

Twice the culture. Half the cheese.

# Monkeyshines

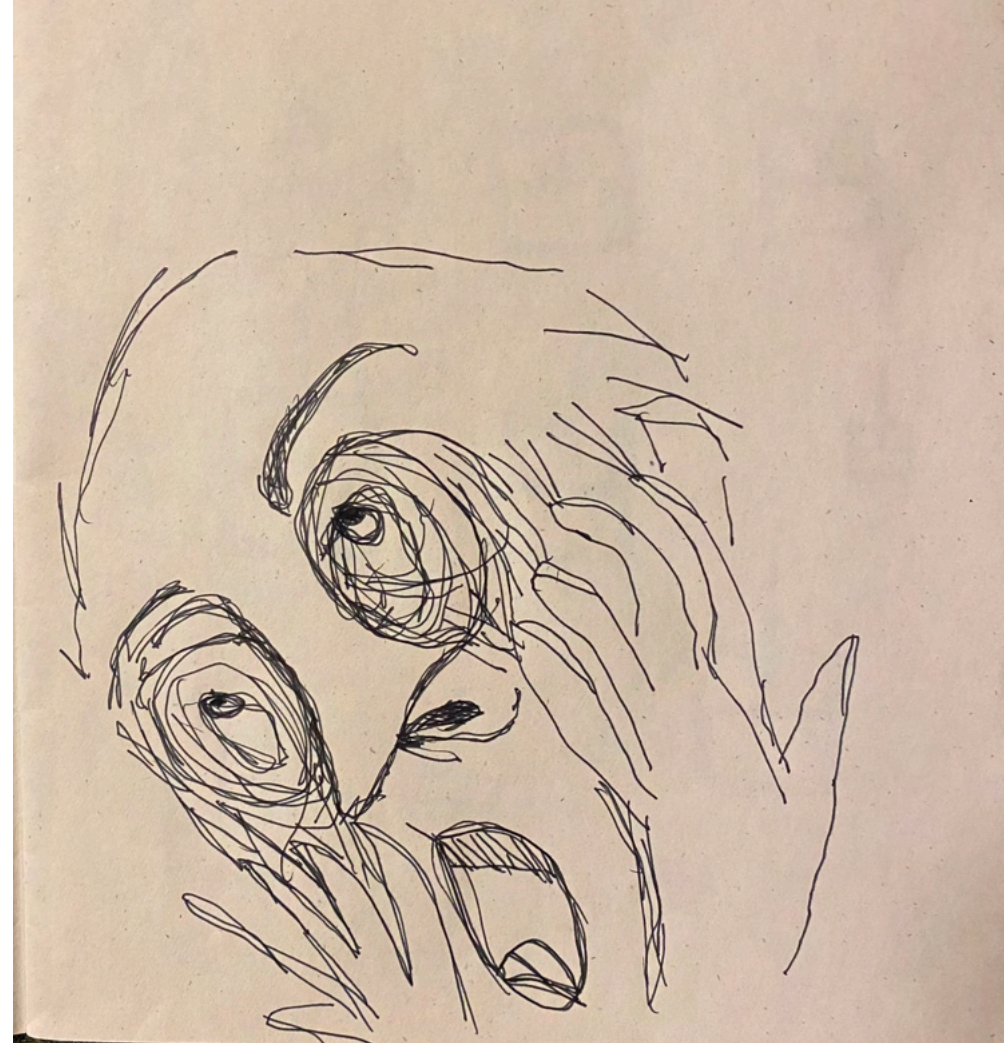
Summer 2021







Hotel Diablo by NeoVenom  
instagram @ neovenOm



### Shake With Me, Quake With Me

Let's see... take a good look...  
What do your eyes see?  
Facebook, notebook  
tiny part of a piano under your bed where you don't sleep  
"Rah-Rah, Raccoon!" when you're listening to trains pass  
"Ghibli, Silly!" you want to cry  
You'd love to die  
You'd love to die in your sleep  
"You'd love to die. Why?!"

Injustice and Justice

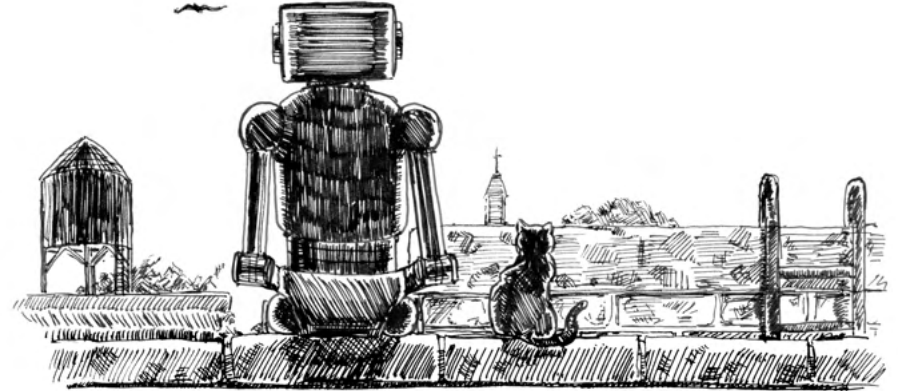
Shake with me  
Quake with me

by Tobias Hobbes  
sound track @ [monkeyshines.media/shake](http://monkeyshines.media/shake)





Photo by Rachael Halupa  
instagram @photography\_\_sisters



Hope by Donald Swenson  
instagram @dswensondesign

Q: What was something that amazed you when you saw it?

