

Viggo knew quite a bit about float planes. He knew about their sound coming into play and bringing togetherness to the site. It could come from any direction really and land appropriately, on many occasions having to circle to push away turbulence. If it was raining the pilot had a bigger smile. And much of all this he learned from his youth.

One guy always brought a little extra. Usually some more beans and really old can openers of the sort; he was more of a curiosity to the group. A different warrior and he became an avid participant in capture the flag.

That summer especially, Viggo learned about berries, snake berries, snakes, and how to set a snare. If you caught a rabbit you were up a rank, but of course you had to watch the other guy clean it. Becoming accustomed to this you heard stories, most spun into some family tree, and some pricked you instantaneously. You'd remember the words used.

His place now north of the city, below road level, and built into the bank brought visitors like the chimes, he said. They never startled the fish.

Once after a heavy rain the mud and silt darkened the river. There were much less jumps. He usually sharpened his knives with the attention they required. And how weather worked, the misty phase came next. Along with shoveling away any sludge and throwing buckets of fresh water to clean up the outside walls. Revealing the fir timbers as natural as they stacked, holding up part of the roof that only few that drove by could see.

Every ninth day he'd fetch his parcel that was always padded to prevent breakage. He had mail and electrical devices in almost every drop-off. Stu, under his false name, lived a mediocre existence in a growing section of town.

Up at the landfill, Viggo lost track of time. A sensual utopia you just had to realize. Beyond the black bear encounters there was a calm urgency; finding treasures, wondering simply. In all this packaged energy a collection of many prints. Pictures of gatherings, in albums, struck him most. If he found copper he'd take it back, or small gears that weren't chipped.

The area had a controlled burn, and the wind wasn't strong enough to spread it. Twice a week the maintenance guy came with his truck, sprayed a special fuel over what was smoldering. He knew of Viggo, and they kept their relationship at that distance.

No one comes back on exactly the same schedule, he said. There had to be a sense of spirit. Perhaps he was a hunter, the timid type. Approaching his work with a weight of responsibility. In this area it was give and take, and it was difficult to actually infer details. He often had an aimless, disheveled look, matching the surroundings.

On his route back to Telsan, the truck rumbled. Mostly from a lack of servicing and because of ripples in the gravel.

Lillian sat on her swing bench and read classics. She hardly acknowledged the odd traffic. Acquainted her reasons with a scene that would play itself out. One day her daughter would marry someone who might change things. She'd meet him on the way out, after years of scheming. Just when the crowd wakes. They'd take a train with the sleeper cabins reserved. Join up with some others, including a good lawyer and health care practitioner.

Unclear advice, she said. Follow Jake and how he sought; time over time he almost balled his eyes out, but never did. Even during Gail's increasing attraction to ponies, leading to a net of manipulators. Drunks, and disappearing acts. Gail fit a wide-eyed wanderer. Jake a dark horse.

Now she had to organize a visit with her estranged daughter. It'd be a dilemma to hitch a ride; a letter of request would speak.

She wrote well that night and signed her name. Her handwriting a soft touch: no cross-outs and woven from experience. T's and I's marked as splashes.

A repair shop sat and puffed, holding the block. They fixed small engines, mostly lawnmowers and general appliances. Big Bruno ordered cigars and although it couldn't register, cleaned the front window religiously. He also brought customers, and his guy's liked their work.

The street had cohesion. No one ate breakfast, and they gorged at lunch. They told blatant lies that became a style, and they could laugh. On certain topics you layered, and saw a genuine search. Uproots, falls, and a carry over. Most came here at an early age.

Caulder was the youngest. Twenty one. A true baker. He never measured and mixed his creations as his verbs allowed, often whistling. He wasn't broken yet, and had a zest to cater large gatherings. He'd done an anniversary held at Regal that went smoothly, and directly set-up a banquet for some diplomats. They were returning from Sweden, and lined him up with a contact, which persuaded him to come see a revolution, the guy said. After two weeks on a tow, beside some yachts, and lit up nights he found another avenue.

