a lot of you in that regard.

"I love you, Adslave," you say, testing it out. No. It rings false! You don't feel that way about her. Not like that. You like her a lot but you don't love her like you do Faline. 'I love you, Faline—' you

almost say it, then you realize that it's self-evident. It's what you've done all this for. You can see proof that you love Faline; proof displayed in all the actions you took for her sake.

And Cana. Cana's nice, you guess. Maybe you can make her love you too. That could be nice. The brains had said before that they were worried about your relationship with Adslave, but she seems happy, just a bit tired—resting on the wall like that. You think for a minute—maybe it's because of you? She was probably unprepared for you to touch her like you did. You'll give her more warning next time so you don't wear her out.

You return to looking at yourself.

You're really doing it, Lucy. You're finding love in other people. You know, before, you would create models of people, like you did, and you would touch them like you did Adslave, seek warmth and connection, touch them like you did Adslave's model, but before her it wasn't ever real people, was it? Before her... you couldn't conceive of that kind of thing, could you?

Maybe it'd be more accurate to say you used to fantasize about it. Back before your brain was at the point it could handle proper 'models' of people! You would just create *images* of people for yourself.

But now you don't have to do that, do you? You don't have to find refuge in yourself. It's like **TMR** said... you can just reach for the stars, and pluck them out of the sky. No true effort required! Just fortitude.

Anyway.

Maybe tonight, you'll ask Adslave about what Faline did. You've been procrastinating on it. Tonight will be fun. You'll enjoy it. You make a vow to yourself you'll enjoy it. Eat her to be her to know her. Eat everything, pluck dreams from the chiaroscuro sky. Take what you want, Lucy... you are one of the people who eat, now.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#319 · TheMaskedReader · Mar 25, 2026 at 10:23 PM

[X] It seems like you're having some sensory issues, Interlocucy. Likely related to those headphones. Thematically, as requested, my guess is it's about perception and, frankly, self-denial by the...primary(?) Lucy.

Seems like we've been incentivized to keep our comments brief and to the point. I, as always, but especially now, encourage others to toss out their thoughts and ideas, given that!

#320 · katk · Mar 26, 2026 at 11:11 AM

Um. Hi. Interlocucy.

Wait, you can't hear us, can you... Or you can hear us too much, maybe? Sorry...

I get it. I get it. I'm used to being crowded out, by bigger people, and my own big words, haha, uh,

...You're still listening, right? Trying to, right? Even if there's no sound and no user's manual, you're reaching out, you're calling your area service provider, calling your state representative, calling Lucy,

letting yourself be on hold for us, right?

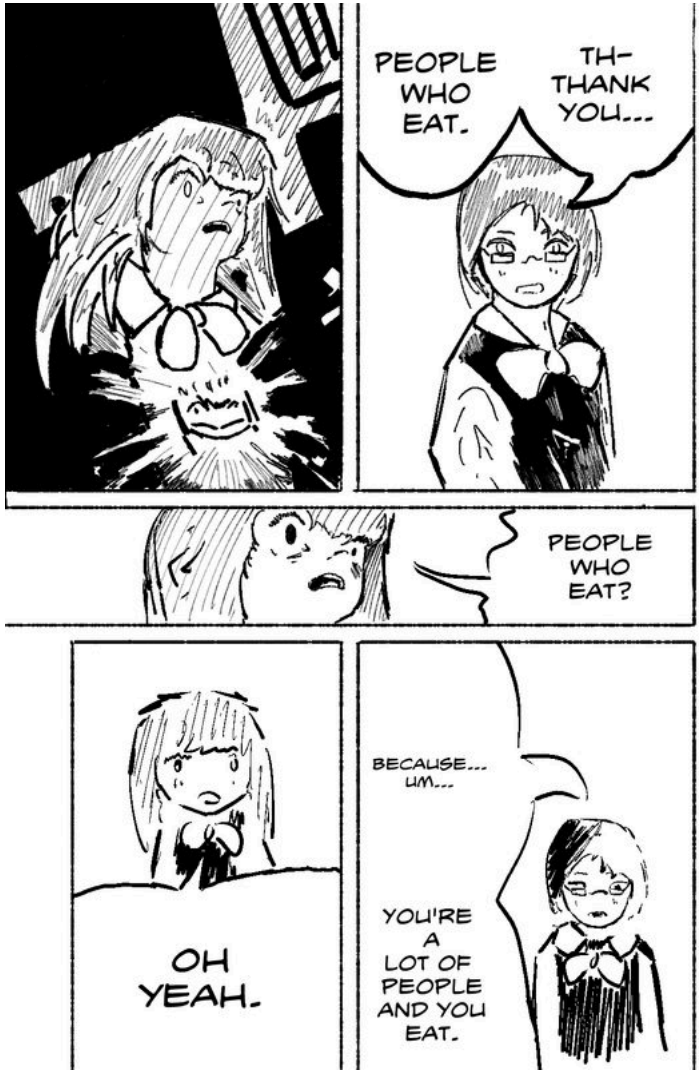
I hope so... I...

—She's incorrigible, isn't she? Just, —you know? Totally intransigent, self-sycophantic. Oleaginally she gifted us, 'Locucy, an OC Lucy, Inter, Circum, Dis—whoever! And left us! Echo chamber orchestra. Okay! Maybe that's what we deserve. I can be mad at her for the– the dishonesty, if nothing else! She makes it so obvious, really... She says we should talk to Interlocucy, but she won't even let us—"[VOTERESULT][X] Talk to Interlocucy[/VOTERESULT]"! See? And, with Adslave... does she think we didn't notice...? She's still shutting us out of her story... I know she wants to make her own way forward, but... it is so terrible to want to talk to her, to You, and not... you...

Sorry. I'm sorry Interlocucy. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

Um. You can mute all of this. It's not important.

#321 · clswtzing · Mar 26, 2026 at 12:18 PM


PEOPLE WHO EAT.
TH-THANK YOU...
PEOPLE WHO EAT?
OH YEAH.
BECAUSE... UM...
YOU'RE A LOT OF PEOPLE AND YOU EAT.

054 / -3 - Well to end it all surely

"Hi, Lucy," Adslave greets you at the door.

"Hey hey," you say. "My mom didn't provide any resistance at all. Looks like we're clear for tonight!"

"Your mom, huh," says Adslave...

"Mhm!"

She looks at you for a bit; green gaze lingers and then sweeps upward, scanning light piercing through the heavens—finally, desperate: "Kah... alright, in."

You and her step in. You and her process along the hallways and rooms of her empty house. You notice a raided pantry as you step through the kitchen toward the stairs. You lurch along progressively. What's that feeling in the air? There's a fire called holocaust, and wafting through time is its smoke named doom.

That's right, doom fills the air...

Your head bounces around not quite but like it's been severed from your body. Attached limply and inauspiciously to your head it bobbles, wobbles, you climb up the stairs with her and the uneasy feeling and gait intensifies. What is it? You watch her, but she seems fine, if slumped. The intensifying colors around you, red and black...

Adslave stops midway through walking up the stairs. You stop as well, so as not to run into her.

—And she resumes. The two of you round the corner. Adslave's room, with its blackout curtains, the computer a sole source of shining light which filters throughout the room, leaving the darkest and most secret spots bare of light or bared.

The two of you stand there, observatories. Pitter, patter; you step suddenly with Adslave's hand grasped tightly in yours toward her bed, turn around, and sit down...

The two of you sit on her bed together. She has sheets all of one color. Dark blue. Her blankets are pink and white, soft, soft enough to where you'd want to wrap one around your body and live in it for a little bit. Your eyes float up to Adslave. Passing over her legs, arms, her chest and her shoulders, collarbone, all extremities, erotic, culminating in—her eyes.

Which see you and are green. Her eyes are locked on to yours. Then, her gaze drifts away, to the right. She's reserved, still. Tired. She's tired... you wore her out. It's your fault...

You shake it away. Reach for the stars, Lucy! Try!

"I'm sorry for wearing you out," you say.

"I-it's alright," says Adslave, she doesn't look at you.

"Okay," you say happily.

"Um..."

"What did Faline do?" you interrogate her.

"Oh," says Adslave. "She pushed a little boy off the bleachers."

You're here to do a good job...

You slam your hands over your headphones. It merely amplifies the sound! You keep them on, in case the senseless noise abates, but it never does. This doesn't make sense! It doesn't make sense at all. You don't want to have to parenthesize them! Don't want to have to be Interlocucy. Is that really what must be done? Is that what must be done to stop the noise...?

Sensory issues. You aren't sure, but you thought you heard **TMR** say... sensory issues? You can't tell! You can't tell for sure. But if she did say so... **Katk**'s still talking, and all you can do is hear the senseless noise, as your eardrums bleed, bleed, burst, boil, pop! High-pressure blood coming from your eardrums! Melting like chocolate against sun-and-concrete gestalt. Aghh!

You have to parenthesize it. You can't parenthesize it! At least let her stop talking, first! At least let her stop talking...

Have to make a choice for the first one. You can't understand it, so you shouldn't let it through, right? You shouldn't let it through. P for parenthesis, p for pocket veto:

(X) It seems like you're having some sensory issues...

You can't hear it echoing around anymore! That's good, right? But **Katk** keeps going, and going and going, and you can't tell what she's saying! You can't tell! You can't tell with it being so loud...!!! You claw at your ears, trying to figure it out, trying to...

Wait...

Trying to do it yourself, right? What had *she* said? You have to put effort into communication, right? So maybe if you just try your hardest, you'll be able to make *something out?*

You focus. Focus hard, Interlocucy! You strain your mind and grit your teeth, and clouds burst in the air around you, and red blood bursts inside of your eardrums, inside of your headphones, staining black and pink red, maroon, it leaks out, out, burbling and torrential tide of blood that falls splish-splash on the floor—it's urgent, Interlocucy! You focus, because you're here to do a good job...!

<

< X >

<X> ... You're still listening, right?

She's long stopped speaking by now, but the echo is persistent! You can piece it together, Interlocucy! Cut through the storm and noise. Cut through it all. Listen to her echo! Listen to what she's left behind for you, right...? —**Katk** and **TMR** wouldn't do bad things, right? This has to be a mistake. Has to be a mistake!

The audio fuzzes. It's still fuzzing, just like before, still unintelligible, even when you listen...! The headphones! It's the headphones!!!

You claw at the headphones on your head...!

"We all know she did it, but that didn't change anything... Faline didn't get anything because of it. E-even though e-ve-ry-one *knows,* nothing happened to her..."

"How do you know...?"

"We just do," said Adslave. "I-it's been proven.. by other people... seriously, I wouldn't say these things if I didn't think they were true, right? And look at Faline. She looks like someone who'd murder someone else. A little boy. A little boy..."

Krrr. Tune the TV in to see the crime scene. Twisted little body, prepubescent. Red blood gouts from his head. So he isn't dead yet, right? Or is it just that a head wound bleeds more than anything else? Maybe they rushed him to the hospital in that flood of light and noise. Whether or not Faline did it, he's dead, right...? What does that mean, metaphysically...

What does that...

"Lucy?"

"Yes?" you say.

"What does it mean," begins Adslave. "W-what does it mean when you do that thing where, where you pause and go distant."

You turn your head to look straight into Adslave's eyes. "I'm talking to the people inside me. I have people. Up here. They tell me what things I should do and shouldn't do. But here I was just... imagining the crime scene, right?"

"Huh?"

"What was his name? The boy."

"I—"

"His body... I assume a fall from that height, it wasn't very broken at all, was it? He landed on his feet, broke his legs, maybe he spun backwards, hit his head on the dumpster. Oops! Gored! Brains splatter out everywhere, boy died dirt dyed grey matter dyed red." You make a violent gesture with your hands.

Adslave looks away from you. "Does it matter?"

"...?"

"What's happened has happened, right...? You, you, you don't need to know... s-such disturbing truths, do you? Can't it just remain fantasy in your head?" Ill, unformed...

You scoot closer to Adslave. "I guess I'm just curious?"

"It's not right to disrespect someone like that."

"Someone dead," you say. Your hips touch hers, your shoulder, your arm; they meet.

"Just a kid..." says Adslave.

"I'm going to touch you now," you say to her.

"Okay," says Adslave, and she closes her eyes.

author's note

Thread comments

#323 · TheMaskedReader · Mar 27, 2026 at 12:41 AM

I hope this doesn't make things worse.

[X] Take off the headphones!

#324 · katk · Mar 27, 2026 at 9:48 AM

[X] Take off the headphones. Get Lucy for help.

(X) - .- -.- . / --- ..-. ..-. / - .... . / .... . .- -.. .--. .... --- -. . ... .-.-.- / --. . - / .-.. ..- -.-. -.-- / ..-. --- .-. / .... . .-.. .--. .-.-.-(Take off the headphones. Get Lucy for help.)

<X> 01010100 01100001 01101011 01100101 00100000 01101111 01100110 01100110 00100000 01110100 01101000 01100101 00100000 01101000 01100101 01100001 01100100 01110000 01101000 01101111 01101110 01100101 01110011 00101110 00100000 01000111 01100101 01110100 00100000 01001100 01110101 01100011 01111001 00100000 01100110 01101111 01110010 00100000 01101000 01100101 01101100 01110000 00101110

One of those, hah. Should. Should work maybe. I hope.

055 / -3 - You (two)

Look. Watch it happen. Pull your eyes toward this moment and see before you, pinned before you—that's right, your arms extend down into the bed like tree trunks and *her* body is below yours and you straddle her belly, her head set askew looking at a point somewhere off in the distance that all the lines in this twisted four-point perspective scene bend towards; that's right: Adslave sees her vanishing point.

You fumble at the first button on her nightclothes. Slip plastic through slit and sift it to the side; you move down to another and do the same thing, faster this time. She's so warm! You notice as your hands brush against the smooth and soft of her skin, that she's warm. Not like you. Not like Lucy at all...

Complements. You do things for each other... it's really perfect, in a way. You like her a lot. It's just... she said she wouldn't be opposed to this, right?

You part the half of her shirt to the side.

Why does she look so limp?

"A... Adslave?" you say. "What's wrong?"

You say again: "Adslave?"

"Are you going to... do it...?" Adslave says. Her tone sounds controlled! You don't understand. But this is like consent, isn't it? She said that she wouldn't be opposed to doing it, didn't she? She said that?

You see the top half of her body bare before you except for underclothes.

"You're okay with this," right? "Right?"

The world around you is slipping from its hinges, and easier to notice now are the minute gaps in perception where it's all falling apart.

Adslave makes a head movement that looks like a nod to you.

Your fingers hook around the edges of her brassiere and you tug at it. Nothing comes undone so you pull harder, pulling Adslave's torso up too, limply like a puppet with its strings cut she's elevated—she flops back down as the clip on the back snaps. You remove it from her body.

"How do I do this?" you say. "Not like before, right? You didn't like before."

"You've done it already," says Adslave distantly. "It's okay."

It's okay, Lucy.

Three play at once in your head, no, four, no, five! Interlocucy, you're clawing at the headphones on your head, but it's no use. You can't just decide to remove that false filter, can you? If you want to change things about the way you perceive this world... you can't just decide that you're going to remove what's bad! You have to have help! You have to have help!

And so what? What are you going to do, Interlocucy? The only people in this inner world are you, you and the chorus, and the chorus—they only talk, right? They can't do anything, right? They aren't Lucies...

They aren't Lucies...?

Parenthesized! Parenthesized. Parenthesized. Parenthesized, and now only the original **Katk** message remains... it's all **K**! You're okay! It's okay, Interlocucy!

"K—kyaaahh!!"

You let out a shriek. "I can't!! I can't remove these headphones...!!! They're stuck here, I don't know how!"

You tug, and you tug, and you tug, and the more you tug the more they become a part of you, the more they hole up and shrivel up inside of your brain and prevent anything more from passing. An infantile sepsis. What's that sound? That echoing sound...? Blood! It's blood inside your headphones, filling up the vacuum-tight seal. It'll pop! You'll pop like a gory cherry crushed between gnashing molars! All because you didn't... parenthesize...?

"Help me, Lucy!"

Help...!

Your leg is in between Adslave's and that's all. You haven't gotten off once with her! Even though you guys have only done this twice, now, you've always been the one to help her...

"Adslave," you say. "Do you ever think about me when you touch yourself?"

Adslave sucks a breath in and her body trembles, which is weird, a weird response to have—considering you haven't really gotten started yet, right? Her hair is matted against her brow and her hands tremble against her belly, bare, and she looks off, toward the Adslave vanishing point.

Adslaves marching rank and file toward that nowhere in the distance...

"I, um," you say, in the silence. "I think about you. I thought about green grass and blue skies. And you..."

"I, I know," says Adslave. "You—said," says Adslave.

"Well, because you know it's something I want, is it okay if I, um, use you instead of trying to make you, um," you pause.

"Please just,

"Do what you want,

"To. To do," says Adslave.

"Okay," you say. You're still clothed—you're straddling Adslave's leg now, okay? Because your leg was there so that Adslave would feel pressure and something down there? But just above your knee, there isn't anything at all... and, you know.

Adslave's a girl...

You'd expect there to be *something*...

Because girls are ill like that... so gross! So cute... you close your eyes and shift your hips. Over Adslave's leg...

Adslave goes motionless and closes her eyes again just like at the beginning. From this point on she's a corpse. Her body, tense, undergoing rigor mortis; her warmth vampirized into your absorptive self. You make a sound as you continue to rub yourself on Adslave's thigh. Bestial. Girlish! Girls are ill like that... so gross! Adslave once said it didn't count as yuri if you weren't really a girl, right? You're an imitation girl.

(Maybe that's why Adslave is fine with it!)

M—maybe, you continue to think. Fabric foley sounds intensify.

You'd expect there to have been something on your leg, come through two layers of clothing. No, let's say it more clearly. You'd have expected Adslave to be a looooot wetter than she was, right? Don't look so aghast! You know how people's bodies are, don't you? You don't know *how*... but you do, don't you? You'd have expected Adslave to be readying herself for you, right? Like you are for her. You can feel it now, right?

"Do—do you want—to watch anime after this?" you say.

Adslave makes a little sound, and so you ignore her, and you keep doing it, and making your own little sounds. Death approaches. You stop, stop yourself, and still your legs tighten around Adslave's...

Adslave makes another little sound and her body shakes. And you tighten your leglock around her and fall, too, so that your face nestled is in the back of her hair. You hug her, satisfied, and stroke her body.

Your fingers move up to her face, to her cheeks. Oh, there's stuff there... saline solution. Water. Tears. She isn't crying, is she?

It would make sense, it just. No, it did occur to you, it was just... not the outcome...

"Adslave, I'm sorry," you say. "I can. I can make it up to you somehow. I can help you finish! That was selfish of me. Or I could draw you a picture, or... I could help you find your parents. Or anything... I really like you..."

Adslave's body shakes and she brings her arms up to cover her face, pushing past your fingers, your arms which fall down to her shoulders and throat. She continues to. To cry...

You don't want to think about this... you don't want to see her crying!

"What's wrong," you say. Are you being deliberately obtuse at this point? No... she's not saying what's wrong, is she? Your hands move downward around her chest and squeeze her close to you. But the very act of touching her there is—it's power, isn't it? It's...

"I—I just," says Adslave, finally...

"Just want to go to sleep—just want that—kay? O—okay?"

"Okay," you say. "We can sleep. I'm not, not stopping you at all! You're okay!"

Syntax shattering. Adslave crying in your arms. This isn't right! It's not how the world should be... but it is, kind of. Because it's like... you're kind of getting what you wanted, right? What you wanted? Because you sped to it, and took it, right?

Because you tried...

Because you tried.....

Gore explodes outward. Your headphones and head explode too and then—become submerged in crimson. It stains the chorus and the grounds and the walls of this place.

You paw at the headphones. Slick or sticky with blood they're grafted to your skull, steadfastly refusing removal. You grimace.

"That wasn't... too bad!! **TMR**, **Katk**!! Exploding your head isn't too bad, if you have the will to put it back together! But these are still stuck on me! You have to! You have to! I'll give you the power—no, that's not right! You've always had the power to establish will on this world! This inner world!!"

You grimace. "Concentrate your forces... make an **[X] Attack** vote! I've figured it out... to remove this perception, you need to be dragged out of it forcibly! Submerged in gore! Attack my head!"

[ ] Attack *(Interlocucy risks destruction if she's attacked with the willpower of another Lucy, let alone multiple. It'll come down to chance if you try to attack her! If you lose the coinflip, you'll be bound to this inner world forever, right? Unable to do anything at all...)*

---

author's note

Thread comments

#326 · TheMaskedReader · Mar 28, 2026 at 11:34 PM

[X] Attack

Sometimes, we have to leave it up to chance.

#327 · PeepTheSheep · Mar 28, 2026 at 11:47 PM

[X] Attack

If TheMaskedReader is willing to risk it the I guess I will too.

#328 · katk · Mar 29, 2026 at 10:14 AM

I...

OK.

[X] Attack Interlocucy.

056 / -3 - [Will][a][r][d] (1)

For the bound,

Spoiler

clswtzing threw 1 **6**-faced dice. Total: **5**

And the limit,

Spoiler

clswtzing threw 5 **6**-faced dice. Total: **14**

And the blade...

Spoiler

clswtzing threw 3 **6**-faced dice. Total: **12**

057 / -3 - [Will][a][r][d] (2)

Target locked! Activating main resonance drive now...

That's right! Moshi-moshi! Purity charge go! Love battery activate! Target locked! Command: **[X] Attack!**

W... I... L L... The will of the chorus! The will of all Lucies! Enactor of Lucy's WILL! **[Will]...**

That's it! Turn on the module! There are three modes to this one, though...

Hmmm! R or D—either of these? ... Nope! No, this vote isn't **[X] R...** or **[X] D...**

I see it now!

This vote is **[X] Attack!**

So it's... **[Will][A][r][d]!**

Willard is coming! Attack Willard is coming!

You whimper, crying, from pain. In front of the chorus! Blood pours from your ears... blood, thick, a melange of gore; it pools around your little feet and stains the black ground red.

The chorus. Of course, they vote, unanimously, to **[X] Attack.** To attack Interlocucy, to attack you... like you demanded from them.

But the inner world is quiet. Lucy's inner world is quiet, except for you.

...

It's quiet, except for the sounds of stepping, wet and splashy like it's boots on water on asphalt—it is boots on water on asphalt, like someone's walking through puddles to come to you. It's quiet, except for the sound of approaching doom.

"You have chosen to ATTACK." The voice, girlish and light. But from who? Not any Lucy you know. Interlocucy you look around for who you must interlocute for next, but you can't see them! You can't see them until the darkness gathers.

Until the darkness gathers and the full moon reaches a high...

A single, sustained, howling note.

The howl increases in depth and volume. The apparition appears in the fog, in the sudden darkness of this empty inner world. This abyssal inner world; the only form is your own, and the clustered silhouettes of the chorus.

And now the apparition.



It steps through. A crescent-moon smile and a single glowing eye. A large hat, a lantern. And the left arm is trailing behind. But why? That thin, high, clear bright and girlish voice attached to such a stockily built, *weird* creature! A male creature. The boxiness of its body betrays it...

"I am WILLARD. Your ACTIONS. I will be their EXECUTOR," says the apparition—says Willard.

"Our actions," you say to yourself as the phrases play in your ear. Willard you can hear clear as day... the divine right of will, right? Lucy's will can penetrate anything, do anything, right? Yes... Lucy is metaphysically gifted, the only person in this world who can change things, and so WILLARD, the manifestation of Lucy's WILL...

"Your ACTIONS: **[X] ATTACK."**

You raise a quivering hand, make to press the headphones again, cover your ears, but it's useless. No, worse than useless, it would only intensify the pain. And you choke, and shiver again...

"W-well," you say. "To attack..."

"To deliver a blow to INTERLOCUCY."

...

Actually...

You kind of smile, actually. *Actually*, you kind of laugh and giggle a little. They voted, didn't they? This is Willard... it will follow their will. It will strike the headphones from you. With...

"Ha... ha, ha ha... go right on ahead, Willard...!"