Alan Cumming performing Macbeth as a one man show on Broadway was the greatest live performance I have ever seen, in any genre. It is probably the most amazing thing I have ever witnessed. - DE

I cried the first time I saw the Rocky Mountains. We came around a bend on the highway and I saw the first snowy peaks and immediately lost all composure. Had to pull over onto the shoulder and get myself together. That was the best hike of my life so far. - KR

The face of my children when they were first put into my arms. I had two c-sections, so I didn't witness the actual birth. A delayed reaction, but well worth it! Their Dad saw them first! - JP



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Thank you, Carl. So it goes.

## Featuring:

**Cover image: Menandor**

by PLUGO

[PLUGOarts.redbubble.com](https://PLUGOarts.redbubble.com)

**Photo** by Rachel Halupa

**The Box and Hope**

by Donald Swenson

**Color Blind** by Christopher Fahey

**Hotel Diablo** by NeoVenom

**JP's Hot Source** by JP Hooper

**Shake with Me, Quake with Me**

by Tobias Hobbes

**El gato largo en el espacio**

by Katherine R.

**Summer Animal Oracle**

by Painted Birch

**Abduction** by Morgan Bissell

**Spice Drawers and Grinder**

by Wally & Deb

**Letterboxd with Thom**

by Thomas Becker

**dukkha** by Rich Fantasia

**The Kingdom** by Jonathan Russell

**Darkness Rising** (part 1)

by Estelle Clark

Summer 2021

Monkeyshines



*El gato largo en el espacio*  
by Katherine R.



## The Vacuum, Usage and Precautions.

1. This product shall not be used as a matching charger (converter) for the vacuum cleaner charging, The power supply!When charging, it should be turned off. The indicator light on the charger is changed from red to green. Please stop charging after filling.
2. Please note that the power cord of the spare cigarette holder is only available if you choose the power line of the spare cigarette lighter.This vacuum cleaner is not available for other products.
3. Under normal conditions, the machine should be used for half an hour and cool for 10 minutes so that the machine is not damaged. No impact on the car battery.
4. The product is not a toy, please do not let children play alone, so as to avoid the danger.At the same time The product should be placed in a dry place.
5. After washing the filter, please dry it and install it again. Otherwise, it will not absorb the dust.
6. Extend the hose at the end of the hose and insert the connector at the end of the hose. Vacuum cleaner suction nozzle, the other end is inserted flat mouth suction head or brush suction head.
7. When the machine is lying idle in the car, please use glue to fix the vacuum cleaner, so as to avoid the traffic.The winnowing machine will turn on the vacuum cleaner by itself.
8. Please stop using the inside of the vacuum cleaner immediately.
9. Please stay away from children to avoid danger.Please do not dismantle the machine without authorization. Warranty.
10. The vacuum cleaner is strictly prohibited to be exposed to the sun. It is strictly forbidden to use the vacuum cleaner during the summer and winter. The dust is placed outside the car.

— Author Unknown

## dukkha

with suffering so invasive and pervasive  
and satisfaction lacking and evasive  
i chase happiness but it runs and hides  
when i look to find it from things outside

objects of desire i conspire to acquire  
cannot fulfill what i desire  
peace comes from the side of the mind  
Buddha teaches and reminds  
no where else should we ever look to find

for appearances are nice,  
but we've tried it more than twice  
from night to night and life to life  
to sustain and make remain  
but it always ends, the same

so where to go from here?  
the path is growing, glowing, getting clear  
as i let go of my attachments, ignorance and fear.

by Rich Fantasia  
twitter @pthelo

The blue afterburner glow of an F-14 Tomcat  
taking off from an aircraft carrier at night, the  
amazing amount of stars in the night sky as seen  
from the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, the  
Vatican/Sistine Chapel :- ) - CR

Also, looking off the side of the cruise ship  
while in the Mediterranean. The water was just  
amazing. - HB



# The Kingdom

They call it “The Kingdom.” It sits behind the building where you’d go and get your food. You’d never even know it was there, but it’s larger and vaster than the main building. It is where they store their dry goods, like flour and corn meal. They also have a huge, two-story freezer in the Kingdom, which they turn on during the holidays. I was here to turn it on.