And because he didn't talk about cupcakes or tarts, the evenings pulled much at the clothes, and who might sneak out for air. On the deck you lost your skill to recite. There were a few passages making headway, one suspiciously from red silo the novel, a store clerk turned cult leader in the glowing grain fields, summoning uninspired rebel-likes. They talked about Woodstock and Glastonbury as defining events.

The trouble with boat motors is that they were finicky. When they ran they did so, and then a minor thing could bring the newest one pattering or cut dead. Big Bruno didn't deal with the sea stuff. His reputation as a neighborhood handyman was strong, taking life from days in the backyard, engineering slingshots when he was younger. Moving on to the garage, and immigrating to Telsan in his late teens.

People approached him. He had a movie director's appeal, with a hint of mob history in his dialect. By his bungalow he often sat on the bench and looked back as he puffed. Dog walkers were intrigued, and exercised in the park. Terriers ruled the trim lot. They were hovering scouts, devout investigators and content to zoom endlessly.

There was no such thing as a weekend. Most in the area had spouses that traveled. Evenings became a time for getting out of the house. You had the wine tasters club alongside horseshoes. Photographers. Night junkies.

Sometimes dawn came. It's where you found your match. You'd have a friend or two dragging for a story. It'd slide toward lunch at Diego's and everything kept pace. Afternoon siestas weren't mentioned. You just took turns.

At the train station you saw a chord of hesitation. Arrivals were hit by a jagged wall of local peddlers. They sold where to stay. If it wasn't common knowledge that Benny or Tony also had a furnished downstairs, but you were better off with this deal, you were told. It was closer. Although most had prior arrangements, the whole process worked.

Eva came through the distant lights. She had chestnut hair and grew up in the outback, by way of wind and kerosene lamps, dreaming often. She coasted through highschool and thought about veterinary school to the feverish point of tossing her application behind some boxes, and running off. After weeks of roaming she spotted a poster at a laundry mat, a distant education course of some kind. She'd heard of Telsan and got a ticket at a fair price in an attempt to settle in its promise.

Surprisingly, or more accordingly it took her under its wing. She found a place to rent with a sizeable backyard, undiscovered laneways beyond the fence. Having but an awareness of an exciting movement was enough. It might have been that that drew her to read different things, and then go walking immediately after. Learn by association, she said.

Telsan fluctuated at about sixty thousand residents. It had a rhythmic continuity that felt like the populace grew. Rumors spread and hit the ridge, dissipating, eventually becoming a closed loop system. What was exported had many knots.

and took pictures of chocolate houses, tall towers not like in Dubai. She loved lying in the grass in unnoticed spaces, and tossing bunches of dandelions. She would finish another book in exactly one year.

She'd take that online sociology course. After registering she phoned an old friend and felt relieved laying out her plan. Ultimately she wanted to be a social scientist, likening to its label. It'd be easier to poke around, order a certain brand, and have a schedule. There were times when they used to skip off early, dodge the end game. Run to Frank's disco, or grab a sandwich late at night. They should get together again, they agreed; take the train this way.

Becoming comfortable with the arranging of her stuff to match the basement was huge. At eye-level the grass swayed. It communicated with both pictures on that wall. Abstracts already there and above her neatly organized shelving stand. She had a full-length couch that she turned to face the stairs outside, and put the television in that corner, away from the glare. Dinner fit the eight o'clock bill while she watched one of two sitcoms, depending on the evening.

A week later Uma had a ticket. She'd wrapped up summer work and had a block of time before school started. From the station they sped off in search of adventure, in a car Eva had managed to borrow. It was her turn and they kept fussy accounts in their bank. Over the last two years it was practically mutual, and there was no foreseeing collapse. After Uma's recent break-up from her wealthier boyfriend she despised stagnation. Things were handed to him, and he still felt cold. For some reason she elaborated as they dropped her bags off, it was apparent she craved this visit, and wouldn't mind switching cities.

