CHAINHAULER

R. Deravakian

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For all those I served with, I want to thank you all for being brothers and sisters to me, in a very important time in the world and in a very important time in our lives. As much as I didn't understand how monumental it was to serve with all of you at the time and share experiences, it is something I now do understand immensely, and I am grateful of. God bless all of you. And God bless all servicemen and women in the armed forces, past, present and future. Never forget how important we all are, for even though we've shown the willingness to sacrifice our lives for a cause, it does not mean we're to also sacrifice our sense of self-worth. We value, so never forget that. Never!

And now, a special note:

This is inspired by a true story. And, in such a process, I have personally taken much creative freedom to completely alter the context present here from actual events that took place. And to the point where no accounts are to be taken as actual facts. I've taken liberty to do this just for the story's sake, however I've deemed it necessary to tell the story I want to tell. For instance, some of the characters in this story might have been inspired by real servicemen and women I met while I was in, but in no ways are they to be taken as exact representations of them. Even the main character of AN Navastian is nothing more than a heavily altered characterization of myself back then and how I saw myself, and not who I was. Therefore, take this as nothing more or less than a fictional body of work. This isn't meant to be an exact story, but a spiritual retelling of it.

-R. Deravakian

And finally, a personal note:
When I was in VF-154 Black Knights, my name was Raymond Hearty. Personally, I always felt like I was going to change it eventually. My dad was Samvel Hairapetian when he came to America in 1960. But he changed his surname around the 60s or 70s, not sure when, to Hearty.

Deravakian is my mom's maiden name.

I later chose not to retake the surname, Hairapetian, mostly because of my uncle. I remember in the 2000s I told my uncle, who was childless, I was thinking of taking up the name. He expressed deep heartfelt thanks if I did. This was before he died in the early 2010s. And before I did change it.

This book is in many ways also dedicated to him.

Shahen Deravakian

Shine On You Crazy Diamond.

-R. Deravakian

“A man thinks that by mouthing hard words he understands hard things.”
Herman Melville

BOOK ONE

SOMEWHERE OUT TO NOWHERE SPECIFIC

Overcast skies hung over the Pacific. Fuckin' A! Think I, for this isn't exactly the situation I'd like to be in. There's only balls to six now left of my shift, it's the middle of the night, and the moon's been coming and going, coming and going, dodging in and out of clouds. Some entity upstairs seems to think it's funny flickering around with the celestial light switch, but all it's been doing is pissing all us Squids off here on the Flightdeck of the USS James Earl (Jimmy) Carter. Coming and going, coming and going, coming and going, as she damn well pleases. Oh, don't be like that! Come on, Sweetie. Stick around! Stick around with that brilliant smile of yours, so we can see. But then all of a sudden, she disappears completely. Fuckin' A! Think I, again, for this is now definitely not the situation I'd like to be in, as me and the Airframer I'm with, AM3 Turnipseed, are left sitting blinder than a clam you'd find at the bottom of the Mariana Trench. Damn, I guess I shouldn't have called her Sweetie. Seems as if though Madame Luna up there don't like me much anymore. She probably thought I was coming on to her, considering all the attention I was giving. But all I really wanted was just some friendly company. That's all! That's all! But it's too late now, for the bitch won't come out! She probably took me for the stereotypical Sailor based on our reputation. And, so, I mean, so what if most of us are partial to whoring up many questionable women with each port we hit? And, so what if I was sorta coming on to you, either? I gotta say, you were looking pretty damn sexy and available up there, Madame—might I add! And, so what if I got turned on a little? All that really makes me out to be, here, is a flesh and blood human being! Dammit! So, what's wrong with that?

"Fuck this nonsense, I can't see shit!" Says AM3 Turnipseed.

"I know, I know!" Say I.

"Where that bitch go? Dammit! Like every other woman in my life!" Concludes the Airframer. That throws me off a little, as I turn my head around to eye the AM3 (or really, I try to, for I can't see, for it's still too DARK). Eye him, with my mouth all twisted up like a question mark, intrigued by the AM3's words. Funny! Seems as if though Turnipseed, here, be thinking along the same lines as me. And I thought I

was solely just the one dabbling in absurdities, by imagining the moon as the sort of woman that wouldn't give me the time of day.
“Fuckin' A! Fuck the moon! Fuck that bitch! And... fuck it’s cold!” Blasts Turnipseed. And now I'm reminded of how I'm also freezing my nuts off up here, as well: Up top, here, on the Flightdeck, out in the open of the open seas, chilling winds truly are a force to be reckoned with; like a giant army of warmongering marauders, they’ll come and go, racing across the ocean’s surface; a giant army of legendary old, led by the likes of Genghis Khan's ghost, riding through space and time; the winds will come a rumbling and a roaring, and we will hear them coming from a very far distance; a rumbling and a roaring and a thundering and a clashing they’ll go....
“Ah shit! I feel a big one coming on!”
Louder! Louder! LOUDER!
“Oh, fuck me! This is gonna be bad!”

Then WHOOSH! We feel, as they cross paths!

“Ah shit! FUCK IT'S COLD! That last gush of wind practically went straight for me bones!” Blasts Turnipseed.
“Fuckin' hell! Shit! It went straight for me motherfuckin’ SOUL! Fuck this! I’m OUTTA here!” Blast the shit out of I as I chatter the fuck out of my teeth. Chattering them hard as they feel to shatter. And am then left tasting the blood and shards.
“I think I’ll go down to get me another jacket.” Whisper I at the end, while shivering all over. But then as I get up off the towbar I and Turnipseed were sitting on, I remember how....
“Ah shit! I still can't see nada!” And cringe a little inside.
“Well, good luck with that. I think I'll just sit here a little while longer. Bring me one, too, if you can.” Requests Turnipseed. And, that pisses me off a little to hear. Hell! You're no Line Rat! I bet your Shop is full of nice warm jackets with woolen inner lining. While all we're getting is this cheap plastic shit that has holes in them. And for some reason, are always wet. Don't be a lazy ass and go get your own, from your own damn shop, you damn Airframer! I go, as I scold the Airframer with thoughts,

only faintly disclosed by my eyes. I then turn around to begin making my way back to my Shop, while tripping over and bumping into everything standing in between. Feet stepping over uneven surfaces. Feeling the non-skids of the deck, also objects sticking out where they shouldn't. Where's my night vision? Think I, as I strain my eyes to see if I can help speed up the dilation process, and then peer all about to see whether or not I have. But all I can make out still at the moment, are the contours of blackened unidentifiable objects, over more blackened unidentifiable objects. Only objects I can make out are the dim orange lights coming from The Ship's island behind me, a good distance away: Which are barely able to shine light on the crap that's around them, let alone enough to shine light on the crap that's around me, which makes me wonder why they even have them on. Yet, still, I try to improvise, using them as a marker to get a sense of direction, as I take small steady steps forward, into the nothing. Then peering back to those lights, I calculate the relative distance I've made. And from there, map out by memory what I should be expecting in the vicinity. Having to work at night, on Night Check, up here, I need to have that sense about me, so I don't end up plowing face first into a Jet. Or worse, walking straight off the side of the freakin' Ship. Hell! If it came to that, seeing how dark it is up here, no one would probably notice that a man has gone overboard. And all I would have then would be this stupid beacon light to get the Boat's attention, as it continues sailing off without me. Hold on there... how do I use this light again? I know it's supposed to stick to my cranial and....

Bang!

And with the next step I take, I smack cranial first into the nose of one of our F-14 Tomcats. The fuck I doing? Pay attention to where you're steppin', Navastian! I scold myself. Then turn to look back at the lights from the island, then figure: Good, this must be 104, The Shop should be just below.

Whoosh!

Goes Attila the Hun's ghost, riding on high, with another army of freezing winds. Fuck you, Attila! Fuck you! You're a bitch compared to Genghis and his Mongols. I wasn't impressed!

I sigh.

I sigh, as I reach the steps, while crouching under the stab of the warbird, and then begin making my way down below. I step into the Ratways, take off my cranial, by the latch, and throws it over my shoulder. I then go through a hatch leading into The Ship. And finally, I am inside, and I am safe: For the few moments I now have to reach The Shop, hunt down another jacket, and then set myself back out again into the wild, and back to my lawful duties, I am safe. Such evanescent moments are now set before me, for it should only take two to five minutes to accomplish all that, in a reasonable amount of time….

A reasonable amount of time? Wonder I, as I now find myself staring at a dim light overhead, attached to the bulkhead, and begin to feel a bit pleasantly lethargic. I then find myself wondering: What's the rush?

Since the time I've spent in, I've been asked by many of my old civi friends: The question. That question! The question of how serving in the Navy's like. I see them then and how their eyes bulge open wide, as they begin filling their heads with wonders, after I've told them stories of being stationed in Japan. Then, how we'd be having to spend months and months on end sailing aboard a Ship, hitting ports such as Hong Kong and Singapore and Australia and Thailand, and many other assortments of places. I see them, and I see the places their minds go, as I tell them all about it. I see how they see me at those places: Who I am, there and then and then back again. I see them seeing that and that person. But the one thing they don't see that I also notice, never once do they really see “me.” See me, now. See me, this. I highlighted with somber tones, with a touch of something gloomy and melancholic, standing before a flimsy light, amongst the dark. A pitiful light that can barely hold its own; only capable of illuminating so much, as the rest of the passageway falls gradually into darkness. The one thing that no non-serviceman ever sees is this. Ever! Us, standing before a dim faded light, while basking in its warmth, and completely feeling one and content with the experience. However little that warmth might be. To really best explain it, it is best to understand the concept behind: Hurry up and wait! For right now, this moment is truly what it’s like to serve

in the Navy, aboard this Ship, somewhere out in the Pacific, treading waters out to nowhere specific.
“Hurry up and wait!” Say I, to myself. And I then find myself standing here a good five minutes. Probably far more than the time it would have taken me to get to The Shop, hunt down that jacket, and then back out again. Back to freezing my nuts off some more. Freezing them off for her majesty's service... wait? Her majesty's service? The fuck I thinkin’? I then try to distinguish the difference between the Royal British Navy and the service I am in. Then grow a bit curious over how much difference that service would be in comparison to mine. Well, the time is now balls… something? I have no watch, so, I can’t tell. I’m sure around zero two hundred hours, let’s say, it would have been time to head down to The Shop for some crumpets and tea. Which in the Royal British Navy, would be a mandatory affair. Punishable by gagging, for anyone who'd refuse. Now that would have been delightful. And definitely something awfully, fucking gay. Fucking awfully!

Another five minutes now feel like have also passed, as I find myself still standing here, staring at this bulkhead light. Which begins to take on peculiar properties.

You know, my uncle Sean once told me, “I’ll tell you, life is like a favorite song coming on the radio, but unlike any other song, this one, for whatever reason, whenever you hear the song, you’re never once able to catch the lyrics. Then one day, a tragedy hits, or a blessing. Either way, it doesn’t matter, since it’s just supposed to be a moment that’s faithed to become monumental for you in life, to behold and witness. All of a sudden then, in that moment, the song finds a way of playing again, either outside of you or inside of you. And at that moment, that very moment, it’s only then you finally find yourself hearing the song for its lyrics. And, finally, realizing what it all meant.”

Funny, just this morning, I was down in the part of the ship where Squids wait in line to use satellite linked phones, which we use using prepaid cards we get from the Geedunk, the space has a TV in there not linked to any Military programed

channel, and they had MTV playing. I tend to go down there to make a call. And, we're almost always glued to that meager 15-inch TV, some 20 of us Squids waiting in Line, since it's the only window we ever get remembering what being nonmilitary was like. What was playing on MTV? Some music video of an old dude in a crummy nursing home where old people get dumped waiting to die. He's sitting around with other old dudes watching TV, and the TV is showing his life.

Ooh, Lordy, my trouble so hard
Ooh, Lord, my trouble so hard
Don't nobody know my trouble but God
Don't nobody know my trouble but God

Then he looks up and sees a doll of an angel on top of the TV, and then the angel turns into Christina Ricci. And Christina Ricci starts dancing. Damn, she was hot! Damn, she's got some nice ass titties. Goth chick from Waterboy was also in it. Bust a nut! Then the old man dies and Christina Ricci carries him away and then he's a baby again being born in her arms. I started tearing up bad watching that. Thank God no one noticed. But then again, I think we were all feeling the same way. I was there to call my mom back home. We call that space on the ship the "ET room."

"Hurry up and wait!" Say I to myself, again. And now beginning to understand what it means to be a moth before a flame.

Two minutes now....
All right! If I keep this up, someone is surely bound to pass by within that time. A Khaki, most definitely! And I really don't feel like an ass chewing right about now. But then again....

And now ten minutes....
Fine! I'll admit, this isn't exactly what "hurry up and wait," is supposed to be about. What I'm doing right now is what you could call "hurry up and skate," which is

something that's also heavily practiced throughout the fleet. Greatly more so, if you were to ask me. Both involving waiting around all brain dead, while collecting Barnacles on your backside, except the difference now being, none of my superiors would know about it. With skating, I'm doing it while out of sight and out of mind. Truly “hurry up and wait,” is all about mustering up in formation, and then waiting an indefinite amount of time, for our LPOs and LCPOs to stop pacing up and down before us, and think up of something for us to do. Pacing up and down, scratching their heads and picking their noses, while we stand at attention, for what feels like hours upon hours upon hours on end. But with “hurry up and skate,” it's practically the same thing. Our superiors will still be pacing up and down and scratching their asses and....

And pinching their creases, while wondering out loud if they should have used more starch on them... aye! That's definitely a Navy thing, you'll notice a lot of Joe Navy Lifers tend to do.

But anyways, once they'd be done with all that, this time around, once they came up with a detail, they'd turn around and gasp at the sight of an empty room. Seeing as to how we're all gone, hightailed it out of there, disappeared, ditched the freakin' joint. So, all in all, the only difference being: Instead of giving them the pleasure of wasting our time, we're now giving ourselves the pleasure of wasting our own! Personally, I like to imagine them becoming all hoppin' mad when they've noticed how we've all vanished like a fart in the wind, as they're forced to run around looking for us: Up to the Flightdeck, down to the Hangar Bay, back and forth, back and forth, all throughout the freakin' Ship.
“Ha! Ha!” Laugh I. And at the sight of picturing all that in my head.
“Ha! Ha! Ha...! Hmm?” And within the very next second, I sense the hatch behind me turning.
“Ah shit!” Which breaks me out of my reverie and brings me center. Shit! Is it Khaki? I worry. Then disperse from the light, as I throw myself into motion, heading for The Shop. Don't look back, Navastian! If it's Khaki, the stupid WTF look on my face would

only constitute them knowing how I wasn't doing what I should be doing, constituting for them to then get involved.

DEEP-SIX, BITCH!

After some circumnavigation, I now stand before the hatch to the Line Shack, and from the sound of the commotion I hear brewing within, I know, once inside, I won't be alone.

“Motherfucker!” Blasts forth someone on the other side of the hatch. And now I am left questioning my convictions, of whether or not it's worth heading in, and placing myself at the mercy of those blood thirsty pirates, I call my fellow Shipmates. Since, truth of the matter is, I really shouldn't be down here. For, truth of the matter is, I'm right now doing what's considered by Navy slang terms as “skatin’”. And if you didn't catch the drift of what it meant before, it's pretty much neglecting one’s duties. And in my case: Neglecting to man my aircraft out on the Flightdeck, throughout the course of my shift, entirely! Which is what I'm lawfully ordained to do as a Plane Captain. And there are consequences to be met if I am discovered.

“Motherfucker!” Blasts the unknown figure that waits within, as the hatch jots a bit in place from his wrath. Also, there is another matter that's got me hesitating to move onwards, which is something much more sacred to me in these fleeting moments: My willingness to not deprive myself the comforts of being by my lonesome, out here, standing in this dimly lit passageway, within the confines of my own solitude and safety. You see, living on a Ship, with four thousand other Squid Dicks, like, myself, I can’t turn a corner without bumping into some Joe Navy prick, that would then stop to wonder who I am, where I am going, and where I have been, as I pass him or her by. So, any time spent hidden from their prying eyes is a precious one. And now, the idea of being deprived of the little time I now have left, has me growing faint of heart. Call me a pussy—for I don’t give a shit—for these moments truly are worth that much to me. And as I turn and motion with my left foot back the way I came, I then picture old Genghis, with his buddy, Attila, waiting outside on the Flightdeck for me, while sharpening their blades between the gaps in their teeth. Oh!

Fuck that! I ain't heading outside to freeze my nuts off for not another minute! NOT another second! I'm going in..... The hatch isn't fully shut tight, the latching mechanism is broke (somehow), but knowing the USS Jimmy Carter's stance when it comes to matters of maintenance: "If it's broke, don't fix it," I know better than to question things when they malfunction around here. And it really would just be out of place, to see any machinery on board, kept in tip-top condition. So, as I grab the handle to operate it, it makes an unholy cranking sound, as it bends in the wrong direction. And all that does is it lets me know, that it's working in proper order. And as I open up the hatch, I....
"I swear, the next motherfucker that steps in here, is getting tossed over the motherfuckin' side! Tossed!"

And as I try to open up the hatch, I find myself stopped dead in my tracks, by the threat of what sounds to be, one of the biggest and meanest Airmans in the Line: ADAN Quimby! A former Defensive Lineman for Georgia State. ADAN Quimby. A man that I once saw pick up two Airframers by their collars, by each hand, then bash them together, like puzzle pieces that ain't supposed to fit together. ADAN Quimby. A man with a peculiar pension to say "motherfucker" a lot, and not all necessarily because he's pissed. Mostly because he's big, black and southern, and he knows exactly what he's doing: Which of course is knowing there's nothing scarier than a big black man from the south, with a pension to say motherfucker a lot.
"Motherfuckin' motherfucker!" Blasts ADAN Quimby, again. All right, something is definitely up! Those have to be more times than I've ever heard Quimby utter those words. Something is up, and... now that I think about it, this might give me a good opportunity to squeeze on by, without them really minding all that much, or even taking notice. Maybe? I shrug. Then slightly open up the hatch a little more to take a peek. Inside, I see two figures: One obvious ADAN Quimby; and another smaller figure that has his back to me, that I can only imagine to be IS3 Falconni, mostly from his form and stature. One ADAN Quimby, that truly seems to be pissed about something or another, pacing back and forth, up and down, and then sideways,

before the IS3. And the other, who just stands there, with his arms folded up, gently nodding his head in accordance with Quimby saying:
“Motherfucker!”
With each entry.

Ah, great! It looks to be like a lot of stupid silly shit has gone down. That. Or is bound to. What the hell are these two Scalawags doing here? And then I notice how Quimby seems to be fixated on a sight, as he stares out towards a direction, which I cannot see the ends of. But as I peek deeper into The Shop to see what all the fuss is about....
“Motherfuckin’ motherfucker!” Blasts out Quimby, again. And then begins pointing, all hoppin’ mad, at a bulkhead, which I can now clearly see, is marked up with big messy letters:

IYAOYAS BITCHES!!!

In big red paint.

I-Yao-Yas... bitches... what? This is some shit that not even I'm yet accustomed to. Since I'm still practically an FNG to all this Navy slang and style and silliness. the best that I can make out is, this must have something to do with our Shop’s rivalry with the AOs. Possibly?

- FNG: a Booter, a Greenhorn, a Fucking New Guy!
- AO: a Red Shirt, a BB-stacker, an Aviation Ordinanceman.

And finally:

- PC: a Brown Shirt, or, as everyone else calls us, a Turd Shirt, a Line Rat, a Plane Captain.

Also, notice how every other title, which be unofficially saved for us, sounds like something that you might find crawling its way out of a sewage pipe… there's a reason for that!

“Man, dude, fuck ‘em AOs! Fuck ‘em BB-stackers. Writing IYAOYAS all over our motherfuckin’ walls! Motherfuckin’ shit!” Mourns the massive Quimby. And then buries his face into the palms of his hands. And then begins wallowing. A moment freezes over me, and presumably the IS3, as I see him cock his head back as mine does, in utter befuddlement. A moment of stillness. Followed by us both losing track of our thoughts, as we turn our heads to notice Quimby, and his whole whimsical and waggish nature, of that of a big, fat, ignoramus child. Quimby, you are a character, and a special one at that! Think I, as I sprout a quaint little smirk on the left side of my face, watching the man wallow some more, as if he's serious. And the fact of the matter is: HE IS! No matter how inconceivable it comes to me, the man really is that proudly invested in his own comical behaviors and attributes, while being completely oblivious of how silly, yet amusing, it comes across to the rest of us. The man is all mouth and teeth, both in the corporal and characteristic sense, which makes him out to be one of the most animated fellers I've ever met. I've seen eight-year-old children high on pixie sticks, show more inhibition and restrain than him.

“I gotta say… them AOs have been getting pretty damn cocky the past few weeks.” Comments the IS3, speaking finally.

“Hell yeah, they have!” Bellows the ADAN.

“Pretty damn cocky, indeed!” Repeats the Third. Then begins shaking his fist. But a bit out of character for him, I feel, as he over exaggerates a bit much, throwing in a lot of fire and spit and silliness. My guess being to match the over exaggerated fire and spit and silliness of Quimby's own. Falky's way of joining in on the fun.

“Man, dude... then it’s time we do somethin’ then!” Cracks Quimby.

Then follows up with:

“Roll 'em up! Tie 'em up! Then deep-six the motherfuckers to Davy Jones... and shit!” To Davy Jones and...? And as I try to wrap my brain around the WTF nonsense

I just heard, I feel the wiring in my brain developing knots all over, and intertwining into a jumbled mess. I don't know why, but I can't help but to find something grotesquely fascinating, seeing old Navy talk being crossed with the contemporary slang and foul words of today. This being the 21st century, 2003 AD. And in Quimby's case, that whole Georgia boy, fried up catfish, Southern drawl, which he is such a blatant perpetrator of. It's as if watching a group of inner-city kids performing a Gilbert and Sullivan opera, and then watching them all forget half their lines, and make up stuff on the spot.

"To Davy Jones with they bitch asses over the motherfuckin' side, shit!" Cracks Quimby, again. Making the abrupt scene come off way too genuinely, for I and the IS3's comfort. As the outburst nearly has us both imploding in from laughter, as we force ourselves to hold it in. Fuckin' Falconni! I can tell you're just playing along, trying to get Quimby as railed up as you can, just to catch what other Whiskey Tango Foxtrot nonsense he'll come up with, sayin'.

"And if we allow them to continue making fools of us… the whole Squadron's gonna notice!"

"The whole motherfuckin' Squadron!" Cries out Quimby, shaking and lowering his head in shame, all dreary and "woe as me" like.

"The whole fuckin' Squadron's gonna notice!" Breaks forth the Third Class, bitterly, again.

"Man, dude...."

"I know, Quimby... I know!"

"Motherfuckin' shit!"

"Ha!" I chuckle, once, louder than I should. For I just can't help taking this whole scene in any longer, while taking it seriously. At least as seriously as these two Shipmates of mine seem to be taken it. But the little moment I get of finding amusement in all this backfires, as it alerts the two of my presence. The two PCs then face me, then eye me, and with the same level of anger and intensity as they had been eyeing that whole "IYAOYAS BITCHES" crap that's on the bulkhead. Especially Falconni! The pint-sized, mustachioed Italian from Jersey.

“What you doing down here, Navastian?” Asks Quimby.
“Who gave you permission to come down here?” Asks he, again. And now, I have a change of heart for the lumbering Georgia boy. This doesn’t sit well with me, as I eye up into the judgmental eyes of the massive ADAN, who questions me, over the same matter I could just as well be questioning him over. It doesn’t sit well with me, how Quimby has his own bird, up-top, which he should be more concerned with, yet now, I’m the one that needs to be questioned?
“So… what you doin’ down here, Navastian?” Asks Quimby, once more.
More than I’m willing to take.
“And what you doing down here, Quimby? Don’t you also have a Jet you're supposed to be on top of, up on the Flightdeck, bird 103?” Call out I.
“Motherfucker!” Responds the ADAN. With the same foul language, I'm beginning to grow sick of hearing, especially coming from his lips. Says he, and then tries to stare me down, peering at me all sideways, as if to tip me over of my moment. And what aggravates me the most is: this Quimby, here, is really just as much of an FNG as I am. No “Golden Age” PC, but part of my “Shitty Age,” also. Just made qual before the cruise, over a month ago, same as me. He has no wings. He has no crow, nor chevron: which would make him Third. He's not even a Shellback. He is as much of a “fucking new guy” as I am, but the only difference there being is favoritism. Good ol’ favoritism! Favoritism, coming from the likes of the IS3, who now stands there next to him, all brotherly like. Mr. Golden Age Plane Captain, Petty Officer Falconni. “Golden Age”... HA! Which is a term he came up with, to describe himself and his class of PCmanship, in comparison to my own.
“Navastian, get the fuck up there, don't make me tell you again!” Follows up the Third. While holding a wary eye over me, seeing as how I’m not budging to head back up, not quite just yet. But as for Falky, here, unlike Quimby, I could understand him being down here taking a load off, since he’s second in command of the Line for Nights. Just below our LCPO, AEC Murdock. And now, once again, I stare up at the ADAN, as he continues to stare down at me. Staring at me, as if his station in life has unique circumstances involved, which don't pertain to me, when his bird is also

up top, unmanned, unchained (maybe even), and at any moment, might have a Yellow Shirt rolling by to do a move.
“Listen, Trainee!” Openly insults the Third.
“Why you calling me that? I made qual already!” Reply I. For I’m not going to be having any more of that, since making PC, and no longer being obliged to be their own personal whipping boy. At least not in that manner.
“Oh… sorry about that, you just still come off as one to me.” Insults the Third, again. As he begins cranking up his ass, as if it’ll raise him up an inch or two.

And as I stand there with my head slightly lowered, like that of a butting ram, seeing as to what other matter I might have to butt heads with, I notice a twinkle in the IS3's eye, as a dastardly smirk extends over his pointy teeth. I then get the sense that I might have just overstepped my boundaries a little: seeing as how the IS3 is still practically my superior, being a Third, which still gives him final say of what goes. And now... great! Just great! For I see the same being done with Quimby, also with a twinkle, and also with a dastardly smirk extended over his own maulers. And with that, I now feel that it would be best to try to reason with the two over the matter, and before they decide to bust out with the duct tape, to fully initiate me, unofficially, of my PC status. And... the hell with that idea! For I ain't no Roach Burger, so, no fuckin' way, no fuckin’ how, and fuck all that humiliation!
“Hey, come on! Listen, I'm just down here for a jacket. It's freezing up there!” I plead. But my words of reason arrive to no avail, as I then see Falconni looking over at Quimby, as he shrugs, followed by Quimby shrugging back. Followed by the IS3 redirecting his attention back onto me, and finishing up with him saying:
“I don't give a shit, get the fuck back up there!”
“Well, let me at least get a jacket!”
“Everybody's got one on already. They’re all gone! And if there’s any more left, they're probably in one of these boxes, and right now, we don't have time for you to be down here searching for that shit!” Explains the Third. And, looking around at all the junk pile of metal boxes stacked about, I get the irrefutable sense that my Third might have reason, as much as I would hate to admit it.

“Hey, wait a sec, Navastian, you see the shit that’s written up on the wall?” Questions Quimby. As he steps forth in my direction, and eyes me all suspicious like.
“Yes!” I respond. As I get the sense that I am about to be dragged into this matter, whether I like it or not. So, I withdraw a little, but the IS3 then notices me withdrawing from Quimby’s questioning, having stepped back, and now seeming overeager to leave as much as I was so a second ago to stay.
“Well, Navastian, whatcha gonna do about it, then?” Inquires Falconni. Now him seeming overeager of me staying, seeing as that I would like to leave. No! Don’t do it, Falconni, don’t drag me into your bullshittin' petty squabble with those damn AOs! With those damn lunatics! Damn pyromaniacs... I’m not in the mood right now!
“Well, what are you gonna do, Mr. PC?” Snaps Quimby, now. Joining in on the fun.
“Hey, Mr. PC, Mr. Shit Hot Sailor... whatcha gonna do?” Follows up the IS3. As he and Quimby both begin taking small steps in my direction. Fuckin’ A! And it now looks like they’re gonna try and roll me up. Fuckin' A! Fuck these two assholes! What the fuck did I do? I’ve done nothing but freeze my nuts off, up top, for the last 6 hours, I didn’t come down here to sign up for any of this crap!
“Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey!” Rattles a fourth party member. Now entering the scene and joining the crew.
“What the fuck is this?” Demands this new entry. Who sounds to be our AD3 Rudebaker, who's now standing behind me. I turn around to take a look at him, but the AD3 then shoves me aside, as he steps through the hatch.
“The fuck is goin’ on in here?” Asks the AD3, again. Then eyes us all with his usual air of precedence. Always the attention-grabbing figure is he, as he stands there in the middle, giving us all the look, as if he's supposedly the senior PC on deck. Which, to my pleasure (given the current predicament that I am in), always has a way of crawling underneath the IS3’s skin.
“Well?”
“Well, what, Rudy?” Responds Falconni. Seeming a bit depleted now that there’s another Third Class in The Shop.

The AD3 then lingers a bit… taking up The Shop's spaces… while taking up our time. Lounges a bit, stepping back and forth within the confines of The Shop, as he stares us all down—as if the only real explanation he's seeking is: Why should he be wasting his time… while wasting our own? And from the looks of it, beginning to royally piss off our IS3.

"What the fuck… is goin' on… in here?" Asks Rudebaker, again. While doing this nodding bit that he tends to do, while snapping his fingers, from time to time. Nodding, while trying to pick up on all the clues we've secretly been (supposedly) trying to stash away from him, and the snapping he does with his fingers, signifies the "eureka" moments, of once he has. Oh, right, gotta say, just how much I love watching Rudebaker be this way, thinking he's so sly—so slick—and so clever! While imagining the rest of us all being a bunch of Joe Dumb, open mouth, Seaman Recruit Schmuckatellis. Supposedly! A bunch of dumbasses. Feeling so self-assured of his game, and thinking how it's leagues and leagues above ours. So much so that we wouldn't even notice any of this taking place... for how could we? Us, seeing the shortcomings into him, as he is capable of seeing into us? How could that be possible? The universe we live in, has only allowed Rudebaker with that ability, so he can continue fighting the good fight, of proving to the world, how much better he is than everyone in it. Although, I've managed to defy the laws of Rudebaker's made up universe, and have managed to see into his character, and into his shortcomings: the fucking coward!

"What the… fuck is… goin'—"

"Hey, Rudy, eyes center!" Snaps the IS3, impatiently. As he begins thumbing at the bulkhead behind him, back to that whole "IYAOYAS" matter. Rudebaker then nonchalantly strolls up to it. First, showing how he doesn't give a shit (him not giving a shit, is something which we're all used to), but is still willing to play along, to pretend to be. To pretend to be... just fo' sho'! Strolls up, then eyes it a little, taking a gander at it from side to side, from different angles, like some snarky art critic would do, to some painting in a museum. And, then, all of a sudden, all OMG sudden, gasps:

“Oh shit! They fuckin’ with us, now.” While covering up his mouth, in surprise. But not really surprised, since, he's pretending to be so, since, that just be Rudebaker's own unique sense of humor: Being that of an offbeat jackass of holding onto everyone’s attention, as much as he possibly can get, to his amusement, and to our annoyance.
“Yeah, that’s right, Rudy, one of them AOs managed his way in here, and tagged us up good, while we weren’t looking. Ain’t that some motherfuckin’ shit!” Comments Quimby. Smiling up at the AD3, since Quimby always got his game and style. Only indicative reason I can come up with is, that they’re both black. AD3 Rudebaker, who’s a pretty bulky dude, himself. Tall. Widely framed at the shoulders. Lighter skinned than Quimby’s coal miner looking exterior, but, for which, Quimby jokes now and then for being “redbone.” For which the AD3 doesn't seem to care much for.
“Some motherfuckin’ shit, indeed!” Concludes AD3. Then begins shaking his head in damn shame, then begins to gawk at the IS3, as if to place that damn shame onto him. I’d call it passive aggression, but the level in which these two take it at, just about anyone could visibly see the manifestations of their feuding egos, practically rolling around on the deck, punching each other in the face. Dukin' it out to prove who's HiMFIC, here! Dagnabbit!

And just as I begin to feel a bit at ease, a bit little, seeing as how the spotlight has been taken off me... for whatever reason, Rudebaker then decides to place it back on.
“Navastian... you down here, again?” Divulges Rudy.
“AGAIN?” Gasps Falconni.
“That's right, again! I caught him two hours ago down here trying to brew up some coffee.” Son of a—BASTARD! Rudy, you blue falcon-ing sell out!
“And, also, just so you guys know, Chief Murdock caught Royster sleeping in an intake, and now he’s on a rampage, up top, looking for sleepers, and with a hydraulic bucket full of water. And if there's anything he hates more than sleepers, it's skaters!” Illustrates the AD3. Then turns his head to eye me as he utters the word “skaters,”

his way of stirring us all up with the thought that Khaki might get involved. Even from the likes of our Chief Murdock. And, because of ME! And now, looking into the face of the IS3, I see how Rudy has managed to do just that. Stirring him up and all.
"Navastian, get the fuck up there! Freeze your ass—I don't give a shit! If it's that fuckin' cold, then crawl up in your bird's intake to keep warm. Just don't bring Chief Murdock's crazy ass in here!" Blasts Falconni. As he grabs me by my flight jacket, and tries to jerk me around a little. Get your fuckin' meat hooks off of me, you freakin' midget! Think I, as I grab Falconni's hand, and pry it off.
"Oooooh… he's feisty!" Retorts Quimby. And then wiggles his eyebrows a little, while looking at me, sideways.
"Yeah, I know, Quimby, I know. Seems like we still ain't done breaking this mule in." Comments Falconni, and just smiles.

You know... to best explain the Line Shack and its functionality, to the best of my abilities, it be best to first explain its part as part of our VF-451 Squadron, and then its overall function as part of our US Navy. VF-451 Bloody Shamrocks is our command, commanded by our CO, one Commander Jägermeister. And what we are, is an F-14 Tomcat Squadron, stationed out of NAF Atsugi, Japan. Attached to the aircraft carrier, the USS Jimmy Carter. We're a forward deployed Air Wing: Meaning that we are always going to be the first ones deployed out into the world, whenever some war or some Military debacle has gone down, wherever. It's our job to be the first ones out there, to stare down our nation's enemies, from the aiming sights of our fighter Jets, destroyers and submarines. Armed with sidewinders, nukes, and tomahawk missiles. Overall, we being the big guns of our nation's Military. Armed with enough firepower to shock and awe whole entire nations, alone, with our weapons of mass destruction. We be the BIG GUNS! The BIG, BIG GUNS!! And a force more powerful than anything that has ever been seen, at least in the last three millenniums of human civilization. Ancient Rome, the Persian Empire, the Han Dynasty, Imperialistic Britain? Fuck 'em! Today, they'd be nothing more than mere cannonfodder, to the godlike proportions our modern American weaponry and machinery, and all that they're capable of. They'd be a joke! With just our fighter

Squadron, alone, VF-451's, amassed with eleven Tomcat Jet-engine propelled warbirds, we'd surely be able to devastate an entire nation's worth of army, that of today (any 3rd world nations of today would do, any nation with a -stan at the end, especially), and we'd be able to devastate them to the point of utter collapse. Just our Squadron, alone, could do all that. So, now, having taken that all into consideration. That whole bigger picture. As for our role in all this, within our division, our Line Shack, and with our parts in all of it as PCs...? Well…?

"Navastian… you hard of hearing? Get the fuck back up there, before I rip off all your clothes, and send your ass back up, naked." Explains Falconni. Well...? As for our part, our services to our Squadron and fleet? Honestly, I'm still trying to figure that part out, myself.
"Falky, you can't do that to poor Navastian, here… he needs his cranial at least!" Interjects Rudebaker. As he grabs my cranial out of my hand, and keeps it.
"Actually, Flightdeck requirements dictate he needs to at least also have on his flight jacket, and Navy issued boots." Follows up Quimby. And... I already know what this is all leading up to. Since the time I've been here, since coming out of A school, after Boot Camp, and being assigned to VF-451's Line. Since then, Falconni and the gang have done nothing but tried just about everything to get to me, get their hands on me, and rolls me up some, like a freakin' joint, and then to have done whatever malicious thing else, as they'd deem fit. Doing such, as they tend to do with whomever else, they deem as the runts and Shitbags in their litter: Hazing. Good ol' fashion hazing! Of the Naval variety. And a truly favored pastime of our maritime history. Especially, our Shop's history, since most of the Squid Dicks we consist of, are usually the fresh out of High School sorts. The ones with the least amount of A school training, and with most amount of testosterone and insecurities, since no other Shop would have us do any real hands-on maintenance work on our birds, such delicate and attention to detail work, which would require an actual human brain to function in doing so (unlike what our monkey brained asses would be capable of).

Anyways... back to the question I was illustrating before, dealing with the functionality of our Line Shack, in service to our Ship and Squadron: As hard as I try to have something respectable to say, novel to say, entitling, all that comes to mind is... we're just aircraft babysitters! For all we do is babysit our aircrafts during the periods of time, when there ain't any better trained officials around to do actual work. For about fifty percent of the time, we will either be babysitting our Jets, making sure they don't spring a leak and begin wetting themselves with their JP-5 fluids all over; and the other fifty percent of the time bored out of our freakin' minds, and at each other's throats. For some time now, since getting to the Squadron, and making PC, this is what I've had to put up with, with all this stupid-ass Line Rat drama. Dodging every attempt these ogres make, grabbing me bones, to try and makes bread with 'em. And now, it seems like these fe-fi-fo-fum-ing motherfuckers are at it again.

"Get the fuck away from me!" I bark out. As I see all three of them massing up together, to take up arms against me.

"What's wrong, Navastian, what you worried about? What... the last time? I was only trying to get friendly with you, you didn't need to take that bad." What Quimby is now referring to is, the last time he tried to get physical with me: Back on the beach, having put on some lovely Ashanti R&B music, then having lowered the lights, Quimby, here, then told me how I had "pretty eyes," (all seductively), then tried to grab me, and make some sweet, sweet passionate dry humping love to my unfortunate backside. No, I'm not kidding about this!

"Hey, come on! I was only down here for like a minute! And I only came down here because I thought I saw… Ramshaw... trying to come down to our Shop, and I—"

"Ramshaw... AO3 Ramshaw, here?" Interrupts Falconni. It's interesting how the mind works, sometimes. Trying to figure out a means of escape, while in the fight or flight mode, my mind decided to take the initiative step ahead, brainstorming one without my knowing, and instantly coming up to the conclusion of fabricating a decoy, which these three would despise, and way, way, way much more than I. Someone, which they'd instantly lock onto, as a more prioritized target. And once having masterminded that, it then took another step ahead, picking the right candidate for the job, and instantly interjected that person in as false memories, which led me to

then share it with the boys. And having all this done before I even knew what happened. Gotta say: It's astonishing of how quickly the mind can work, sometimes, bullshittin' up a storm.
“Yeah, I saw him down here. I thought he was looking for something, or maybe, had a Tool chit for some of our Tools.” I lie. I lie... and then begin wondering what else I'd be able to fabricate, in my cerebral faculties, without my knowing.
“Fucking Ramshaw... huh?” Goes all three.

Nothing but silence then follows, as a moment pauses over us all, while the three here (Falky, Rudy, and Quimby) begin picturing the Squid dick jerk-off I had just mentioned. Picturing that rambling AO jackass, AO3 Ramshaw, who's always standing out like a megaphone amidst his crew, shit-talking up something MASSIVE, with his cranky, unsettling voice. Not very much big on words and having the know-how of how to use them, but, having this pestering high sense of self-esteem and self-assurance, of whatever he is saying is something grand. Having much relevance, pertaining to some real shit that always demands attention. And always: OUR attention! “LINERATS! LINERATS! Smells in here of you BASTARDS! Sons of BITCHES! DAMMIT, where's the pest control AT? We need a fum... fummu… GATOR IN HERE!” You’d hear him bellowing out at the top of his lungs, as his voice would start shriveling up, and begin sounding like shrill whistles, that really hurt to listen to. But yet, still, he’d continue to bellow out some more, and even louder. Even when now sounding like a dying beached whale, being crushed under the weight of his own lard. For the little dipshit is just that much of a pestering self-assured jackass! And, if you can imagine that all done with his Alabama ramble, you’d understand how grotesquely loathsome he would be to listen to. Especially when smearing it out with a shit eating grin, and singling out the word “gator” out of “fumigator,” just in case we’d forget where the rambler was “a comin’ frum.” Where motherfuckin' gators be in dem der hillz! Rambling so bad, that it would even start infuriating Quimby, whom you’d expect to be used to such ramble, considering how he comes from the same neck of the woods.

“Fuckin’ Ramshaw, you say… huh!” Wonders Falconni. Not looking at much of anything, nor me, but the new bullseye I had painted of the rambler before his eyes. Another moment of silence then pauses through. Followed by a voice that begins announcing a Helo landing on the black and white TV screen, in The Shop, that's set on top of some filing cabinet. A small monitoring TV, that's always stationed to the Flightdeck channel. Always showing some bird’s approach, in infrared. And in infrared, even during Day Check hours, when there's broad daylight outside. The voice always scrambling out something in a language known only as Static, that can only be understood by a few salty Sailors, which I definitely ain't one of.

“Scramble…. scramble… NINER… Helo… something!” Says the monitor.

And then, after that moment:
“Fuck it! Let's do it! Get every Swinging Dick in here. Round up The Shop!” Announces the IS3. Then claps his hands together, all while making the call. Claps them, hard, and then begins rubbing them to and fro, together, in excitement. Energizing himself and all of us for what's about to be had.
“Oh, hell yeah! Let’s motherfukin’ do this!” Brews Quimby.
“About fuckin’ time!” Sasses Rudebaker.
“I know! I know!” Concludes Falconni. I, at this point, now get the sense that it's best that I try to step to the side, and allow these three to have at it. Giving them space to begin preparing their “roll up” party. And hopefully... without me! But once again, as I try to ease my way out of their sights, Falconni notices, and confronts me about it.
“Oh, no, Navastian, you’re coming along, too! You think you’re one of us, now… well… it’s time you prove it to me, then!” Highlights Falconni.
“Yeah! About time he starts carrying his own motherfuckin' weight around here!” Blurts out Quimby. And now, another moment passes over me, as I come to terms with what I’ve just set myself up for. As I see now how there ain't no escaping from any of this. But then again….

“Wait a sec... round up everyone in The Shop? What’s Chief Murdock gonna think when he notices we’ve all skated off, and are no longer manning our birds anymore? He’s gonna go berserk—you know that, right?” I rebut. Hoping to dissuade them, and still find a way out of this mess.
“Nah, don’t worry. The Chief won’t be lookin’ for anyone right now. I caught the ol' Cornhusker fast asleep, in Barbarossa's 104, inside the cockpit, while I was up there, just before I came down. We can do this!” Rebuts Rudebaker, back. And with that, managing to royally piss me off, some, as I recall him having warned us a few moments ago, how the Chief supposedly was on a rampage, up top. But now, supposedly isn't. But, is asleep. The AD3 probably having just said all that just to mess with me, and the IS3, keeping us on edge with twisted information, that would only serve to the AD3’s amusement. Rudy, you shady fuck!
“Well… good! Then we’re definitely now doing this!” Announces Falconni, again. And I'm seriously pissed now, and a little disappointed. Seriously, Falconni, I was able to catch the AD3 in a lie, just now, the same one that was used against you. Are you really unable to pick up on such an obvious ruse, or are you willingly choosing not to?
“And you’re coming along! Try to chicken shit out like that again, Navastian… and I’ll rip that PC badge off, off your flight jacket, the one we gave you after you made qual. And then I'll shove it down your throat!” Blasts Falconni. As he sticks his finger up at me, and shakes it a little.
“You shove one down his throat, and I’ll shove another one up his ass!” Adds Quimby. And, of course, the ass would be his preferred choice of entry.

I stand there now, feeling a bit like I’m going to boil over soon, with embarrassment. I eye Rudebaker, who just snuffs at me, then, with his arms crossed. And then walks off. And now I truly feel as if though I’m about to boil over soon. Well, Navastian, look at it this way. I think. Look at it on a lighter note: Do I really feel like heading back up to my Jet right now? Since, I can either be rolling around on the deck with Genghis, up top, freezing my nuts off some more. Or. I can be rolling around on the

deck in the warm arms of some AO. And as hanky panky and awfully fucking gay as that all sounds... fuck it! I think I'll choose to be WARM!

Yet still… fuckin' Falky! And him calling me chicken shit…. I ain't that!

LISTEN UP, YOU CHUCKS!

Every journey has it's starting off point, a point of entry, a place in time when one opens his or her eyes and sees everything begin again. What came before no longer matters, and what will come after, depends. So, as I open up my eyes, now, as I did then....

I see barren trees outside the window of the bus I'm riding in, rows and rows of barren trees, covered with rows and rows of leafless gnarly branches. All spanning alongside the road I travel on. On a December evening. Overcast skies hung over the state of Illinois. Everything is gray here. Everything is a cold dirty red brickhouse, lost, here and there, and lost in a sea of brown and gray woodlands, that are covering as far as I can see. Or, as far as this scenery will allow me to see, past the cluster of jumbled up crisscrossing branches. Weaving in and out before the bus, like the bus is buried under mountainous mounds of an old witch's hair. And the journey I am now on, is to find the exit. Where am I? Where we going? And how long is it going to take to get there? All depends. Where I am from, hailed from Southern California, I always had a constant sense of my baring, looking at the landscape, that dipped and elevated before me. I'd look at the hills in my peripherals, and the mountains in the distance, and I would then know exactly where I was, and where I was going. But here... not so much. And now looking around me, and into the faces of all the other Recruits on the bus, I see how they also have a bewildered look in their eyes, the same look as what I can only assume I had in mine. Them all, like mine, also trying to make sense of it all: their sights also trekking through this gnarly wilderness. Their eyes also meandering through the branches, cutting through them to see if they can find a clear exit. But one seemingly unwilling to come. Everything is cold and barren out here, since it's the month of December, and I'm not used to this, being originally from Los Angeles, where winters are never this cold. Nor gray. I'm

in a state now where every season seems to have its own color schemes, and it seems as if though the color schemes till the clouds break away, will be the colors that express the woes of aging: The colors of long and bitter hardShips of days and nights rolling into one another, and having no precedence, since this damn overcast has decided to overstay its damn welcome, and day and night can now only be differentiated by the different hues of gray. I'm not used to this. Southern California is a state of rolling hills and palm trees, gold and green are its color schematics, no matter the season. And I'm not used to how fucking cold it is out here, either.

And....

Aye, aye! That should have been my first certified sign that I was now definitely in the Navy: FREEZIN' my NUTS off! Since everything about the Navy has involved freezing them off to one degree or another. Besieging my manhood. And trying to get them to prune up and turn purple. Then FALL OFF! All ripe as a fruit falling from some tree. And now just food for whatever dumb animal that comes along willing to eat it.

Ahem...!

Anyways... and I thought Illinois consisted mostly of flat cornfield pastures, stretching out North, South, East, and West, all the way to the horizon. So, where can I find any of that scenery at? But I guess I'm only in the parts that aren't as such, and are as what's seen here, stuck in these woods. Being driven from O'Hare Airport, having been flown here for Basic Training, which I will be attending at Great Lakes. And... would you look at that: Snow! And now, I am seeing snow for the very first time in my life.

Anyways, again, let's talk about what's coming up ahead: Ask anyone that's Military, and anyone you ask will tell you how, supposedly ("supposedly" the key word), the time spent there, at Boot Camp, at Basic Training, is one of those life altering, life

changing and life redefining moments. For which once you've experienced, you'll never be able to un-experience. After which you'll feel Born Again into a new world, with new eyes, opened to witness a new life, for the first and last time, ever. Where everything that came before no longer matters: Your parents, your friends, your neighborhood, your High School, and your girlfriend—not mattering ever again! As you'd feel how disembodied they feel, now in comparison. Disconnected. And now distant. Everything changes in Boot Camp. Then, there, after experiencing that, and everything experienced afterwards will then be based on the new themes and templates that have been installed within you, from the two or so months you've spent there. And, that is all what I thought was to be expected and experienced. But, here's the thing about reality vs. your idea of reality: In the end, you always have a choice, whether to allow for change to take place, or not to. To deny it. Particularly, for me, Boot Camp taught me something when it came to the shit I was getting myself into, that by now, I really wish wasn't so. Interestingly enough, from my experience, as much as Boot Camp changed me, it also didn't. As much as I was "Born Again," I also wasn't. I thought Boot Camp would turn me into something grandioso, which I had set myself up for. Maybe not no mean, lean, fighting machine, Rambo archetype. But something, at least (I did at one time think of going Green Side, Marines, but... NAH! Wasn't gonna happen! And don't ask). So much change was to be expected, but, in the end, nothing of that took place. And in the end, I was left as the same insecure me, which I had always been. And now, insecure TONS and TONS more so!

Once getting there, getting our gear, and getting placed into our division (all which was a fun experience onto itself: At one point, involving getting butt naked in a room in front of everybody, and placing everything I owned in a box to be Shipped away, then receiving all the Navy issued stuff I would need to survive Boot Camp, there on out), once all that, I remember him: One AW1 Nordhaus, who was to be our RDC. Or: Recruit Division Commander. Him, and his words to us that day:

"Well...."

Started off, he did, sayin', but then followed it up with a brief pause, as he buttoned up his lip, once he saw he had our attention. Said Nordhaus. Said, and as if though he didn't, but was meaning to, in which case we had noticed he was meaning to, and therefore thought he didn't, even though he did. Simply did, and then began shuffling his feet while staring at the dirt. A tall Nordic looking man with crystal-colored eyes and with skin too frail from too much paleness. Standing high above the snow-covered dirt, with his long black P-coat, which was clenching for as much warmth from him as he was from it. A black monolithic looking figure, standing before a world of white snow. And in front of a huge ancient looking anchor, that presumably came from giant warships, back when warships went to war with presumably giants. Said Nordhaus, the first real Sailor I had ever really witnessed in my life, making me realize how I truly was in the Navy now, with no turning back. Said, paused... but then cracked:

“LISTEN UP, YOU CHUCKS!”

Cracked it like thunder, as it tore through the fabrics of reality, with the bolts of lightning he was now shooting. Cracked it so hard, we could see the cords that made those words now, violently vibrating within his throat. Vibrating so violently, that they began to vibrate that giant anchor behind him like a tuning fork. And with that, this, what at first appeared to be a modest and mild-mannered man, now had our most direst attention.

“Listen up! Because I'm only going to run this by you all, once, and never again.” Continued our RDC, going into full on drill instructor mode, to remind us where we were all at. Where we were, who he was, and how movies with scenes like these will never compare to the real thing. Ever! Especially never in the way we would think they would. And also, never in the way we would think they wouldn't, (or in other words) grabbing the sort of senses, until then, we didn't know we possessed. (Don't ask, I'm still trying to make sense of it).

“Now, I know what most of you might be thinking right at this moment. I’m guessing that many of you past reefer addicts are now thinking: 'Well, here we go! It’s a done deal now. I’m in! I’m in the Navy, now! And there ain't no more going back... back to Friday nights, and video games, house parties, and trying and failing hard to get the attention of a vapid slut that lives next door. No more of that—at least for now! Until I can pass Basic Training, and prove I got what it takes.”

A pause then followed.

“For the next two months, proving I've got the right stuff to pass Basic. Graduating from Ricky Training, to become a real Sailor. And so. Therefore. Now. I better have my game face on. Better get with the Program, and make sure to give this crazy fuck that’s now staring and shouting at me, no reason to continue staring and shouting. Gotta keep a stiff upper lip, and my chest swollen high. And proud. For that's what Military Bearing is all about. Appearances! And on a lighter note... this all might turn out to be a lot of fun. Like as if I had gone campin'. Might be a lot of fun. And, besides, sure, this AW1 Nordhaus guy might seem like one mean-ass-son-of-a-bitch, now, but that's just him doing his job. And, underneath it all, he might really be a swell guy. Not the type to be taking things personal. And… so... so what if he all of a sudden starts to eyeball me—”

The AW1 then scoured his eyes in a menacing manner, all about, eyeballing us all down.

“All of a sudden, starts to eyeball me all wild-eyed, with a look and feel that he might be premeditating to secretly straight up FUCKING MURDER ME! Or, any one of us. No! There ain’t nothing to worry about, there. It’s all an act! That's just him doing his job. And it ain’t personal. And, in two months, when it’s all been said and done, we might have a chance to have a night out, in town, in the Windy City, and score a few beers. And be the best-est of friends.”

The AW1 then paused, again, and, I now had a few observations about him. For one: His accent. He had that “don’t-cha-know,” Fargo lingo. But now, something very unlike what heard from that accent, from that movie, and would have thought would have been impossible: VERY SCARY TO LISTEN TO! And no joking or laughing matter. Second of all: I could tell that he had had a lot of time to rehearse this, and

not how one does it in front of a mirror the night before (all anxiously, trying to get the words right), no! But, with over time, repetitiously and tediously had done so, in front of other previously attended recruits, until the words had developed a personality of their own. Possibly to fight the boredom. And third of all: This all still really wasn't what you'd call his character, as hard as he was trying to make it seem to be his. Even though, a character, still, it wasn't something I'd see to be his character. But, then again, still, if one was to keep trying to reinforce such, would it then become one's own? This, I'm not so certain of, yet.

“Well, here's the real deal, so you Chucks know where I'm REALLY coming from. First off, let me ask you Chucks this: Does any of you know what a DILLIGAFer is?”

None of us said anything.

“Any of you?” I had never heard Navy slang up until this point. And what struck me funny was, how pirate-y it all sounded. I mean, DILLIGAFer? What? And it was then that words like: Scalawag, Scuttlebutt, and BARNACLES started popping up in my head. As silly as it all sounded. But... fuck it! I guess I had signed up for this: To become a 21st century nuclear vessel Buccaneer. I guess I had?

“No? None of you know what it means, a DILLIGAFer?”

….

“All right, I guess I'll tell....”

….

“You know, back in WW2....”

Ah...! I can see, this story is going way back.

“There was this sonar Ensign, that was placed in charge of keeping track of all bogeys over the Pacific coast. Stationed in Hawaii, he was placed in charge of keeping track of all our enemies at our borders, at a time of war. And at the time, the Japanese. And it was on such a morning, when a relay was sent to him, of what the Radar boys had possibly picked up, of what seemed to be, a giant Japanese attack.”

The AW1 paused, again. And then continued:

“Well, how do you think that Ensign then responded to such a relay?”

“Well, AD1, I think—”

“I WASN'T asking, NUMBNUTS, that was a rhetorical question!” So, I guess one of us Recruits had now tried to answer our RDC, since, this Numbnuts, was still thinking he was in High School, where this so-and-so-called Numbnuts, was a teacher's pet, and always wanting to give an answer to the questions being asked. Our RDC had then gone into full throttle, lunging out like a Navy Jet at the cats, at this poor sort, stopping short of bouncing eyeballs with the kid.
“I, I.”
“You... WHAT, WHAT?”
“I, I.”
“Wait, you saying: 'I, I', or: 'aye, aye,' which is it?” The eyes of this Numbnuts then twitched.
“If you're saying 'I, I', that would be very UNSAT, Shipmate, there is no 'I, I' in a team, nor in Navy, and definitely not MY Navy! You got that?” But we could all tell he didn't.
“If you meant, 'aye, aye,' I'd accept that, but you're still FUNGUS, and I haven't taught you any of that. Yet. Unless... you were taught by somebody else, before.” Again, with another eye twitch, all port to starboard, in confusion.
“So, WHICH IS IT?”
“I, aye, I.” Numbnuts.
“Aye, I?” AW1.
“Aye, I.” Numbnuts.
“E, I, E, I... STOP FUCKIN' HOLDING ME UP! Which is it?”
“I... don't know?” And now, some more eyeball bouncing moments.
“Ever seen the movie, Forrest Gump? I bet you thought you were a real genius before coming here, huh? Didn't think you'd turn out to be such a moron, when really put up to the challenge, did you, huh, did you?” Asked the AW1. And... wow! Was there a lot of hidden meaning behind that, now that I think about it.
“You ever get me to sing Ol' McDonald, again, and I'll have you kissing the gunner's daughter... and with lots of tongue, LOTS!” And with that, a few of us snickered, mostly because we could only imagine WTF that all supposedly meant.

AW1 then disengaged, and the ones that snickered, then got intimidated, seeing how he might redirect his attention onto them. But, AW1 didn't. And, instead, went on with his story:

“So, where was I?” No one tried to give an answer.

“Oh, that's right, the WW2 Ensign... so, do you think he forwarded the message to the right authorities about the possible upcoming invasion? Do you think he made any calls? Do you think that he even took this matter any bit seriously, as any squared-away Sailor, in their right freakin' minds would do?” And now we were all trying to readjust our attentions back to his story. Since, some of our minds were still on that whole “Numbnuts” debacle that had occurred.

“Well, if you thought any of that, you'd be wrong. You see, this Ensign is what we in the Navy call: A DILLIGAFer. Also, Skater. A man, that when placed in a position, where it is his lawfully ordained duty to take action, in such matters, DOESN'T! Resiles. And, instead, decides to just sit there, and give everyone around him the look, that pretty much spells out: Do I Look Like I Give A Fuck? And does nothing! Blowing everyone off. Since he's a lazy, good for nothing, piece-of-shit... that would simply DIE to lift a finger to do anything.” Our AW1 then strolled up to one of us Recruits, in formation, in our smurfs (don't ask, I'll explain later). That was a heavy-set Recruit, which the AW1 started to take notice of.

“One lazy Ensign, whom I've heard was also a fat fuck.” And now, AW1 had really looked at him, up and down, with his bottom lip curling up to show some of his unevenly aligned bottom teeth, all in disgust, and at the heavy-set Recruit. Which left that Recruit feeling a bit disgraced and displaced. The AW1 then shook his head at him, while really rubbing it in, on how he felt about this poor Ricky Schmo, with his UNSAT HR Puff and Stuff appearance. Which he then added:

“Wow, how do I hate fat fucks, let me count the ways. Biggest DILLIGAFers have always been they, always too busy stuffing their fat fuck faces, to take any matter seriously. Disgusting!” Said he, disgracing and displacing that fat Recruit even further, then walked off.

“Well, the fat Ensign did nothing, no surprise, there! And blew the whole Pearl Harbor Invasion off as nothing! And... we all know how well that ended.” And as funny and

scary as it all started off: Us, here, Navy, Boot Camp, and all that it usually entails; now came the part where the RDC was to bring it all together, giving purpose behind the meaning of his story.

“So, let me now tell you all something that you won't want to hear, let's get something straight, the shit I'm taking here—unlike what your Recruiter back in whatever-the-fucks-ville, USA, lied to you about—is very personal! Very serious!” Actually, AW1 was right, that's exactly what my Recruiter also said about Boot Camp, as if it was all plotted to lead up to this.

“You see, I'm not here to play any silly mind games with you. I'm here as a Chain Inspector, looking for the weakest link. The one that might break, and ruin it for the rest of us. To see who's really made of the right stuff to be a part of my Navy, and who isn't. In the Navy, you're only going to be two sorts: You're either going to be Shit Hot. Or… a Shitbag, Shitbird, Shitweed, Shitstick, Shithead, Shitstain, Shitbrick—we got a shit load of names for them! And unfortunately, in my Navy, there's a ton of them around, like that one DILLIGAFer Ensign, back in WW2, that I was telling you all about. All wanting to do nothing but skate, and skate—avoid work—while the rest of us have to pick up the dead weight. Even in today's Navy, there's unfortunately still a whole lot of them around. A whole mess of them, all stinking up the joint, and giving the rest of us a bad name. A whole lot of fuck-ups, like that Ensign, whose negligence was only going to get people killed. Hey, Seaman Recruit Numbnuts!” And now, back to him again, the one AW1 was picking on before, over Military Bearing.

“Yes?” Squeaked Numbnuts.

“If your job in the Navy is to be in charge of doing maintenance on the arresting gear, on an aircraft carrier, on the Flightdeck, and you neglect to make certain checks, and gundeck it, which means signing it off that it's in prime condition to start arresting birds later, when it isn't, what's the worst that could happen, because of your negligence and laziness?” Asked the AW1. Numbnuts... was unsure of what to say, then, and unsure if he was allowed to say anything, even.

“That wasn't a rhetorical question, now, you're allowed to answer. What could possibly happen?”

“It... can get someone... killed?” Guessed Numbnuts. And then, AW1 smiled, as did Numbnuts. And it was all somewhat of a corny moment. For, good boy, Numbnuts! Here's a doggy treat for you, for such a great moment of rational thinking, in a time of question.
“There you go, Numbnuts, maybe you're not as much of a moron as I'd thought you'd be.” And, aye! The AW1 is being that insulting, with such a backhanded compliment. But, Nummy, there, continued to smile, since, it was the best he was going to get.

The AW1 had now turned back to us, seemingly willing to come to a conclusion of his speech:
“So, as you can see, from this moment on, it's my job, not to be holding hands, not to be building you Ricky Dumbshits up, but try everything in my power to break you Ricky Dumbshits down. This isn't just my position, now, to do such, it's also my passion. Getting in that ass, with extreme prejudice, to see what you all are made of. To see whether or not—YOU!” And at that point, the RDC had pointed straight at me, singling me out, as my eyes felt the nip of frostbite, which this Nordic looking man was spitting out. Felt my eyes freeze over and turn black, as my jaw muscles lost their composure, and dropped off.
“To see whether or not you, Seaman Recruit Navastian, are going to be that fuck-up! That skater! That Shitbird! That DILLIGAFing FUNGUS! That Mr. AJ UN-squared away pile of horse manure, that's going to be so careless about his job, as to get someone killed. That unholy piece of—FUCKBAGS!” And the AW1 was now really laying it on me. Me! Getting extremely fierce and ferocious at me, for whatever reason. As he called me out, and practically called me all those names, condemning me to being something that had yet to cross my mind as being such. Which really took a lot out of me. I mean... why me? And then all of a sudden, I had become the most terrified which I had ever been, as I now knew—TRULY KNEW—I was in the Navy now. All was silent, and all was scarce, and out of everyone, for whatever reason, I was to get the brut end of AW1's flames and furious judgment.
“You know what happened to that Ensign, Seaman Recruit Navastian... do you?”

I said nothing.
“That Ensign, after being so careless, was HANGED back then, you know.”
And with that, I took a big gulp of dread.
“You see, in times of war, if you're that much of an incompetent retard, the punishment is death! So, as you can see, SR Navastian, the shit you're getting into here, is very serious. Just remind yourself that, every time you tell yourself, it's all just mind games, and the RDC isn't taking things personal. For, I'll tell you something, SR Navastian, I ain't just telling you this, because I picked you out by random.”
What?
“I can tell a Shitbird when I see one.” And now, came the part I wasn't expecting out of all this, as I didn't feel as much scared anymore, but also MAD!
“I can smell them a mile away.” Wait... no! Seriously! Are you talking to me? ME? What did I do to deserve this? I thought then, as I looked a bit around, and saw how everyone's—EVERYONE'S—eyes were on me.
“And you know how I like to deal with them? Future Shitbirds, here, in Basic Training? I like to personally make sure they never get to the fleet.”
Another gulp.
“Keep them ASMOed, Assignment Memorandum Ordered, setting them back in Recruit Training, as long as it takes, before they're kicked out. That, or, well… if they were to suffer an unfortunate accident, all of a sudden....” And the AW1 concluded with those words, as he stared me down, some, all sideways, then disengaged, and walked off. And....

Aye!
Aye, aye! That was that!

Now, after that, I don't exactly remember much else from that night, since getting to Basic Training, and since being put under such scrutiny. Except! Loads and loads of dread building up inside me, all being stacked up high, and fortified, like a stronghold, really making me feel closed off from everything I knew before. And

having me witness this new now, this new reality, and this new me, whether I was willing to accept it or not. (I'm a Shitbag? What? When did this happen? WTF). Although. Now. Even though I did still understand where the man was coming from, there was something else about it that really felt OFF! I understood where the man was coming from, speaking about Shitbags, and DILLIGAFers, and negligence, I did! I truly did! But something was still not right. Something wasn't expected. Something the whole ordeal made me feel, that disagreed with me in a profound manner. Something I didn't understand then, but have a complete and total understanding of now. I've almost been in for a year now, and now, I've been processing what it was I felt in those days, in Ricky Training. And it has nothing about me being a Shitbag, really, as that RDC put it... the fuckin' asshole!