I think it’s ironic, perhaps, that you’re in the front, buying your chicken that’s been disemboweled, split-through with a spear, and slow roasted, or you’re buying your chicken that’s been torn apart, tendon from bone, and batter-dipped for frying. I think it’s ironic that the front is dedicated to our supreme position on the food chain, but the Kingdom, in back, is run by the birds.

Starling and chickadee and sparrow and crow and sea gull, at any time, you’ll see more of them than there are people in the Kingdom. And when I walked into the vastness of it, I could hear the smaller ones, the stowaways from Great Britain, chirping and flittering around in the rafters in the near darkness. They quieted down when I reached the shelves that held cans and bags and sacks. One such sack was in the wrong place, sitting upon a square pack of large cans. The sack, once protected by plastic, was eviscerated, spilling its guts of bleached flour onto the cans beneath it, and the floor below. There were little peace-signs imprinted in the fine powder at random intervals. These were bird tracks. The birds found a way to get into the flour.

Sahara Desert; electricity and water in the upper Ati village in Cogon, Malay, Philippines (we did this for the indigenous tribe along with several donors); a UFO in Tulum, Mexico. - EMK

My first sight of the Grand Canyon. The first time I locked eyes with my son and saw true recognition and love. I know it's hokey but I still feel what it felt like when I think about it. Sistine Chapel. That took my breath away. - HB

Also, the Aurora Borealis in Alaska! - JP

Oh, I thought, the processed, bleached flour must be like cocaine to these little birds. They probably get no real nutrition from this, just energy.

And so, thinking it wasn’t the best thing to have the flour exposed, I covered up the ripped part of the sack with a large piece of torn plastic and held it down with a large can. Then I walked away. In the empty vastness of the Kingdom, I could hear the echo of beating wings. Far enough away to not spook the birds, I turned around to see seven small brown and black birds looking at the plastic cover and the can holding it down. A few of the birds flew at the can, to frighten it I suppose. They were all twittering and chattering, and the frustration in the noises they made was evident and growing, until I heard, “TWEEET!”

It was loud and echoed through the Kingdom. It was a high, shrill noise that could not have come from a bird any larger than my hand, but it demanded attention be paid. The other birds and I froze for a moment, and they flew back into the rafters.

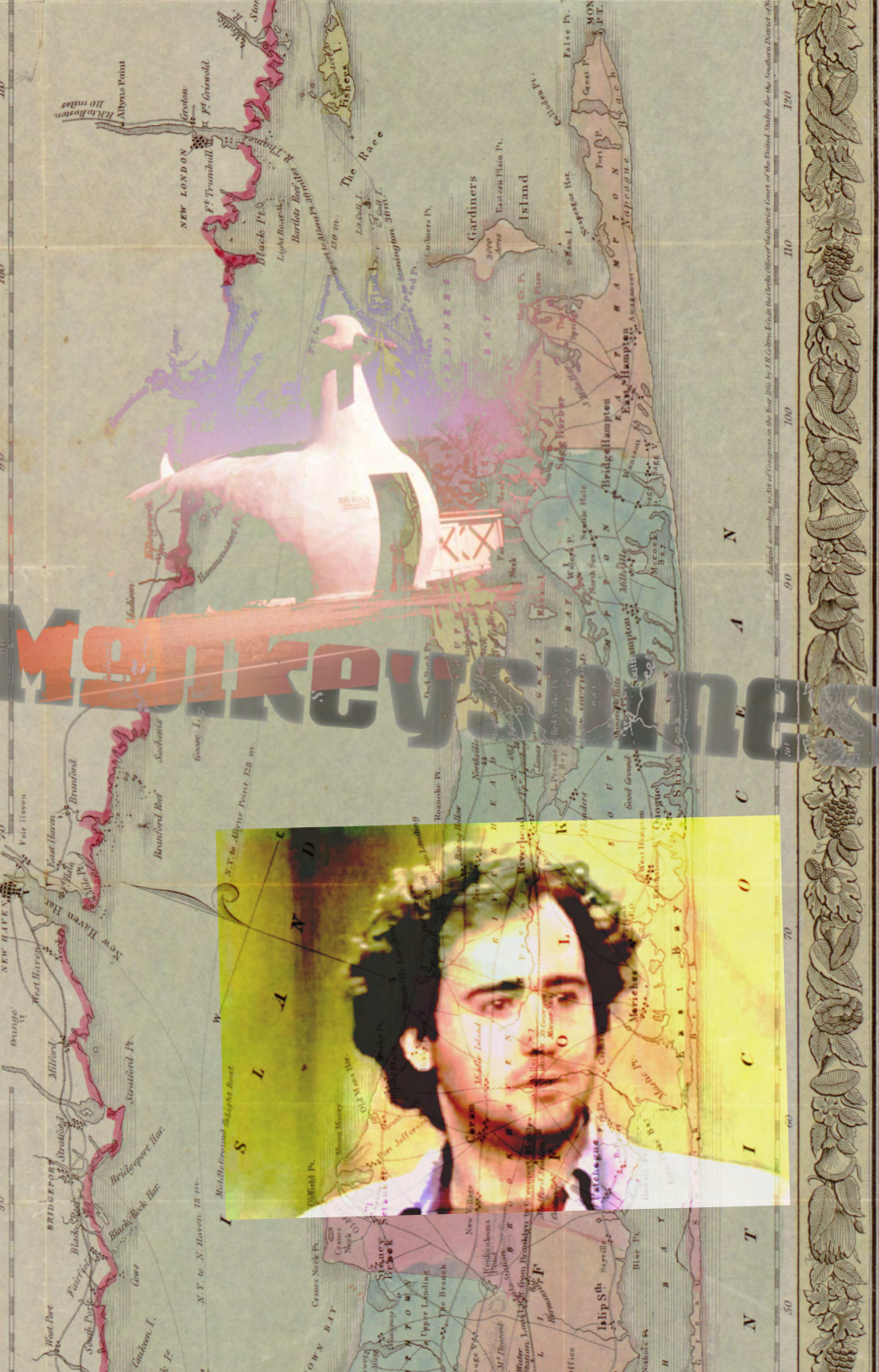
“TWEEET!” knocked around the walls and vaulted ceiling again. I couldn’t make out the source of the sound. It shook all around me. There was more flapping in the rafters, and little tricks of shadow and light made it look like there were several dozen birds up there. Then there was silence. Slowly, deliberately, I walked towards the exit, towards daylight and open air, until I was frozen by,