The neighbour overheard them gabbing and peaked over the fence in the back. I'm skipping town for a bit, he said. He felt he knew Eva although they had only chatted briefly on a few occasions, about the area mostly. He had a cat he felt anxious about leaving alone and wondered if she could check on her while he was away. You didn't have to worry about anything else; he'd carry his cell just in case.

Inside the place was tidy. A lot of white with eggshells and for-life kitchen appliances in a row. They had juice on the deck and he showed Eva how to work the alarm.

They had to do a car rally first off. It had the ability to rejuvenate. Luckily Eva scored a six-bang standard transmission, although a four cylinder would have been fine. Taking roads by feel they hugged the shoulders and stuck to residential coves, throwing ideas of a perfect house.

And their theme slammed a dead end where they parked to switch drivers. There was over a half tank of gas they wanted to drain if possible.

By chance they got back at four in the morning, having stalled the car twice at stop signs, and they were in good spirits. Time to enjoy a nightcap, they agreed. And Eva mixed an excellent margarita, a new blend inspired by the back lot, syrupy but swift. The sky showed many stars, they mumbled a bit and there was still much to be said. At the neighbour's the next afternoon they met Ruby. Topped her water and food dish; she was a genteel, fluffy thing, inquisitive, reddish-brown, and purred loudly from her bed.

They snooped; you had to. You also should assume considering all the variables. There was a moment of wonder for both of them. He could be sitting on the chair they walked by, a thousand kilometers where he was. It looked like he used to be married, the few photos he had were in the livingroom, and the solar window high up was brilliant. Its statement stayed with them touring the recreation room, touching every table to make sure. Later on, scribbling in her diary, Uma wrote down that she wished that she had asked the guy more questions.

Eva was busy chopping carrots and bell peppers for a stir-fry. Lost within the range of her cutting board. She was a good chef and had an extra edge when she might get evaluated. There seemed to be something about two-tone beyond the laminating. She kept the noodles firm, and poured the vegetables into the saucepan with plenty of olive oil, and a tomato paste from scratch. They sipped a regional red wine and watched their show with the volume up.

When the credits rolled up Uma pointed out that they could find someone surely from the area. Telsan was becoming a nook, she'd heard. A place to load up, and organize a bunch. After a big gulp of wine she went into a deflating premise regarding escapism, and her friend listened with one ear.

They typed away on the search engine.

On Dorian street there was a foundation. Slapped with paint that shone. Little sculptures that clenched their teeth in the windows. It was a long street strung on a timer, and mounted gauges, a sudden flick of a switch, and backup power to boot. They had studio rentals with prison-balconies, and new hooded sweaters for sale every week down below, brought in mostly through ground transportation, and this one thriving entrepreneur.

The ladies hit the strip looking for hints, having parked, and needing a smoothie to curb the wine, although it was approaching dark. You felt that flicker like they had a technician tapping the lines. Electric guitar music gave way a bit, numerous definitions stood out. Coke, Diner, San Francisco spelled San Franey, and a few rowdies walking backwards shouting what the blazin'!

And they were locals, apparently. Three cowboys in fashion. You should follow them, they had a great view. Fast, off the cuff, and ready. They were here

when development started, honing their skills. It was easy to smile; you got lassoed. One fellow had tired eyes and a beating heart. Edgar jumped up onto his shoulders and said come on!

The girls drove their Malibu towards the hillside where they directed, keeping sight of their jeep, billowing transparent smoke. At their friend's villa there was a gathering, and most were in the beautiful backyard, lit, and facing the small mountain. Perry probably owned a solid two acres; his neighbour's were part of it and there as friends, dabbling in trade talk.

There was a mix of people, the type that got together often and pretended to not notice a newcomer, at least strategically. The boys appeared enthused and introduced Perry. You saw a sophisticated lingo to him. One-third mystery. He was also tall and tanned.

"I hear you're new to town," he said.

"We're on an adventure technically," Eva said, "there's a fuzz from the strip still ringing."

"Did you find anything there, there's an excellent craft store you should see."