That whole ordeal the AW1 had put me through, had pretty much set up everything that was to come. And not just from the AW1, himself, but, everyone else. AW1 had fingered me as the Shitbag of the division, but he never personally did anything towards me, as such, as promising to have me ASMOed out of the Basic Training (having me sent back to do Basic from Zero Day over and over again). Or possibly, setting up personal injury, that would disqualify me from continuing. Nothing of the sort! After that, I tried to keep away from his wrath as much as possible. But, funny enough, it wasn't as much of his wrath I ended up suffering through, as it was from everybody else's. In my division. After being fingered out as a possible Shitbag, to everyone in that division, I had become that. They had all turned and eyed me, very condemningly, as I became everything the rest of them where direly going to oppose being themselves. I had become that! I had! Instantly making me out to be the black sheep of the bunch. The weakest link. The worst example. After I was fingered out, I saw how they all eyed me, then, with harsh, cruel, judgmental stares, blazing out, smiting me where I stood. I was... cursed, you can even say, into becoming a Shitbag. I didn't start off as one, I was molded into becoming one, and all thanks to them motherfuckers there and then, and these motherfuckers here and now, continuing the process of breaking me down, and building me up, as their personal shit-eating latrine. Fuckin' cursed! And now you can believe in superstitions or

voodoo mumbo jumbo, or not, this was what felt like a curse would feel like. I didn't WANT to be THIS! I DIDN'T! I most certainly DIDN'T! But, I BECAME it! And throughout most of Boot Camp, I took on TONS and TONS of shit from my so-and-so-called division Shipmates. As they all focused their wrath on me, and not officially, as part of the Blue Jacket's Manual of Military Conduct. But all unofficially, behind the scenes. I can't tell you how many nights I was awakened by some Ricky Ninja, smacking my balls (yeah, they did that), in the middle of the night, and rushing back to his rack, before I was able to wake up to find out who that was. Not me, nor the Watch that was on the clock, from balls to four, during the time that it mostly happened. But, then again, the Watch might have also been in on it, or simply been HIM that did it! Damn, did they make me feel like shit. Like a literal bag of shit! And the most fucked up part was, they just seemed to be doing it, NOT because I was one, but because they WANTED ME TO BE ONE, so they could have their fun. Trying to get to me, and fuck with me. Almost every MOTHERF-ing NIGHT! It had to be a curse. And maybe you can look at such a thing in a psychological standpoint, if not supernatural. The understanding of a "curse" can also really be a psychological thing, same as OCD and Bipolar Disorder. What that AW1 Asshat did was fuck with my mind, and everyone else's. Reprogramming me, and them, to take on the parts, of such a theatrical act, as we all were made to adopt whatever role that was necessary and needed. And as for any story, or theatrical play (mentioning, since, I already brought up theater), you need to have your heroes, and you most certainly need to also have your villains! A role I was suited for, which I wasn't able to escape from. And... I TRIED! I TRIED! I DID! To not be. And be as much of an upstanding Recruit as I possibly could. But, NO! I was a Shitbag, then, and it was all my RDC's doing. And everywhere I went, it also followed! The curse! Everywhere I could possibly go, EVERYWHERE, in Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Illinois, they would all turn and look. THEY, like Donald Sutherland from that 1978 Invasion of The Body Snatchers movie, and start pointing and making that God-awful noise: "SHHHITBAGGG!" Whether they knew anything about me or not. All very serendipitous like, and, that is, if Serendipity was a cruel and uncaring, heartless, sadistic BITCH! AW1 Nordhaus' FUCKIN' CURSED ME! And why me? Why I, and

not no one else? I don't think I'll ever understand. But the one thing I did understand after I completed Basic Training was: Whatever that RDC did back there, condemning me down the road to Naval perdition. Becoming a Shitbag....
Was just...!
Well...?
WRONG!

CALLING ALL LINE RATS

There's a lot of pride and passion that I guess is supposed to swell in the chests of us Plane Captains for who we are, and all that we're about. Feeling it resonating within our chest cavities, as we breathe in the illustrious air of our Shop, that holds years and years of glorious maritime history, of all those that came before us. All those proud Seamen that were honored the chance to serve our nation within the confines of this Shop, back then, as we are now. I mean, I guess there is supposed to be… I mean, I really would like there to be. But, for whatever reason, I have yet to feel that sense of pride and passion swell within me. In and of itself, the Line Shack really isn't much to look at. The Shop really is just a dingy shack. A hole in the wall, one level below the Flightdeck. Seemingly a forgotten place abandoned by a crew of more respectable and reputable professionals, and now only used by them to dump all their Tools and gear that they no longer find any use in. All along the port end you'd see a row of flight jackets hung up on ropes spanning across that end of The Shop: Brown flight jackets, that are all jaded and faded, and covered with the sort of soot that you'd find coming off of corrosive rust. As for along the starboard end: Mostly what you'd see are ugly metal boxes, stacked up on top of one another, some set up like tables, others set up as a place to sit, and at one end, there are boxes stacked up way too dangerously high, which, I always find unnerving how some PCs will sit under, without seeming much at all concerned. Also, along the starboard end, there is a row of hook ended chains hung up, all along a shelf that is attached to that bulkhead, hung high and dangling all the way down to the deck, lots and lots of the grimy looking fuckers, which now and then you'll see swinging from side to side, and then freeze in place, always giving us the sense whenever The Ship began turning. Overall, to best describe the Line Shack would be to give you a

summary of the color brown, mixed in with the color gray, with a dash of something colored ugly. Plus, lots and lots of hook-ended chains. Oh! And let's not forget its inhabitants. As for the rundown of every Swinging Dick the AD3 had rounded up in a moment's notice, while our Chief continued snoring away inside 104's cockpit:

- AM3 Katzenberg and AMAN Hathaway have shown up. The brothers, Kats and Hats. One from Huntington Beach, CA. The other from Denver, CO. A surfer and a snowboarder, so of course they would become brothers! One sandy blond, sandy like the 70s. And the other a curly brunet, brunet like the 80s. Two very mischievous preppy looking white boys, you'd always expect to be behind the most heinous acts of pranking, one can imagine. And capable of the sort of devious shit, that required at least a bottle of Captain Morgan spiced rum, and no memories of what came after, to be accomplished.
- AN Derbytown has shown up, from Compton, CA. The fascinatingly eccentric Derbytown. The Fantastic Mr. Derby. Short and stout and black. Who when I first met went into a hefty story about himself and that peculiar name of his that he had changed to. A hefty long story about hating his deadbeat dad, wanting to change his sir name, and how he went his entire junior and senior years in High School wearing Derby hats. And, aye... I agree! Derbytown doesn't come off as playing with a full deck of cards to me, either! And this is the character I remember that had one time decided to wear his Derby hat, instead of the official Dixie Cup, with our ceremonious Crackerjacks, the day we all mustered in our Hangar for a Squadron photo. In the last minute, he switched it over to that special brown Derby of his, that has a joker card stuffed behind the ribbon, and didn't think he would get caught, since there were a couple hundred of us in formation. Aye, sir! After that, our CO (Commanding Officer, aka Charlie Oscar) wanted to personally have a chat with him... but not to berate the man! (Even though our AMCS later did). Just to figure out what exactly was going on in his head when he decided to do such a nonsensical thing. In the end, our CO came back with nothing but a shrug, when I remember a bunch of Maintenance Chiefs had asked him about what Derbytown's dealio was. A shrug, and a look on his face, that pretty much spelled out: Let's just say he's... SPECIAL!

And if you think that's the extent to Derbytown's eccentricity. Well, the rest of it calls for a story another time.

- AEAN Barbarossa and AEAN Navarro have shown up. Both from San Diego, CA. More people from SoCal, amazingly enough, and I'll get to it later why that's so important in our Shop. Two giant Mexicans. One AEAN Navarro, that's mischievously tall. The other, AEAN Barbarossa, that's simply massive. Massive enough to even scare Quimby. Actually, more massive than him, so he does scare Quimby! Always standing high with a massive smile on his face, like nothing could ever bring him down. He's one jolly giant, which the women love. And when he picks up women in bars, he'll literally pick them up, set one lengthy woman on one shoulder, and two stout ones on the other, and take them all home for a night cap. AEAN Navarro not so much! He's too cholo to be likable, and he always has a look about him, like he's scheming to do some good-for-nothing, thug life, gangsta-gangsta shit, when no one's looking.

And finally:

- AN Donnelly, from Boston, MA.

As for the rest of Night Check:

- ATAN Pflugerville, from Oklahoma City, OK, hasn't shown up. But since he's a fat nerd, I'm sure the IS3 isn't willing to put him up for what's about to go down.

Neither has:

- AN Royster, from Detroit, MI. But not seeing him around isn't a surprise to me, considering he's the biggest DILLIGAFing bastard in the Line.

And, so... this is what it's all coming down to? Think I, as I look around at all the faces around me. The Line Shack is now jam packed with us Brown Shirts, all crouching or standing or sitting in chairs, while leaning way too far back, or sitting like patient Indians on the deck with their legs crossed. Everyone's leaning on something or somebody to get comfortable, since The Shop has no cushy furniture to find comfort in. We're all sitting around placing our feet up onto all the metal boxes trashed about. Then there's Katzenberg sitting in a chair, who has his feet up

on Derbytown's shoulders, and it's a little tongue-in-cheek comical watching Derbytown getting all passively angry and knocking them down like they aren't that much of a bother. Just to have Katzenberg place them back up, all sneaky like. Aye! So many Turd Shirts around, now, stinking up the joint, that it's making me want to look for the handle to turn, to flush them all down the toilet. Us damn Turd Shirts! And damn, are we stinking up the joint, too, both in the figurative and literal sense of the word. Right now, we have so many of us jolly Squids around, trying to get all fresh and comical with each other to pass the time, that with every minute that passes, the volumes of our voices (that are already engaged in full blown horsing around) keeps getting turned up a notch. So right now, we're all experiencing that thing one has in crowds, where we all keep testing to see how much louder we can raise our volumes, until someone barges in, and begins yelling at everyone to SHUT THE FUCK UP! How obnoxious and annoying we all can get, before a First Class or Khaki runs in, and begins tearing up the joint. Now, personally, I would be willing to join in on the plant food minded fun, and not be so self-aware and self-annoyed, over how much of a bunch of jolly dumb fuckfaces we all really are. But right now, I just can't get my old RDC's words out of my head, as they keep ringing in over everything they meant, and how they pertain to what's about to go down. And... what's about to go down, you might be wondering? Well… you'll see.

"All right, everybody, we're doing this!" Cracks the IS3. As he bops his head up like a cork in water, within our brown sea of Turd Shirts.

"YES, Let's DO this! Let's absolutely DO this! It's about darn time, I gotta say, I was wondering when we were going to do this… what the heck we doin' again?" Wonders Derbytown. As he knocks down once more AM3 Katzenberg's feet off his shoulder, then stands up, quick, to get everyone's attention. And, unfortunately enough for his corny ass... manages to do so.

"Anyone?" Asks Derbytown. Asking for others to join in on the hammy fun he's having, pretending to be the comedic relief in our bunch.

Crickets!

And....

Oh, good job, there, Derbytown! I absolutely love how you know when to blow your trap, at exactly the right time (WRONG time), when no one wants to hear a word from you. And to say exactly the right words, using exactly the right vocabulary, to piss us all off. Unfortunately, Derbytown has this way with everyone: Having this peculiar way about him that he loves to share. Looking for acceptance. But too peculiar for the likes of us, that like everything to be specific. It isn't just what he says, but how he says it, that always gets us railed up. Saying it in a way, as if, to pass it off as a joke. The sort of joke that we would always expect to be dirty minded, but with Derbytown's well-mannered mindfulness, coming off a bit prissy. A joke that euphemizes words like "fuck" and "bitch," for "dame" and "making whoopee." Which then manages to royally piss us all off—considering we're all Sailors! And, Three Steel Balls! For it's always our fill to do and say the complete opposite: Cramming as many f-bombs as inhumanly possible into a sentence, before sounded like a complete fuckin' dunce cap. And then cramming in some more.

"So… um… we motherflippin' doing this, huh? We…." Shut up, Derbytown, shut the fuck up! Shut up, before it's too late! I beckon to him with my eyes. But, then, the moment changes, and my concerns come in too late to say or do anything that would make a difference. The moment now changes, I guess, as Derbytown's lottery number finally comes up. And in the heat of the moment, we all feel it, as we all eye the AN, as the AN unwarily eyes us back. Us, eyeing our lamb, as he eyes us all, baring knifes, and too dumb to know where this is all going to lead to. Sacrificing time is here! We all feel it, we do! Feeling the call coming in from above (or probably, more likely, someplace down below) coming in from the gods of the Line Shack, constituting to us a call for action, to exemplify to all the young'uns, one of our own. To show them young'uns what being a Plane Captain is all about. AMAN Hathaway, who's standing next to his boyfriend, Kats, leaps in, and rolls Derbytown to the deck. "Get 'im! Get the fucker!" Calls forth Quimby. As he just about leaps in himself, once his shark nose smells blood in the water.

"Aww!" Cries out Derbytown.

“Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! Get in that motherfuckin' ass, and make the bitch MOAN! Sweet music to my ears!” Lavishes Quimby. As he begins chewing his bottom lip. Hathaway had now leaped in, wrapping his arms around Derbytown’s waist, while Derbytown was sitting, and had used the momentum, and his weight, to get Derbytown onto the deck. And right now, he is holding Derbytown locked tight, with one leg wrapped almost completely over his head.
“Dude, do doggie style on him, you almost there, doggie!” Jokes Katzenberg.
“No! No! Missionary!” Jokes… someone else.
“Reverse cowgirl!”
“Deep throat the bitch!”
“Jackhammer that pussy in!”
“THAT'S IT! I can’t take it anymore!” Bellows out Quimby, finally, as his left eye begins to twitch.
“I’m hittin’ it! The pussy’s MINE!” Bellows he, again. Then leaps in to get himself some punani, prying Hats off Derbytown, and tossing him aside like a rag doll, so he could have Derbytown all to himself.

And....
Oh my…?
How do I begin to…?
Actually, I think I know how… so how about like this:
I think it goes without saying that as a species, we humans, are always prone to extremes, we find solace in, when dealing with the turmoil that dwells within. It’s been a good month straight now since our Ship departed the shores of Yokosuka, and in that time, we’ve been at it, for a good twelve hours a day, for all seven days you’d have in a week. In all that time, we’ve been at it, especially here on Night Check, toiling away at work: manning our birds, servicing our birds, prepping them for launch, launching them, and then catching them at arrival, to chain them down, Daily them. And then spending the rest of our shift, all brain dead, from balls to six, contemplating over our choices in life in the dark… just to do it all again the next day. Twelve hours a day, seven days a week, we've been at it. And from all that both

physical and mental strain that comes from such a laborious lifestyle, I guess it's in our nature to find solace in such extremes, ventilating all the hostile pressures brewing within. And considering most, if not all, of us have spent all that time without the soothing touch of a woman…?
"Tap that ass! Tap that MOTHERFUCKIN' ASS!"
Well….

If there is two things Quimby is quite known for, it is his infamous defilement of Naval terms, mixing it in with foul words of copulating with one's mother. And his infamous dry humping the Barnacles off his victims' backside. Quimby right now has Derbytown in prime condition to have his Shipmate's ASS prime ready to be slammed into the front side of Quimby's pelvis.
"Annnnnnnd…. STOP!" Commands Katzenberg.
And now, Quimby stops, all while holding Derbytown in midair, just before another pelvic thrust. A second or so passes as Quimby eyes waiting for Katzenberg as Katzenberg waits and eyes back.
"Now make that booty—POP!" Delivers Kats.
As Quimby continues delivering his full-frontal assault.

And...?
I have to admit, there is something grotesquely fascinating, watching a bunch of grown adults—grown-ass men in Uniform, no less—behaving so POORLY! It begs one to ask the question: whether or not it's the Uniform that makes the man, the man that makes the Uniform, or does the man just so happen to dress in Uniform so he can pretend to be something that he isn't? Or, really, the man is completely oblivious to the Uniform he wears, as in what it's supposed to represent, and how his action has made a complete mockery of it? Three Steel Balls, they say. One does when tryin' to get a better glimpse into the mind of a Sailor, and all that goes on in there. Tries to explain us for our actions: if you were to put a Sailor in a room with three steel balls, and leave him there an hour, coming back, you'll find one will be missing, one will be broken, and one will be in the Sailor's pocket, stolen. That, or

impregnated. ‘Cause us Sailors will try to fuck it, I be guessing. Like monkeys and footballs... DON'T ASK!

I don't know....
Maybe I'm just thinking too in depth of this matter, and honestly, I don’t want to sound like I’m getting on some high horse, here... but look at these clowns! Look at them!
“One, two, three, four, fuck that pussy, dinosaur!” They all cheer.
“Knock it off, Navastian! Stop frowning, and learn to enjoy things a little.” Whispers AN Donnelly to me.
And in that moment, changes up my mood.

And then, something else takes place….

“GET THE FUCK OFF ME!” Cracks Derbytown.
Then kicks Quimby in the chest, as Quimby lets Derbytown go free. And... this is something that wasn't expected by any of us, as it breaks us all out of the mindset we are in, and now looking into Derbytown’s eyes, we see blood. Eyes blood red and enraged. And the sight of this, here, wakes us all up from the rascally, childlike mindset we were in. And, wow! Is this the same person from a minute or two ago? I wonder, finding Derby's transformation a little too surreal.
“Get the fuck off me, NIGGA!” Blows up Derbytown, again.
Then begins puffing up and pounding his chest, reminding us all again where Mr. Derby originated.
“NIGGA, you EVER try some FAGGOT SHIT like that again, and I'll….”
Derbytown is now in full on berserk mode, from his stance and slanted brow and postured forehead, as he peers out with eyes like harpoons, at Quimby. The big oaf. Whom doesn't seem very sure of what just happened. Derby is now in berserk mode, all red, from his forehead down to his forearms, and looks fortified, and tensed, with veins throbbed out from the pressure from the sides. This is truly now a sight that none of us were expecting, not any of us in the Line, as we all realize matters have

become at their most direst and dangerous, and real violence might now step in for horse play. But, before doing so, our IS3 then immediately runs in between Derbytown and Quimby, as Rudebaker runs up behind Derbytown, to hold him back. In case, he really does try to sic on to Quimby.
“NIGGA, YOU—”
“CALM the FUCK down, Derby! CALM!” Blasts the IS3.
With the same look of derangement in Derby’s face, mirroring it back, to show the man the state he is in, and how our IS3 wants none of it.
“If that motherfucker EVER tries some shit—”
“I said, CALM!” Blasts IS3, again, this time through his teeth.

A lot of heavy breathing and aggressive staring follows between all parties at play. A very tense and real moment, that's also a little educational: a good chance to peek deeper into every character in the room and see them in a different light. You can tell a lot about a person, when shit really begins hitting the fan. Right now, the one face that sticks out right away is AEAN Navarro's. Out of everyone, his face is the only one that's smiling. And the thing is, I have never seen him smile before. Then there's his bigger brother, AEAN Barbarossa, who's all spread out on one of the metal boxes, like some swimsuit model, posing for pictures, while catchin’ some R&R. And as for his reaction... nothing. And neutral. He doesn't seem much at all to care about the tensions going on in the room, still seeming way too big for this world and its commonplace drama. As for Hats and Kats… bored. They seem bored. And aloof. But, then again, they also seem like they're working hard to come off seeming that way and are really a little afraid inside. Especially Hats, who's hiding some level of concern, while hiding behind Kats. And, I can guess, concern that Derbytown might redirect his attention onto him, remembering how he was the one that instigated everything. As for the four standing: Quimby's reaction is the funniest to look at, looking like a big dumb baby, all scared and angry and confused, as to “what are all the adults yelling about?” As mentioned before, there's always a level of obliviousness and ignorance at play with Quimby. And as for tonight’s occasion, over the matter of ethics: the ethics of how inconsiderate it is for someone to pick up a

grown man into his arms, and have that man dribbled over his crotch, as if to simulate sexual intercourse. Of course, it was meant to be a joke! Of course! Of course, he didn't mean anything by it, especially anything homosexual in nature (I think?). But you gotta know who you're really dealing with, before proceeding with such a humiliating act, that would leave any man a little embarrassed and angry, no matter how open to humor they really were. And looking at Derbytown's smoldering reaction, it's quite obvious that Quimby had gone too far. And. Damn, Derby! I never would have pictured you getting like this, ever! Since, as I mentioned before, Derbytown is a bit of an oddity. If you knew the man, it would have been pretty easy to forget he was from a rough neighborhood, considering the first time I met him, he asked me to a game of Magic: The Gathering. Some role-playing card game with magic, and wizards, and elves in it. No gangbangers and hoochy mamas. Finally, as for the Third Classes in the room, standing, and supposedly in charge right now, Rudy and Falky, they're now both showing complete opposite reactions to one another. Rudy seems scared shitless right now, a side of him I am well aware of. But as for Falky, he seems to be more pissed off than Derby is. More enraged and offended by everything that has happened. As if he's seeing everything that's just happened as a personal insult towards him and his abilities in handling matters as second in charge of Night Check. Just under our Chief... who's nowhere in present (another matter I'll get to, later).

"CALM!" Blasts the IS3.

As he sticks his finger up at Derbytown and shakes it a little.

"You going to be calm now?" Demands Falconni.

Derbytown doesn't respond, but, continues staring at Quimby, with his arms folded up, holding himself, still burning up red and angry and embarrassed inside.

"You going to—"

"Man, fuck this dude! Getting all butt hurt, and—"

"Fuck you, NIGGA!" Blasts Derby.

Quimby had dropped the confused look he had before, and had decided to now step back into character, calling Derbytown out. Standing by with his actions, out of

principal of having no regrets about it, and finding no reason to feel bad about them, too. And now, Derbytown tries to FRONT, but—

“Derby, CALM the FUCK down, before I KNOCK you the FUCK OUT!!!”

The IS3, again, steps in, and really blasts out, hard and heavy, once again trying to keep the peace by means of intimidation. And so hard and heavy, he even manages to startle the yawning giant on his right.

“Ja! Ja!” Chuckles Barbarossa, seeming the most alert he's seemed all week.

After another minute of aggressive stares and heavy breathing, matters now seem to settle down more. Falconni is once again back in control of all the bigger figures in the room (to the AD3's dismay). In charge and having them heed to his own whims instead of them heeding the whims of their own, just as Falconni likes it.

“You calm now?” Asks the IS3, with an open brow.

“….” Responds Derbytown, seeming to be out of wind and favor.

“Good!”

The IS3 then breaks off with his domineering stares, then fidgets a bit, seemingly wanting to go back to putting things into perspective within himself.

"Listen… you know what, Derby, right now, I just want to roll up some Red Shirts. I don’t give a shit about no Line Shack drama. Because, there really—”

“You saw what he did, that motherfucker EVER—”

“I be GLAD to! ANYTIME Pussytown! I be—”

“SHUT THE FUCK UP! Enough, both of yous!” Blasts Falconni, once more.

Since, once more it seemed like Derbytown and Quimby were to have at it, again. Both men locking gazes, as the 5’3 little man from Jersey City stepped in between, to break them up.

“You know, you two monkeys are starting to piss me off!”

And now, Falconni gets full center stage, after what he just said, as both Quimby and Derbytown truly break off from each other, and begin eyeing this little guy, that just took matters to where they were never expecting matters to go. AEAN Navarro had just about fallen out of his seat, perched high on top of some metal boxes, after hearing that line.

“Ha!”

As one loud chuckle shoots out of him, now, which happens to get most of the Line Shack's attention. And now, Navarro tries to hold the rest of the chuckles in, not wanting to ruin the play taking place before him. The IS3 now has center stage, and Quimby, Derbytown, and also Rudebaker, have become his most receptive audience members.

"Yeah… you heard that right! I don't give a shit. You think that's racist, you should have seen how I was raised." Discloses Falconni, smiling, and not seeming much at all to care.

"You know what my uncle Carmine used to always say? He used to say, 'they're all just a bunch of animals, really, and fortunately enough for us, they're violent and stupid and crazy enough to have at each other, instead of banding together, and focusing on their real enemies.' That's the mentality I was raised with. So, if you two want to go: 'Nigga this!' and 'Nigga that!' and start popping caps into each other's asses, do it while I'm not around and in charge! Not now! Not here! And not in my Navy!"

What is interesting, is, the more Falconni now makes the rest of us feel uncomfortable with his moments of trying to regain control of the Line, the more AEAN Navarro continues to anguish away, trying to control fits of laughter from bursting out. The cholo is now practically in tears.

"So, you two done playing Bloods and Crips?"

"Ha!" Lets out Navarro, another.

Both Quimby and Derbytown now roll their eyes away from that line, looking awkwardly away, in embarrassment. The fact of the matter is: Quimby and Derbytown are nothing of the likes, nothing of the sorts, to be playing out such stereotypes. Quimby—really—is just a big dumb kid, completely unaware of just how offensive he can truly be. And as for Derbytown... Derbytown, as mentioned, is practically the most none ghetto black person, (yet) from Compton, type, I've ever met. Everything about him (before witnessing this other side of him) has been mildly mannered and modest. Nice. And when spoken, can speak more polite, white English, than my 9th

grade English teacher, and how she ever did back in my High School. And for me, hers are the memories of a woman that once went into a lengthy story about growing up as a Philadelphia girl, in the 50s, with ten sets of wavy poodle dresses.

“So, if you two are done with that stupid shit, I like to now set our sights back onto our real enemies, the AOs!”

Derbytown then sneers out a look of indifference over that matter, as the IS3's eyes widen, with resentment, over his outburst. And as for how I feel about it: come the fuck on, Falconni! What is it with you and this corny rivalry with AOS, that you keep perpetuating on to us?
“You know, Quimby, that was a pretty funny scene you made back there, having Derbytown all up in your arms, like you just snatched him out of a Singapore whorehouse, and wanting to make a run for it.”
Quimby then bursts out with a laugh, seeing as to where this is headed, knowing the IS3. And Derbytown now goes back to heavy breathing, while focusing his lengthy stares on a new target.
“Yeah, I guess it was!” Comments Quimby.
“So what’s up, Derbytown, you seem all pussy hurt again... what? Come on! Quimby was only just fucking with you. Just because you allowed yourself, like some pussy ass bitch, to have him—”
“I ain’t no pussy ass bitch!” Interrupts Derby.
“Come again, what’s that you say?”
“I AIN’T no pussy ass bitch!” Expands Derby.
“Then, fine, so… are you with us, then?”

Looking around, I now watch how Hats and Kats, Navarro, and also Quimby, smile, as they listen to the IS3, as he continues to sucker Derbytown into joining in their leagues. They seem all so taken in how well Falconni is able to play into Derby’s insecurities, using them to change his mood and reasoning. Derbytown is like me, FUNGUS to Falconni’s likes. Another shitty age PC who made qual(-ifications) a

month after I did, and really, has no stakes in whatever bullcrap the IS3 is now shoveling. But, Falconni, being the crafty little bastard that he is, is now giving him a reason to take stakes. As for the whole rivalry matter, I'll explain it in full detail, later. What I will say now is, it's something that's been smoldering on between us PCs, and them AOs, for about a year and a half now. Starting from something that occurred then, on a similar cruise as this one (a year in the Military can seem like a decade ago, time has that way with itself in servitude). I was obviously not around at the time, neither was the ATAN Derbytown, who's now being peer pressured into taking part in this whole mess as we speak. The key players at the time were Kats and Hats, Barbarossa, Navarro, and Falconni. The so-and-so-called “Golden Age PCs” back in them days, that I've only seen pictures of from the IS3, which he now has tacked up in The Shop, on a bulletin board, over the main work desk, next to the fridge. And the bulletin board is covered with those pictures of IS3's idea of the better days. Of the ol' crew. Guys who aren't mostly us. Pictures of the IS3, himself, next to Kats and Hats, Barbarossa, Navarro, some Day Checkers, and a bunch of guys that were either sent to their respective shops, or ones I have never met, since they all left the Squadron before I ever even got here. A whole mess of pictures, showing a bunch of Turd Shirts, smiling, together, in front of our birds at work. That. And. Some pictures of them having the time of their lives, having a beer at some bar, in a country I've never been to. Pictures that have backgrounds full of jungles and sunsets, and pretty Polynesian looking women, dressed in long heels and short skirts. They all seem so happy. But whether or not those days were better, the one thing that's certain that separates the old crew and us, is, based on the stories, they got into a lot more crazier shit then we've ever have, and considering the shit I've seen in my time, that's saying a lot.

But, then again, how could we the old Line, considering the LCPO we've gotten in our Shop now. And how he's changing everything (later).

“So, you with us now?” Asks Falconni, eyeing up at Derbytown.

And after a short pause of self-reflection, Derbytown smiles up at the IS3, and the boy is now just another happy little minion.
“Let’s do this?” Rails up Falconni.
“Let’s FUCKIN’ do this!” Answers Derbytown, back.
“What?”
“Let’s get them shit kicking AOs!”
“Yeah?”
“YEAAHHHHH!”
AEAN Navarro is practically in stitches now. He is tittering off into his own little fits of silent laughter, as he can't hold back how manically funny he finds this whole scene to be. Practically doing a song and dance number in his seat, as his face bops back and forth, then side to side, from the hysteria, while tears begin rolling down his cheeks. And what is funny about it is how most of us in The Shop are also beginning to fall into the spell. But not from one IS3 Falconni, nor the ATAN Derbytown that still both have center stage, but from reactions of the AEAN Navarro. He is the one that's lavishing the most in the humor behind how easily Derbytown (the stout lug) has chumped up for Falconni, and his craftiness, and the rest of us are all adorned by it.
“Man, those MOTHEFUCKIN’ AOs, they don’t know what’s coming!”
Don’t you mean MOTHERFLIPPIN’ AOs, Derby? You TOOL! Think I, as I blink rapidly, and feel royally beside myself by the whole ordeal. Beside myself by the whole amusement and stupidity (and how corny Derbytown is now getting) behind it. Watching Falconni rail up Derby, like some coach would do at a pep rally, railing up all the idiots in the bleachers, and I feel like Kurt Cobain, sitting at the back, shaking my head, and counting the days till my career as a High School slacker will come to an end. Or in my case, since I'm Military, and no longer a High School attending civi, till my EAOS.
“Okay, everyone, drop your cocks and grab your socks, everyone—we doing this! Get up! Fifty bucks to anyone that makes AO3 Ramshaw squeal like a little bitch!” Addresses Falconni.
“I’m on it!” Claims the ATAN Derbytown.

“Hey, Navastian, you see that? Now that’s what I call initiative! Unlike the chicken shit we’re all used to when dealing with you!” Comments the IS3.
Sneering out that remark with a disdainful sneer, shooting out between his teeth. And now, everyone’s attention is back on me, again, as I find myself again sticking out as the biggest heel at the meet. Booing and jeering is what’s reserved for me, again, as everyone's face turns towards mine, and adopts the IS3’s observation of me as their own. Great! I feel as how I did when AW1 Nordhaus did the same to me back at Great Lakes. CURSING MY ASS! It's Boot Camp all over again, and as hard as I try to be a squared away Sailor, as AJ as I can be, THIS IS WHY I get labeled as the Shitbag? Over some shit... LIKE THIS? I mean, Whiskey Tango Foxtrot! I motherFUCKIN' joined the Navy, not the WWF! I ain't Hulk Hogan! I ain't even The Brooklyn Brawler! So, why am I NOT on my Jet, manning it, all officially, since it's my freakin' job to do such? But instead, I am to now....

Sigh!

Fuckin' AW1, this is still all HIS FAULT! Setting me up and making me into the black sheep. The weakest link. The worse example. And now, here in the fleet. Since now, here I am, once again, getting treated the same way. When I haven't done NOTHING wrong, REALLY! Sigh... I don't know. I just... DON'T!

THE KAT & THE HAT

First time I ever really consorted with them it was back at our barracks at NAF Atsugi, where our Squadron really operates out of when the USS Jimmy Carter isn’t out on deployments and is docked into Yokosuka base. At the barracks of Atsugi, it was a Saturday night, and except for me and these two, everyone else had went bar hopping out in Tokyo's Rapoongi district. I had gone into the lounge of our barracks, which is a simple living room area with a giant TV in the middle before a row full of couches and chairs. I had gone in there, since, I wasn’t feeling it, having a night out in the city. And going in, I had found the two sitting there, drinking vodka straight out of the bottle, while watching some old Navy flick (of all things) called The Last Detail: some 70s flick starring Jack Nicholson, as some ol’ school First Class Skivvy

Waving Signalman. Now seeing them sitting there with their minds all wrapped up in the flick, while chugging every time Jack dropped an F-bomb, or talked about pussy, I decided to get friendly, and sit with them a little. Personally, I'd have to say, initially, I did like the two, before that very moment. Even though their reputation had preceded themselves, and there was a lot of cringe worthy details that should have made me feel otherwise. Three Steel Balls. But still, there was this rowdy, Dukes of Hazard, good ol' boy charm about them that I liked. The sort that seemed ("seemed," mind you) very friendly and welcoming, as long as you didn't give them any wild ideas of how else they should be acting. They seemed (seemed) like really cool guys! Extremely cool and clever to be exact! The type you'd feel on par with if you were the sort that also took pride in being cool and clever as much as they did. A handsome pair, too, if you don't mind me saying so, without sounded, well... you know! An ideal pair to have around. But then give them wild ideas, give them (specifically) a bottle of rum, and a hammer to share, and you'd best be turning your ass around and tailing it the fuck out of there, away from their sight of interest. Simply put: Hats + Kats + Bacardi 51 and a carpenter's hammer = ape shit!

So, as I sat with the two, I said "hey" to them, which they didn't respond to. And seeing as to how it seemed as if they were going out of their way not to respond, made me a little anxious, then. Had they noticed me at all? I couldn't tell. But then again, I was sitting right next to them. As cool as they are, they're also known for being very aloof at times. And hard cases with anyone trying to ingratiate into their upper leagues. Which can get pretty annoying, giving you the sense that they take you for not being worthy of their attention, even for a simple greeting such as a simple "hey." Great! It's like being in High School, trying to hang with the popular kids, again, and I'm pulling my hair out trying to win my way into their graces. I had thought then. And it really was, too, the more I tried to shoot shit with them from that moment on, the more they seemed to be drifting away, into their own worlds, where they had invited much more interesting people they could be shooting shit with. So, this went on until I felt like I had embarrassed myself enough, and then, decided just sit back and try to absorb some of their presence, that thing that made them seem so sly and fanciful in comparison to the likes of me. For, maybe, I could

learn something from them that could teach me a thing or two on how not to come off as a complete fucking dork? I had thought. Yes! Teach me, oh wise ones! Show me the ways! Since you two are obviously so much better than I am! But, after a while, and a couple of more embarrassing attempts to get their attention, the only thing I was able to pick up from the two, was, “maybe not saying anything at all, I could spare myself coming off as such a dork, and maybe that really was the whole secret behind how cool they seemed to be to begin with?” Which makes sense! If you ain’t got anything catchy to say, don’t be saying anything at all! And these two practically never did have anything to say almost never. Which made me put into suspect that whole notion that they're as cool and as clever as I'd like to think they were. And really, they might just be a couple of fakers. But continuing on, considering I still truly was, and still am, such a freakin’ dork, with absolutely zero people skills, in comparison to these two supposed socialites, I didn’t learn from that lesson, and went on with more attempts:

“Jack Nicholson... huh? Man, do I love his movies. Ever seen the one where he's in a mental institution? That movie is a classic.”

Crickets.

“Yeah, I remember finding it funny how he was talking about banging beaver, and I didn't know what it meant at the time. I think I was fifteen—I mean twelve... thirteen? Thirteen years old the first time I saw that movie.”

Crickets.

“Ha! Ha! Banging beaver!”

CRICKETS!

“So, you two got nothing planned for tonight... huh?”

And then it struck me: well, obviously they don't have anything planned for tonight, for why else would they just be sitting there? I thought then, answering my own damn question.

“You guys drinking... huh?”

Well, obviously, that’s all they’re doing. Obviously, that too!

“Saturday night... huh?”

Obviously, it's a Saturday night. OBVIOUSLY!

And then came my crowning moment, when I began just asking them random arbitrary questions, such as the time. Which I wasn't even INTERESTED IN KNOWING! Which had Hats quickly then snapping at me with:
“Hey, Shipmate, you don’t see the clock at all, on the wall, there, next to the window? In plain sight. It’s 0130!”
Which had me following that up with:
“Yeah, but they never did daylight savings on that clock, and it’s an hour behind!”
And it was then…. my absolute failure to impress the legendary Hats and Kats was now complete.

The fuck with this! I really am not this much of a dork! These two just have that ability to make you feel that way, with their nonchalance. Making you feel small, and stupid, which ends up leading you to say stupid things. And I get the sense they might be doing it on purpose. Well, fine! Whatever! If that’s the way it is, I guess the two of you ain’t such outstanding Shipmates, after all. I thought at the time, as I then began to stop liking them. And the very next second, Hats and Kats, and all the shenanigans they were known for, went into full play before me. And, I was cemented one other reason not to like them. Maybe even downright loathe them a bit.
“Hmm… I feel a tinkle coming on.” Said Hats to Kats, not even looking at him or much.
“Go right ahead.” Said Kats to Hats, not looking at him or much the same.
And at that point, I saw Hats getting up from his seat, picking up his seat, walking over to a water fountain that was near the door leading out of the lounge with his seat in hand, placing it before the water fountain, stepping up onto his seat, unzipping his pants, and preceding to take his tinkle. And... are you kidding me? I thought, then, as I began to wonder if this was the first time these two had ever done this, since, I knew for a fact I had used that same water fountain just a day or two before.
“Great! Now I feel a tinkle coming on myself!” Said Kats, now.

Then preceded himself to get up, picking up his own seat, walking it over next to a window, stepping up, and then preceding to piss out of it. And, the alarming matter was: we were on the 3rd story, and just below that window was the entrance to the barracks we were in, and at any time there was the chance that someone might—
"AHH! WHAT THE FUCK… WHO'S UP THERE?"
"OH SHIT! I HOSED someone!" Cried out Kats.
Then jumped down from his seat, away from that window and its line of sight of being seen from, then stared over at Hats, with his eyes boggling out of his sockets.
"YOU DID?"
"I DID!"
Then the two just smiled at each other, and then:
"YES!" Exclaimed both Kats and Hats, in sync.
And then Kats ran up, jumped high, and high-fived Hats, who wasn't even done yet taking his tinkle. And this had now degenerated into practically an 80s comedy. Hats then finished, stepped down, and the two were now holding arms, as they spun around, dancing in merriment. Never in my life had I seen two grown ass men in each other's arms, so happy and cheerful, as this. The two then seemed ready to split, but before doing so, Hats turned around and yelled to me:
"AND IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!"
"YEAH, this was HIS doing!" Followed up Kats.
"Yeah, if anyone asks, we're going to say it was YOUR FAULT!" Followed up Hats.
"Yeah, NAVASTIAN! How could you do something like that? Something so revolting as pissing on people out of a window?"
"Yeah, you DISGUST me!"
"I bet he even gets off on it, too."
"Yeah, I bet he does. Aren't you ashamed of yourself, young man?" Followed up Hats, while doing a naughty-naughty bit with his index finger at me.
"No, I bet he isn't, and that's just how much of a perv he really is!"
"Yeah, he's a pervert!"
"We've got a perv in our midst."

“Hide the women and children, for there’s no saying what this deranged perverted maniac will do next for his fancy.”
“He’s a maniac! Maniac! At the door!”
“Yes, everybody. RUN, RUN AWAY! Run away, before he puts on baby porn, masturbates, and expects us to watch.”
“Oh, how dreadful!”
“Oh, yes! So very dreadful, indeed. Let’s split!” Concluded Hats.
And the two were then off, and they were gone. Dashing back to their barracks' room, as they began cackling and hooting and hollering along the way, amongst themselves. Also, from the sound of it, banging on other peoples’ doors as they ran past, knocking over potted plants, and tearing down framed pictures from the walls. Did that just seriously happen? I thought then, to myself. And then, I heard a thumping sound coming from the staircase, that's right across from the lounge entrance, and the sound of Khaki and the barracks' Fire Watch that was on duty that night. And from the sound of it, a lot of hell and tarnation and cussing brewing between the two, and mostly from the Khaki. I can tell if it's Khaki, just from the vocabulary he'd use. A lot of “this is UNSAT” and “I want some butts, there's HELL to pay!” And this, to me was all the sign I needed to split, myself. Oh, please, don't tell me those two are going to get me in....
“Hey, Shipmate... STOP RIGHT THERE!” Ordered the Fire Watch.
As I stood facing away in front of the two, a good distance away. After exiting the lounge, and just about ready to turn a corner, having been so close to making a break for it for my own barracks' room.
“Hey, SHIPMATE!” Called out the Khaki, this time.
Now, I have to note something, even though the term “Shipmate” might seem like a term that shows signs of fellowship amongst us Squids. In all reality, in most cases, it really AIN'T! And in the predicament, I was then in, to hear the Watch call me a “Shipmate” (a Third Class whose only as pissed as the Khaki that's next to him is, whom I'm guessing was the man Hats had pissed on just earlier out the window... or was it Kats that did it?), followed by the Khaki to do the same. It could only mean

a shitload of trouble was to be in stored for me. A shitload of stupid trouble, I wasn't up for.
“Hey, Shipmate, turn around so we can....”
And it was at that moment that I made a run for it.
“Hey, SHIPMATE... STOP! I said, STOP!”
Foxtrot Uniform, Shippy! I ain't stoppin'. I'm not getting in trouble for something as brainless as pissing on a Chief while inebriated. WHICH WASN'T EVEN I THAT DID IT! FUCK YOU! It'll be cold day in HELL that I get DRB, or God knows Captain's Mast, for something as stupidly fucking retarded as that! And, just my luck, those two jerk-offs, Hats and Kats, had to just so happen piss on a Khaki. JUST MY FREAKIN' LUCK!
“Hey, SHIPMATE!”
And I'm not you're freakin' Shipmate, EITHER! You know the minute I stop, and am identified, my ass is going to be grass!

Once I had reached the fire escape, I had exited out the doors, and had then began booking it down the stairs. Luckily, the fire escape alarm had never been set, for whatever reason, (and most of us tended to use the stairwell as a smoking spot).
“Hey, SHIPMATE!”
I had heard the Fire Watch calling back to me, again. But, it was too late, then, for I was too far gone, already out of that barracks' building, and dashing to another one, the nearest one, where I ended up spending the night, with a buddy of mines from a different Squadron. For I dared not head back to my barracks' room, fearing I might get caught by that same Fire Watch. And... to tell you the truth, after that, I ended up spending a good three additional weeks avoiding the Fire Watch station, when I'd enter my barracks, trying to get to my room, fearing he might be on duty, again, leading me to get caught by him. Aye... you can say after that, I had nothing favorable to think or say about, when thinking about the Kat and the Hat. Those two fuckers had almost cost me enough trouble.

CALI BOYS

An aircraft carrier is practically a city onto itself. Even though, really, all it is, is a heaping pile of scrap metal, all hammered and riveted and mashed together, all rolled up and crumpled up, by what I'd like to imagine to be a crew of Gomer Pyles, considering the outstanding work they've accomplished.

Pyle: Sarg, I can't seem to be able to get this hammered in.

Sarg: That's because you're trying to hammer a hammer in with a rivet, you IMBECILIC, and you don't hammer in rivets. You use a rivet gun.

Pyle: Oh, gee! Thanks, Sarg!

And when finished, and having christened the vessel, they had then tossed it into the ocean, with the expectation of not having it sink to the bottom.

Pyle: Gee, Sarg, why is it sinking?

Sarg: Wait... why are there holes in The Ship?

Pyle: Oh, that's to make The Ship go faster, I heard it makes it more aerodynamic.

Sarg: PYLE! YOU IMBECILE!

Well, that's what's been left to my imagination, from the sense I've mostly gotten, looking at this assorted collection of deformed metal and machinery, from the inside out. Everything is a pipe, or a lever, or a pipe, or a hatch, or a... a pipe. Lots of pipes! Lots and lots (had a strange dream some two weeks ago, I imagined I was Jennifer Connelly, running through them, to only find David Bowie at the opening end. Strange). A labyrinthine stretch of them running along the walls, and up the walls, and you can hear the sound of something in liquid form running through them. And they leak sometimes, also. And they can be either fuel, or fresh water, or... I wouldn't know what else! Since, I'm not a Boat Chuck to know these things. Oh, and, of course, let's not forget sewage! Especially in the galley. A whole mess of sewage pipes spanning the whole expansion of the galley, just above our heads. Gotta love standing in line for an hour to get some chow, and the second you're seated, you get a drop of whatever the fuck is running above, just slopping down, into your mash potatoes. But anyways, that's a carrier! A floating junkyard that's somehow taken on the title of being called a city. A floating city. Which ends up making us the

unfortunate inhabitants of this nomadic and nautical metropolis. And with us, a mishmash of ethically, morally, racial, psychologically, and physiologically diverse group of men (and a handful of women), all rallied up from different parts of America, and also the world. Packed together, shoulder to shoulder, like sardines in a sardine can, and expected to not misbehave, mistrust, or mistreat one another. Three Steel Balls! But there hasn't been any real training advocated to get us all familiarized with one another. No seminars involved, no! And for that, it hasn't been a well-conceived process. Like wild animals from different habitats, we were captured from our wilds, thrown in together, pitted together within a pitted cage. Then whipped savagely when we couldn't let go of the instinctive urge to allow Darwinism to take effect. Survivalism! A bunch of vicious wild animals (and some not) with sharp teeth and claws, a motley mishmash of our sorts, thrown in, and expected to act human, and not as savage humans, but civilized ones, a part of this floating dystopic city. The Line Shack really isn't much of a shop, as it is a hole in the wall where juvenile delinquents are crammed together, and expected to work as a team, taking responsibility over hundreds of millions of dollars of tax payer bought equipment. Navy Joe Lifers tend to also call us a Pavy (Punk Navy). I'd even go so far as to call us a gang. We're not an organized group of trained individuals a part of some team. No! We're a gang! And right now, looking at us all massed together, heading over to those AOs to put those bunch of bastards into a hurt locker, I can't distinguish us as being anything but. We even have our own colors. And so do they. Us brown, and them red. And them be fighting reason, 'cause, they be different than we are!

Anyways. Let's see, how did the rivalry begin? Well... of course it would have something to do with The Kat and The Hat. Of course, it would! Anything so mischievous being perpetrated to cause a year and a half long rivalry would require those two to have been participants. When shit be hitting the fan in the Line, it will most definitely always be either of those two being the ones to fling it. So, let's see, how did it begin? Well, the funny part is, it's not really just a rivalry that's going on between us PCs and them AOs. No! Looking at the bigger picture, not only is it simply that, but a rivalry that also spans, going on between us Californians and them

Texans. As you know, about five of us in the Line just so happen to come from the Golden State. And even though only three of the Night Check AOs are actually from Texas, they're three very prominent figures that take up much of that shop's space and attention. Then, of course, there's Ramshaw, from Ala... or is it Mississ... or is it Geor... one of those rebel states! That much I know!

(Then again, he can be from Tennessee for all I know, and to a Cali boy like me, and Kats, Derbytown, Navarro, and Barbarossa, it doesn't matter, they're all the same to us. We're just ignorant like that. Hell! Ramshaw might just be from Texas, too. We wouldn't know the difference. Texas' twang? Southern drawl? What's the difference, for we can't tell)?

But anyways. Back to the story:
First off, know this much, as I mentioned before, know that there are now three really, really, REALLY big AOs in the AO shop, that we need to really be worried about. Three Texans named AO3 Merryweather, AO3 Westwood, and one really enormous AO2 Southgate. The AO2 being the biggest of the bunch, equal to the size of our own Barbarossa, so a formidable foe he would be—most definitely! One major reason NO roll up party goes on without Barbarossa taking part in it. Three really big black dudes, that are big enough to call our own Quimby their baby brother. And they probably would, too, considering they're so big, they'd be able to pick up Quimby into their arms, stick a baby bottle in his mouth, and rock his ass to sleep. The way the story goes, about a year and a half ago, on a similar cruise aboard this vessel, the USS Jimmy Carter, AO2 (who was an AO3 at the time) was with one of his big black Texas brethren, up near the hatch leading from the Flightdeck to our Line. AO3 Southgate (or, H-Town, as everyone else calls him) was with AO3 Merryweather (D-Boy) shooting shit, supposedly, about some stripper they had coincidentally both met and fucked at different times of their lives.

(It's an interesting story onto itself, really, some stripper named Dirty Debbie, they had both met in Austin, Texas, when they had both traveled to that city. And this had

all happened way before they had even joined the Navy. So, the coincidental fact they had both met and fucked the same woman, when the two of them are from totally different cities, is what's really interesting. Well... not too much. More “coincidentally amusing,” you can say. As you can imagine, Southgate, or H-Town, is from Houston, TX. And Merryweather, or D-Boy, is from Dallas. What's more interesting is the third big Texas dude, AO3 Westwood, or A-Wall, just so happens to be from Austin, TX, but he never did go to that strip club where the other two had met Dirty Debbie).

BUT ANYWAYS!

So, the story goes, H-Town, D-Boy, were blocking the hatch leading to the Line. It was a shrill rainy afternoon, somewhere in the East Indies, and Hats, Kats, Barbarossa, and a then AN Falconni, were wanting to get below, and escape the rain, to grab some chow. And, supposedly, as the Airman Falconni squeezed on by, considering how small he is, the two AOs made a joke over it, saying something along the lines of, “did you feel a mouse squeak on by,” which led Falconni to tell them to “go fuck” themselves. They then laughed. And then, seeing how Kats and Hats and Barbarossa were still standing by, frowning, and waiting for them to move out of the way, they... obliged. Kats, Hats, and Barbarossa went in, and it would have all ended—RIGHT THERE—if it wasn't for what the then AMAN Katzenberg decided to do next.
“Hey, Shipmate!” Called out Kats.
And Kats had called them out with a crooked smile, while staring, with an air of insolence, and the two AOs had grown confrontational seeing this.
“What you want, Line Rat?” Responded the massive Southgate.

AMAN Katzenberg had then continued to stare at them, all crooked like, consolidating his air of insolence, so the two AOs would know just how insulting he was about to get.
“Okay, what you want, Katzenberg?”

And it was then that Katzenberg squatted down, and started giving a constipated look, then began making noises like he was straining to do... something.
“What the fuck... Katzenberg?”
“Hold up! Hold up! I'm not done yet!” Katzenberg had responded, lifting up his hand. More moaning and groaning noises being sounded out, loud, real LOUD, as it made the rest of the Line Shackers snicker a little, seeing as to where this was headed.
“AHH!”
“Katzenberg?”
But then Kats smiled up at them two, as he felt ready to explain, seeing as to how confused the two Texas boys were.
“You see, what I'm doing is... I was listening how you two were reminiscing about your days when you were both home in Texas. And, I couldn't help noticing how homesick y'all seemed.” Explained Katzenberg.
Katzenberg then waited, not wanting to finish, wanting to see if the two AOS would be able to follow along what his intentions were. But it was becoming apparent that they couldn't, as they grew more and more confused, staring at Kats. But, slowly, it began to dawn on the rest of the Line what Kats was doing, and what was about to happen, as they began building up a snicker.
“What the fuck are—”
“I SAW HOW... homesick, the two of you seemed, so I felt like taking a shit right here, so you two could share kicking it around, making you boys feel right at home.”
Hats, Barbarossa, and even Falconni, a little, were now in stitches, laughing, at just how bold and offensive their Kats had been towards the two massive AOs. The way the story went, the two of them from there on out were still looking at Katzenberg, all confused, unable to acknowledge the negative indications behind the joke: practically referring to the Texas breed AOs as a couple of cross-eyed, yahoos, coming from a place where manure came with an abundance of. Calling the two a couple of “shit-kickers.”
“Wait... MOTHERF—....”
But then, as they finally got Kats' joke, Kats then concluded it all with a taunt:

“What you gonna say, don't mess with Texas? Well, guess what, cowboy—I JUST DID! Cali representin'! Boy! What's up? YEE-HAH, MOTHERFUCKER! Californ-I-A!” Kats then lifted up both index fingers, from both hands, up to his mouth, like he was holding a pair of smoking shooters, and blew at them. Then went off going “YEE-HAH! YEE-HAH!” While swinging his hips and arms around, as if he was riding a frenzied bull. Looking like he was having a good ol' time, going around and around, at AO3 Southgate's and AO3 Merryweather's expense. And, the thing about it is, Southgate (nor Merryweather, really) really ain't the type of person (or persons) to be making such jokes about, unless you're ready for the bloody consequences. One Texan, that was definitely NOT worth messin' with!

“You being serious, Kats? Tell me you're not being serious!” Laughed out Southgate. AS IF, he was taking this all too well.

“YEE-HAH! YEE-HAH!” Continued taunting Kats,

As his brother, Hats, began to join in behind him.

“You calling us a couple of ig-nent, sister fucking, shit kickers, really? Cali boy?”

“Ride 'em, cowboy! YEE-HAH, BITCHES! Californ-I-A!”

Southgate had then paused, as he continued watching Kats lampoon him and his state, just watching, just watching... for the immediate time being.

“Oh, yeah... right! Talking about your sister, don't be upset she moved from your giant shithole of a state to our Valley, to Sherman Oaks, and is now a lovely actress in the adult entertainment industry, having trains ran on her by Cali boys like us! And all up in her, we're all like 'YEEEEE-HAHHHHH'!” Blurted out Kats.

While showing some more emphasized passion in his hip swinging.

“You trying to test me—huh?”

“I ain't testin', I'm bestin'! YEE-HAH, YEE-HAH! Californ-I-A!”

“MOTHERFUCKER!” Blasted the massive Southgate.

And the rest was history.

O’ DARK HUNDRED

“We gonna rain on them AOs!” Blasts Derbytown.

Sticking next to the IS3, like he’s his new buddy, while the IS3 keeps pacing up fast to gain distance, letting the rest of us know—he ain’t! And looking at Derbytown,

who's to the left of me, I find myself not liking him. Seeing as how obtuse he seemingly can be, with his station in life, and the Line, and how it correlates with how the rest of us Line guys feel about him. Derbytown can really be annoying sometimes how obtuse, slow, and all around dimwitted he can actually be. Unlike our AN Royster (another Line Shacker who you'll soon meet) who also comes off that way. But, with Royster, it's different, since he's only doing it willingly on purpose to seem that way (playing it dumb to hide his true nature). But, as for Derbytown, on the other hand, he's never purposeful about anything (for he's just too dumb to be). Up on the Flightdeck, if I was to run up to AN Royster, and ask for help moving a nancart across the Flightdeck during flight ops, Royster would just DILLIGAF, and blow me off, pretending to not get my intentions. While with Derbytown, all he would do is stare, as I pointed at him, at the nancart, and then him, again... who would then walk off, and before putting two and two together of what my intentions were in the first place, what I was asking for him to do (freakin' helping a Shipmate OUT)! Derbytown wouldn't DILLIGAF, he just wouldn't get it.

It's the ten of us, now, minus the rest. Ten of us bent and burly Sailors, flexing our muscles, amongst ourselves, as we make our way to the AOs. Ten of us Brown Shirts, all together, trying to keep pace with one another, as the more prominent figures either pace a bit faster to show lead. Or, weigh back, heavy, like an anchor, and keep the rest of us at cruise control.

"Barbarossa, hurry the…." But then IS3 Falconni looks back at the giant, and realizes his Napoleon complex isn't quite big enough for the lumbering Mexican's breeches, and shuts it while sizing him up, discouragingly, as he finds the breaching point of how far he can bend his neck back, to look up at Barbarossa, completely.

"Ja! Ja! Can't keep up with you, Falky. If you want, speed ahead. I'll just be fashionably late to the roll up party, as usual." Jokes Barbarossa, with a lumbering smile. Falky says nothing. Falky can't say anything! Barbarossa is the prize-winning bull in our litter, making the rest of us look like undernourished calves. Even Quimby in comparison. Also, watching Barbarossa's stroll is also sorta funny, too. He's such a heavy-set figure, weighing heavy at the back, it makes the rest of us feel as if we're

all straining to drag him along, tied to chains. All of us sweating profusely, all leaning hard into the direction we're headed, while he's leaning hard back, amused by our attempts to drag him along. And what's also funny is how queer he looks while strolling, with all his center of gravity seeming to be in his hips, making them swing fast from side to side. Possibly doing so since he himself has a hard time dragging the load he's carrying, and his hips find themselves doing all the laborious work. Carrying all that is above. It's queer how he does it, and it's queer to look at, but I don't see any of us mentioning anytime soon to Barbarossa of this discovery.

"We're gonna rain on 'em!" Blasts Derbytown, again. Making me not like him even more. Derby, just shut up! Think I, as I look into his stupid smile, that doesn't seem too sure what it's smiling about, but continues to do so, anyways.
"Ouch… FUCKING HELL!" I groan. As I slam my shin, hard, trying to step over a knee knocker
"You cryin' already, Navastian?" Mocks AD3 Rudebaker, who's following up behind me.
"No, fuckin' knee knockers!" I explain.
"Yeah, well… you're supposed to step over them." Mocks the AD3, again. Looking back, while still in motion, I look into the pompous face of our AD3, who smiles like he can't get enough, getting the best of me. And as I turn my head around I….
Bang!
"Dammit, I HATE these things!" I slam my shin yet again, against another set of knee knockers, while trying to step through a hatch. and I just about trip into Hats, who's in motion in front of me.
"Damn, Navastian, you trying to decommission yourself before we can even get there?" Mocks the AD3, a third time. And this time I decide not to say nor do anything. Nor look back, and put myself through another one of those again.
"No, I think he's doing it on purpose, so he can cop a feel of Hats, when he falls on top of him." Jokes AN Donnelly. Everyone begins to laugh, then. Well... except for Hats, who turns around, and eyes me some, as if he's wonder if I actually would. And even though, yet again, I'm being embarrassed in front of everyone in the Line,

this time... it's different. AN Donnelly... AN Donnelly... you know, it really is funny. He's the only one that's able to make me smile when making jokes at my expense. Everyone else might as well be unwelcoming strangers to me, even though I know everything about them (their names, their stories, their personalities) and they all feel like strangers to me. Yet, I know nothing about this AN Donnelly here, and yet he's different.

Anyways...
What time is it? I wonder, now. O'dark hundred... something! And, it feels like it should be zero two, maybe, by now. I really can't tell, since, there's hardly anywhere in The Ship you'll find a clock hanging to tell us the time. Mostly, they're in the shops, and the single one that is hung in our Squadron's Line Shack spaces needs new batteries. But, for whatever reason, our Day Check LCPO (Leading Chief Petty Officer, and the Khaki really in charge of our Shop) has decided not to change them, yet. And neither have the rest of us. And, I mean to say, if our most responsible figure won't put the time and effort to get 'er done… why should we? Laziness and neglect spawning more laziness and neglect, and at our E-4 and below level, it would be surprising if you had any of us even thinking about the matter, as I am doing so right now. But, as for our Day Check LCPO, I know damn well why he hasn't changed the batteries in that clock, and it has absolutely nothing to do with him being lazy to take the time. Knowing AMCS Hamakua, that is something I'm most definitely certain of.
"Falky… where's our Squadron's AO shop? We're crossing blue tile, and…."
"It's zero three right now, no Khaki up this late is going to care!" Responds the IS3, to Hats' question.

And that there, really, is something we should be worried about. From our Shop, the passageway we've been taking has been a long stretch that expands from the aft end of The Ship, all the way to the bow, and in between that space there is a "no no" zone for junior enlisted personnel, of our likes. The last hatch we crossed had a blue

curtain hanging at its entrance, and what that means to us is we don't belong here, and at any time, a Khaki could catch us, and give us a hard time.
“Falk, let’s take this hatch down to the Hangar Bay, I don’t want to get caught by—”
“Hats, don’t be such a….”
But then we all see him: Khaki, at twelve o’clock, center, at the other end of the passageway we are in.
“Fine, back down that hatch, EVERYONE!” Cowers the IS3.
All of us then do an about face, a one-eighty, and race back over to the hatch leading down to the Hangar Bay that we had just passed. And as we reach the hatch to take the ladderwell down, a Khaki pops out: a tall, lengthy, black Chief, with a slouching forehead, and with a forehead dis-positioned with enough worrisome looking crisscrossing wrinkles, that we start to feel confounded just looking at. Ah shit! Think I, as I am sure we all do. But, he says nothing. Staring us across, sideways, and away, as he turns and leaves without saying a word. We get lucky. You know... that's another thing about being E-3 and below, anyone about near or ready to don Khaki, all end up becoming our new mommies and daddies, since, we're mostly all eighteen or nineteen, something, years old, and they're all mostly reaching their forties or fifties. Hell, I remember my RDC, AW1 Nordhaus, who one time joked about it. Saying, “Yes, I am your new daddy, and it's now my job to ground you fuckers into the dirt, every chance I get!” And, later, he then even asked us one time to call him, “Big Poppa,” and, funny enough, one of us then did. But the AW1 then chewed that Ricky Dumbshit's ass into Swiss cheese, for not referring to him as “Petty Officer” Big Poppa. We're always supposed to include rank, to remind them, and also us, how much better they are than us—you know! Superiors are superiors!

After taking a couple of flights leading down, we turn out of a hatch, and we're in the Hangar Bay now.
“Okay, Falky, where to now?” Asks AEAN Barbarossa, the last one down the ladderwell and out the hatch.

If a carrier is to be imagined as a floating city, you can then imagine its Hangar Bay as the city's central plaza. It's Time Square. Tomcats, Super Hornets, Prowlers and Hawkeyes, that aren't ready for use up top, can be found down here below, with all their panels and doors flapping open, wide. A lot of birds down here exposing all their vulnerable and valuable inners. And all over them, all the Green Shirts: Wirechasers and Avionics balancing themselves on top, changing out parts, while the Airframers and Powerplants do the same work below, half sticking out of a daily or weekly door, all while reaching for their Tool boxes and Pouches, to replace a ¾ with a ½ inch. It's where everything happens. It's where all the work happens, fixing birds and moving equipment. It's where you'll find the most commotion, since, everyone commutes through here to get to where they're going. Also, for example, like a spaghetti bowl freeway, you'll see so many Squids going to and fro, that sometimes it'll start packing up like traffic. Also, for example, like a city's hubbub, it's also where most come to socialize, since everyone sees everyone down here. Workers coming down here to work, while skaters come down here to pretend to work. Everything happens in the Hangar Bay, that isn't the insanity that takes place on the Flightdeck.

“Falky, we lost?” Inquires Barbarossa.
And with that, the IS3 turns his head around, furiously, to look at Barbarossa, and drops the sides of his face into a frown. The massive AEAN then begins to laugh.
“Ja, ja! Falky, you know where the AO shop is! How are we—”
“Bloody Shamrock's AO shop isn't in the same place it was from the last cruise I remember. I went in there a week ago and found a bunch of Jarheads from that VMFA Squadron, that have decided to join us this cruise, had taken over. Our AO shop has been moved.” Blows up Falconni.
Giving reason for the confusion, so as to not make himself look any more foolish.

As you can imagine, with me and how I feel about the IS3, I am finding this all very amusing. The IS3 is just another crow and chevron-ed, future wannabe nutcase LPO of the US Navy, but still, only second in command (Chief Murdock being first for

Nights). But, I guess it goes with the trade. Once you make PO, that's when the higher sense of purpose and privilege kicks in, even though you're still not exactly in charge. But, still, you're no long just a grunt, either. An eighteen-year-old, fresh out of High School, booter, skater, nobody, looking to strike CV (the way the IS3 would look at me). Now that Falky is a Third, and no E-3 Airman/Seaman, he's not allowed to be all FTN: Fuck The Navy! Any longer. Not no more. But a future would be AJ Lifer. Even though, Falky, doesn't really subscribe his feelings to that, either. So, what you have here is someone stuck somewhere in between. All FTN in secret, yet, all AJ squared away when it comes to appearances. But that ain't going to stop him from taking advantage of his PO-ship. As a Petty Officer, he's still gonna rip into us E-3 and belows, because, he simply can. It's called going crow happy, and I'll get back to that matter another time. When I have a better example to show for. Unlike now, with our IS3 all steaming from the ears, while the rest of us wait for our fearless leader to lead the way. Right now, the IS3 isn't showing much HiMFIC bravado that goes with it, since, he's in an embarrassing predicament right now. I'll get back to the whole “crow happy” matter, when there's a better example to show for it, in all its horror and glory. Wait a while, for I know I'll then have something much more WTF to show when it happens. And when it comes to WTF stuff going down, in VF-451's Line? Or really, VF-451 Bloody Shamrocks, in general! A little while longer... would be much too longer than expected.

