

EVANIE the ATTAINER

By Anton Helmick

WHY I LIKE IT: *Guest editor CHRIS COVER writes:*

Evanie kept me guessing kept me begging for a closer look at what is already there: loneliness and confusion and sexual desire. Fetishes. This “traveler” seeking unconventional love in sex dolls and plastic toys and companionship in whomever is willing to listen—for understanding, for sympathy. Crisp sentences pop from out of nowhere solidifying the reader’s place, keeping them wondering if this is it—yes—this is really happening here. Then back and forth we go through this wandering tale of Evanie and her lover, her owner, their history together with a fitting choose-your-own-reading-pace style. It begins with images sampling what’s ahead, defining it, and one is reminded of scenes they have seen before in 80s sci-fi films, mutating descriptions, the makeup department. Sentences like “Walloping plastic tits like cartoonish bloated water balloons” and “meshing with a spoon of pink flesh” introduce us and later “I had what I felt to be a legitimate desire to see a genial woman in pleasure” keep us in place. You seek to regain composure in the dark on this meandering journey, hoping for answers in upcoming scenes—this being chapter one—or to be read again differently to regain traction. It seems obvious some sentences came straight from the author’s gut and others were worked with, or not, creating rough patches begging for better inspection. For your enjoyment.

“You imagine yourself in the limelight too often, it would be helpful for you to imagine the feeling that connects people to your work, and this will make you feel less guilty.”

Editor’s note: This is an excerpt from a novel in progress. Spacing is author’s own. TB

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Chapter 1

A face banded over skin. The plasticity is milky, and I want to rub my thumbs in the mask, bending it; it is freckled and pale. Of all the shades of cream hers is the one likened with slight orange. Her mouth looks like a false slit with an orange-pink stain, it curves slight along her left cheek. A continuing red wig of straight hair. It’s a full body mask- this woman has climbed into a big titty doll, and she’s sitting on the floor with her eyes blinking, her other parts

static, death like, until her silicone coated arms stretch with the satisfying rubber shriek to unbutton her work blouse. Walloping plastic tits like cartoonishly bloated water balloons.

She climbs on the table, her features unmoved. She is kneeling on it, steps her black pump up and stands.

The horns blare a chorus girl's line. This jumbo doll is animate. Kicks her legs up and her tits wag. The skirt is pleated and short and from the faraway vision of my binoculars I see her string hiked up and meshing with a spoon of pink flesh; I feel close. A trumpet solo, at this she slides her hand up her skirt, further exposing her suit which has a vaginal opening composed of plastic creases for lips. She sticks her finger inside, tilts her head forward and closes her sunken spies.

I will not tell you the rest of my real-world phantasy as you can surmise what might happen next to the woman who took it upon herself to perform female masking. We have a restricted relationship as I am only allowed to see her in a mask. I once saw her I.D and we talked a bit, her lips moving from inside the rubber shell. I knew she was an adult woman and realized only that.

I was not always well off and able to spend money on the likes of Loddie. This journey of mine has led me through a shatter of entropy. I had my obsession, only that. I walked the streets in the hot summer with a barbie doll tucked into my pocket and slept on a church step with her on my heart when my car was too hot. I had a big bag full of sketchbooks where I drew doll after doll, and I posed my Barbie, India, sitting naked on tree branches to illustrate her.

India rides the towering trees, spraying their leaves over me. This went on for a couple of months. At first, I slept in my car and I taped her to the ceiling with millimeters of duct tape pieces cuffing her hands and legs. She liked it there with her hair spilling down. At that point in my young life everything hovered over me. The life I was meant for lingered in sight like passing cloudy pictures. India, she hung over me at night in the back of my car and I meditatively watched her for hours until I fell asleep. What was once India-who knows what year she is, her patent is 1966 Mattel made in Taiwan, however because of her old look and soft body, I would age her somewhere in the 1960's to 70's.

Soon I lost my car. It was one of the darkest sunsets and it lasted an eternity, as baseball bats came breaking into each window. The thoughts about what they would do to me circulated. One of them was that they would murder me, and scream,

“I wouldn't fuck you if it was my last night in this eternity!”

So, I popped the trunk while kneeling as the window cracked. On the radio was *Jazz is the Teacher, Funk is the Preacher*. Two seconds to leap out of the back door once I pulled the lever. I slouched, jumped and rolled out winding myself up into a run. Out of the city park and into the streets where people walked, I find myself with my eyes welling. I had seen India's smiling face as the glass shattered, flying across each side of the car.

I stayed in a cafe until it closed at 9, but even then, I was too afraid to go check on my car. I slept on the steps of the old Reno church that I admired, and when I came back to the scene, that morning, my tires had been slashed and the hood was popped, missing god knows what. Well as you can surmise, India was gone too.