"Really!"

"No, there's a pottery barn close there though. You didn't say you're shopping, no?"

"I could use some hangers in my yard. I have some plants I'd like to keep off the ground."

"Come get a drink," he said chuckling, then led them to the table and excused himself.

They made a vodka and watched him converse with a woman at the far corner of the deck. His cardigan matched her navy blue pullover, and he did the talking. She looked new to the area but stood posed enough to resemble a fashion model.

There had to be fifty all together within the wavelengths. Light jazz from the speakers heading towards the bushes, where a guy stumbled from and noticed Uma glancing.

He came over to mix a rye and got more sober, telling the girls to vote and some other certainties, you had to believe in alliances, look at Watergate and Nixon, look at the taping of Survivor, look at the seven year old found in the jungle, he concluded. "Something's messy. I try new things I say. What's your name's?"

"I'm Uma, and this is Eva," she said sticking out her hand.

"My reward," he said. "I'm banned from gambling as well, won't elaborate, learned a bundle from reflexes. You know in Scandinavia if you don't know when to hike it from a game, you could be left out and freeze to death." He

Big Bruno wanted a new alarm system, one that would ring to his cell and house, and his first partner's. And if either happened to be away there could be a quick redirect to who'd be in charge then. He kept ties like he learnt to put them on, having a snug look and rolling with the punches.

His team, he called them, they should buy some new outfits and meet for ribs and darts, and let loose. It'd be the perfect time to do so.

Tom and his cousin Rick were able to get jumpers and stay relatively quiet, as they had a tendency not to quite often. They picked up gray and red ones with a shiny look, and said they were for an anniversary. They were into botchy ball.

At the deli they got extra meats and blabbed about the same thing when walking the aisles at the sporting goods store where they found chairs, tables, coolers, and other lawn essentials. Next they filled up the car with premium gas and got a car wash.

The last time there was anything at Big Bruno's house the block was underground. It might have been two years ago, roughly when he began his directing, sometimes spending hours on the park bench, one flavour at a time, one sequence in a way. He missed this sweetheart he wouldn't verbalize on, although something showed, he was intelligent just being there in the open.

The club attributed coming out to his presence, initially hiding what they drank, and then finding a more fulfilling avenue of expression. How they admired a gentle rain. Let it soak their clothes, often falling back, grass stains and everything. They weren't the photographers and daring camouflage. Young Jill wrote stuff down later on; it'd probably shake his feet a little. Lawnmower blades on top of a new hat... snipping squares and solid paste... lost porcupines saying hi... and missing posters becoming colour.

When her aunt was away she worked. She had the entire two and a half story modern house to her attention, any builder's dream. She could listen to her body's rhythms, and wore a wet slip on garment from a bath of cool water, having to mop the floors. Coincidentally she made the afternoon, occasionally forgot to eat, and wrote in point form, no more than one page at a time, very insistent.

Her dear aunt acquired this house at a good juncture. Jill tore at its humour. She loved angles and full-length mirrors. After some glances she'd run outside with that nakedness, and she hadn't suffered loss.

Before leaving they talked about leaving, and Rhonda stretched between a visceral, warm feel to a place near Brussels where work wasn't work, and there was an elegant shopping district, much space to people watch, and the men had agendas, scarves dipped in rich lagers, knowledgeable presenters. She had some

'ins' and Jill would mix so perfectly. On her seat she watched the action over at Bruno's. He commanded movement around him. The lights, darts, food spread, and order of appearance spoke like there was unresolved appreciation for something that would never be said aloud, that's if they knew. His friends were athletic and quick on their toes. They looked around lots.

None of her group had phoned on this slightly unusual night in the area. Seven times out of ten they just meet at their finishing point on topic; she hadn't been supplying the wine, thick merlots were fine, most likely they were fixing personas for web rooms while staring at the ringer occasionally.