“Hey, Petty Officer, mind if I burn one?” I joke, but really also ask.
Right now, I'm hoping something more sympathetic in his nature would give me the chance to.
“Shut up, Navastian!” Snarls the IS3.
Looking more and more flustered as he pans his eyes from side to side.

Funny though! I don't even really smoke, I just pretend to. I don't inhale. Right now, we're standing in the way of a line that's forming, heading out to the smoke pit. With every Hangar Bay, on every carrier (I can imagine), there's always a smoke pit that has a line formed for smoking and regulated by a Boat Chuck. A whole mess of

Sailors forming them on board, wanting to relieve some stress by having a drag. And, as you can imagine, being on an aircraft carrier, dealing with dodging giant metallic airships that go blasting to and fro aboard The Ship. All weighing over fifty tons each, as they go whizzing over a hundred miles an hour within reaching distance of us... well, as I'm saying, there's always plenty enough reason aboard a carrier to have stressed out Squids forming lines to relieve some with a smoke break. And as I said before, I don't even really smoke, I just pretend to, for the same reason a lot of other E-3 and below Squids pretend to: to get a freakin' break once and a while! Seniority is always a lot more sympathetic towards us asking for a cigarette break, compared to any other breaks. Actually! No other breaks—but—cigarette breaks, are allowed. So the Boat is a great place to pick up the nasty habit, or at least to pretend to.

“Maybe we should go from shop to shop and knock!” Joke I.

And I just so happen to pull a good one, at exactly the right time, as it has a couple of the men laughing. They shut it, quick, though, realizing they're laughing to a joke made by a lonely nobody in the Line, like me, and it's not my place to gain such favor. But it's enough to give me a warm feeling, and have the IS3 turn his head, fast, to give a look like he's about to growl at me. But, then, turns his head away, and doesn't. Although. Barbarossa, to my pleasure, continues to laugh. I like the Mexican giant! He's even too big for any stupid politics we might have amongst ourselves, and he'll enjoy whatever he deems is worth his jolly. A good laugh in the IS3's expense, or whosoever's.

“You know, Navastian....”

But then the IS3 shuts it before giving me a piece of his mind. And looking at what he's looking at, I see that he's found one of our AOs. AOAN Almendinger. And Almendinger seems to be headed in the direction, we can only presume, will be his Shop.

“Fuck it! Let's follow the peckerhead!” Decides Falconni.

“But what if he's going up to the Flightdeck, or to the berthing?”

But the IS3 takes off after him, as Almendinger enters a hatch, and heads up the ladderwell.

Funny how the IS3 called him a peckerhead. When it comes to prominent features, all Almendinger is, is a giant Jewish looking nose, attached to a bunch of stilts, only he and his family line would call a frame. And when he walks, he has this peculiar thing he does the entire time he's in motion, which is to watch his hands, as if they're the only ones that know where he should be headed, and he will wait for them to guide him along the way. Peculiar! At least I think so.

And now, following Almendinger, I begin to feel a bit different about being part of this silly posse. Not feeling as much mopey about it, anymore. As I begin to enjoy it a little, as the experience begins giving me the sense that we're all a pack of wolves, out on the hunt, and Almendinger is this goofy looking, long-legged bird, similar to an ostrich, but as dumb as a dodo. And the featherbrained idiot is leading us (or his stupid-ass hands are leading us) to the rest of his stupid-ass flock of goofy looking, AO, dodo, jackass birds. AO3 Ramshaw definitely being the prize-winning turkey, there, amongst his crew! Considering how he's the loudest squawking dodo jackass, there. The type that would do a fly by over us and lay a big fat rotten one over our heads as a sign of greeting. Hell! I have beef with the rambler, too! I remember how he one time threw a large cockroach at me back on base, and said he wanted to see if it would try and roll me up a dung hill. Aye, sir! That's right! He did that! For he's just that much of an insulting jackass! He actually picked up a cockroach, right in front of me... and at first, seeing this, I had begun to imagine how he might decide to eat it, thinking: maybe that's how he gets his protein where he's from? Mama would send him up the bayou, to catch some bugs, rats, possums, and snails, for ingredients for a special Gumbo stew, to fill him and his inbred family's bellies. But then he....

You know, I just realized... I can be a real insulting jackass, myself, having pictured him as being such: a backwards, backwoods hillbilly, that would actually eat bugs

he'd pick up off the ground. But I digress. I'm being a jackass to another jackass. And two jackasses do make a right!

And now, with this new spur of motivation, I feel like taking up on the IS3's bet, and rolling the rambler, myself. Fucking A! I need this! Think I, for I really don't feel like continuing to play out the role of the biggest heel in our Shop any longer. And as we get to a deck level just below the Flightdeck, I find myself up in front of the pack, stepping out into another passageway, and right then and there, I run right into the AO3 Turkey, himself.

"Fucking Ramshaw!" Sneers the IS3, behind me.

BROWN VS. RED

AO3 Ramshaw just looks up at me as I look down at him. He sees me, sees the IS3, then Barbarossa—most definitely—since he takes up the most space amongst our crew. And back at me, again. And as I smile all maliciously like at him, AO3's hairs on the back of his neck begin to stand on end and turn white. He begins to shrivel up in form. His face contorts into a look of dread (a funny look of dread it is, too! His face contorting so badly, making him go cross-eyed, almost). And he begins to jitter a little in place, like a mangy interbreed freak would do, jittering from his lousy interbreed genetic makeup struggling to support life in his mangy form.

"Aww!"

And then he squirms, as he comes to terms with what we're here to do. And the squirm comes off so mangy and shrill, our ears begin to ring, from the irritable sharpness of it.

"Navastian .... GET THE FUCKER!" Orders the IS3.

And I just about leap in to do so. But the AO3 then puts up his defenses:

"AWW!" Squirms out AO3 Ramshaw, again.

So loud and shrill, this time, that it startles me for a second, as he sprays me in the face with piss and spit, as a prey would spray a predator with its juices. AO3 Ramshaw then takes off, rushing back to his Shop, while screaming his silly head off. He rushes through a hatch, turns right, as we rush and turn right, right after him.

“The Line fuckers are coming! The Turd Shirts are COMING!” Alerts AO3 Ramshaw, as he nears his Shop.
And from his call of warning, two more Red Shirts pop out to see what all the commotion is about.
“Hey, Line Rats! Get the FUCK back! FUCK OFF! FUCK—AWW!"
And then I sack the AO3, cutting him off, before he's able to throw in anymore insults our way. At that time, he had already reached the entrance to his Shop, turned around, and looked back, seeming all relieved, while smiling, as if he thought he would be in the clear. And safe. But, the thing is, there wasn't any boundaries separating us from him, and his station, no invisible walls, so as I sack the AO3 Turkey, I sack him, hard, and so hard, that I get myself, and him, to fly into his Shop, and through two of the AOs that had popped out to stand before the entrance as guards.
“AWW! WWA!” Squirms out the AO3, again.
Breathing his shrill wails in and out of his mouth and nose. And the sounds he makes, breathing in, sound even more agitating than it does going out. Wails, as I get a good lock on the fucker, having him on his stomach, while I lay on top of him, holding him at half-nelson.
“AWW! WWA! AWW!”
Shut the fuck up! Stop fighting. I GOT YOU! Stop resisting. But then Ramshaw elbows me in the face, and then tries to bite me, as I get a hold of his other arm, as I get him into a full nelson.
Chomp!
Goes Ramshaw, as he tries to take a bite at me, yet again.
Stop it! Stop trying to—
CHOMP!
And this time, gets a hold of my forearm, as he locks on, and thrashes his face about, as if wanting to tear off a chunk of me.
“AWW!” Scream I, this time, from the pain.
The AO3 then tries to break away from me, clawing his way away, but I grab him by his shins, and pull him in. At this point, I also take a look around to see how the rest

of the roll up party is doing. The two AOs that had stood fast at the entrance are now being tackled by Barbarossa, by himself, as he decoms one by throwing him over his shoulder, high and dry (dry docking the fucker, you can say), and holding him tight. While holding the other one in a head lock. AOAN Almendinger is also in The Shop and seems to be the only other AO left. And I see that Derbytown has managed to get a hold of him, locking his arms around his back, as he lifts him up, and swings him around, dosey-doe, around The Shop, and into Toolboxes, chairs, and tables.
“WHOA, BOY! We got these motherfuckers, now!” Brews Quimby.
You haven't got shit, yet, Shipmate! Think I, as I watch him, Falconni, Rudebaker, and the rest, just standing back and watching the three of us at work.
“AWW! WWA! AWW!” Squirms out AO3 Ramshaw, some more.
Then tries to bite me, again, as I drag him in fully into my hold.
CHOMP!
“STOP trying to bite me, YOU PIECE OF—”
CHOMP!
“Someone, HELP me with this!” I call out.
But the rest of my crew still just stand there, smiling down at me, getting a kick out of watching me struggle with the biter.
CHOMP!
“For fuck sakes... HELP ME!”
And now they react.
“Good shit, Navastian... good shit! Nice to see you finally showing some effort.” Exonerates the IS3.
And for a second, there, I enjoy it.
CHOMP!
“AWW! The fucker's biting my HIP!”
Everyone now begins laughing as they listen to me screaming. And. The tini-tiny moment I get to actually enjoy being a part of this Shop, and part of this crew, dissipates, as I am reminded how no one still gives a damn about me, as they only see me for my usefulness. And, for the moment, the entertainment value of watching me in pain.

“Okay, Quimby, bust out the duct tape!”
And Quimby does so. Pulling it out, and stretching out a long cut of it. But, as he starts to walk over with the cut, to put it to good use, it dawns on me then that... Ramshaw, Almendinger, Kohlen, Cochburn... wait? Not all of the Night Check AOs have yet been accounted for.
“Hey, wait... where're the Texans?” I bring up.
And before any of us can spend a productive minute wondering where, D-Boy, A-Wall, and H-Town, all three, in that very moment, all rush in. And when they rush in, all that our senses are able to pick up from that moment on out is their presence, and their massive, MASSIVE form, as they make a whole lot of noises. A WHOLE lot. Thump! Bump! Boom! Pow! And bam! And then, Brown Shirts, Brown Shirts, Brown Shirts everywhere, getting tossed around like salad. And. Wow! I have to now note, this is all happening so fast, with them three gigantors, that I'm no longer even sure what I have a hold of, or what has a hold of me. It's like in them Loony Tunes cartoons, where all you see is a cloud of dust being kicked up when a fight breaks out, and with tables and chairs being tossed out from the center of the havoc. A Loony Tunes cartoon, all with a Merry Melodies of these three being all comical on the side:
“Oh! It's an INFESTATION! Our Shop's been infested with rats. Do you not see this, D-Boy, do you not see?”
“Oh, I do, H-Town, I most certainly do! Oh, Lordy, Lordy, Lordy, Lordy! What are we to do, in this time of need?”
Three very, very, very massive figures running in, as they begin tearing up the joint, all with a song and dance number.
“Oh Lordy, indeed! What truly is to be, please, tell me? Someone, show some lead!” Shouts H-Town.
“Should we bash 'em? Should we mash 'em? And then throws them all into one giant stewing pot, to later on feed?”
“Feed, you say? Feed... on rodents such as these? Oh Lordy, Lordy! What has come of us, when we're being forced to be reckoned with, with such low-down dirty deeds?”

“Yes, indeed, low down and dirty, but necessary, still, they need to be.”
Bang! Pow!
“I guess, indeed.”
Thump! Bump! Bam!
“Don't guess, believe!”
And now comes A-Wall's bit, added to the contribution:
“But, to believe, you need eyes to see, ears to hear, and a mouth to ask all question about. For the whys and the whats, will always be more important than the whos and whens and hows.”
And... everyone now sorta stops. As A-Wall sorta kills it.
“Whiskey Tango Foxtrot, A-Wall... what the fuck is that supposed to mean, anyways?”
Lets out H-Town, all disappointed.
“I don't know, if I had a college education, to know a damn thing I'm saying, I wouldn't be here.”
And... okay then?

I then have a moment to look around, and see what the hell is going on, since their intervention. And what I see is this: D-Boy taking care of Hats and Kats and Navarro, all by himself. As A-Wall, and a few other AOs, struggling with Barbarossa. And it seems as if though Rudy has vacated the premises, for the coward is nowhere in sight. And then I see our IS3, standing, with is arms folded up, like some General, not playing any part of this conflict, directly. Except to indirectly coordinate and supervise. Except... the shrimp is just standing there, staring at me, as I stare back at him! So, WHAT THE FUCK? Also, Donnelly, doing the same behind him, and... everyone seems to be avoiding him, and he seems to have a certain peculiar smile on his face. As for the rest, not much else to make out, but H-Town, who now lets go of the down and defeated Quimby, and now I see how he's beginning to focus his attention onto... HOLY JESUS! On ME!
No...!
No!
No!

No... wait!

But then he lunges out, and I still, or I think I still... wait... yes! I do still, have Ramshaw in some sort of hold.

“GET OVER HERE!”

NO! Stay AWAY from me, Southgate! I freak out, not wanting anything as big as him getting involved with what I can and can't handle. Since, obviously, in no ways would I be able to handle him. Obviously, size would matter greatly how he would be able to manhandle my 5'9, 170-pound self, since he's at least around 6'7, and around 330 pounds (Not fat, but all bulk and muscle. And he definitely exceeds the weight requirement according to his height, but, let’s pretend, like the whole Squadron pretends, like he himself will pretend, he’s not in any way). Stay AWAY! SHIT! And as I escape his mitts, Ramshaw gets his chance to break away. And now Southgate places his full undivided attention onto me, getting excited, seeing how intimidated I get to his formidable presence. Oh, fuck me. He's BIG! I stress, as I see Southgate fully centered, as he lunges after me, again. I cower away, then, and around a table, as he then runs around it, himself, after me, motioning a bit faster to catch up.

“Don't be scared, little Line Rat. I won't hurt you... MUCH! I just want to skin ye a little, and use your scuzzy pelt to make a cute little bowtie, that I'll wear every day, to remind me of YOU.”

And as I escape his mitts, again, running around their AO table, that has bomb parts on it... or something, I hear AO3 Ramshaw calling out.

“Heads UP, Navastian!”

Turning my head around, I see Ramshaw holding a yellow balloon. Oh shit! I gasp, for I know what this means. Ramshaw then tosses the balloon at me, and as it hits me, it pops, and I get splashed with all the lighter fluid contents inside. Ramshaw then lights a match.

“NO! NO! NO! NO! NO!” Plead I.

But Ramshaw tosses the light at me, anyways, and now I'm ignited into flames.

“Oh, wow! That's actually very pretty.” Comments Hats, under D-Boy's massive heap.

“Oh SHIT! I'm burning!” I cry out, as I begin panicking.

Spinning around in circles, as I try to put out the flames by scuffing at it with my hands. But then Ramshaw pulls out a container of lighter fluid, grins at me all wicked like, and then squirts the contents of the container onto me from a funneled end.
“No! STOP! I'm fuckin' BURNING!”
But Ramshaw continues to squirt lighter fluid onto me, as the flames go higher. I then run around The Shop being chased by AO3 Ramshaw, as he continues to try and give me 3rd degree burns.
“Stop it! STOP! STOP!”
Everyone then begins to laugh at the spectacle I am making. I be a Sceamin' Alpha, and they're laughing with laughs coming out hard and maniacal. Laughter coming from the AOs, and even from my own crew. AO3 Ramshaw then chases me out of The Shop, as I run down the passageway, still frantically spinning in circles, while still scuffing at whatever bright flashes I see combusting off my person, while running and screaming my silly head off. I then turn a corner, and plow face first into AO1 Montenegro. The head LPO in charge of the AOs for Nights.
“Navastian, what the HELL are you—”
“I’m on fire!”
“What?”
“I'm on FIRE!”
“You’re NOT on fire!”
That throws me off with all my panicking frantically and mindlessly, as I look down at my person, at pause, and realize that what AO1 Montenegro is saying is true: I'm not on fire. Well, at least not anymore. Looking now up at Montenegro, I see a heavy-set man, a heavily tanned and bronzed Cuban, with a Red Shirt, worn over a pile of boulders for a body. Who isn't quite fond of me standing in his way, very un-squared away like, as I'm guessing I'm looking right about now. All silly, still, and a bit panic stricken. And for a First Class like him, who's as easily annoyed as he is angered as he is annoyed, I guess I'm looking very, very, very unsat and un-squared away like. And since the First Class is one of those overly proud sorts, that likes to wear his outstanding Military Bearing as a badge of honor, I can see how I'm gonna get some

animosity from the likes of him. Since he's just an overly prideful man, with an imaginary license to berate all those that ain't.

“What you doing, Navastian? What you doing down here close to my Shop? Does Chief Murdock know you're down here?” Presses the AO1.

Pressing me with his bulky pecks, as he begins pumping them up with his hands, all clenching together.

“I just... I just...?”

“You just... what!” Presses the AO1, again.

And he's not liking how pitiful I'm being with my response. The Cubano then continues to stand all macho and strong, since, the heavy-set Cubano is just macho like that. For being a macho asshole isn't just a characteristic trait, it's a way of life. A passion. A culture, that has its own customs and language. Which I speak zilch of, since, my cock isn't the size of a pimple, on the ass of a chinchilla, and I have no reason to overcompensate THIS MUCH to prove that I am a man.

“What are you doing here, Navastian?” Fronts Montenegro.

All thuggish and gangsta life-ish. But under Navy colors. And... all his macho-ing is doing is starting to piss me off. Macho-ing doesn't work on me, the way it does on others, I guess, and I find myself talking back, instead of being all intimidated. Which isn't the effect, I'm sure, Montenegro is looking for. So sorry, AO1, but I can't help it. Calling a man out for having a little dick, all while trying to overcompensate, is just in my nature like that.

“Navastian, I'm gonna ask you—”

“I don't answer to you!”

“WHAT?” Explodes the AO1.

And now, I realize, I shouldn't be doing this. I shouldn't talk back, no matter how intolerable I find his posing on me to be. I can get into a lot of trouble talking back at an E-6 LPO. Damn, damn me and my nature.

“What you just say?”

His eyes are now speaking sermons to me, of all the things he'd like to do to me. I say nothing, letting it go, to let him know, I didn't mean to go there. AO1 now stops sheering at me.

“One more time, Navastian... what are you doing here?”
And now, I just feel like telling him the truth.
“Your boys....”
“What about my boys?” He cracks.
“....”
And I respond with nothing, for I know with me talking smack about his boys isn't going to not get him anymore angrier.
“Don’t you have a Jet you’re supposed to be on?” He tells me.
Figuring he's got me at subordinate now.
“How about you get yo' happy ass back to your Jet, and—”
“How about you get your boys in line, and—”
“WHAT?” Blasts the AO1, outraged that I took it further.
“....”
And... I go back to not saying a word.
“....”
And neither does the AO1. But does lean in and breathes heavily onto me. Breathes in, breathes out, as if gasping for air, after spending a minute pummeling my face in, in his thoughts. He then stares, keeps staring, and then I realize the reason that he is, is because I is. For I'm also doing the same, so I stop. Shit! Fuck! Hell. I think. As I turn around, and walk away, and I could be in some real hot water for what I just done. Montenegro continues to watch, as I turn, and I can now just feel his hot stares on the back of my neck. Shit! For a second there, matters were almost handled unofficially.

Heading back up to my Jet, I find the towbar I was on before, with AM3 Turnipseed, and he's still sitting there. I then walk over and take over where I left off: sitting next to him. While freezing my nuts off, in the dark.
“Did you find another jacket?” He asks.
But, obviously, I haven't.
“Hey... what? Ha, ha! Why you rolling your eyes at me like that?” Turnipseed asks.
And I respond by rolling my eyes at him, again.

ALL ABOUT NAVASTIAN

Sunrise over the Pacific. And. Finally! My shift is over with. Finally! Fuckin' finally! Think I, while standing ready, and waiting next to my bird. Standing, shivering, with my hands stuffed behind my flight jacket, staring off into the horizon, as I watch it slowly giving birth to a new day sun, as it rises up off the ocean's surface. Get the fuck up there! I think. HURRY THE FUCK UP! Get up, and warm me up some! God, I don't know if I could take another hour of this! But then I try to fancy a little the beauty displayed before me: all of God's creation. For really, truly, nothing comes close to the heavenly beauty of seeing such a sight, watching a giant golden orb rise from what seems like out of the ocean, rise up high into its heavenly throne, as it seats itself before a new empirical age of existence. Godly forces are at work right now, beyond the comprehension of mortal men, such as you or I. I feel it, and I feel my consciousness stretch out into its eternity, into its glory, I feel it… and then think: hurry the FUCK up, I don't give a SHIT! Hurry, hurry! Chop, chop! I'm still freezing my….

And now another gush of freezing winds.

Oh! Let me just go home! Go to my rack. My hole. My lovely hole, where I don't have to freeze no more, and deal with any more Navy jackasses. Fuck you, sunrise! I don't give a shit how pretty you are! I've been seeing your ass every day for a month, now, straight, and you've outstayed your welcome. No, I don't care no more. I don't! I'm done.

But, I then wait, keep waiting, and keep waiting some more, still. Still freezing my nuts off for an hour or so more. Since, what had happened was, we had sailed into a new time zone, which I hadn't been aware of. Which then left my work shift with another hour to go….

"Fuck!"

And within that hour of waiting to be relieved, I then watched clouds form over the new day sun, blockading any rays of warmth that would shine on through, as I

continued to freeze, freeze some more, felt like I had just frozen to death and then been thawed back to life... just to freeze my nuts off even some more, still, again. And then felt even stronger, colder winds, blowing in from the Korean Sea, which took my freezing my nuts off up to a higher plane of WHAT-THE-FUCK-NESS! And after an hour of experiencing that sheer freezing, excruciating hell, I finally adapted, and then began to feel different. I adapted and began to feel different. Adapted, and began to think: WHY AM I ACTING LIKE THIS? This is the whole reason I joined in the first place. And it was, too.

Me.
Here.
Standing before my Jet. Standing in my rugged Flightdeck attire, that looks all crusted and worked over, but still being able to take it. Cranial over my head. Visor placed down to cut off the wind's chilling touch from freezing my eyeballs, stiff. Chilling, freezing, Korean winds coming down from the north to lift me up off the deck a little, and it all feels like an adventure. I'm on a grand adventure, the type I fantasized over the first time I looked into a Join-The-Navy pamphlet in the Recruiter's Office, back home in Los Angeles. This was what I signed up for. It was all for this. I wanted this. And now, I have it. Sure, there has been hell to pay, freezing hell, but, that's always the point of having an adventure, there's not supposed to be anything comforting about it. Quite the opposite, actually. Freezing winds. Being forced to live out at sea for six months at a time out of a year. And all these whacky Shipmates around me, a bunch of crazy fuckfaces, all trying to fuck me up some, every chance they can possibly get. This all = an adventure. And really... what I should be doing is enjoying this. And that, there, is the problem. Or, I, am the problem. Not all this. Not those jackasses I call my fellow Line mates. Not no Khaki. Not anything, but me. And deep down, I know it.
“I don't want to be just another Shitbag. I want to make something of the next three years that I have left, something to be proud of. Something to remember.” I whisper to myself.

And, that really is my answer. That, there, be my resolution. But as sane and sound as my thoughts are about it on the surface, now, how I feel underneath, is another matter. Like the ocean, so much swimming underneath it all. So much depth. So many... unknowns. And unknowns that are really starting to scare me. What I'm speaking of are my emotions. Aye! Them damn things. Them non-Navy things! Emotions! And even though my rational thoughts feel sane and sound, my emotions, on the other hand...? I feel them underneath being anything but.

“Fucking... emotions! Fucking can't use that word here, definitely not here, unless I'm to have everyone take me for a....”

I whisper, again, but not finishing the sentence.

So, what are the state of my emotions, you're wondering? Well, how do I explain what utter chaos feels like? And, if I was to tell you it feels like nothing, would that make much sense? Considering chaos is supposed to be a whole lot of something going on, not nothing. But, I feel nothing. Nothing inside. Empty. Hollow. Nothingness. And also, a whole lot of something craziness, at the same time: angered, deranged, frustrated, sad, lonely, bored... and a little giddy. And as I think about my resolution, rationally, about how I shouldn't let anything get to me, the undeniable fact is, emotionally, EVERYTHING is getting to me! And whatever resolution I have matters not! We don't want your stupid resolve! I feel the Old Ones within the depths of me sounding out. For they have their own secrets and agendas, and whatever they are, scares me. Ah! The Old Ones? The murky Old Ones, that reside within the depths of my oceans....

But... ha! What a bunch of nonsense, still. I must be freakin' losing it! Or, am I?

Donnelly was right, though, about one thing: I need to really let go, and to start looking at things in a lighter note.

Hmm....

And now I wonder....

Or, I am trying to wonder....

Wait....
What am I trying to wonder for, again? Oh great, I forgot! Something is escaping me. There's something, a feeling I feel, that I feel is escaping me, now. Something important, but, I can't tell what it is no more. Where it came from, and what it was supposed to mean. I guess what I'm trying to say, is, I feel like I'm spread too thinly with everything I've been going through. Yes! With everything I've been experiencing. For a month straight, now, this Boat's pretty much been circling off the shores of Japan, and with everything, considering all that I've gone through… I don't know! I feel as thinly spread out as the surface of the ocean that I am now looking at, all laid out before me in a 360° direction. Water, water everywhere… fuck! It's all over the place! Is there an end to all this? Is there an end to all this water? If we keep sailing in, let's say... the direction I'm facing, would we eventually come across land? Someplace, somewhere, where the surface isn't constantly moving, like it's a living and breathing thing. Of course, I know there is, I know there's land, I know the entire globe isn't one vast ocean spread from one end, circled around, and met back again with its tail end....

Oh great, I'm thinking weird, again. Barnacles! My mind is doing it, again.

That escaping feeling, I guess what it is, is my senses. I'm losing my senses. Before this month of having to be out here, I remember how I used to feel different. How I felt different about me, my station in life, who I was, where I was from, and what all of it summed up to and meant. But, all those senses of oneself, I feel, are now lost. And I don't know who I am anymore, where I'm from, and what it all means. I mean. I still know who I am based on the information I have on my Military ID: my name, my age, my social security number. I'm not losing my mind. But I don't sense them anymore. For my sense of self now feels like it's taking on a different meaning. Strange!

Well, whatever, Navastian, just do what you're doing! Just stand here and wait to be relieved. I guess... I need sleep. And to stop freezing my nuts off for just one damn—NO! NO! NO! Don't remind yourself how cold it is, again...!

Just do what you're doing! Just stand here and waits to be....

And then I see my relief stepping out of the Ratways across the Flightdeck. There he is, now, between 108 and 101, stepping out, and then starting to make his way over to me. It's AMAN Coppersmith. I smile seeing him. And as he approaches, I see him fidgeting around with his expressions, not wanting to face me and make eye contact, like I have something to give him, which he wants nothing of.

But... well, too bad, Coppersmith! I've done finished my shift, time for you to do yours. Although, I do like the Day Checker, even though, now and then, coming off as being a bit too self-absorbed in his prissy "don't bother me when I'm looking and feeling this good" ways. But, he's nineteen. Nineteen years old. And when in civis, him looking good with a New Era cap turned to one side, a diamond earing, and a Ja Rule CD in his CD player, listening in through his headphones: that's all pretty much the extent of what he's capable of, of as character, and the extent in his abilities in interacting in social circles in a meaningful manner. So, calling him vapid and vain would be uncalled for, considering his limitations. So, therefore, I like him. He still smiles friendly enough at me, and manners himself well enough, too, and to be nice. And I like him. Him, and also most of everyone else that's on Day Check. Honestly, if it wasn't for Day Check's LCPO, AMCS Hamakua, I probably would prefer working on that shift. But that ol' fat Hawaiian Senior Chief is, well... one very, very scary man. A real slave driver. A real tyrant. And in comparison, to all the unsavory and unsupervised "lord of the flies" crap I have to deal with on Nights, STILL, it wouldn't be worth it switching over. I'll speak about that man in greater detail, later.
"Yeah..." Stretches Coppersmith, looking away while massaging the back of his neck. And, seeing how scarce he's trying to make himself as, it's only then I figure how there's to be bad news.

“Yeah... Senior says you got EMI.”
“I got, WHAT?” Blast I, hoping I heard Coppersmith wrong.
“Senior's pissed, dawg! He heard from AO1 Montenegro you were giving him lip. And said you got EMI till launch.”
And what that means is that I'm probably going to be stuck out here for another four to five hours. Four to five hours into Day Check. Making it a grand total of a possible eighteen-hour workday. Which would then give me a grand total of six hours to head down, eat breakfast, shower, and hit the rack. Then wake up to do all this bullshit again tomorrow (or, really, later this evening). Fuckin' JARTGO! BOHICA! And it's at this point I go off.
“Fucking BULLSHIT! FUCK... I'm to launch? FUCK! Fuck, fuck, FUCK! NO! WHAT THE... that means I might be here for another FIVE hours. Or, maybe even longer. I might end up being here ALL DAY until Night Check starts up again! I might....”
And I then give up, for there's no point in fighting it.
“Yeah... sorry, dawg.”
There's nothing I can do to stop this. Till launch! I am to be up here that much longer. And now, the thought of not seeing my rack until then, makes me feel like I am going to start shedding tears. Tears! EMI: Extra Military Instructions. Or, in other words, I've been a naughty boy as of late, and I need to be punished. I am to be grounded. Another four to five hours of carrying out with my work shift, as I go on to prep my bird for launch. While my relief, here, stands by, in case I am to go off my freakin' rocker, and decide to dive off the freakin' Ship. Decide to relieve myself of my own freakin' command. Aye! And then Coppersmith would have to take over to finish prepping my bird, while I would go on fighting off giant jellyfish in the waters below, since they'd be trying to eat me, then.

You know, on just about every cruise, there is always that one Sailor whose mind goes gear adrift and loses it. That one dark horse that wins the race by running it backwards, in the opposite direction. That one twilight Sailor that sails into the magic hour, in a world where there is no magic. Ends up becoming one of those Squids, who veers off the main course that everyone else has been trekking and finds himself

at that other place. That other place. Having been led there to that phantom shop, in between decks on The Ship, where a voice in the dark can be heard by one Chief Nowondere, who briefs him with that day's itinerary, of how to permanently relieve oneself of their lawfully ordain duties—forever! And this cruise has already had two such Sailors tasked with such a last detail. One Seaman Jangles, and one other Seaman Fickler. And the way the story goes: the two were having a conversation over faith and altering one's reality. The concept the two discussed being about how sometimes a simple action was all it took to change things, forever. How, maybe, the reality we lived in wasn't the real one, and all it took was one leap of faith, to have us break on through to the other side.

They conversed about such philosophical matters....

But then... ha! Started conversing over silly fantasy. Over mythological sea creatures such as leviathans, and sunken cities, and mermaids, and Barnacles! And since everyone aboard right now is suffering from some major, major form of blue balls, or another. Those two lonely limp noodles started joking about jumping Ship and playing smiles with a bunch of mermaids. Or, in other words, floating above water, while getting blown by them mer-ladies down below. And, I guess, that was enough to get them to do what they did, finally, to dive off: Mermaid head! That's what it supposedly took. And the two then did. Of course, the Navy is always prepared at times like these (aye, prepared, to deal with their boys wanting BJs from some mer-bitches, and there's even an article about it in the Bluejacket's manual. Look it up)! And, so, a rescue Helo was immediately sent out to fetch the two Ariel Anglers. And once brought aboard, they were immediately checked into The Ships five-star hotel, Hotel Bread & Water, or, the Brig (bread and water is all they supposedly feed you in the Brig, that, or that's what they trying to scare us into thinking). Although, a couple of days ago, I saw Seaman Jangles and Fickler in the galley, having been escorted up by some MAs. And from the expression I saw on their faces, while sitting and chowing down, they seemed so... happy, then. So much at peace with their poor choices in life. Their leap of faith. Makes me think how easy it is to lose

oneself and find oneself veered off into that direction. So easy, I think, as I begin to stare at the waters below me, and sense there being certain peculiar properties at work there, too. Faintly hearing... music... resonating from its spellbinding waves. That great enemy to all seafaring men: Siren music!

“Hey, Navastian... NO! Don't do it! Don't!” Jokes Coppersmith.

Obviously, knowing exactly what I am thinking about at this very moment, since we're all on the same Boat when it comes to matters such as these. Same Boat, in both the literal and figurative sense in such matters. Such morbid matters. Since everyone aboard knows the story of those two Section 8 cases. Everyone, and also Coppersmith, here. I now turn around and smile at him.

“NO! Navastian... leave those poor sea ladies alone.”

“But they sing so beautifully... I just—”

“NO!” Snaps Coppersmith.

And shakes his index finger, once, at me. I then frown, hard, while crossing my arms. I look now how a child would look, trying to comically mimic an adult that's genuinely upset.

“No, Navastian, and that's final!”

“But, what if the head they give is just that damn good?” I wonder, out loud.

And now I have Coppersmith stroking his chin as I get him to wonder, also.

“Hmm.” Brews Coppersmith.

“Hmm... INDEED!” I interject.

Coppersmith then smiles at me, seeing the humor behind it all. And at that moment, seeing the humor behind it all, myself, ends up making me frown. For some reason. And frown, hard.

SEND IN THE TOMCATS

No! Fuck being all FTN! Fuck thinking JARTGO or BOHICA. Work...! Work is what I need to think about right now. For work can be happiness. Focusing all your mind on a turning wrench, holding onto a fastener in your hand, and dealing with the elements, since we work outside, and this all can = the solution. A freakin' resolution I can count on. Sometimes JP-5 fuel or hydraulic fluid might begin leaking down to my hand while I'm turning something, and run down my arm, as I feel the cold

chilling wind excite my senses along its path. I don't know. There's something to like about the whole drudgery. The toil. The painstaking hours spent frozen in that frame doing one's lawfully ordained work. Working out something that's on the outside, while working on something that's also within. This can be happiness. This is what I need to focus on if I'm to get past this. This is what I have to discipline myself as a—MUST!

“Okay, so, I need to go down and get a Tool Pouch.” I mention, seeing as I have nothing else to do now but get to it.

AMAN Coppersmith then shakes his head at me and begins taking off his.

“It's already checked out in your name.” He informs.

Then hands it to me to put it on. And I begin, then.

SO... LET'S GET TO IT! Let's get to tending to my bird in the matter of prepping it for launch. My bird, 107, Strange Magic (name of the bird... or, was), happens to be her. This giant hunk of metal right here. This war hero. This most formidable and most badass of foe in the US Navy's arsenal. Mr. Danger Zone. The REAL star of that Top Gun movie (not that short-made-to-look-tall actor, with the ever-present cocky grin). The Jet that'll make every other Jet pilot turn their heads and make them wish they were flying. Hornets? Super Hornets? Prowlers? Fuck 'em! They ain't got shit on these Cadillacs of the skies. Hell! Go ahead and throw in some Air Force birds of prey, those Eagles and Falcons. Double fuck 'em, too! Those multimillion-dollar paper airplanes that those Uncle Sam's Ass Fuckers like to call warbirds, ain't got shit on what our warbirds are capable of. I like to see them try and joust with this titanium framed ol' battle axes of a Jet, of mine, just to watch them get sliced in half by its massive wingspan. And... SURE! Jets don't joust, but these ones possibly could (of course they can NEVER, but, you can't deny how much fun it would then be to see them try). Simply put: Tomcats = they don't make them like they used to. Just a few days ago, we had an ordeal when some stupid skylarking Yellow Shirt, who wasn't paying attention to what he was doing, taxied a damn FA-18 Super Hornet way too dangerously close to one of our birds, and clipped the nose of that Super Hornet with AD3 Rudy's Jet, 101's, along its wing. Hell! Did that turn into a

shit storm. Nothing like watching aircrafts collide into one another, just because of one ignoramus Yellow Shirt (none of us Airdales like Yellow Shirts, and I'll get to later on explain why that is). Watch them collide, then watch every Khaki or First Class pop out of the wood works, and watch their fat egos collide some more with one another, as well. All of our Squadron's Chiefs siccing onto that poor Second Class Yellow Shirt, while the Yellow Shirt's own superiors either pop out to defend him. OR! Also chew his ass inside out for fucking up so royally. What it really comes down to: them Boat Chucks Vs. us Wing Nuts. But with mustachioed fat superiors involved. None of us lowlife Blues. Watching them all hurdle around and challenging each other to a belly bouncing contest, considering how fat they all mostly are, as they mouth each other out at the top of their lungs.

(Which is stupid, since, it happing during Flight Ops, where you have engines turning all around you, and... do you know how deafeningly loud a Jet engine can be)?

Doing all that, while their heads bop about, and the mouth pieces of their cranial mics get entangled together, in the process. It's just CHAOS! Still. Entertaining for the rest of us to witness.
“Get yer head outta yer ASS!” Our Green Shirt Khaki would yell.
“NO! YOU get YER head out of YER ASS!” Their Yellow Shirt Khaki would follow.
“No, YOU first!”
“No, YOU first!”
“Why don't ye BLOW ME while I give ye a THIRTEEN BUTTON SALUTE!”
“Why doesn't yer MOTHER while I do the same!”
That bit of tongue-in-cheek entertainment, while the rest of us FTN strikers squat down and watch the Lifers kick up dust, all while enjoying some Copenhagen dip, the long cut kind. But anyways... roger that! So, yeah! It was fun watching just what happens when Jets collide. And both our Tomcat and that Super Hornet were then rushed down to the Hangar Bay to see what repairs they would need. Our Tomcat... barely had its pain job ruined. That Super Hornet... torn to shreds. And that's what I

mean when I say the Tomcat is one of those birds that were built to last. For, being in its presence, I swear, one could just feel its aura of badass-ness, emanated all around. The type you would expect from a classic muscle car but re-imagined with wings—for it could fly! And at MACH speeds, which in our childlike minds, just makes it sound that much more badass. Since Mach rhymes with COCK, and sorta also with FUCK! (or, it does, if you were to reword it as FOCK) Sorta! And... YES! We're really that immature about it, too! But that's just how these wonder birds make us feel. And they gots sidewinders, and Vulcan cannons attached. And can carry the mother of all missiles, the Phoenix missile. And anything named after a mythological creature—YOU KNOW—is one fucker of all mothers! Bending over that Greek goddess, Hera, and introducing her to what it is to be a mortal female, with one's ass up in the air, both begging and resenting the will to—GET SOME—by the largest phallically shaped object that's ever been carried between the struts. More simply put, Tomcat = baddest motherfucking Jet, you will ever GET! With enough phallic shaped boom booms attached, it could inspire Leo Tolstoy to write a sequel to War and Peace, seeing as how much warring and loving peacemaking this alpha bird is capable of. They're that bad! They're simply that vicious! The Navy would draw teeth on these apex air predators, and adorn their crowns with horns, but they wouldn't, for that would simply be too much for the Geneva convention to accept. Scaring the crap out of all bogies half to death after witnessing these flying battleaxes of the sky. And that would just be too much of an unfair tactical advantage going in its favor (Even though we're AMERICANS and are all about abusing unfair tactical advantages). But that would just be too much of a terrifying sight to witness, beholding the sight of these winged Vikings' revelation into the modern world.

Aye, sir! As much negative feelings I might have for our VF Squadron and its personnel, I have nothing but complete admiration and awe for what it's all really all about: these warbirds. And with that thought, I smile at my 107, and I truly forget for a minute the shitty night I've been having.

So... what is it that I need to do, now? I wonder, realizing I had forgotten all the details of what I had done over the course of last night when it came to its Daily. Wait? Did I dive the ducts last night? Shit, I can't remember! And as I walk over to the ducts, I feel another chilling wind blowing at my back, and up my spine, and I hear the blades turning inside. And then I think: BARNACLES! HELL! As I decide to put off checking them for later. FUCKING A! Did I check the blades last night AT ALL? I really can't remember. And that really is a problem, too.

As I continues to do my pre-flight checks, that, and waiting for the Purple Shirts to come by with the fuel, I half watches over everything going on, on the Flightdeck. Since we're the only Tomcat Squadron aboard the CVN, and since our birds are some of the more intimidating figures up top, one will mostly find us and our birds back here at the aft end of The Ship. Like the sort of anti-establishment, and anti-"WHAT YOU GOT," rebel without a cause sort of teens in a High School class room, you will find most of our trouble making lot all the way back here, sittin' very shady and sketchy like, at the rearrest end. Sittin' and starin' all mischievously at all the others, all the other classmates, and teacher, and the direction today's lessons will be steerin' in. Bad boys will be bad boys, I guess. All us Tomcats back here. And as for our counterparts, all them Hornet and Super Hornets, those goody-two-shoes, squared away, preppy little dipshits, they'll always be found at the front end, at the bow end. With their hands up in the air, ready and waiting to answer all the teacher's questions. Or, the Yellow Shirts' questions, in this sense. Since they're preppies, and they're popular, and all the girls in the classroom think they're so pretty (while the rest of us boys have a different "P" word we like to describe them as).

There's us two. And. Finally. Then there's the rest aboard the carrier, and if we're to continue likening the Flightdeck to that of an American High School classroom. There's:

- Us, Tomcats: bad boys.
- Them, Hornets: preppies.

Then the Helos, the Prowlers, the Hawkeyes, and Cads. And those birds, I guess, would sit somewhere in between our Tomcat's tough as nails, and 'em Hornet's prissy as fuck, extremes. For instance:

- The Helos: would be the special students. Needing special arrangements to conduct their launches. And requiring their own special classrooms to conduct their own flight ops. Since they're so SPECIAL, and incapable of handling our own.
- The Prowlers: would be the jocks. A bunch of bulky planes all trying to act big and tough, but, like the type of jocks found at a High School that's run by gang members, would get WRECKED if they even dared and tried stepping up to the likes of us Tomcats. They'll sit in the middle of the class, not cool enough to sit back here with us, but not prissy enough to want anything to do with the preppy Hornets, nor the nerdy Hawkeyes. And speaking of which....
- The Hawkeyes: as mentioned, they would be the nerds. The socially awkward lot, all about their nerdy shit and calculus, and shit the rest of us wouldn't get, since, most of the rest of us (even the preppy Hornet douchebags) aren't really that into their nerdy shit, and we would like to get laid once in a while. No one gets the Hawkeyes, and no one wants to get them, or be around them (and for more reason than this semblance to a nerdy kid in the High School would allow) and during flight ops, are always left alone to do their own higher learning.

And finally, there's:

- The Cads: and... Cads, do mail service. And... I don't know what personality I can liken them to. I don't know! Maybe... that one fat kid, no one cares about, or no one knows exists, that asks to go use the bathroom every once and a while. Which no one notices, and no one notices (not even the teacher) how he doesn't return until the middle of next week.

Anyways... aye! Those be ours birds.

And. Now. Since I'm putting on an effort to describe all these birds, I guess, now, I can also put on another describing all of us. Us skittles. Us Flightdeck personnel. And, so, as for us workers, us laborers, all of us busybody little ants, toiling away,

before these giant birds made of metal. To understands what we're all about, all depends on our colors. Green, yellow, red, blue, white, purple, and brown:

- Green Shirts: these Squids are the actual maintenance teams up here, working on both our birds, and The Ship's equipment that's used to aid our planes during launches and recoveries. And you have to remember that Boat Chucks =/= Wing Nuts! There are Green Shirts that are directly attached to the Boat, and those attached directly to a specific Squadron. And one and the other never mix.
- Yellow Shirts: Squids that are all Boat Chucks. And since we Wingnuts/Airdales, it's that whole us vs. them complex, again. They hate us and we hate them. And, honestly, FUCK 'EM! Since their only work detail on the Flightdeck demands no expertise, nor any mechanically inclined attention to detail. Practically, just the sort of skills and smarts required to be valet, and the same type you'd find in the civilian sector. They're here to park planes, then move them, then move them, again, no matter if we're still working on them or not. They're here to move us sometimes what feels like ever ten to twenty minutes, to a new spot on the Flightdeck, just to move us back again. And us Wingnuts all hate it. Therefore, we hate them. And in the end, as high and mighty as they like to see themselves as, as they confuse their work as having any greater precedence and importance, since they can boss all us Wingnuts around, going so far as imagining themselves as some sort of Flightdeck “directors,” all the job still details is them playing three-card Monte with our shit. And it's not even they that play that shit, it's the Air Boss and all those stationed in The Ship's island that are really ones orchestrating anything, deciding what goes where, and the Yellow Shirts are just their hands doing all the dirty work. Or really....
- Blue Shirts: and, once again, a crew of all Boat Chucks. But they're a crew of future would be Yellow Shirts, so, really, only here to be trained to do their mindless work. And until they make their quals, and graduate, switching over from blue to yellow, their only function until then is to get bitched out by their pompous overlords, that do nothing but throw hissy fits at them whenever they please. Also, they're wing walkers, and tractor drivers, and... all right! Fine! Now that I think about it, I'll admit, moving birds isn't as mindless as I've made it out to be. You need a tractor, you

need a towbar that will connect from the tractor to the bird, and you need a Blue Shirt driving the tractor, and also Blue Shirts on their feet walking by each wing of the plane, holding onto a whistle, to make sure when the bird begins moving, there won't be any unforeseeable accidents. Unforeseeable accidents, which Yellow Shirts will cause, as they go cross eyed using up all their two brain cells to move shit around, and accidentally taxi a bird way too dangerously close to another. And even though it's always the Yellow Shirts doing, it'll be the Blue Shirts that'll take the rep for it. The Yellow Shirts will fuck up and not pay attention, and it'll all be the Blue Shirts fault. And I see it all the time, too. And... I really do feel sad for them, sometimes, for I've seen how they get treated by those Flightdeck directors, when they get all angsty and crow happy, and decide THEY WANT SOME BUTTS!

- Purple Shirts: All Boat Chucks, again. And all they do is haul fuel lines around to fuel Jets. And... that's it! They're practically nothing more than gas station attendants. So, they're about as fascinating as the ones you'll will find at a local gas stop, and the same one that you've been going to for the past ten years, and... still don't know their names. Not bad people, overall. They're just nobodies. And even more so then us Brown Shirts. They're just small-minded people with small minded ambitions and capabilities and wills. The type that'll smile a lot, and seem very, very excited just being around you. Won't ever have anything to say. But then, one day, they will. And will tell you a joke, which they'll pull off pretty well. But then, unfortunately, for your ass, you'll then catch them from then on out bringing it up, to reminds you of how funny and fascinating they showed promise of one time possibly being. And, really, that joke... was really just them getting lucky.
- Red Shirts: they handle the bombs, of course. And there's both Boat Chucks and Wingnuts amongst them. On The Ship's end, they'll move ordnance from where they're stowed away down below decks in the magazine rooms, onto the elevators, which they'll then brings up to the Flightdeck, to be handled by our Wingnut AOs, such as AO2 Southgate and AO3 Ramshaw. Who'll take them, and have them secured onto our birds, so they can go out and do missions. Very seldom do you NOT see an AO holding some sort of ordnance at hand. If it's big and round and made of metal, they'll want their hands all over it. They will want to hold it, lift it,

fetch it, lug it, prop it, carry it... do just about everything to it, as long as you, and they, and I will notice. Personally, I think they take it too far, sometimes. You see, they're dealing with real live bombs. Missiles. Stuff that goes BOOM, and leaves nothing in its trace. So, there has to be some level of delicacy involved in handling their job. That's why their shop is well equipped with trolleys. So, lugging one over one's shoulder (like H-Town is right now doing) as he C-walks it over to his buddies, is, what I consider, a MASSIVE failure in the service-with-care department. Also! No! Don't take it there, D-Boy! I've noticed just like everyone else on the freakin' planet has noticed, how bombs and missiles and bullets, tend to have a certain shape about them. A certain phallic shape, leaving one to question if it was intentional or not. We've all noticed, and now you, there, D-Boy, noticing it, and demonstrating your new discovery to all the world to see, as you treat it as an extension of the front side of your pelvis, doesn't make you look clever! But anyways...! All in all, it's a simple job, really! Until shit goes down, and the bombs begin blowing up in everyone's faces. Leading to complete and total disaster, as the explosion leads to planes full of JP fuel to also begin exploding, leading everyone screaming in sheer terror, while dying in horrific ways, leading to more things exploding from the flames that now engulf everything and everyone around, leading to The Ship exploding, while it sinks towards Davy Jones. While exploding some more. And did I forget to mention the USS Jimmy Carter is a nuclear vessel? Well... there's that, too! Boom... boom, boom, boom... boom boom boom. Then one final BOOM! And now we're all ascending towards somewhere up high, while stringing harps, and we're dressed head to toe in white... for some reason... or another.

- White Shirts: These are the higher-ranking personnel you have to watch out for. They're QA. Or. Quality Assurance. So, in other words, they're here to make sure we're not fucking up doing what we do. But, also, they're mostly here to make up stupid-ass shit that would make us more prone to fucking up, royally. For instance, just recently they implemented a new rule in our Squadron, that all personnel on the Flightdeck must have their pockets sewn up, to eliminate the possibilities of anyone carrying FOD around up here. And, recently, I personally was caught by them for not yet having done so on my now, new pair of cammie trousers. So... aye, there!

Got a royal ass chewing by them. Also. Now I have a Senior Chief in the Line that eyes me every morning, wondering if I'm going to be the new troublemaker amongst his crew. And... I'm sorry! It just slipped my mind. I wasn't DILLIGAFing! But that First Class QA sure made it out that I was. Mostly, they're just looking for a reason to yell at us. Just as all the other seniority in the Navy tries to do. So... aye, sir! White Shirts... fucking assholes! Watch out!

- Brown Shirts: I think we've been over this, already. Us junior level Wing Nuts, made to feel important, by being placed in charge of one of these Jets. And... would you look at that... our names are then stenciled onto them, too, to make us feel just as special. But in the end....

You know, I give up! I feel done with the pessimism. This is my job, and, it's something I should feel proud of doing. Even though I'm not. I GOTTA LEARN! And that's all there is to it.

Also, I remembered one other group:

- Checker Shirts: The shooters. And their job is as slick as it sounds. So slick, they like to stencil a Skull and Cross Bones on the back of their Flightdeck jackets, except the bones are a pair of what their job details, a pair of shooters, and the skull itself is feathering wings. Really... they don't do much. They just do a couple checks before any of these birds take off, the same checks we PCs do, but a second time. And when it's time. They point in the direction the birds will be headed, and the birds will fire off. Bang! And somehow, that's all supposed to make the rest of us feel envious of how cool they be.

Anyways, been waiting here for a while, and....

And, there he comes! The Purple Shirt I was waiting for. Finally! Approaching. While holding onto a fuel line over his shoulder. And as he approaches with it, I now go over to open up to where it can be secured onto my bird, to be fueled.

“Hey, how's it goin', Navastian?” Asks the Purple Shirt, smiling way to enthusiastically.
Smiling. While tonguing around a wad of dip he has stuffed in his bottom lip, at one side.
“Whatcha got there... what flavor?” I ask.
Which makes him begin chewing a bit more animatedly, in excitement.
“Oh... Skoal.”
“Straight?” I ask.
“No, Wintergreen.”
I frown, then. But then accept it with a nod, letting the Purple Shirt know I want some. He then pulls out the container from his un-sawn up cammie's (obviously, his superiors don't care, so why should mine?). Packs it a bit between his fingers: snapping at it, while, posing a little to come off slicker than he really is. Then opens it up to give me some. And. I take a wad, and pack it in.

Hmm... not bad!
Chew, chew!
I go. And... guess I needed this.

Anyways... to tell you the truth, no shitter, I only just started dipping a few days ago. Dipping really is a big thing on the Boat. And so big, you could even consider it a part of our maritime pastime. For instance, let me try and give you an understanding of how much it is. For instance, if you ever took the time to notice the Flightdeck, itself, the actual deck, the level we walk on, you'd notice how pretty damn disgusting it all looks. Always covered in a layer of soot that looks to be something uniquely its own. And, also, smells something uniquely its own. And, have you ever just discovered a smell before... have you? Since, things like that don't really happen that often. And when they do, it's never pleasant. And also, it's not something you'd want to have linger around a bit, so you could familiarize yourself to. So now, “how does the Flightdeck smell?” You might be wondering, now, since I placed the thought in your head. Well, for one, the burned rubber smell is definitely there, followed by sea

salt. Then something strange, that I can only explain as the smell of the waters from here near the Korean Sea, since, we're right now so damn close to that country, circling its waters. So, all those smells. Plus, some really disgusting smells. And….

Spit.

Now also my dip: the smell of Skoal Wintergreen. And my mouth. So, to summarize this bit of exercise: if you can imagine how many years this Flightdeck has been spat upon by Squids like me and this Purple Shirt, here, you could then understand the importance of dipping as being part of our maritime history. Which to summarize some more = we're that much of a disgusting bunch of jackasses. REALLY!

"Hey, Navastian, ever heard of an LBFM, there's nothing but them in Thailand." Asks the Purple Shirt, smiling at me, like he has another joke to say.

And, aye! Remember that bit about Purple Shirts? Nobodies! That are just full of jokes and splendor. Well, it was all mostly based on this Purple Shirt, here. So, bear with me, now, for it seems, like the fucker is yet again going to try and prove it to me (and mostly himself) yet again, that lightning could possibly strike twice in the same local. Even though the local is the inside of a rectum, of a gerbil's ass, that lived under a rock in Death Valley (where there hasn't been rain or lightning storms in many, many years), with his gerbil wife, playing canasta.

"LBFM... no! Never heard of it." I entertain.

"You know what it stands for?"

"No, I don't."

And I had already told him how I had never heard of it, before. So, how would I know what the acronym would stand for... huh?

"Guess." He pleads, with his pestering smile, trying to be all friendly like, the damn Boat Chuck be!

Oh, here's an acronym for you… STFU, Shipmate! STFU! Could you roger that for me?

"I don't know… 'Large Belly Fake Marines?' An acronym for army guys?" I guess, then.

Deciding to take a clever shot at it.

“No… but, you know, I kinda like that, too. Try again!”
“No, just tell me.”
“No… guess—”
“Just tell me, already!” I demand, putting my foot down with his damn charades.
The Purple Shirt now seems a little disappointed. But, since I don't care, I just give him a DILLIGAFing look. The Purple Shirt then smiles on through and decides to keep at it.
“Well, like I said, you’ll see them a lot in Thailand. All over the place. There, they’ll be hanging off of you, willing to do anything for you, for a handout. And when I say anything, I mean—”
“Just tell me—ALREADY!”
“Little Brown Fuck Machines.” Divulges he.
With the biggest, corniest smile, I would never have imagined.
“Get it? Thai people are brown Asians. Little brown fuck machines. How funny is that?” He follows up asking.
Smiling even harder.
“Hilarious.” Sneer I.
But then I guess the Purple Shirt gets the hint of how frown worthy I sorta find the joke to be and takes it that it's not racist enough. And... since racism is a funny thing to us Squids, considering how offensive it is. The Purple Shirt decides to take it to the next level:
“Oh, and if you think that’s hilarious, There’s also LBFMPBR. And you know what that stands for?” He asks.
And, I say nothing. I do not care no more. I am done.
“Little Brown Fuck Machines Powered By Rice.” He concludes.
While smacking his thigh, for that's just how gut-busting-ly hilarious he is imagining himself right now being.
And, as he finishes fueling my Jet, he leaves. Walks off. And then, gives himself a pat on the back.

FUCKIN' Boat Chucks! I think, then, while shaking my head. For, I could see now how a Squid's mental faculties could be affected, if he or she spent all year round living aboard, here. Especially during those months when the Boat is docked, having maintenance being done to it. Having upkeep, like having the insides all painted out. And a special Sailors like this Squid, here, can't do nothing but spend that entire time breathing in the fumes. Lucky, for us, Airdales, since we at least have six months of living like normal human freakin' beings. On land. On a base. In the privacy of our own barracks rooms (although, with one other roommate). Not having to spend that time dwelling it out, down to our whitey tighty skivvies, with eighty other Squids, in the same giant room.

LBFMPBR... huh? Really! How does one go around pronouncing that?

Hmm... then again, speaking of hilariously racist shit to think or say, this all sorta reminds me of that one time, Quimby, once tagged Thai women as Nigganese bitches. And... ha! Now that does somewhat fill me up with yuks, especially for being as offensive as it is.

SERVING ONE ROACH BURGER TO GO

Up until now, I haven't exactly introduced any of you to a true Shitbag/Shitbird in the fleet. A real Shipwreck. A true fuck up. One true to the blue jacked up Sailor, if I ever saw one. Gooning up anything and everything he touches. Just ALL jacked up! COM-NAV-DRIFT-PACer supreme! Think what you may about the IS3, Hats and Kats, and all the Golden Age PCs, that are skatin' on Night Check, all they damn well please, they still know their shit! They could still manhandle this job like the job was a seventeen-year-old, perky, little preacher's daughter, from a small God-fearing town in Wyoming, and they were those leather clad bikers that just rode in, looking for some kicks, and a bed to sleep in. They can still manhandle the job like it's no one's business, whether they're good for business or not. Chief Murdock knew what was up on Night Check with all the skatin', he just didn't care, because the boys were still on point when they needed to be. But on Day Check, with clowns like Roach Burger? Now, that was an entirely different story. Roach Burger is that fuck

up! That jacked up Sailor. He is that Mr. AJ UN-squared away pile of horse manure, that makes screwing the pooch into an art form. Also, he is a dog dickin' half-asser, a DILLIGAFer, and the smuggest jackass I have ever met.

First day in the Line, I remember it was a rainy Thursday morning. Overcast skies over Naval Air Facility Atsugi. I was at our Squadron's Hangar, which is a large navy gray metallic enclosure, sitting behind a cute little red Japanese torii, with our Squadron's emblem hanging from the bottom. And since we're the VF-451 Bloody Shamrocks, what we have is a green shamrock dripping with red blood, making red and green being our Squadron's colors. And you can also see them on our birds, especially along the vertical stabs. Inside the Hangar, closest shop to the Flight Line is our Shop. Entering The Shop on that overcast morning to properly check in, I had met one AD1 Bastille, who was, and still is, the Day Check LPO. Friendly first class. Smiled a lot and seemed overly exciting to have a new greenhorn amongst his crew. But, not excited for the same reasons the IS3 would be excited. The AD1 is far from being another crow happy jackass, and is an actual leader. He smiled a lot, and had a bit of a mid-western accent. He's from Chicago, IL, really, and that exclaimed his friendliness. And his mustache. And his overflowing beer belly, that seemed stuffed solid with a hearty fill of hoagies and deep dishes, and whatever other greasy foods you'd find from those states, where the people care less about their outward appearance, compared to the state I am from... I mean, who needs a beach bod, when you're smiling and chuckling and chattering as fast and as heartily as the AD1 was, leaving me with no reason to ever not absolutely love the man to death. Okay, stop! STOP! I like you! I really, really like you... you big teddy bear, you. Oh! Just whatever you do, Navastian, don't make up stuff like mentioning you're a Cubs or Bears or Bulls fan to win him over even more. He might get so excited, that he'll either adopt you, that, or ring your neck, after spending a melancholy minute reflecting how badly the Cubs have been doing since—FOREVER! AD1 had then smiled and chuckled, smiled and chuckled some more, then slapped me on the back as a show of sign that he accepted me. He had then walked out of The Shop, leaving for Maintenance, to get that day's itinerary, of all the sorties and whatnots from the

Chiefs in there. Left. Leaving me with the rest of the Line, and all the lesser savory characters.

“So, you're the new trainee... huh?” Someone had muttered to me, then. It was someone standing behind me, next to the door I had entered The Shop from. Turning around, I saw a lengthy Airman, who's tall, but not as tall as he is skinny, which makes him look taller than he really is. I saw a shifty looking character, with crooked and unmatched and uneven features. Parts such as an elbowed neck and uneven teeth. Also, small timid looking eyes, that were stuffed behind large over-folding mounds of eyelids, as if in hiding; a scared little animal hiding from the rest of the world in the safety of its hole.
“New trainee... yeah, I guess so.” I had then answered with a smile. And I had smiled, since, the AD1 had up until that moment left me with the impression that it would be befitting to do so. But maybe towards him. Definitely not towards this AN, who was now staring at me. And staring with a twinkle in his eye, that I had up until that moment, had not yet grown accustomed towards. But would eventually. But would EVENTUALLY!
“Nice meeting you, Shipmate.” Brewed the AN. Smiling along with that special twinkle. Did so, while nodding his head, softly, while eyeing me up and down, and, that was also something I had at the moment no clue as to why, since I was new to all this: The Shop, here. This AN Rauschenburger (which I saw was his name, saw printed on his coveralls) who's from Tampa Bay, FL, had then stepped up. Smiled! Even more twinkly like. And had then extended his hand to me, seemingly wanting to do a handshake. But, as I extended my own hand, and having just before grabbed his, this AN Jackass had then pulled his away, and had then done that stupid clichéd “brushing away his hair” thing, as he began to nod, like that didn't just happen. And with that, I had then thought: Oh wow! As I truly got a glimpse into the character at hand (or not at hand—since him pulling his away).

Well, aren't you the least threatening person I've ever met? I had thought, then. And, the corniest!

But yet, this Rauschenburger had then continued nodding softly to himself, still seemingly feeling as if he had pulled a good one. I chuckled, once, then, as my entire future in the Line Shack flashed before my eyes: Having me see for that split second, all the details of what was to come; all the corny, pretentious, silly, insulting details. And all coming from such an ill-postured and ill-received character, such as this Rauschenburger. Something of which I had found nothing at all intimidating. Nothing to sweat over, at least not from him; such a mook, wiry, overly self-assured, jackass character, as he was, then, and still is today.

But then:
“Oh—WOW!” Blasted out another character.
One AE3 Brockhausen, who was standing behind him. From Philadelphia, PA. And what we had here was someone completely on the opposite spectrum of Rauschenburger's character. A character that was on the flip side of the coin. Best way to describe the AE3, is, the second I saw him, I had heard (or I had thought I had heard) the sound of a woman's moan coming from somewhere in the back, even when there hadn't been any females in The Shop at the time. Athletic as fuck. With broad shoulders, a broad chest, and a broad this, and a broad that, that also had enough bulges in all the right places, that it could make a man wonder why he'd start staring at them... longer than he should. He had his arms all crossed up, which seemed difficult for him to do, since his broad chest didn't seem to favor being held in such a constrained position. And also, another thing that had stood out about him “funny” was his belt. Which somehow managed to physically complement his already overly masculine, overly testosterone filled, pussyslayer presence. It seemed larger than the ones worn by the rest of us, even though it was the same Navy issued belt that the rest of us wore with our coveralls. Even really the same size as the rest of ours. But, on him, especially, it looked larger and heftier. “Authoritative,” I would say would be the best word to describe it. And also very... intimidating.
“Oh, my freakin' LORD... ROACH BURGER!!! Oh, my freakin' LORD!” Continued the AE3. As this so-called Roach Burger grew very self-conscious like, all of a sudden.

Seemingly how an omega wolf would grow in front of one that's the alpha, when that alpha is feeling both humorous and pissed.

“Roach burger, Roach burger, ROACH BURGER...!”
“What?” Asked Rauschenburger, as be began to shiver a little. The AE3 had his bottom lip all folded up over his top, and he was staring at this Roach. Staring! What the hell is going on, here? Wondered I. Then.

And then, it began:
“You know, Roach Burger, you are freakin' clown shoes! Freakin', fuckin' clown shoes, you know that?” And it had all felt like a bit of a shtick. Brock's shtick, that is. Something well-rehearsed for only this occasion.
“Why do clowns wear them, huh? They're not funny, and they make them look ridiculous—and in a BAD way! Just so retarded, and so UNFUNNY! And also, SAD! Just like YOU! You are just clown shoes, Roach Burger, and all that it makes me want to do, is put a red honker over your stupid nose, and honk it!”
“Well?” Remarked Rauschenburger, looking away.
“You know that, right?” Stressed Brock, again, with a serious tone.
“I guess.” Remarked Rauschenburger, still looking away.