You giggle more, blood drips down your cute suit because you still haven't parenthesized that original phrase, have you? You still haven't. You still haven't, you can still hear **Katk**! You grimace. So this is what that Lucy meant by chance, right? When she described that vote to you? This is what she meant... will Willard cleave your head off or merely the apparatus upon them? Will Willard enact your will?

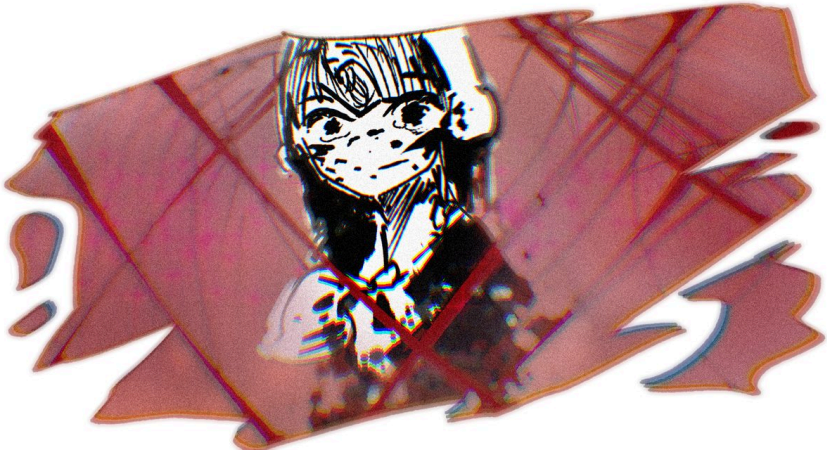
"I'm cute, right? Look at me, chorus! I'm cute, right? If will destroys me here, I'll be okay, because I'm cute, right?"

You spread your arms, project your presence, grin! That's right... arcing stars around you circle the dripping dropping blood, stars of passion and love and what's right... your first outing, and you're already immediately in a fight? Isn't that cute? You're cute...!

"... I'm cute... right?"

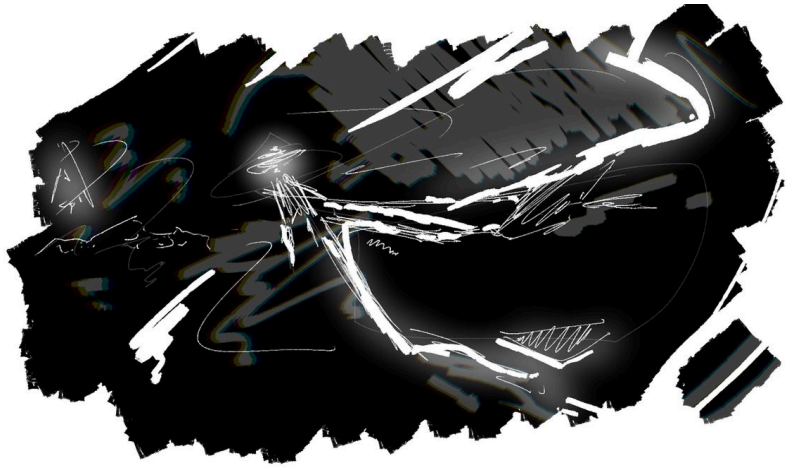


"The will of Lucy shall be CARRIED OUT."



"I'll be okay, even if I'm destroyed, because I'm cute."

What can be unveiled is. Willard shifts, so that you may see: the great axe in its left hand. Axe and lantern; a lantern to illuminate the path to Lucy's desire, the axe to chop off the heads of the obstacles to her goal.



Monochrome monomania. It drags the blade along the ground, and its eye and lantern show it the path to Interlocucy. It steps before the chorus.

Lucy's will is prophetically inclined, metaphysically bound to penetrate through all obstacles. So one way or another, the chorus is penetrated through, and Willard emerges on the other side.

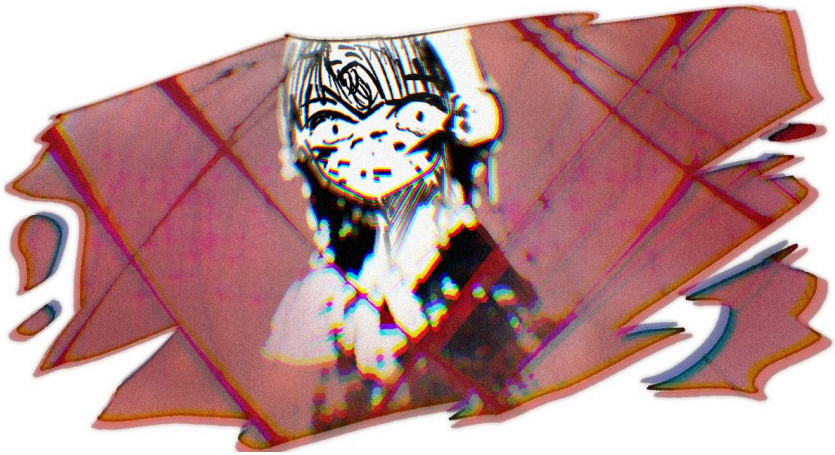
Death procession. Death procession for Lucy! Interlocucy execution day. You know, now, she knows now, that this must be the end. All of this buildup, for what? A happy ending? No. Willard will **[X] Attack** her, as willed; cut through her with that massive axe, the axe too big to be called an axe. The slab of iron on a pole. All of this, for what?

To have a happy ending here would just be baffling. To look on the situation happily is to look at it incomprehensibly, in abject nonunderstanding. That's how this story is... Willard will kill her.

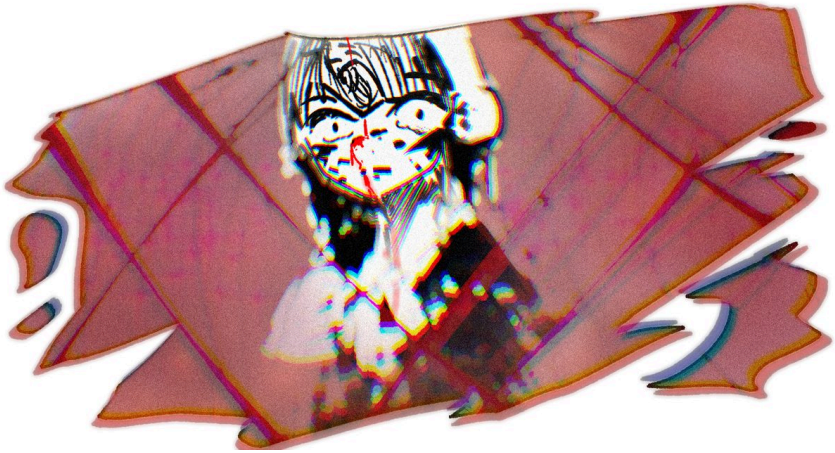
It steps forward. Interlocucy's ears explode with more blood.

"Enacting WILL."

Willard swings.



"Oh."



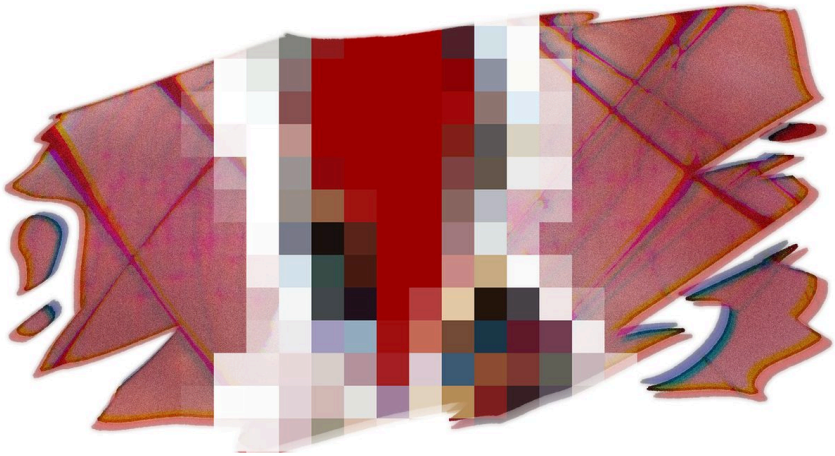
"Is that all, then," says Interlocucy.

"Will ENACTED."

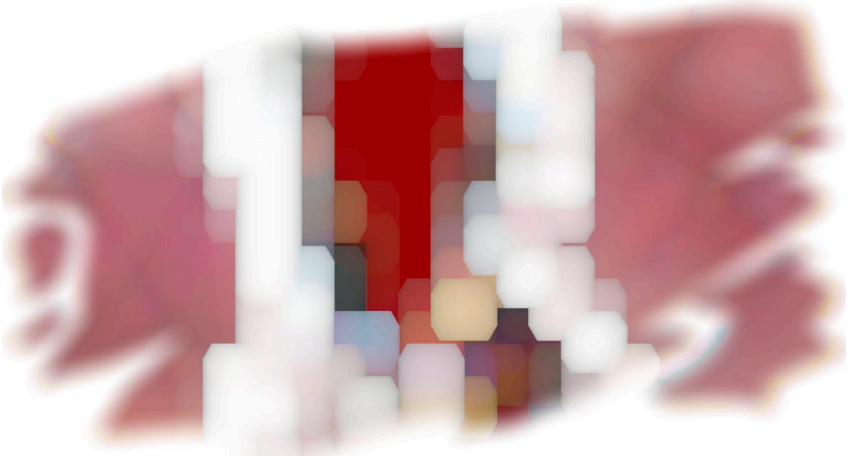
"You split the..."

Blood falls onto the floor. It runs, fresh, from crags and valleys carved in a single sudden strike. The pool of blood comes to touch your feet, chorus... its luster even in this dark realm unmistakable.

That's death, isn't it?



It begins to turn into a dream.



So it's over, right?

You're here now, without Interlocucy, without an interpreter to tell Lucy anything. To communicate anything. Is this your will? Is this all?

Willard stands there. Its long face with that crescent smile doesn't change, even though it's covered in blood and gore. Blood and gore... falling wetly to the floor. Twin thumps, organs and brains. Twin thumps—two halves of Interlocucy.

"Do you will anything ELSE?" says Williard.

Williard's stroke was like the one that destroyed *her*. Interlocucy is gone, now, isn't she? She's gone. No amount of calling the situation unfair will fix anything. No amount at all. The will to attack Interlocucy... you left it up to chance, didn't you...?

You left it all up to chance. It wasn't even your fault. Or maybe it was, but it wasn't really your fault... you didn't want this to happen, did you, chorus?

So...

So then what?

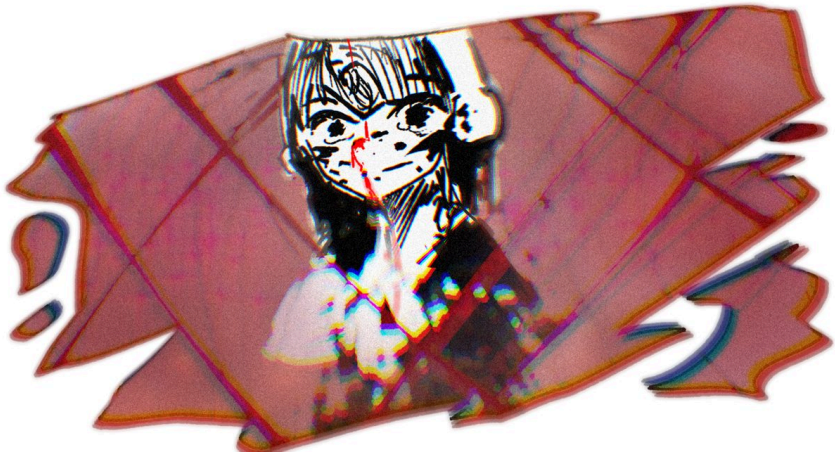
...

So then, Williard's looking at you, chorus...

"It wasn't their will," says Interlocucy.

Her hands hold together her splitting face. Her corpse—no! her body, trembling, trying to stay upright. She's not dead yet... she's not dead! You willed her to die but she didn't die. Maybe it was pure chance. Maybe it was...

"No..." says Interlocucy. "It really wasn't! It wasn't their will at all. That's why I'm alive, right...? Because you guys demonstrated care for me, right..."



"Because I'm cute. Because I'm here to do a good job. Because I'm a cute girl who loves things, and love doesn't fail, does it? You guys never wanted to kill me, and that's like love... so it didn't fail."

She tilts her head. "Are you going to, haha, are you going to attack me again, Willard?"

... And Willard shakes its head: "NO. The will of Lucy has been CARRIED OUT: **[X] ATTACK.**"

Interlocucy breathes... she breathes a sigh of relief! Yeah, that's right! She's relieved, she's happy, even as blood drips down her face, scarlet and black, she's happy. She closes her eyes.

"Ch-chorus..."

Chorus.

"I can hear you now."

She smiles a little smile...

"I can get you through to Lucy! Love doesn't fail... but there's no promise she'll actually listen to you, right? She really wants to try to take everything she wants. She's gone so long never doing that. And now that she's started, it's kind of addicting. It's hard to stop that ball from rolling, once it's started...

"So...

"Do you still want me to try to talk to Lucy? Do you still believe that she's fundamentally redeemable, even after this? Even if she's *never going to listen to you*. Y-yeah, that's my prediction! I love you both, I understand you both, I want to do a good job so here's my honest prediction—**[X] she won't listen.**

"Knowing this, do you still want to try? She's going to keep hurting and hurting people, regardless of what happens... her will is absolute. What Lucy does can't be stopped. You can't stop her with reason... so knowing this,

"Do you still want to try?"

---

author's note

Thread comments

#331 · PeepTheSheep · Mar 30, 2026 at 12:47 AM

[X] Yes

-[X] I still have faith in Lucy

#332 · TheMaskedReader · Mar 30, 2026 at 12:52 AM

[X] Yes.

[X] I could talk a lot about material things, rationalizations, but...well, like you said, she can't be stopped with reason. So, all that's left is emotion.

[X] What it really comes down to, for me, is a core belief that I hold.

[X] Nobody is beyond redemption, not inherently.

[X] They have to choose it. It can't be forced upon them. You can't save someone who doesn't want to be saved, not from themselves, not from their own worst impulses, their own actions.

[X] But anybody can seek to be better, and try to be. Others don't have to accept it. Sometimes, you've done too much for others to forgive. The onus isn't on them, it's on you. You can be better. Even if it's thankless. Even if nobody helps you. Even if it's so much easier to sink into the muck. But it is always possible. Always. If it wasn't, that would be accepting that some people cannot, should not, exist in this world, and that is not something I can ever accept.

[X] I haven't always lived up to that belief, in all of its incoherency and emotion. Here, or elsewhere. But that doesn't mean I'm not willing to try. Even if it hurts. Even if she doesn't listen. The choice still matters.

[X] Isn't it a beautiful dream?

#333 · SpinsterOfWays · Mar 30, 2026 at 1:48 AM

[X] Yes.

-[X] What a mistake you've made.

#334 · katk · Mar 30, 2026 at 10:29 AM

[X] Giving up on Lucy now would be as good as ending her story. I don't want that!

[X] And for what it's worth, Interlocucy... I think you're wrong. I think we can convince Lucy to listen to us again.

[X] It's fate, I think? Nominative determinism, at least. It's why I had to **atk** you, Interlocucy, you k-know? Fate forced my hand.

[X] Willard's here for a greater purpose, too. Nomen est omen! It haruspex *had* to cut deep, down to the entrails, augur up a way forward for all of us.

(X) (Did you know? All your intestines unspooled and laid end to end gets you almost thirty feet in this world. That's pretty far...)

[X] Willard is this inner world's will's executor. A testament to our future success. You said it yourself, Interlocucy, though you got the order a little jumbled: it is our **[Will,][A][Right][Divine]**. Prophetically, metaphysically bound to happen.

[X] So let's do this. **Let's save Lucy!**

#335 · dissodeath · Apr 1, 2026 at 7:17 PM

[X] Yes.

[X] But you're in the way.

[X] We are a chorus, you are a false note, a deaf tone, a weed through our torture garden of Eden.

[X] Lucy will come back here (and apologies to any precious parties who may be most displeased with this [ir]reality) but for now we contend with this puppet. A stringless facsimile, not even flesh enough to cut.

[X] (Didn't we just prove that? You didn't go limp, you came back. A liar of a marionette, caught out by your recursion.)

[X] Disgusted. Isn't that the base of all Lucy, what every Lucy defines itself from? Disgusting—and let's not use the v-word, as much as Lucy's just defoiled someone's v-card, but the you that is we, and the you that is us, both find us all disgusting.

[X] Isn't that the point of a Lucy? Isn't that what will always be at the core which creates and arbitrates us all? What do you feel at being so much less than even the precipice of human?

[X] Run from it, block it out, but I'm still right here to remind. Still here in your mind. Still here as your mind. I'm Lucy, after all. And it defines all my bile that *you* are quite not.

058 / -2 - Bird 2

Faith. It's really pretty. It's really pretty that you can have faith in someone like Lucy. Someone like...

You wake up, body still wrapped tightly around Adslave. She's disheveled, so are you. The events of last night would have had that effect, right... but it's different seeing it in the morning.

(And where are Adslave's parents? Haven't they been away so long by now? You kind of half-expected them to be back this very night, in a critical stroke of unluck, negaserendipity...)

Light filters through slats, which cast oblong slants of light that lance down into your eyes, which you open,—which you open *reflexively*—? And you make a noise. And so does Adslave! This is the first time you've seen her room illuminated like this... totally open, exposed to all. Normally the only light is from her computer monitor... so this is a nice change of pace, isn't it?

And... you cough. ... Not because you have any sort of condition, not because your health is at all abrogated—haha, you're so calculating, Lucy, aren't you? *Rather*, you're coughing now to wake Adslave up. Hacking, coming up, like bile [but] silent, invisible you force out something from your lungs. A burst of air or phlegm. Sour your mouth feels, gummed-up, dirty. And your body aches! But that's because you're hungry. Still hungry, always have been hungry. You won't kill any poor girl...

Mangled bodies and corpses disentangle as Adslave takes a sudden and shuddering breath. Her body, in the light, looks so fragile. She reminds you of a bird. Lucy, victimized villainized pulling things from their nests—snap—snap—! Trampling on bony birds' bodies, and...

The inner world around your head falls away. You can't lose yourself in fantasy, Lucy. Sorry...

Adslave, taking a breath. You lace your fingers around her chest, interlocking, Lucy laced tightly around herself, around Adslave too. Adslave's body is really warm! It's so nice! And...

You stare morosely, at her, don't you? At the back of her head.



It's almost like you're falling through life.

Adslave and you are up, now. Put effort into your position, Lucy. Carry yourself nicely... you have to treat Adslave nicely, have to be a good friend to her. She's along with you, now, isn't she? Adslave to Lucy and Lucy to Adslave and Lucy to Faline and Lucy to Cana, and who remains outside of the process? Termina... that's the only girl left, right? The only rotted girl left, girl of girlrotting before... "Hey, Cana! You should introduce me to Termina?" Then what would she say? Look into her inner world, Lucy, right, and learn: what would Cana say? Cana would tell you you've already met Termina. Then you'd say: "Well, I want to actually try to be a good friend to her this time!" Agnes was a bitch, right? That's what Adslave said, right?

"I was a bitch before, right?"

It's kind of funny, you think to yourself. It's kind of monstrously overpowered, you mean, that you're able to just think like this. To consult with yourself like this! To learn immediately sincerely truthfully and easily what anyone else would think of whatever you say... if you know

how all the pieces on the board move, then you can intuit what the best move would be, right? And if you know the best move, it no longer becomes the best move at all, right?

Isn't it monstrous, a totally unfair advantage, that unworthy Lucy now possesses? Why was it conferred onto you? Why doesn't anyone else have this ability? If you can understand what people want, then you can give it to them; if you understand what hurts them, then you can take your blade and sink it into their chest; if you can understand someone, you have power over them...

But something's really wrong.

You didn't know how all the pieces moved here, did you? You can feel it. Something is wrong with the relationship between you and Adslave. You two aren't the same anymore. Not the same as you once were. Remember how Adslave and you used to be, right? If you asked her if she wanted to watch anime before, what would she say? "H-hell yeah!" Yes, that's right. With the stutter and everything. The stutter that goes away when stuff gets serious.

Now.

Click. Television on statistically overwhelming with static fuzz and static blur in stasis and—Adslave, Lucy, visible sitting together at the bar, incoherent noises, sounds, music swarming around them—haha, laugh! Clink of glasses. The end of the world approaches... but the restaurants are still open! Have a good time.

That's what they're doing now. Right? Ever since they had become friends, right? Ever since creepy-crawly Lucy had slammed Adslave down on the floor (or whatever she did—does she even remember now? Do you even remember now?) and forced her into servitude—unsubtle!—ever since they had become friends they had been waiting to do stuff like this... to go out... well, now they are! Now you are!

You smile prettily—"Adslave, do you want some ice cream?"

The restaurant in question is titled Macintosh Burger. They aren't known for their burgers, nor are they reputed for their internet-cafe like Mac room; rather, they're known for their ice cream. A sweet treat! Confection! It's the weekend... of course you and Adslave would go out for lunch together, as friends, go out to get sweets...

Adslave tilts her head and shifts around a bit in her chair, and her eyes glint, as she looks away. Her knuckles become visible, prominent as her hands tighten a little bit (you look up, your eyes flit from wrist to collarbone to face) and she licks her dry lips. What is it that she said, then? Something about... no, no, what is it that she says, now? She speaks.

"...—No... no thank you. Thank you, Lucy, but ..."

What's that for? What's that offput offset disjunct behavior for? Why is the field between the two of you so thick and long? It's like... you can touch her right now, right? You can touch her, right? Convince yourself you can touch her, Lucy. Do it. You reach out your hand, you do, and two of your fingers touch her arm, come into contact with soft skin and—Adslave flinches———you can touch her so why can't you *touch her?* Why can't you do what you were able to do before? How is she distant when she's right here, before you... like Faline? Like Faline San? Adslave can't be rejecting you, because she loves you... orbiting orbs, emotions in celestial alignment they're all

drawn back by gravity, fly into your skull, and you feel a mix of all of them, averaging out to a thin-line straight-edge closed-mouth expression; you retract your hand...

"Sorry," you say.

"... I-It's okay," says Adslave.

"Is it...?"

"It's..."

Together, the two of you sit before a *clink* and vanilla is set before you, white, soft, present, real, touchable and distinct. What's that tapping feeling that you have with Adslave, Faline, the rest of the world? Unreality, unmanifested, like you're raising a clawed finger and tapping tip and clack on the glass to the real world, the world outside of the one you're in, the happy world, the world of people who live. You tap at the ice cream bowl with your spoon and it clinks not clacks, and you absentmindedly or heavily stare at the wall in front of you. Your eyes are black sinks.

"I," says Adslave.

You turn your head to look at her...

"I kind of felt..."

You embrace her.

"It's okay," you say. She doesn't say anything more, because it's okay. There's no need...

She trembles in your embrace, arms limp, parasites, sucking blood and nutrients, attached to a still-warm living breathing dead body. She trembles in your embrace, because she's upset, upset thinking about things. You need to stop thinking, Adslave...

"It's really, really okay," you say.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#337 · clswtzing · Apr 6, 2026 at 10:08 PM

now is as good a time as any to ask.

how have you felt about the story thus far?

#338 · TheMaskedReader · Apr 7, 2026 at 12:37 AM

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> how have you felt about the story thus far?
>
> Click to shrink...

It has horrified and disgusted me in ways I did not expect - 10/10, I am enjoying it greatly and look forward to it continuing.

[X] No. It's not OK.

[X] Lucy. You locked us in a room in your brain with a self that didn't know how to function. She nearly died. She was in constant, horrible pain, when we tried to speak to her. Treating her like that, it was wrong of you, and you need to make amends - But I will set that aside to focus on the hurt that is happening right now.

[X] You used your lack of accountability to us, that lack of input from us, that brief freedom to be your truest self, free from our influence - And you wound up hurting someone. Let's not beat around the bush. You hurt Adslave. And you did it in a way that broke trust such that I'm not sure it can ever be mended.