**“TWEEET!”**

The sound surrounded me in the cavernous building. It was an angry chirp, a desperate whistle. Just steps away from the doorway, it stopped me. Pausing for just a moment, I turned around again, and quickened my pace back towards the shelves. I threw down the can and ripped away the plastic. Flour dust danced all around me. I swiveled and made for the exit again, pausing only briefly, once out the door, to peek back into the darkness of the Kingdom, where the birds ruled. Two or three little birds pecked and scratched in the white flour, flittering in excitement, content, for now.

by Jonathan Russell  
twitter @ macphoenix





# Letterboxd with Thom

## Llamageddon, 2015

Watched Dec 11, 2020, no star rating

I cannot, in good conscience, give this a star rating. It is the type of film I cannot stand — poorly acted, badly written, incompetently directed, sci-fi nonsense that falls into one of two camps — “earnestly bad” or “bad but in on the joke.”



However, when Louie the Llama emerged from his spaceship and walked up to the camera for his closeup, a star was born. Louie has no idea he's in a terrible movie and has no fucks to give. He struts around like he owns the place which makes him both adorable and scary as hell. His is the best performance in the movie. He puts every actor in this mess to shame. When he walked into frame opposite a car he is about to blow up with his laser beam eyes, I could not stop laughing. Even standing still and doing nothing, Louie makes it work. It's ridiculous, and it's fantastic.

The best way to watch this is to fast forward through the plot and the party scenes and watch anytime Louie is on screen or when there is an animated sequence, as those are actually very good. You should also watch the scene in the car right after the funeral even though it is badly acted and dubbed, because it's bonkers and you learn that the first two people who are killed in the film are supposed to be grandparents even though they look as young as the people playing the partying kids.

## Crash, 1996

Watched May 29, 2021, 88881/2

I did not like this when I saw it in theaters but thinking about it in context of one of my favorite Cronenberg films, *Dead Ringers*, I could appreciate something he might have been going for here: Specifically, the lengths that one will go in order to feel. The soundtrack, like the sex, matches the mood: Cold and detracted. But unlike *Dead Ringers*, I am not sure I want to watch this one again.



reviews by Thomas Becker  
letterboxd @ becker471



# Abduction

Diedre did not want to calm down. Her handlers actually thought they could bribe her with food and whatever this prison is that they are trying to fool her with. Food? Seriously? While yes, she was hungry, did they really think that would distract her from the fact they'd dragged her from her only home and locked her in this? This? She didn't even know what to call it.

It was a large space with vegetation and a pond of some sort. But not like a natural pond. Definitely a pool constructed of some sort of rock or cement and then vegetation placed on it to hide the bare, boring, flat surface. Effort was definitely taken to make it look "natural." Diedre did not have to be a genius to see it was not even remotely a real pond. The water smelled off and she suspected the fish in there were placed in there for there was no place for them to come from or go to.