“Honk, honk, Roach Burger! HONK! HONK!” Went Brock, still with a serious tone.

Some of the boys in The Shop had now began snickering. But, their eyes had a different tale to tell. Their eyes... seemed predatory like. Sort of eyes you'd expect predatory birds of a flock to carry, watching over one of their own cutting its sharp beak into the flesh of its prey, as the prey screamed in horror. Watching. Studying. And learning.
“Hey, Brock, what's going on here, I was just introducing myself to the new guy?” Explained Rauschenburger, while holding his hands out.
“Okay.”

“Just want to see what this new greenhorn is gonna be all about.” Explained Rauschenburger, some more.
“Okay. Carry on!” Said Brock, and had then begun chewing on a stick of gum he had in his mouth. Chew, chew.
“So, new guy....” And Rauschenburger had then redirected his attention back onto me, as he had begun trying to eye me, how Brock was eyeing him. And part of me had just felt like stepping out of The Shop, then, and leaving; not wanting to be a part of all this, and a part of what Rauschenburger (I guess) had planned for me. Rudy was also in The Shop at the time, and catching the sight of his brow widening as if to say, “Oh, here we go,” had been enough to let me know how ugly this whole thing was going to get.
“So, new guy.”
“What's up?” I asked.
“Where you from?” Rauschenburger asked, back.
“LA.” I answered.
“Oh....” And said nothing else. And there was a short pause that followed, as Rauschenburger looked like he was awkwardly trying to think up what else to ask.
“SO, new guy?”
“Yes...?”
“Do you got your ID 10 Tango paperwork with you?” Asked he. And before he had asked, he had sprouted this giant smile out of nowhere, like a child would do, coming up with something (he would think) would be clever to say. ID10Tango? What's that? I wondered then, for I didn't know. But since AD1 hadn't asked for such, I was sure then it was something Roach Burger was making up.
“No!” I responded.
“Well, then, you should go get it! Go to the CMC, he has it!” CMC Hayakawa?? why would a Master Chief be holding onto any of my paperwork? I should go to Personnel, if anything. They should have such paperwork. I figured. And I knew, then, whatever this ID10Tango paperwork was, was just some runaround bullshitting task. Actually! I had already fallen for something as stupid sounding as this, and in Boot Camp. I remember in Great Lakes, I was in the head trying to use the sink, and

it was then that some Recruit, like me, that was hanging back, had then said, “you gotta clap to make it work.” And, seeing how I couldn't figure out how to do so and turn it on (there was no handle, or lever, or button, or anything), at that moment, I had gotten really, really, profoundly cross-eyed dumb, and had done what he had asked. And... I clapped! I clapped... that Recruit then laughed, while looking over at his buddy next to him, with a look saying, “WOW! We got a live one here! He actually fell for it,” and at that moment, I felt like bashing my head into the mirror across from me, while staring into my own dumb reflection.

“Yeah, I'll do that later.” I snapped back at Rauschenburger. Over that whole ID10Tango paperwork business, and a little through my teeth.

“Fine, if you're going to stick around here, you should make yourself useful. Go to the AO Shop and ask them for a Bosun's Punch. It's a Tool you're going to need later when—”

“Stop!” Ordered the AE3, while holding his brow in his hands.

“What?”

“Just stop, Roach Burger. Just stop! We're past that now.” Concluded Brock.

“What do you mean? The booter here's going to need it when we put him to work on the—”

“Roach Burger!” Snapped Brock. And this Rauschenburger character had then began bickering a little to himself. And after that session, went back with his cross-examination of me.

“So... you got a girl waiting for you back home?” He asked. And then smiled very dorky like, like a conceited donkey would do. Just so absorbed by his own stupidity, that he lost some of his senses, and began to drool. Or, that is how I at least imagined it. For... what type of question was that? What? I wondered.

“Umm....” I went.

“You do like women, do you?” He-Haw! He-Haw! The donkey then smiled even more conceited like now.

“Wait... what?” I confounded.

“Well?”

“Yeah, I do.” A couple of the guys in The Shop had now began snickering. Hats and Kats were two of them. Actually, just about everyone's attention was on me, and Rauschenburger. But, personally, I didn't feel much nervous about it. I guess it was because Roach Burger was conducting himself in a way, that looked like he figured everyone was laughing with him, with this whole spiel of his, and not laughing at him. Something I, the AE3, and everyone else, were well aware of, except him.
“Okay, cool.” He said, taking up time. Where the fuck is this going? Wondered I, again.
“Back home, you scoring with a lot of chicks, huh?”
“Sorta, why?” I sorta lied.
“Roach Burger! You done yet with the new guy?” Exhausted Brock.
“No, I'm not.” Snapped he.
“Because, you know these are work hours! We're not here to lollygag, we're here to work. Once AD1 comes in, we gotta be on top of our birds. Chop, chop... and right now you’re—”
“I GOT that! I GOT that! Just give me a minute, let me finish sizing the FUNGUS up.” FUNGUS... what does that mean? I wondered.
“Hey, new guy, you know what a FUNGUS is?” Oh, shut the fuck up! I thought, then. Beginning to get pretty sick of this.
“I don't know, I guess, me?” I remarked. As Roach Burger chuckled, as Brock shook his head at him.
“You know what an FNG is?”
“No.” I snapped eyeing him as Brock was beginning to eye him. But I knew. I at least knew what FNG meant. And now I knew exactly what Rauschenburger was doing. He chuckled, then, and then said:
“So, Navastian, what if I was to tell you, I don't believe you got any girl waiting for you back home?” Umm? I never mentioned I did.
“What if I was to tell you, I don't believe you can ever score with any chick, for that matter, because I think you're clown shoes?”
“No! No! No!” Went Brock, coming in finally to the rescue.

“I already used clown shoes for you, Roachy, YOU! If you want to call the new guy something, you gotta be original about it. YOU'RE clown shoes! Not this Navastian, here.”

Roach Burger had now seemed resentful over Brock’s interfering with (what I could only imagine in Roachy's head) was him doing an outstanding job, trying to play me out for a stooge. Hoping, in his head, that he had found someone to replace himself, as the omega in the crew. Which was EXACTLY what he was! The omega. The bottom feeder. The Shop's BITCH!

“Well, okay, Navastian here is... fancy pants.”

“No! No! Fucking Roach Burger? Fancy pants is used for a guy that's supposedly pretentious. This guy doesn't seem pretentious. Just green. And you just came up with that because you still got clowns on your mind, since clowns tend to wear fancy lookin' pairs of such. Which means you're still trying to steal from ME!” Argued Brock. And this all had made me smile, now, because I could see he was going to be taking over the cross-examination from then on out. And he wasn't going to be focusing on me, but his lackey, here.

“Fine, he's pigeon’s feet.” Said Rauschenburger. As Brock shrugged.

“He's a veggie burger.” And that one even had me clamming the palm of my hand over the side of my face, as it had with Brock, as well.

“WOW!” Gasped Brock, rolling his eyes.

“What?” Pouted Roachy. As I learned to stop thinking of him with his dignified AN Rauschenburger name, and adopted his pet name in The Shop, completely.

“You're Roach Burger, and now he's veggie? No! Not funny! And you're now stealing from your own name. The name Barbarossa first gave you when you first got here. I mean, Barbarossa placed a lot of TLC into thinking up that name for you—”

“Actually, I came up with it by accident, someone called his name out, and I thought I heard Roach Burger. Ja Ja!” Intervened Barbarossa. And had us all at pause. Which was a funny pause. Very tongue-in-cheek. Brock then continued:

“And now you're desecrating it. Oh, wow! You're really that pathetic?”

“Umm....” Went Roachy.

“Roach Burger... COME UP WITH SOMETHING! And come up with something QUICK! Or so help me God, there's going to be hell to pay. Oh, there will be HELL to PAY! You can count on THAT!” Threatened Brock, as things got interesting. Threatened he, as he grabbed his belt, with both hands, and began shaking it up a little in display. Daddy was coming home. AE3 Brockhausen was stirring up with piss and vinegar, now, getting mad, and it was a funny sight to see, considering how scared Roach Burger was getting.
“….” Went Roach Burger, as he shivered a little, and drew a blank stare.
“Roach Burger! I give you to the count of ten to come up with something funny, or, I'm going to have to take off my belt, here, and punish you!” And now things got VERY interesting, as we all felt where this was headed. The countdown had begun, and we were now all getting excited to see it through to the end.

“10!” Counted Brock.
“Umm... umm...?”
“9!”
“Dingleberry, he's dingleberry!”
“That was Aja, once again with the desecration... 8!”
“Cocker spaniel?” That one had us all tilt our heads to one side and look confounded over.
“Cocker... what? Really? 7!” Confounded Brock, as well. Roach Burger then smacked himself a couple of times across his temple, as if trying to force himself to think.
“6!”
“Toe jam.”
“5!”
“He's a chinchilla, an oversized rodent, YES! That's funny!”
“No, it's not! 4!”
“For fuck sakes! I like that one!”
“Well, I don't! 3!”
“Bunion? Hammertoe?”
“Enough with the stuff dealing with feet, what are you a Pediatrist? 2!”

“Don't you mean Podiatrist?” Corrected Roach Burger.
“1!”
“Fuck you! I can't come up with anything when you're pressuring me like—”
“Ding! Ding! WRONG ANSWER. So, Rudy, why don't you tell us what the unlucky contestant has won today!” Showcased Brock, as everyone got exponentially excited, now.
“What... wh... huh? What's he won?” Broke out Rudy, gaining attention.
“Yes! What has he won?” Snapped Brock, impatiently.
“Umm... a motherfuckin' ass whoppin'?” Guessed Rudy, with an even tone. Not seeming that interested in playing along, since, Rudy has always been the type more absorbed by his own lead, then the lead of others.
“Yes! That's right! A motherfuckin' ass whopping!” Cheered Brock, then. And then, Brockhausen took off his hefty belt, and with one quick motion, began with the belting. Roach Burger just about jumped out of his skin, along with his eyeballs jumping out of his sockets, when the AE3 whined up his first strike. As if Roach Burger felt it before experiencing it. And then:
WHA-PA!
He did. And, here was the thing, even though up till now, this all felt like simple harmless horsing around, when it came down to the actual belting, it was ANYTHING BUT! He was really laying it in there. Really, really whipping that ass within an inch of Roach Burger's life.
WHA-PA!
“AWW!” Agonized Roach Burger. As Brockhausen continued to seriously punish the poor Airman, relentlessly, as what you'd expect from a drunken Irish household, behind closed doors. But, there were no closed doors, and here we all were, witnessing all this dysfunctional mess, out in the open.
WHA-PA!
“AWW!” Agonized Roach Burger, again. As Brockhausen let another one crack, and there were SOUND EFFECTS to it: With the belt cutting through air, as sharp as a blade. And the crack of the belt meeting Roach Burger sore little tush was a sound,

I don't think, anyone had heard since the cotton-picking days of the Confederate South.
WHA-PA!
“AWW!” Agonized he again, through tears. As everyone else blew up into laughter, and then I took a good look into Brockhausen face, that seemed almost more so anguished than Roach Burger's face was. As if Brockhausen was reenacting scenes he remembered from his own childhood. Oh! Get me the fuck out of here. I thought, then, as I realized I might be in for an experience that was going to make Boot Camp seem tame in comparison.
WHA-PA!
“AWW!” This went on for a while. A long while. A good long while. That is until our AD1 finally stepped in. And since the door to the Line Shack was closed, it opening, was the cue for Brock to stop. AD1 stepped in, saw Roach Burger on the floor, nearly in tears, then had a look in his eyes like he knew exactly what had gone down, but then shrugged it off, and had then went on describing that day's flight plans.

And....
That is the story of how I met our Squadron's biggest Shipwreck.

And....
Want to know something that I find also interesting about him? Him (Rauschenburger) and Brockhausen, are barracks roommates back at Atsugi. So, yes! Them two live together. And what's even more interesting is Roach Burger asked to be his. Now, I know what comes to mind is: “How is their relationship inside their own room?” For maybe all the violence and horsing around were all stuff they'd pull only in The Shop, to put on a show and show off how whacky they were. But the answer is... not much different! I remember passing by their room one Friday night, when everyone was out hanging around outside, binge drinking, and when I passed, guess what I heard:
“Roach Burger, you are a fuckin' chinchilla. A fuckin' overgrown rodent, people today take for being cute, and like to keep as pets. But they're just another type of RAT!

Freakin' vermin, I tell you, VERMIN! And all they're good for is destroying furniture and carrying diseases, yet, people still like to keep them around, treating them like they're cute little dogs or whatever. And, I fucking HATE chinchillas, and, Roach Burger, guess what? I fucking... HATE... YOU!"
"Wait, I've done chinchillas before as a joke."
"Yeah, but I know how to make it sound FUNNY!"
WHA-PA!
"AWW!"
And I was just passing by their door, hearing this shit—MIND YOU! Passing by, to hear such WTF wacky nonsense, before carrying on. And there were just them two, only them two, from the sounds of it, in there. Actually! There's something really peculiar going on with their relationship, which I don't know all the details of. And... something tells me I don't want to; two grown ass men working out their daddy issues: One growing up having too much of one around beating the crap out of him, and the other having missed out on all that fun since his was never there.

Really, Roach Burger is this way with all the alpha types in The Shop. His relationship of the omega extends further than just AE3 Brockhausen when it came to this level of horseplay. Practically everyone wants a piece of Roach Burger, since him and his slow, dull and dimwitted and obnoxious ways, have made him the center for everyone's aggression. He has become The Shop's "go-to" punching bag to relieve stress and aggression. And how does Roach Burger feel about it all, you might be wondering?
"AWW! It hurts! It really, REALLY hurts! It—"
WHA-PA!
"Shut up, you stupid CHINCHILLA! You South American rodent!"
"Like Speedy Gonzalez?"
"He's Mexican, and chinchillas are from Chile. So... NO!"
WHA-PAH
"AWW!" He'd just take it and go on.

Honestly, I don't know how he does it. If I was in his place, I'd kill myself! Just so embarrassing and humiliating, REALLY! I mean, everyone is this way with him. EVERYONE, almost! Roach Burger will do something, say something. Fuck up! And then we'll get really excited and happy, and smile, and then make him pay for it. Everyone uses him for these means: IS3 Falconni, AD3 Rudebaker, Navarro, Barbarossa EVEN! Quimby absolutely loves to dry hump the Barnacles off Roachy's backside, absolutely LOVES! Hats and Kats. Royster. And also, a lot of Day Checkers on the Boat right now; guys I still haven't brought up. They're all almost always taking their aggressions out on this schmuck, and the thing about AE3 Brockhausen is, he isn't the sort! The AE3, under normal circumstances, is one of the few outstanding Third Classes we have in our Shop. A respectable guy. Who's also very sincere with the many of us supposed “Shitty Age” types. Brock is truly Shit Hot and doesn't play by Falky's rules. But with Roach Burger? Brock can't help but allow the man to bring out the worst in him. There was this one-time Roach Burger fucked up major at Atsugi, when he drove a light cart into the wing of one of the Jets: The light cart has this large spotlight attached to an extendable neck, and when Roach Burger drove it near 105's wing, it clipped, and the fully extended neck was then lying flat on the deck. Officially, as punishment, our Senior had him sent to DRB for a royal ass chewing. Unofficially... Brock, Falky, and a couple of others, crammed him into a grocery cart, lit it on fire, and sent it down a large hill in Tokyo. And had it sent crashing hard and fast into a dumpster. And, supposedly, just before the dumpster, there was a parking bump, so bets were made to see if it would have the cart turned over, and had Roach Burger flying out of it, and into the dumpster. Of course, while Roachy was still in flames. Money was bet. But since we don't live in a universe where cartoon physics apply, it didn't happen.

BUT, ANYWAYS! Aye, sir! That's how it is. That's our Roach Burger, all right! So, smack him across the face when you see him for me, all for your own kicks and jollies. And, don't worry, it'll be all right to do so, since Roach Burger won't mind (actually, he will, but since he's too much of a punk-ass-bitch to do anything about

it, it won't matter), and he'll let you, too, (still! Too much of a chump to say or do anything). So, smack him for me! And make yourself feel better, when he goes:
“AWW!”
For that's what he's there for.

KEEP YOUR HEAD ON A SWIVEL

“Get out of your Shops, get out of your holes, it's time for today's FOD walkdown! Get up! Get out! It's time, my fellow Shipmates, it's time, time for today's FOD walkdown!” Announces the Air Boss, over the 5MC speakers. And continues to do so as everyone on the Flightdeck begins making way to the aft end of The Ship. Also, anyone that's down below, down in The Shops, also begin making their way up to start today's rendition. Slowly popping up and out of the Ratways, coming from inside The Ship, with the tempo and rhythm of the Air Boss's authoritative, yet benign, sounding voice. There's a melodic quality to it, that also comes off a bit hypnotic. And, also, very back-country-ish, if you can consider that a word. The Air Boss sounds to be a rural man by heart, and there is an ethereal quality to him. With ethereal prows and properties at work. Establishing a sense, we all can somehow relate to, in an unrelated fashion. He is the lone fiddler, on a long and winding Tennessee country road, playing his tune, at big starry sky midnight, casting a spell on all our sleepyheads to travel to the lands where the roads can't carry. Something silly and whimsical and waggish in that nature, which his voice is able to magically produce.
“Out of your Shops, and out of your holes, it's time for today's FOD walkdown!”

FOD: Foreign Object Damage. If there is anything more threatening to the safety of a launch, and also, the lives around during the procedure, so threatening, yet so inconspicuous, it's FOD! Something as small and unnoticeable, at first glance, as that of a nut or washer, that's all it would take to take down a Jet, while still not airborne. A nut laying on the Flightdeck in the path of a turning engine, ready to be sucked in, and bounced around, inside, tearing up its inners. Shredding the blades and taking down that bird until a new engine can be found and replaced. Which would also require heftier amount of time and man hours, all thanks to an object the

size of a quarter. So, as you can see, FOD, is one of those things, we take VERY seriously about, up here. It's why the pockets to my cammies are sewn up as we speak. It's why we're always going nuts over Tools and Tool count, making sure everything is accounted for, before and after a launch. All FOD walkdown really is, is us all lining up at the aft end of the Flightdeck, then preceding to walk slowly toward its bow, all while keeping an eye out for any FOD we might come across. We do it twice a day up here on the Flightdeck, during ever shift change. We do it so much, that, no shitter, I've heard stories how Sailors on leave that will go home to see their families, or go wherever to spend their days off at, will sometimes be catching themselves in the garage, or in a strip joint, bar, wherever, coming across a screw on the floor, or nut, or washer, and then, without even thinking, they'll bend over to pick it up, to pocket it. Only to later on ask themselves: “Wait, what the hell am I doing?”
“Out of your Shops, and out of your holes, it's time for today's....”
Okay, ENOUGH, already! DAMN! We're all up and out, and ready! Let's just get this started so we can be done with it. So, we can get to the damn launch, so we can get to me being damn well relieved, so I can start heading back down, to get some damn shut eye! Is that too much to ask? Think I, since, I am already three hours past my shift, and, I am not looking forward to spending any more time up here. Also, considering a launch usually takes at least another hour, and almost never begins immediately after FOD walkdown, I am definitely not looking forward to the additional time, however long, I might still be up here.

“Damn, Navastian, you still up here?” Gasps AE3 Brockhausen.
The Third Class is following along behind me, while doing FOD walkdown. The AE3, who's in charge of Day Check, just under AD1 Bastille, who's just under Senior.
“Aye, got EMI until launch... according to Senior. So, I'll be launching 107 today.” I mention.
Brockhausen just shakes his head, then.

As we finish with the FOD walkdown. I now head back to my bird. Getting back to her, I quickly wipe down the canopy, up top, inside and out. And now, it's time to wait for the pilot and co-pilot to arrive. And as I stand there feeling finished with the pre-flight checks, I grows weary, since, I really HAVEN'T! And what's getting to me is my ducts. I tried to check them before FOD walkdown, but they were turning way too fast to do so. And. I still ain't sure if I dove them last night, even though I did sign it off that I did. And, no! I didn't gundeck it! I didn't... I hope? WTF? I ain't sure now! I can't recall! And, the jacked-up part is, this is all it would take to get Captain's Mast-ed. If those blades in there are FUBARed. Since, I've already signed it off that I checked them last night on my Daily, that's all it would take for me to see the Skipper! FUCK! I'm worried now. How can I be so absent minded?
I swear to Him all mighty, up top, there, this is all the Navy's fault. I swear... the Military has rendered me a fool.

I guess what I am driving at is this:
Back before all this, back before this cruise, before being attached to this VF Squadron, here. Back in Great Lakes, with AW1, and that whole being “Born Again” business that I experienced during Basic Training, I swear, since then... I've grown dumber and dumber as time has progressed.

I guess what I am driving at is this, question: exactly how hard is it placing one foot over the next? How fucking hard is it? HUH! How hard? Considering it's something we've all known how to do since we could remember. Since, it's something that any moron can do without thinking, and you must be suffering some truly major brain malfunction if you're taking it as a complex thing to do. Marching. Freakin' marching, is what I'm getting at! All freakin' day and night long we did nothing in Boot Camp but march. And, all of a sudden, the simple act of placing one foot over the next had then become this very complex thing, that we all had to relearn. Since Boot Camp will teach you everything you knew how to do before was wrong, even the most basic, basic things. Stuff we had all learned and mastered since we were toddlers. But, because of that whole “Born Again” business, we had to “relearn again”

everything. It's all about breaking us down to such rudimentary levels, and then building us back up, again. Making us practice such tried and tested actions, over and over and over again, until we couldn't help but to eventually make a mistake, fuck up, trip or fall or misstep, and get reprimanded for it. Then, start the process all over again. (Really, the point being, THEY WANT US TO FUCK UP! They WANT it to happen, just so they can get in that ASS). Aye! This happens in Basic Training, the fuckers there do actually try to break us down—THAT MUCH! And then, all of a sudden, even the ability of distinguishing one's left from his or her right, all of a sudden, becomes this vast and complex thing. I mean... not really, but let me explain further: I remembers way back when I was a kid, in kindergarten, there was this really, really dumb kid that needed color coded stickers placed on his hands, that were also labeled: L and R, to remind him which of his hands was his left, and which of them was his right. Really stupid and obnoxious kid that the rest of us hated, and loved to hate, and loved to see just how dumb and obnoxious he could possibly get. And, one time, this kid ate the stupid stickers on his stupid hands, and it was a giant fiasco, that involved lots and lots of crying on his part, and lots and lots of head shaking on ours, and even the teacher's. Well, here's the thing, thinking back to that little dumb shit in kindergarten, how dumb do you think I had then felt, when in Boot Camp, now and then, I'd get so stupid, I'd forget myself. After spending the last four hours straight practicing marching, I'd then turn left instead of right, and get a royal ass chewing by my RDC, AW1 Nordhaus, because of it. I guess, my mind would just skip, or, I wouldn't hear him correctly, or... it doesn't MATTER! I'd fuck up, and I would then feel monumentally embarrassed watching AW1 Nordhaus stare at me, as I'm presuming, I'd stare at that dumb little shit back in kindergarten. Well, that's one thing the Military has done for me, made me lose all my senses and sensibilities, and to the point, simple tasks have become gravely difficult for me to do now. And, what I'm getting at is this: in the end, everyone fucks up! Everyone forgets, no matter how old they are, or how experienced, or wise, or intelligent, how to place one foot over the next, and trips and falls down. I mean, that's just the human experience: we all fall down! But in the Navy, we're not allowed to fall down, we're Sailors, with Military Bearing. And, there is no falling down, and picking oneself back up. Since,

missteps are very non-Navy like things to do. (What do you do if you fall off the horse... well, in the Navy, you get ready for a royal ass chewing! And then, live the rest of your Navy life in perpetuated fear, of getting back on, just to fall again, just to get another round of ass chewing coming up)!

I guess what I am driving at is this:
There is no place in the Navy for human error. And since we're not allowed to be humans, we spend extra, extra brainpower making sure we won't. Which really (AND HERE'S THE RINGER) ends up leading us to fuck up even more than we would. Like in Boot Camp, everything out here in the fleet is about rigorous, rigorous, rigorous training. Launches and maintenance, launches and maintenance, launches and maintenance. Being forced through repetition, taking grave strides and stress to acknowledge all the intricacies of the mindless work we do, having us worry ourselves silly over every freakin' little detail. I mean... how freakin' hard is it to tell if these planes we're working on are broke or not? If the wings are cracked? Or if a part is missing? Or if the stupid birds blow up in our stupid faces? But since we're so obsessed with the fear of fucking up so royally, this has all become brain surgery for us. The fear of committing human error has become all the world to us, and it's a damnation that has a way of manifesting itself: the fear of fucking up leading to actual fuck ups. And, even though we can do most of this work blindfolded, like second nature. Like second nature, it's grown beyond our conscious comprehension, and we no longer have any sense of what we're doing, while we're doing it. Or, in other words, the mindless work we do has rendered us mindless, since it's programmed into us to do it without thinking. Requiring no real thought anymore being necessary. And, when you're no longer paying attention to the work you're doing, since you're doing it by second nature, that's when the real fucking up begins. We're all waging a constant war to fight complacency, while practicing all that would make us complacent in the first place.

AND NOW LET ME GET TO WHAT I'M REALLY DRIVING AT: I mean... how fucking hard is it to be unable to tell a Jet is missing both engines? This happened to me

back in Atsugi air base in Japan. I was fueling one of these birds. And... I did my checks before fueling. And... I checked everything, everything, EVERYTHING NEEDED, except that one thing I hadn't been trained to check. And nothing that would be so small that it would be understandable if I failed to miss, but a big, glaring, obvious one like BOTH FREAKIN ENGINES BEING MISSING! Well, what do you think happened then when I began fueling that bird? If you're guessing: JP-5 fuel being pumped out, everywhere. Then you guessed correctly. The Military has rendered me an idiot, and as an idiot, now, I have to take double precautions to not lose sight of obvious gripes, shit my common senses should have taken care of picking up, beforehand, simply enough. But since I've lost them back at Great Lakes, between sleep deprivation and AW1 screaming in our ears ever ten minutes, the chance that any of the senses I now have left catching gripes is all up in the air. And in the end, it all comes down to the perpetuated constant fear of fucking up, royally, and getting a royal ass chewing because of it. And that is just a royal embarrassment we're all now trying to avoid. I mean, we're all scared shitless of pulling a Roach Burger.

Sigh!

But, anyways... back to waiting. And waiting to discover if I'm going to be needing to get my Crackerjacks ready, later on, to pay the Skipper a visit. I hope they don't try to make an example out of me and do an Open Mast in front of everybody in the Squadron. God, save me from that!

But, anyways, to one side of me, next to my 107, is Roach Burger's Jet: 109. And on the other side is AN Royster: 108. And it seems like Royster is also serving EMI for having pissed off the Chief last night... somehow. I really don't know, nor care much for the details. That's something to be expected from him, Royster, who's seeming about as tired and wary as I can imagine I am right now. Tired and ready to go to bed. But, as for Roach Burger, he seems a bit delighted to see me still up here. And... what the fuck you looking at, Clown Shoes? Keep your eyes on your

own Jet, and on your own work. Whatever you have to say to me, I don't want to hear it. Right now, Roach Burger is also on top of the Jet wiping down his canopy, and he's dangerously balancing himself up there, wiping down the inside, while paying very little attention to his footing. And, too much so on me. I'm guessing he heard about last night. Heard about me. And. That's what he's finding so entertaining right now, seeing how I got EMI for all that boopdiddley.

And to that I think:
Fall! Roach Burger, FALL! Just fall, since you've gone on more than a month without an accident, and you're due for one right now. Fall, so I can have myself a hearty good laugh... you fuck up! Roachy then looks and smiles at me, again, while I wish this. And then, a sharp wind blows in, and Roach Burger almost does so: one foot slips and goes into the pilot's seat, as he grabs a hold of the ejection cord, to keep himself from toppling over. And.... oh... my... think I, then, as my jaw drops, and then I begin shaking my head. Roach Burger then shrugs it off while giving that "whoops" motion with his hands, and begins pointing and sneering at me, again... as if that just didn't happen. Oh... right! I think I might have forgotten to mention this, but, our job, working as PCs, up on the Flightdeck: EXTREMELY dangerous fucking job! EXTREMELY fucking dangerous! EXTREMELY so... just so you know! And stupidity up here can be a DEATH SENTENCE! Luckily for Roach Burger, up there, there are safety pins that go into the ejection seat, that keeps it from... well... ejecting. A whole mess of them that'll keep any outstanding Airman Bravo Zulu, like Roachy up there, from becoming one Airman Alpha Mike Foxtrot: Adios, Mother Fucker! As he sets sail for that second star from the right, motherfucking NEVERLAND!
"Hey, Navastian, at ease! Your guests are here." Informs the AE3 Brockhausen.
Does so while passing behind me. And, turning around, I see that they are: one LT Reddecker, the pilot, and one LTJG Winemeister, his wingman. Two Fly Boys Two of America's finest, with call names such as "Hanky" and "Panky." And... no, I'm not kidding! Two college graduates, reminding me how much that piece of paper matters in the Military as it does out in the civilian sector. And in here, it doesn't just up your

pay grade, it can make you into a better class of human being. Both wearing their flight suits, with shades on, and having a certain level of air-headed aloofness about them. A sort of Zen like overly confident high, that can only come from spending four years in a college fraternity, perpetually getting their dicks sucked by emotionally and morally bankrupt pretty blonde co-ed women... jealous, am I? ROGER the FUCK out of THAT, you can say! I mean, I'm willing to admit it. But, I like the two. They remind me of how I felt about Hats and Kats before those two left me with a night of being chased around by a Third Class Fire Watch, and an angry Chief, that smelled of salmon you'd find swimming in a toilet bowl in the restroom of a Russian Deli.
“Good Morning, Gentleman, my name is AN Navastian, and, I'll be your PC for today. As for 107, the fuel is on 20k, LOX is on 8, the wing-sweep handle is at the wing-sweep position, I've wiped down the canopy, I dove the ducts. I will dive them, again, while AMAN Coppersmith, here, assists you with your walk-around. Power is connected, and the huffer should be coming by at any second. If there is any questions, please let me know. Thank you. And let the launch begin.”
That, there, is my PC spiel that I just gave. Standing at ease, at first, and once they get up to me, I salute them, then give my spiel, and then I inform them that the Jet's in fine condition for today’s flight. And after the handshake, it's now time to check to see how those blades are doing. For there's no avoiding them now.

God, please let them be all right! Please!

As I approach the port duct, even from standing just outside, I can hear the blades turning, still, from the wind. Oh, for fuck sakes! I think, then, as I dive in, anyways. The F-14 Tomcat has some very deep intakes, which requires me sliding my way in a good bit of distance before I reach the blades. Sliding in, sliding in, and after sliding in some more, I finally reach them. And, seeing how the winds are at my back, which is keeping the blades turning in speeds way too fast for me to check them, proper, I... now... don't know what to do!
“Fuck it, Navastian, just try the flight jacket trick. See if it works this time.” I tell myself.

And, I do so: I open up my flight jacket, and also unbutton a regular Navy issued jacket that is underneath it, and expand them like they're wings, and try to see if this will blockade any of the air rushing in, that's keeping the blades turning. And after a while of being in this position, while flapping my jacket a little like some retarded Batman, I give up, then, because... the trick isn't FREAKIN' WORKIN'! And now, after I have a long sigh, after having failed at the trick I was officially trained to do to handle this matter, I sigh, and, go ahead with the unofficial trick. The trick I was trained as a DO NOT DO AT ANY COST! I stick my fingers in. Now, I've done this before, and the truth is, this is the only thing that works. Before the blades, there is a guard in place, a set of unmovable ones, that are used as a screening device to keep any bulky set of objects from being sucked in, fully. Bulky set of objects... such as me! And, now, as I stick my fingers through that first set, I go to the base of the spinning blades to try and catch them a little. Playing around with them with my fingers, slowly, to motion them to stop. I catch quickly, then release. Catch! Then release. Cat—

OUCH!
Fuckin' JARGTO! I go, as I almost cut my fingers off.

Catch! And release. Catch. Release. And then give up noticing how I haven't been able to slow them down at all, hardly. And now, after a few more sighs, and a few mores shakes of my head. I then decide to try Option: DO NOT DO AT ANY COST, PART II. Option B. I stick my boondockers in, and try to catch the blades with my steel toe. Okay, Navastian... one... two... and... and I stick it in, and I catch it with a loud clanging sound, as the blade cuts a bit into the steel toe, and gets a little embedded. Quickly, I check the blades, then, and, they're in fine condition. Dislodging the blade from my boot, I pull it out and check the steel toe. And, seeing the results, seeing as how if the blades were turning any faster, that that would have cost me all my toes on my left foot, as they would have found new home of residence inside this turbine engine, seeing as this, I then smack myself across the right cheek, for being such a FREAKIN' FUCKIN' DUNCE CAP, IDIOT! FUCKIN' DUMBASS! But,

what else could I have done? Sigh! Exiting the intake, I walk over the starboard duct, as the pilot exits it, one LT Reddecker, who now takes off his shades and stares at me all wild-eyed, and says:
“How the fuck are we supposed to check these things when they're turning like that?” He blasts at me while shaking his head. And... me, personally, I find it a little comical how I can relate to the college grad Fly Boy standing up front, since it's also his job to check these damn things before a flight, as it is mine. And, if anything, if I had a Chief wanting to go right up my ass, wanting to know how come I couldn't stop the blades from turning, to check them proper, how I was trained to do, I got the LT, here, to vouch for me, on how stupidly hard that is to do.
“I didn't have much of a problem.” I brag, and wiggle my eyebrows at him, once!
And, as he heads to check the intake I just jumped out of, I slide in his, the starboard intake, and slide up to the blades. Now, seeing how the winds have died down a little, and the blades aren't turning so fast, I just eyeball what I can as they go spinning before me. And, after a second or two of doing so, I feel content with what I got, while also feeling a bit dizzy. But content! And, so, I exit. And then, I head up to the retractable ladderwell attached to the port side of the bird, up to where Hanky an Panky are seated in the cockpit, and I help them with their seats. Then take the Pouch full of pins (of the ejection seat), and secure it at the back of the cockpit. And, once done, I head down, and I latch up the ladderwell, as the two inside close up the canopy.

And now begins the real fun: The launch!

As a Plane Captain, if you're wondering if there is any fun to be had with this job of prepping airplanes, and running around with chains to our backs, I would say: there is! But for only a brief moment. Before any flight, there has to be an ensemble of checks conducted, testing to see how the Jet would do in operational conditions. With the engines online. Checking to see if the wings will open and close, if the on-board computer would work, if the hydraulics would engage. Checking to see if any movable parts on the Jet can and will move freely, without any hiccups. For if we're

to have a problem with a stabilizer, it's better to learn about that now, then for the Pilot to learn about it, later, while up there in the skies, over enemy territory. And the fun part of all this, is, to conduct all these procedures, what's required is an able body Airman, such as us, orchestrating it all through hand signals. Keeping an eye out for all those details, while, keeping an eye out for everyone's safety, as well. If there is ever a proud moment we have doing this job, it is this. Lots of fun! Although... maybe, there can be a little too much fun. For, for most of us, after having done this so many times, we end up developing the procedure into what you could call a “dance.” And...! Aye...! Roger that! You heard that correctly, a dance. And, many of us tend to get a little too into the whole dance, you can say. Hands all swinging wide and wild and crazy. Sometimes with our hips. Firing them off like guns. Leaving everyone around us feeling very tongue-and-cheek amused. Heck! I've had our Charlie Oscar once balls out laugh at me when I got too carried away with it.

Anyways... still waiting now... for I don't have air.

Although, I can see Roach Burger is the first to get his engines started. Since, the huffer unit is with him. Fucking Roach Burger! Even your launching comes off as unreasonably cocky. Unreasonable, since, you have no cock! Yet, you still try to flaunt it. Roach Burger has that same thing AD3 Rudebaker has with his personality, except Roachy has it with his hand signals. Being all nonchalant, and slow, and sluggish, in movements. Exhausting everyone's patients by being so slow. And, we can't NOT be patient with him, NOT give him our undivided attention, since, he's the conductor, here! He's the maestro, and it's his freakin' show. Freakin' jackass! Anyways... I'm still watching him feed air into his system to get the engines started. And... finally! He's done! And now we can bring the huffer over to mine. The Blue Shirt then drives the huffer over to my Jet and connects the airline to the port engine.

And... no! Tomcats don't work like automobiles do. There's no key or ignition. First: you need a giant cable to plug into the Jet. Second: we need SE (Support

Equipment), such as a giant air hose from a mobile gas turbine air compressor unit (what we call a huffer) to blow air into the system. Without these external sources of power and air, there's no way to get these engines online. And... I know, I know what you're thinking! You're probably now wondering if someone also needs to turn a crank on the side of the bird, while the engines being fed power and air, to get it fired up and spittin'. And to that I answer: go fuck yourself!

Once the huffer is attached, I begin with the hand signals, telling them to feed air into the engine. Also, the hydraulics systems, to get them pressurized. I do it to both engines. And then, I go on to start the starboard one, signaling to the pilot to rev it up with my fingers (having my middle and index finger up in the air, shaking it up like mad). And, from the sound coming through my hearing protection, (I will hear the deafening wail of the a Tomcat engines, with or without any hearing protection, and, I will lose a portion of my hearing from the continuous exposure to it, whether I like it or not, there's nothing to be done about it) from the sound of it, hearing that engine peak, I now know, that I am done. And, so, I signal them to cut off the external power and air, so the huffer unit can go to the next Jet that's ready and waiting. As of right now, I am also not alone, there is now a dozen or so VF-451 Bloody Shamrock personnel all around watching the launch. Me and my 107, Strange Magic. There's an Avionics Green Shirt Chief wearing a cranial with a mic, that has a line going from his ear to the side of the Jet (which is used to speak with the pilot and wingman). There are Airframers around that are watching the wings and flaps open and shut, to see if the hydraulics is working properly. AE Wirechasers around. Powerplants. And AOs. From Airmen to Third Classes to Chiefs, they're all around me, watching me, and my bird. But mostly keeping an eye on me, since, it's my job to orchestrate everything, and I am what signals the next evolution. Am I nervous...? No! Not really. I've done this over a half a thousand times, already, since the Military so heavily favors training through rigorous, rigorous repetition (as I spoke about before). And, I do mean rigorous! There's going to be a thousand more launches probably (what at least feels as such) before the Jets take off for the real thing. To

do real bombing missions or dog fights. Heck! I still haven't played a part in all that, yet. But... in about a month or so, once our carrier reaches the Gulf, I know I will.

Anyways! Since I'm done with the starboard engine, and I have that engine fully engaged, it's now time to use it, and feed its power and air into the port engine, and have its turbines ragin' and burnin'. And, so, I now begin cross bleeding from one to the other. The hand signal to cross bleed sorta looking like I'm playing a violin. And as I rev that engine up, I now have both engines online, and it's now time for OBCs: On Board Computer checks. And then, for me to open up the wings and flaps to do a... WAIT, WAIT, WAIT! Come on, Navastian, that's stuff you do on shore where there's enough space! Right now, if I'm to give the signal to open up the wings, since Roach Burger's bird is right next to mine, and Royster's is the same on the other side, to give that signal, that would lead to a catastrophe, as the wings would have opened into the other Jets! SHIT! Come on, NAVASTIAN, WTF? Seriously! WHISKEY TANGO FOXTROT! Once again! With this mindless work, making me go mindless. And unable to notice something as GLARINGLY obvious as that! And now looking at Roach Burger, I shake my head, and then I notice how I have his attention already. WTF? And AN Clown Shoes, there, is still snickering at me, probably from the shit he heard about last night. And to that I think: go FUCK yourself, Roach Burger! I almost just pulled a YOU! I think, while going ahead with the OBC check, which usually takes a while, and is mostly the Pilot fiddling around with the switches inside the cockpit. I think? (I ain't trained to do his job, so I can't tell you exactly).

After the OBCs. I check the refueling prob. Then, I give the signal for the Shooter (oh, right! Forgot to mention, a Checker Shirt Shooter is also out touching and feeling and checking everything as we speak, making sure through his hands on approach, everything is also working honky dory), I give the signal for him to go into the well of the nose strut, to check the air pressures in there. And then do a signal for the pilot and co-pilot to lift their hands over their heads, so as not to touch their controls. Since, if they were to, and didn't do what I hand signaled them to do, while the shooter is in that nose well, they might press something, accidentally, that might

cause that nose well to pressurize, which would then lead to the Shooter's eyeballs popping out of his....

Aye, aye! Roger that! Shit like this happens. No shit! I told you fucking up in this job could be a death—NAH! NAH! NAH! JUST KIDDIN'! That wouldn't lead to that happening. Ha! Did I get you, there?

But, still, I signal the Fly Boys up there to—LAY OFF! So, an unforeseeable accident still doesn't happen. Maybe no eyeballs popping out, but something! For let's not forget all these procedures we're doing did originate from some mishap or another. From some AN going mindless because of his mindless work. And all rules we have up here were originally written in blood. For, it took someone in the past getting his hand cut off, to his or her eyes to pop out of his or her sockets, or to get sucked into an intake, and be spat out the other end, as tomato paste. It took some fatal mishap like that, to have a bunch of Khaki Chiefs sit around a smoke pit, and consort. It took some Airman, like me, losing an arm, or a leg, or a HEAD, to have them Chiefs decide to add another entry to the “DO NOT DO” list. And in this case, with the Shooter in the nose well, there, it took something happening to someone like him, something awful, for the “hands-off” procedure to be written in for this part of the launch evolution. Maybe not having one's eyeballs popping out. Not sure, but... actually!

I think....
I know what must have happened.
There's a part in the launch, where a PC has to make the Pilot kneel the Jet, and, in the past, the pilot must have fucked up and done it early, with the Shooter still inside the nose well, which would have then led for him to get crushed in there.

Aye! That makes sense. That's what must have happened!

But, anyways, and after a few more checks being done, I am now done. And now I pass the reigns over to the AOs, so they can do what they do. And as they pass back to me, I then pass it over to the Shooter, so he can do what he does, which is for him now mostly giving the thumbs up signal to the Fly Boys up there that everything looks good-to-go on his part. And once that's done with, and the reigns are once again passed back to me, I now stand, with my hand in the hold position, holding onto the bird. Waiting for a Yellow Shirt to come by, so I can finally pass the Jet to him, to have him taxi it to the cats, for the actual launching. And, this.... is probably going to take a while! Since, my Jet, Royster's, and Roach Burger's, aren't the only birds scheduled for sorties today. Looking all the way to the bow end of The Ship, I can see a Squadron of Prowlers waiting for Yellow Shirts for their birds. And, also, a Hawkeye Squadron doing the same. And, also, a Super Hornet's. And since our Tomcats are all the way back here at the aft end, all it is now is a waiting game.

“Hey, Navastian! We're... do... check!” Screams AD1 Bastille in my ear.
Or tries to do, trying to get through my thick hearing protection. But, all I hear resonating through is muffled nonsense.

“What?” I scream back at him.
Also giving a shrug so he knows I wasn't able to follow. The AD1 then moves his mouth over to my right earmuff, closes his hands around it, so the sound won't escape, and now yells:
“TAIL HOOK! TAIL HOOK DROP! Yellow Shirts to... so... we can check the...!”
BARNACLES!
Think I. Then.
Shit!

I didn't get much of the message, but I know what's up. More checks checking off covering over more possible fuck ups that might arise once my bird is airborne. You see... just last week, one of us had done it big. Done it bad. And had launched a bird without a tail hook in place. And done it here off this carrier, and not on the beach,

where one wouldn't exactly be needed for landing. Aye, sir! That's right! Someone had gotten that freakin' cross-eyed dumb. And mindless! Actually, a great many of us had. The Jet had just been pulled from the Hangar Bay, down below, after the Airframers had done finished... whatever job they were doing to it. Done finished with everything, except that one thing. That one OBVIOUS THING! Which they weren't scheduled to check for, and had forgotten to secure onto the freakin' plane, the freakin' TAIL HOOK! And... THE MOTHERFUCKER WAS LAUNCHED THAT WAY! A PC, like me (A former Night Check PC, one AN Castleberry, that's now TADed as punishment), and a Shooter, like the one on my Jet right now, had done their checks. Signaled off to the Pilot and Co-Pilot that the bird was good-to-go! And no one was the wiser, even after the Jet was taxied to the cat to be properly launched. After it was feel checked again by Shooters up at the cats one final time. And after it was fired off. But then, once it was, it was only then at that last freakin' moment, someone then noticed—YUP! NO FREAKIN' TAIL HOOK ATTACHED! As 109 was waved off the carrier, and was forced to fly all the way back to NAF Atsugi to do a proper landing. And... aye, aye! Roger that! This is a no shitter! This bit of ungodly stupidity HAPPENED! Sufficed to say, a lot of ass was chewed up and spat out after the whole ordeal. A bloody, messy LOT! Although, besides blaming this whole thing on the whole “mindless work has made us mindless,” I do sorta understand how this could have happened. At least, sorta! You see, all of our Jets tend to be TOW: Tail Over Water, when they're up here on the Flightdeck (that way to save space). So, it would have been hard to see back there, with the ass end of the Jet. Also. This happened on Night Check, during night ops. So, there's more reasons. But, anyways, since then, we've been paying double attention to the tail hook, to make sure the bloody thing is bloody well there! And, just last night, during bounce patterns, one of the pilots were complaining how the tail hook on his bird seemed to be acting funny. And was worried trying to land the bird, that the hook wouldn't drop to catch the wire. And... all in all!

What this all means is....

What now is to be done is....

Well, you'll see.

Anyways, I'm still waiting, and there's nothing we can do at the moment, until a Yellow Shirt arrives. Damn, Boat Chucks! Hurry the fuck up! SLEEP! I need sleep! I needs it! I think, while I crotch down for the long haul, and spit up some tobaccah. Then looking over at Roach Burger, I see the fucker is still begging for me to walk over, and deep-six his ass over the side, in front of the whole Ship and Squadron. The fucker is still pointing and laughing. And I... just refrain! Roach Burger has also done finished with his launch, and is also idly standing by for his next instructions. And then I see a Yellow Shirt approach him. AD1 Bastille walks over to the Yellow Shirt to yell in his ear muff a little over what we're to do. Roach Burger then passes the Jet to the Yellow Shirt. The Yellow Shirt then signals for the chains to be taken down. Each chain attached at each strut is undone, and placed onto Roach Burger's shoulders. Then the Yellow Shirt runs back a little, giving himself distance with the bird, and gives the hand signal for taxiing. But just enough for the tail end to come off over the water, and be over deck. Then the Yellow Shirt stops the bird, has the chains placed back on, and then gives Roach Burger back the reigns. Now! I've never seen this done. But, fuck it! At least not here onboard. Although, something we do all the time back on the beach. Pretty much the next few steps are going to be Roach Burger signaling to drop the tail hook, signaling a "hands off," while the Shooter is checking the tail hook mechanism. Then, signaling for it to be raised again. And, then... that's it! And, as I watch, expecting all that, I instead notice how Roach Burger's attention is still on me. All snickerin' at me, while shaking his head. And....
"For fuck sakes, Roach Burger—THIS ISN'T THE TIME!" I yell.
But it's a yell I know no one will hear. But, although, it now seems to have gotten more of Roachy's attention, as he notices how irritated I seem. Which now leads for him to continue on with more mockery. Roachy now points at me, and now does this gesture with his hands, simulating a fiery explosion, then points at me, again, and starts dancing around a little, mouth all open, looking all excited and panic stricken. And....
"Motherfucker!"

Presumably how I looked after AO3 Ramshaw ignited me into flames with the lighter fluid. And that now sends me off.
“WELL, FOXTROT UNIFORM! FUCK YOU! GO FUCK YOURSELF!” I scream, more words being sent into the void of Tomcat engines' screaming.
And, I guess I'm lookin' pretty red and embarrassed right now, since, my outburst has Roachy now wailin'. Which, now, has me PISSED! Panting a little. While I continue to mouth him off with words, OUT LOUD, that I'm sure no one will be able to hear.

“FUCK YOU, CLOWN SHOES! YOU LOSER! YOU LITTLE CHINCHILLA! GO EAT A DICK!”

And after that, it's then, that it happens....

Not paying attention, Roach Burger gives the signal to drop the tail hook, thumb down onto open palm, and when the tail hook drops, it lands on the collar bone of one AE2 Hogarth, who is Roach Burger's Shooter. Knocking his dick in the dirt, as he falls alongside the horseshoe end of the tail hook, which touches down beside him. And… shit! Shit! That tailhook is pressurized to drop and drop—hard! And now, all hell and bedlam ensues. What the FUCK, Roach Burger? You could have killed him! And he could have, too. The AE2 is now flopping around on the deck, showing signs of life, but also extreme pain. And then, I see a whole bunch of Khakis and First Classes, so many, running around, and about, trying to take charge, or show direction, of what to do next. Some checking on the injured AE2 while still dealing with a turning Jet, and others signaling to cut the engines. Who are then confronted by still some other Chiefs stopping them in order for the launch to resume. And then, all of a sudden, just about everyone of them turns their heads around to eye the PC that's still supposed be conducting the launch, and they begin to show TEETH. Once Roach Burger sees all their sights hone in on him, he twitches, once, and his knees almost buckle, in, realizing, hell has no fury for what those angry Khakis and First Classes have in store for him. By this point, the Medical emergency

team comes in. One of our Maintenance Chiefs arrives at the scene to signal the pilot to cut the power, and the next second, all I see is TEETH, AGAIN. The teeth of almost every Khaki, up here, siccing onto Roach Burger's meaty ass, as they begin gnawing at it, like a chew toy. And....

How do I explain it...?

Well....

I guess like this: all I can explain, is, that I can't help but to find something grotesquely fascinating behind all this, something grotesquely fascinating with how much chaos and insanity can all of a sudden be released, as that seventh seal gives way. And to that, all I can think of is: ha, ha! Good ol' Roach Burger, you never cease to disappoint me, by disappointing me! Ha! For I can't help but to enjoy watching all this take place. I think it's called schadenfreude: the joy experienced in watching others in pain. But, still, fuck him! He's just as much a part of what's keeping me up five hours into my work shift, keeping me from my precious sleep, as everything else! So, fuck him! I feel. And then looking around at all the chaos and confusion again, I also feel how I can't help but to enjoy watching all of this go to shit, too. Seeing the woes in all the faces around me, which makes me smile.

But then... frown.

SENIOR HiMFIC

You know what the hardest thing was dealing with in Boot Camp when I was at Great Lakes? Well, if you think it was that RDC of mine, AW1 Nordhaus, you'd be wrong. Sure! AW1 was a certified asshole, and not only because it was his job to be one. I remember him self-reflecting one time over his station in life, and describing how he felt about it:

“Sometimes, I wonder... why am I doing this? Why does my job have to detail me yelling at all you dumb Chucks every chance I get? Why can't I just speak to you all like a normal freakin' human being would do? Why should I stick to routine, and act this way, when there could possibly be a way better way of handling this job?”

But then, as he paused, he took a long and hard look at all of us, turning his head from side to side, and then concluded with:
“But, man, how do I enjoy it, I tell you! Man, how do I love getting in all you dumb Ricky Dipshit's asses, and tearing you—not just a new one, but SEVERAL! Puncturing several holes in your asses. Eight, to be specific. So I can stick eyeballs in them, and call you all a bunch of ass spiders! Ha! Ass spiders! How do I come up with this stuff?”
He then grew a bit creepy to us all, as he began softly snickering to himself over the eerie idea. Also, began calling us “ass spiders” along with calling us “Chucks” and “Ricky Dumbfucks,” and a whole mess of other stuff. I guess he found something dementedly funny about the notion, even though it left the rest of us a little unsure of what to make of it. Really fuckin' freaky where the mind goes when its grown that bored, and filled with that much contempt with the mundane, that it needs to mix things up in morbid ways to find new fancies.

But, anyways, AW1 was in the end harmless, cursing my ass or not. And as for all the bull I was put through with everyone else, them and their so-called shit list (which I never saw, since, those that had appointed themselves in charge of the division, kept it from us). Which goes to show just how much camaraderie there really is amongst us Navy, they actually made a list for possible Shitbags, and delegated punishments. You know... just want to express it right now: fuck you, Division 207, you were not missed by me after I left Basic Training. Can't believe some of the idiots there said they were gonna get a tattoo with their Division number on their forearm, or somewhere. But anyways, still, I managed, through all that. I managed, dealing with our AW1, plus the two other RDCs we had which their name escapes me at this moment, and my so-and-so-called Division brethren. But, truthfully, what I found myself UNABLE to manage with at Great Lakes, really driving me (and really us all) sonar spinning crazy, was, sleep. Sleep! Or really, the lack thereof. We would barely get enough to sustain us for the following day. It was sleep deprivation within those eight weeks that was really doing us all in. How much so, you might be wondering, well... what if I was to tell you we'd, now and then,

experience quick power naps. And even while we were marching, too. FREAKIN' MARCHING! Aye! I mean, we'd be in formation, listening to the AROC sing cadence: “One, Two... Three, FOUR-AH! A One, Two, a Three a Four... Two a Three a....” fuckin' counting! So, of course we'd start to feel drowsy and dreary and simply bored out of our minds, listening to someone try and reinforce in us with such basics. Of course! But, anyways, it was then during marching, within a split second moment, I could have sworn I was no longer conscious, and was fast asleep, as the rest of me went into sleepwalker (sleepmarcher...?) mode to keep me from tipping over and knocking the fuck out. At night, I'd have dreams I was sleepwalking, while marching. And during the day, while marching, I'd sleepwalk, and have dreams I was marching, still. And then, I'd start to see ghosts. And... aye, sir! You heard that correctly. GHOSTS! Roger the fuck out of that! I'd see motherfuckin' GHOSTS! Figments of the past, whose energy and souls had been trapped in time, to repeat the same actions and gestures and experience, and the same traumas, over and over again, for the rest of eternity. Repeat going through the same experiences of getting a royal ass chewing, by such RDCs as that of our AW1 Nordhaus, whose own soul had taken on a demonic form. Enslaving us, then. Old devils in between spaces trying to regiment weaker will souls to the disciplines of their own harsh and cruel practices. Fine... maybe I wouldn't see any of this, but at least, I'd hear them. “Hey, did anyone else hear yelling and crying all night long, last night?” I'd ask the other Recruits in the galley, while having some chow, trying to figure out what the fuck I had experienced. “Seriously, just an hour after taps, I could have sworn I was hearing some RDC—not a part of our division—yelling! Had come into The Ship, tossing a trashcan down the aisles to wake everyone up. Then, started beating everyone. PT-ing the fuck out of all of us. And the thing is, I picked up my head, and saw that no one was there. No one was up. But, I could swear, I could hear them. And I swear I wasn't dreaming it, either! COME ON! I've really been going through all this for the past few nights. NONE OF YOU know what I'm talking about?” I demanded.

But, got no verbal answer. Although, I did get a nonverbal one, as all their horrified eyes filled in the details.

Then there was that one Seaman Recruit Darryl. I remember. She was, I thought at the time, a part of our sister division. But here she was, all alone, and naked in our head, in the middle of the night. Crying! And... I can't remember the rest. What happened with her? WTF was that about? Was I dreaming that, too? And if I was, why did it feel so real? I can tell the difference with what a dream feels like compared to reality. But, I can't remember, and something in me, I feel, prefers it to stay that way. Strange!

Also, every day and every night, I'd also hear ambulances. Ambulances. Yet, I'd never see them. And I'd never see any of the injured being taken away. Double strange!

But anyways... SLEEP!!! There was always this constant need for it. A constant longing. There was! This wishing and yearning for the peace and silence that came with it, when there weren't any RDCs intimidating the fuck out of us, and Recruits then acting up, and turning on each other, to weed out each other's weaknesses. None of that trauma and turmoil, that just made us want to shout and murder at anything and everything set before us. SLEEP!

Although, here on the Boat, it plays a different part. Here, the cruise is really nothing but a dream, on the edge of the universe. For look! In the middle of the night, you can see the oceans spread out all before you, and also the night's skies. And the night skies in the middle of the sea are a scary thing to witness: the cosmos with all their chaos laid out before you. On center stage. Seeming and willing to engulf you into its madness. At night, laying on top of my Jet, 107, some nights, I'd swear I'd experience a weird sensation where the gravitation flux would invert, and I'd get sucked up, falling up into that eternity. Forever and ever. Casadastraphobia I think they call it (aye! There's an actual name for that, WEIRD, HUH)! But, wait... what night was it that I experienced that sensation? What night was it? Last night? The night before? I can't tell. I've been breathing in too much sea salt, and its residue has been clogging up my brain arteries, creating blockades and boundaries, while opening up

new untold places where my thoughts can go. Old journeys ending, and new journeys beginning. That, and Barnacles. My brain is encrusted with BARNACLES. WTF! And WTF does it all mean? Shit! So, this is what must happen for one to transform into a Salty Sea Dog. Becoming what the salt in our veins turns us into, to become a real Sailor. And falling upwards into the seas above and finding a place in the lost. In that Lost. In that eternal nothingness. Finding home in its homelessness. On the Boat, sleep is a constant need, because, it feels as if we're already dreaming, and it's unnatural for us to dream without having laid our heads down to indulge in that unconsciousness. Aye! Right now, I'm more conscious of my desires to catch some Zs, rather than conscious over the work ahead. Consciously, I can't think of nothing but that slumbering place. Unconsciously, I'm going against all my worrisome fear of making a catastrophic error, as Roach Burger had, because, right now, I just don't have the brain power to worry my head silly over such, and I feel like placing trust in all my well trained facilities, my second natures, my muscle memories, to finish up the rest of my labors: waiting for the Yellow Shirts to arrive, passing the Jet to them, unchaining the Jet and lugging them over my shoulders, following along the bird as its taxied to the cats, waiting... waiting... waiting, then watching it take off, finally. Finally! After six hours after my shift had officially ended. Meaning that I had now spent eighteen hours up here. Plus, that one hour of daylight savings. Had had myself a grand total of NINETEEN hour work day. And now, I only have five hours to head back down. SLEEP!!And wake up again, so, I can do it all again tomorrow—or really—later on this evening! Since there won't be any date turnover in between that interval.

Heading back down to The Shop, down to the Line Shack, I stop. And now, I'm standing before the hatch that jots a bit from a new wrath exploding within: Senior's. Reminding me something else my RDC, AW1 Nordhaus, said in Great Lakes:
“What, you think after this, in the fleet, things are going to get easier? No more gettin’ your butt chewed like a bone in a junkyard dog’s mouth… OH NO! I’m here to prepare you for what’s COMIN’! Lots of saliva. LOTS!”

Senior… gulp! I hear the voice of our Senior Chief, and a figure more terrifying than anything I've ever come across, in my whole Navy experience (except for our MMCPO, he really takes the cake).
“Ra—Raus—Rauschen... burger, you've done FUCKED UP, good, this time—haven't you? You've done fucked it up ROYALLY!” Blasts he.
Roach Burger really is the biggest fuck up in VF-451's Bloody Shamrocks' history, and we all hate him for of it. And... why? You want to know the truth? Well, truth is, (and this is something that I've spent some time ruminating about until it hit me), it's because he reminds us just how stupid we're capable of possibly becoming, ourselves, when we don't place close enough attention to what we are doing. When we don't place close enough attention to detail. And manage to royally screw the pooch in a spectacular fashion. Like how I did fueling my aircraft without any engines, that one time. Or, how I almost did, if, I had opened up those wings and caused a major accident, myself, today. Or, also today, how I almost had my FREAKIN' fingers cut off, after diving them ducts, and wanting to check them blades, with them. We hate Roach Burger, because, he really has been the embodiment of everything that can go wrong, doing so! But unlike the rest of us, most of us all have this gut-wrenching fear of our shortcomings, Roach Burger, the defiant, continuously has exemplified how he doesn't. So, all that said and done, I'm now curious to hear what measures Senior is going to take to rectified Roach Burger's ways. Something I really do believe is blatant on his part, and not as unbeknownst.

“I'm sorry, Senior, I didn't mean to do it.” Shrugs the little Airman, in display.
Senior Chief then begins boiling up fat and angry over that line.

Oh, right! Let me delve a little into this Senior Chief of ours. Excusing me for saying, but, Senior is the fattest fuck I've ever seen in my Navy life. The man is just all—there! Tanned and heavy. Taking up a lot of space. And considering how much he sweats and shakes from some type of intensity bubbling up inside, I feel like I'm staring at some giant human volcano. And presence wise, you'd feel as such. When you're near him, you'd feel as if you've been Shipwrecked on some deserted island

in the middle of the Pacific, that's harboring the largest towering volcano that's ever been raised over the Ring of Fire. Scary ass volcano. Ominous! Possibly active, too. For you will hear rumbling sounds now and then, making you wonder. So, pray to some Polynesian god, so as to appease him or her. Pray! To keep this volcano's objections fat and plentiful, for if you don't, sacrifices will be called for. Sacrifices of the human sort.

“You didn't mean...? Seriously! You're giving me THAT line? You didn't mean to do it?” Confounds the AMCS.
Sitting plump on his wooden seat, next to the Line Shack's only computer, that's frizzly and old, and has an old black and green DOS program running, that's used by the Navy to file for gripes and hold data. And there's so much of Senior, sittin', it seems as if there's he sitting on his fat neck, which is sitting on his chest, which is sitting on his stomach, which is sitting on his lap. All supporting one another. And all I can think is how sorry I feel for that little wooden chair, that won't stop squeaking, even when he isn't swooshing about on it.
“No, I didn't mean to do it, Senior!” Proclaims Laurel, standing next to Hardy.
His form and his words weighing about the same, equally, which is flighty compared to Senior's earnest heavyset demeanor.
“Rauschenburger, what are you, twelve, didn't mean to do it? Seriously, I gotta say, kid, if I thought you did, I'd strangle you right now, because premeditated murder is what it would come down to if you meant to do it.” Declares Senior, as his head begins bouncing off, as if trying to escape from his neck.
“I didn't... I mean... I wouldn't!” Shrugs Roach Burger.
“Shut up, Roach—I mean—Rauschen... SHUT UP! I don't want to hear any more of your lip, because, I know what it comes down to. Fucking children. Children! I have to deal with. How old are you, kid?”
“Nineteen.” Answers the Roach.
“Nineteen, huh...? Just what I thought!” Calculates Senior.
“But it doesn't matter, because, the law says you're officially an adult at your age. Which makes you responsible.”

“Senior, I fucked up... I fu—”
“You Gooned it up, ROYALLY!”
“I know... I know... but it won't happen, again.”
“BULLSHIT!” Cracks Senior.
And Senior now seems really pissed, as he almost gets up from his seat, to kick some BUTT, but doesn't, to the seat's displeasure, as it squeaks some more.
“....” Says Roach Burger.
Or, doesn't say. Senior is really beginning to intimidate him, as the shrugger continues to keep up his ways. Being very flighty, and forcibly, in a way, as if to persuade the Hawaiian how futile it is to try and ground him. There being no point taking account to anything he says or does, seriously. And, aye! The AN really is just that proudly foolhearted, and proudly showing off how foolhearted it would be taking him and his actions being accountable of anything. And seeing this, and understanding this, really begins pissing off Senior, more.
“I won't... I won't... fuck up... again.” Says the Roach.
Then demonstrates the level of competency in his actions, as he rolls his eyes even over the trust of his own words. Showing how little faith, the boy wonder even has, in himself, and his own word. Which, now, practically has Senior sent SAILING!
“BULLSHIT! You BEEN fucking up! And now, AE2 Hogarth is in Medical, with a broken collar bone, all thanks to you, you know that?” Blasts Senior, as he gets up off for a second (to the seat's pleasure), then sits back down, again, (sad face).
“Yeah....” Stretches Roach Burger, as he rolls his eyes, again.
And now:
“WHAT?” Snarls Senior.
“I mean, yes, Senior.”
Yeah! In the Navy... there are no “yeahs.”
“Yes, Sir.”
“Yes, Chief.”
“Yes, Petty Officer.”
“Aye, aye.”
“Roger that.”