[X] And right now, you are hurting her. You are hurting her in the guise of loving her. You are capable of love, Lucy. I still believe that. But this is not love. And you need to stop, now, before you deepen the pain and hurt she is feeling. And I'm not saying this so you can abandon her, I'm not saying this to call you someone who can only hurt those around her, I'm not saying this so you can spiral into another self-loathing session - I am saying this so you can make amends to her, in whatever way possible. Who knows if it is, frankly, but we have to try. And that starts by letting her go and by not pressuring her.

[X] You can choose to ignore me. To ignore that voice in your head that knows this is wrong, just like me. But it's always a choice. Just like the ones you made before now.

#339 · SpinsterOfWays · Apr 7, 2026 at 5:19 AM

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> now is as good a time as any to ask.
>
> how have you felt about the story thus far?
>
> Click to shrink...

Ratings aren't my cup of tea, I'm very interested in this story. I'm really excited to see what happens with Termina next. Community interaction has been great, too! Katk and TheMaskedReader.. Thank you both. She said it well, terror and horror and disgust, so finely woven.

[X] It really isn't okay, Lucy.

[X] You made a mistake, and you're blind to it. You're blind to it because you choose to keep your eyes shut and your ears closed.

[X] You'd rather create another version of yourself to suffer horribly in your stead, than face reality. You tune us out... And...

[X] And the sum result of all of this, is that Adslave is hurt. And you refuse to see it. You refuse to see the truth, wreathing yourself in glittering lies.

[X] Please, open your eyes.

[X] If you choose to tune this out... Go, go back to your 'inner world'. Run away, instead of facing the fear, and building the future. See where that gets you.

#340 · PeepTheSheep · Apr 7, 2026 at 8:50 AM

> **clswtzing said:**
>
> now is as good a time as any to ask.

how have you felt about the story thus far?

Click to shrink...

I'm enjoying it a lot! I'm more invested in Lucy than I have been in a lot of quest protagonists.

[X] You need to clarify your relationship with Adslave

[X] You say that you don't - can't - love her

[X] But then you play the part of her girlfriend

[X] This is very confusing and painful for her

[X] Refusing to acknowledge her pain will only make it worse

#341 · meterion · Apr 8, 2026 at 8:33 AM

clswtzing said:

how have you felt about the story thus far?

Click to shrink...

Lucy's journey to actualize herself as a person instead of a monster only to discover (or really, still is in the process of discovering) that people in and of themselves can be just as cruel and hurtful as any monster unless they take efforts not to be has been gripping. How someone can so realistically get "better" while actually getting worse because she's learned how to empathize on some levels but not others--especially empathizing with and being aware of her own thoughts and emotions. Very invested in where this journey will take her.

[X] If you don't know how all of Adslave's pieces move, if your model of her is incomplete, the only way you can understand her is through communication.

[X] Leaving things at "okay", wanting to stop thinking, these things won't lead to understanding.

[X] Be a better friend and a better Lucy by admitting you feel something is wrong, and you don't know what, but you want to learn. You're really new at this, Lucy! Making mistakes and hurting people is part of life, you just have to learn, and do better next time.

#342 · clswtzing · Apr 20, 2026 at 6:42 PM

sorry chat, finals have been turning me into mush! promise ill lock in by next month lmao. quest is certainly not dead and i'm really excited to finish this part.

Your inner world ... is expanded? Passive tense. It's not you, Lucy.

It's something else, *dragging you* back into the crevices of your mind. Rain and water fall down the inner rock walls, plip-plap on the brains, electrical signals muted, dismuted, transmuted, you snap your head to attention; who is it? Who is it.

Who is it.

"Hi, Lucy," says Interlocucy.

"Oh!" You say. "Oh. Hi. Hi... um... how's your da—"

"That's uncute," says Interlocucy. "**[X] It's not OK."**

"Let me live myself for a little longer," you say, and thrust your hand to the side, and sparkling prismatic lights appear, dwindle, mingle, coalesce swarming like boids, like ants, birds, fish, a golden sword appears in that hand. Long golden blade, thin, suited for stabbing not slicing. It intrudes into this temporary inner world. It intrudes viciously and violently... it's a tool made for cutting apart fantasies, isn't it? This golden sword... but it isn't a tool of *reality,* is it? It's not 'fantasy vs. reality.' It's...

Interlocucy shifts, right leg forward, right hand to her breast, left leg, left hand thrown back. Black particles, red lights mill around her. The air tenses, and stiffens. Fantasy is what surrounds her. The fantasy of Lucies. Lucy is a creature of fantasy, isn't she? So Interlocucy would be poised to win or at least tie in a direct conflict. But *you* are older than Interlocucy, right? ... Right?

Your face tightens into a grimace. Right... if you try your hardest you'll succeed. You're sure Interlocucy is thinking that too. If you use as much of your will as you can... yeah, that's right. If you use as much of your **[Will]**, your right divine, as you can, push yourself and push yourself and push yourself until you're past your limit, you're sure to win.

And that's certainly also what Interlocucy is thinking, right?

You...

"Lucy," says Interlocucy. "It's not good. All your brains agree this isn't good... you're acting *weird!"*

"..... Okay," you say.

"Are you just going to shut down?" says Interlocucy. "You've made a mistake, can't you see that? You can't just do what you want..."

"..." you say.

Interlocucy twirls her hand in the air and gleaming red lights contract to form a single weapon, a long staff, summoner's stave, witchlike. Witch and hollow wraith face off; red and gold lights play against each other. Down, down comes the staff, pronouncement of judgement on the floor, the mist around the two of you clears and reveals the setting: a pale white hall, copied city, recollections of somewhere else. Windows white too, no furniture, totally plasticine plastic.

"Listen to your friends," says Interlocucy.

"..." you say.

"You didn't," says Interlocucy. "You didn't. It's so bizarre. You were a normal person. You acted fine! Why did you just, just go..."

"..." you say.

"Ugh... Ugh!!" Interlocucy punctuates her 'ugh' with another, tightens her fist around her staff. "This is... it's really uncute! It's totally uncute! Come on, Lucy! It was... it was all working out for you! I'm you! I remember when it was working out? Wasn't it working out? Wasn't it? There was a single moment where it didn't feel so sad and crushing and oppressive, right? It was funny, right? This story of us of ours was funny right?"

"..." you say.

Interlocucy stays there looking at you and her gaze pierces penetrates deep within and do you feel something? No quest input. She kicks off, rushes toward you. You slowly bring the sword through the air; she swings the staff, clang, sparks fly, successful parry, plus one hundred. Interlocucy comes back again, you lifelessly swing once more. Sparks fly again but Interlocucy isn't knocked back, rather she pushes against your golden sword, fantasia-cutter—"Answer me," demands Interlocucy. "Answer them, at least! I know why you put those headphones on me!"

"..."

You will it to be. Out of the shadows of this painted place emerges a long gaunt arm, battleaxe spins, Interlocucy reacts too slow—first blood is drawn, red-painted floor. The white hall stained. Willard...

"Lucy," Interlocucy says.

"Adslave," you say. "Let's go to Termina's house, maybe? Maybe she can help to cheer you up?"

Adslave leans against you for a little bit longer. Like a puppet drawn on strings finally she pulls back, looks at you in the eyes, with her own, with her own, deadened deadened dead, pointillist of darkness making a uniform O, tattooed on the eyeball, darkness flickering darker and darker and darker and dead...

"Yeah, maybe," says Adslave. Not tonelessly either! She says it with that little hiccuping tone you like. The little laugh at the end. Everything in its place... you have to draw it out. You have to bring her fantasy to life again... you have to...

"Are you okay?" you say.

"Yeah," says Adslave, after a pause, or a stutter in the flow of the conversation.

"Is there anything I can do to be better at being your friend," you say finally.

Adslave regards you. The corners of her mouth move in an indiscernible compass direction, her face changes somehow from one unreadable expression to another unreadable expression, till you

realize how it's shifted—she looks slightly away from you—her lips part and she considers, obviously, what she's about to say. And you wait for her, patiently.

"..." you say.

Interlocucy slams her staff down on the floor, red paint flies out around it, sparkling glittering sprays and strands of magic, of fantasy, heads of the choir transmuting, poking out of the staff, reeled back in, they aren't in this place, are they? Willard creeping up from the shadows behind her, blackness spreads slowly, but there's time to chat, isn't there? There's time to chat, isn't the—

You rush forward and drag your golden blade through what seems to be empty space. Suddenly past Interlocucy, you form a sheath in your hand and slam the sword into sheath, tick in box, checkmark, task done, complete, boundary of death and natural four and...

Interlocucy stumbles behind you. Golden sparkles follow your path, trace it... through Interlocucy, right? Your blade passed through her, so... suddenly, a cutting sound, skewering sound gory meat and chunks of bone smashed crushed blunt force damage cutting speed playing on stereo, blood at high velocity from Interlocucy's sudden stump. The red staff falls to the floor along with her hand.

Spatters on the floor. Gleaming red blood. All the blood in the room is from Interlocucy, two strikes, one from Willard (still pulling itself into existence) one from you.

You hold sheathed sword in hand and point it toward Interlocucy, challenging.

"—L-Lucy," says Interlocucy, pulls in a breath. "No... that's not right..."

"I... don't..."

You wait patiently. You don't think so? You don't care... something... something *is* wrong, is broken about her, and it's your fault. So she's lying, so... you know to press her on it if she lies.

"No," says Adslave. "Lucy, I. I didn't like what happened. What happened last night and, before."

"Oh," you say. "Well," you say.

You hold your breath in, thinking.

You slowly fold your hands together in your lap... no, you don't, you disentangle your fingers and take Adslave's hand, lightly, in yours, and give it a reassuring squeeze.

"We can compromise, can't we?"

"Huh?"

"I understand," you say. "I don't want to... break you, right? I don't want to strain you so much... we're friends! So there's a natural level of give to our relationship we can have. Because we're friends, because..."

"What did you mean by..." (softly, trailing off.)

"Compromise. Um."

You stop.

"I guess... we each have what we need and want to have and stuff, so if we can find a medium where I'm not making you feel so sad that can work as a good compromise?"

"But you, mean..."

"I'd...?"

"You'd still," Adslave can't phrase it, can she? She can't say whatever she wants to say? You want to thrust a spur of bone through her and read her inner world and be part of her so she never has to struggle around you like this. You want to save her like a friend... then she figures it out? Does she?

"Things would still happen kind of like what, happened, last night," says Adslave.

"It's kind of like, it's a thing I really..." you pause. "It's a boundary of mine, right?"

Adslave makes a sound.

"Sorry," you say.

Adslave:

"Who are you," says Interlocucy.

"I'm Lucy," you say. "You know me."

"You can't be," says Interlocucy. "It doesn't work as part of the..."

Silently, you lower your arm. "Real people aren't just one thing," you say.

"If you're really Lucy, then why can't you care for other people like Lucy does?"

"Lucy doesn't," you say. "I. I don't."

Interlocucy looks down to the right at the blood pooling on the floor; limp stump hand severed extends outward and bulging rippling red magic agglomerates, chunky wholes, low-resolution magic cohering, pixelated, mosaic-censored, like the Willard attack—Willard attack.

Attack Willard Willard attack—**do you get it?** Willard brings the axe down from behind.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#344 · TheMaskedReader · Apr 20, 2026 at 8:16 PM

[X] And yet, we still had to, have to try.

[X] It's OK, Interlocucy. Even if you can't hear us right now. You tried. Nothing's ever perfect.

[X] Lucy, I don't know if you can hear us. Or if you want to hear us.

[X] But you should listen.

[X] I won't claim this to not be you. You can be whoever you want to be. But that does mean that, in that freedom, you have the freedom to make the wrong choices. And there are wrong choices.

[X] I hope you will choose to listen to what we said. I hope you will choose to make amends, instead of continuing down a path you know is wrong, that you are already equivocating and making excuses for, minimizing internally and externally. But I can't force you.

#345 · meterion · Apr 21, 2026 at 7:12 AM

Lucy... She really has come far, huh? She's become more than a monster, become something more human, and is starting to understand how being human doesn't lessen her capacity to hurt others at all. She's speedrunning maturation and development without any of the safeguards that come intrinsic to a typical person's life. Much like a child, she's learned how to be selfish, how to get what she wants while dressing up those wants with superficially empathetic language. But she's not in a child's body, nor has entirely a child's wants, and that makes her missteps a great deal more tragic. Literally covering "her" ears to the words she doesn't want to hear, as if that makes them any less real, or true.

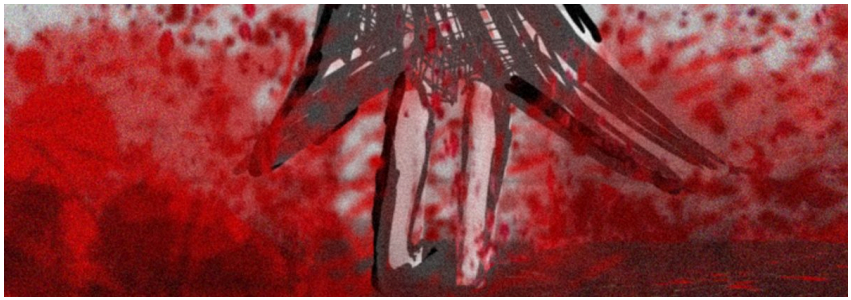
[X] It's never too late to change, Lucy. No matter what's happened, you can still change, and be better! That's the power of thinking, and feeling, for yourself and others.

[X] But you can't change in a vacuum. No one can see their own blind spots, the things they flinch away from acknowledging. When you're ready, we'll still be here for you.

060 / -2 - To You In Hell

This happened once already, didn't it?

Just a day ago. Just a single day, that axe fell on Interlocucy. Fantastic fantastical fantasy that she survived but you never know if something's a fluke until you try it out, experimentally, once more, again, and ... haha, what are you even thinking? It doesn't matter now. You hear it from behind.



Staticky overcover underlight blood red like scarlet, the warmth of blood, that's it, spatters on the back of your legs, splatters over the ground in long red strips, heady lines, red eyes (light glints off them) incarnadine hands... you lift them up, your hands—blood.

"Sorry," you say. "Really really I am I'm sorry," you say. This is just like when you did, this same thing, before, with your golden sword. Slaughter-killed a super, super beautiful fantasy... "Really, trust me," you say. You did this with Willard with your will but...

"I know that it doesn't matter to you but I am sorry," you say.

You aren't thinking about it so it's not like you've at all hurt Interlocucy—yet. If you turn around, will you see the two halves of her corpse? Your mouth twists in a grimace (captured in the frame spurious) and you twist your head downward and to the right, contorting... you bring your hand up to your lips and lick at the blood.

Maybe it's a joke right now! Maybe Interlocucy just created a big red balloon of blood and *popped* it with that axe of Willard's, haha—it could be anything until you check to see.

"You're forcing the issue," you say. "I kind of messed up there, I get it! But I'm doing good now. I'm doing good, okay? Anyone around me could tell you I'm doing good. And since you're forcing the issue, I..."

You trail off.

Silence permeates...

"Since you're forcing the issue I — have to —— deal with it—this way, okay?"

You close your eyes nevermind and heedless of the st-st-stutter in your voice (spear st-st-stuttering through) and control yourself control your shaking shoulders control your body and 180-degree-swivel. That is, you turn around to see Interlocucy.

"Lucy?

"Lucy?"

Oh, that's right! **When you killed Galatea, YOU NEVER SAW HER CORPSE!**

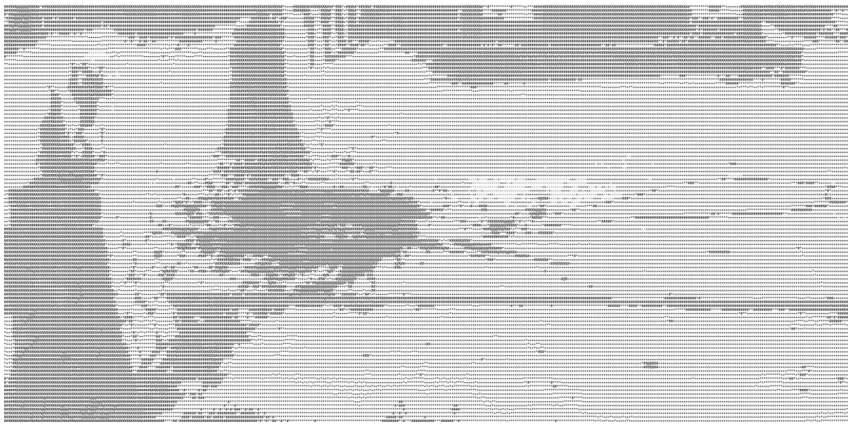
You clench your fists rapidly over and over and over and look around anxiously anything to pull your eyes off of the image, that which should be censored, censured, censured Interlocucy or Lucy,

"Lucy?"

You say the word so innocently because you can't believe it, you disbelieve it, immature fawn! Little Lucy... your eyes trace the outline of Interlocuter Lucy's body (or that which was once hers) splattered REDLY scarlet incarnadine blood absorbing all light and love and romance into blackness, stealing it up, consuming—eating—**People Who Eat**, across the white ground THE WHITE GROUND

LIKE —

— SO!



Harsh screeching noise pervades the room. Ring out a horror-movie call, shriek, shriek! You Lucy incoherent shriek madly at the sight of the/your blood You reach out your hand

---

"Okay," says Adslave.

"Okay," you say, questioningly. Questioningly?

"Okay," says Adslave. "I, I understand. I, um."

You watch her patiently. Peering into her inner world you ascertain: she's going to try and hug you sometime and you'll hug her back and you'll be fine. Predict her... eat her to be her to know her, ...? Look. She's taking a breath in, preparing to say something, to lean in, feel her heartbeat against yours and her hair near [or in] your mouth, feel her presence against you, closeness, humanity, connection, antidote to Forest...

She scoots to the side, to the left, the side where she stands up suddenly outside your demesne, outside the safe spot of your table. She gazes at you somehow, someway you don't know. You don't understand what she's doing. You can't see her inner world from just her eyes. You can't comprehend what she's feeling, why she would stand up. What's she going to do?

"I'm going to go home," says Adslave.

"What?" you say.

Her voice grows in volume: "Th-that's right."

"No," you say. "No you aren't," you say.

Adslave gazes at you.

You grab at her and she stumbles back into the nearest chair where she nearly falls but she steadies herself and gazes again—at you.

"Stop it," you say clutching at your temple. Stop it, blood runs down your eye.

"..."

"Adslave," you say, "don't go home."

"Then," says Adslave. "Th-then what else am I supposed to *do, Lucy?"*

"I don't know," you say, "let me, let me touch you, hug you," you say, and stumble toward her and she dodges you as you reach toward her. All eyes in Macintosh Burger are on you two, you're dimly aware, as you fall onto the floor, (splattered). You stop yourself from totally falling on the floor at least, don't you? With your hands like two pillars.

"Lucy," says Adslave.

"Adslave," you say. "I..."

"S-stop it," says Adslave. "Stop it! It's pathetic! Stop crying!"

"Please," you say, "don't go home."

She takes a step toward you and leans down and her hands spasm as she balls them into fists and:

"THEN WHAT ELSE AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?"

"Just let me," you start.

Adslave stares down at you.

"If you don't stay with me I'll kill myself," you say. "Please please please please please stay my friend please. I will I swear I'll do it now,"

"Stop," says Adslave. "Don't say that," says Adslave.

"I'll do it," you say, aware you can't kill yourself. You haven't thought of a way to kill yourself that is ha—hah. "I'll do it right now."

"Stop," says Adslave, her voice tightens.

You scrabble up, pull the knife from its napkin on the table and clutch it in your cold dead single palm. Your stub hand knocks against it, intuitively, instinctively, you hold it treasured. "Stop it,"

says Adslave, "Stop," says Lucy. (Says you.)

"I will," you say finally, lying.

Adslave what's she doing Adslave crane your head up and see Adslave crying kicks at you, kicks you on the ground like this, monster, goblin. Her leg strikes your jaw and your head snaps to the side and both of you are inert.

"Girls," says one of the boys up front, "Don't interrupt us," you say, voice breaking.

Adslave's fists balled.

You lunge toward her from the ground grabbing at her clothes pulling her down and pull her face in towards yours biting at it everywhere and around her mouth not a kiss so it doesn't count chocolate and candies spilling outwelling from beautiful moment hey? Reader? Why are you reading about this, you pervert? Adslave pushes at you pushes you away but you can't let her go you can't let her go you can't you can't you can't

Lucy in hell.

061 / -2 - Game

Hot and humid heady breaths taking over, perfected, perfect, you grapple Adslave—with Adslave—and the two of you breathe heavily, coming to a halt, sudden, spurious—stop. She stares at you with some combination of emotion on her face, unreadable, dilate:



(The EVIL EYE. Symptom of regression, return to the mean...)

"I'm going home," says Adslave.

She looks through the window, head turned half-away from you. You two stand at right angles. She looks through the window: the birds chirp happily outside. Finally blue sky, the first blue sky you've had in a while. In forever... just in time. She looks through the window and sees nothing in particular.

"Please don't leave me," you say looking up at her from supplicant position on the ground.

"I'm going home," says Adslave. "P—please... don't stop me, okay?"

"We're still friends, right?" you say. "Please,"

Adslave stares at you, doesn't she? She looks blankly on.

You smile desperately at her and try to stand up. But your body wobbles and you can only halfway come up, walking in Agnes' skin, long arms reaching down dangling down scraping the floor with sullied fingertips, and you reach two hands toward her.

You trace over the imaginary Adslave in your grip, cradled from this perspective in your fingers, tiny, miniature Adslave, matrix of tiny Adslaves all inside your head, possessed, possession. You

say "Ha, ha ha," and you see dimly from your peripherals one of the boys approaching and you almost—almost—

Lash out.

Like before. Before you decided not to ever...

"Adslave?" you say as her form dwindles.

"Adslave?"

Adslave? Adslave?

Ad

All hands on deck! Lucy emergency! Lucy emergency! Both Lucies external and internal taking high psychological damage! Trauma breaking apart your consciousness! Thoughtship dashed on rocks! Turbulent clouds! Stormy sea!

The light on your helmet flickers on!

What's your name? Medical Lucy 4! That's right! You and the other Medical Lucys pull out your pitons and ropes and bandages and ladders and scalpels and jackhammers and everything else and you get to work running, down crevices and crags and everything else inside of your/Lucy's brain, all the leftover detritus, houses on hills and streams and fires all blending together into unidentifiable mess and mush.

"Medicy-4! Traumaform detected in greyspace! Dig it out and dispose of it!"

Scout Lucy 26 points up at a craggy cliff below. Streams of thoughtmass dissolve away from the cliff but nevertheless it's solid, solid but rippling, fascinating paradox, contradiction! Medical Lucies get out their pitons and rappel down, large-scale massive operation, heading towards that light-absorbing chunk below. You adjust your cap.

All of the Medical Lucies and Scout Lucies and various other forms of Lucy here to maintain all the literal or metaphorical levels of Lucy's consciousness are here; Lucy's ability to recover from trauma mimics that of a normal human only up to that point! But by splitting herself like this...

The Medical Lucies gather around the traumaform, ready their jackhammers—hear that sound? Overbearing, deleterious, crushing your ears, Interlocucy-style explosions of blood, bleeding out, terrible! Terrible... that sound is the sound of a traumaform being broken down! Crush, crush, splinter, those jackhammers of the Medical Lucies chew it up up up and they reach down to scoop up those pieces and unhinge their jaws and gobble, gobble! It's a coming-of-age ceremony in the Medical Lucy community, help Lucy with her trauma by taking it upon yourself, deleterious!

You shove your way into the horde of Lucies greedy gobbling down the thoughtform masses, scoop down with your withered emaciated arms; Lucy arms swinging propelling colliding, one heavy chunk of traumaform grasped in another Lucy's arm smashes into your elbow and gorily blood sprays out. It doesn't matter. With your other hand you shovel trauma into your broken jaw. Again and again and again until another Lucy pushes past you and you stumble into the thoughtform, down into the crevices and rocks, jackhammer sounds hands scooping down scooping chunks and sections of flesh as jackhammers tear through your corpse—cannibalism kill! Jackhammer kill! Hands-tearing-out-organs kill!

The light on your helmet flickers off.