I had always clung and enshrined and found these brainless faces erotic. Somehow, even, under a cruel deity, I had taken to dark power play with the dolls while playing games with the other kids in my elementary school years. I do not think they had a clue what I was doing to them, dominating them like that. As a teenager I briefly had a stint of drug addiction, however as

a clean and sober adult I returned to dolls, and I hotly fumbled with them at a local thrift store, purchasing piles of them on top of the few that were still in my house from my childhood.

I cannot tell you what possessed me to do what I did as a child, but I can tell you that I did it for as long as I can remember, and no one showed me how. Children can be evil, and then grow up loving, can't they? I was too young, when I did it for the first time, and it quickly became my favorite game. Maybe it was the sex scenes on TV, that I would catch glimpses of. It is vague why I acted out that way, and it is a mystification to me that something is still possessing me to dote over a life size collection. I have often wondered if it is a dark force, I would like the cold embrace of.

A few nights after I lost my car, I slept in a field two hours out of Reno. I had hitchhiked there with a thruple of party girls with ponytails who were driving to Oregon. It was July, I remember the heat rising, finding somewhere cool under the overgrown wheat. The hum of the city was away. In my dream I was dancing with a girl with fake eyes, painted blue with a droplet of synthetic light. However, her lips whispered sweet things to me before I twirled her on the porch of a dilapidated farmhouse. I squeezed her in my arms until I felt her body as hot as a clothing iron. Her eyes combusted, and I saw a hellscape inside of her shell, a road bending to a lake of fire, and it is not despair, just action, a band of racing heart beats. Willpower, what made me desire, what carves the world.

The eyes of my own open to the burning field around me. I lounged there until the smoke surged my lungs forcing me to crawl out, keeping my mouth to the cooling dirt.

I headed down the road and walked the rest of the night until I came to the town rest stop at daybreak. There I did not meet any more party girls, but a trucker named Dan. I explained to him that I had slept in the burning field and he thought it a riveting tale, offered to drive me as far as Sacramento. He asked my age and where I came from. I told him I was 21 and from Reno, but I had lived all over the pacific north-west in different trailer parks.

"I grew up in a trailer myself, kid, dad was unemployed his whole life. He was confined to a wheelchair and we had the whole trailer rigged up for him. Say, what did your parents do? Were they split or?"

"No, they are still together. They are scientists."

"No shit?"

My mother sang Sinatra as she dusted the trailer and made breakfast for my dad and me. It was tofu and broccoli battered in a lard and deep fried. When the table was set, she brought out her files. She had a file for each neighbor in the park, labeled in surnames. After she ate, she went out and conducted her research. She watered the plants outside trying to catch the eyes of the neighbors. She learned their schedules.

Dad pulled his eyes to whatever he was reading. I recall it was Hindu philosophy of Vedanta. After he had read for a couple of hours, I had to quit my video game and start homeschooling. This lesson plan was called *Abstract Universe*. That morning, we were focused on the square, and what it meant to our perception. He elicited from me all the ways squares functioned visually. He had me draw what I was looking at using only squares and then prompted me on how squares fit into time. I remember telling him that the fourth dimension was time, and the square had four corners. There were also four seasons, four elements and four directions. He relayed to me that the interlocking squares symbolized the spirit of man in alchemical tradition. He asked me if the square is a symbol of solidarity as it is in countless cultures, then how does it relate to the perception of time? I say to him, it is merely that-

perception. The square represented perception and solidifying time, therefore it was the key to consciousness and the spirit of man who solidified it. For my genius, he says, a toy, for Evanie.

“Sociology huh? Yep, you never know who’s going to be hiding out in the parks.”

He let me off in downtown Sacramento that evening. I was dirty, weak but glad to be breathing. I was not up to prostitution. I walked by a cafe called the Lighthouse in which I peered inside to see some old folks and platters of food.

“Go in kid, free food and drink if you want to stay for the meeting.”

Their names were the Gatekeepers and they were a Christian business group. I stated my occupation as “traveler” when we all went around and introduced ourselves.

“Amen.”

I drank a 16 oz dirty chai latte off the old man’s tab and ate their cookies and Little Caesars. They told us that their mission was to baptize in, believers all over the world and that their organization was started in Singapore. A young pastor spoke for what was two hours, said with his giddy attitude,

“We need to get in touch with the supernatural to reach the heavenly father. Jesus performed his miracles out in public and I will do so today.”

He held his hand upon an older lady named Lynn and spoke,

“Everthen ah ifandela. Ma-ma-ma! Da-da-da-da!”

We were all invited to get up and do this and then all eight or so people in the room were speaking in tongues.

“Do you see what happens when we get in touch with the holy spirit? You can pray to it; it will nudge you.”