Jill created a couple of them once, based loosely on some fantasies, which she found lead retroactively; she called it a drain against anyone's opinion. Astonished in a sense the network catapulted her thoughts along with an image that flashed, like that reflex in a dream and you try to freeze and release and freeze.

After awhile she slipped outside and Rick was there eating ribs – a pillar in the yard across the other fences. Everything carried up and away. She took the back alley to get closer. He recognized her large white hat. "Jill right. You shop on Dugmore often. I see you from my store."

"Are you familiar with Doves?" she said.

"A little; why." He said.

"They have these walking sticks, and canes, that are so need to get. I thought I'd pass the energy." She said.

"... What else is there... I've been meaning to stop in."

"Soaps, clothing..."

"I like your chapeau. It works great."

"I'd let you try it on, but it'd break the rules."

"Rules." He said.

Tom skipped over after noticing their side-to-sides. "Doves!" He said within the context of knowing some other things, and connections. "And radical hat; that's my own. Rick you ate all the ribs!" He added smiling, filled with a glow. He was a good mediator. Believable because his tone broke through his wavy hair and lines on his forehead. "You want in on some darts?"

"I think I do."

"Show her the door Rick. I'll set it up."

They had a legitimate party and most of the others zigzagged like they'd been wound up. Jill would later find a possible source, like times before. Cinnamon on a mint leaf... covered arms and bones in a bucket of ice... attaching to the notion... we slapped the board silly.

By chance a small lot went up for sale. The northeast worked the same as the northwest: you ate slowly at dinner on those nights and the word spread through the body language. Chopping wood in the back meant get ready. The rev of a vehicle usually measured to being late for an appointment.

A mature thirty acres overlooking the city radiated. There was a way to find roots over and over again, become nourished with certain richness. It was said that if your coffee wasn't dark enough you hadn't stepped in shit.

The thing was getting things straight as possible. Everyone was a type that could be placed on the chart. One house had an enormous pie chart depicting the food groups off the sunroom. Cate jotted down and coloured over mistakes. There was no way living down her studies, and she was twice as bright as her husband who saw biology research as a waste of time, and was gaining weight on their deck.

Losing his excitement for the land they agreed on a price and set plans to relocate. His main problem was to patch relations with his former associates who'd most likely snickered his name in some tense poker faces after hours. Then there was the mess of boxes that sat unlabeled downstairs full of emotions, and key accounts of where to go. After days he stumbled upon a portfolio that was hard to open: the photos looked make-believe and brushed up, and a couple names in long form tried to ground him. He wondered where he was before.

He started waking up early drenched in sweat, and would laugh it off by saying a part of me is never leaving, and I really loved that rhubarb crumble we had the other day. Cate had stopped fixing the chart and devoted her remaining time with the place to packing and visiting her neighbour friend.

They met every day until they left, usually by the creek where you could see little minnows change size, and let some tears fall by the bank. They said keep in touch for sure, and there was that jerking motion before a last hug wondering why they didn't learn to fish.

One month later Edgar felt most assured with what he wanted to do. Sometimes it took stretches before others noticed what he called a sit down meeting; there wasn't an urgency to get off somewhere else. He'd already done his surveying around the property, came across the perfect climbing tree, and spent an afternoon whittling up in it. Like other times he had to show you in person what sprouted over there, and you saw how he blended.

Philip helped him fix the deck and they had their first beer together again in many weeks. They talked about how badly the footings were cracked and how it was a must repair, and a new railing could add a lot. He brought some new tools to christen the place and they put them in the designated workshop that'd

need some work, but had plenty of room. "I'm thinking a little table saw would fit in here fine," he said.

"Those brackets need to come down," Philip said pointing, "anything heavy and they'll break."

"A free standing shelving unit the whole way across."

"That'd work. Head high, so you could reach stuff. I have some extra wood lying around I could go and get."

He backed his jeep up to the back porch close to the steps and sorted through the best boards. After realizing their length he found his wrench set and removed the rear bench, which he placed by the shed under a tarp, then tied the hatch tight with rope. A last look at his chaotic setup and he started the twenty minute trek.