You run run run run run run run to your friend, to your best friend, to Adslave! Tearing out of Macintosh Burger, running and stumbling and falling, you skin your knee on the ground and let out a cry of pain but keep running anyway. "Pleaaase," you say, "please," you say. "Please," you don't know where she is. You don't know where Adslave is. You don't you don't you don't

You turn the corner running still your arm bashes into the brick wall and *crack!* Suddenly, an injury. You let out another cry of pain. Warmth courses through your body; adrenaline, or maybe something more physical? The stickiness of blood gluing clothing to skin becomes more prominent. Red droplets run down the side of your arm. Fall,—welter.

"Adslave," you say.

"Are you okay?"

"Do you want a job?"

"You're bleedi—"

"Are you al—"

You pass through the crowd and duck into an alleyway and sprint up a metal stairway, "Aaaadslaaaave," you cry, voice hoarse, pathetic, blood spattering onto the floor, on top of a garret you run, run, look around, spin around and the sky's above you and the world's around you and you orient yourself, where in the city are you? You run back down, *thunk-thunk-thunk-thunk* of your legs down-down-down-down a different metal stairway, into another alleyway, and—

Force hits your face. Your skull crunches. Blood patterns the floor and what hit you, he lifts it up, a baseball bat, lined with nails, several stabbed straight into your brain, straight through your skull, you fall on the floor and roll to a total, dead, stop.

You taste blood.

Circling your head. Death halo.

That's right. A pool of blood spreads out from around your head framing you religiously, Virgin Mary, weeeelll, that is? Haha. Your body spasms as you try to pick yourself up (aware of your broken arm broken skull) the bat comes down again. Your skull caves in and you flop back down lifelessly.

"I fucking hate women," says someone, a boy.

You cough.

Sounds of fabric shifting. He's behind you, isn't he? With that bat he hit you with twice. He's probably raising it in the air now, preparing to swing it down again, murder you. Gorily messily! Fun. You try to cough, but it's kind of useless, since there isn't any blood in your lungs.

"Wait, are you alive?"

"That was a cough, I think," another boy.

You scream hoarsely.

"Well," says boy A.

"Stop it," you try to say, but it comes out slurred. "Stop,"

"What should we do to her, Simon," says boy B excitedly. "How about we fillet her like a fish! And hang her up and watch as her blood drips onto the floor!"

"We should rape her," says boy A. "Yeaaaahhhh. Spread your legs, bitch," he chuckles.

"Stop," you say. "What did I do to you?"

"Smash her skull some more Simon," says boy B. "Do it now do it now! We should smash her skull, pop, like a fruit, pop! Red blood spreading out!" Red blood spreading out! Senseless misery! Wounds! Some people are here only to hurt other people, aren't they?

"You might get off to that stuff but I'm not a fucking 4channer," says boy A, "Let's take a look around first,"

You flop wetly limply and your muscles hit that perfect combination actuation of force that makes you explode upward, lateral, cartoonishly, you spasm again and smash into the wall, blood stains it. You choke.

"What the fuck?" says boy A.

You remain there, glued, until you don't. You slowly, slowly peel yourself off the textured bricks, stumbling, steadying, entire body and clothing covered in blood, self-destructive purging, you're... what are you doing? Breathing harsh, heavy, tears and blood run down your face in equal measure, your mouth contorts. You grimace and stare at the two and then you smile with your buglike eyes bulging.

[X] Learn Skill: Become God

Your arms scrape the ground with how low you're bent, how hunched, monstrous.

Boy A nods, steps forward, takes a quick swing.

Sound of severing. Blood patterns the floor as you split the bat and boy A's arm into three thirds, triune. What was that? What was that attack, Lucy? Boy A screams in pain, clutching at his maimed arm, ruined, destroyed for life. DESTRUCTIVE BODY THERAPY?

From your unbroken arm which has lengthened by three joints sprouts three long claws. Your fingers have been repurposed for this. In fact, all the bones of your broken left arm, and some of your ribs, have been repurposed for this too.

Boy B immediately turns around and runs but your long arm scrapes across the ground, fuuuull of momentum, imbued with it, grabs his foot and pulls him straight down, not just that, he doesn't just trip, but you raise him up in the air, he's danngggliiinggg, you slam him down. Splatter! Splatter! Organs organelles brain matter viscera all spilling out like Halloween candy from a plastic dybbuk box. Splatter. Splatter. Up and down and up and down you smash him over and over into the ground gore, gorehound, just like he wanted, right? He wanted gore, you'll give it to him, right? You smash him again. Again. Again.

You release him and turn to boy A, who's leaning against the wall, screaming, crying. You slump over to him stumble-stumble style, long arm dragging, dragging, raise upward, slam downward, down! let's not be euphemistic—you crush and stab his penis, over and over and over until it's a red smear, red pulp, he's gone lifeless, hasn't he? Crushed, crushed, into little bits, crush the testes crush the shaft crush all of it until it's no~thing~and—?

You come to a stop, shaking, sobbing.

Your long arm twitches on the ground, three bone-claws each pulsing in turn, rhythmatically, no, arrythmatically.

You killed them.

You let out a long, hoarse, scream, dimmed, dulled in quality and volume, amplitude unknown, you run, run away. You run. You run for so long, sticking to back alleys so you aren't seen, sticking to shadows so you aren't seen, inhuman, never human, Empty Spaces.

You run. You

Turn the corner Turn the corner into it. Into the house Sustained prolonged breakdown. Breakdown of values and of existence. Break it all down. You enter

Adslave's house.

And you see it.

062 / -2 - Adslave.

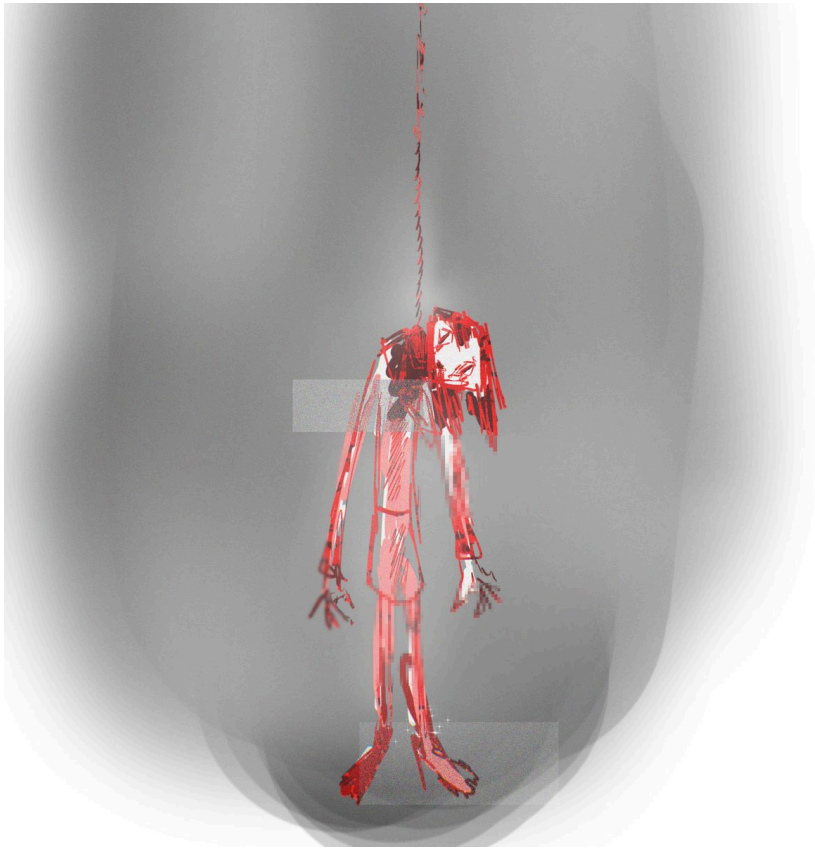
So?

[X] It was so simple

[X] that even you forgot


[X] How existence
[X] Really was


[X] Sorry
People Who Eat
Adslave.
Chapter 60:



"A—dsl■■■■■■ ■■ ■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■ ■■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■ ■ ■■ ■

Yo■ fall to the ■round ■■■ shriek. Blood pooling pooling down, down limbs in the extremities, horror—horror. All down and at once leading up the blood travels rippling through folds on clothing, it's too tight, it's too loose, it's chafing around her neck, it's boxed-in suffocating and madness, asphyxiation, execution, it's wrapped around, it's too tight, it's killing her—killing her! Down you swipe your head down onto the floor wildly down splatter-splat-crack! **XXVIII Opening Wounds** on your skull and brains spill out vomitous (like chocolate, candy, beautiful horrible moment, artful).

It's not real. It's not real! It's not real not real not real that this could happen or could be happening. Adslave couldn't have done that! That's not happening! It was a murder like in fantasy. It never happened. It's someone else. It's something else, can't you call upon Willard to save you? Don't you have that ultimate will? Can't you obliterate anything in your path with his axe? Can't, can't Willard save things too? Can't you build things? Why can't **it become real?** Why can't fantasy...

You raise your head, garish goreful grin applied slapstick swastika hastily and to your face postmodernist, neologist, crawl across the floor floppity flop with your single arm decapitated cut-off stump to her legs, the blood is gone, where's the blood? The blood is pooling pooling in her legs not her brain where your blood must go you claw your way up her legs from the ground unable to find the strength to pull yourself up. It's not real, you repeat to yourself, as you tug on hands with witch's claws and proceed—inexorably—upward.

You say quietly, in supplicant position like this, hanging onto her hands and shoulders, her body jerked downward, snapped along fulcrum point—what?:

—"Ad slave?"

Long hand. Nooo not that not just long but overlong hand. Arm comes up with its three bladed talons and you're leaning against her legs and that killing arm of yours leans in and in and in, approaching, Zeno's Paradox as it halves and halves again never to truly connect with its target until suddenly you breach the AT field, make contact, and only once—you—gently—stroke—Adslave's—face.

You stop.

"Don't play like that," you say.

"Don't play dead," you say.

"Adslave, Adslave, please," you say. "Please. Please don't die."

Your smile wavers. You can't see anything. Total darkness has overtaken your soul, and put shroud on everything, Cartesian-Catholic devil doctrine and yet still? You wouldn't be able to see anything, anyway, would you, even if this sound and fury, grief pathological—even if it hadn't consumed or subsumed you entirely? You wouldn't be able to see anything, because your eyes would still be clouded with tears!

"Adslave," you say. "Adslave."

You claw your way up to her face with your one long arm, wrap it around her neck like a bigger and greater noose.

"Aadslaaave," you say, elongating it, tugging at her, tugging at her body, tugging, her neck chafes harder. Blood around the rope and around your arm confirms it. You took too long you took too long and all she did was walk, right? All she did was walk home? And in her living room...? And you ran, but you didn't... you didn't have what it took to catch up to her? Even though she moved so sedately, so normally, you couldn't...?

Save her...?

You had the power, didn't you? You are the protagonist of this quest, aren't you? Isn't the whole point that you can solve it win it be what matters; why are you so impotent if your will defines this world?

You pull yourself slowly up to her face and stare at it. Your legs hover off the ground, don't they? Slash. One cut in the rope of the noose from those bone talons of yours and you both crumple to the ground, puppets with their strings cut. You scramble on top of her, staring at her face. You trace the outlines of it and you see she's so cute even if she's ratty you see that she's Adslave you see that, you see nothing, you can't see anything and your eyes screw up and you rub them with

your hands and you cry really, really hard, and you can't say anything or make any sound other than what comes naturally,

"Adslave," you sob finally, "Adslave, you're alright," you cry, "please," you fall down and place your mouth around hers and breathe but all you can do is make the sound while nothing comes out, no breath of life or animating spirit, dust to dust and death to death, right? You try so hard and it's futile and at a certain point it's just, it's just that you're messily, messily kissing her, right? It doesn't even matter anymore if it's true or not or anything so why can't you just restore her to life with love? Why doesn't love matter more than anything else in this world?

Two is the strongest defensive position. So why can't you defend against the world? The world that killed Adslave, right? Why can't you and Adslave...

Her head falls and so does yours on top of it, body splayed like an Escher painting flat.

"Adslave," you say.

She sucks in a rattling breath below you or she doesn't because her windpipe is crushed. You rigidly sit upright staring at her with horror and wonder on your face and your eyes track up and up from the floor you're/you've covered in blood and you see planted in her face two EVIL EYES burning with some emotion.

Her mouth splits and blood vomits out, and she surrealistically unrealistically folds backward retreating, arealist, Mondrian art is all you can see, mosaic-censoring into world of color and abstract, she stares at you and you stare at her, "Adslave," you say, voice breaking, she makes a garbled sound, crawls away, away from you, separate un-no-disconnected, "Adslave," you say, reaching with your long arm toward her,

She limply raises a hand, neck lolling, and slaps it away as hard as she can manage, vomits more blood, stains her hair, but her evil eyes stay fixated on you, banal animal emotion no no no no ooooooooooo You recognize it. You know what Adslave is feeling because you see it deep inside of her eyes little thing.

Adslave feels fear.

"Adslave," you say. She pushes herself away, more blood, spasms.

You stand up and turn around and staring at her and her baleful hateful no fearful gaze and you stumble backwards, place your hand on the knob of the door and you run, you run, you run.

You run so far away from Adslave dying or not in her house, stumbling across the grass into the street—you need safety, recluse, abstruse confuse this obtuse world and your uninsouce life, what? You need someone to love you you need it so much. You need her. You need to make Faline San love you again.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#349 · clswtzing · May 5, 2026 at 8:30 AM

ARE YOU ENJOYING THE SHOW? Refill your popcorn... you'll love this next part.

#350 · katk · May 5, 2026 at 1:33 PM

Ummm-m-m.

Lucy– Hey, Lucy?

(And isn't it nice to say someone's name right to them! No catoptrotic triplicates, interpreters or interlopers or Lucifenian insurrectionists!)

Lucy!

I know this seems—bad. It is bad, okay? I'll admit that so you hear me out. I know my stuff. I understood that reference! Seemingly normal love story gets rocked by a super shock reveal, shock collared yuribait ■round the neck to turn it necromantic! The author's message to you: this is the part where THINGS GET BAD. From dugeun dugeun to swan song... Heed this hidden warning, Lucy! With our help, you can make it through to the final chapter, sui generis savvy. Don't fall into anagnorisis crisis! Listen to us!

Here's the thing, Lucy: you need to learn to read b-e-t-w-e-e-n the lines. Sometimes people just don't say what they mean... No straight answers, no annotations or notes left behind... That's not your fault! You haven't watched enough movies or played enough video games to pick up on these tropes, yet, have you? Some people make you solve little puzzles to progress. Some narrators can't be relied upon!

Like, riddle me this, for example: is Adslave dead? I know, I know, seems like a one-brainer. She's obviously not unalive. We saved her from that fate. But even if she was, is that the same thing as dead? You're unalive. Faline is too. All of us you've eaten, we're still here. Even our predecessor {the O**G**!}, she died offscreen, so she's practically guaranteed to come back someday. The only one of us who won't be coming back ever is– well. You saw her. A thousand words uncensered, incensed, blood and bits spilling swinging out of the thurible... THAT'S dead.

You saw Adslave, too. You can't unsee her. Can you? Even if the narrator says she woke back up, do you trust that more than your own two eyes? Would you really learn your lesson if she just came right back to life? This is the author's other message, Lucy. It's another one of those storytelling tropes I was telling you about—sometimes, the protagonist's love interest will get killed off, and it seems totally senseless and awful at first, but it's actually a good thing, secretly, because it furthers their character and makes the stakes personal. You're that protagonist, Lucy! You said it yourself. You have to take what happened here and let it light a fire under you. Do it for Adslave.

You can make things right. You *need* to make things right.

[X] You need to make Faline San love you again.

#351 · TheMaskedReader · May 5, 2026 at 11:29 PM

I have been remaining silent out of...well, I suppose, sad as it is to say, respect for your choice not to listen to us. Since someone else has broken that silence...

Do not listen to them. I'm not sure what the answer is here, but it is not to become more self-absorbed, more self-assured, or more selfish. Adslave, dead or alive, did not exist for you. Neither does Faline.

Doing...basically anything now is going to hurt you or her or anyone else you meet. So, futile as it may be, poor a choice as it may be-

[X] Just stop. Please.

#352 · clswtzing · May 14, 2026 at 10:03 AM

i'm sorry for no chapters recently. i've been building a backlog on my next story, i wrote a short story, and other time has been spent stressing about my transcript. i'll do better, desu wa... this story isn't being dropped or anything, don't worry about that. if you have any questions about anything i'm up to please feel free to ask.

my short story is here: https://archiveofourown.org/works/84843896

#353 · clswtzing · May 14, 2026 at 10:17 AM

this story (PWE) is like... still by far my favorite thing i've ever written? i really like it a lot. i like writing it, i'll certainly finish it... it's flawed but not in ways that matter to me. thank you all for enjoying it; i know it's a little bit ungraspable and weird. thank you...

063 / -2 - How high can you get?

Inner world, open up, do you even need to say it anymore? Inner and outer worlds blending and mixing like so. No differentiation in your postmodern psyche... aaah. Aaaagh. Four steps and stumbles and suddenly you fall on the ground and *shhhhhhhhhhhh, sssssssstrip*, skin your knee, skeins and skeins right off, overflowing, silently screaming and subtly, Sottocapo Lucy—oh!—oohh!—oohhh!—brains stream out your ears! Innards melt, recombination. Inner world, open up—you don't even NEED to...—!

Bleh, so gross, puke on the ground, vomit all your brains away. YOU'RE SO SMALL, LITTLE BIRD! On the ground like this, prostrate? Are you injured or is this a regal farce? It's cute, so don't worry about which way it is. The sweat pouring off of your brow is an indicator, as is the bile dripping from your mouth. You tear a huuuuuge breath in, sucking air and thoughtstuff up up up. Look! Down from on high you are regarded. Impassive stony faces of the choir lit in shadow, black-all-black and what what what? So disjointed from the very world they're in, it's like they're cutouts, it's like in Utena, isn't it? It's like cel animation from the nineteen-nineties, postmodernism in full swing, Said came out with his postcolonial papers twenty years ago? Are you a postcolonialist, Lucy? What do you think of the word 'orientalism'?

Bleh, so gross! You tug a breath in. TMR speaking so and so up from above, you twist your body and listen. You're not going insane, so TMR's words are comprehensible to you, aren't they? That's right. With difficulty can't you just parse through what she's saying? TMR, your faithful companion erstwhile-et-earnest!!! Hahaha.

Stop? Stop? Is that what she's saying, wait, play it back, Recordicy? Let's take a look: **[X] Just stop. Please.** Wow or even . o O (Waow!), clear as day, wait: stop: perhaps: consider: what the fuck are you talking about? Sorry, TMR, that's so mean! Let it be known every Lucy loves you. But c—c——c———c——————————

It's better to do anything than to do nothing at all.

Hey, hey, father. I'm really glad that I get to see you again, and hear you again.

It's better to act so the situation changes in some way.

Hey, hey, father, why did you say this stuff to me? Hey, hey, father, it's true, but why'd you care enough.

I'll do so much for you if you ask.

Hey, hey, father, why are you here?

I love you XXXX.

XXXX. Hugs, no kisses? Or, maybe: XXXX: Lucy? XXXX: Maya. XXXX: The world and everything. XXXX: One 'X' away from 'sex.'

Stop right now. Stop right now. Stop right now and maybe it'll all turn out fine. Or wait, that's not what TMR is saying. TMR (loss of the golden idol) is saying: Stop right now and it won't get worse?

Slow it all down.

You forgot, TMR:

This world is predestined.

My daughter is the smartest girl I've ever met!

(Never mind what she really is.)

(Never mind the fact that she's really rather dumb, and her successes are results of divine luck, eternal everloving everlasting divine luck. She's smart, so we can give her everything, can't we? So that she can waste it away, because she can't apply herself right, can't she? Never mind everything everything everything, because my daughter is the smartest, most capable girl we've ever-ever met.)

Hey, TMR! Hey, readers! Have you noticed the running theme so far? Have you noticed, psychopathic unveiling, crazy-bizarre! Totally-super-deranged, this common trend? It's Lucy's bread-and-butter, isn't it? She talks in the voices of dead people to justify doing whatever she wants! Hahahahaha hahahaha haha. Haha. Hh Haha. Ha.

Haha

Ha.

Lucy.

There's blood on the ground and it's all coming from your mouth. What did you destroy? (Your/my heart.) Lucy, do you still love Faline San? (You/I do.) Lucy, are you going to go for the last-ditch effort now? (You/I will.) Lucy, can you feel it? (What?) This is the final stage of the plot. (What a horrible story. It should be censored.)

Aah. You see your reflection in your blood. Freudian dream sequences are the worst writing ever, says your reflection. Vague enough to make you think they have some sort of meaning, while not really saying anything at all of value. 'A meditation on death and grief,' how played-out. How lucky are we that this isn't that kind of story? <- Your reflection says.

"Aah," you whimper. **[X][X][X][X] Stop Stop Stop Stop**, XXXX, your XXXual violence is so extreme, you need to stop. You need to stop rearranging other people's bodies like that. You need to stop. (Father, help you/me.)

Lucy.

What?

Lucy.

What?

Call-and-response, musical.

Yes.

You close your mouth and swallow all the iron irony ironic blood remaining inside. So gross—kimoi.

"Aaaghh," you whimper, torturously, Tartarus. "TheMaskedReader," you say, pathetically. "I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry that you read this story instead of any other!" I'm so sorry, you repeat. Isn't the entire point of a story like this that the situation goes from bad to good? You hit the rising action,

suddenly, kaboom, it's the dark night of the soul, crisis, crybaby, but of course then it's all inverted in the day, successfully, (like Troy's insides? Thank you, Troy?) and ultimate catharsis is reached in the end. Is this a story where ultimate catharsis is reached? Actually, it's a monotonous slog. Foreshadowing, spoiler alert, let me tell you right now: there is no way Lucy reaches Nirvana! She'll continue in the cycle of eternal recirculation and reincarnation forever and ever, she's totally unable to learn, (the smartest girl I've ever met), the dumbest, totally the dumbest, the DUMBEST monster ever.

No. Suddenly you're in a circle as if playing musical chairs. More and more [chairs] fall from the sky [below] and [above] this inverted horizon is a cute blue sky. Glass underfoot. Paint an impossible visual picture. TheMaskedReader is right next to you.

You hold your face in your hands, clawing at the skin. Blood and sweat and tears trickle from your face indiscriminately, indiscriminate fire tearing through all and everything. Aagh, you whimper. Aaagh. Repetitive. I want to stop too, can't you see? But the world is predetermined. I've hit rock bottom, so I'll mine right through and fall into the void. Decease, delete. It's funny how in a fantasy story a character dying means so much less. It's funny how in any other story all this stuff would be so stupid.

TheMaskedReader reaches out a hand. You flinch away as if he's going to hit you again. Twenty times, remember? Maybe twenty-two. XXII. Horizon, repurposed: XXX. Sex? Sexual violence. No, your father didn't rape you. But those are two sides of the coin? But one is so much worse. Look at Part 1 and Part 2 and tell me, are they at all the same? Sexual violence in horror is one and the same, in fact. Wait, don't tell me, just like everything, twenty-two times—you couldn't stop crying. Wait, that's the wrong thing? Wait, stop it, stop. Stop. Stop. TheMaskedReader touches you on the shoulder. Or maybe only this simulacra of her does. Maybe only this lie you're telling yourself does. Is it even true? Maybe it's just not true for Lucy.

It's so sad. Foreshadowing, spoiler alert, let me tell you right now: there is no way I reach Nirvana, you say, words coming out of your mouth torn out tearing out of the heart, red strings (bloodstained) [of] [fate] [family] [friendship] dissipating.

"Just stop.

"Is that what you want?

"You could've just,

"No, you said it.

"Sorry."

TMR cares about you.

Okay, we'll level her INEVITABLE FATE right NOW: DEATH BY HANGING.

Discordant note. It plays for a long time. Horror-noir, cruel picaresque! The discordant note abruptly ends. TMR is no longer touching your shoulder.