But DEFINITELY no “yeahs.”
“Yes?” Demands Senior.
Not really looking for an acknowledgment. But a show of acknowledgment through Military Bearing. For Roach Burger to stand straight, stick his chest out, and look Senior in the eyes, and say anything besides “yeah.”
“I guess so.”
“You guess so?” Confounds Senior.
Getting up and sitting down again. And since Roachy's ways are truly now getting to him, getting him to get up, fast, then sit down, again, it all has Senior feeling faint from the blood rushing in and out of his head so quickly. Senior now sits there, cemented, and seems to be in contemplation. And after a minute or so of it, now has an assessment, over the matter at hand, to share with:
“No! No! No! No! No! I know what this is about. It's always like this, always has been. A stupid and lazy kid, that's too stupid and lazy for College, gets out of High School, and has no idea what he wants to make of himself. But knows, whatever it is, should be something grand. And then one day when he sees a bunch of men dressed in Uniform: Sailors, Marines, what-have-you. And when he sees the reactions these figures get from the women around them, the kid comes to the conclusion that that's what he wants to be! A stupid and lazy ass kid, that's never had no concept of discipline and responsibility and hard work, all the stuff that comes from taking on such a role, ALL OF A SUDDEN decides that THAT'S what he wants to be. But to earn the right to be one without the discipline, the responsibility, and the hard work. Since, all he wants is to look good in a Uniform. That's what it is, isn't it, Rauschenbur... berg.... burger! Isn't it?”
“….” Answers Roach Burger, as his eyes twitch a bit.
Too much revelation for one small mind to handle.
“What I'm saying, Rau... is... that I don't believe you can go on without fucking up, as you have. Why? Because you're an immature little dipshit, and worse, you're a moron, too.”
And now what continues to piss Senior off, thoroughly, is, Roach Burger's reaction, for he's smiling now, once having heard Senior call him a moron. As if he didn't get

the memo that it was pertaining to him, all he heard was the insult, which is what got him excited, and got him smiling (AYE! Roachy is the type of human creature that enjoys hearing insulations), and before his mind was able to associate it with that of being a BAD THING, since it's about him. And, aye, Roachy really is that stupid. And, also, I know what you all are thinking now, too. And the answer to that is: yes! In the Navy, unlike in the civilian sector, your boss can just flat out tell you off how they really feel about you, and there's nothing you can do about it (Well, you can! But that would be career suicide). If they think you're a moron, they'll just tell you, straight up. But, things have improved, though. It's not like twenty or so years ago, where they could just beat the living Barnacles out of you, with their own bare fists, and you'd just have to take it.

“You like that? You like being called a moron? Do you?” Confounds Senior, confounded how anyone would.

“….” Argues the Airman.

Showing how much, he is really wasting his time amongst us, and should have gone to law school.

But, in all honesty, all jokes aside, I'm right now starting to grow a little sorry for him. Seeing how Senior is readily setting up his routine.

“Answer my FUCKING QUESTION! Do you like being called a moron? Only morons won't care, because they're too dumb to see past their own shortcomings. Normal, sensible, and intelligent human beings will try with all their might to stay ahead, while morons will feel content sticking to the back, and not being expected to place any real thought into anything. Personally, I see stupidity as another form of laziness, and a laziness of the mind.”

“….”

“Do you understand me, or am I going that far over your freakin' head, kid?”

And now, it looks like Senior has given up, as he sees how there is no point in trying to get Rauschenburger to get mad. He's giving up, falling back in his seat, and sighing with his eyes, while swaying his face a little, disengaging from the Roach, completely.

“Well... since you won't respond and won't even get a little irritated with me calling you such, I guess that's all there is to you.” Accepts Senior, while shaking his head.
“....”
“I don't know what to do with you Ra... Rauschen... HA! Roach Burger! Roach Burger! That's what the rest of the boys call you, because, none of them respect you. Because, they see you as a worthless bug, idiot. Tell me that at least ticks you off a little. Tell me!” Tries Senior, again, but to no avail.
Although, I personally could tell through Rauschenburger's oblivious stare, deep down, he got it. Looking very down and depressed, but in his own feeble way. Obliviousness can really be the best and most successful form of denial, able to even fool the person expressing it.
“I really don't know what to do with your stupid ass. I want to send you TAD, but I can't, because, we're short on PCs as it is. Since we lost Castleberry after that tail hook fiasco, and after Dudzik popped on the drug test, before cruise. I don't know what to do.”
And now, Senior is practically speaking to himself.
“But I can't have you on Days, anymore. I need people that are going to be on the ball, on Days, and you're too much of a clumsy fuck-up to be able to manage that.”
Oh, please don't send him to Nights! Please, don't do it! PLEASE! I don't want to see his ass on Nights. I think. As sorry as I feel about the spineless idiot, now, The Shipwreck is anything but spineless when I, and everyone else, has to deal with him, that isn't E-6 and above.
“I'm sending you to Nights, and switching you with Hathaway. Go gets some rest, you got five or so hours to report here with Chief Murdock. Go!” Delegates Senior.
As he brushes off Roach Burger, with his left hand, brushing away his mangy ass out of sight.

Oh! I don't want to go in there! I fear now. But, I have to. I have to check in my Tools, and really, I have to show my face. It's part of the Line Shack rules that I have to show my face during shift change, to be properly relieved to go back to the berthing. It's a rule made to manage us FTN Strikers, and keep us from skating off as much

as we'd like to. Although... why do I keep referring to myself as such? Me being all FTN? I really... I don't know!

And as I muster up enough might to head in, and possibly face similar scrutiny, Roach Burger steps out of The Shop, sees me, then it's as if that humiliating conversation that he had just had with Senior, never took place. Seeing me, Roachy smiles, and begins doing what he had been doing just before almost murdering someone during launch: pointing and laughing. He then leaves, and looking back, I see how he has a bit of a skip to his steps. Oh, wow, do I hate that guy! Wow, do I hate him, so!

“So, Navastian, you know, I've had my eye on you from before.” Divulges Senior.
Does so, after staring me intently for about ten seconds, since I entered The Shop, and I got his attention. I then look at Senior, and then I go back to checking in my Tools.
“And, I sorta right now am wondering how much difference there is between you, and that Reshen... Rauschenburger idiot, that just left.”
Oh, don't compare that Shipwreck to me. Don't! Simply DON'T!
“So, tell me, Navastian, how much difference is there?” Asks Senior.
Then starts staring me down as he had with Roach Burger. As if, expecting the same. As if, taking me for a mook dumbass, too. As if, he would be able to call me a moron, too, putting me down as such, and not be expecting me to say something back. No, Senior, I ain't responding. I am way too PISSED to do so right now.
“What is this? I asked you a question... just my luck! I have to deal with two irresponsible dipshits in one—”
“HEY, Senior! I didn't exactly drop a tail hook on a Shooter today, or have I, ever!” I interrupt.
Seeing the sight of him throwing up his arms, and looking up, going over his woes, as if lamenting to the Man upstairs, is enough now to break me out of my silence.

“No, but you have fueled a Jet with no engines in place, leading to hundreds and hundreds of gallons worth of fuel to spill out. Right?” Senior Hamakua brings up, as he gets up.
Then, walks straight up into my face, and gets confrontational. Testing out my fight or flight response, to see which method I would pick. In my face, or, to the side of my face, as I continue trying to finish checking my Tools in. I ain't gonna turn and face him, directly. I AIN'T!
“That was you that did that, fueling a Jet with no engines, right?” Spits out Senior.
As I begin to take off my flight jacket, and hang it up.
“So, what's your deal, Navastian? You don't like staying on your Jet, and prefer fucking around with AOs? Well...?” Berates Senior.
Then starts nodding, steadily, as if building up an assessment over me. Nodding, as a show of sign that he is almost done.
“I wasn't fucking around.” I respond, evenly.
Senior then turns his head at a certain angle, looking at me from a different prospective.
“You know, I heard from Chief Culpepper that he saw you and Rauschen- Rau... you know, I'm just going to start calling him Roach Burger, too! But, anyways, the Chief saw you making faces at him during launch. Mind explaining to me what that was about?”
“I wasn't making faces.” I confound.
“You calling Chief Culpepper a liar?”
Oh!
“No, I just wasn't—”
“So, what is it, Navastian, you were also paying no attention to your Jet, also trying to cause a major accident, and—”
“I had my eye on the Jet the entire time, I was ON it, I would not allow—”
“YOU INTERRUPTING ME?” Spits out Senior, again.
And this time, really spits out, and catches me on the left side of my face, with his spray. And his spray is very warm, and sticky. And obviously DISGUSTING! I sigh, then. I sigh, and feel how futile it is to continue. Senior wants a piece of me, and he

wants me to serve it to him. Keeping his hands free, as if to show, it wouldn't have been in his intent to lead me on as such.

“You know... the reason I gave you EMI today wasn't even because you were caught not manning your Jet. Fine! You decided to scamper off to the AO shop and play grab ass with them—YES! I know what really goes on!”

There you go! He knows, just shows you how rampant this shit is here. So much so that even our most highest superiors will allow it. But, then again, it's also so rampant, that there's nothing that they can do, really. There's just so much pressure wound up all over, that, they allow these roll up parties, even us burning each other (I guess as long as it's not the sort of burns that would have us sent to Medical), they will allow it, since they see it as us simply letting off steam. I guess there's really nothing that they truly can do about it, it's just so woven into the Navy culture (Wog Day a prime example of it), like alcoholism and whoring, that they'll accept it, as long as they don't see it. Because, if they do, then YOUR ass will be GRASS! Just another aspect of that “don't ask, don't tell” policy. I guess?

“I hate Night Check on the Boat, it's always this way, always. That and us always catching you guys sleeping!” Says Senior.

Another thing they'll allow, if they don't see it. That's why we sometimes go into our intakes, or on top of the Jet, anywhere, least visible, to get away with it.

“Anyways, it wasn't the fact that you did that, it was the fact that you were talking back to AO1 Montenegro, giving him some serious lip. Stepping way out of bounds with a superior. And that's what led me to give you such. Your attitude. You got an attitude!”

“I don't have—”

“You're right now giving me, ME! Attitude. You should see your face right now. I'm guessing it's something everyone else can see, but you.”

You know... maybe I am, and maybe I'm not. Fact of the matter is, you cannot avoid giving off a little attitude while having this man's face, IN YOUR FACE! Senior's ways just rub off on you. The attitude HE'S really giving me, now, and I'm just trying to deal with it as respectably as I possibly can, and without making myself out as an

insubordinate punk (as Senior wills to have), nor a pussy-ass mook, as Roach Burger had gone out.
“So, what is it? Don't like having superiors? You see these anchors, these don't mean anything to you anymore, huh?” Blasts Senior.
As he steps up, now, RIGHT IN MY FACE, AGAIN, and I can tell he had sausages and eggs from the Chiefs Mess Decks, bathe in Tabasco sauce, with some Southern biscuits and gravy on the side. The fat fucker is so close to me, that not only can I smell it off his breath, but TASTE it, too.
“No, it's not like that, I don't have a problem with superiors.” I try.
“You think you're back at home, still? Back at home, with no responsibilities, no cares in the world, and you can do, and GAF off, as much as you damn well please?”
“No!”
“Do you think this is all a joke? You think the Navy's a joke? You think I'M a joke?”
“No, Senior, no!”
Did I say any of those things? Did I even think them? Fucker's putting words into my mouth... well, whatever you do, don't give in, Navastian. Don't! Don't get mad. That's what he wants you to do. But, then again, I'll be damned to go out like Roach Burger did. Without saying a word, and with my tail between my legs.
“No, stop making me out to be that way, I'm not that way!” I say.
“Well, I don't believe you, Navastian, since your actions have spoken louder than your words. And, I see what you're really about. So, guess what, Navastian, guess what! Consider today just the beginning of your EMI term served.”
“What?” I go.
“Yes.”
And now, I just can't take it anymore, and I have to say something to this fat piece-of-shit, who will NOT STOP spraying me in the face. As if doing it intentionally, too!
“Come on, Senior, I've been here for nineteen hours. NINETEEN, for fuck sakes!” I blast out loud and hard.
“Well, consider that your punishment from now on, every day, for the next four days, until we reach Hong Kong.”
“What... NO!” I blast.

And now, I'm full on defiant, in his face, spitting back.
“No?” Remarks Senior, as his brow widens.
“Did you say no to me? You being insubordinate now, too? Is that it? Tell me that you are, so, I can start dealing with you how I deal with all insubordinates. Tell me, just tell me!”

You know... in the Navy, they'll give you a medal for not getting into trouble. For not fucking up, royally. Well... aye! It's called the Good Conduct Medal. Serve three years without flipping your lid, and wanting to murder anything you can get your hands on, going blue on blue, and you'll get a medal for it. Aye... doesn't that paint a picture of how freakin' hard that could possibly be for most of us, since, it's considered an accomplishment. An accomplishment to deal with crow happy jackasses like Falconni all night long, and an anchor happy Senior Chief, like this Luau raiding motherfucker here! Do it, without getting physical. By this point, I have had my wits end with Senior. I am no longer in his face, entertaining his confrontational nature, any longer. Instead, I am looking away, feeling pretty sad and depressed. Sad and depressed, that the night I've been having, had to end like THIS! All I wanted last night was a freakin' jacket. Something to keep me from freezing my nuts off, for at the time, another six hours. Is that why I'm a Shitbag, AW1? Is that why you pointed me out as such? Because I was COLD? This is bullshit! This is FUCKIN' bullshit! That's all I wanted, a jacket, was that too much to ask?

Sigh!

Right now, I am feeling pretty freakin' sad and depressed, and no longer angry. And, I guess, it's enough to make Senior notice, and see a little, maybe, the unnecessariness of his ways.
“All right, Navastian, I've decided to be a little lenient. Since you've been here for nineteen hours, you won't have to be in until later this evening, at 2130, instead of coming in at the usual 1830. Giving you three hours more today to get some proper sleep. Nineteen hours is a bit much, I'll give you that.”

It's at least somewhat welcoming, seeing him open up. But then again....
“And, also, just to prove how merciful I can be, don't expect to be staying as long as you did today, until Flight Ops are over with. Tomorrow, don't worry, you'll have three hours extra, and only three hours.”
Although... I don't see any reason I should be having, ANY!
“Fine, Senior.” I conclude.
Not willing to go any further, knowing, this is going to be the best I am going to get.
“Good, now, go. And, Navastian, just to let you know... I will have my eye on you for the following week. It'll be four days until we reach Hong Kong, and for the next four days, I'm gonna be watching you, very close, like a hawk, just to see if you're going to be another problem child of mine. Roach Burger... Royster... those two are already on my shit list. So, if I see any more attitude from now on, that's your ass.”
Gulp! I go.
“And... I might even go so far as put you on Liberty Risk when we get to Hong Kong. You got that?”
Fuck you! Liberty Risk? Keeping an eye... fuck you!
“Well?”
“Yes, Senior.”
“Good... now really go!”
And, finally, I am now relieved, proper. Finally! And... what a long and hellish night this has been! And now, I don't even want to think about it. For this is truly now some JARTGO shit (Just Another Reason To Get Out)! Even though, I would rather not be so JARTGO about it. Since, I don't want to be all FTN, wanting to get out. NOT JUST YET! But as for what just happened... I don't want to acknowledge it. And with Senior, here, that just didn't happen! Him being lenient... HA! Fuckin' BOHICA! Just trying to rub that idea in my face, as if it means something, after giving me EMI for the next four days. What does he actually take me for, a chump? And everything he says is a ploy to piss me off, and so, I can get confrontational with him. As if he's begging to see some insubordination, since, he sees excitement behind it, and sees it as a challenge. No! No! No! Navastian, that didn't happen. Don't accept it! Don't! It didn't happen. What did happen, though, was... I don't have to show up until later

this evening, until 2130, now that's actual good news. That did happen! And nothing else did. And thank God for that.

As I make my way down, I reach the Hangar Bay, and seeing the smoke pit, I decide to have a drag before heading for the berthing. But, since, I don't have a pack on me (and I never buy any from The Ship's store), I bum one from a Second Class... with monstrous looking eyebrows! All drooping down so low, they make me wonder how he could see through them. Just HUGE! A Second Class, that's all leaning on the wire rail near the edge, staring at the waters below. And as I take a drag, that Second Class notices something, and brings it up with me:
"What, are you kidding me? Inhale the fucker! Don't be a pussy!"
And... I do so. And then begin coughing like crazy, to the Second Class' entertainment.

Reaching the hatch heading into the berthing, below, before it I feel the need to take a tinkle, so I go into our Squadron's designated head, and do so in the urinal. Looking to my left, I notice a pipe that is sticking out, and facing me from an open end. Strange! I had never noticed this pipe before, and I have been in this head several times. And from the pipe, there is an echoing sound of water coming from it. Ocean water. And almost like a musical instrument, only the length of the pipe, the waters below, and The Ship sailing passed, can make. Looking into the pipe, I see that it is a clear shot of the ocean at the far opposite end. Double strange! What's the use of this pipe? I wonder. Then shrug, and then I stop caring. Although, the sound of the ocean coming through is quaintly pleasant. And then, I turn my head... and then I see something not so quaintly pleasant, a large spiraling piece of turd in the sink.
"Fucking phantom shitters!" I curse out loud.
It looks like the Boat Chucks are at it, again.

Entering the berthing, I hear something said over the 1MC, then, as I look around, I see pretty much the same sight I have been seeing after every work shift: the lights

turned off, and a couple of 1st Lewie sitting at the lounge table playing cards in the dark, while watching some movie on the 12inch overhead TV. But then I'm irked to see something: 1st Lieutenant has floor stripping equipment with them. The electrical kind. The kind that can make a whole lot of whooshing and humming noises, really, REALLY LOUD, and....

“Hey, Zeedorf! Please tell me you've already done finished with the stripping, right? I don't know if I can stand hearing you go vroom here and vroom there, all day, while I try to sleep.” I say.

AOAN Zeedorf then looks at me, smiles, and shakes his head. And... fucking Zeedorf! Now, there's a character. An Airman with a thumb for a head, and the big and plump kind, that has a small nail in the middle, encased with dirt. And when Zeedorf smiles, it means nothing, because Zeedorf will smile over everything, even when telling you stories of melancholy... and failed suicide attempts. Don't ask! I'll run the story by you in a little bit. And now, as I head into the berthing, deeper, I also pass all the racks, and lockers, and a few Airmen with worrisome looks in their eyes, which is a certified sign telling me they aren't supposed to be down here, and should be up somewhere, doing what they should be. Fuckin' skaters! But I digress. And now reaching my own rack, I ponder: should I shower... or not? And I'm mostly leaning on “nay.” I'm just feeling too broken up inside and tired to want to take one. And, luckily, mostly all the other Night Checkers are asleep at this hour, and won't notice me hot racking to put up a fuss. Aye, must note, if there's anything that can really send a Shipmate off: it is not showering! And heading to one's rack, after having spent twelve hours, up top, sweating and accumulating enough of one's own odor to become a sanitary hazard. And then, heading to one's rack, to spread the PU, as if marking one's territory, so if anyone passes by, they will know who was there. But, then again, feeling as disgusting as I am right now, I open up my coffin locker, change to my showering clothing (mostly gym clothes), get my showering equipment: towel, flip-flops, bar of soap, and other items. And then head back up to our head, again.

After some fifteen minutes of some nice warm showering, I realize then how much I really needed it, more than I thought I would. And not just for hygienic reasons, but for the therapeutic sort that comes from basking in the douche of hot water. And after a half hour of that, I head back down to the berthing, and... to find Zeedorf going ahead with the floor stripper.
VROOM HERE! VROOM THERE!
Passing him by, Zeedorf smiles at me... AS IF I hadn't just expressed how I felt about all this to him not long ago.
“Hey Zeedorf?” I go.
“What up, Shipmate?” He follows, smiling.
Still hasn't got the memo of how calling one that is really a derogatory term. Very booter like of him.
“What does IYAOYAS stand for?” I ask.
Since, he's an AOAN. And then Zeedorf drops his smile, and gets all gang affiliate at me, with a hardened frown.
“If You Ain't Ordnance You Ain't SHIT!” Goes the AO.
And Zeedorf be wearing a do-rag on his head right now (no really), with his coverall top opened up, and tied around his waste, exposing his wifebeater (which isn't Navy issued) underneath. Goes the Charlotte, NC, white boy, lookin' very thug life-ish. Pecs all puffed up, showing how often the boy frequents at the gerbil gym. And then drops that whole act, and gets back to his dorky, lovable, oblivious smile. All right... I can't take this wacky sight no longer. I'm out! I think, as I leave his company.

Getting to my rack in the middle of the berthing, to the left, there, between AT3 Locke's rack that's above, and AME3 Echols' rack that's below, I crawl into that cramp space, close the curtains, put on my night mask, and stick in my ear plugs in, and now, I go to sleep.

And... I go to sleep.

And... I TRY to go to sleep. Try! While Zeedorf continues with his VROOM here and VROOM there, for I'm still able to hear it through the ear plugs.

ZEEDORF THE MELANCHOLIC

AOAN Zeedorf and AMEAN Timberman. These two are 1st Lieutenant. Or, in other words, they've been placed in charge of doing all the bitch work for our Squadron. Cleaning up the mess we make in our berthings, in our own pants, and even in our heads. If our laundry needs to be done, they'll be on it. If the berthing needs to be stripped and waxed, they'll be on it. If a sewage pipe bursts open and floods the fan room, they'll be on it, pumping the water out. That. Or scooping up buckets of the slush, and hauling it to and fro from our berthing to the head (I'd say around two hundred trips would be required going up and down the hatch, through that little scuttle in the middle. I know this, because I've DONE IT). If a gang of Boat Chucks decide to make our stay on their Ship a little less welcoming, by massing up in one of our heads, and covering the entire spaces with their fecal matter, them poor 1st Lieutenant bitch boys WILL BE ON IT (Yup! I just so happened to have done that, too)! That's just what the detail is all about. Doing the dirty work around here. Being tasked with cleaning up the mess. So, as you can see, there's absolutely nothing glamorous about being TADed (Temporary Additional Duty) to 1st Lewie from any respectable shop (Before the cruise, I was Tiger Team on the Boat here. So I had my own share of the experience before this cruise, I'll speak about that... another time). But, the funny thing is, as unglamorous and unadventurous as the detail is, most people in the Squadron will request for it. And why would they do such a thing, you might be wondering? Well... 1st Lieutenant is one of the few details in the Squadron that has the least amount of supervision involved. Or, in other words, hardly any superiors, except for one AS2 Needlinger, and Needlinger is even by non-Navy standards what you'd call “chill-as-fuck.” AS2 Needlinger barely ever keeps tabs of 1st Lewie. So, the detail is what you'd consider “skate-as-fuck.” And the work expectations go by any pace Zeedorf and Timberman see fit, not Needlinger. Of course, then there's our CMC, one Command Master Chief Hayakawa, who is directly above the AS2 in the chain of command for 1st Lewie. But our CMC rarely ever shows his face anywhere near our Squadron's berthing. And

rarer still, to any of 1st Lieutenant—EXCEPT for AOAN Zeedorf! But what goes on between our CMC and Zeedorf is... let's just call... *special relations*.

So, the reason I'm bringing up 1st Lieutenant right now is because of this AOAN Zeedorf character, who REALLY is a character in our Squadron worth mentioning. First time I really got to know him was while I was attached to the on-board party back a month ago when The Ship was still docked into Yokosuka Base (Zeedorf wasn't a part of Tiger Team with me, earlier). The on-board party being a group of us VF-451 Bloody Shamrocks, chosen from our respective shops, to begin hauling equipment we had brought over from our Hangar onto The Ship. We had finished for the day, and were allowed to head out into the Honch, to unwind a little. Since, the on-board party was an all-day laborious affair, hauling big heavy metal boxes from morning till early evening. So, as I had finished moving all the equipment needed into the Line Shack on the Boat, I had stepped out onto the Ratways, and found AOAN Zeedorf, sitting over the edge of The Ship, with his feet dangling dangerously over the edge, as Zeedorf stared out into the harbor. I felt like saying something to Zeedorf, but, the thing with Zeedorf is... he's peculiar! And so peculiar, that everything he says, can leave anyone awkwardly scratching their heads utterly baffled in utter befuddlement. So, what did he say when he saw me staring at him, with a worrisome look in my eye, that left me even more deeply worried... you might be wondering?

“Hey, Navastian, check out my war wounds, self-conflicted war wounds—that is! How jacked up do my wrists look all cut up like this?”

Aye,
to say Zeedorf is a suicidally inclined basketcase… would be an understatement. For, you have to understand something, when Zeedorf asked me this, the AO was first off doing so while grinning from ear to ear. And when I looked down at his wrists, and all those crisscrossing crevices (that resembled the Grand Canyon when it came to scale and size), I... I... was left speechless. I mean... Zeedorf! How the fuck

can you smile while asking me that? I thought then, as I saw no point in wondering why he was sitting so close over the Boat's edge.
“Yeah, I know, gnarly to look at... isn't it? Sometimes I can't believe it myself, that I've cut myself these many times. Ha! Ha!” He had commented and followed up with, with a hearty laugh. And all while smiling at the fruits of his own unique madness, as if they were something grand to look at, and share with others. Smiling, with his mouth open, and panting a little, like an excited pup would do.
“So... finally done with the on-boarding party, huh? Fucking finally—right?” I brought up. While still staring at his wrists, that were still in full display, like they were some Jackson Pollack painting in a museum.
“Damn, dawg, if you think today's been tough, and the whole week, even! You should hear how my week has been with CMC Hayakawa riding my ass, like I'm his own personal whipping boy.”

And then, so began the tale of Zeedorf, and the crazy week he'd been having, SO BEGAN IT:

“First off, no shitter! I think the CMC is homo for me. I'm not one hundred percent on this, but there's signs there that he might be. I mean, all week long he's been on my ass. And, I mean, ON MY ASS, like he likes it, and likes it too much.” Zeedorf had his arms out while saying this, like he was up in a big ol’ badunkadunk, from behind.
“And he's told me things that... well... like, Navastian... if a dude was to tell you stuff like... I don't know: ‘Yeah, I was in TJ about ten years ago, getting blown by some hooker, that later on turned out to be a dude, and when I found out, I think I got turned on MORE by it'... I mean, would that story make someone out to be gay?” Asked Zeedorf.

I just paused for a minute, then, unable to speak. But then did, and said:
“I guess so.” And then followed it up with a shrug. Or, an Air Force salute, as we like to jokingly put it.

“Yeah, well... he's really been riding my ass, too—as I brought up just now! And I see that as a sign, too. Plus, two days ago, he called my barracks room to ask me a bunch of questions. Questions like: 'Ever wonder what makes homos the way they are, if it's psychological, or biological? And if it's psychological, could anyone be turned gay? What if you only thought you weren't gay, but were wrong about yourself, and actually were, and didn't know it, and all it took was the right dude to come along and show that to you...? Have you ever felt not gay, but then looked at a guy you thought was handsome, and thought about making out with him, but didn't get an erection from the idea, but wasn't exactly displeased with the idea, either...? Ever wondered what semen would taste like, and after masturbating you... well... you know!' Two hours with these questions, man! He spent two hours asking me!”

“O... kay.” I responded, then.

“Yeah, the CMC doesn't have a wife, and he's always riding my ass. But, I love the man, he saved my life—I tell you—he did! Just last month, after that public Captain's Mast we were all at. You remember, with AD3 Sutherland and AE3 Dominguez getting kicked out for popping on the Whiz Quiz, right? And we all had to witness it. And the CO ordered an 'about face' so we'd all turn our backs to the two, to show how they had turned their backs on us, for smoking weed. Jacked up shit... wasn't it? You remember, right?”

“Yes...?” I said, since I did. But where the fuck is he going with this? I thought, then.

“Well, after that, I had gotten really, really depressed... like I sometimes do....” Zeedorf then made a face, like he was going to start tearing up, BAD, and begin bawling... but didn't.

“Fucking depressing, man! Getting kicked out like that! Those two were outstanding Shipmates, yo! Always squared away! No Shitbirds! Bro! And didn't deserve us giving them an about face like that. They didn't! Well, I got really, really depressed, then, in the Hangar, especially since I also did an about face and felt guilty about it. And, I stayed in the Hangar all night drinking a bottle of Vodka... which I found in the Chief's mess room. I got keys to that room, since I'm 1st Lewie, so I broke in.” Then Zeedorf winked at me, and clicked his tongue, doing it in a showy way, to show, how sly he could be, now and then.

“I was up on the second floor of the Hangar where the Squadron keeps a lot of junk, where no one could find me. You know, that second story ledge overlooking the Jets in the Hangar. Well, anyways, I was drinking up there, and... I guess I decided to hang myself, maybe? I think? I don't know.”
“Oh, really, Zeedorf? I'm sorry to hear that.” I tried. TRIED to sympathize, that is, but was totally unable to considering how WTF Zeedorf's story was making me feel. Zeedorf then began crying, profusely, for about... ten seconds, right then and there. Right THEN and THERE! PROFUSELY! Then immediately stopped, and was back to smiling like he had a mouth full of candy again, and then went on:
“Aye! Don't know how it happened, but I guess I figured I could hang myself, maybe? Although, there was no rope up there, there were a lot of flagstaffs, and, they're pretty long, so... I thought I could roll up the flag end like a rope, tie it around my neck, then jump over the ledge. And having something tied to the other end of the pole so it wouldn't come tumbling down with me. I mean... wouldn't that be embarrassing way to go?”

I did not answer back. Zeedorf would not stop smiling while telling me this story, and it was beginning to creep me the fuck out. Although, the image of Zeedorf (with a FREAKIN' American flag tied around his FREAKIN' neck) failing the hanging attempt, almost made me chuckle, hard, but I caught myself before doing so.
“Anyways, I was about to jump. I finished the bottle, but then CMC Hayakawa showed up, up there, and found me, and... like he knew... like he motherfuckin' KNEW!”
“And then what happened?” I finally responded by asking. Hoping it would rush along Zeedorf's story, so he'd be done with it.
“He talked me out of it....”

“HOW?” I not only asked but found myself demanding. Finding myself now immensely fascinated with the story, all of a sudden.

“I don't remember.” Concluded Zeedorf, and began staring intently at the waters below.

“What?” I gasped. Beginning to grow a little ticked off with how surreal Zeedorf's story had been. And began to hold it under suspect, a little. I mean, this shit's too fuckin' weird. Can it be true? CMC Hayakawa, homo for Zeedorf? Trying to hang himself with an American flag over a second story ledge in our Hangar? WTF? Whiskey Tango Foxtrot? I confounded, then.
“I don't remember... I think, what he had to say, struck home with me, so hard, that it was like he was speaking to me in a magical language.”
“Magical—WHAT? What the FUCK does that mean!” I blasted. Fully pissed, now, for some reasons or another. And why I was, I can't even tell you exactly. It's kinda like I sorta knew where he was going on with, with this. That he was leading me on. Making me stupider, yet more in tuned, with something—I DON'T KNOW WHAT! I sensed within. WTF AM I NOW BABBLING ON ABOUT?

“I don't know, dawg! Ever have dreams, sometimes? Dreams of you remembering your mom singing you a lullaby, back before you could remember? Back when you were two or one years old. Maybe even only a couple months old. Ever have dreams remembering such forgotten shit? Well, that's what the words of our CMC sounded like in my head. Magical words beyond anything I could understand, that I just can't explain to you exactly right this minute. Like a different magical language... and that's what got me to not jump and hang myself, and what saved me at that moment.”

A moment froze over Zeedorf, then, as he continued staring at the waters below, all watery-eyed. And as I got the inclination to slip the fuck out of there, to save myself of this wacky scene, before Zeedorf grew any more watery-eyed. It was then, Zeedorf did, and began bawling nonstop.
“Umm... Zeedorf?” And as for me, I felt beside myself, on what to think or say or do, next. And, also, really then felt like slipping the fuck out, something even more fierce. No more, Zeedorf, no more! I begged with my eyes. But then Zeedorf stopped, and the silence that followed, freaked me out even worse than the story had managed to do so, in all its entirety.

“Zeedorf... umm... you umm?” Zeedorf then turned around and smiled, all lovingly at me.
“You're not going to jump after I leave, are you?” I finally manned up to ask. But then Zeedorf began looking at me all bizarre, like, I had just said something more bizarre, than all he had been saying, this entire time.
“No... why? What gave you that crazy freakin' idea? Ha!” Concluded, truly, this time, Zeedorf, and said nothing else to me that day. Zeedorf then turned his head back to the harbor, and continued to stare towards it, for... I can't tell you how much longer. Since, I left the very next second. Left for the Honch, to sport me a beer or two, and deal with my issues in life, in the customary means, I've found relatable and reliable with, of how other human beings would, dealing with personal issues... on PLANET EARTH! Aye, Aye! All about that self-medicating with some suds. And not in no magical world Zeedorf be speaking of, that had CMC speaking of lollipops, and rainbow drops, and whatever else, softly, to him, in his ear. Barnacles! What a “no shitter” that was! I think, now, as I shake my head.

ANOTHER FINE NAVY DAY

Waking up is a rush on the Boat, it's a very active process involving a lot jumping out of one's rack, jumping into one's proper work attire, moving this, moving that, opening up coffin lockers, closing them, opening them up, again, closing them, again. And, I'm not doing this alone. Where I now stand, there are three other mates about, also doing the same thing, and we're all rushing, rushing, rushing... whether we're properly in a wake state of mind, or not. For most, especially me, our minds are still at that slumbering place, and standing before my rack, I can still see a part of me still crammed in there, snoring away. A more ideal station of where I'd rather be. The Bahamas? Rio? Fuck those places. For now, just give me another hour of my time in this hole I call my personal spaces, and that would just be dreamy. Paradise. But....
“Navastian, move, MOVE! I need to open up my locker, again, I forgot my FOD Pouch.”
You MOVE, Echols! I talk back in with my eyes, and AME3 notices.
“Fuckin' gonna be late!” He snaps.

I finish getting ready. And now, I'm heading back to the Line Shack. After three hours of decent sleep, I'm up and out, again. Out of the berthing through a hole in the hatch called a scuttle (a hatch within a hatch, everything on a Boat has to be closed up like tupperware). I now enter the galley, that's right above our berthing, into, and through. I go up to the Hangar Bay and see clear skies over the Pacific. I now head to a ladderwell, one which'll lead me straight up to my Shop. And once I get there, I look at the clock, sweating over possible tardiness. But, then, remember how the clock still doesn't work. And.... that's all thanks to Senior! Fuckin' Senior... who won't change the damn batteries. So I can't trust that damn clock, that's right now saying it's 0540 hours, I can't tell if I'm late, or even a bit early. He won't change the batteries, on purpose, to have us constantly worrying what time it is, since, Senior constantly wants us on edge. "If you ain't early, you're late," is his stance when it comes to tardiness. Although, looking around The Shop, I can still tell what time it is, seeing how none of our superiors are in The Shop, and it's just us all: PCs. And seeing this, I calm down a little. Right now, it's shift change. But, for whatever reason, there's both us Night Checkers, and them Day Checkers, here in The Shop. Usually during shift change, us Night Checkers would come in to show our faces, get delegated with whatever our superiors have for us, and will go straight up top to relieve Day Check, taking over manning birds. But, for whatever reason, today is different, and there's all of us in here, minus the LPOs and LCPOs. And few also missing, who are probably still on their Jets, up top, or down below in the Hangar Bay.

"Ah, Ha, Haa! Ha, HAAAAA!"
And after hearing that, from AN Royster's chuckling ass, I can see it's still another routine day in The Shop. With everyone in here, in form, or... the lack thereof. Since, we're all getting comical and obnoxious, as what's usually when our superiors ain't around.
"Ah, Ha, Haa! Ha, HAAAAA!"

AN Royster is VF-451 Line Shack's resident Shitbag Number Two. And suffice it to say, how he stands out amongst all the rest of us colorful personalities, when it comes to his contribution to our cause, all that can be summed up about him, is, with that particular laugh of his:

“Ah, Ha, Haa! Ha, HAAAAA!”

It's BOLD! It's LOUD! It's ABRASIVE! And never have I heard a more devilishly conceited laugh, such as his. And devilishly so, considering, how full-blown evil it sounds, too. I mean to say, Royster's laugh sounds like a laugh you'd expect from devil children, and the comically drawn up sort: with red bodies, horns, and tails. What you'd expect from their mischievous likes, while trying to stuff live cats into a tumbling dryer. And when the cats go spinning inside, while crying at the top of their vocal range, you'll hear the devil children laugh and play, while growing devilishly white, smiling, pointy teeth.

“Ah, Ha, Haa! Ha HAAAAA! Hats, my man... you look PISSED!”

And now, everyone's attention is on Hats, as we all notice how he really does look pissed. And so does Katzenberg. Since Senior has decided Roach Burger is too much of a fuck up to have on his Day Check, and since Days are the operational hours where everyone needs to be on their A game, he has switched him with Hats, since, Hats is a two year running Line Shack Vet, and trustworthy. But, obviously, nobody wants to be on Day Check. Nobody, obviously, for the obvious reasons. Senior’s neurotic and confrontational ways have become more than enough reason. Plus, it's easier to skate off when it's dark out, and most of us are nudging off to that slumbering place. Even though it would be preferable for Vets to be on Days (since they'd handle it better being on their A game) Most of the Vets will still ask to get placed on Night Check, since, they feel like they've earned it. And every LCPO has up until now obliged to this request (although, I feel like Senior is eventually going to become the exception). Night Check is skate, it's the fun hours Falky and his gang can step out and play. Run roll up parties. And not get too worked up about what all the Khakis around will think, since, most Khakis on Night Check are there because they ALSO want something skate. Since....

Well....

You know... it's HARD WORK! Chewing a subordinate's butt off! HARD WORK! But.... I digress.

But, aye! Night Check is more ideal. Which I'm pretty sure you've all already gotten the sense of (I apologize, I tend to over describe things, and I can sometimes repeat myself, over and over, it's just a characteristic trait of mine, I guess). On Nights, there's no constant Flight Operations to constantly be worried about. No constant Khakis at every corner, to worry about, as well. And... the party's there. Falky and his heroes being on the flip side of Senior's Day Check, and the sweat shop he's running (I sense I do repeat myself, because, this shit is always on my mind, ALWAYS! And I can't stop thinking about it). But, anyways... (I say "but, anyways" a lot to, don't I?) BUT ANYWAYS... (fuck it! It's who I am, so let me be myself!) BUT ANYWAYS... Hats seems pissed right now, THOROUGHLY SO, and there's more than enough reason for that.

"Looks like Roach Burger did you a favor, and moved you to Days, just like you always—"

"Roach Burger is dead! Fucking DEAD!" Snaps Kats.

Seeming as if he's already missing his significant other.

"Speaking of the Roach... where the fuck is he?" Asks Kats.

"Late, as usual, I'm guessing." Mentions AE3 Brockhausen, while shaking his head.

"Hats, if you're not on Night Check, then what are you doing here?" Asks Brock, now.

"AE3, I just now came to find out I've been switched to Days. I'll be leaving soon, to be back later." Answers Hats.

Looking all half glass empty, but then:

"But, at least, I'll be getting another twelve hours off, making it twenty four hours. So, an actual day off." Mentions Hats.

Looking all half glass full, now, with a smile. And that, to us, truly is something! An actual day off. Something worth its weight in GOLD!

"Lucky motherfucker!" Comments ADAN Muwangi.

A Day Checker. Looking just as pissed, as Hats has been looking. With arms crossed, and a bottom lip all sticking out, all pouty and sore, as if caught and strung out by a fisherman's line.

“Shut up, Muwangi. Shut your ass!” Cracks Hats.

Not wanting any more lip from the moody Kenyan. And as for Muwangi, “moody” is the word. And considering where we stand when it comes to sensitivity towards people at their most vulnerable, not so ideal for him. Since everyone absolutely LOVES fucking with him. And Muwangi, now, seems to be once again asking for it, with that bottom lip of his sticking out so sorely, that it's beginning to turn purple.

“Hey, Muwangi, what's wrong, man? Why you looking pissed, bro?”

And here we go. Or... here AN Royster goes. Breaking out with a fake look of sympathy, as we all feel how comical things are about to get. And all so rude and offensive, too. And, in ADAN Muwangi's case, racially offensive! We can FEEL IT happenin'. For we can feel how bored and weary them Line Shack gods have grown with us, and how they're now cravin' for some good ol' juvenile entertainment. Since. Them Line Shack gods are mostly juveniles themselves. (Just imagine the Greek Pantheon turned into a High School drama, nothin' but teenagers in tunics and Ray Ban shades).

“What's wrong, Jumanji?” Goes Royster.

As we all have a haphazard snicker.

“Yeah, what's wrong, did someone steal your goat?” Snaps Hats.

As we all now turn it up to full snicker. But Royster seems mad for some reason with what Hats just said.

“What the fuck, man?” Pretends Royster, not to favor that line.

“What?”

“That's racist.” Interjects AN Royster.

Who I should mention is also black. And, when it comes to physical features, the one thing that really stands out about him is his really large head. I mean, humongous-ly so. And even though his hair's up to Navy regulations, his enormous head still manages to make it seem as if he's sporting a constant afro.

“What, how is that racist?” Demands Hats.

While smiling, for he can also sense how comical things are about to get. And all in Muwangi's expense.
“Just because Muwangi here is from Kenya, he supposedly had a goat?” Asks Royster.
“What, I don't get it, how is that racist?” Continues Hats, playing along.
“It just is.”
“It's an expression.”
“No expression I ever heard of.”
“It is where I'm from.”
Hats is now making things up.
“Wait, in Orange County, they have an expression for one losing one's goat? They got goats on the beaches in Cali? I thought they just had blonde bimbos with fake boobs and shit.” Wonders Royster.
“Dude, I'm not from Cali, that's Katzenberg you're thinking of.” Answers Hats.
“Aye, that's me, I'm the surfer dude!” Confirms Kats, as he signals hang ten.
“Oh, well... it's still racist.” Concludes Royster.
While also now crossing his arms, and looking away all pouty face, like. Same face Muwangi is making with the whole bottom lip thing, which everyone is able to catch onto, as we all begin to snicker. And, now, looking at Muwangi, Hats smiles, and takes it to the next level:
“Dude, if I wanted to be racist, I would have said, 'hey, Muwangi, who stole your zebra?'”
Everyone laughs to that now.
“Oh, now you've done it! Now you've gone too far!” Cracks Royster.
While getting up, spittin' and pointin', putting on a good show.
“What? No!” Laughs Hats.
“That's offensive towards my people.”
“Wait... you're Kenyan? I thought you were from the Motor City.”
Royster's angry frown brakes off, then, to show what he's really feeling: showing off a devilish smirk. But Royster says nothing.
“You're from Kenya?”

“I might be. I mean... I wouldn't know. And it's all your fault that I don't know!”
“How is it my fault?” Baffles Hats.
“Back in them slavery days, when you white motherfuckers were bringing us over on the Boat from Africa—”
“Us... ME?” Woes Hats.
“Yeah, you, WHITE motherfuckers, when you brought us, you brought us over from all over Africa, and—”
“MAN, you two done, YET?” Interrupts Muwangi.
“What?”
Royster was on a roll, just now, and now, isn't. And he doesn't seem to be liking being interrupted as such.
“You two dumbasses done, YET, I'm just sick of hearing the two of you's shit.”
Oh, forgot to mention, but, Muwangi is also one major kill joy. Majorly! He's now standing crossing his arms, harder than he has been, as his moodiness begins emanating enough negative frowny face vibes, it begins depressing the whole lot of us in The Shop. But, it doesn't seem like Royster is going to be having—ANY OF IT!
“Hey, Muwangi!” Cracks Royster.
As we all get that sense of how ugly things are about to get. ADAN Muwangi says nothing, and it now seems like he's been in a moody state all week. For a long while. And we're all just now noticing it. Since him killing Royster's vibe. And his moodiness is coming from a real dark place within him, we can all tell. Boat life has been getting to him. And. He just doesn't feel like listening into Royster's type right now. But... as mentioned, Royster isn't DAMN WELL going to be having any of it—WHATSOEVER!
“Hey, Muwangi?” Cracks Royster, again.
“What?”
Royster then grabs a banana from one of the Styrofoam box lunches that's on a counter. Box lunches, that were sent up from the galley, earlier, for Day Check. Picks it up, and throws it at Muwangi, hitting him in the chest while the Kenyan is seated, which then falls onto his lap. Royster then says:

“Hey, Muwangi, teach me that trick you showed in the galley.”
“What trick?”
And now the punch line:
“Peeling a banana with your feet.”
And now, no one's feeling Muwangi's moodiness, anymore, for we're too busy laughing.
“Dude, teach me, man!” Demands Royster.
“What, Muwangi can peel a banana with his feet?” Wonders Barbarossa, in excitement.
“Yeah!” Reaffirms Royster.
“Dude, that's AWESOME!” Rejoices Hats.
And then laughs, as we all laugh, because this is going to be a fuckin' RIOT, we all can feel it.
“Well, if you think that's cool, you should see what else Muwangi can do.” Mentions Royster, keeping up the roll.
“Like what?” Asks AD3 Rudebaker.
As he also begins to smile, not minding anymore the racial implications, all to Muwangi's dismay. And also to his dismay, further, with every Line Shacker joining in on the fun, Muwangi grows the ever more humiliated.
“Muwangi can take off chains off a bird with his feet, I've seen him in the head, and he can shave with his feet, too. Also, he can launch a Jet with his feet.” Brings up Royster.
“WHAT... HUH... WHAT'S THAT??” Goes a bunch of us.
“He can launch?”
“Yeah.” Reaffirms Royster.
“How does he do that?”
“Well, Muwangi stands on his hands, upside down, giving signals with his feet, revving up a bird.”
The room then explodes after hearing that one line, taking the laughter up another octave.
“Wow, that's IMPRESSIVE!”

And then, unable to take it anymore, Muwangi goes off:
“FUCK YOU! Fuck ALL of yous! Why you all always giving me shit?” Blasts he, and then throws the banana back.
“Oh shit, he might start throwing feces, next.” Laughs Hats.
And now, Kats drops to one knee, while laughing his ass off, and holding his side, making faces of the pain he's putting himself through, unable to stop.
“Hey, Muwangi... hey... hey...!”
Kats is trying to throw in his shtick, but unable to, since, he's now out of breath.
“Hey, you throw feces with your feet, too?”
And... I have to say, this is without a doubt, the most racially offensive shit I've ever heard in a while. Really! And there's something so grotesquely fascinating about it, how it's bringing us all together, as a shop. And considering how racially mixed we all are. And, I don't know what to say! Am I laughing my ass off, too? HELL YEAH, I am! It's just one of those moments, you can't do anything but obliged to.
“You MOTHAFUCKAS, I HATE you ALL! I hate you ALL! MOTHERFUCKAS!” Goes Muwangi.
And from his face and eyes, experiencing the most humiliating thing he's been through, in his entire life. All thanks to VF-451's Line Shack. And... NO! This happens quite more often than you think. Now it's just this poor Kenyan's turn, and tomorrow, it could be mine.
“You MOTHAFUCKAS!”
“Dude, REALLY... DUDE, really. Oh, it hurts.”
Kats is now literally on the floor laughing his ass off.
“My side! How it HURTS! I'm dieing!”
“Hey, Muwangi, just once, at least, before we do proper shift change, show me how you rev up a bird upside down with your feet, I gotta see that.” Begs Hats.
“Fuck YOU, I ain't doing SHIT!”
“Dude, take off your boondocks, take off your boots—”
“Hats, his boots are already off.” Highlights Royster.
Taking the joke even further. Everyone now looks down, sees how black his boots are. And then, realizing the implications behind it, begin to laugh, harder.

“Damn, I guess his boots are off.” Laughs Hats.
“MOTHAFUCKAS! FUCK you ALL!” Blasts Muwangi.
Now all hoppin' mad. And really, he shouldn't be. The more humiliated he seems to get, the funnier it all comes off to the rest of us. Jumping around, as he's doing now, and to stop this snowball from rolling downhill, that's now become way too big to try and do so. This has all become a riot, and there's nothing Muwangi can do about it.
“HA! HA! HA! HA!” Goes everyone, EVERYONE!
“SHUT UP! STOP laughing at me.”
And then... his accent comes out, fully.
“SHU DI FUK UP MUDA FUGAS!” Goes Muwangi.
And now, I feel like I'm watching a cartoon character, from before the 1940s. Back when where Muwangi is from was considered the Dark Continent.
“What, Muwangi, what was that?” Amuses Rudebaker.
“What language was that?”
“Oh shit, I think that was his tribal call to war. We at war with Kenya, now.” Laughs Hats.
And... WOW! Gotta say... it just won't stop. It just WON’T!
“HAHAHAAAHAAA!” Goes everyone, EVERYONE, again.
Rudebaker then walks over with a broom handle, and hands it to Muwangi.
“What you want me to do with this?” Fusses Muwangi.
“Muwangi, just go 'Shu di fuk up mudafuga,' but wave this around, like you gonna chuck it at someone. Do it. Go 'Shu di fuk up mudafugas!'” Responds Rudy.
But ADAN Muwangi then throws the boom at the ground towards his feet, making Rudy react, jumping quickly.
“STOP! Please, make it STOP! I'm dieing. I'm really, REALLY dieing.” Begs Kats.
ADAN Muwangi now leaves The Shop. And, I know it's so he can head over to the closest head, lock himself up in one of the stalls, and begin CRYING! I KNOW. For, the boy had his head turned away, to not show how teary eyed he was getting from all this. Muwangi leaves. And after a short while later, Chief Murdock, our Night Check LCPO, steps into The Shop. And looks around. Then goes:

“Okay, what you guys say to Muwangi, now?”
“Nothing!” Snaps Royster, a little too eagerly.
“Then why does he look like he's about to start bawlin' when he passed me by in the passageway?” Asks the Chief.
“What? Oh shit! We have to go see this!” Cracks Rudy.
“Shut up. Sit back down! You're not getting out till I say so.”
There still a lot of us laughing and snickering over the sheer comedy we had all experienced. And. The Chief takes notice.
“You know, you guys are assholes. Muwangi is a sensitive kid, leave him alone.” He brings up.
“We will, Chief, we will.”
“Yeah, right! Three Steel Balls! Huh...? Anyways....”
And then our Chief goes on with our itinerary today. Explaining this and explaining that. But... I'm not paying attention, because, I got other things on my mind. Muwangi...? No! For you have to understand, this happens more often than you think it does in the Navy. This isn't civilian life where we have certain freedoms. Or, rights, for that matter. I know out in the civilian sector, in some civilian work office in some building, amongst office workers, this all would have been a giant fiasco. But we ain't in the civilian sector. And. No one can sue no one here. Abuse and harassment... what about it? The Military is one giant abuse and harassment charge, starting from Boot Camp, and ending on your EAOS (End of Active Obligated Service). I mean: hello, Mcfly! HELLO! Boot Camp! Yelling! In your face—YELLING! You signed up for this, DUMBASS! Now BOHICA, me matey! Or. Bend Over Here It Comes Again! Like shots rounded up at a bar, you bought them, you dared to drink them, now DRINK! And if you still want a different answer? Well... don't! And... for fuck sakes! Cut that shit out, RIGHT NOW! For none of this that just happened had anything to do with racism, for that matter. Realistically, I guess, you have to understand something about racism and the Navy, and that is there would be no way we'd tolerate it, if it was for real. There's already way too many racial groups mishmashed together amongst us, and, if shit was really to go down, and we all started murdering each other, no one would survive. But, yet, then again, it's presence is ever constant.

Racism. And on all our minds. And you have to remember that the personnel in the Navy aren't exactly your intellectual sorts. Or, even, ones with any good sense or sensibility about them. Definitely not the types that would know how to deal with such matters, respectively and responsibly. The people in the Navy, us all, mostly, are the dumb blue collar sorts. Your average Joe Schmoes in society. That really have no idea of how to handle such matters, but have to now, have to, since, this be the setting, and they have to now deal with working with an angry looking black man from Kenya, a shady looking Filipino, a ghetto ass Mexican, an overly polite mix of some breed or another (which we can't exactly tell), and... God help us all, a scary looking unibrowed Arab (that always has a look in his eye as if he's labeling us all off as “infidels,” since we can see infidel written backwards on his pupils). Mr. Blue Eyed Joe Schmo from Cleveland Ohio, whose family line originates mostly from the Bavarian parts of Germany. That. And Poland, Ireland, and some from Greece (the ones from Greece being the black sheep in his blood line), has to now—he has to now—deal with all them characters. As it all becomes a battle between making the best of any given situation by staying friendly and open minded, and, the FRIGHTENING UNKNOWN. Mr. Blue Eyed Joe Schmo, who before this, couldn't even find the country Niger on a map, and used to pronounce Niger as “nigger,” thinking that's where the word originated, because he's that uneducated-ly dumb... HAS TO NOW learn how to deal with the unknown. And, the best way he has, and we've had, all really managing to do so, is, by NOT HIDING IT! And laying it all out in the open. But, as jokes, to keep it sinuous, so it won't lead to direct violence (which still manages to happen, take last nights “Derbytown Vs. Quimby” matter, for instance). Joking about it as much as possible. Which has led the whole matter to become something else. So, this all thing you saw and heard here had nothing to do with racism, and what it had to do with was something else in the Navy, entirely. What... you might be wondering, now? Well... the good ol' Navy stereotype! That's what! All about being that Navy stereotype, of being that mad, shit talkin' Sailor, maddest shit talkin' bastard in the history of the existence: the cursing Sailor! I mean, you've all heard the legends. The level of defilement we're all supposed to be capable of. You've heard it! And so have we. And now seeing how we are what we've set

ourselves to be, since, signing them papers at the MEPs, we now, us newly anointed Squids, have a legacy to uphold. And what better way to do so, as such, by being that vicious, and downright insulting, as to have racist jokes involved. There's too much of a gold mine there for us to deny tapping into. And the more offensive we become, the more we'll succeed. Being as abrasively offensive as possible, regardless of the skin tone. Being that much in-your-face offensive for its own sake. Turning it into a game. And, to top it all off, know this much: the reason Muwangi was getting royally picked on just a moment ago wasn't because he was black, or African, or any of those things. It was because he's another runt of our litter. A frowny face kill joy none of us like. And he's 5'6 and 145 pounds. A true runt of any litter. And a true weakling. And him being who and what he is, and us being all that we're all about, all about that law of the jungle, motherfucking DARWINISM, him being weakling = PREY.

Fine... fine... FINE!

It also had EVERYTHING to do with racism. AD3 Rudebaker and AN Royster being given the chance to lavish in any self-hating racism, and Hats and Kats being given the chance to laugh out loud about it, and not have to worry about political correctness, or white guilt, for that matter. Fine, it was all about that, too.

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Oh, and as for any of yous who can't stomach any more of this whole swashbucklery of such behavior. Such raunchy and abrasive good ol' Navy charm. Then. You'd best be closing up this book. Since. It's all ‘bout the REAL Navy. And the REAL things that go on in it. No holding hands with a black man to my right, and an Asian to my left, all holding hands in a circle, singing Kumbaya, and celebrating our ability to overcoming such diversities. None of that goody-goody nonsense! For that's not what we're all about. More like us using our diversities, as WEAPONS, to wage a war of character, to weed out the weak. More like us all fist fighting it out, to prove who's got the right stuff! Who's HiMFIC, here! Head Mother Fuckers In Charge! And if that's too much for a sensitive ass Sailor, such as yous! Then. You'd best sail back

to San Francisco Gay—I mean Bay—with the rest of your lot, because, it's only going to get worse from here on out. And I take it back, I did mean San Francisco Gay, for that was an intentional slip up. Obviously, it was so, obviously! And wait until I start talking about homosexuality in the Navy, and how that fairs with the rest of us. Just you WAIT! And maybe later... MISOGYNY, TOO!

MUAHAHAHAHA!

But, anyways, right now none of this is what's really bothering me. For. What's really bothering me is....

Wait...?
What is really bothering me...?

Great! I've now lost track of thought.
“Hey, Navastian, whatcha doin' here? Senior said you don't have to be in until 2130.” Brings up Chief Murdock.
Ah shit! I forgot about all that. What the fuck AM I doing up here now? When I could be down in the berthing, and it won't be skatin'. Fuck this! I'm outta here.

Honestly, I like our Chief, though, Chief Murdock. We call him the ol' Cornhusker, and rightfully so. Since, he's from some-cornhusking-hick-town-that's relatively unknown, Nebraska. Quiet man. With a quiet temper. He has the type of sense and feel about him of the rugged outdoorsmen type. The type of person you're expected to cross once in your life driving on the I80 highway, and he'll be the one fixing a fence in the middle of nowhere, in the snow. And then, cross paths with him, again, twenty years later, driving on the I80, again, going in the opposite direction. And guess what? He'll be out there fixing that same fence in the snow, once again. Quiet man. Quiet temper. But don't be fooled, for there's something very terrifying about how low key he can be, and when he's crossed with you, all angled in the eyebrows, while lookin' right at you, there's this something in his eyes, that if he shows it to

you, it'll make you want to just about jump Ship. A sort of horror and intensity to them that could stir the dead. Still, a likable guy, but then again, don't expect him to like you much, back, unless he's known you for a very long while. Type of guy when it comes to relationships, you might try to befriend by telling him a joke, and when you're done, he'll just stare you down, whether you pulled it off, well, or not. Stare you down, looking very, very unimpressed, and make you feel uncomfortable of ever wanting to bring up humor with him, ever again. But, give it twenty years, and if you're still around, and there's still relations, he'll then confess to you how much he actually liked it.

Anyways, I'm back down in the berthing now, and I guess I got some time to kill. I sit down at the lounge table. And checking the overhead mounted TV, I see another old Navy movie playing: An Officer and a Gentlemen. Which then has me thinking about stuff: these movies are always about Officers. Always about some Chief, or some Pilot, or some... somebody IMPORTANT! Never about the average runabout Sailor, some nobody like me, whose only job is to hold the keys to the Tomcat Jet, for that Mr. Top Gun Hot Shot Ace Pilot, while he runs down to the head to stare into the mirror at his gorgeous mug, while parting his slick shiny hair to one side. And, when finished, he then heads into a stall, to take a dump, making a guy like me wait longer. Looking up at the Richard Gere film, I watch the man's performance. Telling the story of that important somebody in white Uniform, his struggles, his pains, and how his story is more important than mine. Even when we're really all in the same branch of service. There's a whole lot of that honor and duty crap movies like these keep trying to force feed the audiences, that have no clue what the real Military is all about. A whole mess of that standing at attention and saluting the red white and blue moments. Which I have NOTHING against, and am ALL for. But... AS IF the Military was really all that simple! And we were that simply honorable and dutiful, and brave, and not a bunch of stupid kids making dick jokes, and playing grab ass every chance we got. And, let's not forget, in the REAL Navy, even proud Pretty boy Ace Pilots don't exactly go by slick names like “Goose” or “Maverick.” Instead, they have call signs like “Hanky” and “Panky” and “Rimjob” and “Blower.”

AYE, SIR! Those are most of the call signs I've personally, as of yet, come across. So, the whole dick jokes and playing grab ass isn't just an E-3 and below sight to behold and witness. That immature frown worthy crap goes all the way to the top. And as the movie finishes, I see that officer and gentleman on the screen save the day, somehow, and get the girl at the end. And the only part that makes me smile is when I actually see a Crackerjack wearing E-3 in the background, for that nameless nobody character is the closest a Squid like me gets in making it in these damn flicks. Also. I imagine if this movie was made with real officers such as Hanky and Panky, which I personally know in question, it would have been one of those two sweeping Debra Winger off her feet, but not to take her home to meet mother over supper. But to some cheap motel, along a highway, where he and a bunch of other Top Gun cadets would have ran a train on her. Since. That's what REAL officers, and REAL gentlemen, in the REAL Navy, would do. And as the credits roll, I get angry, realizing the mopey state of mind I am now in, watching this movie, for it's done nothing but put me in. And I now think: wait, what point did I have sitting around watching the flick, anyways, when I could be in my rack right now? And sitting around watching this flick really was just a waste of my time and a waste of my thoughts, especially since the thoughts were more negative crap over my station in life. As if I didn't have enough, already. Don't watch these movies anymore, Navastian! Stupid ass movies... thank you A-Farts, for wasting my time! I think. And then, think about hitting the rack, and catching an hour or two of Zs, since I have two hours left, according to the clock on the TV. Thankfully, I had only wasted a half hour watching that movie, since that's all that was left when I started. But, I worry, then, of oversleeping, and messing up a good thing....

Wait...?
What good thing?
I still have three hours of EMI after my shift, and it's going to continue on like that for another....

And now I remember what I had on my mind earlier in The Shop, the EMI. And... I DON'T WANT TO DO IT! I don't want any part of it! I DON'T! I don't feel like I've deserved it, and I just don't feel like I can tolerate it for the next week. Fucking Senior, saying I've got attitude, when EVERYONE, including HE, all, really are the ones having attitude. And their real attitude is all something I'm just supposed to bend over and take... take it like a man. Aye, sir! That's something you'll hear a lot of, them expecting you to take it like a man. I can't complain, and I can't try to reason my way out of anything, because, if I do, then I'm not being a man, for being a man (a Navy serviceman, no less) is all about bending over and taking some. BOHICA! And Bend Over for Here It Comes Again, once more! And doing it all with a proud Navy grin, to show how satisfactory the job has been having the Navy resizing my asshole, making it go from this: “o,” to this “O!”

OH SHIPMATE, MY SHIPMATE

“So, you plan on spending all night sitting here, quietly, to yourself, in the dark?”
Asks a character, I had not been paying any attention to. And as I open my eyes and turn my head around to look, I see that it's AN Donnelly. Strange! I hadn't noticed him. But then again, I realize in the entire time I have been sitting here, many characters have passed me by, which I had also not taken notice of. Actually, a whole shift change had been going on, with several Day Checkers from our Squadron coming to and fro, while, the movie played (movies?). And I have not been paying attention to them, either. And now the lights are off. Which is taps. But... wait...? Wait! What happened? Why are the lights turned off now? Taps, already? Wait, was I asleep while sitting just now? Looking over at AN Donnelly, again, I notice a worrisome stare.
“Was I out just now?” I confound.
AN Donnelly then snuffs at me.
“You know what time it is?” Asks Donnelly.
“What?” I ask.
AN Donnelly then points with his eyes over at the TV, and looking at the clock, I see that it's 2347 hours. And... I'm late! I'm really LATE! I'm more than two hours late. And that really sends me off.

“FUCK! NO! FUCK NO! This is fucking BULLSHIT! Did Chief Murdock send you down to get me?”
AN Donnelly smiles.
“Oh, I'm really in hot water now, AM I?” I groan.
AN Donnelly then begins to smile more.
“Well?” I ask.
“Well, what?” He responds.
AN Donnelly then begins softly shaking his head at me. But as I get up, really feeling the dread of having to head back to the Line to face my LCPO, AN Donnelly then grabs me by my brown shirt, and drags me down to my seat again.
“Don't worry, Chief Murdock has been out for some time, sleeping in 104's cockpit, again.”
And that's now a major relief to hear.
“Why didn't you tell me? Wow, my nerves! I can't take this shit no more! I just can't. I really can't!”
AN Donnelly now begins to laugh at me a little. Then shakes his head.

I'll tell you this much about what I know about this Shipmate of mine. As quiet as he is, there's something very cocky and boisterous about him under the surface, that has at least left me with one impression: here's a Shitty Age PC, like me, that's somehow ABOVE ALL THIS! Above all me, and other runts of this litter, and what we've all been going through. There's a lot of confidence and pizazz, I feel, within him. He sure does smile a lot, but, not in a dumbfounded way: all oblivious like how Roach Burger or Derbytown does. For. Looking into Donnelly's eyes, I see eyes fully focused and fixed and knowing. Eyes well aware of its surroundings and where they stand. Confident. This E-3 nobody Airman, such as I, exudes a lot of confidence. And I really couldn't tell you from what source. As for his features, with a name like Donnelly and coming from Boston, you’d expect him to being a blonde and blue-eyed Irish kid, but he wasn’t (not to say all Irish people would fit the criteria for the genetically perfect Nazi Germany Aryan, but… you know!). And neither did he have that young thug Kennedy 20something Bostonian accent of the Good Will Hunting

variety. No talk of apples without having the conversation being about comparing apples and oranges and olives and mangos. I mean, stereotypically speaking, since I've seen enough movies with Matt Damon and Ben Affleck in it, I feel like I would expect some X-gen brat-packer or juvenile delinquent wiseguy you'd find in a sports bar in Boston, all hissing and booing and jeering at the top of his lungs at some Red Sox game, on the TV, over b.s. calls made by the Umpire who seriously needed to "get ye freakin' head out of ye freakin' ass ye freakin' (so-and-so)" as he would sometimes fling beer suds at the screen… all while simultaneously trying to hit on some extremely super skinny and extremely super white New Englander chick, that was also about as contrarily pretty but also ugly as a girl named Agnus could possibly be (meaning, she would take up on that "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" challenge, where you can't really tell if she is or isn't with a name like "Agnus," since no two guys will tell you the same). With Donny boy, here, what you got was that Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson or that Jessica Alba thing. Since… no one in The Shop had any idea what he was since he had decided not to tell any of us. The guy had strong and tanned Pacific Islander features. So, whether he was actual Polynesian or Samoan or Caribbean or even simply Hispanic with some black mixed in… I couldn't tell you. He had no accent, none to speak of, so, I couldn't tell you anything. Plus, finally, as for how he groomed himself, he was bald, but not bald because of a receding hairline, but since he obviously would shave his head bald and not shave his head to hide an actual receding hairline. And, also plus, he had a very pencil thin mustache. That Casanova pencil thin mustache you find on guys in 40s and 50s movies always, always, always trying to woe white women with an unknown accent, while playing the piano.