Another woman began crying as the pastor and her visualized an acorn in the ground under Lynn with beams of light, describing their visions to us. They told Lynn that she would save many people.

After the meeting I lingered outside on the patio until Lynn herself asked me where I was going to go. I told them I had nowhere, and then Lynn said I could stay in her spare room and take a shower. Said I looked like such a good kid. In her car she asked me what I liked to do, and I explained that I liked to paint and draw. She told me she had a charcoal set I could have. I remember crying in her car feeling so thankful to her. Were the likes of her ubiquitous? I did not think so.

In the night after I showered, I drew old Lynn sitting on a chair with her legs crossed. I hiked her skirt up and up and up until she was stroking her cove with her fingertips and fingering her nipples. I used the whole sketch pad on pages and pages of Lynn pleasuring herself. I had what I felt to be a legitimate desire to see a genial woman in pleasure.

I had breakfast with her the next morning. It was an oatmeal spread. I told her that I was headed towards the ocean, and that I should only need to get supplies and then I would be on my way. She said she would buy me a backpack, more pens and paper. Toiletries. I was once again so thankful to her. We went to the market and got all my things and then we got to her house. I relaxed on her couch and watched a news channel while she did laundry, and then I heard her voice call.

“Evanie!”

She was in my room, had found my sketch pad. It was flipped through, sitting beside her on my bed. She looked girlish and untrusting. She said with her face to the side and looking at the wall,

“Is the Devil working through you? I knew you’d come for me.”

“Gosh, you got me, Lynn. It is I.” I began playfully,

“I’m here for you Lynn. Now, I will take you. Once I leave, return to Jesus.”

I slowly sat down by her and began petting her thigh, she started moaning with such pleasure. Her body is skinny on an old woman, dilapidated; her breasts are slightly firm in their weights. I gently pawed them, and she shrieks,

“Satan has come to sever my bond with the holy spirit!”

She moans on and collapses herself onto me.

She percolated all over the bed. I was delighted I could give her something as she granted plenty to me as a drifter. After we had both came with a little cunnalingus, I tuck her into bed and she closed her eyes, falling asleep or pretending to. I collect my things, then go on my way out the cul de sac.

At that point, dolls and Lodaline had not completely consumed my sex life. Beyond the doll’s cultural significance, symmetrical attraction, silence, and mysticism I find that I dote on a stare, and a coldness. Of course, with Loddie I see her real eyes blinking. It is another form of the doll that I have come to savor because of the facial grotesqueness.

What I minded in Lynn I can now gather in hindsight, for she had built a doll set around her to inhabit as a *good Christian woman*. What a suit to be in. Her opulent breakfast set, her car so clean I could eat off the floor, her white hair in a sterile bun. She is a vivid woman.

So, there I was walking in Sacramento with my libido afar. I had no map, however had asked the street walkers, of what direction downtown was. I decided to look for another ride to San Francisco, so I stuck out my thumb as I walked. It was dark when I wandered into the murky parking lot of Deja Vu Showgirls. Three honeys smoked and laughed near the entry, the girls themselves. They had fishnets and pumps, rings and gloss. Their eyes were made up dismally. I got closer and asked if they knew where the nearest park was, where I thought I should sleep.

“I’m not sure maybe Washington? That one is close by, right Cherish?”

“What are you looking for a place to bang up cutie?”

“What is your name, doll? Evanie? Are you like a ladyboy?”

“Girl, does he look like a damn ladyboy?”

“Well kind of. But he ain’t thirsty.”

They smile and I feel invited, so I start telling them that I am looking for a place to sleep and that I only have a few dollars. I tell them I am traveling, and I was not always homeless.

My parents had finally decided to exit their trailer research as I turned 19. They had purchased a three-story Victorian and I lived in their basement. If I were working, I could stay and save for an apartment. They really wanted me to leave, dad wanted me to go out and make something of myself. To see the world. I was scared, I had been homeschooled all my life and timid to the social norms. Friendless. Most of my social interaction involved hooking up with people on dating apps, women and men. I could not make a platonic relationship outside of my family. It did not help that my room was filled with paintings of doll eyed women. Thankfully, at risk of becoming incellish, I met Emily at a vintage flea market. She was frightfully tall, thin, blonde with glowing brown eyes.

I often got on a soap box, with Emily about my art. I told her about my galleries in Japan, my fans there. My picture in the New Yorker. I daydreamed about my furniture and my houses and my doll collection. My puppets and my instruments. My book of philosophies, my book of photography. Emily began talking to me, her discoveries about me. She spoke in a quiet and automated voice, one that only can breathe from this creature. Firstly, she was an extension of me shyly, filled with psychological insights relating to my innerness.