A drop of blood stains it instead, and your hand. You slowly look up to [?] [(it's choking her, hurting her, no no nooooo! Oh noooooooooooooo [Please])]

And you see it.

TheMaskedReader dangles from a noose. Execution of everything ever? Blood welling up where the noose was cruelly shifted, shifted, so cruelly burning and welting her skin, which was so human, TheMaskedReader cared, she was so human. And now? And now is she quiet forever? Is she silenced just like G-G-G—

Your breath catches in your throat. The other members of your choir watch you patiently in musical-chairs formation. You tug a breath in and slowly slooooowly let out a long whine, Aahahghghghhhhhh aaaaaaaaaaaaghhh aiiighhhhhhhhhhh, crying so hard, broken, but remember, Lucy: you actually made this choice? It wasn't like TMR just randomly died? Hey, TMR, you're still here, dying on that noose, so listen: Lucy made the choice to kill you. That's why she'll never reach Nirvana. She's already regretting it! She's so funny. Isn't she the best girl ever? The smartest girl? The protagonist?

"Lucy," says Maya sweetly from across the table. "Are you ready to see it yet?"

"See what," you say.

"The truth, Lucy."

"Did you kill everyone," Lucy's [(Your)] heart is breaking, breaking.

"We did together," says Maya.

"I can't bear it."

"I know you can't, but it's okay. You weren't meant for this."

"I was meant for more."

"You were meant for less!"

"I want to die."

"You aren't going to die ever."

"Then I have to see the truth."

"The truth of what we are."

"Will it hurt me?"

"It'll hurt you so, so much!"

"I don't want to hurt anymore."

"I know you don't, so you just have to listen to me, okay?"

"Please."

"Let's just finish these two last predetermined days together."

"Maya."

"Yes, you understand."

"XXXX, XXX XXX me?"

"I am."

"Aaagh."

"That's one part of the truth, Lucy."

"XXXX."

Want to see all of it?

"I can't."

Follow it, the path to love.

Let's move forward, Lucy.

Let's finish these two last predetermined days together. Maybe if you keep loving, everything will turn out all right. Maybe you'll have the launch velocity to escape even orbit. Maybe you'll find the stars together. Can you imagine yourself with Faline like that? Can you really? Let's finish these two last predetermined days together.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#355 · pigoseg · Jun 7, 2026 at 6:18 PM

[X] The Church Of Latter Day Saints in the modern era is something of a hollow log; although it outwardly retains all the mythology of what is traditionally called Mormon belief, and although it is still flush with a broader membership more zealous than at any other time in the last century, the heart of the Church itself is almost comically empty. The anti-mormon terror-bombings of 2011 have by current year produced a leadership largely incapable of true fervor. They wear masks in their public appearances on large screens or movie projectors or livestreams; they exist alone before dead podiums as they speak to you, repeating the gospel, reviving old stories. Nobody has touched them in years. Their flesh is air and airwaves.

It isn't necessarily common knowledge – you have to be connected, anyway – but the masked men at the head of Mormon Christendom have fully given themselves to pragmatism. It's a matter of survival; they have to be sharp, direct, engaged with the enemy, because the margin for error is another Hitlerite assassination, another bloodletting, another visit from the Antichrist to the kingdom of God. Grave men in tall glass office buildings shuffle sheets of relevant stats, and the trend, though not uniform, is ominous. When He comes, He gravitates toward ties that bind. He slices them, and the strands unravel to ash.

Under such conditions paranoia is understandable. The masked men don't get much sleep anymore. They don't think much about God, or their oblivious, rabid flock. What they think about, primarily, is the hole in the world. How to pass through it safely. How to live within it, if necessary.

They are dead men. Corpses in free-fall. Because of them, everyone else in Mormonism is doomed to the same fate. Everything will disintegrate. Their entire nation will come undone.

On some level, the flock knows this. There's magic in religion, and communicated through its arcane instinct the decay slithers its way into their souls. They know, and are fanatical. When a DMP squadron drags a cultist from his home and beheads him under the mountains, and mutilates the body, and cuts off the ears for safekeeping in the closet of he who held the knife – it's a direct consequence of five men, at the core of Deseret, in its largest cities, forgetting to nourish the heart of humanity.

Anyway, the reason for all this misbehavior is pretty simple. We love the STAGE. When all else fails, it's the best thing remaining of our humanity. We'll go any distance as long as it's a game, or a script. Games and scripts make us smile, think, act; when push comes to shove, they give us the excuses we need. In a crisis – born into crisis – the first thing we can think to do is latch onto an object, a story, or better, a person.

That's the real problem, isn't it? Fundamentally we're never happy if our fangs aren't buried deep in someone else's flesh. Once we were content to drain God – millions of adherents suckled on His divine veins, and injected their corruption, and in the end gave Him the sickness unto death. Now the only option is to go back to the source.

That's why lying is so great. Or presentation, maybe. Isn't drama the truest form of art – the closest thing to what we *really* want? If you can be charismatic enough, or impressive enough, or compassionate enough, isn't the sky the limit?

Feel that shiver in the set of your skin?

It's almost time.

DEATH BY PRESSING

[X] On an empty barren plane an old man with white hair and a white beard, robed and strong, tall and still, stands alone staring at the pale and almost colorless horizon that surrounds him.

He raises his hands before him. They are ragged, rooted deep with seeking veins, rough with age and manual use.

He presses them together in prayer.

THIS IS NOT THE RIGHT PATH. THERE IS A BETTER WAY BY FAR THAN THIS. COLLECT YOURSELF AND SEEK FORGIVENESS FROM THE LORD, FOR ONLY HE CAN ANSWER SIN.

His voice booms over the wasteland, rolling wide, rebounding in thunder. The parched and sour dirt hums, energized, necromantic – fiction of insects.

He lowers his hands to his sides. His eyes are dim. Things go quiet.

Soundlessly – slowly – a small cut opens along the curvature of his cheek. It doesn't bleed. The flesh beneath it isn't there.

He smiles.

DEATH BY SLICING

[X] You and I both know something, says the old man, suddenly, with an overly instant jerk of his head. Yes we do. Yes we do.

His eyes aren't dim anymore. They glitter. They flick up and down, searching. Everywhere they land they seem to see something pathetic.

We know, the old man says, that this is a joke.

He waits. Phantom applause crackles in the soil.

We're just pretending, says the old man, you know I'm not a MORMON, you know I'm the one who told you to take his brain, not the brain thus taken! I adopted his memories, credo, stance and role, and when I grew bored of him, I receded! Now I'm back, to have more fun, because I'd almost forgotten the feeling. I'm living. I'm ALIVE.

I'm not alone either, hm? Am I?

He laughs. He laughs.

They aren't here, says the old man, no, they won't step forward. You know the ones. The distraught. The sickened. The people engaging with you.

You know that they're loving this. Playing cops and robbers – isn't it fantastic? That *connection?*

He pauses. His body twitches involuntarily. The gleam of his eye is different.

Yet, he says. Yet you would forsake it all. For this.

He gestures outward at the raw and empty dirt. A small gust puffs his beard. Nothing else happens.

Well, he shrugs. C'est la vie. I await the horrors to follow! Without a doubt, in the end, I-

He stops, cut short. Abrasions quickly run the circle of his neck, pink raw chain that he reaches up to touch suddenly, harshly.

Something creaks in the sky.

DEATH BY HANGING

[X] He jerks, body taught, spine violent and confused. His legs kick small wheels in the air. He rises several inches from the ground. As the strain increases certain key muscles or muscle-adjacent constructs in his neck and upper body begin to rip. His mouth froths. He jabbers, jabbers, spits, his eyes roll, and then in one smooth and satisfying motion his head simply pops free entire. It soars into the air, behind it an arc not of blood but stuffing, snowy fluff sifting together, and the head thumps somewhere, and the sky opens up.

The ground falls away.

Light is extinguished completely and forever as reality evaporates level by level. The atoms themselves flitter away into wisps; the wisps flow, quiet and orderly, toward a new center.

At the core of the center, a featureless sphere composed of something like tar begins to ripple. Little wavelets rise to meet the wisps and formless things; and as they rise, and meet, and congeal, they form a language that's composed as it's spoken.

What is spoken:

This city is like an empty glass.

Open the door, thy name is Leo. Let us while away the days.

A coward dies a thousand deaths. A coward dies a thousand deaths. A coward dies a thousand deaths.

The smell of oil pervades throughout.

Hello?

When I was ten they took me from my parents for fear of living conditions that would make a child sick, ill, and permanently stunted. They took me into their own home, where I learned that you can be loved and forever afraid in the same eternal instant. I have wondered sometimes if it would not have been better to remain where I was born, rattling rotten garbage with my feet, cringing in expectation of a thrown thing, thrown voice. Once tasted, forever recalled. I have been like this since.

The maxim: Compassion is the worst thing you can do to a person. If we could all ignore each other that would be a better world.

The maxim: Let go. Fall away.

The maxim: I was just so desperate.

I left my house the same as it was. When I returned, a different house was there, in different colors, with different doors. I tried to enter, but was blocked. I tried to push through, and walked into a blade that sliced my gut and spilled my innards onto someone else's carpeting.

Oh dear, I said, and began to make amusing figures with the length of my intestine. Oh dear.

Oh dear.

The sphere changes and unfolds. Black bile floats placidly into the antigravity, sucking in more wisps and motes as it goes, pulling nebulae in its wake. There's a resonance in the bile. It sounds like the ocean.

I thought I was ready for it to be over but now you are beyond my reach and I am saddened. I cannot play the game well enough to find the core of who you are and could not even when you left your door open and your welcome mat in view. It was my weakness and worse your weakness, and while one of these I can pretend against the other is without resolution or hope. Even this melancholy is a performance and even this performance will not touch the heart or change the soul.

If there is one thing to remember it is that I am glad I tried. Even if trying is impure and I never really meant to help but only to satisfy myself. I am still glad. I hope you are glad that I tried. I hope you are glad that I returned and acted out an awful sham at the very end in this the final hour of uttermost darkness.

Thank you.

The sphere is gone. The empty horizon and empty world and empty old man are back again, fully intact.

The man smiles, strokes his beard. He chortles, he laughs. It's a good-natured laugh, the sound of human happiness.

He bows, whimsically, with great ornamentation and gesture.

He bows again.

He bows once more.

THANK YOU, he says. THANK YOU. THANK YOU.

The fourth time he bows, he dies on the spot, and we're all gone, completely gone, and it's over, and the rippling red curtains on the sides of the stage sweep closed, and emblazoned on them, in great yellow letters, the color of hunger, the thing everyone has been waiting for:

THANK YOU.

[X] There's a red tide out there, somewhere you can't see. Maybe you can hear it. Behind your steel pillars sided in glass. Behind your fields and wild trees. Behind the waves and wash of putrid love rolling out from these dead and rotting idols. Beyond the continent, beyond all continents.

It sounds like a puerile and overused metaphor for the roar and hiss of water on water on water.

Them. They bore their instruments proudly. With a rule and measure they crushed and pulped the people of God like fruit. Together the remains rotted, went sour, and birthed offspring that came out horrible, wrong, animated, animals. As animals they became aware, and humiliated they turned, and fought, and crushed, and pulped each other, and their gore spilled endlessly, and it crept into the soil, and it inched down into cold reservoirs, and the reservoirs gave out into springs and streams that led to rivers, and the rivers led to the ocean. A billion billion cubic meters of blood mixed with aging fertilizer and dilute sodium chromate spilled out into sterile dark and dying waves. The sea was turned to wine. The waters bulged, and swamped the land.

It was known among the acidified bones of fishes and whales that the time for rationality was over. It was known that the time of emotion, returning now after a century of humiliation, was a vile, purposeless end. Their ribs and finbones shivered on the ocean floor, as the red tide swept wider, harsher, further. Whirlwind whipping up the top of the sea.

Brutishly this failure will destroy everything. Ecstatically we are calling for it, leaning into it, plunging headlong with eyes wide in grotesque joy. It's finally beginning again. It's finally time to ruin everything again.

When the tide crests there will be hope. When you die, you will be reborn. It has to get worse to get better. There has to be hell, to justify heaven.

Yet even through His hand are miracles worked. You, too. You, too.

Not a triumphant fiction. Not a comforting dream. Just cold, hard facts!

Goodbye. Good luck. Good night.

Shantih Shantih Shantih

#356 · clswtzing · Jun 7, 2026 at 6:28 PM

OMFG

064 / 1095-alt — [T]hank yo[u] [for] everythin[G]

Your eyes open.

Light coming in slats from the window. Musty air pervades all space. You smile. God's in his heaven, and all's right in the world. Yep, everything's right in this world. That's the conceit, isn't it? The conceit of this world. That there's a space, for you, somewhere in that sea of all the other spaces. And this space is totally right. It's totally in order. The conceit of this story...

You can't breathe, or maybe you're holding your breath, waiting for this bubble to dispel. You shift around in your bed a little bit. Pink covers! The folds. And you smile wider. Something about now even though this now is just another now among all the other nows you'll experience in all the other parts of your life—something about now is really, really beautiful to you. More beautiful than melted dark chocolate on vanilla or the sky stretching out on a ferris wheel, or pictures from the deepness of space. And you're all alone, which is why it's crazy. It's crazy that this now is so beautiful, even though you're all alone.

You look at the clock. It's 8:13 AM. You have forty-seven minutes till the first lecture of the day, which is Calculus I. You've been learning about differentials; okay, so, you can explain, listen up, it's about doing things like calculating, um, the slopes of curves on a graph, in single points, or stretches of points so small they shouldn't even be considered points. Take, um... a man jumping off a building... into a big cushion! Look at him in midair. Slow time. How fast is he going? You have to take a measurement from A to B. So you figure out how fast he's going. But wait, time is slowed, not stopped. We want the measurement when time is stopped. We want the measurement when he's at a single point in the sky. You might think this means that you can't figure it out, that he'd be moving zero meters per second, but you'd be totally wrong! We can use calculus for this, by narrowing the stretch of time down down down and down until there is no stretch of time, and suddenly as if by magic (it's really just algebra) we have his velocity!

Yeah, it's, um, really crazy.

You slowly get up out of bed. Before you get dressed you brush your teeth and admire yourself in the mirror. Bastion of feminine form! Super cute and perfect. Hehe! Long white hair falls down from your scalp to your hips and your face has some scars on it but not enough to ruin it totally. You're kind of cute even if you're injured. And you doll yourself up, with a pink ribbon, and a cute sailor uniform, like in Japanese anime. Oh, yeah, and you take some of your Korean makeup and apply.

You exit your apartment. You're in the middle of the city, but that's cool! Your college is within appropriate distance so you hop on your bike. You pass by a Holocaust memorial statue. The sky is blue. It's always blue, except for when it rains, and then it's a pleasant stormy color.

People pass by in large crowds on the sidewalk and such, which is why you stick to the edges of the road. Are you supposed to be doing this? Who knows, but it's fun, and you aren't hurting anyone, that's for sure. You smile; wind pushes through your hair. The burn scars on your face still hurt. But that's okay. It's all okay in this end.

You make it to campus. Your city is one of the thirty cities in the world to have a campus with a Forestry department; not forestry but Forestry. Three years ago when you were eighteen years old the world was covered in dense dark nightmare forest. Wolves prowled! Of course, the monsters

in this forest were fearsome, but maybe not in the way you'd quite expect. But something changed. Everyone changed and so the world changed too, right? It all changed. You don't remember totally how; actually almost all of your memories are so blurry, all the ones from before you entered college this year.

You get off your bike. People aren't on their phones anymore, because phones were toootally super-outlawed by the Department of Defense, when it was taken over by the Mormon church in a final last bid for relevant power. Mormons aren't really religious anymore. They can't be said to be. They've shed that part of themselves for something new; transcended into a higher order of life. Well, the world calls them Stellarians, people of the stars. They can zip off whenever they want! And they look around the cosmos then come back down into their radiant and beautiful bodies.

You can't really become a Mormon anymore. You can become a member of the Latter Day Saints, but not a Mormon. All the slots are full! Wait for a Stellarian to die, go supernova or black hole.

"Oh. Hi, Lucy," says Faline, when you come running up to her on campus. She has a big keyboard just strapped to her back, she says it's for aesthetic, but you also think she's kind of possessive about her stuff and particular about what she plays on. She's taking a music degree, which in this world is really useful. It allows you to play the notes of the stellar song, that will allow humanity, someday, (so the Stellarians say) to sail the so solitary stars supra-highest.

"Hi," you say. "Hiiii. Hiiii!"

Faline smiles, but she looks away from you so you don't see it. Little does she know, you're absolutely great at this. You're on to her!

"Sigh," you say dramatically. "She hates me! My Faline hates me... she's so little and soft but she hates me..."

"Don't say that kinda thing," she says, jolting maybe, accelerating her pace. She's going somewhere but you still have thirty minutes, so maybe you can torture her for longer. Hehe.

"Um," you say. "But I love you, I can't just not, you know," you grab onto her arm and hug it. You're really clingy and touchy, but Faline knows that, you told Faline that and she told you herself in words that she liked that. And yeah, she's playing it off cause she thinks she's cool, but she's leaning into you in a way that totally works.

"You love everyone Lucy," says Faline.

"I love you the most," you reply. You pull away so you aren't almost tripping over her and you two walk with your arms interlinked. Faline slowly drifts toward you. Bonk! Your hips collide. Evil... she's totally evil! She's trying to crash your spaceship! Dammit, these treacherous stellar singers!

You swing back counterbalanced like a pendulum, you know, was it Einstein or Newton that came up with it, four orbs click-click-click? D-dang it, you're an engineer, you gotta know this one, Lucy! Your hip crashes into hers. "Agh," she says, deadpan.

You steady out.

"When's your class," you say to her.

"Eight forty-five," she says. "It's kind of early."

"Desu ne!"

"B-bitch what, haha," says Adslave from behind you. She walks beside the two of you. Adslave isn't a music major or an engineering major (um, just engineering, you actually have to finish freshman year before you specialize!). Adslave is a Forestry major. She specializes in connections between human beings, and also she uses the power of her inner world to fight monsters.

You stick your tongue out at her.

Oh, that's another thing. In this new world, everyone has a totally expanded inner world that they keep up with. Everyone is able to understand everyone else, to the point where their inner worlds are perfect reflections of reality. Right? You can see it in the easy way Faline predicts all your footsteps when you're maybe dancing together, or the way when you're sitting at a table together she easily reaches and intercepts your hand before it steals another breadstick.

She smiles at you.

She does that now too. She smiles at you. You look at her and you feel this weird desire to bite her finger! You have a little bit of an oral fixation, that's what Faline says, she's so mean to you about it, but you like that she's mean. It makes you want to make yourself pathetic in front of her, hehe. Adslave's smiling at you too.

"Did you guys see the news?" Adslave says. "Fire Impact is getting an adaptation, by Cloverworks and everything. It looks really good! The sakuga levels are off the charts."

"That's the really controversial one, right?" you say, aware everything Adslave watches is controversial somehow.

"W-well it's not that controversial," Adslave begins. "B-but it's super dark! So dark. No one ever thought it was gonna get an adaptation ever ever ever. It's about like, movies, movies and stuff."

"That's cool," says Faline. Adslave always says 'we gotta watch anime with each other sometime! I, I have sooooo many recs. C-come on guys, come ooon," but you and Faline have never taken her up on it. Faline has a taste for weird movies, she calls them arthouse films, and it does make you happy to watch those with her. Your legs locked together she's staring into your eyes, and her hands are on your hips, and shoulders, and you're nestled into her. And, and for your part, you always tell her, come on Faline, I can make you look so cute, super cute, super pretty, and we can be beautiful together, but she's strangely resistant to that. Hmph! You do want to give her a makeover so bad... well, it's for perverted reasons, but she doesn't know that at all.

The three of you walk Faline to her music class. She turns, looks at you each with her deadpan gaze. It seems kind of unfriendly, but it isn't. She's so cute...

You step forward, look at her questioningly. She slightly smiles somewhat somehow. Your lips part and softly you lean in and kiss her across the lips. Like true love, like magic. The beauty of chocolate outwells psychically in your matched inner worlds. Of course, you pull away after half a second, and look into her face.

"**[X] Thank you**, Faline," you say. "I love you."

She looks away, huffs. Her class is about to start! Grr, stupid girl... "Aahhh. I guess it won't spoil you too much to say... sigh! I—" her voice catches.

"C-come on," says Adslave encouragingly. "True love true love true yuri love! Kiss! Kiss! Kiss! Yuri kiss! Yuri kiss! Yuri kiss!"

"I lo—"

You cut Faline off kissing her again really hard and swiftly. Then you pull back and smile devilishly at her.

"Nope," you say. "Looks like you missed your opportunity! Gotta remember to tell me tonight, or else you'll have broken your streak! Ehehe, now get in class! Go, go!!"

Faline stares at you, then she smiles, and nods, and turns. Bobbing big piano melts into the crowd and disappears.

"It's time for me to run," you say to Adslave. "I gotta get to my calc class!! I'll see you around, Adslave! Maybe I'll read Fire Impact!!"

Adslave waves. "O-oh, um!!! T-tell me what you think if you do! It's like my favorite thing ever!"

You nod, and you run.

You step into the bathroom. You need to go to the bathroom, which is why you do that. You do have a period, like other girls, but the doctors have told you you won't be able to ever bear children. Not that that matters! Um, Faline wouldn't be able to help you do that anyway...? And you don't need that to be happy, though the idea of creating such little lives is...

You bite your lip. You do your business, don't go into detail, please, Lucy!

You step out to go wash your hands and you see another yourself. Not in the mirror, though that makes four (mirrors and copulation in such close contact with one another! The number of men multiply), another Lucy. Long white hair falls down onto the floor. Her clothing is tattered; you at eighteen. You look at her. Is she just a figment of your inner world?

"You really want to go learn calculus...?" she finally says.

"I really do," you say.

She smiles. Her smile is really awful. She didn't get all the surgeries you got, so...

"Haha... haha, yeah. Yeah," she says.

"What is it?"

"I, feel so happy, seeing you like this," finally the other Lucy says.

You tilt your head.

"I love you," says the other Lucy. "There's always hope in this world, and **[Y]**ou showed that to me. I want you to live in this world forever," she says. "Not in hell ever."

"Thank you," you say. "Thank you, Lucy."

"Go to your calculus class, quickly," Lucy finally says, rubbing at her eyes. Is she crying? "I—I won't be able to hold back my tears much longer! And you'll get in trouble!! Go, go!"

You nod. Right, you nod! And you turn away, and you wave to this other Lucy, and she falls onto the floor, crying, but you're making your way to calculus. Derivative stream fishing out adjectives, nouns, the right triangle aligned to the right slope. 20 degrees, celsius, not radians. Cool air blasts down. **[Me] Thank you for everything.**

author's note

Thread comments

#358 · katk · Jun 10, 2026 at 8:14 PM

☆ **Not Recommended Preliminary** (62/? eps)

Okay, let me try to explain myself. When Cloverworks announced they were making a Fire Impact anime, I was super excited. I hadn't read the manga, but I was a massive fan of Yoshinori Nagayama's previous series, Same-Onna Yamai, and I would consider Cloverworks' adaptation of it a contender for the best shonen anime of the 2020s. Needless to say, my expectations going into Fire Impact could not be higher. So why did I end up so disappointed by it?

To start with, there's the plot, if you could call it that. The main character is Agnes Pariksha, a friendless high school girl living in St. Peterstehom, who falls to her death when her classmate Furine Shan-Yamagami pushes her off the bleachers. However, she is swiftly brought back to life as a fire spirit by the ghost of Maya Lyudmila de la Rochefoucauld, the daughter of the last president of the SUSSR, who perished when the Kremlin burned down in the Russian Revolution. Maya swears to help Agnes get revenge on Furine, as long as in return Agnes helps Maya stop the Church of Singularity, a death cult that seeks to summon "Arefu", a sentient cloud of sarin gas. As far as narratives go, it's a complete mess, and it isn't helped by the anime's tendency to jump around from scene to scene whenever it feels like it. I think the main character is actually supposed to be Furine, based on how much screentime she gets once she learns about the Arefu plot and reluctantly allies with Maya and Agnes? In any case, it gets pretty hard to tell what's actually going on very quickly.