"What you looking at, Navastian?" Demands the illegitimate Kennedy.

While smiling, with one eyebrow lifted up, high, as if holding a drink to give toast.

"I don't know... what you looking at, Donnelly?" I snap back, but really, also kids.

And that's me just playing along, since, I know his game... somehow? Since... somehow between the two of us, there's been an immediate connection made, a clique, between us, in the matter of seconds. And. I'm really now just getting to know him. This Donnelly character, here. Even though he's been around the entire time I

have, and I've been seeing him, but from a distance. Still, he's been there all the same.

“Shits getting to you, huh?” He notes.

And then all of a sudden, I notice this thing in his eyes, something of which comes off a bit odd to me. At first a bit strange. But then, as it comes to me what it is, I realize: Holy Mother! Somebody who actually... dare I think it... cares? Huh! And it really is that! Something I haven't seen since being in, since joining this whole Navy thing.

“....” I say, or, doesn't say, since I'm still way too astonished to have witnessed this. I mean... wow! How has the universe allowed for this to be possible? And what would be next on its itinerary.... dragons, Santa Claus, string theory, the Easter Bunny, heaven and magic?

“What the fuck, man? Why you looking at me like that, like you've seen a ghost?” Donnelly jokes.

“I don't know, you just woke me up... I guess I'm wondering whether or not you might be that, or, a figment of my imagination.” I joke, back.

We don't say a thing to each other for a moment, as both our attentions go to the TV. And. It would be weird now if we just started staring at one another. Weird! And television is always a safe place to keep one's attentions at when one doesn't want things to get too weird.

“So, what's up, man, what's going on with you?” Donnelly asks.

And I realize his attention is once again on me, and not on the TV. And, he once again has that unnatural and unheard-of thing on his face: concern. And I am at awkward now. And this is getting too weird. And I am not sure how to handle this moment, and his question.

“Nothing, why?” I just let out.

“Well, you sorta started freaking out there a minute ago when you thought Chief Murdock had sent me to come and fetch you.”

I think for a second about the answer, but shrug.

“Falconni is a real asshole, huh?” He comments, knowing my deal with him.

Also knowing Falconni's deal with all newly qual-ed PCs, which, might I add, again, Donnelly is one of. But I've never seen Falconni even try anything on Donnelly as he's tried on the rest of us.

“I guess so.” I respond, about Falky, and the negative influence he's had in my life.

“You know, first time I met him, that little fucker stepped up to me to give me a handshake. Asked: 'You the new trainee, huh?' But I didn't say anything, because, I immediately saw what his deal was. He just stared at me, then, as I stared back. Little fuckin' prick. This went on for a while, until he realized it WASN'T going to be that way with me, not by a long shot.”

And it's funny how Donnelly is bringing this up, this story, since, I also had the exact same moment with Falconni when we first met. Although, I didn't pass his test, as Donnelly had, from what I can gather. It was the first time I worked with Falconni, after I had checked into The Shop. Falconni had pulled me aside, him, and Kats and Hats were there, and so was Barbarossa, and so was Navarro. They were all there, and they had pulled me aside to size me up. Figure me out to see what I was made of. And after that handshake, Falconni had went on to ask me a question:

“You scoring any since you been here?” He had asked.

Same as Roach Burger had done. And. Same question any douchebag alpha type would ask to test a new initiate. But, unlike Roach Burger, Falconni's inquisition came off a lot more demanding. A lot more imposing, since, Falconni is an actual imposing guy, no matter his stature. And I did what most insecure dipshits do at moments like these, I lied, talked about how I was hitting up this chick and that chick, at some bar at Rapoongi, a couple of nights back, and how they were all over me. Going way too far to overcompensate and making it that damn obvious how I hadn't any of such. At the time, my stupid self, figured it was that, or, come off as a loser… or worse yet… a fag. And contrary to popular comical beliefs about us Sailors, being homosexual is the LAST thing you want to be branded as. There's been a lot of jokes made over the matter, but nobody wants to see the real thing take play in any of their divisions, or Squadrons, or shops. Clinton's “don't ask, don't tell” policy is definitely in full effect, here.

“Senior getting to you too, huh?” Asks Donnelly.

And now I'm not hiding it anymore.
“FUCK SENIOR!”
And what I have to show, is a lot, as I say that a little too loud. And. I'm in the berthing where Day Check is sleeping in racks, only a few feet away, and anyone could be listening in right now.
“SHUSH! Damn! Quiet down, control yourself, he ain't that bad, is he?” Goes Donnelly.
But I have my opinion of the fat Hawaiian.
“He's worse!” I assess.
Donnelly nods, then, taking note of my opinion of the man. As much time as I've been seeing Donnelly around The Shop, he's mostly been on a shift where Senior hasn't been, same as me, mostly. Back at the beach, we mostly have three shifts, splitting a workday into eight-hour life cycles. Unlike now, with twelve-hour workdays, splitting the workday into two halves.
“Maybe he's a little crazy, and always fussing about hand wiping Jets, practically running Day Check like—”
“Slaves? Aye! That's exactly what he's doing.”
Donnelly shrugs.
“You know, it's called a fourteen day for a reason! So why is he making Day Check do it every single minute of the freakin' day—huh?”
That's a matter I'll get to, later. It has to do with a lot of silly Squadron politics and pride.
“And, if it's not him being a slave driver, the guy's also a neurotic basketcase, and shouldn't be in charge of the Line.”
“No?” Asks Donnelly.
“No!”
There's still a lot about that man, our Senior Chief Hamakua, I've taken notice of, I've observed, which I'll also cover, later. Cringe worthy details that really makes me wish he had never taken charge.

“I've seen how he is with people, he's confrontational, man, he'll get in your face, not to reprimand, or be a leader, but just to get in your face, and get you to do something.” I explain.
And the way Donnelly's eyes widen, I can see that that's a detail he hasn't been aware of about our LCPO.
“Wow, he's really that bad?” He asks, a little naively.
“Aye!” I confirm.
Since Donnelly hasn't yet been on a shift with the AMCS, I guess, I can understand the reason for his ignorance of the man. Donnelly then switched back to Falks, since he's more of our main problem, or at least, mine, since, I didn't have the same levels of hardihood to stand up to him as Donnelly had, with that whole handshaking test thing.
“Well, then I guess Falks is at least not so bad, better to be on Night Check with him, then on Days with Senior.” Notes Donnelly.
But I ain't done yet.
“He might not be as bad, but, he can sometimes be just as worse.”
I then see Donnelly smiling and shaking his head a little, and, personally, I see it as him being bias. Since, he hasn't had to deal with the little big man's shit as I have.
“Donnelly, you don't know, you—”
“No... I do know, Navastian... trust me! I do!” Donnelly responds.
And, I am now thrown off a little from Donnelly's reaction, which comes off a bit crazy, which I wasn't expecting.
“You know, Donnelly, Falconni was like: 'we need to break this mule in.' just last night to me.” I say.
Trying to at least give something to show what I'm dealing with.
“He said that?” Gasps Donnelly.
“Yeah, he did.”
“Well, I guess that's a bit of a jerk-off thing to say.”
“YOU THINK?” I demand.
But seeing how Donnelly is taken back, some, by my animosity towards the IS3, as if I've gone a bit overboard, and any further, I might start swinging wrenches into

the back of Falconni's head, when he isn't looking... that all! Has me reassess my feelings over the matter. And, what scares me a little now, is, for Donnelly to see me that way. A Section 8 case. Someone that actually would.
“Well, Navastian, all I can say is: don't let Falconni get to you! Don't let anyone get to you. You know what your problem is? You let them.” Advises Donnelly.
“But the fuckers are always in my face, trying to wear me down.” I rebut.
But then Donnelly says something revealing, that throws me off completely.
“Yeah, but... maybe that's because there's a lot of you, there, to wear down.”
And, interestingly enough, when Donnelly tells me this, what really throws me off is how I see a little bit of intimidation in his eyes, and intimidation from me. ME!
“A whole lot of... what is that supposed to mean?” I ask.
Donnelly then rolls his eyes.

There's a momentary silence between us that follows. But after that, Donnelly continues:
“Listen! I'll be honest, I got a bit of the same problem.”
“And what's that?” I wonder, not catching where he's coming from with this.
“Look, I'm like you. I might seem cool, most of the time, but, if you tick me off, I can get really nasty, also. So, I know how it is, and how it feels. Especially when it's only a part of you that feels that way, and it's not completely you. Just a part of you that just can't take it anymore.”
And what Donnelly says to me there completely goes over my head. Especially how incoherent Donnelly gets at the ends. And as for my thoughts on what he just said: how are you like me, Donnelly, how? You know, what? What do you know about what it feels like? All I know is my experience has been getting shit on at every turn. Is that what you're talking about? Honestly, I like you, but I have yet to see that happen to you. So, I really can't see how you can relate to me on this matter.
“Okay, I see that you don't get it.” Donnelly now notes.
And I shake my head at him. Can't tell if Donnelly might be onto something, or, might be onto boopdiddley, and I'm leaning on the latter.

“Listen, I know! You try, you try, you try... but then you aren't able to anymore, once you reach your breaking point, but....”
And as confusing as that all sounded, since, Donnelly is starting to seem confused himself trying to explain what he's got on his mind... as confusing as it sounded, it now somehow doesn't.
“Fine, I guess... that's sorta me. I'm trying right now to deal with all this, and, I'm reaching my breaking point, I guess?”
“Okay... well... so am I.” Donnelly explains.
And... maybe this Donnelly character is, and maybe he isn't. Fact of the matter is, I'm really just now getting to know him. Me, mentioning, AGAIN! But, if he's feeling a lot more similar to how I'm feeling, about everything, maybe, that's why we've been able establish a pretty good connection. And, truth be told, there definitely is a connection. I like this guy, Donnelly. A lot. Interesting how I noted before, how little I've felt like I've been able to connect with anyone else, and yet, somehow, Donnelly here is different. Even with all differences I see between us. Unlike me, Donnelly's a lot more like our AE3 Brockhausen. He's well built. He's a handsome guy. And, a true strapper. And I can see this kid fairing well with females. Unlike me, I can imagine this guy, here, making Third. And soon. And being on his way to being a Shit Hot Sailor. I see all this. Which then has me thinking: but really, then... how much further off am I from this guy? Maybe I'm just kidding myself. The fuck with what that AW1 thought of me! I know I'm pretty sharp and sensible, myself, when I can be. As for the looks department, not exactly chop liver, here, I'm a pretty decent looking guy, also. So. How much harder would making Third be for a guy like me? And how much harder would it be if I was to be Shit Hot, myself?
“So, how do you do it?” I ask.
Me wondering how he's able to deal with all we're going through, and still able to come out on top. For maybe there's some secret he knows about it that I could benefit from. Maybe, something?
“How do I do it?” Asks Donnelly.
“Aye, tell me?”
Donnelly then smiles, and tells me something I know I need to hear:

“Okay, I'll tell you, but first off, do something for me.”
“And what's that?” I ask.
“Stop saying 'Aye this,' and 'Aye that!' I know we in the Navy but shut the FUCK UP with that shit!” He sneers out.
And, I agree, for I know exactly where he's going with this complaint.
“Fine! Yeah! I will!”
“Seriously, anyone doing their first term, I think, needs to drop the act, because none of it sounds natural. Saying, 'Aye this,' and 'Roger that,' 'Squared away,' 'Jacked up,' and no one knows how to say any of these terms, correctly, because, they just adopted them not too long ago, when they joined. Thinkin' they got more salt than they do. Half the time they want to say 'yeah' 'cool,' and stuff, but then they try to catch themselves doing it, correct themselves, 'belay my last' shit, and when they do, it sounds off. I find it so annoying listening to anyone that's in their first term trying to talk this way. And then there's Quimby, and that motherfucker has lost his infantile mind, and now thinks he's some OG Captain Ahab, talking about sending motherfuckers to Davy Jones and... whatever the fuck else!”
And that just about has me on the deck laughing my ass off, or, should I say “floor.”
“Seriously, Navastian, and I swear... if you, or anyone else, any other motherfucker, really, calls me Shipmate, ever again, I'll—”
“I know! I know!” I fully relate.
Donnelly then begins shaking his head over that thought. Which has me go back to wondering Donnelly's secret: how does he keep himself so ahead of the game, so fresh, and so untouched.
“So, what do you do, what's your secret?” I ask, again.
And Donnelly now has a look in his eyes, but then rolls it off and says:
“I don't know. Just keep doing what you're doing, I guess! Even when you do reach your breaking point, they, Falky and Senior, and the bunch, when get you to your breaking point... if they keep knocking, just DON'T let them in.”
“That's it?” I wonder.
“Yeah, that's it. Stay positive.”
And that now has me rolling my eyes.

“That simple?” I keep wondering.
And now Donnelly seems pissed.
“Yeah! It really is that simple. Stay positive.”
And I don't know why, but just the word “positive,” alone, makes me frown for some reason. Donnelly notices, and comments about that:
“That's your problem. You don't want to be positive.”
“Oh, come on.... it's that simple...? Just stay—”
“Yeah! It is that simple, man! Just stay positive! Why do people like you always have to make it so difficult?”
And Donnelly has me there. Why do I make things so difficult? I now wonder to myself. And maybe that is really all there is to my problem. But then again....
“Aye, but it's not going to be easy. Still got fuckin' EMI and Senior to deal with.” I mention.
Which has Donnelly frowning even harder.
“Hey, what did I tell you about that whole Navy jargon, saying 'aye aye,' to me.”
“Oh, sorry, it's become a habit.”
“Well, maybe that negative shit is just another habit, you need to break, too.”
And Donnelly has me there, again. But, then again, is it just me? Because, it seems like everyone else is also making things just as hard.
“Fine. Stay positive—right? I get that. But it's still not exactly easy to do that with every Third Class and up is trying to 'break me in like a mule!'”
And looking into Donnelly's eyes, I can see that's an argument he can't refute much over. Donnelly then shrugs.
“Never did say it was going to be easy.”
“Wait, you did say it was going to be easy… so?”
“No, simple… not easy. Just because something is simple doesn’t necessarily mean it’s easy.”
And that gets me thinking again. Feels like both “simple” and “easy” would mean the same. At least to me.
Donnelly then looks at me all sideways, through another perspective.
“Navastian, I gotta say, I'm noticing something about you....”

“And what's that?” I ask.
“Dude, we're in the Military. It's all about these guys 'breaking us in like mules,' you know that, right? To break us down so they can start building us back up, into what they want. I mean, that's the Military. Go figure! So what else were you expecting?”
And Donnelly... gotta say... is making a good argument, right now. But then again:
“What was I expecting? How about a little bit of camaraderie? Isn't that what the Military is ALSO supposed to be about, huh?”
Donnelly now smirks, haphazardly, from that line. I then continue:
“Fine, I get it! You're right about one thing, that shit we all kept hearing in Boot Camp, 'breaking us down to build us back up,' I get that, and I'm willing to accept it. But, once again, was camaraderie really too much to ask? I am supposed to be going to war with these guys, not going to war with these guys! I mean, we are at war. We have been since September 11th. And, yet, the only enemies I've had to deal with have been the ones on the home turf.”
What I just said, now, really has Donnelly at pause, making him contemplate. And after a while, I get the sense that Donnelly might have just agreed with me over this matter.
“I don't know, Navastian, I can't exactly argue, there. But, like I said, if they keep knocking, just don't let them in. Do your own thing. Stay positive, and you’ll get through this, man.”
And what Donnelly says, I really take to heart. No matter if it's just rhetoric or not. Well? Maybe not all at once. But, I do, bit by bit, I feel. And... it really has been a very long time since I have taken anything to heart, like this. I smile at Donnelly. And now begin to wonder why have we been sitting down here for so long, while technically still on the clock.
“So whatcha doin' down here, Donnelly?” I ask.
And Donnelly just smiles.
“Whatcha doin'?” I ask, again.
“Skatin'! What are—you—doin'?” He asks, back.
“SKATIN', too! What else?” I reply.

We both laugh, then, and decide it's best to head back up. For there's no saying how long our Chief is meaning to continue snoring away in 104's cockpit.

DRY DOCKED

Khakis only means of dealing with subordinates is through fear and intimidation. Yelling! Lots and lots of yelling. I mean, you never really get used to it. I've gotten so many royal ass chewings from here and there, coming in from everywhere, and yet, I still can't get used to it. And neither do I want to. And, the thing about them, is, when it comes to the art of installing fire and brimstone into the heart of a fellow Shipmate, to terrify the bejesus out of him, and get that Shipmate to do what the Khaki be reckoning for him to do... my word! Words cannot describe it. It's an art form well practiced amongst them, well-crafted over the years, well refined, as they learn how to install such sheer terrors into the minds of us, watching their eyes turn abominable, almost, to get us up and doing what they're commanding us to. And... all right! I don't want to sound like some sensitive ass Sailor, afraid of getting yelled at, at every corner, some coward, some PUSSY! But, where the fuck is the camaraderie at, again—huh? I joined the Military because I wanted some camaraderie for once, since, most of the people I find in the civilian sector to be lacking. I mean, I've been an anti-social fuck for most of my young life, since, I've just never been able to feel that sense of oneness amongst any group of people I've been around. Most have been either too flaky, too fleeting, or too false. I want oneness for once—for fuck sakes! Something to restore faith in my fellow man. But here in the Navy, I feel like I've not only found something that I WASN'T looking for, but I've stumbled upon and discovered a new level of just how downright despicable people can be to each other. Here, I see more of the true nature behind people, I would have never been able to see in the civilian sector, because, here, all the macho bravado, and confrontational weeding out the weak process, that goes on within the Military sector, has absolved away any inhibitions people generally carry, in more civilized settings, and, what's left bare are people's truest and bluest nature, as purely as they are conceived. People are shit, I guess, no matter where you go. But here, people are shit WITH A VENGEANCE! And damn skippy about it, too. The ugliest and most despicable qualities you might find in anyone is magnified by ten here.

Then given teeth, given bark, and given tons and tons of attitude to make them sea-worthy, to be a part of this American fleet. Bullies from all parts of America have been rounded up and made into super bullies, now, wearing Uniforms, medals, and capes. And I do mean CAPES. Since they're Super Bullies, now. Jackasses and assholes, here, are given the chance to home in their skills, and turn their craft into an art form. Here, you don't just bully and shit talk your way through life. You do it with style, you do with with grace, and you do it in the proud Navy form, exemplifying ones proud Navy heritage. Proud Navy bearing. From your starched-up creases to your spit shined boots. I mean, you've heard the stereotypes before, right? The loud ass drunkin' cursin' whorin' Sailor! Well... BARNACLES! Where be the tattoo parlors at? When we hit port, me mateys, let's all get a tattoo of a horse's ASS on our burly chests, and flex them to one another. And definitely to anyone not willing to witness. And especially to women and children, exposing to all what we're all about. We be Sailors! Drunkin', whorin', fightin' SAILORS! Once I joined, it was good-bye shy and kindhearted Navastian, and hello the overly posturing, womanizing Navy jackass, you now see before you. And the worst part is... a large part of me feels like I ABSOLUTELY LOVE THIS NEW TREND! Love this new me. Love what I've become. Three Steel Balls! The Navy has made me de-mature. Whatever maturities I possessed before I was Born Again in Great Lakes, is lost to me, now, and I'm back to my rudimentary level of feeling like a scared and angry and rascally lost little child, coming to terms with reality, again. Re-experiencing innocence, and then experiencing the absolute destruction of it. But this time: “The Yo Ho Joe Navy” way. I've been made into a child, again, because, the Navy didn't feel like I lost my innocents properly the first time, in the spectacular mortifying and also horrifying fashion it idealizes we all should. I remember a couple months ago, I called up the few friends I had made in my last years of High School. Them, and some blonde girl I had a crush for back then. But, when I called them, I was DRUNK as a SKUNK, and mouthing them all off in the language I had been learning since Zero Days. Or, in other words, going something like this:

“Hey, Steven, you fuckin' PRICK, you fucked that skank Becky, yet? The one you had a thing for all throughout High School... the same one I had? Damn, did Becky have

an ass on her, I mean, seriously... you hit that, yet? Because, if you didn't, I'm coming back, and I'm hitting that. Make her wear my Dixie cup on her ass while I give her my twenty-one-gun salute—from behind! And, I swear, I'll take pictures, and send them to you. That's right! So, better get with the fucking. Better fuck that bitch, before I do. Before the Uniform does. And you remember that one time how excited she got for that mall cop in a Uniform? Imagine how much she'll be gushing when she sees me, in my Pimp Coat, over some Crackerjacks! YEA BOY!"

After a while, I was asking myself, "who the fuck is talking?" I WAS ASKING MYSELF THAT QUESTION! I was so drunk, and so out of it, and so not being who I at one point thought I was, I couldn't tell anymore. And, pretty sure, the same question my old High School friend was asking about me, now, also. And, considering how much I'm sure I offended him, also the other friends I called that night, now, my ex-friends, probably.

As for Samantha, that pretty blonde girl I was crushing over back then. Let's see, what did I say, now, that I was a Navy Joe Squid, drunk off my rocker, and had lost all my inhibitions, and was willing to show her the raw deal of how I REALLY felt about her. So, come again, what did I say to her?
"Oh fuck, Samantha! I have to tell you, in High School, I wanted to eat your pussy out so bad! So fuckin' BAD! You remember how you caught me a few times just staring at you? Well, I was thinking about your pussy, then. Fuck, did you give me blue balls, you sexy little skank, you! Fuck! Do me a favor, stick your fingers in it, then taste it, and then describe to me how it does!"
After realizing what I had done in those five phone calls to old friends, and to Sammie, I laid off the sauce for a good month, fearing what I might say if I was to start calling relatives, in the pits of inebriation. Especially my third cousin, Amanda.

"AWW! Get me DOWN! Get me DOWN! Fuck you guys, get me—"
"SHUT UP, ROACH BURGER! Shut the FUCK UP!" Punks Quimby, to Roach Burger's upside-down face.

We're in the Line Shack, now, there are no E-5s and up in sight, and what me and AN Donnelly are now witnessing is Roach Burger's unofficial punishment, for having fucked up so royally, yesterday morning, I mean... today's morning (sleeping during the day gets confusing sometimes).
“Now that you're a Night Checker! Now that you're one of us. This is how it's going to be from now on, EVERY NIGHT! Roach Burger! Every FUCKIN night!” Cracks IS3 Falconni, as he begins twirling him in place.
“Yeah, every MOTHERFUCKIN' night!” Contributes Quimby.
For no f-word should ever go without its mother at hand, according to this Georgian momo, while crossing the street.

All right! Let me explain what exactly they've done to him: first off, picture Roach Burger upside down, as mentioned before... all right? Then picture him chained up, and hung by his feet, with the chain running up and over some pipes running along the overhead (Navy for ceiling, similar to bulkhead = wall and deck = floor/ground)... all right? Now picture him covered in Wog sauce: any and every sort of condiment you'd find in the galley, also, any blackish tar like substance one might stumble upon oozing out of a boiler room at the lowest decks of The Ship... all right? And now just picture him being probed, pricked, slapped, smacked, and whipped, by a bunch of Line Rats, like us, or Quimby, while upside down, and while the IS3 twirls him around a little... all right? Well... THERE! Roach Burger's punishment. At least for tonight. No saying what the boys might have in store for tomorrow night's rendition. As of right now, it's the IS3, Quimby and Kats in The Shop, but as the IS3 notices me and AN Donnelly, he frowns, and gets a little confrontational.
“Where you been, Navastian? You're supposed to have been here hours ago. Senior gave you three hours of off time, and you've gone past that.”
And the IS3 really does seem authoritative and pissed off about it. But... I sorta don't feel like myself right now, and how I'd usually feel towards questioning like this. Can't tell you what's different, but, I feel it being so, and, I feel a lot more at ease.
“Well, you got anything to say for yourself?” IS3 follows up.

But I just shrug, and GAFs him off (GAF being shortened version of DILLIGAF), straight to his face, and the IS3 takes notice.
“Navastian, who the hell do you....”
But then he begins peering, with eyes slit, peering at me, then at Donnelly, and then me, again. The IS3 then smirks.
“Get me the FUCK down from here, this isn't funny any—”
“SHUT THE FUCK UP!” Punks Quimby, again.
Really frontin' his face all stonecold and serious up at Roach Burger's own. And. I find it all very silly. Even though meant to be threatening.

After a second or two of this. Us all. Also with the IS3, who's still peering at me and Donnelly. After a short while, at pause, as we all try to assess our next words and actions, AE3 Brockhausen steps into The Shop. He steps in, and steps up next to me, first, looks at me, with his usually piercing stares. And, I must note: Brock has some very unusual stares, now and then. The type you see those that have been overworked giving, as if the pressure is all building up behind their eyes, ready to blow. Since, he's one of the few that's really favored in The Shop (mostly when it comes to getting shit done), and the seniority in The Shop has been constantly giving him a bag of dicks, and that's our colorful description of having a lot of bullshitin' tasks added. Extra responsibilities placed on one's shoulders, which ends up having one spend extra hours doing the monotonous B.S. work. Just imagine him sitting around and sorting through a bag of dicks, and hatin' life! Aye! For that's what he looks to be doing, most of the time. But the seniority makes him do it, since, he's good at it. He's squared away. Shit Hot! But then again, I can't imagine any reason for him to be staying this late into our shift, since he's Days.
“Brock, you still working?” I ask.
Brock looks at me and gives me a 'nay' with his eyes. Then looks over at the spinning, upside down, high and dry Airman, and grows a hearty smile.
“Sup, Brock.” Greets Falky.
“See what we've done to your boy?” Says Quimby.

“Aye, I see, Falky... you said to me I should come up, that you had a present for me, and....”
“How you like it?” Asks the IS3.
“Beautiful, simply beautiful!” Rejoices the AE3.
With open arms, as he walks up to Roach Burger, and simply marvels at the work done.
“Brock, PLEASE, get them to get me down from here! All the blood is going to my head, and my head right now feels like it's going to POP!”
Brock rejoices some more, then begins twirling Roach Burger in circles, himself, slowly and softly, as Roach Burger goes:
“COME ON! Get me DOWN! Stop fucking around, I feel like I'm going to pass out at any—”
“SHUT THE FUCK UP!” Punks Quimby, a third time.

And then... someone else enters The Shop.
“Hey... any of you've seen Chief Murdock? I've been looking all over for him, to let him know, Maintenance is ready for... what the hell....”
It's a First Class White Shirt QA, stepping into The Shop. He sees us, sees Roach Burger, and his predicament, his mouth parts open, then, as a fly flies in, and without him flinching.
“What, they turning 107, now?” Asks Falky, without any concern.
The First Class baffles a little more over the scene he's witnessing, then answers:
“Yes, right now! Or, soon, at least! Get whoever that's supposed to be on it—on it!”
He then stares at the scene, again, and then steps the fuck out, as if he was never there. And the scene then goes back to what it was doing:
“Roach Burger... Roach Burger... Roach Burger....”
“Fuck you, Brock, get me the FUCK DOWN—NOW!”
“Why is his mouth not duct-taped?” Reprimands Brock.
“Oh, roger that! I'm on it!” Rogers Quimby.
Then quickly hurries over to a table, and pulls some duct tape out of a drawer, then brings it over, to put it into good use.

“Roach Burger... Roach Burger... Roach Burger...!”
“Go FUCK your—hmmm, hmm, hm!”
“You know what you are?”
“What is he, Brock?” Rejoices Quimby.
Wanting to hear what Brock's spiel is going to be this time. All admiring the AE3's game.
“Roach Burger... you are fuckin' wet tissue paper... you know that?”
“Hmmm, hmm, hmm!”
“I want to blow my nose, since, it's all stuffy and running all the time. I mean, my nose is so stuffy, I can't even breathe through it, and have to breathe through my mouth. Looking like a creepy mouthbreather! So when I find some Kleenex, what I absolutely hate, ABSOLUTELY HATE, is, when they're already wet. Because they got something on them to kill germs, and shit. That I don't give two shits about. I mean... I want to blow my nose, and they're ALREADY WET!”
Everyone begins snickering, now, as the AE3 builds momentum, as Falky begins twirling Roach Burger in circles, faster and faster.
“They're motherfuckin' already... I fuckin' HATE wet tissue paper... and Roach Burger, guess what? I fuckin' hate... YOU!”
He then whips out his belt and begins with the whipping.
WHA-PA!
“Hmm!”
WHA-PA!
“Hmmm!”
WHA-PA!
“Hmmmm!”
“Hey, Navastian, 107 is your Jet! They're turning it at any time, so... GET TO IT!” Delegates the IS3.
And I... get to it.

WHA-PA!
“HMMMMM!”

“Hey, do we have lighter fluid in The Shop?” Wonders Brock.
“Yes, so... we doing Flamin' Pinata?” Asks Falky.
“Roger that! Flamin' Pinata it is!” Confirms Brock.
“Outstanding!”
Watching all this, I'm then all of a sudden stricken with a curious notion: what if Roach Burger was to snap, one day, and to turn on everyone, for having been put through all this? And, it's a notion that I feel coming from a deep-down place, as I watch all this, watching all these details set in motion, and how they might possibly lead things into that direction. I mean, how much more can Roach Burger put up with this humiliation? How much more could Muwangi, with what he went through earlier? Or. How much more could Derbytown? Or even I? Or even... I? But anyways... everyone has their breaking point, and I know most certainly if the boys were to ever take the hazing I've had to put up with, to this level, I'd straight up ATTACK these FUCKERS! I WOULD! I'd start swinging chains into their faces, or, around their necks, as I'd choke them, then, maybe even to death. For, look at how they like to smile and play, they're like children about this! Like children, running around hitting things, and breaking things, and being all mischievous, with no understanding of what they do, and whether or not it's wrong. Not seeming to at all be able to contemplate over the consequences of their actions, and how they affect people around them. I mean, sure, Roach Burger, at this moment, isn't at that breaking point, and still is able to tolerate enough to be able to take all this, but... for how much longer? How much do we, or do they, really think they know Rauschenburger, to think they can get away with all this, without facing any serious consequences, in the end? I mean, I know Rauschenburger this much: what he has is this... childlike admiration, for Brock, and the other guys in The Shop, since he's such a child, dealing with those he sees as supposed role models. I see it in his eyes. He looks up to them. But how much longer is this going to last, if, they keep doing this to him? You know how they say: “You don't want to meet your heroes.” And, right now, Rauschenburger is not only having met his, but... LOOK AT THIS SHIT! And Brock might be one of the few that's supposed to be different, a really outstanding guy. A true Shit Hot role model for all of us. One true leader amongst us E-4s and below.

But, right now, LOOK AT HIM, for he's one and the same with Falky, and his villainous lot.

I don't know, maybe I'm just thinking for myself, and far too into it, considering how I'd feel if I was chained up and hung from my feet, and set on....

Wow! Whiskey Tango Foxtrot!

They're really setting him on fire! What the fuck is going on, here? This is really happening? This is what the Navy, and camaraderie in the Navy, is all about? This is what I signed up for? And the fact of the matter is, it is! All jokes aside, this really is happening! And this is what I have ended up signing up for. And as funny as it all seems, on the surface. As comedic. There's something seriously scary about all this, underneath it all, when thinking about the possibilities of what's really leading for all of us to act this way. This crazy. And this mischievous. And downright evil, in a way. Also, what's scary to me about all this, is, how I've now grown accustomed to it, accustomed to all this harassment and hazing. And simply acting this way. And seeing others act this way, too. And having our superiors accept all this, by simply looking away, and pretending it didn't happen (that QA that just entered our Shop, officially, should have DONE something about this, but as you saw, he DIDN'T!). It's little bit grotesquely fascinating, (and also simply grotesque) seeing how all this can be done and seeing it all as being “normal.” But underneath... truly underneath... what we end up defining as normal, really should be anything but! There be some giant tentacle krakens down there, some tentacle Old Ones, down in the depths of our oceans, which, you wouldn't ever want to be seeing them eventually SURFACE! If Roach Burger was to snap, and turn on the people he looks up to, now, would that be the new normality he would then establish? True destructive violence taking shape? Right now, the violence at play is there for entertainment sake. Like watching some Three Stooges short. Or a Looney Tunes cartoon. It's only there for the laughs and meant to be harmless (even when a lot of PAINFUL harm is conflicted). But, we don't exactly live in a cartoon filled universe, where blood will never be shed, no

matter how violent we get amongst each other. Just past the violence that's already at play here, would be that, be destructive violence. Where blood is shed, and mortal lives are being threatened. So, question is, could that become the new normal? Since, we're already doing all this, and finding nothing wrong with it.

Well, they would... but at least I wouldn't!
I think?

But, then again... maybe I really AM thinking too deeply into this matter. Maybe it is just simple fucking around, and there really is nothing really wrong with all this, and no worry of things getting worse than this. Maybe I should stop thinking of it as "harassment," and see it as just fucking around. I shouldn't be thinking of all this with that "H" word. Being all sensitive ass Sailor about it. And... really... how much damage is there being done, here? Hell, I was set on fire last night, by those shit kicking AOs, and I'm fine right now, and have no third degree burns to report to Medical with. I'm fine, right? This is fine! Everything is fine... right?

"Roach Burger, you are fuckin' nose hairs! I'm on a date, I say something suave to the girl I'm with, and she likes it and finds me cute. But then when I smile, you come popping out of my nose to say 'hello.' The girl sees it and goes 'EWW!' Now I won't get laid. I WON'T GET LAID! All because I forgot to trim my nose hairs, beforehand. And all I can do now is go home and jerk off for the rest of that night. All because of YOU! I fuckin' HATE nose hairs! And Roach Burger, guess what? I fuckin'… hate… YOU!"
WHA-PA
"HMMMMM!" Goes Roach Burger, again.
And I laugh. Since... I guess it's funny? And it's all meant to be for good show.

WOLF EYES

You know that thing about finally snapping, and deciding to turn on everyone around you, I, personally, would never want to get to that point. I wouldn't! And the thought scares me of how it might be possible. Because... I don't know. There's something

churning within me, just underneath the surface, as it is with everybody else. I feel it. I don't like it. But it's THERE! And if you really think about it, all it would take would be one ugly moment, where Falconni, or Quimby, or whoever, saying or doing something cross with me, for the very last time, and then... I might just do something! And I won't even have to be the one to decide to do it. It might just happen, spontaneously. With enough pent-up anger and frustration and hatred accumulating to the point that it becomes self-aware and begins thinking and making decisions in its own behalf. For me, it would feel like blackening out for a split second, then coming to, to see, I'm on top of any one of my fellow Shipmates, as the rest would try to pry me off, and then I'd be done for. Even though we're all already getting physical with each other, that thin (very thin) line of getting TOO physical will be reached, and after that, I'm done for. Cookies! I would have gone too far, and, I'm going to be finding myself in the Brig for the rest of this cruise. Until I'm dishonorably discharged. Being served a Big Chicken Dinner. And if whatever I end up doing leaves fatal results, I might end up seeing some serious hard time before I'm allowed out into the world again....

And after having thought all that... I decide, then, not to spend another single second thinking about it. Not another single second. Not! One! Single!

I'm out on the Flightdeck, now. Starry skies laid out over the Pacific. And... aye! It's cold. Freezing my nuts off, yet again, up here, but not as badly as I was last night. Or earlier this.morning. I'm up at my 107, and there's a couple of Airframers around, meaning the turn I'm about to do will deal with a lot of hydraulic crap being tested.
“Hey, Navastian, how you been?” Greets AM3 Rosario.
And, yes! Would you look at that! An actual female on board. In our Squadron. Thought our command was all balls and franks, did you? And, as for Rosario, here, she's something... I mean, someone, I feel like I should be centering my thoughts on, instead. Instead of the jacked-up shit I was on before.

Women in the Military... what is there that can be said about the matter? I mean, ideally, nothing should be said. They're there to serve just as we are. They're no different, and, if you think about it, we're all born female, until those of us selected are introduced to that Y chromosome, which in turn “turns” us male. So, what is there to be said about women in the Military? How about if I summarize it in this way: if I had a daughter, I'd rather have her spending a night at an all-male correctional facility, butt naked, in a room full of Lifers, tied up, with an apple in her mouth, than to have her join our ranks. Well... at least one night (okay, fine! I'd rather have her serve than any of that crap mentioned, but... you get the point). And since we're talking about the Navy, here, words could not express the level of dread and terror I'd feel in her behalf, if she was to decide to go against my word, as a father, and join. Let's take Rosario here for instance: sweet girl, pretty mixed girl, Black and Hispanic. Looks wise, pretty? Aye! But in the FUPA style girls like her come packed with when they what’s considered voluptuous (Fat Upper P*ssy Area! I don’t come up with these Navy acronyms, so don’t ask, but, then again, you do know what I mean). And if she was back in Bronx, NY, where she's from, walking down the street, every day, she might have... two... maybe three... guys making cat calls at her to get her attention, her number, and hopefully, her sack. Two to three harmless cat calls. But that's in the civilian sector. There you have cat calling pussy cats, here you got WOLVES! When us Sailors begin to spend enough time aboard a floating vessel, far, far away from the wholesome influences you find in a nuclear society, far from the sociological influences women, children, and old people have on our collective psyches. And all we're confronted with is the confrontational influences I've been illustrating, from page to page, of the going-ons amongst us. When we have all that, and then have a chance to see that there ARE a few women amongst us... well? “He got the wolf eyes,” is what they'll start to say when one of us begins to build up enough hunger for the opposite sex, that we'll no longer be looking at the mating ritual with human eyes. Some will joke though “he's starting to see things two, ten, and two,” which is a lighter hearted and comical way of putting it, basically putting it as: “women that are twos, are tens on the Boat, until they get back on shore where they'll revert back to twos, again.” But, like I said, that's just being comical, and a

little childishly mean and derogatory. Truthfully, we're building up enough hunger for sex, that it becomes a little scary, sometimes, and scarier still are the lengths we'll go to get some. Satisfy our cravings for the flesh of females. For when we hit port... well? I think we've all heard the legends of the whorin' Sailor. But while on Ship? We're all wolf! And wolves don't do any cute and silly cat calling, like any pussycat, harmless civilians will do. When we see female, we'll stare RIGHT AT THEM, and begin to howl. And when we stop howling, that will definitely not be a good sign, for, whoever we have our sights on, had better RUN! For that's her ASS, if she doesn't!

Muahahahaha... ahem!

All right! Maybe we're not that bad (I not wanting to insinuate us all as being rapist! Fuck that notion!), but, it feels like we're that bad sometimes (bat at being a bunch of whoring womanizers. Not rapist! I don't want to take it THERE! Fuck no!). It just feels like we're really terrible, on the surface. Since, rule of thumb insists, whatever frown worthy quality you find in the general public in the civilian sector, in the Military, you'd best have it times by the level of WTFness by ten. And in the Navy? Crank it up another notch, to eleven. (Marines call for another, twelve, as long as the category resides in the stupid department). Every male in our Squadron, which consists of up to two to three hundred personnel, wants to (and excuse me for my French) FUCK AM3 Rosario. Fuck her raw and senseless. Fuck her in the vagina, mouth, a-hole, nostrils, belly button, piercings... if she has a hole, she had better cover it up, because if we see it, we'll start to stare at it all funny. And most definitely, very creepily! EVERY male in our Squadron wants to do her in like that, and that's not counting the Boat Chucks, or other Squadrons, and that one VMFA Squadron full of Jarheaded Marines. She has to always be on guard, because, when we come for game, we don't come with simple, harmless cat calls. We come with wolf eyes, and drooling mouths and ravenous teeth, which are hiding sharp and pointy teeth behind them. And if there's s full moon out, I pray for AM3 Rosario to load her guns with enough silver bullets, because, it's going to take every last shot to save herself

from the frenzy. And that is why women in the Military... not that it's a bad thing! But, definitely, not an easy thing to have, either! Now, AM3 Rosario is actually a pretty tough cookie. And really, she has to be, if she wants to survive. She's one of the few we have in the Squadron that can handle herself around all these predatory wild animals out on the hunt for some meaty sustenance. She's tough and has only had to take on... almost a quarter of our Squadron, including some married Chiefs and Officers (don't even get me started on fraternization, as if any of that realistically ever applies). And, aye! Roger that good sir or madam! You heard that correctly! "Taken on" meaning exactly what it sounds like. Or more simply put, sucked and fucked a quarter of our Squadron, and whatever else Boat Chucks, or other Wing Nuts, or Jarheads, which I don't know about. I'm going off Scuttlebutts and word of mouth, here! And, would you look at that! Unlike AN Robertson, AMAN Martinez (remembered for her Black and Decker Pecker Wrecker), AD3 Jonesy... and, ugh! What a Buffarilla she was...!

(Buffarilla: mixture of buffalo and gorilla. The result of many years of female inbreeding practiced by multiple heavyset inhabitants of the Southern United States. Habitat is usually limited to the Pascagoula, Ms. locale. However, intermarriage with drunken junior enlisted Sailors resulted in wide-spread minor infestations across the lower 48 states). Yeah, just felt like I needed to go into quite the detail with what that slang term means, considering how colorful us Squids imagination tends to be in describing this type of nasty ass, mean ass shit. Ha!

But, anyways!
Unlike those girls, and two other former female Bloody Shamrocks, that had to be sent back, state side, because they all got knocked up, and just in the last two years—might I add! Unlike those girls, who weren't even half as attractive as the AM3 here is, Rosario is still with us. So, good for her! Cheers!
"Ha! What you looking at, Navastian? Lookin' like you haven't had some in a while!" Snaps she.

Being all spunky and teasing about it. Knowing EXACTLY what the deal is twenty-four/seven. Because, that's how often she has to deal with it, indirectly, and also not. Personally, now (and in a nonsexual way), I really like the AM3. She has all the sassy physical and personality traits, which can all be found in her lips, which are way too proportionately big for the rest of her body. First thing you notice about her face aren't even her eyes, but her lips, they stick out that uniquely by themselves. So much so I'd find them as Rosario's windows to her soul. And when she's on a roll, full on sassing up a storm, with those lips, mouthing off at everyone, and everything, and you can see bubbles develop, and strings of saliva and....

Wait?
Where am I going with this...?

But anyways. I like her, and I like talking to her, and also mostly just for her, and not just to watch this body part of hers, or that body part, set in motion. Then to imagine a certain body part of mine correlate with the motions she is....

Okay! FINE! I also want to fuck her brains out, too, just like every other Swinging Dick in our Squadron. I mean, she's no Boat Goat, quite the opposite, she's fucking HOT! But, here's the problem, I really feel like there's a connection between me and her, and not just the one I'd like to imagine, on some level. For some reason, she doesn't seem to click well with most of the other Bloody Shamrocks as she does with me. I mean, even though she's just about fucked and sucked a good portion of them, also the Boat... the only person she ever seems to talk to a whole bunch, is me. And that MEANS something. Something I know, deep down, that sex wouldn't carry, but would ruin. Gotta take consideration into that, no matter the lust. Every other night, for the past month we've been on the USS Jimmy Carter, and also some time, earlier, on shore, we've had our chats. I mean, it's kinda interesting watching everyone else approach her while she's chatting it up with me. They all come off mackin' and smackin' to get her attention, and all Rosario does is stare at them, for about three seconds, like she's looking at a monkey trying to figure out how to fuck

a football. That withdrawn and disapproving look a person gives when they can't believe what they're seeing and want nothing to do with it. And then, she'll ignore them, and switch her attention back onto me. It's pleasing to see a girl act that way to any douchebag, player types, that try to get to her. It's like she's really saving herself for the attention I'm meaning to give. I mean, she's still just another Boat Ho, unfortunately, and she'll still fuck and suck every last one of them off later, but....

But....
FINE...!
YES, I DO KNOW HOW ALL OF THIS SOUNDS! And, NO! I'm not that gullible.
I'm...?
I'm... just being that willfully so! So, give me a freakin' break, here, and let me enjoy whatever bullshitting fantasy I've made up for myself, where there might be something between me and her, that won't just involve me sticking something of mine, into something of hers, and THAT'S IT! And to answer any other questions and concerns for you: NO! We haven't done it... yet! And I prefer it to stay that way. Word is, Rosario has more male like qualities than most males do, being the “hit it and quit it” type. And also, word of mouth, she's so good at it, most swinging Squid Dicks won't end up feeling that way with her, in return. Or in other words... she has a few lingering ex types lingering about. And I've seen them giving the sad, lonely eyes at her from a distance. And when I say: “good at it” I also mean that exactly as it sounds. And with lips like that, I can only imagine. So, what you have here is an entire Ship (there's never a realistic answer of how many) that either have had her, and are begging to give her another hit. Or, haven't, and can't wait to get their first.

Aye, sir! Roger that! That is how life is aboard a Navy vessel. These are the stories and rumors that will persist. And on the Boat, persist tenfold. So, fuck all that being an officer and a gentlemen, and sweeping Debra Winger types off their feet. Yet, here I am, being the only guy that's spent the longest time resisting her advances, and... I don't know why? Because I'm fucking stupid like that, I guess? I think it was a couple of nights ago, I was talking about some stupid shit, or another, and all

Rosario did was stare down at my crotch, while biting her lips, and barely once looked up at me. And then said: “let me see it." “What?” I asked, as if I didn't know. And after she gave me a, “don't even pretend to be that naive, I know you know,” look, I asked: “why?” And why ask “why,” when I really was anticipating what could have gone down, later, if I hadn't. But when I asked, Rosario then made a pouty face, like she was sweating through some summer's heat, and totally brought it out into the open: “because I want to suck it, that's why!" And said it like she meant it, as she began puckering her lips. And... after I had myself a long... long... LONG, winded moan, inside my head, as my balls went Arctic zero blue, I smiled, all broken up inside, as Rosario just began laughing her ass off. “Kidding... I'm only kidding!" Said she, seeing how I was that much of a fuckin' prude. I don't know. Maybe I should just let her blow me and get it over with. There's nothing else that's going to come out of it. Let her blow me, and get something out of it, before I develop any real feelings, and end up being just another Seaman Lonely Eyes, stalking her from across the Hangar Bay, watching her, as she begins entertaining the fancies of the next Swinging Dick that comes along.

“So, what are we waiting for?” I ask Rosario.
She smiles at me, then.
“Well?”
“Chief Delashmut!” She says.
And so... we wait. And so... we wait, some more. And some more, and so on. And now, I'm sitting on top of a huffer that was driven over by a Blue Shirt, and it's me, her, AM3 Turnipseed, and a Smurf at the driver seat, that's nodding off to sleep. And. It's very, very, very cold out now.
“Hong Kong! In a few short days we'll be there.” Cheers Turnipseed, with an open smile.
But then Rosario smiles all presumptuous like.
“Hong Kong—huh? So, what's in Hong Kong that's got you very excited?” Asks she.
Turnipseed just smiles, back, and doesn't answer. But then stops with the smiling and says:

“Adventure.”
“Adventure?”
“Yes, I don't plan on doing what everyone else is going to be doing, heading to the Wan Chi district. We got three days of shore leave, my Duty Day is the first, and I plan on spending the other two days just adventuring.” Explains Turnipseed.
But something in Rosario doesn't seem to be buying it.
“Adventuring?” Says Rosario, looking bland and bored.
Aye, I could see Rosario is finding the words being used a little corny. But, then again, coming from a corny guy like Turnipseed, is I guess, something sorta to be expected.
“Honestly, I can't wait until we hit Thailand, after Hong Kong, I've been wanting to go there for a while, so I can head deeper into the country, to check out all those golden palaces, those pagodas!” Mentions Turnipseed.
And Rosario yawns now. And a bit rudely, might I add.
“You mean those buildings that look like funnels?” Asks she.
“Aye.”
“Why?”
“Umm....” Goes the Turnip.
“What's so interested about looking at pretty buildings you'll never live in?” Asks Rosario.
“Well, historical reasons.” Answers Turnip.
And I'm starting to feel the level of annoyance Turnip be feeling answering these questions.
“Oh. So why don't you do what everyone is going to do in Hong Kong or Thailand?” Sasses Rosario, now.
And... wow, now I can see why women can be so anti—this time of crap! Now seeing how a female being so pro Player Player Life is such a major TURN OFF! Rosario smiles, again, as both me and Turnip frown. And it's like we're dealing with a douchebag MALE type, you meet in clubs, with his New Era cap to one side, with womanizing eyes, type of cat calling douchebag whose sole purpose there is to embarrass the rest of us.

“I don't know, Rosario, that whole Wan Chi... it's not really my thing.” Anguishes Turnip.
“Oh?” Goes she.
Oh, and another observation about Rosario, here. I feel like I should really be taking her as a hip-hop dyke. Type of guy... er... girl, you have as a next-door barracks' roommate, that will spend the last three hours before bed, every night, playing some Ja Rule or Lil' Jon LP, REAL fuckin' loud! And to the point you start to get sick of hearing the words “PUSSY” and “POP” uttered every five seconds (“MOTHERFUCKER” in Quimby's room, and a lot of dogs barking, for that fool will be listening to some DMX shit). Listening to the type of music the listener be training themselves with, self-brainwashing themselves, self-indoctrinating, to this new train of thought and lifestyle. Themselves, and also YOUR ASS, now, since you're being forced to listen to that hedonistic crap, as well.
“No!” Cements Turnip.
Over the whole “why don't you go redlighting,” question, and also Rosario's continuous attempts to bag on his moral character.
“So, how about you, Navastian, is that your thing?” Redirects Rosario.
And now, I'm starting to not like this woman, here. This isn't the Rosario I've been liking, chatting with. I mean, I know how her sass is, but I don't like it this time, seeing it at this level. It's as if she's getting worse and transforming into something I don't see I'll be attracted to much longer. Eww!
“What's wrong, Navastian? You look moody.”
And the jacked-up part in all this is, I don't want this to mean I'm to start disliking her every time I see her. Since, I have been enjoying her presence when she isn't being THIS direct.
“Moody? Well, I'm... I'm... I guess I am, since we're waiting for the Chief. So, we can do this. It's freezing up here!” I finally answer.
“Yeah... I guess it is cold up here.” Answers back, she.
And... good! I'm glad to see an end come to this all.
“Hey, Navastian, maybe we should crawl up in the intake and wait for the Chief in there, keep each other warm.” Smiles out Rosario.

And as she smiles, I really now just imagine her as a dyke, or just a male, really! And I'm really not interested now in crawling into some intake to keep warm with another dude.
“No, AM3, I don't even want to know what the Chief will think, catching us two in there.” I try to sorta laugh out, sorta trying it out to be a joke.
Rosario the Dyke's smile widens, as I notice she has a very thin layer of peach fuzz spread out on most of her face. Especially above her upper lip. And she's practically a dude now.
“Oh, don't be a pussy, Navastian. Fuck the Chief, let him think what he wants to think.” Says Mr. Flat Bill Cap.
And as she smiles, she does so, now, with grills on.

And... I don't answer. I don't want to. I'm done now.

“So Turnipseed, you'll be heading deeper into Thailand, you say.”
Seeing as how I've disengaged completely from her, Rosario grows a quick frown, then redirects back onto the Turnip.
“Aye.” Answers he.
“Oh, that's cool.” Nods Rosario.
And after my withdrawal, she now seems a little out of her element.
“You know what I love doing in Japan? I love to just get on the metros, there, and get lost, just to see what I might find.” Explains Turnip.
Interesting. That's exactly how I have mostly been in Japan. Using the metro system, a lot. Going all over, and just to get lost, too.

Rosario then lets out a long-winded sigh, all discouragingly, and looks away, and doesn't say anything anymore. And. Neither do we. And after a moment of looking at her, while trying real hard to disassociate that whole notion of she being a he (which I can see she sees, in which time she spends mostly ignoring me as if none of this is happening), after all that, I decide not to fully acknowledge what just happened, since, I still like to have the prospects of maybe getting with her. But as

long as she's coming off as a she, and not some frontin', jackass dude you'd find in a Yo MTV Raps music video. Fuck them Barnacles. I wouldn't fuck Jay-Z with his own dick! Nas… at least maybe if I swung that way. But not that ugly mofo. Fuck that shit. Ether—proud!

Hmm... I think now, as I start to think about what the Turnip was saying. Talking about getting LOST! And... for some reason, I really start to like that idea, as it begins to resonate with me. The idea of getting lost out there. Far. Away. Someplace that's not here, on Ship, someplace that's more in tune with my nature to come.

BALI HA'I: PART ONE

Wait, what am I doing in the water? What am I doing here? Where's the Boat? Where is it? How did I fall off the Boat? I don't remember! I don't remember! Oh, I'm in the middle of the ocean. There's nothing all around me. Nothing but sea. And the Boat is nowhere in sight. No! No! This can't be happening! How did this happen? How did I fall off without my knowing, and how did the Boat continue to sail off without me? How long have I been floating out here in the middle of the Pacific? It's day. I remember it being night. Oh! What do I do? All right, Navastian, get the signal light, get the... but the Boat is nowhere in sight, it won't see the signal light. GET IT OUT, ANYWAYS, NOW! All right, now put it on your cranial. Even if it's in broad daylight, now, and the light has no purpose...! And now inflate your—wait! It already has. It's saltwater activated. The flight jacket as a life preserver is good to go. All right... now what? Now what do I do? I'm out here in the middle of the sea, and now what do I do? How am I going to survive? Last I remember, it was night time. I was sent up to my 107 to have it turned for a couple of Airframers. Aye! I remember that much. But how and when did I fall off the Boat, and did anyone see me doing so? Well, obviously, Navastian—they DIDN'T! If they had, they would have immediately called "man overboard," and an emergency Helo would have immediately been sent out to fetch me. THAT HAS OBVIOUSLY NOT HAPPENED! So, what am I to do now? Oh, it's cold! The water is colder than anything I have ever experienced. I'm going to FREEZE TO DEATH OUT HERE! That's what's to happen to me. I'm to freeze to death.

No more just freezing my nuts off, now I'm to freeze to death. Go out like Leo from Titanic with not a single female to mourn my passing! Dead! GONE!

Did I jump off...? Did I, do it? Did I do what those SN Jangles and SN Fickler did? Did I, do it? Did I black out and just do it? That whole something about another side in me taking over and decided things in its own behalf... did that happen? WHY? Why would I do such a thing? I'm going to DIE out here, now! Why would I do it? You're a fuckin' piece-of-shit, Navastian, a piece-of-SHIT! And now you're a dead piece-of-shit. Fuckin' shark food. You're DEAD! Is that what you wanted, HUH? Oh! Why did I join if this was to be my faith? Why did I? I'm not Military material! Neither am I Navy material. Another stupid kid wanting to look good in Uniform, maybe to attract a few girl's attention, but was it worth ALL THIS? All I've been through. I've changed! I've changed! And not for the better. But for the worse! I hate who I've become! I FUCKIN' hate the Navy and everybody in it! I FUCKIN' hate them all! They BETRAYED ME! They betrayed my trust. I've not only sacrificed four years of my life for them... I've sacrificed MY ENTIRE LIFE! And, now, I'm going to die out here! And it's all THEIR fault!

Oh, WOW, it's fuckin' cold out here! Help me, God! What do I do now? Freeze to death—what else? Nothing else to do now.

But maybe?
But maybe... I can adapt and begin to feel something different.
Adapt, and begin to feel different.
Adapt, and just accept... my faith.
Because....

Oh, wow! Like a revelation. I realize now: I really do want this.
Huh?

I did want to jump off the Boat, and now I'm here, and I have what I wanted. I joined because I wanted an adventure... I guess. And now I have it. I have the REAL thing now. No more living within the safety and comforts of a sea-worthy vessel. I AM the sea vessel, now, somewhere out in the Pacific, sailing out to nowhere specific. Ha! That is what I am, and that is what I have now. I have that now. The REAL thing. And I'll be out here till the end of my days. Which isn't very long. But no true adventure could do without.

Do without Death!
Without the capital D.
Without its presence ever mocking you at every turn, for without it, there is no adventure. Aboard that Ship, you weren't really having it, were you, Navastian? But now you ARE! And that's why you jumped. I guess those sirens finally got to me. And now I'm here. But, since I'm here....

Where's that head I was promised? I thought I'd at least be getting blown by some mermaids. So, what happened to that—huh? Ha!

Ha, ha, hah, ha, haaa, ha, ha!

No... I didn't want this! Not... this.
Sigh!

Wait... what is that out there? Far in the horizon... is that an island?

And then all of a sudden, Chief Murdock grabs me by the leg, and yanks me hard and fast out of the intake I was sleeping in and has me plop ass first hard onto the Flightdeck.
“Who... what... huh?” I go.
And then the Chief grabs a hydraulic bucket full of water set next to him, asks:
“You ready for this?”

“What... who... huh?” I go, since I ain't.
Still in a daze, feeling very disoriented over my predicament, which only a second ago was me being cast away out to sea somewhere. And as I come to, a little, and gain focus, the Chief then gives it the old heave-ho, and doses me with the contents of that bucket.
Splash!
“You awake now, Navastian?” Asks he.
“AHA, AHA, AHA!” I cough.
“You good?” Asks Chief Murdock, with a thumbs up, also asking.
And after a second... I nod. While wiping my face that has water all up in my eyes and nose.
“Good! Stay that way.” He says, and now leaves.
“Oh, and, go ahead and go down to get some midrats. I mean... that's why I was lookin' for you, to tell you, in the first place.”

BOOK TWO

NAVASTIAN VS. ROACH BURGER

The word: hypocrite, comes to mind, with what just happened. But, since I like our Chief, I won't fully acknowledge him as such, at least I won't acknowledge it on the surface. But, aye, our Night Check LCPO is still just that, a skater. He is! No doubt about it. And no matter his rank, being that of an E-7, which means even as seasoned and matured as he is in the service, it makes no difference, since, he's willfully choosing to show himself as a skater and not to show his seniority and sovereignty over VF-451 Line Shack Nights. Taking charge how an authority should. Over us, in his own charge. And, I have to admit, it can be discouraging seeing him this way, since, he's a forty-something middle-aged adult, who is being as juvenile-ly negligent as we tend to be. Just so foolhardily irresponsible and ir-respectable. And at his pay grade, no less! This all coming from a fuckin' Lifer! I mean, there's never a moment our Chief isn't skating, himself, as he does. But like Falky and the boys, he's grown well in tuned to the flow of things in the Navy, knowing when to skate, and when not to. For that's how he's decided to use his wisdom and experience. Whenever duty calls, he is there! But then... not! For then he will be immediately asleep in 104's cockpit (which he loves so much, for some reason, to both Barbarossa's amusement and annoyance). But, if shit was to go down, again! Whoosh! Back to work, again! And then immediately back to not. It has now become his specialty. But none of that still hides the fact that he's allowed himself to degenerate into such a JAFO, skater. There's no hiding that from us in The Shop, even though he has managed to do so from the rest of the Squadron, and also a little with Day Check Line, too. And the thing is, the man used to be very squared away, back in the day. But now he's like having a drunkard father around, which for us, his (so-and-so-called) kids, have to constantly be taking care of, when he should really be taking care of us. We, taking care of him, while he stumbles and stammers about, nowhere near sober, and we're all undernourished since deadbeat daddy has grown too irresponsible to even be the breadwinner anymore. Now, as to the reasons as to why he's allowed himself to fall from grace, so much, being inclined to skate as much as he now damn-well-pleases, there IS a perfectly good reason (or, really, not a “good” reason, per se, but a frown worthy barely passable one, at least). Chief

Murdock is what the Navy calls “A Double-Digit Midget.” Which means he only has double digit number of days left remaining until retirement. The Chief's done his twenty years, and now, he wants out. That. And he's tired. And really, really struggling to show that he still cares anymore about this whole Navy crap, and over the decades he's spent building his career. Plus, there's the fact that the Squadron has given him a royal screw job, royally dishonoring him, and, for absolutely no good reason, (actually, there is a reason for that, too, but a frown worthy one, still). And for that, I guess, the Chief has felt like he's now truly done with this all. How do I know all this inner politics between superiors who would try and hide it all from us, subordinates, like me and most Shitty Age PCs...? Well, most of it is stuff I heard from IS3 Falky, one night, on the Flightdeck, while he was chatting with the boys (not with me, obviously, since to him I'm nothing more than a lowlife-FNG-booter-worthless-piece-of-shit-skater-nobody).

Ahem...!

You see, Chief Murdock used to be our Shop's head LCPO: Leading Chief Petty Officer. That is until our Maintenance Master Chief got here and decided to bring in the Senior Chief, we have now to run things. Our new LCPO, Senior Chief Hamakua, wasn't even here when I got here to the Squadron, not here the first five months I was here after coming out of A-School training in Pensacola, FL. It was all our AEC Murdock being the head Chief in charge. Him being HiMFIC. And suffice it to say, they were better times. Damn good times, to be exact! But... maybe too good. And for our Maintenance Master Chief (I'll tell you about him later) he didn't feel that the AEC was right for the job, for maybe he didn't see AEC Murdock tyrannical enough? Because he wasn't as hard, or as much of a hardass, as the MMCPO, and all the head Chiefs in Maintenance, wanting him to be. Suffice it to say, there's a lot of politics involved, as you can now obviously get the sense of. Politics! And a lot of passive feelings between all parties at play, which we can all sense underneath the surface. And since we're Navy. There's ALWAYS a lot of passive shit underneath it all, and an entire ocean's worth (if you don't mind me saying, considering the corny

play of words). Chief Murdock's a Double-Digit Midget. He gives even lesser fucks than the most of us do. And considering we're all going to war real soon. A real war! It really speaks volumes to me and the rest of us to see him this way. I've seen our Senior stay late into Nights, an hour or so, just to do more of what's supposed to be AEC Murdock's detail: yelling at us subordinates! And all while Chief Murdock will be snoring in The Shop. Literally! It's funny how Chief Murdock can really be that in-your-face about it. On some nights, his DILLIGAFing scale is so off the charts, he'll become a downright embarrassment. On some nights, he'll become the giant elephant in the room (or Squid in the room) that no one wants to talk about. And there was this one occasion where Senior was in our Shop, chewing AN Royster's asshole, inside and out, for having been caught in the berthing asleep in his rack (of all places) while he was supposed to be finishing his Daily aircraft inspection, up top. And with all that hollering and hooting going on by our Senior, where was our Chief...? Zzzzzzzz! And all while in The Shop. I was also in The Shop seeing this, watching Senior being all peripherally embarrassed of him: him with his feet all up on the boxes, with his head folded over the chair, hanging downwards, and his mouth all open, snoring the night away. Senior was royally embarrassed, but, he couldn't say nothing, especially in front of us, since, that would show how grossly inefficient and unprofessional our Shop's leadership had become. Even though THAT PLAINLY OBVIOUS how it had! But... AYE! So, remember, he's not really there! The giant Squid in the Line Shack isn't there! So, pay no attention to him, for in fifty-three days, he REALLY won't be.

Although, fortunately enough, then, I can see our Squadron giving him a End-of-the-World Party, which I heard, they will, when he leaves in mid cruise (just the idea of that sounds fun, to me. It is said that this tradition originates with Vikings, who believed that they might sail off the end of the world).

Anyways, I'm done with the turn on my 107, done with getting splashed wet by our Chief Murdock (as much as he doesn't care anymore, and will DILLGAF, that whole splashing us with water bit is really him having fun with all the tedious no work doing

boredom). And, also... I'm done with whatever the Whiskey Tango Foxtrot that dream was about, which I don't want to acknowledge right now. And now that I am done, I head back to The Shop, again. And, so, as I enter The Shop, so it goes, again. So, it goes. The process of slowly seeing my patience nicked away, my tolerance of all things Navy. I enter The Shop, and Kats and the IS3 are there, and I feel their sights on me, even though all I'm getting is peripherals from them. They're going to make a scene, I know it.