There were open areas with grass and some places cleared to sit. There was an alcove that she supposed was supposed to be a sleeping area? Maybe to get out of the rain? There was no roof beyond the sleeping area. There did seem to be some sort of netting high above the trees. Lots of plant life was trucked in to fill in the open space from low to the ground to the tallest trees. Diedre assumed it was to resemble her homeland.

Oh! She missed home! She lives — rather lived — in a beautiful part of the jungle. Lots of tall trees with trails you could get lost in. There was an actual, real pond that took very little time to reach. That is where she was when she was snatched up by a large group of men. She had been lounging in the shallows when she felt the bite of something in the back of her shoulder. When she grabbed at it, there was a cold metal barb sticking out of her shoulder. Very quickly, she started to feel faint and dizzy and as she was slumping over, she saw several men rushing toward her and dragging her out of her pond. She faintly remembered being thrown in the back of a truck, but she could just be filling in that part, because when she woke, she was in a truck in a cage.

Scared and confused, she tried to communicate with her captors, but they seemed unable to understand her. They spoke in a language she had not heard before. She probably should have kept her cool, but Diedre had never been one to really shy from a little

bit of force. Of course, the cage they put her in was definitely too strong for her. She knew it every before she started shaking the door of it. The men seemed to be amused at her attempts, which only infuriated her more.

Then, to make matters worse, they shot her with the dart again while she was still in the cage. She assumed that was when they transported her out of the truck to this ridiculous enclosure. Well, if they thought she was angry in the cage, they probably should not have given her a place with more improvised weapons available. Should any of them dare enter this pathetic place she will be sure to have a heavy rock in hand.

Where she could go, she had no idea. Diedre could not even fathom if she were even close to her home. It did not look like it. She had climbed to the highest point of this space they gave her, but her view was blocked. Some sort of prison. Cement walls everywhere.

Diedre's thoughts were interrupted by a grating and jarring sound coming from the other side of the pond. What had seemed like a wall started to move to the side. She grabbed a rock, expecting a doorway to appear, only to be dismayed by the chain link fencing revealed. Fencing going 20 feet up in the air with a netting from the top to beyond where she could see.

Through the fencing she saw more people gathering and walking past her enclosure. She called for attention, and got it, with many people gathering at the fence's edge, pointing and speaking excitedly. Would they help her? Would they free her? Diedre was disappointed to see people stop to look and appear to actually be happy to see her. Then they would walk on. Not a single one helping.

She finally moved to the perimeter of the fencing to see where the people walked off to. As far as she could see were enclosures just like hers, filled with all the animals she used to encounter in her jungle. All looking back at Diedre, mirroring her outrage, her frustration, and her sadness.

*by Morgan Bissell*  
**contactin.bio @ excessivemascara**



# The Box

I made a box. A simple thing.  
It never had a key.  
I left it in the open  
and asked the world to see.  
People came from everywhere to see  
this box I shared with pride.  
Some stared. Lost in wonder.  
Some thrust their hands inside.  
Their faces always changing  
Disappointed. Happy. Sad.  
Once I heard some laughter.  
Often they looked mad.  
One by one they all withdrew  
having seen all they could see.  
At last there was some quiet now  
just my little box and me.  
It didn't look much different  
but the box somehow had changed.  
It was all at once familiar  
yet all together strange  
I wiped away a bit of dirt  
and opened up the lid.  
Inside this little box of mine  
a little note was hid.  
I took the piece of paper out  
placed my box upon the ground  
and pondered at this little note  
this message I had found.  
It read,

"All I saw was just a box  
as I passed it through the crowd.  
Then I stopped to think on it  
(It was me who laughed out loud.)  
The point was not the box at all,  
The point was what we shared.  
A group of strangers coming here  
showing how we cared.  
The box was always empty.  
You had nothing there to hide  
and every soul that opened it  
left themselves inside.  
Not everyone will understand  
the gift you gave today.  
Some will think you tricked them  
and you did... in a way.  
So now I leave this note for you  
to show that someone knew  
that box had more than what we saw.  
That box was part of you."  
I stared for so long at that note  
I memorized each word.  
Not a word was spoken but  
the thought was clearly heard.

by Donald Swenson  
facebook @ dswensondesign





# Darkness Rising, part 1

**Content Warning: Psychological and physical torture. Brutality.**

Ralla sat tucked between the oversized roots of her favorite tree. She was smiling, happily listening to the calamity going on. She used to play here with her brother Akan. They were twins, born from the belly of mischievous Shaah, who happily accepted the seeds of thunderous Malfu. When Ralla broke from her mother's womb, Malfu saw the thunder in her eyes and called her demon. He saw the reckless spirit of Shaah and the overwhelming power of himself manifested in one goddess. She was everything Akan wasn't. He was soft and meek. He would be the redeemer. Shaah was amused by what caused Malfu's fears. She laughed and deemed Ralla the bringer of conflicts. And so it was, these polar opposites, were locked in the bonds of blood. How fitting it is that Ralla sits there covered in his.