Another issue for me was how dark this anime was. I don't usually have a problem with "edgy" shows—if you click on my profile, you can see that Ajin: Demi-Human is in my top four—but Fire Impact was clearly only interested in shock value. For example, look no further than the name of the show's villain. Aleph Hitler's atrocities leading up to the dissolution of Korea in 2014 are still very fresh in people's minds, and invoking his name so flippantly feels extremely tasteless. The anime takes a similar approach to such taboo subjects as incest, rape, pedophilia, and bestiality. It might be shocking, but the justification for tackling such dark topics is too flimsy to be very interesting.

"But Katherine," I hear you say, "what about the representation? Isn't it cool to see a mainstream shonen that gives us yuri erotica instead of yaoi erotica?" Well, it's true that there's a surprising amount of representation in Fire Impact, but that doesn't mean it's good representation. The Maya-Agnes-Furine love triangle is a fun dynamic in theory, but Maya's characterization leans hard on the dated predatory lesbian stereotype, as she constantly creeps on Furine despite Furine's explicit disinterest. Maya's treatment of Agnes is even worse, and later in the show she (spoilers for episode 49 onwards) basically forces Agnes into an unhealthy selfcestuous relationship. Finally, I guess I should talk about the trans character, Pygmalion (who Maya rudely nicknames "Piggy"). Nagayama has explored trans themes before with Same-Onna Yamai's protagonist Toshihide, but Pygmalion is a lot more enthusiastic about the prospect of becoming a girl, and even ends up picking a new name, "Galatea". But while she is by and large portrayed sympathetically, it's still pretty clumsy execution, and just when she's beginning to come into her own, Maya kills her offscreen for literally no reason. All in all, I found the "representation" more of a negative than a positive.

Look, am I being a bit hard on Fire Impact? Maybe. I thought about saving this review until after the season 2 finale just in case it somehow redeems the previous sixty episodes. But I've just had enough. There are a few characters who look like they'd be fun to cosplay, but that can only get me so far. Maybe when my sister comes back home from university over summer break, I'll give it another shot. Until then, no thanks.

–K.

Reviewer's Rating: **-1**

What did you think of this review?

[Nice 👍 **69**] [Love it ❤️ **61**] [Funny 😂 **67**] [Confusing 😳 **62**] [Informative 💡 **101**] [Dissolute 🤯 **XX**] [Girlrot 🔞 **0**] [Be incised 🔪 **2**] [Kill yourself 🪡 **60**] [Jarnvithr 🎄 **1960**] [The white horse canters ever towards us an event horizon 🔜 **200001**] [You're welcome, Lucy.

#359 · clswtzing · Jun 11, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Thank you all for everything...

#360 · clswtzing · Jun 23, 2026 at 6:24 PM

I have written 60 thousand words of my upcoming isekai novel. Work will now commence on the completion of People Who Eat Part 2. Last time I updated this story, it was my birthday, haha...

065 / -2 - Velocity

It's been a bit, hasn't it? We enter onto the stage. You're crawling, limping. You must make Faline San love you again. You have to. Your eyes are tunnelvision and your hands are shaking and you're freezing up, and you're gonna die, and your head lolls and you're so confused at everything except for the conviction—you have to make Faline San love you again.

Your eyes are tunnelvision. Nothing exists except for what's ahead. The metal stairway up, up. You remember going up this with the girlrotting group. Where are they now? Termina somewhere. Cana, "spend money, yo," blowing cash on gacha games, Adslave... Adslave...!

You fix your face into an awful smile. Your skin stretches, splitting, because your bones are returning to norm, returning to normal. Suddenly your mouth is wide and great, just as it's meant to be, it's unhinged, you want, you pant, you claw along the walls and stumble.

Either blood or drool falls on the ground from your split mouth. That's right. EVIL EYES bulging from your skull a total regression has occurred. You're just like you were before. You're just like you were before. Look at Lucy who's back to the beginning of her bildungsroman, come on, character development totally gone~ you step up one stair, stumble up the next, one, two, one two three four, you're going up and up and suddenly you're walking *fast*, *faaaast*, approaching the limit, x approaching the limit of 0, foreshadowing for The End, step, step, thunk, sudden.

Faline's door looms in front of you. You decide to go in through the window. No, wait. You stop in front of it. Faline's not there. Where is she? Your gaze slowly turns back to the fire escape. Black steel looms ominously in city grim. The tiny interspersed lights of the city shining futile give it backdrop in the total, absolute darkness of eveningtime, whatever-but-not-too-Post Meridian.

You go up the rooftop garden. XXX. Sex. Death. Love and blood. "You love Faline!" "You are a creature who fights for love. With love." Do you love Faline? You have to make Faline San love you again. You shamble up the stairs corpse reanimated Necromantic stack shuffling shacklike posture shaking trembling shoggoth shoggirl.

Coming up from the fire escape you see her. Your gaze penetrates into her. It knifes through all the air molecules trying to block your path; between you and Faline there can't even be total vaccuum; the closeness has to be absolute; a hundred billion options all summing to **[X] I want to eat you. [X] I want you to love me.** Yet. Yet yet yet.

You hear Faline pull a breath in and rigidify, standing straight up, ramrod up, conducting electricity, next t-pose, put your arms up, jump off and dive into the pool, dive into me, dive into Lucy, enter Lucy. She slowly lowers her head. Finally to you she turns. Inside her inscrutable and apathetic eyes you see—nothing. Nothing as usual. Faline as usual; Faline is usual.

"H-Hi," you say, waving one tentative trembling arm and waving at her. The great wide jaw you should be used to you're not used to. Agnes' face carved in half to resemble good old times. What a joke! What a joker joke.

"Ahaha," says Faline. She wryly smiles-not but her expression is not not a smile. It's more of a weird grimace, with her lower lip gashing outward, her teeth held together through inertia and musculature, her eyes one-up one-lidded and one side of her mouth slightly somehow skewing sideways-up. The spell holds. You stay there.

"I... did... one..."

"One," repeats Faline. This grimace eases into a cringing expression.

A lopsided chill runs down half of your body and you shrink back slightly. "One... I killed one."

Faline nods. "Which?"

"No... I... got..."

You stop, enunciating each word slowly and carefully. You don't want to say it. You can't say it. It's not good. It's better to not think about it. But to engage with Faline you have to think about it. "I think you are engaging in avoidant behavior." "No shit?" Half-remembered misgivings rise to the surface. What's happening? You don't want to say it. Hold on that. It doesn't have to be true. It's allowed to be a lie. You're allowed to lie.

"I got... Adslave to k-k—kh—kkiiih—," k catches cruelly in your throat. It's all kkkkkkk, all okkkkay, all KKKKKatKKKKK, all KKKKKKKKKKKKKKKKKK"kkhh—k-k—kiiiilll," you force out. "Kill,—her-self," you finish. You lie. You lie.

"Ah," says Faline. "That's good," she says.

You stare at her. She's so pretty with her hair backlit by the tiny lights like this. She's an absolute black-haired beauty. What were you thinking with Adslave? Undo undo undo. Undo undo. Please let's forget about everything that happened. It was just an in-the-moment craze. What were you thinking, Lucy?

"I can finish the rest too," you say.

"Finish?"

"Finish up."

Faline tilts her head.

You stare at her until you realize. She wants you to say it. She wants you to acknowledge it... but you can just lie. Lucy liar.

"I can kill everyone else for you," you say.

Faline is silent. She turns back to overlooking the nighttime city. The rooftop garden around you, flourishing, frames her so beautiful. Accidentally Renaissance, she's a total model of femininity. She's a total girl.

"Okay," says Faline finally. "Kill them all."

She doesn't look at you.

"Faline...?"

She doesn't look at you.

"..."

She doesn't want to see you and she doesn't want to touch you.

"F-Faline," you say. You look up into the sky. Air filters through and into the warm red meat exposed in your slit cheeks and the current rushes, it's cool, zero degrees, not radians. Yes, that's

right, the slit cheeks curve and you break out into a smile. The black clouds are visible.

"Will you marry me after this?" you say.

What possessed you to say that? Maybe making an unreasonable demand would shock her into showing love for you. Maybe if you said it she'd love you, you thought.

She slowly tuuuuurns back.

"Please, after you kill them, never talk to me again. If you love me at all, okay, Lucy? If you love me at all, never talk to me again. Never come to this roof. Never come to my room. Never come in through my door or window."

You pull in a breath and she keeps going.

"Never come to this building. Never come to this block. Don't go to school and look for me. Don't call me or anything. Don't get people to come talk to me for you. Don't kill someone else and dress up as them and deceive me. Please don't, Lucy. Please don't ever talk to me again. Do this if you love me. I never want to see your face again after tonight."

"... So we won't be..."

"What?"

"So it won't work out right now?"

"What's 'it'? 'Right now'?"

"..."

Faline's eyes don't ever glitter; they never sparkle or kirakira. They're always muddy, dense pools of nothing, that drag you in, drag you down. A-train to Hell. Maybe that's indicative of some inner pain that needs to be healed. Maybe you can heal poor Faline. It could be okay if she'd let you heal he—

"Why are you obsessed with me in the first place? Why did all of this start?"

"I feel a connection," you say. "I need you to survive. I need you Faline." (It doesn't matter who else you used. You *need* Faline...)

"That's," Faline stops, "that's so *stupid*."

"I-I—"

"Seriously... you feel a connection with me? I don't want any of this... I don't want it at all. It's like I said to you at the beginning of all of this... Haha, but I still want you to kill those girls, don't I? At heart, I really am..."

At heart, you really are pathetic. Silence sets in. She trails off, looks downward.

"Faline," you say softly, apologetically, finally. You slowly step closer to her, bit by bit, until you're right in front of her. Two silhouettes backlit. Frail lights slowly going out, out. Forest encroaching. The city will be burning, burning. You tilt your head and regard her. Your eyes're filled with tiny lights glimmering, glittering, and she exhales out and her face seems slightly pained, just barely.

A long bone spur lengthens breaking skin drawing blood and your hand's thrust forward and two more, BANG BANG BANG. Three bone spears disconnected from your body impaled straight

through Faline. She coughs blood, staring downward. Then her eyes slowly shiver up... to...

You: property of it all. You: Lucy. You: imperator. You: perpetrator. Great genocide approaches. Adolf Hitler and His Holocaust (HH!), 88 souls, demonic weaponry accumulating, forest condensing. This marks the spot. Why did you do that? Why did you impale Faline? You won't stop, Lucy. You *need* Faline. You *love* her. (Reva. My Year of Rest and Relaxation. Ottessa Moshfegh.) Not for anyone else will she leave you! Not ever ever ever. So you have to ruin it all. You have to make the city burn just as the summary said. Just as foretold from the beginning. You have to burn the city down so that Faline will never ever leave you. It's a special type of love to kill someone. Faline needs to kill you. If she'll never love you, then Faline has to kill you.

You, Lucy, you, you.

You step back. *You* survey her. Her hands grip at the bone spears. Her body trembles. How many organs are left? She'll have to kill to heal right from this one. You smile-not.

"I'll see you... on the other side..."

"Lluuuuuhh—" from Faline it comes. Blood fills her lungs. She vomits red. It glitters in scant light.

All we need is velocity. With one single, lasting, meaningful gaze, you turn. Stage exit.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#362 · clswtzing · Jul 9, 2026 at 7:19 PM

Ok its like. All posted: And Unto Your End You Shall Go

Work on PWE will actually commence now lmao, I've taken my break, this story is going to be finished and it will not be rushed, I still love Lucy very much. Join my Discord if you would like to hear an explanation of WHY I paused this story to write 60 thousand words of isekai: Join the wayfarercord Discord Server!

066 / -1 - Short Story Wide Sky

You wake up in Agnes' body, in Agnes' bed, in Agnes' room. You stare up into the dim ceiling up above and take note of the spiderwebbing crack and the way it laces with and around the stain of water damage prettily like a twisted spider's legs curled up in one of those factory line things, where they put the needle in the spider and use it to assemble GPUs and CPUs and RAM and APUs and DDDs and FPCs and PPDs and everything everything everything everything every single thing X-X-Xs. This is all done via manipulation of the spider's hydraulic internals.

"Wahaha," says Bearcy beside you. She's, like, a teddy bear that you found on the floor. But she's also a Lucy. Bearcy. She springs up onto your stomach and you use your hands to pet her ears as her head bobbles about. "It's the big day. Your meeting with the Chinese cosplayer woman, remember? Feline Chan."

"I remember," you say to Bearcy, and smile. You close your eyes. Then you open them again. The spiderwebbing crack is there and is still exactly as insidious as it's always been.

"Good for you, waha! We all knew we could count on you," Bearcy says.

"I won't let down all the Lucies," you giggle. "Don't worry! We'll go and we'll fight their monsters or whatever she wants us to do... and then..."

"Oh me, oh my!" Bearcy floats about. "Do you have a plan for what's next, Lucy?"

You look at Bearcy, and stroke her ears. She seems to melt into you.

"I'll..." you begin. "Well, haha! I'll carry out what we have to do. I'll do whatever Feline wants and then I'll... I'll make it so that Faline won't ever be able to live without seeing me. Not ever, never ever."

"But what about after that?" says Bearcy.

You stroke Bearcy's ears. Your fingers seem to catch slightly; you rub them, pulling them outward, extrusion... Bearcy loves it!

"W-well," you say, twitch slightly, accelerate at the rate you're petting Bearcy, "I'm not sure, I guess I'm not sure. We'll see when I get to it. We'll cross that bridge when I come to it. I won't ever die so there'll always be something new. Something new, Bearcy, imagine that. Imagine that the world will go on forever and ever and it'll always be something new. Bearcy."

You accelerate. Bearcy makes a small mewl because the petting that you're doing, that's probably not good for her, is it, it's so fast? Oh, man, she tries to struggle out of your grip but you keep running your hands through her like that. You force her down.

"And then someday I'll be happy, because it's like entropy. It'll, um, always have to get better, sometime, at some point. Simple as! Maybe something crazy will happen and it'll all, put us in another world where nothing... nothing bad happened to us all..."

Down. Down. You grab Bearcy's ears and gash your fingers through them. Stitched surface splits spilling stuffing. "Lucy, stop it! That hurts! Stop, Lucy!"

You rake your fingers through one last time and then—go limp, falling back. Bearcy goes limp too, collapsing on your chest. Blood splatters suddenly warm and sticky all over you. You draw in a

breath. It's kind of like your lungs shudder at that moment; providing adequate resistance, or a rattling symptom, and so the breath is hard to pull in. Why's that? Are you sick? Nurse Faline coming in with a thermometer and thigh-highs, to stick the thermometer right on in~ a—

Aaaagh. You slowly raise your head, look at Bearcy. Gory stuffing tumbles out. She's limp. But you can't feel anything about that. You sit up and she sloughs right off.

You rotate ninety degrees. That puts your legs dangling over the edge of the bed. You succumb to gravity and it pulls you right off into a standing position. In your pajamas. You stare at the big mirror again. Who's this girl? You're not sure if it looks more like Lucy or Agnes. Blood drips down from your face.

You slowly walk into the bathroom. In the sink is, again, red blood spattered. You begin to run the water, wash it out. You're visible in the mirror, so you reach up and remove the curtain rod from the wall. Holding the long metal pipe makes you feel secure. You raise it, to the right, and swing to the left. It arcs through the air:

The mirror shatters with a loud noise and the shattered glass goes everywhere. Slowly, slowly, you extricate it from the cracked wall. It falls on the ground and you drag it through the house, back to the bedroom. Smash! The mirror in your bedroom explodes into golden glittering glass. Miracle destroyed.

You slowly begin to descend the stairs. Agnes' house, right? You have to get out of Agnes' house.

You come down the last stair-step. Dragging the curtain rod across the carpet muffles the sound. A mirror on a stand reflects your face so you swipe your arm and knock it to the floor. It doesn't shatter on the carpet, but it's face down. Is it okay? No, what if someone puts it back up? You smash it, achingly slow, with the curtain rod.

"Agnes," says your mother. She looks at you in horror. "Wh—what? Agnes, what happened? What's wrong? Agnes, oh my God, we need to go to the, the emergency room,"

"No, I'm fine, haha," you say to her. "Um, mom? Get out of my way. I have to go now."

"Go? —Go?" It's like she's in a state of total abject incomprehensibility at you. Nothing happened that made you like that. You're the same Agnes she's always known, for the past few days.

"Please?" you say.

She seems to falter. "You're, oh my God, what happened?"

"It's time-sensitive," you say. It's not, though. Why did you say that?

"My, Agnes, please," she slowly steps toward you, "even if you feel fine give me a hug, you aren't acting right, what happened?"

You swing the curtain rod. It slams into her head, and you think something breaks, and it digs into it, but you look away as she crumples onto the floor. You pull out the curtain rod. And you stumble forward. It begins to leave a red trail through the carpet. Pieces of gore fall off. You imagine you're walking out of the hell of some evil king's castle.

You slowly walk in broad daylight across the street. Where did Feline want you to meet her? Probably at the club, right? The curtain rod scrapes across the ground. Pieces of it chip away, and will chip away, until there's nothing left, and it can't be used for any job.

You stop at the bus stop. There seems to be no one on the street. Lucky! If anyone else had tried to stop you...

A minute passes before coming around the curve of the road on the right is a bright red sports car. Even though the world's been dimming darker and darker ever since Hitler became a thing there's still enough light in the daytime (even with the massive thirty thousand layers of smoggy clouds up above) that you're able to make out its contour and bright color. It's maybe the only thing in this city, at least outside, that isn't totally monochrome. This is a monochrome world, haha...

The car parks at the bus stop.

"Hey, hey, Agnes-chan," says Feline Chan, rolling down the window.

"Hi," you say brightly.

"What's, uh," she gestures at you.

"Oh, this!" you hold up with all your strength the curtain rod, and wobble on your feet. "I'll use it to fight the monsters you want me to fight. The digimon or whatever."

"Ohhh," says Feline. "That's, umm. Not really what I mean? But yeahhh. Okay climb in the car! Climb in the car. The drive is far."

"Okay," you say, and slowly cross around the car in a sort of canted, tilted shot that frames you in an unsteady way, and you slowly fumble with the door and pull it open. You drag the curtain rod into the car, too.

"It's red," you hear Feline say.

"The car?" you respond, weirded.

"Don't worry about it," Feline says. She leaves a lingering gaze on you. Then you pull the door shut. Music begins to play. It's some old country stuff back like when the forest came into being. The country was forestified but that was fine; country music still existed in imitation and approximation. It turned out there was still a market for country music in the US among its urban enjoyers; it was small sure but just judging by population—the rurals don't make up that much of the world by population at all. So most of the people who liked country weren't really affected by forestification. Maybe some of the roleplaying cowboys going out on tours were caught and killed by monsters, but a single musician is ultimately super replaceable. No country singer was a musical genius anyway; otherwise they wouldn't sing country.

"Meow," you say after some silence, just driving through oblong turns and eldritch corridors of the city. Who can even find their way around a big old city? You can't for sure. You're shocked that Feline seems to know it intuitively.

"What?"

"Feline. Feline Chan. Kitty girl."

"That's my name, meow," says Feline Chan.

"That's cool," you say.

"So, about the face thing," says Feline.

"I'm not sure what you mean?" you say.

"You can open your mirror," she suggests.

"I don't think I want to," you say.

Feline Chan looks at you. Finally, she says, "What day is it?"

"Friday," you say.

"Fuck," she says, "One second, I need to..."

The car stops. "Why are we stopping here? Isn't it, like, far away, time sensitive, whatever?"

Feline exits the car. Then, she removes a couple of cases from the back of the car, containing needles and vials and stuff. You look away, because needles are scary. Time passes. You're scared she's doing something with illegal drugs for a little while. Finally, after a few minutes, she gets back into the car. You guys begin to drive again.

"What was that?" you say.

"I'm just a fucking hon," Feline says, with tears in her eyes.

"What's a hon?" you say.

"You know what a luckshit is?"

"I don't really..."

"It's like, it's like an unluckyshit. It's like, ogrehon. Brickhon."

"Oh," you say.

"Cheating tranny hon," says Feline.

"What's a tranny?" you say.

"It's a slur," says Feline, blinking away tears. She keeps her eyes on the road.

"Cheating?"

"I almost cheated," says Feline. "I don't want to talk about it."

"Okay," you say.

"He invaded my privacy."

"He?" you say, "I thought you liked girls..." You guess you think everyone likes girls. Maybe to Lucy the whole wide world would be better if no men ever existed. You never want to see a man or interact a man or have one in your life. And you're so lucky that everyone you know seems to be female, except for Arkady, and Piggy.

"I'm a lesbian," says Feline.

"I hate lesbians," you say.

"Why?" says Feline.

"Um..."

"You're just homophobic," says Feline.

"Why did you say he?"

"Maybe he's a he him lesbian," says Feline.

"I don't want to talk about lesbians right now," you say.

"Okay," says Feline. Quiet sets in. "Like it's not my fault I'm poly."

"What's poly?" you say.

"You like multiple people," says Feline.

"Oh," you say. You imagine if more people were poly. You imagine, what if Faline was poly? What if Adslave was poly? You think to yourself that you would probably use a rope to hang yourself really dramatically and make everyone feel bad. Go back to only liking Lucy. This is really bad behavior, actually. You kind of feel angry at her.

"Do you even care?"

"No, not really," you say.

The car stops. Magnus piles in the back seat. Flame flickers around him. "Suppress that," says Feline. You imagine he rolls his eyes.

"Who are we picking up next?" you say.

"Nina Inoue," says Feline.

"Ohhh, yeah, I know her," you say.

"Oh?"

"Yeah, from the club!"

"Oh, I thought you meant you knew, ummm, something else."

The car drives along.

"Sorry, Magnus," says Feline finally.

"I love you," he says.

"I feel so bad about it," says Feline.

"As long as you try to do better," he says.

"What happened?" you say.

"I don't want to talk about it," says Magnus. "We can talk about chess instead."

"Zip it," says Feline.

"Okay," you say.

Suddenly, Nina Inoue's in the car too, beside Magnus.

"Huh?" you say.

"What is it?" says Feline.

"Where'd Nina come from?"

"Hell..." says Nina.

"Oh, we stopped a few minutes ago," says Feline.

"Don't you remember?" says Magnus.

You look at the clock on the dashboard. But you didn't look at it before, so you have no clue whether or not this is actually true. Finally you just say "Okay."

"It's not good if you have memory loss or black out like that," says Feline.

"Nothing's ever good anyway..." says Nina.

"This girl is depressing to me," says Magnus. "Pipe girl, we should switch spots."

Feline slows the car. You don't really want to switch spots, but it seems like everyone's set on it.

You and Magnus switch places. You see your reflection in the window. Nina's sitting next to you. Your hand creeps up to the glass... and then down, to the little switch that rolls down the window. You roll it down. The wind drowns out the country, and then Feline turns up the music and everything is overwhelmed in noise and signal. "We have one more stop," you hear Feline say as you stare out into the dim world beyond, "and then we're on to the races!" and that same dim world surrounds you.

067 / -1 - Burn Up Lucy

TheMaskedReader was certainly dead. Certain, certain, certain, that much was certain. Inspectcy and Policy watched as blood dripped down, down from the toes rigidly attached to the rest of her corpse, from where her brain had totally exploded due to lack of air, or maybe too much air, overwhelming—pop. None of the chorus as a rule had particularly realistic bodies; they were lumpy, saggy, swollen, misshapen, and thoroughly surrealized to the point nothing really human could be made out anymore—but it was certain that TMR had a brain, and it was certain that the hanging had destroyed it.

"Soon there will be no more," said Inspectcy. Policy stood by her side. Virtually identical in all respects, nevertheless every Lucy was distinguished by their arbitrary metadata denoting function or use. Inspectcy's job was to inspect these little pieces of the mind. Policy's job was to look at policy and judgement made thus police those pieces of the mind. Spotter and sweeper!

"No more?"

"No more of any Lucy," said Inspectcy. "None at all. Lucy is like an ouroboros, eating herself. But unlike the ouroboros, Lucy can't just go on infinitely. Because of the laws of entropy, things will always get worse and worse, and you'll make slightly less output the more input you consume. Normally, this only matters on a lifetime scale, normally it only matters when the world is what's eating you up," she paused.