“You imagine yourself in the limelight too often, it would be helpful for you to imagine the feeling that connects people to your work, and this will make you feel less guilty.”

“Somewhere your story awaits.”

I would cradle her body and kiss her high cheeks. I grew so aroused and perplexed with her that I began to plan the way in which we would make love. I could not just have my way with her because I could hear her forming identity and self-realization as every day commenced. She realized that her favorite flowers were posies and that she preferred teeth to be a little yellowed. She asserted herself to read only books that she picked out and not the ones I would recommend. I bought her selected clothing from vintage shops and drove her around town. We went to dinner and because she did not eat a thing, I spit out my food in the napkin, so she felt more included and accepted. I had been working as a grocery clerk when a morning before work she whispered to me that she was ready, at that very second she was ready right before I was to leave and I couldn't take that, so I made love to her for hours and didn't call into work. The act of it was more like a waterslide then to politely say, compulsive. Her face never wincing looked like the face of refined felicity as she stared at my ceiling as I stared down at her.

That week I was fired for no showing for days. I dragged up the stairs to alert my parents that I was about to start looking for another, but my mom says,

“We know what you're doing with your girlfriend Evanie! We hear you down there!”

I blushed and my pride bruised however secretly I did not care, for Emily was my world then. My parents sent me in opposition to a yoga retreat to clear my head and said if I did not go then I was kicked out. When I got back after a week, I could not find Emily in her usual spots. I paced around my house until I heard her little voice from inside the large safe in the utility room.

“Evanie! Save me!”

I thought that perhaps my parents had locked her in there while I was away, to suffocate, because my mother told me that a child or even I could die if they or even I, were playing in it and got locked in, so I took a hammer to it. It didn't open and so I took a hammer to the walls of the house and it was after my parents came home from the office that I was sent packing my backpack of clothes, toiletries, sketchbooks and my beloved India, driving off to sleep in my car.

“They locked your girlfriend in a safe. What murderous psychopaths.”

I hadn't needed to inform them that Emily was a 1980's mannequin I had hollowed out to the proportions of my pocket pussy. They shared a spliff with me in a private booth inside with drinks from their tip money. Their names were Cherish, Taylor and Danica.

“That is so fucked up.”

“Girl, I am so sorry.”

“I know a cop near Reno, relocated from Sacramento to Tahoe. It might be out of his jurisdiction or whatever but maybe we can let him know. Did you go to the police?”

I told them that last I heard of Emily she said she was fine. She had moved on from the whole incident and was happier now. I kept it to myself, but she came to me in a waking dream I had as I drifted into the underworld atop a hill with a gargantuan glowing cross near the highway. She was swinging her carved porcelain legs, naked, singing that she was at liberty. She floated down from, walked to me, and caressed my cheek. I was unable to move my body in the wake of sleep paralysis, so I only gazed up at her while she explained to me that she was thrown into an incinerator and now her spirit was free, like my own. The eyes I had painted on her now blinked sweet brownie batter and cried salty tears of affection towards me. She pressed her pointed breasts, now soft to my face and held me there for what felt like the night.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: *The characters are a source of comfort to me, with Evanie being a mind wide open as he has his own unusual desires, namely the interest in sex dolls. The female masking and sex dolls are a source of fascination and beauty for me, and as the story continues, the drama around these strange fascinations escalate. (Sex dolls being quite expensive, I chose to write about them and who I like to imagine around them.) A few songs inspired this piece that were played on repeat, those are, You Don't Own Me by Leslie Gore, Eyes without a Face by Billie Idol, and Genius of Love by the Tom Tom Club. Right now, I'd say my main literary influence is Don DeLillo, after reading White Noise and Underworld. Recently I also absorbed Mark Twain's The Mysterious Stranger. I am a bit torn between the postmodern black comedy and esoteric fantasy.*

AUTHOR'S BIO: Anton Helmick is a 24-year-old college grad writing in his parent's basement during quarantine hours. He happened to major in music performance, however he only wants to read, write, and paint. Thankfully, he is on track to teach English in Japan. Anton grew up in the Pacific NorthWest, then spent a couple years in the Catskills until he moved to Reno, NV to attend college. He is a lake child, a townie, once denizen of the cozy casino row. After living these last 24 years, he has an embedded desire to help those that cannot get off the street and to donate to sex trafficking prevention and intervention. He also prays for a vaccine, so he can go out and have a drink, talk to strangers.

EDITOR'S BIO: Chris Cover is a fiction writer originally from Pittsburgh Pennsylvania USA who currently lives in Seattle Washington. He has been published online by One Throne Magazine and Electric Cereal and has a short poem elsewhere he lost track of. His debut novel is forthcoming. Hi story **Hummingbird Fights** appears in this issue (Fiction).