She closed her eyes, comfortably cradled in the soft moss, cooled by the canopy of Ferngully trees, and allowed the battle lust to drain from her veins. The screams emanating from afar were sweet lullabies to her ears. She knew it would only be a matter of moments before they would come for her. After all she had not hidden what she had done; she even left her mark seared into his flesh. Her smile broadened, reflecting on the way he writhed beneath her as she engraved his skin. Oh how he bellowed and shrieked, but he never begged her to stop. Not that she would have, but she had to respect him for not groveling. Truth told, she admired her brother for his quiet strength. It was his only asset.

The panic slowly gave way to the rumble of thunder as raindrops sang their condolences upon thickly woven leaves. Ralla gave only slight notice to the approaching footsteps. She casually lifted a blood stained hand, offering it to the spiked cuff. Chains are simply a formality, it is well tested that they cannot hold her. She rose to her feet and humored her uncle Avouterie. She knew he would take her to stand before her mother. There would be no negotiations, no time wasted on idle explanation. This will be swift and cruel, like her conquests upon the fields, and she would enjoy it no other way.

"I should have slain you on your birth bed as your father had asked of me."

"I love you too, Uncle," Ralla responded with a smirk, her teeth like sun bleached bone against her mask of blood.

Ralla had a vivid vision of what she was walking into, and she was not disappointed. Malfu stormed the room with gale winds as he paced. Shaah sitting quietly, tear soaked and weary. It was she who had found the pieces of Akan; mangled and strewn about as if ravaged by dire wolves. She had witnessed her daughter's capacity for violence, but never thought it would extend to this. Ralla stood in front of her mother in a relaxed stance. Shaah stared into her daughter's eyes, void of expression,

"Banished. Your father wanted your head."

"At least he's consistent," Ralla quipped. Her words sliced through the roaring winds with deadly accuracy, landing harshly upon Malfu's ears. Malfu turned, looking at his daughter for the first time, and hurled his full force upon her. Ralla accepted the energy he gifted her, absorbing each bolt into her body. She relished in the pain and channeled the current throughout her being. By the time Malfu had exhausted himself, she glowed with a crimson hue. He could have struck her down, and she was aware that the only thing keeping him from it was her mother's grief. He would not make her witness the death of a second child. Ralla reigned in the surrounding energy as she knelt before her mother, "Whatever it is you wish, I accept".

"Why did you do it?" Shaah's voice quivered.

Ralla did not drop her gaze, "Why not?"

The room was suddenly ablaze, the ground beneath her rumbled, and then there was nothing.

She opens her eyes, ignoring the searing pain coursing through her, and takes a breath. The crisp air fills her lungs like sharp knives. Her eyes and ears are keen and aware of the desolation that surrounds her. This isn't right. "What the ever-most layer of hell is this? I am contained within this? What am I even?" Slowly she gathers herself together, awkward and fumbling upon her new found limbs. She catches sight of herself within a puddle, and snarls. "A human? Of all the beings I could have been condemned to, I am human!" Full of rage and vile bitterness, she forces her new



## Darkness Rising, part 1, cont'd

form into compliance. "So they thought that a human form could diminish my power? Let us find out." She raises a hand, and light builds at her fingertips, burning her flesh. She draws back her focus. "So, I am to be deterred by pain at any attempt of magic? Not likely." She raises her hand once more, fighting back against the biting agony. She forces the energy forward, slicing through the flesh to release a shattering blow. Again. Again and again, until blood drips forth from every digit. She took aim at the rocky terrain in the distance. It did not take long to shatter the large boulders with a single flick of the wrist. She laughed wickedly. "Condemn me to humanity mother? I think not, for it is they who are condemned. Vengeance will soon be mine."

---

Dusk is falling as a young woman quietly steps foot upon the field. Long ago, great battles were fought here, but now all is peaceful. The ground is cold beneath her bare toes. The rustling of the tall grasses and leaves dance upon the whirling wind in harmony to her sing song whispers. She extends her thin fingers to touch imaginary warriors as she lightly dances past her visions. The air is still everywhere else except here. Here she twists and turns it to her fancy.

"One, two, three. One, two, three.  
Sing a song of sixpence, rise up to me.  
Leave behind your solemn graves,  
leave behind your hellish toil.  
Arise again to scour the earth,  
dig out from the soil.  
Walk again upon this land,  
step by step, follow my hand,  
rise unto the tallest peak,  
mischief and havoc for to reek."

The ground beneath her feet rumbles and cracks into a million pieces as her new found army assembles itself among the living world once again. She smiles with delight and calls to her minions, "Sally Ho!"