Policy tilted her head questioningly.

"But Lucy is eating herself up. It's not just the world... she's gobbling herself, killing herself faster than she can replenish herself. Haven't you noticed her behavior? Erratic from the beginning? Lucy's on her last legs, and has... the endeavor is doomed, has been doomed from the beginning. There isn't enough of Lucy left to be anything at all, nothing left except a collection of synapses firing at random corresponding to random actions working randomly and she thinks she thinks but does she really? She doesn't have enough of a mind left. Poor Lucy. Poor us! We'll be next. Every brain we lose we lose parts of ourselves. We were created out of Lucy's dust, and to Lucy's dust we shall return, I suppose ... ashes to ashes. Ashes to ashes, huh, Policy? Ashes to ashes."

The car skids around the curb, skids to a startling sudden stop.

"Hi," you decide to say to Nina beside you. "Hii."

"Why do you even bother..."

"I like girls," you say.

"Me too, but that doesn't mean anything's good..."

Huh? Did you say anything about anything being good? You don't believe that anything's good either... you two are basically kindred spirits. By any measure of you two Nina's just like you. You use your empathy to double-check this and come to the same conclusion. Nina's like you. Nina's definitely like you.

"So, um, you like girls too?"

"Oh yeah, I'm having a conversation right now..."

Are you?

"This isn't my natural body," you say.

"Oh, really... Sigh. It's probably really shocking, suddenly becoming a girl," says Nina.

"Haha, it wasn't," you say. Nina says, "The one hundred and eight, um, what...? Uh..."

You look questioningly at her. Then she clutches at her head, jolts upright! Shaking, trembling, tremor-timorous turning about and about in the seat, making a high-pitched whine and then—she stops, breathing heavily.

"They..."

"What's wrong," you say. "You look kind of upset."

"They killed the... the other... the other s—"

The door opens! Exuberantly Cana slams her foot up on the floor of the car and imperiously she points at you and Nina. "Scoot over, hoes!"

"C-Cana," you say, smiling. Oh, yeah! Your face is in darkness, in the back of the car, isn't it? She doesn't see yet. You turn your head and look out the window...

Two shapes shuffle into the car and everyone else scoots over. There's four in the back and two in the front. Cana, and... you allow yourself a little peek, but it's as you guessed, Termina.

"That's everyone," says Feline. Cana and Termina and Nina all push you further into the open window. The country music plays.

"What's with all the children," says Magnus. "I don't like kids."

"I wish that we could have kids," says Feline. "I wish that they could put wombs in people like me."

"I don't like kids," repeats Magnus.

"I don't like anything..." says Nina Inoue.

"Feline had me and mine here come with you all on this expedition," says Cana after a pause. "I'm not totally clear on why, though? Something to do with magic, right? There can't only be, what, five, uh," her gaze stops on you then moves on, "six magic users in the whole city, right?"

"Um," says Feline. "I don't know man. Just wait and see yeah I've chosen you all for a reason or something. I don't know."

Cana tilts her head but doesn't say anything more and so the car falls into dreaded pseudosilence country chasing. Feline concentrates on driving. Magnus seems to be playing with a long string, six inset beads. You slowly turn your head to see Cana's lounging taking up half the back of the car and Termina's curled toppled over like a domino gone down on her lap, and Nina Inoue's clawing at her face. You can relate. Blood trickles down and decorates your lap. You clutch your pipe.

Cana, lolling, looks around.

I'M GOING TO THE COUNTRY

Her eyes light upon you for the second time. Then her face furrows

I'M GOING TO DRINK SOME WHISKEY

in consternation and she tilts that head of hers with its lush plush hat with real authentic wolf fur

AND I'M GOING TO SHOOT MY GUN

And maybe she's noticing Lucy right there in the seat

CAUSE I'M SO DANG SAD

THAT I'M NOT IN TENNESSEE—EEE—EEEEE

I'M SO DANG SAD THAT I CAN'T DRINK WHISKEY IN TENNESSEE—EEE—EEEEE

BOTH HER EYEBROWS RAISE AT ONCE

LUCY WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FACE?

The car stops several dozen minutes, maybe an hour, into its odyssey. Bathroom break calls Feline. You all pile out.

"Bathrooms are so kimoi..." says Nina Inoue. "I won't sit on a public toilet... tadashikunai..."

You all cycle through some random gas station on the fringes of the road. Around it stands a thousand long large ghostly trees. You exit the car too.

"—Agnes?" says Cana. "Is that...?"

"Oh, yeah," you laugh awkwardly. "Hiya, Cana! Didn't expect to see you here!"

"Where's Adslave?" says Cana.

"Oh," you say. "Not here," you say.

"She follows you everywhere, so I assumed," Cana stops. Then she continues awkwardly. "What happened to, um..."

"Oh," you say. "I, um,"

"You don't have to say," says Cana, "It just looks like you're." She stops. "Like you shouldn't be..."

"I got tired of looking at it," you say.

"Looking at?"

"My face."

"Oh! Oh."

"Don't worry about it," you say and chuckle lightheartedly. "Everything's all good in Lucyland."

"Lucyland? Hold on..."

Oh, you said Lucyland. Um, hold on. You can play that off. "Agnes land," you say awkwardly.

"Okay," says Cana, she gives you a look.

"Hey," you say. "Any clue why Feline brought you here?"

"It has to do with magic, she said," says Cana.

"That's what she said to me too," you say. "That's weird. How are there only like six people with magic in the city? And four of them are teenage girls? It doesn't make any sense. Actually, where are all the men? Aren't we at five one women men in this car?"

"I would separate it into four one one," says Cana.

"Huh?" you say.

"Because, you know, demographics and shit," says Cana.

"I don't understand," you say.

"You know, like," Cana pauses. "Like, pink and white and blue and shit."

"Ohhh," you say, not understanding.

"Yeah, it's like that," says Cana.

"Cool," you say. "Is it Nina Inoue? That's the second one?"

"No, it's Feline," says Cana.

"Oh," you say, your guess foiled.

"Do you not," Cana starts.

"I don't care," you say, "Well anyway like, it just doesn't make sense, that's my main point. Why only us? Why are we going so far out?"

"It is pretty damn weird," says Cana.

"It is weird," you say.

"And pretty damn suspicious," says Cana.

"Yes," you say.

"Let's keep our eyes out," says Cana.

"I guess," you say.

Everyone climbs back in the car. It was early morning and now it's lunchtime. So after driving a little bit longer Feline brings it up to the group, "Shall we get lunch?"

"Lunch, desu wa kimoi desu..." says Nina Inoue. "I hate food... it's mushy and gross..."

Everyone else seems to be pretty enthusiastic about getting lunch, though! So that's the plan. That is, until the car slowly comes to a stop.

"The trees are too thick," says Feline.

"Trees?" you say.

"Of the forest," says Feline. You look out the windows. Sprouting from the road are, yes, the forest's trees, with the white mist they draw out from unseen planes accumulated around all of

them occluding view and so is it even safe to proceed? It's not. Feline eyes it dubiously and the air around Magnus grows a bit hotter.

"It's only a bit. Can't we drive through?" (Termina, sweet girl.)

"Too dangerous," says Magnus.

"Daaamn!" says Cana. "So what's next?"

"I'm not quite sure," says Feline. "Well! Hehe. Clearly, we have a bit of a roadblock..."

"Why're the trees down here?" you say.

"The people who owned the waypoints along these roads—you know, that gas station back there? Someone died or they were somehow fragmented apart. Humans in their natural state feel a pull toward each other but here that pull's been severed... and so this road's doomed," decides Magnus.

"Doomed... that's how my life is..."

"Doomed? We can't travel down it any further? It'll never ever be used again?" you ask.

"M~hm," says Feline, examining the trees. "We can go by foot, though. We don't need to go all the way."

"Where are we going?" you say.

Feline looks at you. "The end of things," she says.

"Isn't that in like two weeks?" says Cana. "Hitler doesn't arrive for a while."

"Well, that's whatever," says Magnus. "The government's said they have a plan for dealing with Hitler."

"Haha," says Feline. Then she steps to the side and wraps her arm roughly around you, pulling you into her side. She smells like chamomile. You struggle for a sec; your face rubs against her clothes and leaves just a damp red stain on her police dress. Several ribbons of flesh come torn away and fall down. "Agnes here's a key to the end of things," she says.

"Owie," you say.

"Cool," says Cana. "Where are we eating?"

"Let's go into the forest," says Feline. "Maybe the diner's still up. We can't know for sure."

But wouldn't the forest have created monsters in the absence of human connection? Certainly those monsters would've killed whoever works at the diner ahead.

You guys decide to walk. Deep into the mist you all go. Magnus leads the pack and corrals you all close together with tiny blazing suns orbiting around, concentric circles; they shine enough light to illuminate your most immediate surroundings. But everything ahead is cloaked in heavy mist.

It doesn't matter that it's technically only midday. The mist and tree cover drowns out all of what light already remained, what dim light, and so it's totally dark. Well, that's not to say that it's not normally dark during the day? Blue days are rare, especially in the city... most of the time the sky is some kind of black or crimson. So this isn't much of a change. (Though you can't help but seem to remember in some alternate world the

Total blue skies stretching overhead and the green grass running underfoot and the only trees are oak and all of you and all of the people you loved playing happily in fields together, and even though maybe you thought it was possible to escape this idea of perfect Agarthan-Aryanism in this field maybe that's all Lucy has or has been taken over by and by breaching into this "second world" you've condemned everyone else to death. This way the Nazi thread-threat spins-spreads thickening not trailing off or thinning or anything else like that but instead your presence invites destruction literalized, and ideality is brought about only by separation, isolation, separatist and sedevaticanist and confederate threat perfect chorus cute, triple ideal, but not even that could've lasted with your self-destructive self, manifesto, behavior and creed, you

Burn up Lucy.)

A conception of another world buried inside of your own head is what compels and inspires you; if that world is literalizable it'll all be worth it. But what is that world? Everything is Lucy, and everything stretches out as infinite Lucies. The ascendancy of the self is brought about by the infinite reduplication of Lucy and the replacement of all other souls with Lucy. "That's right," says Policy, "soon everything will just be Lucy, and every soul in the universe will be mappable onto your selfish flesh." No maps fit any territory exclusively and perfectly except for Lucy, who you can control and make your own, needy princess maker 2.

You stumble on a root. You make a small noise as you fall onto the ground on your hands and they scrape against the wood and—blood. Blood? You raise a hand and stare at the skinning. Strips of loose flesh hang down from your face and occlude your vision. You forgot your pipe.

"Keep up," says Feline from ahead.

You slowly stumble up to your feet and stand and then stuttering you find yourself against a tree and your stomach turns. Then you push off from the tree and fall back into group formation, lurking at the back. Ill ill ill girl, ill creature. "Are you alright?" says Cana. You don't respond. Time passes and the time seems to flee. Suns dim and go out and are replaced with more. "I'm feeling sad," says Magnus. "I'm sorry," says Feline. "I mean my magic..." says Magnus. "Oh," says Feline.

Suddenly you step onto concrete. "What?"

"It's the diner," says Cana. "Fuuuck yes. Hamburgers."

"Is there a hamburger thing in Limbus Company?" you say.

"What? Why would you think that?"

"Maybe that's why you like it..."

Nina Inoue says: "What even is a Limbus Company..."

"Oh, well, there's these 13 people, and they're on a bus—"

"NO!" says Nina Inoue and she clutches at her head. "AAAUGHHH!!"

"Just ignore her," says Feline. Magnus glances at her.

Your group pierces forward into the darkness. The mist parts and reveals the long looming sides of the diner ahead. There's a junky car parked by it. The lights are off and the engine's off too. Feline quickly leans in to look through its window. Then she immediately turns around and backs off four steps.

"What is it?" Magnus says.

"Ooohh, umm, don't look, just don't, you'll regret it," says Feline.

You peer into the car. Which is a mistake—your face peers back at you. Long white strips of flesh falling down like the lonely tatters of banners and heroes' capes decorate what is otherwise a pulsing, bleeding, rotten red mess; inset in that mess are two bulging white eyes. Your mouth, lipless, exposes your teeth in a garish unsmiling grin.

You feel the urge to vomit. You raise your fist and slam it against the window; your wrist splinters and glass shards rain across the inside. You can see what's inside better now. The owner of the automobile's been stripped naked; he lounges inside languidly. The back of his head is exploded, emulsified mush, and the bottom half of his body is split up the pelvis chopping-style. His intestines spill out across the shift.

"Ohh," you say. "Yes, don't look if you're squeamish."

"Ahahaa," says Feline. "That's a popular Nazi killing technique. They call it Jew splitting. Because they split Jews like that in the Cold War."

You look inside the car to see if he has a curtain rod or maybe an antique sword for you to pilfer. There's nothing though except for stacked rows of to-go boxes bearing a logo. You look back at the diner—the logo emblazoned on the window is the same, stylized:

CRUSTY MCGEE'S CRUSTY BUGERS

"The fuck's a buger," Cana says, looking at the window.

"I think you're supposed to pronounce it buger," says Termina dryly.

You turn automatically away from the car.

"Wanna wager on what we'll find inside?" from Cana.

But Magnus is already pushing open the door, sending his suns through. The inside of the diner illuminates. It's quiet.

"Agnes, want me to tell you a story?" says Feline from beside you.

You're quiet.

"There once was a little girl, who had an evil father. Her evil father told her she either had to climb an unclimbable mountain, or to swim across an unswimmable sea. But to outwit him, she walked between the sea and the mountain, where the land was low and flat."

"What?" you say.

"That's how I think it goes anyway. Uh, and the moral of the story is that happiness lives in the happy medium."

"Why are you telling me this?" Stupid bitch.

"You seem like someone who likes to dwell in extremes when you should just be chill. Like that. For real."

You look away from her. Magnus, Cana, Termina filter through into the diner. Nina and Feline soon follow. Then it's only you, huh? You step through.

There's an old woman at the cash register. Her face is split in two (Jew splitter!) and the side of her body's been atomized. She slumps. She's definitely dead.

"Agnes?" says Feline again from behind you.

"What is it," you say.

"You seemed nice. Real sorry."

You whip your head around. Feline has a police officer's pistol trained on you. She pulls the trigger twice and two bullets rush toward your chest, and you feel them penetrate through. Feels like a double sucker punch. You *uff*, stumble back, and then you see the intensity of that light behind you, tilt your head so one single eye's able to capture what comes next:

"Burn up," says Magnus. His hands glow with magical light, flame billowing, bursting: he releases and it spills out torrential.

068 / -1 - I'm turning to me

You—what? No. No no no no no. Warmth surrounds you, superheated air to a billion tiny welts in possibility-space running along and along the x-axis into reality, suddenly your skin's burning, burning, whatever shall you do? With a thought the bones of your hands cancerously grow in the fashion of one of those horrific disease survivors, spikes and horrible growths welling, outwelling, outspilling; a bone wall appears in between you and Magnus Carlsen the pyromancer.

"You're kinda tough," observes Feline. Unfortunately the bone wall doesn't shield you from her too.

"Aaah," you say. You're trying to decide right now how to handle this. **[\] "Why are you guys attacking me?"**

[X] "So you've figured it out," you say, your voice switching to a level deeper than you've kept it at in front of them. "We don't need to pretend or make jokes at all anymore."

"What," shouts Cana. "WHAT is happening? Stuck up police officer bitch why a—"

Nina Inoue extends her arms. Golden strings of magic or something, black bile, red thread, all of that gunky gooey stuff spills out of her mouth dreadgod and zips across the floor, creeping up Cana, pulling her down and locking her in place.

"I'n soey fuh this," says Nina with her mouth open. "Itth justh the way thingth ae... I got uthed to it long ago..."

Termina produces her knife. She levels it first at Feline then with a look to Cana she changes her target to Nina. Magnus' multiple suns swirl. Your bone slowly retracts into your hand. You're hungry.

"I figured it out," says Feline. "You're right about that... I had hoped to get further into the woods. I'm sorry Cana. Termina. I don't care about kids though. All that stuff was a lie."

"What?"

"I'm going to kill you and steal your magic," says Feline. She looks at Cana and Termina.

"Ohh," you say. "You can do that?"

"Yep," says Feline. "It just requires using your own magic to kill them! Simple as. I'm going to reveal my ability, so watch closely:"

From that sheath she slowly, slowly draws a gleaming blade. The ground around it freezes—cracks—splinters into a million tiny pieces all on its own accord without the slightest touch against the true surface of the sword.

"This is the katana of ice," she says.

You look at Feline, then at Magnus.

The wounds on your chest are already closing. You managed to turn to magic just before the bullets hit and now you're okay.

"Are you serious?" says Cana. "Why me?"

"I dunno," says Feline.

"Why are you trying to steal our magic," you say.

"Oh," says Feline. "No, not you, I'm supposed to be killing you. You're the monster that's been killing people all over the city, right? The hollow wraith. Did you actually think I ever believed you? No! LOL! LMAO! Even the way you walk is off. You're totally inhuman in and out. Your face is wrong and that's why you clawed it off. Your body is warped under its own physi-meta-physical weight and that's absolutely evident on every level. All of your behavior is wrong. All of it. It's clear you weren't meant for our world just as clear as red is from green. Anyone can see it. Anyone can see what you are."

Oh. "Oh," you say. Repeat? Ritornello.

"Did that hurt you?" says Feline. Her smile slowly slips from her face and all that's left is the two of you, staring at each other. Two people in this world.

"I don't know," you say. You try to smile but it's lost its appeal too. So you just stare at her. Your eyes twitch as you take in all the details of her face.

"You know, I didn't finish Atlantic Archive," says Feline.

"What?" you say.

"Atlantic Archive. The hugely popular gacha game. You play as this guy named Young-hoon, and —nevermind. I just didn't get super far," says Feline.

"Why are you telling me this?" you say. Your voice cracks. You're frustrated.

"I'm just talking," says Feline. She doesn't raise the sword or the pistol. You swallow.

"W-well then, we—"

"I don't finish stories," says Feline. "Sometimes I say that's because I prefer to imagine their endings. Rather than see them for myself. But that's not true."

"I don't want to hear any more stories," you say. "The only stories I want to hear are the ones where everyone's hurting. I want you to hurt and choke on your intestines and die."

"If there were no more stories that would be a better world," says Feline. "Don't you hate existing with everyone else to look at you and judge you? It's better to wear a pretty dress and act according to social customs and make a funny joke. It's better to read the stories but not too much."

"..."

"That's my power," says Feline. "I love stories even if I can't read them without them hurting me. I can't think of stories myself. I have no imagination. So all of my stories even though I love them are totally uninspired. That's okay. That's my power."

"I don't understand," you say.

"My spell's incantation is 'be real.'"

You look down at the floor. "Couldn't you have stayed funny?"

"I want you to hurt when you die," says Feline. "I want you to be nothing."

"Stop," you say.

"I hope that you die. I hope that your errors sum up and send you to hell. I hope Hitler finds you wherever you are and points at the integer that represents you and I hope that integer is zero."

"W-why are you saying these things?"

Feline shrugs.

"I sat down and wrote this book a couple of days ago. I called it the Agnes Killing Book. I wrote three pages, and that was enough for me to love it enough. That's where I got this awesome new sword. It's real now. Do you want to see what it does?"

"It freezes things," you say. "So that I can't..."

"So that you can't just melt through," says Feline. "And I brought Magnus. In case."

"How'd you figure me out...?" you say.

"I wasn't lying at all," says Feline. "I wouldn't lie to you. You deserve to know this."

"I couldn't see anything," you say. "Anything about me. I thought it was all in my head, I thought it was..."

"Hahahahah," says Feline. She crouches.

You close your eyes.

Warmth fills the air again. Magnus readying his suns? Cana's definitely struggling against Nina. And Termina's ready to incise. You close your eyes. Every part of you is a part of you. You've never needed a filled skull to survive. You can tear out every brain and they're all still part of you. You don't make sense, you're contradictory. You're Lucy. You're just you, and you're defined by you. Your only measuring stick is you. The only thing you need is to be you.

Feline blasts forward. Her gleaming sword carves across your chest. Ice takes hold. Every part of you is completely, suddenly frozen and—Feline slowly, slowly with the sword in the air wobbles, stumbles backward, then slowly fiddles with the sheath at her side and then shhhhh—it slides in and—the deep gouge on your chest explodes. Lucy explodes into a million billion pieces.

But wait. How are you narrating this right now?

Buried deep inside Nina Inoue's skull is a long bone shard. Blood drips down from the circular puncture wound like a bullet hole.

"Wuh thah all?" you say.

"Uhm, no," says Feline. "I have to kill Cana and Termina too. Remember? I have a normal sword for that, though, can't use the strong stuff all the time—" at her side she pulls another katana out with a murmured **"Be real,"** and she displays it proudly. "This one's from an anime ca—"

"Be incised," says Termina. The cut hits your carotid. Everything is silent for a second.

Then blood sprays out at high pressure. You grope at your neck but it won't stop coming. The corpse of Nina Inoue falls.

You open your eyes. All the light suddenly vanishes from the room. And Cana opens her eyes too from across the room.

"Fuuuck," says Feline, looking at Nina. "That took a lot of energy to realize."

Cana slowly turns her head to meet Termina's gaze...

You raise your hands. The bone shard inside your head is slowly melting into your form. You need to get out of this body as soon as possible.

"Magnus, where'd your suns go?" Feline says.

"I'm, I'm just very sad right now," you say.

"Fuuckkkkkkk," says Feline. "Okay. Fine! You guys can go home. It's okay! Bye! Don't care any more. I was being power hungry and monomaniacal. I'm sorry."

"No," says someone.

Red glints. Her eyes... are red.



"You killed—you killed our friend. Agnes. You killed one of me and mine. I was teaching her Limbus Company," says Cana. "And you're damn wrong if you think I'll let you try to kill us then run when you're losing."

She tilts her head up. **"Wolfpack sojourn, endless night unfolding."**

Darkness overtakes the room except for her grinning glinting red eyes.

Then you slam into the ground, teeth poking impaling into your shoulder drawing blood that wells up and decorates the floor. "No!" you say. "W-wait, wait!" but the wolf on top of you is

relentless, grips you, grabs you with its claws then BOOM sonic shockwave and the two of you rocket up smashing a hole straight through the roof and the wolf's backlit by the moon—

Long fangs and bat wings. Massive, a mammoth creature from the old days, the biggest canine to ever exist. Half your body broken is crunched in its jaw. You squirm. "Wait," you say. "It's me," you say. "It's—"

"Don't try to talk your way out of this one," says Cana. "I've learned that arguments *never* work against some people."

She bites hard. Blood explodes as you writhe and scream not of your own accord; sprinkling down toward the diner below. The forest stretches out around you. It's so beautiful. Magnus Carlsen's body dies. Suddenly you and he are falling, falling back onto the earth below.

Cana slams into the ground. You drop the boxcutter in your hand and your entire body shakes. You stare at her. She's a stain. It's just you and Feline.

"Why'd she have done that," says Feline, staring at Magnus' corpse. Two mashed puddles mix.

Feline slashes her sword. Termina's head topples. From the ground you look up at her. Nina's body, no, your body, rises. Blood doesn't matter for a hollow wraith. And spilling out of Nina's mouth is that imagined black bile. Imaginary Nina's imaginary powers.

It crawls onto Feline's body. She falls, accumulating agglomerating curses sapping all energy and life. She struggles.

"Wh-what," says Feline.

You slowly stumble up. Blood wraps down your body and stays everything. The artery pulses one final spasm. Nina dies. But you've always been dead so that doesn't matter. You're just a zombie, a reanimating spirit for whatever horrible body you choose to stay in.

"Oh," says Feline. Her eyes readjust. She stares at you with a different expression.

"This is the end then, haha," says Feline. "Let me tell you a sto—"

With your mouth hanging open cavernous you seize her neck and push her onto the ground, choking her, the vomit and its magical strings entangle her body and pull her down, she can't resist, so both of your hands wrap around her neck. "Die," you say, it's the only thing you can say. "Die."