Both capable carpenters they made improvements to many spots over the next week only having to buy a few odds and ends. Any scrap was piled for a later date and a birdhouse was to be a huge project. The one hanging from a branch just didn't call out. Supposedly there were the most colourful macaws that came once in awhile. They competed against a line of sparrows, and they were there really early in the morning usually, at pitch black and coming into their own.

A bird guide left behind had checkmarks on various other species, including two eagles. It was the only book and it appeared to be a present. Edgar found it amongst the hurry of traffic when he first felt something for the place. It wasn't quiet here, he said. At this altitude it couldn't, and he had an anticipation of the crisp air and turbulence.

It rained hard for three days and he watched the mist. He had a favourite chair already, laying a blanket on it, and he made it rock a bit. The entire house moved on its axis. He engineered a clothesline to run forty feet from the side entrance to a tree where he put another seat to rest on. From here he thought aloud and waited for enough clothes to get dirty, and the breeze was refreshing.

It was time to go check out the saloon. They had driven by numerous times and there were never many vehicles in the parking lot. It looked like the building had been dropped into place from some other town. It had grandeur and an appealing contrast, with a red roof and large overhang covering some tables and small windows.

They pulled up beside a sports vehicle with black tint and not a scratch on it. Philip was always weary and intrigued. They played a game of pool and wondered if the guy at the bar was a hustler, drinking something dark and pretending not to notice much. The barman went back and forth doing what owners do, and Rebecca found them a spot by the wall to take their order. After

some pork chops and mashed potatoes they washed it down with a beer before going onto the deck for evening air, and followed a car heading west.

Between driving and constructing they communicated their anxieties best, and arrived at a promise. They drove up Dorian street for a hoot and then by Perry's for old times sake. He'd been acting bizarrely since learning of the move up the hills. Returning phone calls quickly and on edge, perhaps looking to jump port. When he left for his travels he consumed what was around him. He brought ironed suits along with folded clothes, brochures, extra sunglasses, and his regimented drink and pill list.

Two blocks past his house they weren't in the mood to exit the city and turned around. The lights to the back were on and faint music reverberated.

He'd grown a mustache and was leaned against the door swaying in his robe looking up at the sky. It was one in the morning and they contemplated coming into the scene, and stood watching him from the grass lane on the neighbour's lawn. Last thing he said on the phone was 'takes two to know three'. He often spoke in some poetic form to try and mess with people's opinions, as he knew they'd think about him. When he came back the first time he'd been pried open by someone he never disclosed of, opting for a reflective charisma that stirred things up.

On a more connected night Perry could entice your invitation like no one else. It was dominoes and you could see it happening. He took pleasure in serving a special tropical breakfast to guests that stayed over, did the dishes while they relaxed. He always had to call somewhere far away and made it public; in his office he showed a personal joyfulness.

"Fellas!" he said startled.

"Perry, we saw the lights and we were driving by." Edgar said and they walked around the deck. "Clear night."

"Almost sparkling," he cleared his throat, "just driving passionately I take it, and felt the brakes."

"Over here yes, and no we've been thinking. Spent hours zooming around and kabam: it comes around to a few times when the weights are gone, and that bearing down feeling is removed, and we're young adults, talking and moving, free."

"You believe in cycles do you." He said.

"I don't know. Belief however is hardly used. It's trivial. Get into a situation and the resources are there, sliding, whatever."

"Did you hear what happened in the cage match? The older guy wrecked this rising star that'd trained with people you train with, and was taken out the back door to a medic van. Sounds like there'll be another match. The venue might take some figuring. I'm itching to get a glimpse."

You never knew who was in disguise or acting as decoys. This tactic worked wonders to keep things clean, fresh, and tangy. An inspector required a direct route to possibly tarnish your reputation, but an energetic, motivated writer and such could stomp their feet on your mat, come back tomorrow, pass out next door after hours of nabbing.