“Okay... go for it!”

I barely hear Kats whispering out, obviously trying to conceal it from me.

“Ahem!” Now goes the IS3.

And then:

“Yeah, Kats, I gotta say, I think when it comes to our Shop, today, the biggest Shitbag most definitely has to be Navastian.”

And I'm just checking my Tools in, again, and can't just step the fuck out as I had stepped the fuck in, just a moment ago. There's Tools needing to be dealt with, and I can't exit The Shop as long as I have to check in these damn things! For if I hadn't needed to, I would have stepped the fuck out with such JOY—I tell you! Such JOY! Not having to listen to any more of this bile. Kat's now snickers.

“What do you think?” Asks the IS3, turning his face, all curious, making it all into a shtick.

“Oh, roger that, I agree. Navastian is definitely up there.” Cues Kats, and then goes wink wink.

Followed by a disembodied laugh track, like this is a sitcom, or something.

“No, not just up there! He's at the way top. At the altar. Ready to be crowned the Shitbag king.” Cues the IS3.

And now cue another laugh track.

“Well, now that I think about it, I guess you're right. I mean, let's look at the statistics: he's late all the time, even when he has time off. During work, instead of being on his Jet, he's always skatin', and more than most! Fuckin' sleepin' in intakes, which forces our AEC to always be on his ass with a bucket full of water. And if he isn't skatin', he's bitching about why he should be, moaning how cold it is, which makes

him seem all pussy hurt, whiny, too. Also, he's a Gooner fuck up! Like Roach Burger, fueling birds without no engines." Illustrates Kats.
And now cue another laugh track, followed by an applause.
"Damn, fueling a bird that had no... wow, was that stupid of him." Goes the IS3.
"That was all jacked up, I know!" Follows Kats.
"Oh, didn't you tell me one time you caught him drunk in the lounge, back at the Atsugi barracks, blindly pissing out of a third story window?" Wonders the IS3.
And now I'm sorta curious to how many other Line Shackers (or Bloody Shamrocks, in general) know about that story, and how I've been FRAMED for it. Traduce much, there, Kats?
"Pissing out of a...? Yes! You're right, I did. I think he hosed some Chief that night."
Ha! Was looking into AM3's eyes, just now. And for a second, there, I could see him getting confused. Since that was him (or was it Hats?). That did it. Fuckin' asshole, covering up his own actions.
"Fucking despicable." Goes the IS3.
And I'm still not done checking my Tools in, unfortunately.
"I know, and also so perverted."
Then the two look at me, and IS3 puts it on me:
"So, Navastian... please! Please, explain to me how are you such a Shitbag? Don't you have any shame?"
And now, I feel like... picking up the link of chain that's hanging next to the filing cabinet, where we check Tools from, to begin SWINGIN'! And with this, there won't be any "other side of me" taking over to do it, without my authorization. It'll be ALL ME! Wow, right now, all I feel is my heart, in my throat, trying to jackhammer its way through, with all its might. But I'm not biting! And I don't want to make eye contact again. Because, if I do, they'll then know how much their shtick is working me over, pissing me off, just the way they now want it. Ooooh! Am I PISSED! Shitcanned ANGRY!
"Look at that? Three Steel Balls! Not only is he not ashamed of himself, he's pissed off that we would even bring it up."

Oh, FUCK OFF! How do you two know? I ain't facing you to show how pissed I am. Fuckin' mind readers, these two are, here!
“Look at that, standing defiantly so, and against us! I mean, we're Third Classes, we're your superiors. Don't you have any respect for the crow?” Goes the IS3.
And now I'm done checking in the Tools. Time to step the FUCK out! So, hurry, Navastian, RUN!
“Hey, Shitbag... I'm talking to YOU!”
Nope! Sorry! Can't respond... but then I realize, I can't even move, either. I feel as if now, if I was to stop restraining myself, with all my might, I might simply rush these two and attack them, head on. Also. I've... fucked up. Turning around to leave, I accidentally made eye contact with the two, again, and now, I can't stop staring, I can't! For I'm just that locked on, pissed off, angry. The IS3 now sneers at me, while shaking his head. Does so, while taking in my smoldering reaction. And I then think: even if I don't want to do something regrettable. Maybe they do? And maybe I—should!
“You know what... Falky, I—” I go.
But then the IS3, I guess, gets the hint that I was planning that I might, so he gets up, and gets confrontational, as to ready himself. And I... my bitch ass self... gets intimidated. Ah shit! Don't look down, Navastian, don't step back. Don't get intimidat—... what are you doing? Damn, you PUSSY!
“Ha. Just what I thought.” Says he.
Noticing how I chickened out.

Okay... so... AYE! Here's a detail that I've left out about Falky: for a little guy, he's not all bark, but he's got some hefty bit of bite, to follow. Falky is a former state wrestling champ—supposedly, according to his word! Look at the bulletin board, and you'll see it's got one or two pictures of him, in tights, rolling up some guy twice as big as he is. And, I've seen him in live action, too, take down guys just as big, and bigger. Check this out: I've seen him even take down D-Boy, the AO! Aye, I have! And that guy is only a little smaller than H-Town. The day that that happened, I remember even H-Town got scared, when he realized what this little guy was capable

of. IS3 Falconni is a real inspiration, if you think about it. And now he's staring me down, letting me know, the state I am in, and how it doesn't mean diddly-squat to him, because, he knows he could take my ass down if I was to attack— easily, too!
"Ha! Looked like you wanted to rush me, there, for a second, Navastian. Good to see you came to your senses."
And then Kats says something to really tick me off:
"Wow, so, I guess, Navastian is a pussy, too. Good thing we're Ship bound, and not some Marines, that would be touching down in Iraq. I mean, the second bullets started whizzing by, Navastian, here, might have chickened out on—"
"Go fuck yourself, Kats! Foxtrot Uniform—FUCK YOU!" I blast, loud and clear.
And the two then bend their necks back, to begin bawlin' laughing. And I'm just feeling seriously depressed now. Seriously! I mean....

What the fuck was that dream about, me jumping Ship? And wanting it? All it was, was a dream, but, it felt so vivid. So real. So grand. And so righteous. And I wouldn't ever want that to be the case. But, now, looking at these two chuckleheads, it's all beginning to make sense. And then, feeling as depressed as I am... I try something different with the boys. Something I've never tried before, and never have seen anyone else try, either. I do what is taboo amongst rowdy boys of our age. Strictly taboo and heavily frowned upon. I open up... my feelings!
"What the fuck, why... why are you guys this mean to me? What have I ever done to you two?"
And seeing how I've opened up, has them bawlin' laughing, even harder! As if they've WON, and the next step down from this would be having me in tears. Which would be to their glory. But, I continue... continue, because, I don't know what else to do.
"No, seriously! What is it you two got against me?" I ask.
Kats then shows his big teeth, all white, and says:
"Well, besides the fact you're a Shitba—"
"CUT that shit OUT! SERIOUSLY! How are you guys like this? We're supposed to be all for one, Shipmates, and...."

“All for one... with you? Ha!” Goes Kats.
As if I was now being downright insulting towards him, to have included “I” in this so called “team.” Line Shackers. Shipmates (Shipmates: in it's original term of endearing fellowship, and not the derogatory term it has taken on to be in the Navy). All that stuff you'd expect from Military service and camaraderie.
“No, no, no! Hold up! I see where the FUNGUS is going with this.” Says the IS3 and begins posturing very condescendingly with his eyebrows.
“Do explain.” Asks Kats.
“The FUNGUS, here, doesn't get it! He thinks we're being mean to him, when we're really helping him out.” Says Falky.
“Aye, but I really don't like this Shitbird, so, I can't speak on behalf of that notion, I'm just being mean to him, because, I think he's a worthless Shitbird, and deserves every minute of it.” Highlights Kats, then shows even bigger, white teeth, my way.
“I see where you're coming from, Kats. Very true on the whole disliking thing. I don't like Navastian much, either. But, also, something in me not only dislikes this guy, it makes me also want to downright loathe him.” Says the IS3.
“Loathe?”
“Aye, loathe.”
“Why is that?” Asks Kats.
And then the IS3 begins staring with his eyes slit, as if in deep in thought.
“Well, with you—I know—you don't like him because you don't think he's capable of being one of us, you see him as an embarrassment.”
“Aye! That's right! That's my reason, he makes us look bad.” Expresses Kats.
And with his tone and long stares, expresses it like he means it, which really confounds me over how anyone can be so condescending. Just so can’t! For just how high and mighty does he take himself for? And, on what grounds? And, on what grounds am I that much lower than him? I guess Kats really is that much of an arrogant jackass, which is really depressing, considering how part of me still likes the guy. Both Kats and Hats are vanity cases—I know! I know that just from their vacant, yet, judgmental stares, they're always casting out. They're the types that are constantly running a filtration process in their heads, of all that are worthy, and all

that are not. Flaws are flaws in their book and have no virtue. I mean, this is the guy that told everyone in The Shop how he was “on again off again” with AM3 Rosario, because, he couldn't get past how big her big toe was. And started calling her “Toezilla” when the boys were like: “so, how was the pussy?” And Kats was like: “you mean Toezilla's...? Fuckin' eww!” Then all parties went: “Ha ha!” Laughed it up, and thought it was a riot. Aye...! Aye, aye, roger that, he really is that much of an arrogant prick! So, with Kats or Hats around, you always feel a little more self-conscious about this insecurity, or that insecurity, because, if these two are to notice it, they will be marking that off as a minus under your name. But still, I never though their level of condescension was at this extreme.

“That's your reasons, but with me it's way different.”

“How so?” Goes Kats.

“With me, I don't see that being the problem, I think he could be one of us.”

“Really, you think?”

“Yeah, I do, this job ain't brain surgery, any monkey with two brain cells could do it.” Says Falky.

And now we all have a moment with ourselves, as we come to accept that truth, followed by a nod, which we all end up doing in sync, might I add.

“Fine, you got me there. But you say there's a problem you see with this FUNGUS, Navastian, here?”

“Aye, I do.” Says Falky.

“Then what is it?” Asks Kats, really wanting to see the IS3's take.

“The problem is... I don't think he wants to be one of us, because, I think he thinks he's better than us.”

“What?” Goes Kats, now really seeming insulted.

“Aye! That there is the problem.”

“This guy... he thinks he's better?”

“Aye, he does! I think he does, really!” Goes the IS3.

And I have no clue where he's coming up with this. Not one bit of clue. Not an iota. But looking into the IS3's eyes, I see that he really means it.

“Hey, Roach Burger, get a whiff of this. This guy thinks he's better than all of us.” Tells AM3 Kats to Roachy.
Who now stands behind me, and who has now entered the scene.
“What... this guy? Navastian...? How is that even possible?” Sneers out Roachy.
With his nose all crunched up, as if he had caught a whiff of something truly rotten and disagreeable.
“You know... now that I think about it, Falky, you're right! And I think it's really also the reason I can't stand him, either.” Divulges Kats.
And I now really don't know where they're both coming up with this bull. How do you guys come up with this—huh? How do you two think I think like that, that I think I'm better then all of you? You jackasses, all of you are the ones that take yourself as being better! I've done nothing but suffered one harassment after another, from this shithole, from you shitheads, and now this?
“I mean, Roach Burger realistically has been the biggest embarrassment ever in the Line, yet, I can stomach him, somehow, but I can't stomach Navastian, here.” Divulges Kats some more.
You know, maybe on some level I do feel like I am better. I do, now, now that I think about it. Because, looking at all you, TRUE Navy SHITBIRDS, I feel like what I represent is something far more better. First: take Falky, for instance, I know he's also looking to strike CV come EAOS. He's close to being a Double Digit Midget, himself, since, he's got something less than half a year left. But unlike our Chief Murdock, he hasn't exactly put in twenty years, and earned some real salt to be so proud and cocky. Fuck him! Striking IS, Intelligence Specialist, when our Squadron needs no IS. Probably did so to get a nice comfy office job, but since he'll never work a day in his Navy career in the field, since he plans to get out, I can't understand why he did. Second (and also third): now take Kats, what is there not to say about him and his so-called brother, Hats? The two of them were supposed to be sent to their respective Airframer’s shop a while ago, but they're still here. Right now, they should be in Airframers, with AM3 Turnipseed and AM3 Rosario, doing actual maintenance, doing actual work, but they're not! Instead, AM3 Katzenberg is down here in The Shop, as usual, skatin' another night away, even when he has his own

Jet, up top, he should be manning. Only Falky is the one on Night Check, without the personal responsibility of manning a Jet, since he's second under our AEC, so WTF is Kats doing down here in The Shop? Fact of the matter is, the two, Kats and Hats, being here, in the Line, allows them to sit comfortable with a job that doesn't demand much (at least for them), one that the two are very well grown accustomed to, and one they're both considered Vets in, and are respected as such. If they were to be sent to Airframers, now, they would have to start all over again, with a much more laboriously demanding job, and one they would be considered the bottom feeders, doing all the bitch work. But they really should be there, since, the Line Shack is really only supposed to be temporary for those that have rate, like Kats and Hats do. Being Airframers. And not un-designated, which I am. So, why aren't they in their real shop? Well, from what I've heard, him and Hats pulled a major prank on AMC Scagnelli, the LCPO of the Airframer shop, pissing him off so profoundly, that as long as the AMC is around in VF-451, Kats and Hats won't be. In Airframers, that is! What did they do? No shitter, get a load of this: one (or both) of them fucked the AMC's wife, took pictures, and had all of them posted all over the walls at Skunky's, the local dive bar a lot of us Squids hang out in that is located a couple of blocks outside Atsugi base. Aye, sir! That's right! They actually stooped that low! A whole bunch of pictures of AMC Scagnelli's wife, staring into the camera, with her mouth partially open, nearly going cross-eyed, while a partially concealed disembodied penis can be seen going in and out of many and several of her orifices, on her naked body. And in one of the pictures, the opening being her man pleaser (mouth). This whole thing all happening around the time Kats and Hats were to be sent to their shop. Now, it was never proven that it was either of them that did it. And the AMCs wife is known for being a real cat on a hot tin roof, a forty-something woman, always lounging at bars, with lonely eyes. The ones in the loveless marriage tend to do that are always giving you the feel of having not been touched for a very long time by their hubbies, and are now just aching for it, being very, very flirtatious with a lot of the other Squids. And sometimes JNs: Japanese men. And sometimes women. And based on word of mouth, Ramona, the forty-something Filipina Buy-Me-A-Drink bar owner, whose bar is located just next to Skunky's (called Funky's), that's well known

for her racy tag line, “no fucky, fucky, only sucky, sucky!” Having honored us Sailors by blowing us for the past twenty years (I'll get to the legends of this Filipina bar owner, later! And they are LEGENDS). Blown us, and many closeted bi or lesbian service women and Military wives. Ahem... all right, back to Hats' and Kats' story: even though everyone suspected of one, or both, having done the deed to the AMC's maiden of the night, it was never proven. But, then again, no one else were to be suspected of such foul play, but they. There's only been two Squids in Bloody Shamrock history that have time and time again stooped so low, when it came to their pranks. So, everyone expected as such. And the AMC fully rejected bringing them in. And, finally... fourth off: as for Roach Burger, now, having entered The Shop, I think I go above and beyond being better than this DFOB (Dumbest Fuck On Board). This nothing. This nobody. This zero, zilch, real scrambola. Real PRICK! Big fat goose egg tryin' desperately to keep balance off the tip of my DICK!

Aye!
So...!
So, you know what, Falky? I think you're right! I do feel like I'm better than all of you! Maybe I got some more self-improving to do, there's still work to be done on me, if I am to ever to be anywhere near being a Shit Hot PC. But... you know what? I'm not a condescending jackass like the rest of you are! I'd never treat any Trainee of mine, when I am to become a PC Vet, the shitty way you fuckers have treated the me, and the rest of us newly qual-ed PCs. I guess I am a much better person, I'd never stoop so low and....

Wait....
Would I...?

“Man, Navastian... you're a piece-of-shit! How could you EVER in your empty, little head, think you're better? Someone needs to put this FUNGUS in his place.” Dishes Roach Burger.

As if he is that badass to try and do half the shit he's calling for, there. And who I now really want a piece of. Feeling like he's done called me FUNGUS: Fuck U New Guy U Suck, for the very last time. Since his more senior status in the Line, hasn't exactly spoken volumes, compared to what I've clocked in. Me not having fucked up and gotten fucked up, what seems like every other day, since being here. ESFOAD this ASSHOLE!

“Roach Burger, you can take Navastian, here. You can do it! My money is on you.” Cheers Kats.

As Roach Burger begins dancing around a bit like some heavy weight boxer would do, since, we all feel it! We all DO! Me and Roachy are about to have at it. Fucker is all dancing around, still, (motherfuckin' Glass Joe, here) with that ever present and obnoxious cocky grin. AS IF—not too long ago, this fucking waste of human skin wasn't chained up, hung by his feet, here, in The Shop, by the same fuckers now cheering him on to take me. I mean... that whole experience didn't faze him one bit? I know he gets picked on just about every day, but... MAN, do I HATE this guy! This delusional piece-of-shit! Bent shitcan! Football fucking monkey fuckbags! BUT WAIT... what if he gets lucky break, and gets a good hold over me? I can't afford that humiliation! NOT BY HIM! Littlest nobody like him in the Line.

“GET 'EM, ROACH BURGER!” Orders the IS3.

And in that second, I grow mortified beyond belief that he actually might. So intimidated by the idea, that the idea begins to manifest itself. Roach Burger “The Weak” now masses up enough strength to jump on top of me, encircling me, and getting me from behind. And now... WTF? I'm on the deck, and I'm LOSING!

“THERE you go! THAT'S what I”m talking about!” Cheers IS3.

And really does cheer for him. As if he sees it also as a personal victory. As if it means a lot to him to see Roach Burger get a break for once, and win.

“You got him, Roachy, keep going! Win this, and you're no longer the biggest bitch in The Shop! Navastian will be.” Calls out Kats.

And he's standing along with the IS3, cheering Roachy on, and why I'm the biggest villain here, I cannot tell. But to hear how the two are REALLY favoring Roach Burger getting a win, really gets to me on a personal level, which I haven't experienced

being in, in the Line Shack, yet, until now. Getting to me, and wounding me at a deep-down level, down to the core. And I now feel like giving up, completely, and letting The Shipwreck do so, and win. Roachy feels really excited on top of me, able to manage all this, and I don't know how to feel about it.
“What the fuck is this?” Then goes AN Donnelly, entering The Shop.
And looking up (under Roachy's heap, behind me), I see him standing in between Kats and the IS3, as the two part and make way for him, as they quiet up quick.
“What the fuck are you doing, Navastian?” Asks he, looking all surprised.
“He's getting his ass handed to him, that's what?” Mentions Kats.
But then AN Donnelly shakes that notion off, and says:
“Bullshit! Don't let Roach Burger get a lucky one on you, you can take him. ANYONE can take him!”
And with that line, AN Donnelly changes the entire mood and outplay, completely. Donnelly's words affect the two Third Classes, as they shut it, and look very disgruntledly over at me, then him, then me again, and now they don't seem so confident with their boy, The Roach, anymore. And with that, this all also affects Roach Burger's stamina, as I feel him getting weaker, and falling back in line with who he is, really: biggest bitch-ass Shipwreck loser in The Shop. Not worthy of winning any win, EVER! And how am I affected by all this, you might be wondering? Well... quickly I wrap my arm around Roach Burger's head that's behind me and exerts it all to flip him off my back. And as I do so, I flip him off my back, and now he's in front of me, sitting on his ass, with his front turned away, and with his back to me. And now, I get him into a chock hold, and I hold him there.
“There you go! That's what I'm talking about! Fucking embarrassing, Navastian, you almost had Roachy, for a second there, do you in.” Jokes AN Donnelly.
And I smile, seeing how much difference his influence has made. And... Falconni and Kats... don't seem too pleased with Donnelly's presence, seeming like they'd prefer it if he was to just go away.
“Oh shit! I'm excited now. I want to wrestle somebody.” Goes AN Donnelly.
Jumping up and down, up and down, like an excited pup. Hoppin' back and forth, very coordinated like, like a boxer would (no Glass Joe, here, but all Tyson).

“Me next! Me next!”
And then, AN Donnelly looks right at Falconni, and smiles, and Falconni seems even lesser pleased.
“How about you, Falconni?” He calls out, pointin'.
And then it occurs to me. Oh shit! He's called the little big man out! Oh shit! And look at Kats' face, very disquiet lookin', very!
“You... you... want to take me on?” Goes the little guy.
Twitching a bit, and I can't tell if it's out of fight or flight. Whether it's all, “how dare you challenge me,” or, “who... me? Gulp!” And the latter is something I've never seen the IS3 express.
“Yeah, why not?” Goes AN Donnelly.
Anticipating a friendly match, smiling still.
“You sure about that?” Postures the IS3.
Both in words and his actual posture. Lookin' around as if to catch who else might be witnessing this possible embarrassing moment, here, and then pointing himself out, when asking: thumb all rectified and strong, as if to express to Donnelly, what he's about to get himself into.
“Couldn't hurt to try. I mean, I know you're some grand daddy-o state wrestling champ, but I might be able to take you.” Smiles out Donnelly, still.
And... wow! Right now, you could just feel the egos of both these characters, two titanic characters, getting ready to prove their titan status. And... I until now, never knew AN Donnelly had it in him.
“Ha!” Scoffs the IS3.
And now, AN Donnelly begins to drop some of his openhearted demeanor.
“Well, maybe with a wrestling match, I might not be much of a challenge, since, that's your expertise.”
And now AN Donnelly grows a little hostile in form.
“Although, pretty sure if it came down to a real fight, and not just two men in tights rolling around on the floor, in each other's arms, a real fight, with fists... pretty sure I would win, then.”

And now, this has become one of those moments, where you could just begin droppin' pins, all over, and they'd sound like elephants stampeding.
"…." Goes the IS3, lookin' pretty anxious now.
"I mean, I am an ex-professional boxer, you know. And not just some bum palooka. My record was undefeated, before I quit early, from an injury. Last bout, I took a really bad blow to the head, and the doc told me any more like that could result in brain damage. You ever done any real man sports, Falconni?"
Oh, man. This is hilarious! The IS3 is definitely now intimidated by this FUNGUS, here. And immeasurably SO! And PISSED! Definitely!
"But... I'm not really into wrestling, so, you'd probably win that—for sure!" Smiles out Donnelly, again.
Seeming very confident, even when admitting possible defeat.
"Hey, Donnelly, I'm headed to midrats, what you up to?" I ask.
"I think I'll do the same." He goes.
As we leave this funny scene, and all these funny characters, behind.

ALL ABOUT DONNELLY

It's me, and Donnelly, now, heading towards the galley to grab some midrats (anything the galley serves after midnight is what we call midrats). And as we exit out of a ladderwell heading for the Hangar Bay, we cross a certain AT2 Sundergaard, from Avionics, who happens to be the biggest man on Ship, biggest Bloody Shamrock, and a man so big, that even guys like Southgate and Barbarossa could develop neck cramps trying to bend their heads skywards, to catch a glimpse of this Nordic Mythological figure. And what does the truly, TRULY massive Sundergaard have to say to us, with a look of utter dread, sweating through his plastered brow?
"Don't use the Hangar Bay, Master Chief Dreadnought is roving, again, don't let him see you two."
And with that, we decide to....
"Come on, Navastian! Don't be like that, Master Chief's all right, we're just headed for chow, what can he possibly say against that?"
And... Donnelly has a good point. Sure! Our Maintenance Master Chief might confront us over what we're doing, but why pussyfoot about it? There's nothing he

can say against us heading for chow. No matter how much of an imposing figure our MMCPO might be.
“And what about you, Sundergaard? Why's your big Viking ass so scared of Master Chief?” Belittles Donnelly.
And Donnelly has a point, again.
“Ha, ha! Really funny! But that man never sleeps, it's 0240 hours, and he's still up, he's Day Check, and...!”
“So?” Goes Donnelly.
And Sundergaard isn't able to come up with an argument. Ha... Sundergaard? What a humongous ass Swede this man is, and I'll get to you all about him later....

(Aye! Another time! I know! You're getting sick and tired of hearing me feed you all with that line. But, I'm trying to manage everyone in this story in a timely and orderly fashion. And, also, most importantly, in a relative fashion. And right now, I feel like delving a bit more into our Master Chief, before I delve straight into Donnelly. And I just don't feel like interjecting too much of Sundergaard, in between, and giving you all a more in-depth character study of what an astonishing such-and-such he really is. Since, I don't see any other use for him until the need comes up. So, bear with me, here).

Anyways...!
What is there to say about our Maintenance Master Chief? The real man running practically the entire Squadron. Our CO, what about him? He's just a face, a figurehead, that, and also a Fly Boy, that really just takes orders from his own higher ups. Just there to fly and deal with all the politics inside and out of our Squadron. Our CMC, the Admin Master Chief? Same thing! He's just a face, but a face representing us enlisted personnel, and that's it (also formally a bubblehead with zero Squadron experience). But as for the MMCPO, since ninety percent of what goes on in our Squadron entails keeping up maintenance of our Jets, and since he answers to no one when it comes to F-14 Tomcat Maintenance, since, no one in the Squadron is as well knowledgeable as he is about the job, it's pretty reasonable to

assess him as the one really running the show around these parts. The true HiMFIC of VF-451 Squadron. And, besides all that, he is the meanest and most vicious Joe Navy tyrant I've ever met. What is there to say about a man at his level of tyranny? Well, how about this: “GROWL, HISS AND SNARL!” That's what! That’s it! Simply: “GROWL, HISS AND SNARL!” I mean, you've seen how ferocious our Senior Hamakua is—right? Well, when he's standing next to our Squadron's MMCPO, it's all, “yes, Master Chief Dreadnought,” this. And “yes, Master Chief Dreadnought,” that. “Right away, Master Chief!” With a brow hung—way the fuck low—to show, just how much of an obedient little pup he can be, to our MMC. And... AYE! Master Chief DREADNOUGHT! That is really his name, too, really! “GROWL, HISS AND SNARL!” And I'm not joking around about that, either. There is a level of terror and ferocity behind the man, that can only come from someone that has had to have first enlisted back during the John F. Kennedy administration. No fuckin' joke! Joined during the Cuban Missile Crisis and having survived around FORTY MOTHERFUCKING YEARS of this lifestyle. “GROWL, HISS, AND SNARL!” Aye, sir! That's right! The salt goes MIGHTY strong with this Salty Old Ancient Sea Dog, here! “GROWL, HISS AND SNARL!” When this Master Chief Dreadnought comes roving on through the Hangar Bay, everyone in our Squadron, even those that aren’t, you'll see, TEN-FOURING like a MOTHERFUCKER! That, or scattering like cockroaches, beforehand, to save themselves from his wrath. I mean, let me explain just how LOUD and FEROCIOUS this man is: during flight ops, when there be Jets turnin' and burnin', you'd see him stepping out to the line, and when he'd begin yelling, we could all hear him, even through the banshee scream of the twin, giant, massive Tomcat engines, and not with just one Tomcat being online, but several of them. He made other Khakis tremble and feel weak in their knees, including officers. I remember one time here on The Ship, in the Ready Room, I was unknowingly passing by, and at that moment I saw him growling and hissing and snarling at 350% of his usual level. He was picking up tables and chairs and tossing them around, like a predatory wolf tearing through the bushes and grassy scenery looking for his prey. I had just passed by, a complete JAFO in the scene, and had absolutely no idea what was afoot. And this was all while happening in front of our XO (second to our CO,

the Skipper). And, the XO, even though, an officer, even if he out ranked MMC, the XO just stood there and took it, watching this maniac completely wreck his Officer's Ready Room (although, pretty sure, if this was our CO in there with the MMC, knowing our CO, well… he'd probably join in on all the fun. Then later claim it was his masterpiece idea). But all the XO could do was just stand there, wiping his sweaty brow and blinking rapidly as our MMC continued thrashing and totaling the joint, with the ferocity of something only seen in Biblical Sodom and Gomorrah, with all objects standing before his path. Our XO just stood there, taking it, standing far, far to the starboard end, playing it safe, that is if our MMC was to then decide to turn on him… and not stop, even for him. And then, one time, back in Atsugi base, he had turned towards me... ME! And it was then my turn to deal with all that churning, smoldering, ancient evil madness, blasting out from inside this leviathan: "GROWL, HISS AND SNARL, NAVASTIAN!" went he. And I just started runnin'! RUNNIN'! And I didn't even know what for. "Hey, Navastian, come back here! Come BACK here! What are you runnin' for, kid? Just wanted to let you know, your cranial, there, seems to have a crack in it!" "Oh, sorry, Master Chief! I... under Jet... picked up... head... FAST! Got cracked! Won't happen ag—" "Fine! Fine! I got it! Just get it fixed." And then he walked away, all sullenly, with both hands holding at ease, behind his back. Besides the whole "GROWL, HISS AND SNARL" bit, he could also be a quite calm and patient man, too. And, for some reason, he really seems to like AN Donnelly a lot. I've noticed that in the past, in the background. Every time I'd see him pass Donnelly, the two would smile, and start chattering, even with other Khakis around, that were still mostly all standing at attention, all tensed up, as if waiting for something to give. Which leaves me a bit curious, now, of what the dealio is, there. Considering how one could misconstrue it as fraternizing, (although, Master Chief is one Squid who would be able to get away with it, openly. I mean, who would dare even bring it up? As mentioned, all other Khakis are also terrified by him).

"Hey Donnelly, what is there between you and him? The two of you are like father and son, almost." I ask.

"Haven't you ever noticed his accent?" Donnelly points out.

And that makes me think:

“Wait… yeah… sounds like he’s also from Boston like you—right?”
“Right! He's from Southie, like me.”
And I have no clue what Donnelly means by Southie.
“Southie?” I bring up, rhetorically.
“Yeah! Think of it like this... you got any rough neighborhood's where you're from?” Donnelly asks.
And my answer is simple.
“I'm from LA, what do you think?”
Donnelly draws a gasp and a smirk to that remark.
“Fine! Just imagine one, but full of Irish Catholic hicks.”
“Hey, Donnelly, where you two Line Rats headed off to?” Asks Master Chief Dreadnought.
As we pass him by, under one of our birds.
“Chow.” Answers Donnelly, simply enough.
And our Master Chief simply nods, and walks away, doing his “at ease” usual bit, walkabout thing, he does most of the time I've seen him. With his head hung low, while peering. Just peering.
“You know, I've heard he mostly sleeps in the Maintenance big chair, a couple of hours, here and there, and is then up, again, doing all this roving.” Brings up Donnelly.
And I follow up with:
“I've personally seen him sleeping in that big chair, in Maintenance, snoring, while the other Chiefs are going over stuff with the Pilots. And then sometimes he'll wake up, and throw in a word or two, in, something the other Chiefs might have left out.”
“Really? He will just wake up and....”
“Yeah, he'll wake up and go, 'Hanky! Panky! Cut it out with those hard landings! How many times you want us to get the Airframers on the birds for you two fucking up the bottom fins?' And then he'll be out again, fast asleep, until he needs to yell about something else.”
Now I got Donnelly rollin', a little, imagining that scene played out in his head.

And, so, we're in the galley now, and, it seems like for this morning's midrat breakfast, we're to be served... ahem... green eggs and ham. And, when I say green eggs and ham, I don't mean anything it having to do with that Dr. Suez story, the eggs, here, are literally green! I mean, WTF! How did the CSs (cooks) fuck it up so bad for the eggs to turn this color? How far out of their way did they go to come up with this? Eggs don't just turn green, no matter how bad a cook you are. Yuck! Might as well have a bunch of apes cooking for us, since, it seems like these CSs' limit in the understanding of the culinary arts ends with the knowledge of how to peel a FREAKIN' BANANA (and with their feet, no less, ha)! And when served, they'll throw away the banana, and give you the peel. But, fuck it, I guess a hungry man can't be too choosy. Let's just be happy we're not being served dog meat, since, most of the CSs, here, are Filipinos. Fuck, what am I saying, they're all Filipino! God help us, the galley is taken over by the Filipino mafia. And, aye! There is such a thing as that. All throughout The Ship you'll see certain divisions completely taken over by them, and only them. But anyways, I still gotta ask Donnelly about this, here, green eggs and... Whiskey Tango Foxtrot!

“Dude, why is this shit green?” I ask Donnelly.

“Dude, it's not their fault! The Ship's stocked with nothing but that dehydrated crap that turns green when they add water to it.” Explains Donnelly.

And.

Okay...!

Anyways....

Sitting down with our chow, I can see me and Donnelly are about to have a chat, with the way Donnelly begins fidgeting with his green eggs and ham, and seeming a bit wound up tight with his silence.

“So, how the fuck did you almost get your ass handed to you by Roach Burger? How you managing that?” Mocks Donnelly.

But since it's him, I can take the mockery, the jokes, and the what-have-yous, since, he's not asking me to belittle me. Not much, at least.

“I don't know.” I say, smiling.

“You don't know...? Seriously, if I ever see that again, I'm not talking to you anymore.” Tells me, this Donnelly, does.
While shaking his head all rejecting-ly, but smiling as he does so, as so do I.
“So, just like that?” I mope.
“Yeah, just like that!” He cements.
A minute or so then passes, as we begin trying to fork our food, prick our mush with it, to get a sense as to what the hell we're still trying to eat. Fucking eww! And after a minute of that, I go on:
“So... what's up with you and Falconni?”
“What about him and me?” He asks, while picking up his head.
“I've never seen anyone stand up to him like that. That's all.”
“Well, like I said, before, that little fucker hasn't just been getting on your nerves.” Remarks Donnelly.
“Yeah, but what does he have against you?” I ask.
“He can't intimidate me, what else? That's all a guy like Falconni cares about, who and what he can intimidate into thinking he's a big shot, even though 'big' is the last word to use to describe the guy.” Explains Donnelly.
And from his begrudging stares wavering as he explains all this, I can see how much he feels about Falconni as I do.
“But, lucky for me, I can take care of the little jerk off.” Continues Donnelly, with a bit of a shrug.
“Thanks, though.” I say.
Really feeling like Donnelly went a little above and beyond anything I would have ever expected from anyone.
“For what?”
But then he gets it.
“Oh! Don't thank me for that, really, you've been the one standing up to Falconni the most.” He says.
Which has me really pondering.
“Me, really?”
Donnelly then smirks.

“Well, not all successfully, but you've been one of the more rebellious ones in there. And seeing the two of you butting heads, again, just made me feel like it was about time I really took sides, myself. Let him know that now that me and you are PCs, he needs to seriously cut that shit out, and start giving us respect.”
“Fuckin' A!” I agree.
Another minute or so passes, again, as we continue trying to finish whatever we're trying to eat.
“Hey, can I make an observation?” Asks Donnelly.
Eyeing me all funny, eyeing me how anyone eyes anyone when asking that question.
“Go ahead.”
“Just wondering... you're an only child... right?”
And that question really throws me off.
“Yeah, how did you know?” I ask.
“I can tell.” Notes Donnelly, with a haphazard grin.
“...?” I say.
Not knowing where to go from there. Which Donnelly notices, and now looks like he would like to elaborate:
“It's about that whole camaraderie thing you were talking about earlier.”
“Okay...?” I say.
“You see, I got five other brothers and one sister. So I know how it is. But, I've had some friends that were only children, and I've noticed how they're always a lot more... 'idealistic', I guess would be the word... about sibling matters. Relationships. Looking like they're very envious over it, too. But, really, they don't know how it's really like.” Donnelly elaborates, further.
“What you getting at?” I ask.
“What I'm getting at is that... camaraderie? That shit's hard!”
“Why?”
“It just is! Camaraderie... everyone just getting along? It's not something that's easily said and done. And here in the Navy, it's easier to peer pressure people to be a part of some team, than to have them choose willingly.”
And what Donnelly has to say, really makes me think, disappointingly, also.

“You know, guys like Falconni, the reason he says something like 'breaking you in like a mule,' and is such an asshole about it, is, that's exactly what happened to him. Don't know if you know this, but you know how people see you... right?”
“How?” I wonder, finding this very revealing.
“Everyone sees you as the one of the few that hasn't been 'broken,' they see how resilient you are, and they can't help but to admire that. But also despise it. Despise it, because, it makes them look bad, since they weren't able to. They were broken, and they don't like seeing someone that wasn't. I mean, why do you think everyone likes Roach Burger so much?”
“What?” I gasp.
“Yeah!”
Wait... people in The Shop like that turd?
“What are you talking about? Everyone hates his ass.” I say.
“Yeah, they hate his ass, in a way. How much of an embarrassment he can be. That. And his cocky attitude, constantly smiling like some spoiled brat, begging for someone to whoop his ass, and remind him, how he definitely ain't all that and a bag of chips. But... they also admire him.”
“….”
“Why do you think Roach Burger is always so cocky?” Asks Donnelly, now.
And looking to one side, and then another, playing around in my thoughts, the only response I can come up with is:
“Because he's an idiot.”
Which has Donnelly busting out with a small chuckle.
“Fine, there's that, too! But it's because Roach Burger knows what's up. He knows, in the end, as harshly as he gets treated, he knows he's able to take it, and he knows he has guys like Falconni, Brockhausen, and the rest, truly holding a lot of deep down respect for him, even though they won't show it. And why? Because he's a resilient son-of-a-bitch, too. And he will stay true to himself, no matter how much everyone tries to beat it out of him. Same with you. But unlike the Roach, you're more of an enemy to Falconni, then an ally. Roach Burger is still doing everything

he does to get guys like Falk and Brock to like him. You, on the other hand, don't seem like you give a shit. You're more like Royster...."
And now I give Donnelly a confounded look.
"Okay, scratch that, you're nowhere near as how disrespectful he is. But...?"
And now Donnelly looks to be trying to resemble me with someone else.
"Okay, you're kinda like Pflugerville, without being... whatever he is." Elaborates Donnelly.
And maybe there is some truth to what Donnelly is now saying. I don't know. The thing I do see is what he means when it comes to me and the boys, overall: me being their enemy. Me being something they can't control, considering, how defiant I am. And me being something of a target they feel they need to "break" so they can have things in The Shop at status quo, again. Them older PCs staying as HiMFICs: And us younger ones, having to continue to put up with them riding us. Though, fuck Donnelly comparing me to Pfluger, too. Ha!
"The hell with them, though. I guess you're right on some parts, Donnelly. But I just don't see why I have to be so below them, I mean, they're just a bunch of Third Classes, they're not supposed to be this way with their rank." I snuff.
Which is something I find infuriating, because they haven't exactly put in THAT much time to be wanting so much respect and privilege. No other Shop's Third Classes have that much level of authority to those below them. Not even Second Classes have it that way in other Shops. It's once you make First Class that you do, and you're placed in the position to supervise all those below your pay grade.
"Yeah, I guess you're right." Says Donnelly.
Then continues:
"It's not like they're Senior Chiefs. That, I could at least—"
"Fuck our Senior!" I snuff, then.
And this now gets Donnelly all choked up and chuckling.
"Dude, come on! I get the resentment you got with the Third Classes in The Shop, them thinking they got more salt then they do. But now we're talking about a Senior Chief Petty Officer in the freakin' Na—"
"I don't give a shit!" I say, then.

The man is an overly confrontational nutcase, end of story!
“Oh, wow, you really do hate the Navy, don't you?”
And hearing Donnelly say that, really makes me frown. Because, the truth of the matter is... I really don't!
“I bet you really can't wait for your EAOS date—can you? You really—”
“It's—NOT LIKE THAT!” I blast.
Feeling irritated others would imagine me feeling as such. Being so FTN. And now, Donnelly looks pretty confounded over what the deal is. But says:
“Hey! Remember what I said, if they keep knocking, don't let them in!”
“I don't hate the Navy, I just hate a lot of the Squids in it that I'm forced to de—”
“Like I SAID! If they keep knocking, you do your own thing, and don't let them in.”
And I accept Donnelly's words.
There really is no other answer. I couldn't just start swinging wrenches at those knuckleheads.
“Ha!” Goes Donnelly, deep in his own thoughts.
Which has me guessing:
“What?”
But Donnelly doesn't seem like he wants to delve into it.
“Ha! I don't know... fucking Pflugerville, I guess. That guy really is in a world of his own?” Amuses Donnelly.
Something I know most of you still don't know the details of, since, I haven't gone over him just yet. But I will. TRUST ME! I will.
“No shit. So is Derbytown.” I amuse, also.
“No wonder him and Pflugerville get along so well.” Donnelly concludes.
“Although, I'm don't know about you comparing me to him, either!” I say.
For, fuck that shit!
“Fine, you're your own unique snowflake!” He says, mostly at ridicule.
“Oh, fuck off. Calling me snowflake. Ha!” I jest.
And Donnelly begins to chuckle a little.
“Fine, I'll tell you exactly who you're like, you're like the Kenyan in our Shop, that moody Muwangi, guy.”

And now, hearing that, I get very depressed being resembled with that mofo's characteristic attributes. But I say nothing. I don't want to delve into it... for some reason.

And after about a minute, I now feel like asking some more questions about the man before me. Since, I feel curious about prying into more about his life. Since, we're getting along so well, and, I'm now curious to know his story.
“So Donnelly... what's your deal?” I ask.
But what I get is a hard frown, and no answer, as if he didn't hear me.
“What's your story.” I pry.
But then feeling like maybe I shouldn't.
“Oh... me?” Gasps Donnelly.
As if he hadn't heard my question the first time and is only now alerted that I asked it. Although, I can tell that's not to be the truth.
“Oh... nothing! Not much of a story... to me. Thirty-one years old... how old are you?”
“I’m still just twenty-one!” I answer.
Had turned twenty-one the day I called all those old High School friends to embarrass myself. I remind myself, now, for whatever reason. Ugh! Although, thirty-one years old? Hmm… that starts to make sense now. Seeing how the guy is older and would have had a lot more time to build his own sense of self-confidence, a lot more time grow in comfort of being in his own skin. And, most importantly—as an adult! Which my baby fat ass hasn’t been able to as of yet.
“Yeah...! Don't have much of a story, I mean... that's why we're here—right?” Explains Donnelly.
“I guess.” I answer.
“I mean, I guess that's why we're here in the Navy, why we signed up. To have an interesting story to tell... one day.”
It seems as if though Donnelly is fidgeting around with his answer, and more than needed. And I can't tell if it's because he really doesn't have much of a story (like he said), or, has one he'd rather not share. But I guess since we're really just starting to get to know one another, I shouldn't pry, too much.

“Honestly, I got my own issues. If you haven't noticed, Falk and Rudy don't like me much, either.” Interjects Donnelly, out of nowhere.
Answering a question, I hadn't asked.
“What you mean? I've seen them joking with you at times.” I say.
Since, that really has been all I've seen between them and Donnelly, until tonight.
“They joke with me, because, unlike you, they're afraid of me.”
And I really don't know where Donnelly is going with this. Donnelly can be tough. And unafraid. Can stand for himself. But, to be afraid of him… I don’t see how. But, then again, I also don't see it mattering.
“So... you got five siblings?” I joke.
“Yeah, I'm Irish Catholic, what do you think?”
“You… umm… you?”
“What… I don’t look it?”
And I don’t know if I want to go down this route.
“Okay, fine, my dad’s Irish. And even though I was raised Irish Catholic. My mom is originally from the Fiji Islands. And that’s why I don’t exactly look Irish. But I was raised that way, so… there!”
And I knew he was going to say something along those lines, since he had that stereotypical mixed vibe about him like as mentioned before, with that whole racial anonymity thing.
“So, you’re Irish and Fiji?”
“Yeah.”
“How did they…?”
“Meet… well… my mom was a looker. She was very dark and Polynesian. And she originally moved to New York when she was younger to pursue modeling. Although, she had a falling out seeing how cutthroat that industry could truly be. Even though you wouldn’t expect it. She, like my dad, had a strong Catholic upbringing. Her having one from English Catholic influences from the Fijis. So, when she moved to Boston because of a job in nursing (which she picked up), the two met at a Catholic church. Since, that’s what conservative minded people will do when they just want to get married and not end up getting divorced in 5 to 10 years. Finding a spouse

at church is the only good solution if you want that security. My dad was very stereotypical Bostonian Irish bricklayer, up from his early life dreams of wanting to be the next Jack Dempsey down to his extreme Joe Schmo inferiority complex that leads to tons and tons of also stereotypical Irish drinking, and, so, not wanting to marry any ugly Irish girl in town named Agnus or whatever, since that's what you're pretty much going to get when it comes to women from Boston. And, not wanting to continue that bloodline, since he was self-aware enough to see just how painfully and embarrassingly stereotypical, he truly was… and wanting to marry something exotic… well, you can see where I'm going with this. Can't you?"

And, aye, I could, so I just nodded. That was a mouthful of intel.

And now, from that line of questions, I could see Donnelly was going to flip the tables

"So… in that line…?

"Oh, I'm… Armenian."

And I could tell he had no clue what that meant.

"Although, I was born in the US and I'm a very Americanized Armenian, let's just put it at that."

"What is a, 'not' so much of an Americanized Armenian?"

I didn't know how to explain that to him. But, then, I saw how I could do such:

"In Boston, have you ever come across a Russian, or Polish, or Ukr—… any group from the former USSR in your community and made friends with any of their kids?"

And seeing how Donnelly's eyes lit up like a slot machine dealing out a lemon, another lemon and a rotten egg, I could tell my meticulous wording of how had done the job.

"Oh, wow… that backwards, huh?"

"Yeah."

A pause then followed.

And now I had a couple of other questions, that were somewhat meant to be tongue-in-cheek and somewhat "me being bored and asking just about anything."

"So, are all Irish Catholic girls in Boston named Agnus and very, very ugly?" I joke.

Donnelly then did a grunt followed by a chuckle. A “gruckle” you could name. As inane as it sounds.
“No! No! Of course, not… not completely.”
I just smiled, seeing how defensive he is getting, but not defensive in a resentful way.
“I mean, ‘yeah,’ they are. But they can be very, very pretty in a Jennifer Connelly brunette looking way. But, then again, when it comes to personality… all!”
“What all?”
“I mean… all! I had a girlfriend of such, and, all! That ugly!”
And I and Donnelly sorta frown to that.
“Why you think stereotypes are so pervasive?” I ask.
“Well, Navastian, that’s because most are what you call a self-perpetuating stereotype.”
“A what?” I baffle.
“What that means, is... umm? Okay, look at it like this, for example... I have a black friend back in Boston that used to like Marlboro nonmenthol cigarettes.”
“Okay.”
I have no clue where Donnelly is going with this.
“But, guess what, one day, that friend of mine saw some Chris Rock comedy special, that talked about how much black people love menthol cigarettes.”
“Okay.”
“And a week later, I saw this friend of mine smoking nothing but Newports.”
“Okay.”
Donnelly nods.
“Fine, I get it.” I say.
Actually, I still kinda don't. Donnelly obviously notices this, and continues:
“All stereotypes are, are people mimicking what they think is expected out of them. Black people with fried chicken, Navy guys unable to shut the fuck up saying how everything is “unsat” and needs to be “squared away,” and Catholic raised hicks, like me, with a family, that did what every other Catholic family did in the neighborhood, and cranked out a whole bunch of kids, just to fill out the mold.”

And I get it now.
“Ha.” I go.
And I do get it, now. And really, now that I think about it, further, as ugly as stereotypes are, in other word for it would be... culture. Let me explain: take black people and fried chicken, for instance, what really is wrong with the whole notion that a lot of black people prefer KFC food? African American cuisine “Soul Food” just so happens to involve those food items and are heavily steeped in their culture. Same with most pastas being Italian, and anything skewered is most likely Middle Eastern. Filipinos are all about the balut, so what? (Oh... balut, eww). But anyways... it's not stereotypical or racist to say these things, (although that remark I made earlier about Filipinos eating dog meat sorta was). It's not racist, though. It's part of their culinary heritage, that's a part of their culture. Same as Mexicans with tacos and burritos, so what? It's what they eat. It's not like I'm calling Italians spaghetti slurping wops, Mexicans tamale eating wetbacks, or black people Newport smoking niggers. Since when did such attributes that frame the expectancies of a culture take on such a negative outlook? All of a sudden, it's racist to say these things. It's their fucking culture! Really, I feel like it shows a little of what's wrong with us as a collective culture to think that way today. Us Americans. But I digress.

Another pause follows.
“You know, I’ll be honest, I thought you might be Mexican at first, before I found out how you were from Boston.”
“Really?”
“Aye… I mean…?”
(Ugh! And still I am unable to say “aye” all the time as aforementioned). Although, Donnelly, I see, decides to not pick on me again for that.

Another pause.
“What makes you think I was Mexican?”
But I don’t want to answer, since, that’s mostly what I know of coming from LA. That just being my ignorant Armenian side rearing its ugly head.

One final pause.
“So, what are Mexicans like as a people… not so stereotypically?”
“Oh, they can be humble… but then again, extremely cholo.”
“What’s cholo?”
“Oh… like Navarro.”
And that completely answers Donnelly’s question. I then conclude with:
“Gotta say, stereotypes are like… curses.”
Both us think about such, as we’re both unable to think then how to answer. We finish with our midrats, then. And then leave the galley.

THE GREASEMONKEYS

There wasn't much else left to do the rest of the night. I still had my Daily on 107, which, I did, once I checked out a Tool Pouch from The Shop. Falconni was there, but, didn't say much to me, nor pay much attention, and was mostly busy trying to figure out Senior's password to his computer. So, he could log into his account. So, he could have access to the internet. Which is horrendous here on the Boat. Absolutely HORRENDOUS! In The Ship's library, there's several desks with PCs, all having internet access, and, we always have to stand in line for a good half hour until getting on one, so we could spend another half hour, just checking one email, before our time is through. Ha! Internet...! When you're in the Navy, living aboard a Ship, you tend to forget what century you're really in. And the idea that there's such a thing as internet, or cell phones, or even video games, starts to feel out of place. Any technology that is microchip based can all of a sudden seem like a radical idea, considering what we're mostly working with, here. Seem like the stuff of science fiction. Since, being on the Boat, I have lost much of my senses of what goes on and exists in the rest of the world. When it comes to technology, here, on the Boat, it always feels like the early half of the 20th century, where, hardly any technology has yet to go binary. Every bit of technology can be generally understood just by simply opening it up, and looking at it, with the naked eye. No microscopes needed! Here, it really does feel like that early half of the 20th century, even though, we're already three years into the 21st. And less isn't more, and bigger is always better.

Everything has a crank, and everything needs to be manhandled to get that crank turning. If you have a machine in your hands, you better have some brawns, not brains, if you want to use it properly. And as for all the other advancements of that era, they're all still mysteries to us. The mysteries of nuclear power, the mysteries of sonar waves traveling through space and time. The unseen things that escape our human eyes are senses: mysterious, dark, esoteric, eerie things... chaos! Which we have managed to harness in a bottle.... I'm not exactly sure where I'm getting at with this. And, honestly, it's not just on this Ship it feels that way, but all throughout the fleet. First time I felt this sense of anachronism was in Boot Camp. I remember standing in formation, getting yelled at, or beatin', or I don't know what. Can't even tell you if it was just our RDC Nordhaus standing there and not being his "in-your-face" drill instructor self. Since, periods of him not being that way were far in few in between. But, anyways, we were in formation, and at that moment I looked to the wall to my port side, being near that bulkhead in our Ship's division (no shitter, the Boot Camp barracks we were in in Great Lakes were also called a "Ship" since we Navy, and everything has to be Navy, even on dry land). I looked and saw an old photo in black and white of the earlier days in the Navy, around the 1910s. I saw a division of the boys at the time going through what we new recruits were going through today. And considering the attire and them standing in formation just how we were doing now, looking at them, then looking at us, looking at them, once more, I realized how I wouldn't really be able to tell when that picture was taking. For, if it wasn't in black and white and it wasn't dated in the 1910s, the picture might have even been taken yesterday. And, look here, there I am in that picture, having no clue what decade or century I be living in.

But, anyways, my Daily: a lot of the same old same old, same checks as every night to make sure these birds will be in tip-top condition, to tear themselves apart tomorrow, or really, later on today (since we at past midnight hours within our shift). Jets tearing themselves apart, since, there's a lot of wear and tear to be had from having them fly at such velocities and speeds. For Jets ain't like automobiles, where one can just jump in one, and go, without needing some serious level of

maintenance in between each ride. These aircrafts constantly need our attention. CONSTANTLY, on a constant basis. They're being put through hell and back in those clouds, up there, flying so hard and fast, that, they can then make their own clouds, and paint the skies with their Jettisoning presence, as they go smearing across those expanses. Those Pretty Boy Pilots job to paint the skies with them, and then ours to replenish them with colors. One hundred man hours in between each flight, one hundred accumulated hours, in total, when counting all the heads busy at work making sure they'll go up there, and stay up there. Personally, I feel like I can sorta relate to these war heroes, how they tear themselves apart up there, considering how we're tearing ourselves apart, down here, to make it all happen.

I'm done with my Daily, now. And, so, I head down to The Shop to sign it off that I have. And file any gripes that I might have found in the process: there was none. And once done with that, I head back up to my 107, to man it, and now wait till morning, which will be in the next hour. Wait. Wait with my thoughts. In the dark. In the cold. Really, really freakin' cold, mind you. Aye, I will be noting every time I'm freezing my nuts off up here, and I don't care how redundant it gets. IT'S THAT COLD! And I'm FREEZING! And, therefore, you have to hear of it! Misery loves company—you know! And my misery right now absolutely loves yours.

And now it's over. It's 0630. Red twilight skies hang over the Pacific. Morning skies. And the redness of it all begins to scare me a little, in ominous ways. Scare me, of what the following day might bring. Shift change occurs, but I know that doesn't mean I'm through, just yet. It's 0630, and from this point on I have three more hours to go. So, I head to the Ratways, I fill up a bucket full of water from the water line down there. Leaver seems pretty stiff to turn, must be corroding, needs some W4. I get the turco, then, and rags, and now it's time for the hours upon hours of hand wiping. I know this is what Senior had in mind when he gave me EMI. So, he could also have me as part of this little venture, he generally has Days spending their entire work shift attending to, hand wiping these birds—and not because they're unclean, no! I mean, we do it so much, these birds, now, look immaculate! They're mirrors

now. Freakin' MIRRORS! But that doesn't mean the job is done, since, we're really doing it not for cleanliness, but only for show. Here's the deal: before our Maintenance Master Chief was brought out of retirement. Our Squadron had been lacking. Had been considered “UNSAT” in many levels of flight operations and maintenance and was in threat of being pulled from our forward deployed Air Wing, and turned into a rag tag Squadron, Shipped back state side. Our Squadron had become unsat by many standards, and needed an overhaul. Squared away by someone that knew a lot about Tomcat maintenance, and that is exactly what happened, once Master Chief Dreadnought was brought in. Since him being supposedly a legendary figure in the Tomcat community, having been there since the beginning. Now? Things have changed. Management has changed. And in our Shop, those changes being Senior replacing Chief Murdock as head LCPO. And what does that mean for us, and how our job reflects the changes made, you might be wondering? Well: hand wipes! Us PCs, since we're all a bunch of Airmen new-bodies, nobodies, spending our entire shift hand wiping these aircraft to a spit mirror shine, so the rest of the Air Wing can look upon us, and not see us as being as unsat(-isfactory) as before. But squared away, finally. And with our new MMCPO, Battle E worthy. Is hand wiping really that bad? No! But, Senior is! Him lashing us with his whip while we do it, is! We (or really just Day Check) have become his whipping boys. And it's all for show. All for show! Officially, according to our pubs, our birds only require a wash job, every fourteen days, out here at sea, to keep the salt off of them, in order to keep corrosion from setting. Out here, there's a lot of salt in the air that accumulates onto everything (reasons why we call ourselves “salty” when we’ve been seasoned after enough time from this lifestyle), and for anything made of a certain metal, that's BAD! But with Senior, with what he's detailed us with doing, there is no danger of any corrosion setting onto these birds, ever, considering how we're constantly wiping them down. And now, they're clean beyond belief, considering how many useless man hours we've placed into wiping them. “No, we still do hand wiping to combat corrosion. Every second that passes, that you boys ain't hand wiping, salt particles settle, and begin the corrosion process all over again, and every second counts, SO KEEP WIPING!” Our Senior one time tried to explain

to us. But it's bullshit, really. It's all for show, so, all other Squadron's and the rest of Air Wing, can look upon us, and see how far we've come along from our rag tag days. Everything in the Navy is about appearances. All for show. Not camaraderie. Not service. Not pride. Not for America. Nor for our defenses averse against any foreign threat. But... for show. And. Yes...! Please excuse me for my pessimism, I know I can go a little bit overboard with it, now and then, but I really did not picture myself as being a part of all this, when I joined. I mean, I can put up with the whole "being broken in like a mule," I can put up with all the hazing, all the roll ups, and silly juvenile horsing around (also since I won't deny the level of fun I've derived from it), I can put up with it all... as long as there's purpose behind it. Ever hear of that tale of that janitor that worked for NASA, back in the 60s, being asked as to what his contribution were towards the space program? And him responding: "putting a man on the moon." Ever hear of it? Well, like that janitor, I like to think that with all the nobody-busy-work I'm putting into this Navy, it's eventually (in the long run) going to amount towards something. Like putting a man on the moon. That the work, and all the hazing, and all the burning alive, and rolling up, and tieing people up with chains to hoist them over pipes... all of that is going to amount towards something.

What the hell am I even speaking about? All the hazing, burning alive, rolling up… etc., etc! Damn you, Navastian… damn you! Stop being such a Tool. Stuff like this will never… grr!

"What the fuck you doing out here?" Asks Muwangi.
"Hand wiping. What does it look like?" I tell him.
"You got EMI? Well...?"
Well, WHAT, you moody FUCK?
"...." Muwangi doesn't say anything snarky.
As I know he would like to. Probably because he can't think up of anything on par with how abrasive, and even derisive, he'd like the remark to be. Always the moody, frowny jackass. He's an ass at his own level. Substituting insufferable snark with

friendly humor, and not being able to tell the difference. He's practically always scoffing at people, and isn't even aware that he is, leading me to truly get why so many of us PCs treat him the way we do. The guy is right now just permeating with all that moody, derisive, frowny face bile, and then he wonders why everyone would get pissed and reflect it back. WAIT? Am I that way too? Like how Donnelly compared me with him, earlier during midrats... do I frown as much, too? God, I hope not! So ugly, too, with him always frowning like that. Maybe that's why I have such a hard time attracting women? God, so ugly! I gotta learn to smile more.

Honestly, I can't stand doing hand wipes. It's the one detail I truly hate having it be a part of my job. It is just such a low and petty task meant for low and petty laborers, which I refuse to be one of! A fourteen day? That at least is a wash job with good reason. Meant for combating corrosion. But I hate this hand wiping. Luckily, for me, though, us Night Check PCs don't have to worry about doing any of it. At nights, no one can see us hand wiping, and no one really cares. And for that, it would be completely pointless to do so. But, then again, here's the thing, Senior still wanted us on Nights to continue doing it. But, luckily for us, again, Chief Murdock wasn't going to have any of that. He wasn't going to be babysitting us wiping our birds, every second, as Senior tended to on Days. I remember I was listening in just outside The Shop, with Senior talking it over with our Chief: “I think Nights needs to start on this, too, my boys on Days are doing an outstanding job and....” And at that point, I remember peeking into The Shop, deeper, and catching a glimpse of our Chief (if I had been in The Shop, I know the two wouldn't have been having this discussion. Khakis will never allow subordinates to witness such transactions), and what was the look upon our Chief? The man was DILLIGAFing like a motherfucker, pretty much spelling out, “go fuck yourself,” with his eyes to the Hawaiian. Our Chief wanted NONE of it. And Senior knew he wasn't going to have his way with the Double Digit Midget. He wasn't. It's all cosmetic bullshit, really! These machines are made to destroy things, and not meant to look pretty while doing it. But I digress. I'm not going to dwell anymore into the whole futility of some of the work we do, here. Really, truly! There's a lot of futility to be had all around.

“No, no, no, I'm not heading to the Wan Chi district, I'm not into stuff like that. That stuff sounds gross!”

It's AD3 Qian and AD3 Beauregard. Two Powerplant guys. Mechs. Or Greasemonkeys, as some of us jokingly will put it. Two of our Squadron's Green Shirts, that just walked over to my 107, with one large Toolbox, to open up the daily doors, and do whatever they do. AD3 Beauregard is from Baton Rouge, LA, from what I understand. He has a bit of an accent. Black mixed with French mixed with Indian (Native American, I mean), according to him. Can't tell you with what Native American tribe, though. Has another pencil thin mustache like Donnelly, that, and lingering playful eyes. Eyes that stick out far and seem to have no bottom lid to propping them in, properly. Lingering eyes, always lingering about to find something juicy to sink its attentions into. As for AD3 Qian, he's Taiwanese, but was raised in Seattle, WA. And. The thing about him, is, he looks like a twelve-year-old boy amongst us. And he might as well be that age, at certain levels of maturity, physically and psychologically. Twelve. And, has just discovered the birds and bees, by means of his dad's porno tape that was accidentally left in the VHS machine, and discovered by the poor child. And now, his face has the look like its stuck, perpetually, carrying over the look of shock that was founded on that day. AD3 Qian is the type of character I feel relieved for, absolutely relieved, that he was sent immediately to his Shop, and wasn't sent to us, first. Qian... in the Line Shack? I don't see him lasting more than a week.

“That's just gross!” Says Qian.

Reacting to the Beauregard's filthy minded questioning having to do with the opposite sex, and sex.

“Eww! That's gross!”

And “gross” being the word of the day. Oh, good! This sounds like it's going to be entertaining. I think. Deciding not to get involved as much, but listen in while I do my hand wipes, while they do what they're doing, turning wrenches in that daily door, unfastening some nut off the engine to replace some part or another.

“How do you know if you don't try it?” Asks Beauregard.

And it sounds like the words are coming more from his eyes, instead of his mouth. Such curious and inquisitive eyes, he has! Also, sleazy (just as his prior mentioned pencil thin mustache… although Donnelly's looks more dapper than sleazy. Just giving you a sense of how this AD differs). Sort of eyes that will fixate onto you, and won't budge a centimeter, after some disembodied voice asks you to touch yourself.
"No fuckin' way am I going to hang around with prostitutes, that's just gross."
Wait, what? AD3 Qian actually used the "f" word? I'm impressed. For it's not anything you'd expect from a character like his. I guess the Navy is finally having its influences on him.
"Hang out? You don't exactly hang out with the women you'd find there." Says Beauregard.
Always so suggestive, always! And he has a very womanly sounding voice, might I add. If his voice was disembodied, you'd guess he was some sultry female, first. A horny sultry female from the south, that is, which can get Squids like me or anyone horny just listening to for a split second. THAT IS before remembering that she's really a he, and not made of the same sugars and spices. Androgynistic as a motherfucker, with his voice, but definitely not with his appearance, if you don't mind me saying.
"Eww! Gross!" Goes AD3 Qian.
And I'm getting tired of how much of a prude he is seeming to be, for the boy absolutely loves to confuse innocence for virtue. And the kid's twenty-thee, supposedly. Even older than I am.
"So, what do you plan on doing in Hong Kong?" I ask now.
I do, for, I can't help but to just listen in, anymore.
"Me? I don't know, catch a show, go to a fancy restaurant, and then maybe—"
"Just be another tourist—huh?" I ask.
And this is somehow reminding me of the conversation I had with AM3 Rosario and Turnipseed, last night, for some reason... hmm?
"Well, yes! What else is there to do in Hong Kong?"
And then I see Beauregard's curiosity at work.