Sanya watches the corpse armies reenact their battle, allowing each

to fall to rest in turn. It has been her routine to come here to hone her skill. She still hasn't raised the full masses from their lodgings beneath the solid earth, but every night she adds a few more to the battle ranks. She was so engulfed in her observations that she did not notice the approaching men until a dart pierced her arm. Immediately, the poison began to take hold. Sanya fell to the ground, as inanimate as her playthings.

She awoke some hours later as dawn broke forth over the mountain peaks. She found herself bound in chains. She looked about, men in brightly colored red trousers, were setting to daily tasks. A shadow fell over her from behind, and she turned to see a tall man, grown like an oak tree, towering above her. His face was clean and his voice was steady.

"I will take those off if you promise not to run." He leaned down and removed the cuffs from her hands. "My name is Thomas. I am captain here."

"Where is here?" Sanya asked in a dry, raspy voice.

"High Peak," Thomas responded, calling over a man carrying a wooden bucket. He took the ladle from the side, dipped it in, and offered her the water. Sanya drank eagerly.

"You are the rebellion then?" she asked as she drank her fill.

"Indeed."

"Why did you take me?" she asked angrily.

"Your skill has been a myth around High Peak for a long time. Many people are looking for you. We simply found you first." Thomas stood up and offered her his hand. Sanya refused it and rose to her feet.

"If you were going to kill me, I'd already be dead. What do you want from me?"

"I was hoping you'd join us," Thomas said directly.

"And if I do not?"

"I'll take you back to the valley. But I cannot guarantee the next people to find you will be so generous."



## Darkness Rising, part 1, cont'd

"I do not know how to fight."

"You don't have to. Just do what you did last night." Thomas's tone was gentle, but his dark eyes were firm. It was easy for Sanya to see why the men followed him. She surveyed the scene and weighed her options heavily.

"Alright. I'll join you."

---

Ralla stood amid the brambles of what qualifies as a forest in this wretched place. She has mastered this feeble form, making it as strong as it could be. After all, she has had an eon to do it. Every muscle defined, every synapse charged and waiting. She has become comfortable in this skin, and has even come to enjoy the simple beautiful curves of her body, never forgetting the power behind them. Her strength emanates from her core; a strength that has only grown stronger. Every battle, every war, every drop of life essence spilled, has fueled her. Here, among humanity, there is no shortage of malleable, ego driven, fodder. Her waist hugging, not quite black hair was braided and tucked up so as not to protrude her vision nor create motion that would reveal her position. There was a keen glint in Ralla's eye as she silently nodded in the direction of her approaching target. Her sight line followed their every move. Her lips slightly mouthed silent words. She knew her voice could have moved mountains, yet her calm, stable, presence was all she needed. Her thoughts were alight with the variable outcomes of every opportunity. She quells the turret of motion beneath her surface and focuses on her target; saying not a word, but watching as the battalion officers passed beneath her. They were not the true targets, simply collateral damage. If she was correct, and of course she was, there would be a much more valuable jewel than the heads of rebel captains. Ralla sat like a cat, ready to pounce. She batted an eye and watched the men fall from their horses, feeling their death in her bones. She stifled a chuckle as she viewed the panic that followed. The entire battalion, fifty or so men, whirled about the two fallen generals like dogs chasing their tails. She hadn't yet grown bored before she found her real target. One soldier waded through the mayhem, ushering in a calm. Ralla watched the every move of the approaching soldier. She watched feet that seemed to

glide over the hard packed trail. She saw the slightest movements of gloved fingers pulling the limbs of the fallen men into action like a puppeteer would bring hunks of wood to life. She watched the corpses rise from where she dropped them, stand, and mount their steeds. The soldier seemed to set things right again and order began to return to the battalion. It was in this moment that Ralla chose to strike. Quickly she disappeared from her post and reappeared beside the soldier, encompassing them both in a power ring. With a wave of her finger, Ralla sent out a striking force that reaped all those around them. Her eyes turned a violet color as their combined energy fused with her own. When the trail dust settled, Ralla focused on the one remaining soldier

"Do it." Ralla commanded, and the soldier silently, unwillfully, complied. In no more time than it took Ralla to breath, the entire battalion was standing at attention.

"Remove your helmet and tell me your name." This time Ralla did not speak. She infiltrated the soldier's conscious mind. She was met with unanticipated resistance, but easily shattered the human's defences.

"Sanya."

Satisfied with herself, Ralla bestowed her full power and took over Sanya. "I am your master now". Ralla laughed at Sanya's feeble attempts to resist, knowing full well that the puppeteer had now become her marionette.