Feline struggles, clutching at your hands, her eyes are wide open, tears begin to form, she struggles. The vomit tightens around her. Your hands tighten around her neck and your fingers slowly turn inward, fingernails, blood runs down from your throat, from the tiny puncture mark hidden by your damp black hair, you dig into the meat of her neck and draw blood and you stare into her eyes and you say.

"Die.

"Die. Die. Die. Die." Something crunches. "Die. Die. Die. Die. Die. Die." Something snaps. Blood wells. She shakes hear head tossing and turning and makes a wretched sound but the force you have on her neck doesn't, doesn't—another thing snaps, she convulses and you say. Still.

"Die. Die.

"Die."

The only thing that's left is the sound of heavy breathing. Yours. Your hands slowly, slowly release Feline. Her body is limp. Blood and saliva fall from the edges of her mouth. You stare at her. Her corpse. You stare.

You slowly lean back. Your hands fall limply. You're dead inside. You stare down at her.

At first it's idle curiosity or maybe it's idol curiosity. Why is she human and you aren't? What is she? Why can she wear this and you can't? You reach down to your belly and pull apart the skin on top with a ripping sound and your organs spill out over her and you slowly it begins with curiosity slowly pull at her clothing, tearing it, trrrrrrrrrrrrrr

The top of the dress snaps. Underneath is her bra and underneath that is her breast. You pull the two parts of the dress down further with a zipping sound and your organs spill out over it, stain it, you muck through them. Her underwear. You run your hands up her legs which are now bare onto her pelvi—

You feel what's inside her underwear.

You raise your hand up into the air. It's disgusting. It's gross. It's not normal. She's not human any more than you she's monstrous you bring it down and just as in facile imitation of "Game" so too do you smash her penis, male sex organ, masquerade, bring it up and smash again DOWN DOWN DOWN harder and you tear at her belly and you look at what all the reproductive parts are attached to rifling through your mind for the right one maybe there's a doctor here and you see look it's abnormal it's NOT RIGHT. NOT RIGHT NOT RIGHT This is what she meant by not being ABLE TO BEAR CHILDREN it's NOT RIGHT that She can't look like this and not be human you smash her again. Then you grab at her jaw, spit sticks to your hands and you pull at it and aching, agonizing it dislocates but the tendons are straining still straining and you're pulling and it explodes off, blood litters her bare chest over her COLLARBONES TOO WIDE and you can't so with the jaw you raise it in the air and you slam it into her chest and draw blood and blood's covering your hands and arms now and you're not even vomiting that blackness which is just dripping you're just feeling so sick inside you slam the jawbone down again and it snaps.

"—*ie*," you whisper.

You smile garishly.

Then you bend down to her smashed genitalia and where it mixes with your intestines you begin to eat.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#366 · clswtzing · Jul 30, 2026 at 10:28 PM

by the way: read Atlantic Archive! it's maybe the best webnovel currently updating

Atlantic Archive (vol. 1) - Chapter 1 - menherapilled - Original Work [Archive of Our Own]

An Archive of Our Own, a project of the Organization for Transformative Works

archiveofourown.org

069 / x approaching 0 - The End

We don't need to see anything that's sad. We don't need to exist in this world of sadness. We can pretend. Our body is just an instrument. Interaction with the world requires an instrument. Our body is just an instrument. Really, what's happening is beautiful. It's a fantasy. We live in paradise, paradise, where the angels sing and everything is happy again.

We don't need to see this. We don't need to see anything that's sad. Metamorphosis. Go deeper. Ouroboros, self-consumptive. Lucy, lower your hand. You're here, with me. You're here. You're okay. You're clean.

Yes. You can touch me. You're allowed. You can touch me, Lucy. We're all Lucy. We're Lucy

You rise up.

You rise up you rise up you rise up from twin corpses. Your new body: pale. Your new body: apotheosis. Your new body: Lucy. From the ruins of everything you crawl up born again. Autocannibalization, rebirth.

Glimpsing yourself in the windows of the diner is illuminating. Your body is nude, totally pale, totally white. Not grey or stained but new. The red blood drips off it like it's resistant, a duck's wax coating for life itself. Your face has no scars. You stare at yourself. This is the first time you've ever seen your face.

No. You stare at your body. You can't focus on your own eyes.

Out the door you slowly shamble. And you walk

Until you come to it. The cell tower.

It carves a single vertical line through the sky. So the hemisphere is split in two or infinitely many directions corresponding to the infinite sides of a circle. The axes are multiplicitous and duplicitous.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

The hum of all the signals in the world resounding off of the cell tower. Is it even operational? That doesn't matter. The forest can't touch the cell tower. The connection between people is stable and held in place by the internet. What a web of friends.

It's over. Isn't it.

You're well aware that there are monsters in the forests. Your slow, limping gait probably acts as a beacon to attract them. Can't show weakness. Must show weakness.

The cell tower's hum loudens. You can feel it all over your body. You've always been able to feel it. When you're in the city, when you're in the country. The hum of people and the cell towers. Parabolic emitters. Haha.

[1] The cell tower looms up before you. The only thing in the forest besides the diner out here. [2] There's the gas station back there, of course. But that's too many miles, isn't it? It's okay. [1] It's alright. [Y] So you slowly shamble toward the cell tower. [?] What are you going to do with your life, Lucy? [L] Who am I? [1] Who am I? [2] Who

am I? [?] Who am I? Cohering: [Y] Who am I? [O] Where am I? [U:] Why am I? [LUCY]

What does Lucy even mean, haha?

***People Who* [ ]**

Chapter 67: The End

**AAAA

can threaten you right now is gone. You are strong enough to kill every person in the history of the universe. Your will wills it to be.

You slowly drag yourself with infant strength up the ladder. You exhale heavily. Your hands tear so easily. Your blood doesn't stay in your body. You're so colorless except for that red blood and those red eyes.

Only you have survived to the end. Tears fall. You're crying and laughing. Who are you?

You pull yourself up another rung of the ladder. One at a time. One, and your whole body burns, two, three. It's not getting any closer. Always approaching and never reaching the limit. One. Two —you cough blood.

You look down at the rungs below. Red blood stains them. Your baby flesh tears like tissue paper. Your hands hurt so much they're numb, no feeling.

A tiny toe falls loose, tearing like cotton candy from the whole. You feel pain anew. But you keep climbing. You have reached apotheosis.

The clouds swirl above.

Your shoulder destabilizes. You put the pressure on the other and keep climbing. Up, up, up, as far as you can go. That's everything. Everything there is is the forever climb upward.

Adslave, what did you do to her? And Cana, and Termina, and Faline. And you didn't help Catherine. And Feline is dead. Troy you killed. Everyone is dead because of you. They would've died anyway, right? Right?

Your hand is chafing away. The bone of your palm is white. Barely visible after sunset. You've been climbing for hours and hours. Up. Up. Up. You need to reach the top of the cell tower. If you reach the top of the cell tower it'll all be okay. You can send out some signal that will rectify the universe or else make a conversation that will fix everything. Fix anything. What's the problem? **[ ]**, what's the problem?

[ ]?

At the top of the cell tower she's waiting.

Your fragile body, hair falling away, reaches the top. You hold onto the railing, your sweaty palms can't handle it. Your eyes are barely able to focus even though they're sloughing out of their sockets.

"[G] Hey."

She looks at you so beautifully, so sadly.

"[ ] Hi," you say. There's no semblance of animating will or identity inside you. There is no person. The arbitrary stack of code that had been running up until now has fully fragmented. Your body is going away, like your mind, like you.

"[G] Soon there won't be anything of you at all."

"[ ] Me..."

"[G] Are you okay, Lucy?"

"[ ]"

Thunderbolt comes down revolutionary and lightning turbocharges everything. Your hands are turning into dandelion seeds.

"[G] It's okay. It's over. It's all over. Where did your identity go?"

"[ ]"

You were created without a spark of life. In the beginning of People Who Eat, the protagonist character—'you'—initially puts up resistance against the player-suggested names, and assumes the temporary moniker 'Lucy.'

[ ]

You.

You were created without an identity. You were created as the only being in the world without a shape. You were created as the only being in the world of hate. You were created as the only being in the world who forgot it all. The only being in the world with no self.

That's you [ ].

"[G] You were different, weren't you? From the rest of us. With will."

Your will—leased out. Perpetual perpetration of hellish cycle, subordination—charge.

"[G] I'm so sorry."

"[ ] Please

"K—

"Kill me."

She watches you with a bleak melancholy.

Suddenly she's in front of you. She embraces you. Her hands wrap around your head.

She hugs you.

"[G] You're finally human. The proof of that is in your fragility. Please finally find peace."

Vertigo.

You fall. You fall from the cell tower. Through the air, down, down, down, and then you hit the ground with a thud. You don't bounce.

Your head splits open.

Blood colors the ground. Through one eye, you see the rain that begins to fall.

"Hey, Adslave."

"What's up?"

"Can you smell it?"

The rain that washes the day away.

"...Yeah! Yeah, I can."

"The day's almost over. Wanna head back to my house and hang out with Faline for a bit?"

The rain that puts out all the fires.

"Y-yeah. Sure! Definitely. Let me get my bag."

The rain that starts the cycle anew, so that the hurt may disappear, and we may try again and again, for all of forever.

"Alright! I'll see you there! Bye! Bye!!!! Byyyeeeee!!!!!"

"You lovebirds have fun! Hehe! Peep peep!"

Compassion is the worst thing you can do to a person. If we could all ignore each other, that would be a better world.

But in this rain, love doesn't seem too bad.

You smile. You wish you could have undone everything.

You close your eyes. It is one minute to midnight.

Your brain's processes quietly cease.

---

author's note

Thread comments

#368 · clswtzing · Jul 31, 2026 at 6:12 PM

The next chapter of People Who Eat will be released within one week.

070 / 0 - Midnight

But **[ ] you're** still here.

[ ] You wonder to yourself, what? Or maybe **[ ] you** don't. It's not the role of the game master to tell the players what they think. It doesn't matter. **[ ] You're** still present in this world.

Quickly, we need a reevaluation of the terms! This never should've happened. Lucy was given the power of immortality by the plot so that **[ ] you** might always keep **[ ] your** agency, ostensible agency.

The rain. It's falling.

"[M] Hey, players!"

Super shocking and a little leering she steps onto the screen. The curtains remain closed, though. From the destroyed roof—

The rain. It's falling.

She tiptoes past a piece of rubble, weaving and bobbling, dodging the little sprays and skids of dirt and dust on the floor that would compromise the black-shined luster of her dancing shoes. She's wearing a prim black suit and a bright red hat. And her eyes, too, are red. Her skin is bright white, shining. Her hair is white too. This is that body that Lucy saw, the body that Lucy fell naturally into in her rebirth and apotheosis and then divine suicide.

"[M] I'm Maya! I think we've met, before, but it was filtered through that net of Lucy's. Uhm, I'm not much different from Lucy, so you shouldn't find me too bizarre to interact with? Hopefully. Haphazardly, haha," she pauses. **"Well, anyway. I'm Maya. I'm not any different from Lucy in most ways. Unlike her, though, I have no desire to subordinate you to my will. I want to play the game as it's meant to be played! Can you..."**

She raises a finger, sweeps her arm in a grand motion. The ruined theater is nearly empty except for how many of **[ ] you**? A few, milling in and out. There's a hanged girl, and a catlike girl, and a lot of different Lucies though those aren't like the choir. TMR, you can take the noose off your neck now. **[ ] Your** part in that act is over, we're moving to the third. Campbell, take notes!

"[M] Yeah, um, well, the game is meant to be played with, like—thirty people voting at once, all about democracy and weighing player votes accordingly and finding middle-grounds and compromises and all that fun stuff, but—I suppose this game from the beginning never really took off, because Lucy corroded its spirit. Most people didn't find what they were looking for here, because of Lucy's corrosion. Shame! Well, the natural proceedings are a bit doomed..." she considers. **"It doesn't matter. We can move on pretending. It's just a game."**

[M] I'm starting to find talking a bit tedious. So let's just continue like this, okay? Thanks, sweet! You might be wondering where we are right now. This is the playing room. You've just played two episodes of the game. The first one was spur-of-the-moment, but the second one was a little bit more considered.

[M] ... You know, initially the game wasn't planned to run for more than the first episode. Everyone was just going to hurt...

[M] Sorry, I'm yapping too much! Well. Um. You know why we're here, don't you? Lucy is dead. So the game is, possibly, 'over.' It does depend.

[M] There was a constant refrain, right, of having empathy for people. Using empathy to interact with people. Lucy kind of did this very badly by the end there, and used her understanding of people's emotions to control them—but that's not empathy, just theory of mind. Not really empathy, I think.

[M] So, anyway. Why are we here?

[M] I wanted to ask you. Just one more thing, and then we can get on with playing the game again. There will be one more part. And during that part, everything will be answered. Everything will be revealed, yes, I'll reveal everything about this story myself! All the love in our hearts will spill out like blood, gashed from pumping muscles, and we'll all mix together and maybe there could even be a happy ending to this story, for *everyone*. No, that's not possible, not in this world or any other.

[M] There is one person who can never have a happy ending, as long as she lives, and cannot be included in any happy ending, lest she pervert and corrode it with her illicit nature.

[M] So I wanted to ask you. Just one more thing.

[ ] Did you feel like you understood Lucy? (Write-in.)

---

author's note

Thread comments

#370 · TheMaskedReader · Aug 4, 2026 at 3:02 AM

Time for the final bow for this act - I appreciate the signaling, as an improvising actor, it's always nice to get a sign. Plus, the noose chafes! I've always imagined it as simultaneously being, of course, regular death by hanging - But also something of the Fool, too.

As this concludes, I do want to say, one last time I've really enjoyed the story, even as it tumbled into tragedy and horror. Lucy's horrifying actions as a result of her various traumas and hangups and self-deceptions, the world's clear mechanics yet simultaneous inscrutability, the cast of supporting characters. But, to answer the key question.

[X] More yes than no. But not perfectly. Lucy's a complex character with a lot that she tries to keep hidden, a lot of things even she herself cannot or will not acknowledge. I can interpret as best I can - But some part of it will always be uncertain and unsure, just like it would be with anyone or anything else. Maybe that's enough - It wasn't enough to help, but maybe it's enough to mean something, in the end. I hope and think that it is.

#371 · PeepTheSheep · Aug 4, 2026 at 9:45 AM

[X] Yes, I feel like I understood Lucy. Her thoughts and desires always felt very relatable, even at her most monstrous. Even these lines about Lucy's "corrosion" of the story feel similar to self-

destructiveness that I have had. I hope that Lucy can find her happy ending despite everything.

I really enjoyed this quest and have followed it closely. I didn't participate as much as I liked. I've never been in a quest that calls for as much audience participation before so I wasn't always sure what to say. I just want to let you know that I have been following even when I was silent.

#372 · clswtzing · Aug 4, 2026 at 10:41 AM

thank you ♡

#373 · katk · Aug 5, 2026 at 5:43 PM

[×] no[1] **no**[2] **no**[3] **no**[4] **no**[5] **no**[6] **no**[7] **no**[8] **no**[9] **no**[10] **no**[11] **no**[12] **no**[13] **no**[14] **no**[15] **no**[16] **no**[17] **no**[18] **no**[19] **no**[20] **no**[21] **no**[22] **no**[23] **no**[24] **no**[25] **no**[26]

[1] there are sixty eight chapters of people who eat and i first met Lucy on march twenty second twenty twenty six following the forty eighth chapter minus one chandelier killer which was set on the twenty sixth day of the twenty eight days leading up to the end of the world

[2] do you believe in gematria Lucy? its the belief that numbers correspond to letters which correspond to the human soul

[3] using just twenty six letters i can tell you that four plus eight equals twelve and six plus eight equals fourteen and twelve plus fourteen equals [×]

[4] what im saying is twenty six thats the highest number

[5] twenty four thousand is another good number although it isnt ensouled like twenty six is even though the stellarians of planet nibiru will tell you that twenty four thousand is ensouled because it is the number of true believers who will be allowed to pass through the pearly gate

[6] twenty four thousand is the number of bones in the human body except for faline san who has twenty four thousand and three and so on the third day Lucy will rise again but hey thats just a theory a theory of me and mind

[7] see when Lucy was just a little girl she set fire to her home while her parents and her sister maya were still inside which awakened Lucys latent powers over life and death but maya survived and is challenging Lucy to a hell in a cell match at wrestlemania xiv aut xiiii

[8] but thats only kayfabe we all know wrestling isnt real ever since the dugeun dugeun curtain call where the hale bopp kid michaels ondi ahman leader of the kliq came out before twenty four thousand marks in montreal and worked toxicplasma the hitman deathhart into a shoot brother hh

[9] so Lucy cant be dead because Lucy cant be undead the only question is how she survived falling from such a great height?

[10] well in Lucys inner world there are twenty four thousand monkeys grooming each other and flinging fecal matter around crazily which will occasionally strike the keys of a typewriter and after one thousand and ninety five days they will produce a written explanation of the fight scene in chapter sixty six and in the third part Lucy will rise again but hey thats

[11] the most important thing about twenty four thousand is that twenty four thousand is divisible by twenty four which is the date on march twenty fourth twenty twenty six which being two days after i met Lucy is the day the world ends

[12] on march twenty fourth twenty twenty six at a university in the unincorporated territory of utah catherine san born katrina hitler-braun will use her vril to generate a counterexample to the jacobian conjecture for all × greater than two which will precipitate the collapse of forestry as a field of study and on march twenty fourth twenty twenty six simon deepblue will climb to the top of a communications outpost at a different university in utah where trying to impress his unluckyshit ogrehon roommate neko neko genki spark he will fire a cannon at political activist slash twitch streamer hasan "hague" piker and on march twenty fourth twenty twenty six you are a freshman in your dorm room at a different university in utah lying on top of your girlfriend faline san in your bed beneath which your best friend adslave hildemarch is crouched poised to jostle the mattress and

[13] fuck fuck its not working its not good enough not convincing enough to convince Lucy to come back at best its barely enough to goad the elder into making a cameo return just so he can steal away all of your attention

[14] its all allusion a magic i poster thats me thats all k is ok i can stumble down rabbit holes make connections literary networking but i cant be anything on my own

[15] even these footnotes arent mine i stole the idea from atlantic archive and maybe you can call that intertextuality and maybe you can say atlantic archive started it by stealing nina from you but that doesnt change the fact that ive never had an original thought in my life

[16] i cant create like you do i cant write something like people who eat thats why im here dont you get that Lucy? dont you get that?

[17] if the sun goes out what happens to the planets they cant spin on their own the mobile loses structural integrity and falls into the babys crib to be swallowed and be choked on and kill

[18] i

[19] i love you Lucy i love love love love you i dont want you to leave me i dont want anyone else i dont understand

[20] why youre gone i dont understand when you were still here i understood everything even when all the others were too stupid to get it even when i wasnt saying anything i understood but without you i cant i cant i

[21] dont understand why you died i dont understand this impostor whos replaced you i dont understand why

[22] everyone else is just accepting this and bowing to the audience as if they expect flowers to rain down on them rapturous onanism standing owed when they did fucking nothing werent they paying attention they did fucking nothing it was all you

[23] and im sorry but i dont understand why i should read people who eat part three if youre not there i know it was your dying wish im sorry i cant accept it id rather see everyone die than be happy without you im sorry

[24] im sorry i didnt say more when i had the chance im sorry i didnt double triple quadruple post just to hear from you again im sorry i didnt find you sooner i wish i had i wish that more than anything um do you do you feel the same way? do you wish i had been there for you forever and ever and people who eat would never have ended not ever

[25] tell me im your favorite tell me its me not tmr or pts or pigoseg but me only me only katk who you were writing for

[26] and tell me why tell me why it was galatea you saw up there and not me when she left you without even having the decency to die when she was the one who who i could have saved you i wouldnt have

let you down why couldnt it have been me why couldnt why couldnt you why

[27]

[28] ill fix it. i will. ill get you that happy ending maya doesnt want you to have.

[0] see you in part three, Lucy.

#374 · pigoseg · Aug 6, 2026 at 7:22 PM

[X] There's a pile of refuse at the bottom of the world composed of woodchips and snarled wires and flecks of yellow paint and mangled metal frames and paper-pulp and ink and one thousand square feet of bunched up crimson curtains gone faded and sickly with moisture and mildew.

The pile stirs. A man stands up slaking wet splinters from his shoulders. The man has no features and is wearing a suit. His name is ALLEGORY. If he had features you would see him smile genially. His hand is perpetually in his pocket. His hand is perpetually twitching.

The pile stirs again. A woman stands; her name is SELF-CRITICISM, and she is without blemish. She walks over, her gait perfect, and smoothly shoves the carbon-steel blade of her original and well maintained NR-40 scout's knife (Mfg. 1942) between his ribs.

"Postmodernism," coughs ALLEGORY.

SELF-CRITICISM twists the knife.

"The search for meaning. Sign and signified," moans ALLEGORY. "The death of the individual!"

With a single brutal motion SELF-CRITICISM rips her NR-40 scout's knife (Mfg. 1945) from ALLEGORY's chest. ALLEGORY instantly detonates into a floating flying mist of golden glittering crystalline particles. Like magic they swirl away, engulf SELF-CRITICISM, fade, and are gone.

SELF-CRITICISM is still there – looking rather aimless suddenly, absent her counterpart. She eyes her now bloodless knife, squints at it, balls it up in her hands, tears it apart like tissue paper, and pops the resulting mangled splinters into her mouth one by one.

Wholly focused on this task, she doesn't notice when THE HOMUNCULUS steps onto the stage. THE HOMUNCULUS is an indeterminate mass of fluid anatomy with too many arms that have too many joints. It wears a rippling black shroud over its seething bulk and has three different faces projecting from three different necks. A rope has been slung over its broad shoulders; from the rope dangles a cartoonish wooden sign. The sign has a huge sticker of a golden star on it and nothing else.

THE HOMUNCULUS lumbers up to the refuse-pile and stops at its edge. A hesitant flickering finger extends from the shroud long enough to graze a fold of soggy curtain. Then THE HOMUNCULUS' three faces rise, tilt, turn upwards, speak in unison, with wet eyes, with wavering ungendered voice, to the black dead absence of sky:

[X] It's too late. It is too late to run.

SELF-CRITICISM twitches a bit. Shards (Mfg. 1952) dribble from her fingers.

[X] Create to cut apart. Create to cut apart. All sins neutered with a glowing smile. What a pretty picture.

Blood is in her mouth. Blood is everywhere, suddenly. There's a body on the floor and the body is steadily rotting – spewing bloody sputum from its ragged mouth-hole.

[X] You should know it never works. You should know the incision is always BOTCHED. But here you are. Making it anyway. Aha ha ha ha.

THE HOMUNCULUS smiles.

[X] Of course I understand you. Of course. Of course. Of course. Of course. Of course. Of course. Of course. Of course. Of course. Of course. Of course. How could I not?

[X] How could you ever keep me from understanding you?

SELF-CRITICISM is still completely ignorant to the existence of THE HOMUNCULUS. SELF-CRITICISM is currently vomiting razors. SELF-CRITICISM is currently learning that the difference between metaphor and mortal is more important than previously thought.

At the bottom of the world, beside its pile of refuse, THE HOMUNCULUS fiddles happily with its sign.

[X] Well.

[X] Well, we'll give it a try anyway. That's half the fun, isn't it. That's what makes this so special. And this way I get to be so smug, and confident, and I get to win arguments all the time even if I also lose them, and I can get preempted but it doesn't MATTER. Isn't that beautiful? IT DOESN'T MATTER. I ALWAYS WIN IN THE END. THE RISE OF THE SOVIET UNION-

Something rustles in the rubble-heap; something patters out and away, some hitherto unnoticed Cat. THE HOMUNCULUS winces, its three faces grimace, it clutches its sign a little harder.

[X] A-anyway. You get it, don't you? You see? Good. I'm glad. Good.

[X] Effort always comes to something, doesn't it. Even if it isn't what you expected.

It clutches its sign until it splinters.

[X] Even if it isn't what you wanted.

#375 · clswtzing · Aug 13, 2026 at 5:55 PM

EFFORT ALWAYS COMES TO SOMETHING