There were two delivery trucks that parked in the back lane every Tuesday. They arrived in the morning and drove from near the border straight through. Acquainted with the district they unloaded food, then checked into their bed and breakfast spot, one beside the other close by. Becoming friends they had a similar story, and somehow ended up spending an extra day in Telsan, they snipped from the calendar later on.

A thermos of coffee and the flow of blood out from their legs postponed sleep like usual, and got used to meeting on the front steps. We should change up the routine, they reluctantly agreed.

Zac changed his clothes and left a note on the message board that he'd be out for the day. She was at work and they'd pass by. Morris bought a pack of smokes and some toothpicks for the walk, although he desperately needed casual shoes. A section of him wouldn't cave to life lived in the seventies; he was the older rolling rock. On the drive down he sang Vince Gill hits and pressed the off button when the city limits came.

In town: dollar bills flashed. Souvenir shops had a liquid honey and surely sweetened their deal. Mugs and board games shaped another way fit perfectly back home, telling the curves of the sidewalks and staying one month ahead of a big move. Funky t-shirts worked as well. They both liked slogans. At this juncture they had fifteen stuffed away between them that never got brought up in conversation.

Deliverymen had their own set of keys. Upon lifting the first crate they were taken out from the refrigerator and welcomed. Air conditioners were hidden and not yet turned on in the buildings. Antique clocks matched. A massage therapist was three diverse places, and Mr. Elgin took cancellations under unique circumstances.

His office had curb appeal as it accommodated to numerous parking spots on a bend. Meters were watched over by the odd skateboarder, which was followed by a lazy patrol car once in a while. It was second to Main street with a tattoo parlor and upscale drink lounge. No one littered beside the trees and its soil got swept back in its holder.

The entire pocket worked mostly from word of mouth. Any ten minutes was reserved, likely to catch where you were headed. There was a language coercing

to become common English. An undercurrent of persuasion. There was a back room 'the shape of a limousine', occasionally your friends found out, or by luck it was just opening. It's how you had a memorable experience. No flyers of any kind ever passed hands or flew onto posts.

Mr. Elgin used the side door to a few of the establishments. The spiraling effect seemed to keep people happy. Minute to minute he looked around as if in lust. He had a studious approach when it came to the client sessions; a photographic snapshot from last time. He never said it, but another reward in a way was after hour drinks with his assistant Tina, a young socialite with a gravitational pull.

She provoked a letting go in him. In fewer words he transferred impulses into his work. He wanted to talk about his punching bag but never did.

A young student helped design Hillies popular extension. Its cable supports attached to a central post and awning. It looked like a giant sail. When it rained the patter was thunderous. Groups wore patches on their sleeves unifying a trend. One out of every ten described what beach sand was. A high-pitched laugh caught everyone; it sounded authentic.

Water run-off hit the road. At the end of the world some called it, underneath the overhang and shadow. The engineers must have kept a few nuts loose because a creaking sound had quite the effect, pivoting, and possibly arcing down. A set of one-way stairs became heavily debated. A replica from somewhere, and in reach of a fire department's inquiry.

One should do brunch downstairs off the grill, spelling out ingredients for a sizzling dish. The cooks took delight in listening. They had exotic onions to famous scones. Their oil bottles and butter dishes spun. Your seat was your stool at the kitchen. And often one stayed to hang around. Mr. Elgin influenced their menu: he'd been to a private house and had the freshest juice, squeezed then and there. He described the livingroom and open concept. Their owner understood, and went in for weekly sessions as well.

Tina called in a last minute reservation from her desk and knew his reaction. They'd found their table over the last month away from any other dealings. Supposedly a navy guy was in hiding, and clung to some mates he trusted, still afloat. No matter what he said now his landing here was merely another course. He wouldn't curl up under the blanket, and those in similar boats held each other's arm, once in awhile doing a strut, celebrating in some fashion.

They called it a wrap after one drink; Mr. Elgin's mind was full.

At his condo he didn't feel like going to bed, or watching television, or listening to music. He stood on the tiniest little balcony with high concrete walls; slightly

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