*To be continued in the next issue!*

**by Estelle Clark**  
**facebook @estelle.clark.75**

Akihabara, Tokyo, at 10a.m. It was loud and bright so early - JH

---

A bald eagle hunting in front of me here on Long Island! - RH



# JP's Hot Source

## trappey's buffalo blue authentic wing sauce

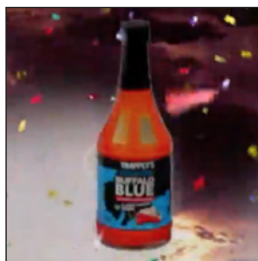
find it here: [trappeys.com](http://trappeys.com)

pepper: cayenne

heat: 1

pour: fast

flavor: in my searching for new sauces, i look everywhere: hot sauce shops, grocery stores, farmers markets, even bodegas. i find some fun stuff in some weird places (once in a hot sauce/vape shop — yes it's a real thing). typically i have something good to say about every sauce. this one i don't. i get it's supposed to be wing sauce with blue cheese (not ranch. got a problem? fight me about it) and give you an authentic wing experience. this missed the mark. it tastes like chemical paint thinner with a touch of blue cheese-esque flavor and a cayenne sauce hitting the tail end. there's no heat either. i feel offended for the city of buffalo (GO BILLS!) that someone even suggested this sauce has anything to do with it. the buffalo on the label is the only thing i approve of about this sauce. they all can't be winners.



## dragon in the clouds

find it here: [ebay.com](http://ebay.com)

pepper: ghost pepper

heat: 10 out of 10

pour: medium

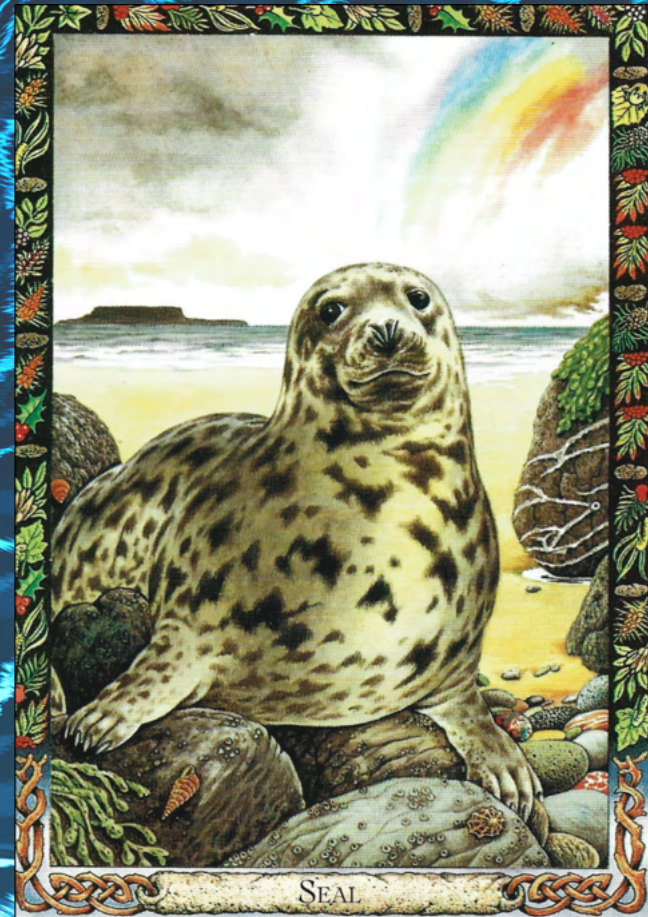
flavor: this sauce, wow. it burns behind my ears, i'm sweating — my sinuses are cleared. i fear for the sauce's exit. my stomach is already mad at me. i had to drink a bunch of water. it definitely hit hard. a very unique collaboration sauce that was only available for a limited time, but it has a super unique flavor to it. like mandarin oranges, but not quite — the pepper is barely in the flavor with the orange flavor overpowering it. the heat is there though to let you know the pepper is in fact there, and you will pay. i've had other *hot ones* sauces and this one is by far the hottest, plus i like the flavor. i thought it might have extract in it, which is usually why some heat only sauces are the way they are. not so with this one. i'm not super familiar with the szechuan peppercorn oil or the yuzu juice in this sauce, but i approve. this is dangerous if you don't like heat and very hot if you do. it was a limited run sauce which i hope will be released again.



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# Summer Animal Oracle



*Seal is a symbol of love and longing*

This card requests that you follow your heart when making transformations in your life — don't become imprisoned in your own mind. If it feels right, then do it. Take the time to bring about healing and love into your life.

In folklore, *The Fisherman and the Selkie* (seal people), the fisherman falls in love with a selkie in her human form. She loves him back, but longs to return to the sea. When it comes time for her to return to the water, the fisherman refuses to let her, imprisoning her to the land. But, once he sees the pain it causes her, and with his love for her her happiness, he releases her. She quickly returns to the sea, but every day thereafter, the fisherman finds fish left for him on the beach, a token of her love.

Until next season.

**// Painted Birch //**  
*beithe péinteáilte*

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*Spice Drawers and Grinder  
by Wally & Deb*