“So, what you plan on doing when we hit Thailand, the same thing? Catch a show... restaurant... etc and etc?” Asks Beauregard.
And I now know where he's going with this.
“Well, yes! That would be very neat. That, and I've heard from Turnipseed about those pagodas, there, and I want to travel and see them, too.”
“All right, but what about all the prostitutes waiting for you at the pier when we dock in Thailand?” I bring up, then.
And Beauregard smiles when I do.
“What do you mean?” Asks AD3 Qian.
Mouth a little open, and him being just that clueless. And now, Beauregard takes it from where I left off.
“Qian, do you know how Thailand is like?” Asks Beauregard.
“Yes, I've heard stories, but I don't want anything to—”
“They don't care!” I throw in.
“What do you mean?”
And now me and Beauregard feel in sync, and now, we truly begin:
“In Thailand, prostitutes are sorta... mean.” Beauregard throws in, now.
“What do you mean, mean?”
“They're going to be all over you, they're going to want business, want money, and they won't care whether you're interested or not.” I continue.
There's a lot of stories I've heard about Thailand. A lot of stories, especially here on the Boat. Cringe worthy shit that truly happens there, and stays there, and for good reason. GOOD REASON!
“Interested or not? I'll just tell them to leave... politely.”
AD3 Qian is now blinking rapidly and seems flustered. Funny thing about Qian, I remember I was at Skunky's, and I was with Beauregard, then, and the two of us were messing with Ramona from Funky's, asking her a lot of questions about herself, since, Ramona is a very interesting woman with many interesting tales to tell. And then, Qian came and sat next to us, but we were already ready to leave. Ramona wanted us, me and Beauregard, to get her onto our base, since, our base sells a lot of American Shipped items for cheap. Stuff like TVs, DVD players and a lot of

electronics. That, and... she planned on blowing Beauregard, later. But as we were about to leave, Qian seemed to have fallen for Ramona, quite a bit, and when he asked where we were going, we told him as such: “back to base.” Qian then looked outside the window, saw that it was drizzling (not too bad, mind you), and then asked us how long we could wait for him. “Wait?” Asked Beauregard. “Yes, wait!” Said Qian. So, Beauregard told him a few. Qian then ran out of the bar, ran through the rain back to base, ran to the Navy Exchange, bought an umbrella, ran back, and after about fifteen minutes of us waiting, showed up, and told us we could now head back. And when Ramona stepped out, Qian opened the umbrella for her, and... words could not express how WTF me and Beauregard felt after seeing all that. And later on that day, words could not express how Whiskey Tango Foxtrot I felt seeing how naive Qian could get, when Ramona went with Beauregard back to his barracks' room, and Qian began wondering what they planned on doing without us two. Although, I kinda wonder how Qian would have felt if we just straight up told him Ramona was really not much different from a prostitute herself? She was what we in the Navy call a Mamasan. Hmm... I wonder? Wondering, since, he seemed so head over heels for that 5'1 pretty little Filipina, who is just built for sexual appraisal, over any other characteristic feature: a tiny woman in statute, but not in form, with a body that's just begging for everyone's arousal and attention, on her knees and begging! And the dresses she wears are so skintight and short, they might as well have been painted on her. And if that and the dirty language Romona always uses, to make even us Sailors blush, if all that wasn't a clue to Qian of what type of woman this Romona really is... then... I don't know!

“Qian, you can't be polite with them.” Beauregard says.

“Fine, then I'll be stern!” Qian says, putting his foot down.

“Being stern isn't gonna work, either.” I go.

And now Qian seems flustered. Just how me and Beauregard want him.

“Then what should I do, what can I do to let them know I'm not interested?”

“Nothing! There's nothing you can do. They're going to get to you and there's nothing you can do about it!” Beauregard says.

With eyes not only seeming all sleazy now, but devilishly, also.

“What?” Gasps Qian.
All dopey eyed, having me snicker a little. And now it's time for us to pop this twenty-three-year old's cherry.
“They're going to JUMP you Qian, they're going to JUMP your bone the second you get off The Ship?” And so, I go.
“What do you mean, jump me? They can't do that!”
Qian is really at a loss, now, seeming to get a little scared. Me and Beauregard have somehow decided to turn Thai women into some sorta boogiemen...er women, and we're doing it all for Qian, so he and his childlike mindset could understand. And understand why he must be fearful.
“Yes, they can. They can jump your bone all they want.” Confirms Beauregard.
“That's against the law.”
“It's not America, Qian, it's their country, and you have to go by their rules.”
“Well, I'll just tell them to go away, and I'll be rude about it, too, to make it clear to them I'm not interested.” Qian says.
Shooing the thought away with his left hand. And now I know I have to have Qian come to terms with what he's going to be dealing with.
“Qian, I don't think you understand something. These aren't your regular prostitutes, these women are going to be ruthless. They come from a 3rd world shithole, where they're constantly struggling to make a living. Constantly hustling to survive. And they're also constantly dealing with very unsavory characters. Bad people! Bad men! Bad men that do bad things to these girls. And teach them to be bad themselves.”
“These girls are bad?” Goes Qian.
More dopey eyed than ever, and now I know I really got the boy hooked.
“Yes Qian, they're bad!” Goes Beauregard.
“Dirty! Vicious! Scandalous!” I go.
“And they want you!” Beauregard follows up.
“Well, I don't... I'll just tell them straight up, NO! And they'll have to deal with it!” Keeps up Qian.
“Not going to work.”
“I don't believe in prostitution.”

“They don't care.” I say.
“I'm saving myself up for MARRIAGE!” Blasts Qian.
And I almost lose it, there. Me and Beauregard, the two of us, almost lose our cool, and begin laughing. But, we can't do that, for, that would ruin the roll we've got.
“They deal with married men all the time, they don't care about that, either. And they sure do know how to get around it.” I say, while trying to hold in the laughter.
“….” Qian doesn't answer, and begins to look away.
“Qian, they're gonna GET YE!” I go.
And now I sound as if I truly am talking to a child, trying to scare him about the big bad boogie monster living in his closet.
“No.” Goes Qian.
“They're going to be all over you.”
“Why?”
“They want your cock!” I go.
“No, that's for my future wife.”
Oh, wow! I don't know if I can take another line like that from Qian, and would be still able to hold in the laughter.
“They're gonna make you like it.” Goes Beauregard, throwing in his perspective.
“What?”
And now Qian really looks scared.
“Yeah, they'll change you.” I go.
“Make you feel different, once they pull your dick out, and start stroking it in their hands.” Beauregard follows up.
“Eww! That's so gross! I would never be into—”
“They'll make you into it!”
“I don't care. I just want to see pagodas.”
“You'll feel different once they get to your pagoda.”
I don't know if I can take this anymore, let alone Beauregard, who's in on the fun.
“No, I won't.”
“Yes, you will!”

It fascinates me how little sense Qian has on what we're really trying to do here, he really can't tell we're fucking with him. He just can't!
“NO!”
“They're going to pull out your—dick!”
“….”
And now Qian really goes silent, as his bottom lip begins to shiver a little.
“And start sucking it, right as you get off the Boat.”
“….”
I feel as if though Qian is about to go catatonic, from all the unsavory images we're implanting into his brain.
“And there’s going to be like eight of them all trying to do this at once, so resistance will be FUTILE!”
Beauregard sorta overdoes it with the “FUTILE” bit, and with his accent.
“Ha!”
Making me chuckle hard, once, which gets Qian's attention. But luckily, it's not enough to lead Qian on towards what we're doing.
“They're going to pull out your cock and they're all going to start sucking it.”
“….”
“And you're going to realize how much you love it, too.”
“NOOOoooo!”
And there she blows, or, he blows, now that we got Qian by the throat. And with that, I go in for the ringer:
“And the one that looks like a thirteen year old boy is going to be the one that's really going to get you off!”
“NO, NO, NO! I won't get of the Boat THEN!” Cries Qian.
And if he was to turn around now, and begin runnin', screaming his silly head off, it wouldn't be that off putting. We're laughing our asses off now. Me and Beauregard are done. And we can allow the laughter to come out. I've stopped wiping my Jet. Beauregard is on the deck, with that last outburst from Qian, rollin', just rollin'! And Qian looks like he's mad! And about to leave.
“Oh... well, fuck you guys!”

And now he does. Gets up and heads back, before, even finishing with the job they were on.
“Looks like you have to finish that by yourself, now, Beauregard.” I go.
“No matter! No matter! It was all worth it.” Follows he.
Then continues doing mech shit with the engines.

Well, that was all very awful of me. Think I, and now I begin to wonder really how much difference there is between me and the rest of the Line, all those other jackasses, that would have pulled something very similar. But, whatever!

“NAVASTIAN!” Blasts someone behind me.
And turning around, I see that it's Senior.
“Yes, Senior?”
And looking at his sweat riddled brow, that's all tensed up and pulsating as he stares long and hard at me, I can tell he's not happy.
“What the fuck are you doing?” He asks.
“What, I'm hand wiping!”
“No, you're not!”
And at this very second, I really ain't, just holding a soaking rag in my hands, and not exactly wiping.
“Roger that! Wiping now.” I go.
As I continue.
“Right, until I leave, then you can continue fucking around with AD3 Beauregard over there, am I right?”
And I can tell now, we, the two of us, that is, are going to have one of those talks.
“No Senior, I'll be wiping. I only stopped wiping a second ago.” I explain.
I mean, there's always going to be tini-tiny micro-secondary moments where I won't be wiping, it's impossible to be doing such EVERY second I'm out here. And now, you all can see what I mean by: hand wiping not being the worse part of this job, this fat Senior Chief of the Navy riding our ass, is!

“You only stopped for a second... right? Then I guess my eyes were lying to me when a good five minutes ago they saw that you were also still not wiping, and also still fucking around with AD3 Qian, and disturbing him and AD3 Beauregard at their work.”

Ah shit! He's been watching me this entire time! I realize. And now, I'm feeling royally pissed, and really not wanting to be stuck in this moment. Honestly... who cares! I've still been wiping most of the time. And why get so anal about what minute I was doing what?

“So, my eyes were lying to me—right?” Goes Senior.

Taking it there, so he can go back to doing what he does best.

“No.”

“No... what?”

“No, Senior, your eyes weren't lying to you. You're right, I was neglecting to do my work longer than I thought I was. I guess I got carried away chatting with the two Powerplant guys. But, trust me, really, it won't happen again.” I admit.

Hoping he's gotten what he's wanted and will now leave me alone for the rest of my EMI, which I need to serve.

“Why didn't you come down for shift change?” Asks Senior.

Now opening up a new topic to berate me with.

“Well, I figured—”

“You figured... YOU?”

“I figured my shift was to go on for another three hours, so, I stayed and took the initiative of—”

“Well, Navastian, you figured WRONG!” Spits out Senior.

As I continue wiping my Jet. And when I say spits out, I mean it again, spits up and out and all over the side of my face. Senior has a nasty habit of doing this, and the worst part is, he does it in a way, as if, he's unaware that he is, letting it stream so naturally and unapologetically, but I know he's aware. And I know that he does it on purpose, just to piss me off.

“When it comes to work, don't be figuring nothing, Navastian, that's my job, not yours.” He explains.

“All right, Senior, tomorrow I'll be down for shift change when I'm supposed to, I was wrong to assume that. I won't make that mistake twice. And as for now, I will continue wiping without any momentary breaks, I'll make sure of it. I'm ON THIS!” I establish.

So, he can now GO AWAY!

“You're... staying for another hour, today!” He blurts out.

And now, I feel like taking this soaking rag, and shoving it down his gullet! I specifically remember yesterday him telling me how I wouldn't have any more than three hours of EMI. I remember it SPECIFICALLY! Right now, I see with my peripherals, AD3 Beauregard shaking his head, once over, over this spectacle. And I can just feel his pity, I can feel it! Over this pointless embarrassment that my Senior is forcing me through to put up with. Probably counting his blessings, Beau is, knowing that his LCPO is nothing like this. For, let's face it, none of the Khakis in the rest of our Squadron are anywhere near half as intolerable as our Senior is. Not even half! And it's not even the additional hour that's pissing me off the worst, and him telling me yesterday he wouldn't add any more time. It's not him giving me more, but the reasons behind giving me such. Discipline? HA! As if that was what it was really about! Senior is now continuing to stare me down, breathing heavily, so, I could feel his hot breath over the side of my face. Letting me know, he had pancakes this morning, smothered in blueberry syrup, with a side of hash browns, and lots and lots of bacon. Lots and lots! He's a fatass, so OF COURSE he would have that many, for his breath to smell as meaty and greasy as it does. Breathing heavily and waiting for my next reaction. Waiting for something to give. And after a few seconds, him seeing how I won't be saying or doing anything else except continuing to wipe this Jet, here, as is expected of me, he finally leaves.

“Your LCPO is something else.” Goes the AD3.

And I say nothing. And neither does the AD3, for, what more can he say, what more can he?

BALI HA’I: PART TWO

I'm staying here. Why move? Why budge? I'm not swimming towards that island. I don't want any more transitions. They're wearing me through and out. And they're

changing me. And, I don't want to change anymore. I like it here. I like just floating out here. I'm no longer on that Boat, and I'm glad. I'm seeing this as a positive thing. And it really is so peaceful out here, too. Why be afraid of this, being here in the water? I knew what I was doing when I joined the Navy. I wanted to be a Sailor. And, now, I am one, minus one Boat, but, the point was always to be out here, far, far away from everything and everyone. Far away from all those unsavory influences, that had—if anything—drove me to this! For whatever the hell that was the inclination that got me to jump, that got into me and made me do so, is far from me now. It drove me to this, to be out here! And, here, I am. And, here, I will stay—FAR FROM IT! I remember as a kid, the stories and songs that always stood out to me were the ones that took place out in places like these. Out in the open of these open oceans. What was that nursery rhyme that I used to remember singing in kindergarten, which my teacher taught me? Not the Itsy-Bitsy spider one—no!

My Bonnie lies over the ocean,
My Bonnie lies over the sea.
My...

Funny. I don't remember it being “Bonnie.” I thought the words were “body.”

My body lies over the ocean,
My body lies over the sea,
My body lies over the ocean,
Bring back my body to...

It never made much sense to me as a kid. How could one's body be apart from oneself? How could it? In a different place. Lost! Far. Out there. Far out to sea. Deep. One's own being such, and wanting it back. I remember spending a lot of time reflecting on that verse as a kid, trying to figure out its meaning. A whole lot of time. Practically, my entire life as a five-year-old child, completely absorbed by it (at least how my memories of that age serve me). Can't tell you how much time spent thinking over that verse. Like it meant something! Something great. Something grand. Something that was going to be important to me later on in life. And, why so, I don't know! Specifically, me, out of all the other kids that were being taught to sing that song, that nursery rhyme, made doe-eyed, and not knowing why for.

Memories are a mysterious thing…
and the reasons why we remember them.

For instance: another thing I remember at that age, specifically, is, that one trip to San Fran me and my family took, and that weirdo in San Fran in a bunny costume that weirded me out. Some guy paid to dress up like one, an Easter Bunny, or something, and made to blow balloons and be all clown-like and... but the fucker weirded me the fuck out! Who the fuck is this guy? Why is he dressed like this? Why a fuckin' bunny? And why does this all scare me, so? And I was five, so, how could I know what being weirded out was all about, then? Hmm...?

Memories are a mysterious thing, full of hidden meaning, I believe!

Take another memory for instance: I remember the Incredible Mr. Limpet movie at that age. A movie about a man whose whole desire was to be a fish. It's another Navy flick, a real old one, starring Don Knotts, who plays some... aquarium store owner... I think? In San Francisco. During the Second World War. And as everyone is busy with the war, and their lives, then there's his wife (another cat on a hot tin roof, sort, mind you), that's too busy fussing and worrying over other matters, which discontented wives tend to do, when brooding over non-affectionate husbands. All the world is at war, and all this man, this adorable, dorky, man, is completely absorbed by, are his dreams, to be a fish. Aye... a fish! You heard that correctly, a fish! And why? I couldn't tell you. Especially at that age when I saw this flick, around the same age as I learned that “Bonnie over the Ocean” song. Why he was so intent to be one, I couldn't tell you. But deep down, I felt like I knew. “We all come from fish!” I remember him saying in the flick. “And I just want to return to being one.” He'd continue to say. And then, he did! He jumped into San Francisco Bay, and became one. He did. Transformed. Adapted to his new life and surroundings and began to feel different. Adapted, and then decided to help the US Navy fight the Germans (or Japanese, I believe, since San Fran is a costal city by the Pacific, so it

would be the Japanese, not Germans... but whatever) Now that he was a fish and had the powers to use sonar, somehow? That's what he decided to do....

Ha! Silly movie!

What did it all mean, and what did it all mean to me? Why do I remember these mysterious memories, in this order, and what significance does it have to do with me and my life now? I'm one that doesn't believe memories are random. I believe they mean something. Something esoteric, maybe, at first... but give them enough time, and God will then reveal to you the meaning of them and how they correlate to your story.

My body lies over the ocean....
Well, my body does lie over the ocean, now! And, now, it would be best if I was to turn into a fish.

Then again, with that whole “all memories mean something” I can't tell you why I remember that freaky guy in the bunny suit... maybe that's a memory that has no significance at all, and did just now pop in all random like in my head as such. Maybe? I don't know! Strange.

Also, I will never forget Mr. Limpet in that movie falling into the ocean, and then transforming into a fish. It was all animated like a cartoon, but I'll never forget his transformation, for how surreal it felt, as he adapted to his new world, and became something different... adapted… into something grand. And a true hero for the Navy. Ha!

I guess if I stay out here too long, and not swim towards that island, I'll die. I'm not changing into no fish anytime soon, from what I'm seeing. Whatever got me to jump Ship, didn't have me completely jump Ship, in my head, so I know I'm not turning into a fish anytime soon, for I can still tell the difference between reality and fiction.

And right now, my reality is that island. And my reality is that, if I don't swim to it, I will die, and I don't want to. And that's all there is to it! And, maybe, also... I'll find something there, on that island, that I've always been looking for. Maybe the stuff of dreams.

Maybe I'll find my body, or Bonnie, find her, there, and finally feel complete.

Wait a sec… Bonnie… bunny… bunny costumes?
….
…?
…!
Okay, now I'm just confusing myself.
So, whatever!

DARK WATERS

Big moon skies hung over the Pacific. Fuckin' A! Think I. We're doing Night Ops. Birds all around turnin' and burnin', and right now, I've finished launching my 107. I'm at the cats (catapults), watching my warbird, now, blazing out a fiery stream, from the back, while up front it's all kneeling and waiting for the signal to fire off. All "on your mark, get set," and now waiting to "GO!" Go BALLS to the WALL and blast OFF! This can be a very intense moment. Very intense, when Tomcats get this way. Shit begins shaking. The deck begins rattling. And our faces begin burning, feeling like they're gonna melt right off, looking at all this, even with our visor down. Tomcats can be some really imposing motherfuckers—mind you! All muscular, with abs and pecs and biceps. All bulked up, massively tensed up, ferociously ready to take off, and go, out there, and motherfuck anything that simply moves! Not just fuck, but motherfuck! Because, all mothers are going to also feel it, when these massive, berserking, bad boy machines are through.
"GROWL!" Goes my 107. And won't stop with it, either. Our Squadron's two shooters are doing their thing, and AE2 Frankowsky is being the most animate, swinging from one end of the war machine to another, like he's swinging off vines, like some Tarzan in the jungle. Being all cool and slick, because his name is Rick, and he's got a big...

disposition: a real high and mighty opinion of oneself. But, whatever! He also looks silly doing it, too. Sillier than we do when we're doing our part launching the fuckers earlier in the process. All right! I get it, AE2 Frankowsky, you Copenhagen dippin' BASTARD! You're a freakin' BADASS! SHIT HOT, SALTY, SEA HOT DOGGIN' SAILOR—YOU ARE! I get it! With your Top Gun mustache, and your twisted-up lips, gumming around your face to show some teeth. And SPIT, man... SPIT! I know you boys like to be all showy with how long you can go without doing so and spittin', holding in the wadded load as the dip starts to go nauseatingly toxic. But if your face keeps contorting, trying to hold in all that bile and juices, like it has, all that nasty ass shit, your lips are gonna be where your eyes are at, and one of your eyes is gonna be setting up shop off the tip of your dick. MY DICK if you keep with your face contorting like that! So, spit it out, you JACKASS! Think I, as I begin to feel like strangling myself with the chains clinging to my skin, around my neck, watching the man being all he can be. The great star spangle banner American hero. Treating like the fireworks happen out of my 107's afterburners are actual fireworks, commemorating to the glory of his planeshootin' history. Sorry...! Belay all that. It's just that witnessing too much cockiness can get to me and get me all heated up and silly. And start thinking and saying silly things. Sorry again!

And then the AE2 kneels behind the Jet, giving the thumbs up, and now the real head shooter (the Yellow Shirt Khaki in charge of the cat), does the real shootin'. There you see, Frankowsky, in the end, you're only just support. Ain't that slick. Ain't even the real shooter that does the real shootin'. Think I. But really, shooting a Jet is an overly complicated process. Our Checker Shirts (like Frankowsky) just do one last check on the birds, making sure they won't go nose down the very last second, and decide to go for a swim, instead. Two Checker Shirts. Then there's the Boat Chock Green Shirt up near the launch bar, making sure it's secured onto the cat. Then there's one Yellow Shirt that revs and does the pointing. And another Khaki Yellow Shirt that points and really MEANS IT, THIS TIME. And a Green Shirt inside the cat controls, that pushes the actual button, that fires it off. Really there's one, two, three... four... A WHOLE MESS of shooters, like an army of apes, all swinging

around an enormous loaded gun, working all the parts: cocking the gun, aiming it, one in charge of coordinating the whole messy process, and another pulling the trigger. A teamwork affair, just to get the bad boy fired off. And then there's also the one really GONZO ape Pilot, all foamy at the mouth and spinning in the eyeballs, the nutjob ape that dares riding the bullet as it's being fired off. But whatever! AND THERE SHE GOES! There goes my 107, and now I'm headed for the Ratways to get forty winks.

I pass the island to the right of me, reach the edge of The Ship, and make my way down to that shelf, off the edge of the Flightdeck, where all the other PCs hang out at: the Ratways. Getting there, I then take off my chains, hang them up on a rack, keel down, and close my eyes, not fully, but slit. And now I am just alone with my thoughts, for a while, as the rest of the Night Ops continues burning and churning behind me. Sorta feels like I'm in some WW1 trench, down here, in the Ratways, and looking about me, I see, I really am not alone. There are other Brown Shirts, like me, I can see standing around me. Some also keeled over, and waiting for the Night Ops to be over with, just as I am. All their eyes, either staring through their visors, over at the Flightdeck. And some, at each other. This is a long wait where no words can be expressed considering how loud the engines be screaming behind us. I'm here, so is Roach Burger, Kats, Derbytown, Pflugerville, and also Quimby. And some Hornet/Super Hornet Brown Shirts, a few from the rest, and two Marines from that VMFA Squadron. Two cute girl Marines. Really cute, also, might I add (although they say that the cutest girls are Air Force girls. But I wouldn't know, since I haven't seen them. But seeing these two, makes me think that Marine girls should at least be a very, very close second. Don't ask about Navy girls, them and their lobster backs). All us PCs are now around, in chains, like some chain gang, and now I get curious to see how all our feuding egos will be handled within us, having so many of US around. All of us beginning to bubble up, and mix, to get along down here in this Brown Shirt stewing pot that we're in. But, from the look on Kats and Quimby, standing behind Roach Burger, eyeing him funny, I can see, something is about to happen. Kats and Quimby are just eyeing the rodent meat, just eyeing him, and

showing teeth through their smiles. Roach Burger? He's just slouching, growing a hunch back, with his head slanted low, making his head look like an L attached to his shoulders. Mouth partially open, catching salt (there are no flies out here), looking dumb and ready to be a prime target to whatever Kats and Quimby have planned for him, next. Today's rendition of his punishment, since, Senior decided not to give him any official one. Since Senior has grown sick and tired of the young fuck up, and has given up on him, completely. And yet, we HAVEN'T! And then all of a sudden, it happens! Quimby makes his move: grabs Roach Burger from behind, over his shoulders, and takes him down. I can see Roach Burger mouthing off, violently now, but no sound. All us PCs, us Line Rats, and those two Marines, from all over The Ship, are now just watching the spectacle. All of us knowing what the deal is, as we begin smiling, and showing our own teeth. Laughing. And, then, Kats begins to do something... what the fuck are you doing, Kats? Wonder I, and it seems as if he's trying to take off Roach Burger's boots. He does so, then, and float checks them over the side. Then he begins trying to take off his cammie pants. Whiskey Tango Foxtrot? I wonder, again. Does so, taking (practically ripping) them off, as Roach Burger begins kicking, and then, once off, Kats float checks them as well, over the side. And now... his skivvies?

"…?"

My mouth drops, now, and Kats follows up with that, taking them off, and deep-sixes them also over the edge. And now, Quimby lets go of the Roach. And the boy is all bottomless. Privates hanging out for us all to see. Bottomless. And all us PCs down here are laughing so hard, I can hear us all a little. Roachy does this thing you see gorgeous women in old comedy skits do: that whole routine where their dresses are ripped from them, exposing their girders and underwear, and they begin dancing around with their gobs flapping open, and their eyes straining with embarrassment, hands waving around trying to secure whatever privacy they can, and failing at it miserably! And Roachy, is now failing at it, miserably, for we can all see how he's a grower, not a shower. And so can the two female Marine PCs, too, which Roachy takes double notice of them staring and snickering, at him, and to themselves. Kats is on the deck, rollin'. And Quimby now eyes Roachy as Roachy eyes back. Quimby

then gives him the “bye bye” gesture with his hand, for it's now Roachy's turn to run back to his coffin locker, in the berthing, all while passing every Squid and Khaki along the way. And. I wish him the best of luck with that! I does. Wishing him the best with the sprawling adventure laid out for him, ahead. Having to run down ladderwells, through a crowded Hangar Bay, and a Galley, while holding his cranial over whatever he can. I wonder, then, if any of the Khakis will take the effort to hold him for a moment, to berate him. Or, would they have the kindness and decency to let him pass, and let him escape this harrowing predicament.

I then feels a bit peculiar, something peculiar I feel within me, as I step over the edge, where Kats had been float checking stuff, as I look over. Dark waters underneath. Seem like calming, soothing dark waters, and I think about my dream, the continued same one I've been having for the following two nights. Think about them, as I feel my thoughts stepping over the edge. Why do I keep having these dreams? What's the point to them? And looking down at dark waters below....

I then step up, onto the edge... and LUNGES IN!
SPLASH!

NO! NO! What? What happened? Did I jump in? Did I just...? I scare. And the truth is... I hadn't.

No! No...? I didn't jump! I... good... I didn't jump! I just thought for a second, there, that I had. Wow!

Mind's playing tricks on me... Whiskey Tango Foxtrot?

And now the peculiar properties of those dark waters underneath begin to scare me something fierce. As the thoughts of falling into them, them dark oblivions, have me stop looking down at them. And as I turn my head around, I see Kats and Quimby, eyeing me. Now very funny. And I then quickly pick up a link of chain next to me

and begin swinging a couple of links of it around in circles, showing threat! Kats and Quimby smile, now, and their teeth keep seeming to grow sharper and sharper, the longer they do so. And now, I also smile, back!

Night Ops are now over with, all the Jets have taken off to do their thing: training missions. And we all now begin to slowly get up and leave. We have a few hours before they return, in which time we'll have to be up and out, again, to catch them.

THE MAN BEHIND THE MUSTACHE

You know, before I joined, I really thought I was going to be something grand. Really was going to do well, with all this, and make a real... SPLASH… in the Navy. Starting at Boot Camp. Be that Shit Hot Recruit, with the chest swollen with pride, all proud, getting chewed out by my RDCs, and showing I had what it takes! For I'd be able to take it! And move on. Being that poster child we all (I guess) imagine we'll be, before reality sets in, and checks us: As we come to terms with our true measures. Come to terms with who we really are and what we're really made of. As for me...? I obviously haven't been capable of much of anything. I didn't make RPOC or AROC, while I was in Great Lakes, as I thought I would before getting there. For I just turned out to be just another faceless one, another JAFO: Just Another Fucking Observer. Not taking the chance to step up and take initiative. Really, I've been just some average Joe Squid, lingering a bit on the below mark line. Can't sail straight much for shit. And now, I might be going Section 8 in me head. And... how the fuck did it come to this? I wonder. And it's not like how what other branches, such as the Army or Marines, will be facing, coming up in the immediate future. With the war. I'm not to be facing war, how they will. Yet, I still feel myself going over the edge, even with the job I'm doing. And I'm not going to be doing anything that's going to require getting my hands all bloody, from direct bloodshed. Me shooting at people. And then fearing and dreading to find myself being shot back. I'm not going to be left with such psychological scars. PTSDs. So, why do I still feel this way...?

It's quiet now, now that all the Jets that were online are gone, to do what they do. And I'm only left with offline ones. It's quiet. And me and a couple of Line Shackers

have decided to head aft, to where our Shop's entrance and exit to the Flightdeck is located. We head there, and, now, just... sit around. Taking in the fresh night's air, that really isn't as cold as it has been on every other occasion. Aye! Finally! Some decent weather. And it's me now, and Derbytown, and Pflugerville, up here. And luckily for us, Kats and Quimby have made themselves scarce. I guess, feeling like they're better than the likes of us. So, they've both left us, and have gone down to the Shop. Good riddance! But, then again, look at what I have to work with now! AN Derbytown I've introduced, ATAN Pflugerville I'll get to, some other time. But suffice it to say, the two aren't your most relatable company of companions. They're just two very off-putting pair of Squids. I mean, I don't want to sound mean, or like I'm better, but they're the type of guys you're going to find at wits end with, trying to relate with. Make sense of. Because. The two aren't your most sensible lot to be around. They live and breathe in a world of their own. Fascinating worlds—mind you! But not ones that make much sense, leaving us mostly feeling like shrugging every few moments, when they start asking you questions that don't pertain to you, and anything you have much of an opinion thereof. Sorta how AOAN Zeedorf is like. Except, Zeedorf, scares the fuckin Barnacles out of us, with what he has to say. Ha, Zeedorf! “Awkwardness” wouldn't even begin to describe what he makes us feel.

“Hey, Shipmates! LOOK ALIVE!” Goes a figure behind us. And turning my head around, I see the Checker Shirted Shooter, AE2 Frankowsky. The most celebrated Joe Navy Squid amongst our Squadron. He is all appearance, showy appearance. A real AJ Squared Away jackass, we can't all help but to love. What's his intentions with the likes of us right now? From experience, just to be showy! No other reason. He has nothing valuable to say or give. Nothing meaningful. Nothing thought provoking. He's here to share his big fat ego and his big fat stories, with all of us, so, we can all marvel at them, leading for him to be filled with egotistical satisfaction, as his ego begins to grow the ever BIGGER. And since there's just so much of him, and so much of that quintessential Joe Navy thing about him, what really defines us all and what we all feel we’re about, so much of it embodied there, in its most purest form, all we can do is marvel, having been graced to witness his presence. This is

AE2 Frankowsky's Navy. This is his world, and his universe. He is the lord of hosts. And we're all here as just temporary guests, on this maritime plane of existence, here to play out our small parts, then leave.

“You boys ready to get your whistles wet when we hit Hong Kong?” Goes the AE2. While transitioning from three different postures, full of pompous orientation. Also. Silly! Frankowsky will do a lot of posturing. A lot! And every frame that some shutterbug PH manages to capture on a roll of film, would be worth in gold, being a cover photo for All Hands magazine.

“Whistles wet?” Goes AN Donnelly. And now he's sitting with us. And looking around, I see so is AEAN Barbarossa, and a couple of Mechs, and a White Shirt QA. Whiskey Tango Foxtrot? Where did all these people come from? All these Squids, popping out of the woodworks. And now I figure it had to be the AE2: His presence always required a massive audience, since, there's just that much of massive him to share. The showy jackass. Wherever he goes, a congregation of enthusiasts would have to follow suit. He's got an audience, now, a full-blown audience. And Lord help us, for this is about to get all very tongue-in-cheek boisterous, and silly. All that high sea tales, the no shitters, of all those stories of all those exotic places and lays the AE2 has had in his fill, within the fourteen years he has clocked in with the fleet. Hong Kong. Singapore. Thailand. Guam. Minala Bay (back when we used to frequent more). Australia. Hawaii. Mostly to do with the Pacific theater. But in his case, nothing really theatrical about it. For what you'd find on stage is a full-on porno. Frankowsky showing his love of Asian and Pacific Islander pussy. For he's become quite a routine comer and goer around these parts. Has had enough Eastern pussy to collect all them strings, and establish a manufacturing company, in the business of making and selling handcrafted violins. And now here he is, showcasing his exquisite pieces. All show, no touch! About it.

“Hong Kong, boys! Hong Kong! Wan Chi District! I have a couple of Filipina homegirls there that run a bar, we should all visit.” He mentions. And what is it with bars run by Filipinos? You see a lot of them wherever you visit in these Eastern Hemisphere parts of the world. Japan has at least three bars I can name off the top of my head, all ran by such (Romona's included).

“I remember. I remember.” Goes Barbarossa. And the lettering he's spilling out with his eyes spells it all.
“You remember—don't you! You giant ass Vato—YOU!” Goes the AE2.
“You're Mexican?” Asks Derbytown. Throwing a couple of us off with his delayed question, of something he should be damn well aware of by now. None of us responds to Derbytown, AE2 and Barbarossa are having a moment, and we want none of that off-putting shit that Derbytown can sometimes be full of.
“I remember... I remember playing smiles there for the first time.” Mentions Barbarossa. While slicking his hair back, being all showy now, too, since, the AE2 brought him into the conversation.
“Ha! How did you like it?” Asks the AE2.
“It was... different. Interesting though.” Replies Barbarossa.
“You know, I thought Barbarossa was Indian, from India. Reminds me of a guy I knew in Tulsa that worked as a car mechanic. He was Pakistani. Had the best hashish connections, liked to get fucked up and shoot heroin through his bellybutton. Bit of an asshole, though, kept getting silly and high around us, then began smacking around his boyfriend. And then they'd really get into it, and we'd have to leave. They were a gay couple.” Goes Pflugerville.

And all of us truly decide not to acknowledge what he just said.

For.
OH, NO! Don't you get involved now, too, Pfluger! Your weird ass, weirder than Derbytown's shit, that's really going to mess with the setting the AE2 and Barbarossa are establishing, and we want none of it! None of us says a word for a second. And then Derbytown and Pflugerville break off and begin sidebarring, as Barbarossa decides to continue where he and the AE2 Frankowsky left off.
“Hey, that homegirl of yours, was something else. I never would have imagined something that little, harnessing such *powerful lungs*, to do all the sucking that she did.” Explains Barbarossa. And now, he's got all of our attention (even the two sidebarring: Derby and Pfluger).

“Ha, ha, I know, I know! That's why that little girl is my homegirl. When I pick 'em, I pick 'em well.” Explains the AE2. All head bopping about, while rubbing his hands to and fro, together, expressing how much of a “job well done” he did, over that homegirl of his. Whomever! Making me curious, imagining a short little Filipina Mamasan, like Romona, but shorter, and built even more sex friendly.
“What's smiles?” Asks Pflugerville.
No one answers. But it's a worthy question.
“What is smiles?” Follows up AN Donnelly.
And since he doesn't know either. And since Donnelly is cool and doesn't look like a lumpy human jar of mayo, like Pflugerville does, the AE2 answers.
“Well, you see... it goes something like this....” Goes Frankowsky, rubbing his hands to and fro, again.
He does that a lot! And also postures some more, just in case AM3 Rosario, and her likes, were to walk by.
“You and your buddies sit at a big round table, in a circle, and your job is not to smile.” Explains the AE2.
“Not to smile?” Retorts Donnelly, back, confused.
“Aye! Can't smile. Because if you do, you lose.” The AE2 follows up.
“What's making you smile?” Asks AN Donnelly, smiling himself, now.
Then the AE2 does this thing, looking around, all port to starboard, checkin' to see who might be listening in, like the shit he's about to explain, is TOP SECRET! Whatever! And then continues:
“What's making you smile...? The pretty little Asian girls under the table, corning your cob, that's what.” He explains.
And now for anyone that didn't know, their eyes all begin to grow, as the wonders of what a great game that sounds to be, begins filling their heads. Making us all want to play it now.
“Damn, that's something!” Goes Donnelly, intrigued.
“Isn't it? It's an old game. Classic one to play amongst us Navy.”
Now Donnelly seems really intrigued, as the AE2's wealth of experiences really begins to entice him with its value.

“Damn, Frankowsky... gotta say, I bet you've had some adventures—haven't you?” Wonder's Donnelly.
“Well, I wouldn't want to brag.”
OH, GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE! I think.
“Actually, even though Barbarossa, here, is still practically FUNGUS to me, he's had his own share.” Goes the AE2.
“Ja, ja! Calling me FUNGUS.”
Which is very true, you don't call him such. You don't, EVER!
“No, really! Ask Barbarossa some stuff, he's been through some crazy shit, too. Remember our last port visit in Thailand, when we got all those sweet little Mamasan, from that bar, to have a Banana Eating Contest with us Squids?” Goes Frankowsky.
“Oh, man, don't even bring up Thailand.” Barbarossa blushes out.
“Do so, Barbarossa.” Donnelly cheers.
“No, it's all right, Barbarossa, go ahead!” Demands the AE2.
And now Barbarossa begins. Interesting how the AE2 pushes the spotlight onto the giant Mexican. Like he's trying to set something up.
“All right! All right! I didn't really go through, much, except of course that whole Banana Eating Contest Frankowsky hooked us up with: me, Navarro, Falky and Brock. Thank you for that, Franky.” Says Barbarossa.
“It was my pleasure!” Responds AE2, as he gives a bow.
Banana Eating... what? Not even I've heard of that! But, then again, considering how suggestive it sounds, I think I do know what it is.
“But, except for that, man, Thailand... was something else! The place also kinda scared me to think how much VD there was going around, considering all the crazy sex everyone there was having.”
And then Barbarossa went on to tell us a couple of stage shows he saw over there. One where some Thai girl, with very large breasts, that was only bottomless, danced around with a fishbowl in her hands. And at the end, she had placed the fishbowl down, squatted over it, and out had popped a goldfish, STILL ALIVE, mind you! Into the bowl, as it began swimming.
“No shit?” Goes Donnelly.

“No shit.” Follows Barbarossa.
Then he went on with another stage show he was part of, where another girl was sitting on a sTool, surrounded by guys. Some street performer. And she was blowing balloons and handing them out. One to Barbarossa, and then to the rest. And then she asked everyone to place the balloons between their thighs.
“Between your thighs?” Asks Donnelly.
“That's right.” Confirms Barbarossa.
And then, the girl sat on the sTool, and she was also bottomless, too. And, so, she then started sticking darts in her who-ha... that being Barbarossa's word.
“No shit?” Goes Donnelly.
“No shit!” Confirms Barbarossa.
And I'm pretty sure you all can now imagine what he explained happened next. Barbarossa then continued on with stuff he saw and heard. How he saw some fat, mustached Chief, he knew, coming out of a bar, drunk off his rocker, being carried out by a bunch of underage Thai females, that weren't related to him, in any way.
“How underage?” Asks Donnelly.
“Elementary school underage. Looking like they belong in a school playground, not some buy-me-a-drink bar.” Explains Barbarossa.
Yeesh!

Then how he heard that one of the Massagi girls, there, that was giving out Vag bubble massages, was, come to find out, had herpes, and how she got a couple of Squids infected by it. And now, Barbarossa was beginning to make us question just how much of Thailand we really were willing to see and hear. Making me feel how AD3 Qian felt, yesterday morning. Gross!
“Wow. I can see why they say what happens there, stays there.” Jokes Donnelly.
But then we all look at Frankowsky. And grow curious. We all felt like he was a lot more animate and enthusiastic with his stories, like he had some real juicy tidbits to tell. And looking at his eyes, now, scanning for recommendations, we feel like hearing some of the legendary bits. The stuff, only a man like AE2 Frankowsky, can

tell. Feeling like hearing some real “no shitters” from the man that was the master at bullshittin'.
“Wow, that's cool, Barbarossa... but honestly, I want to hear one of your stories, Frankowsky.” Goes Donnelly.
Since we’re all wondering the same thing.
“No. I'm modest. I don't have much to share.” Blushes the AE2.

SERIOUSLY... get the fuck outta here, you JACKASS! I think, again. For I know exactly what this mustachioed, moo shu munchin' motherfucker is doing. Mr. Petty Officer “I've fucked more Asians than General MacArthur.” He once claimed. Said that, he did! Comparing himself to fuckin' MACARTHUR! AKA the official, unofficial, first and last American Emperor of freakin' JAPAN! The man that started the nearly fifty, now, yearlong grudge, between US and North Korea, when MacArthur fucked that entire country up the ass, and out the mouth, with a dick so big and hard it went into CHINA! And, then, had to be restrained by the US President at the time, when MacArthur wanted to bring out the REAL BIG GUNS of America, to play show and tell with the Red Chinese. That's who this AE2 Petty Officer thinks (likes to think) he could compare to! Of course, not with lifelong accomplishments, but at least when it came to personification. That, and Asian pussy. All that is left is for him to pick up smoking that special corncob pipe, which the AE2, here, would mix in tobacco and pubic hair. The sleaze!
“Bullshit, I want to hear one of your stories.” Demands Donnelly.
“All right. All right, I'll tell you children a bedtime story, I think you all will love.”
What a JACKASS! SERIOUSLY! What an ASS, that only its mother could love. Makes me want to play “pin the tail” on this ass, but the tail isn't a pin, but a chainsaw. He-ha! Georgy! He-ha! And why do I love it so much... why?
“All right, no shitter, this one time, around this time, about twelve years ago. Back when I was a Third. I was in Thailand, again, and, man... I don't even know how to begin telling you all what happened.”
And now he had us all hooked, even Pflugerville and Derbytown STFU with whatever weirdo conversations they were both sidebarring.

“What, man, what? You can tell us!”
“Well, I was at some sleazy lookin' bar, with a lot of pretty little Thai chicks around, that were lookin' real mean, and also, sleazy...!”
And you can just see how much more descriptive the AE2 is, with his story, wanting us to really picture him being there, him and those Thai chicks, and his mustache.
“And the bar I was at was all pink neon lights and elephant ear plants, nice lookin' establishment, even though it was a complete dive. Sill exotic, to me, since, it was on the beach front, and the dives that I usually go to in the States, being from Milwaukee, WI, as I am, are nowhere half as pretty. Nothing but dirty brick houses and snowy weather. But anyways....”
All right! Enough with the details, Mr. Hemingway. We get it. You got a flair for story telling!
“But, anyways... I was knocking out Heinekens, left and right. Because. I was just feeling it. Just feeling it...! And then I saw the prettiest little Thai chick I had ever seen. This little hot momma was bitchin'...!”
Hot momma? Bitchin'...? Oh, right! I forgot, this Squid joined back in the 80s. That explains everything. Him, and his persona, and his language, and his mustache.
“She was just so pretty, and cute, and dark skinned, too. Very dark skinned... just how I like it. She had long dark hair, real long and thick, that hung down to her heels, almost. And when I say she was little, I mean, she was LITTLE! I mean, I'm 6'4, and she had to be 4'9, but she just kept lookin' UP at me like she could take me. Even with shades on, I could feel her sights were on me, like that. She wanted to get entangled in these moose antlers... I'll tell ye!”
Moose antlers... what...? Whatever!
“So, then she began to approach me, sat next to me, ordered a beer, and didn't turn to look, once. And I didn't look once, either. It was just me and my Heineken, that's all there was in the world for me, up until that point. But once she received her beer, took a sip, it was only then she finally spoke. Said: 'Hey, cowboy, I bet you've seen some things, had some real adventures.' And I said: 'Maybe... I guess!' And nothing else. Then she took another sip, waited for a second, and said: 'Well... baby, maybe there's something you still haven't seen.' And it was then that I got curious. But I

knew the act, so I didn't show it. Said: 'I doubt it.' Stayed slick. Waited to see if she really had something for me to give, or was she just playin' silly schoolgirl games, which I wouldn't be interested in."
"Did she have something?" Asks Donnelly, totally engrossed by the story.
"Oh, she had something, all right! She most certainly did!" Nods the AE2.
"She then asked how many women I've been with, all at once. I said: 'A couple.' She then asked: 'In total, how many?' So, I told her roughly three, which was true... at the time."
"Three? You've been with—"
"At the time, yes! Just three women, just that! I've set some zebras in my time, since, you should know though."
Leading us to now understand just how wild his times have been, since then.
"At the time?" Gasps Donnelly.
"Aye. Roger that. Only at the time."
It was at this point the White Shirt First Class QA chuckled hard, once, and looked like he just couldn't take it anymore. Just couldn't take it and wanted to walk out on the story. And to tell you the truth, at that moment, if he had, I would have joined him.
"Anyways, she then said: 'How about I take you somewhere where you'll have a real good time.' And since I still felt like messing with her, I said: 'Maybe,' again, which began to get to her a little. Get underneath her skin. She then said: 'Shut up! I mean it!' And she took her shades off, and, when she did, the way she was now looking at me, made me feel, whatever promises she was making, were probably real."
"So, what happened next?" Asks Donnelly.
"She took us to a place." Replies the AE2, while drawing a blank stare.
"Where?"
"I don't know."
"What?"
"She, had us blindfolded, and placed into a van." Informs the AE2, with more blank stares.
"Wait, what? And there was two of you, now?"

We are all really intrigued now. But, then again, this story is a “no shitter” so I figure it's best not to put too much credibility into it. I mean... blindfolds, really?
“Yes, there was two of us. That girl, whose name was Pacifica, said I could bring a mate of mine, if I wanted, and I got my port buddy, LaRusso, to come along. The trip took at least a half hour drive. Driving, with us two blindfolded. But, anyways, when we got there, to the spot this Pacifica was promising some real action, what we found was a rundown pagoda, out in the middle of the jungle.”
“Out in the middle of the...? Wow! I don't know, AE2, I don't think I would have gone along.” Divulges Donnelly.
“Brother, I wouldn't blame you. But there we were, in the middle of the freakin' jungle, with possible tigers and anacondas, and all sorts of shit around us, we wouldn't know, for it was now dark! It was nighttime, by then. But, anyways... Pacifica got us to enter the rundown pagoda, and inside, the place was in shambles. Nothing but rotted wood and cobwebs. That, and a Buddha statue made of brass, and all rusted. But, also, it looked like someone had cleaned up the place, enough, for this very occasion, and there was filming equipment inside.”
“Wait... filming equipment?”
“Aye! That's right. A whole bunch of VHS filming equipment. That, and the floor was matted.”
“All right...?” Says Donnelly.
Unsure of what to make of it.
“And, man, were we out when we got there. That Pacifica girl had given us some type of pill, halfway during the drive, there. And whatever it was, made us see things a lot more colorfully!” Explains the AE2.
“Ha! What about zero tolerance?” Brings up the First Class QA.
“You know, AD1 Abrego! This was before zero tolerance, and an entirely different Navy, these youngens wouldn't know boopdiddley about.” Laughs out the AE2.
And the QA joins in, for it's an inside understanding of theirs. Since, they've been in much, much longer.
“So, then what happened?” Asks Donnelly.

“Well, after a while, we got real antsy, and horny, and were wondering what the fuck was the deal. But then that Pacifica was like: 'All right, we ready!' And asked us if we were, too. I told her then: 'Sweetie, I was born ready.' Pacifica then said: 'So you ready to fuck?' And I just gave her a look, but asked: 'So, we fucking you on camera?' And her reply was: 'No, them!'”

“Them?” Wonder I, finally opening my trap to gasp at something.

“Aye, THEM! And what happened next... HA! What happened next, was just unbelievable. I don't even know where they all came from, since, the pagoda wasn't even that big. But, this area opened up, and there were tons of cute little Thai chicks, like Pacifica, all waiting for us. I couldn't tell you how many women there were, I couldn't keep track of them all to count. Because, they were all over us, then.”

“Holy?” I go.

“Ah-ha! That's right! All over us, and we were now making porno.”

“So, you guys pretty much got kidnapped and ransacked by a traveling porno group, out in the middle of the jungle?” Sums up Donnelly, nicely.

“Ah-ha! That's about what happened! I mean, there had to be fifty or so women on me and LaRusso. Sucking! Fucking! Everything! And anything they could get their lips on. Both sets! And it went on and on. And there were periods me and LaRusso were just screaming from how good it was. And they, those hot, really hot, Thai women, just kept going at us. All of them, like they themselves hadn't had anything as good as us two. Although, never did get to fuck that Pacifica girl. Something very enticing about her, but so untouchable. Pity! I bet she would have been the best lay out of them all.”

And now the AE2 is done with his tall tale, is grinning from ear to ear, and looks like he'd like to give himself a pat on the back, for another Bravo Zulu: Job well done! Since, I guess, that's what he figures his job to be in the Navy: porkin’ lots of Asian women, and bragging about the experiences to us, later. Side of me can't help but find it all juvenile and degrading. The AE2 is in his mid to later thirties, or early forties, and the way he gets telling these stories, seems to have a mindset even younger than ours. The guy, I take it, now, is a fifteen-year-old horny teenager, with well, well over fifteen years of experience of being this way. Part of me finds this all

degrading, mostly because it's all coming from the mouth that looks to be perpetually sucking down ramen noodles, from a pair of chop sticks, and sucking them down, hard, making LOTS of noise. Sucking them, down, while bits of it get stuck in the pubic hairs growing above his lip. Part of me finds it that way. But, then again, another part feels: oh my God! Fifty? I think. Because I really am that fuckin' horny, right now. I won't deny it. And why always sleazeballs like the AE2, here? Guys that can't refrain from going, “I fucked this bitch, and I fucked that bitch,” to all his stupid buddies around, all with stupid chuckleheaded smiles. As they begin chuckling. Chuckle, chuckle, chuckle, here! Chuckle, chuckle, chuckle, there! I think I really frown too much, that's the problem, I gotta stop!

“Wow. I guess the stories don't get as good as that.” States Donnelly.
But then something grows in the AE2's eye, as his left eyebrow begins to sprout. And grows out, far and high, for what we can see, is, that the AE2 now has a REAL beanstalk of a tale to tell!
“Honestly, the best stories, the stuff of legend, even for me, are things yet to come.” He lets out.
Now really seeming modest about it. So... WTF? I wonders.
“What do you mean?” I ask.
“Well. I mean, there's this legend: of a bar, of a place, that can trump even the story I just told you.” He explains.
Really seeming to be taken in.
“What now? A place where you got ransacked by a hundred chicks?”
I'm being a little sarcastic, now, but not too much, to really have the AE2 stop and take offense.
“No, no! Nothing like that. This place serves quality, not quantity. It's a place of legend, I've been hearing all my Navy career, but yet, have to experience.” He explains.
And now I'm sorta beginning to be taken in, myself, it really seems like it means a lot to AE2, but then again....
“Another... 'no shitter?'” I go.

“No... I don't know. This one is for the books.”
“All right, tell us.” I demand.
And AE3 Frankowsky now spits, he FINALLY SPITS, out some of the dip he's had in his mouth, this entire time. Holy Barnacles! I realize, then. For it looks like this “no shitter” is going to be the motherload.
“There's this bar called supposedly: ‘The Sit and Twirl,’ and the stories that detail it are the stuff of Navy and Marine legend. An establishment built back in the 40s or 50s, after WW2. It's somewhere in the Pacific, one of those islands we used to frequent more, but not as much anymore. The bar, inside the place, you'd find a two-story dive, where you'd find beautiful Pacific Islander women, sitting in buckets, that are attached to cords, hung from the overhead ceiling. They're sitting in there, with their legs dangling out from the sides, just waiting for you. And the thing is, the buckets are bottomless, so when the women sit in them, when they crunch up inside, all you see sticking out at the bottom is their goods. The way it works, is, as you're laid out on a table, the bucket full of goods is lowered onto your junk, and when you give word, they begin twirling it. I've heard stories, I've heard the experience is so fucking good, so FUCKING GOOD, within seconds, you'll find yourself ejaculating like crazy, and won't be able to stop. I've heard it's so fucking good that you will continue cumming, even after it's done. And into months ahead, the memory of the experience will be enough, just dwelling on it, you'll find yourself, again, ejaculating like crazy, from just that. So fucking GOOD! And, supposedly, there's this record held at that bar, of how long anyone has been able to hold it in, before cumming like mad. Supposedly, the record, till this day, is still held by a Marine, from back in '53. Some tough as nails son-of-a-bitch, that was able to hold it for as long as fifty-four seconds. Second place? Twenty-two seconds. I mean, the experience is so fucking mind altering good, when the bucket starts twirling, and her junk is fitted onto your junk, it's so fucking mind altering, mere fucking seconds is all it takes to get you off. For there's no holding it in! No matter how tough you are, or think you are, you'll never go more than a few seconds, let alone what that one Marine in '53 was able to do. To accomplish. But, I heard that guy was some Medal of Honor winner, from WW2, that was at Iwa Jima. Tough as fucking nails! Still, only able to keep it in for

no longer than less than a minute. That was as long as he was able to take it. But even he gave in."

And, honestly... I'm not that impressed.
"Wow. That sounds like some place." Goes Donnelly.
"Oh, you bet it is!" Goes the AE2, and sighs.
"I don't know. I think, I still would rather get sacked by fifty women." I go.
Since, I don't find myself buying into it. Don't see the brilliance and glory behind it, that the AE2 is trying to illustrate to us.
"Ha, same here." Goes one of the Mechs, sitting next.
"No, no, no! You don't understand. The experience is that good." The AE2 tries to explain, again.
Which has me go:
"All right, so when we get to Thailand, we can buy a bucket, and some bungee cord, and find some Thai whore to—"
"No, no, no! It won't work!"
"What do you mean?" I say.
"It has to be that place... and that place, alone."
"Why?" I ask.
"Because, it would be a tradition!"
And, honestly, I really don't get it! I guess the AE2 notices, now, how I truly feel about all these wild sex tales, he's been making, and now tries to explain more:
"It has to be that bar. That bar was established that long ago. It has that many years of maritime history."
"Frank, I heard about that 'no shitter,' back in the day, myself. The place just might be a 'no—"
"No. It's REAL! I've heard from some older Squids, Squids like our Master Chief Dreadnought, that the place is real. And I'm going to find it and break that record." Interrupts the AE2.
From what the White Shirt QA was trying to explain. The QA, I see, begins to snicker, then. The AE2 right now is being childishly doe-eyed about this so-called Sit and

Twirl bar. About some long, lost bar, in the middle of the Pacific. And it's lookin' pretty whimsical to all of us, now.

“If it's been around since the 40s, and it's an island we don't go to anymore... maybe, it's been shut down.” I rationalize.

Which seems to have the AE2 growing pissed.

“What does a booter like you know about this stuff, Navastian? I can see you're just here for the college money, and that's it.”

And that has me growing pissed, myself.

“What, just because I've been in for less than a—”

“It's not just that, I've heard stuff about you. Or really... nothing much! I've seen your type come and go, a lot. You're not Navy material.”

And now I'm being sent off:

“No! Maybe I'm just not 'Lifer material,' like you, been practically institutionalized... and afraid of getting out and starting over again.”

“What are you saying?” He goes, even though he knows exactly what.

“What I’m saying, is, even if I'm not Navy material. At least, if I get out, I'll be able to start over again. You? You're sittin' comfortably, now, since you've gained enough seniority status to do so, and grown lazy! And you no longer have what it takes for the civilian world. And then there's the fact that even after fourteen years... you're still a Second Class.”

“HEY!” Goes the First Class QA.

“I mean, you should have at least been a First by now, and where are your golden stripes at?”

“I said, ‘HEY, SHIPMATE!’” Goes the QA, lookin' fierce, now.

Hoppin' mad! And pointin'. And it's now I realize how I've stepped over the line. I shut it, now, quick, knowing going any further, and I'll just be setting myself up for being reprimanded by AD1 Abrego. Seniority, lookin' out for their own kind. Which I have nothing really against, but... come on! The AE2 really didn't need to start talking down to me, over some stupid no shitter about women in buckets. I mean, really! There's a moment now where none of us say anything, but, we're all staring at one another. And now the AE2 is smirking at me, and says:

“You know, I had you figured from the moment I saw you, your type is always disrespectful, and think they're better. I've been in for fourteen years and been proud of it. Proud to serve. You? Your generation, and you New Navy types...? I don't know! Sad to see the direction the Navy is headed. Just sad.”

And says nothing else. Leaving a whole lot of mixed feelings, as one by one we all begin to break away and leave.

OLD NAVY

Honestly. I might have not shown it. But I really do like the AE2 Frankowsky. I does! How can anyone not like the man? Him and his lively ways, with his lively tales, of how he wooed this Asian chick, and oohed that Asian chick, and then aahed, and then aw, and then ow! He really is a fifteen-year-old horny teenager, at both heart and mind. Forever trapped at that fixated state of awe and fascination, one gets, while watching a lovely pair of breasts bouncing up and down, to the sound of womanly moaning coming from an area a little above.

Bounce. Ahh!

Bounce. Ahh!

And bounce...!

And now, I have to smack myself across the face, to break away from that glorious state of mind, before, it consumes me fully. And I end up on my belly, worming and crawling and tonguing my way to the nearest female berthing. I am a male, too. I have a cock with a pair hangin' below that. And. I know how that feels like. But, I also know when to smack myself out of it, and when not to. AE2 Frankowsky is a man who decided, at a very tender age, NEVER to do SO! And now, he's become the Peter Pan of Porno. Forever stuck in the “fuck zone,” and completely and utterly stupefied by it. Which will never allow him to mature past. Mature to a point where he could see the lewdness and also silliness of his ways. And how it's forever going to keep him from finding a true relationship with the opposite sex. Kinda sad, really. Still a child in many ways. Almost... innocent, in a way, still. Oblivious. Therefore, I don't dislike him, because, he just doesn't get certain things, so why should I hold him in contempt? I don't know... maybe I'm being a really condescending jackass about it, myself, now. And a hypocrite, too. I'm not exactly any more enlightened

than he is. I'm just as much of a slave to my male urges, same as him. I mean, just now, I just finished jerking off in the stall to our head. Imagining AM3 Rosario having gone ahead and blown me that one time she was all staring and puckering at my crotch. Fuck! I need to get laid! I need it! Fuck! That one no shitter about the fifty Thai chicks in the pagoda really got me sending! Fucking Thailand! Fucking...!

But, anyways, what was that he was moaning about earlier? Us New Navy? Aye... there's something else I've been hearing quite frequently. The lamentations of our senior personnel, about the glorious Old Navy, and how it's gone by. Back when men were men. Women weren't allowed on board. When we could smoke marijuana, freely, anywhere on The Ship. And, if you didn't like any mug of any Shipmate of yours, it didn't matter what rank he was, asking him to step outside The Shop, and allowing our fists to do all the talking, could solve any and all issues we might have had. I could be like: “Hey, Senior, how about we step outside?” And he would have agreed. And, then, when we had, I would have decked him in the fucking mouth, and taught him a thing or two about spitting up on people, and pretending not to notice, making it out all right. Aye! Based on what I've heard, that was allowed back then in the Old Navy days. Back before sensitivity training (which, might I add, has obviously been a complete and utter failure). And back before all the PC crap. The PC coming from the civilian sector, not standing for us Plane Captains, but them Politically Correctness crap. And I call it crap, because... IT ISN'T WORKING! Being generous and fair to one another? NO, not saying it's a bad idea! Actually, it's a GREAT idea! Dreamy, almost! But also, unrealistic, because, it HASN'T been working! And if anything, I feel like there's this layer of deep seethed resentment going about, boiling up inside. Making us all two faced, as we smile and try to act polite on the outside, but go, “fuck this faggot ass, bitch ass, gook, wetback, nigger!” On the inside. Now, I don't just mean in the Navy. I mean, us, as a society, in America, in whole. Say what you will about all the crap that goes on here with the hazing and asking guys like Muwangi to chuck objects while making monkey noises, and how AM3 Rosario types having to beat us horny male Squids off with a stick. At least everything is out in the open! Nothing boiling up, inside, like in a pressure cooker,

ready to blow. For all pressure is being ventilated OUT! But, now with PC trying to infiltrate the Navy? I don't know! And I can see how AE2 Frankowsky, and his sort, wouldn't want to see things go that way. To see two faced types like, supposedly, ME, us New Navy Joe Squids, coming in, pretending to be all “HOORAH” about it. While really hating all this, and counting the days for EAOS, to collect our college grants. Aye! As you can see, I feel very conflicted about a lot of things. I hate the ways of the Old Navy, in a way. The stuff I'm seeing that's still being carried on through hazing, while our Khakis aren't lookin', but really pretending not to be! All that survival of the jackass-est, running rampant! But, I see how it works in ways, not being so, wouldn't! Say what you want to say about Kats or the IS3 being allowed to call me a “Shitbag” to my face, being all in-your-face offensive about it, and not caring boopdiddley how I might feel about it, either. Even if, in the end, it might result in me snapping, and losing it, shoving one of them into an intake, when the engines are online. With PC, and the New Navy, if it was to infiltrate, fully, what we would have is Kats and the IS3, still feeling that way about me, but now, not showing it. So, nothing but passive aggression. That PC crap wouldn't save me from that, and now, I would have to deal with their disapproval of me in indirect ways. As if that would be better than the direct ones. Worry how they might stab me in the back, while I wasn't lookin', by either dimeing me out, creating false rumors, or straight up framing me for having committed something heinous. I came to the Military to be all I can be. Since, in the civilian world, there's none of that going on. People being and showing only their half selves, a quarter of themselves, leaving me to worry about them and what they have in store for me—fully! Here, I see it all, I understand it all, and I hate it all. And I'm at least somewhat grateful of it all since it's out in the open.

Or am I...?

Maybe it's a bit much for me to handle? Never have I felt so spread thinly as I have in all my life, as I have now. I don't know.

There's something important behind those dreams, something very revealing. I don't quite understand, yet. But I feel that they're important. Feeling as thinly spread as I am, I just don't know any more how I feel fully consolidated. And something to do with me jumping Ship, seems, to have all the answers. Wish it wasn't so. But it is, now. And, now, I get very worried just approaching the side of The Ship and looking down. I get very nervous and feel my heart pounding. Those waters below now are making me feel anxious. And I feel how anxious they are about me. Waiting. Just waiting, for something within me to...!

What the fuck are you thinking—huh, Navastian? I'm not jumping! Are you fuckin' serious?

Night Ops are over now. Birds came back, I caught mine, chained it down, for a short while, while waiting for the Yellow Shirts to figure where to put us two. Me and my 107. Pilot and Co-Pilot, of course, both left for their berthing, to relax, and do whatever, while I stayed behind. Just waiting now on my 107. And now, we're moving the aircraft. During this period of time, my job is to ride breaks. I sit in the cockpit, while the Blue Shirts hook up a towbar to my Jet and attach it to a tractor to move it. Just sitting now in the cockpit, and now they begin to move it with me in here. The point of being a breakrider is (as you can imagine from a literal sense) to ride breaks. And use them if the Blue Shirt tractor driver, or really the Yellow Shirt, fucks up, major, and tries to taxi my damn bird into someone else's. Hey! Fuck you, Royster! Your damn wing is now way too close to mine. Watch that shit! Wait? Where the fuck is he? Is he snoring in the intake? Is he...? Fuckin' Royster. Fuckin' skatin' ass bastard! But, anyways, I got to watch it, since, I'm also in charge of the move. And if they do fuck up and get too close, I have to apply the brakes, and stop them from where I'm sitting. And the worry isn't just having them fuck up, and have Jets colliding into one another, it's also me worrying how they might truly, royally fuck up, and accidentally taxi the damn bird way too near the edge, and have us all parked somewhere over the Marina trench. Have us go struts over canopy, over the side. Aye! Fuck up the move that badly! And it can happen, too. For instance, right now

they're taxiing me tail over water. Right now, the tail is nudging over the water, slightly, with each time the Blue Shirt steps on the gas. And he really is stepping because my 107 doesn't seem to want to budge, much, right now, and all it would require is him to pedal a little too sternly, while backing up and... IN I'D GO! And with The Ship rocking sometimes as it does, slightly, I can just feel the weight of my 107 begin to tug, leaning towards the direction The Ship all of a sudden begins tipping towards. Whoa, shit! Whoa, shit! Don't tip, too much, DON'T! But luckily, it doesn't, and also luckily, I don't all of a sudden become Jacque F-ing Cousteau, with 107, here, becoming the submarine. Even though not completely underwater seaworthy. But, aye! If I do go over. I'll shut the canopy, and begin trying to steer, heading for that deep blue. Might join a pod of whales lookin' to hunts some Squid, while I'm done there. Some real ones. Not us Squids. And I would like to see their reactions, the pod of whales, of me and my 107 joining along. Ha! But anyways... all this is over with. The move is done. The Blue Shirts that were doing the wing walking chain up my bird to Padeyes. And now, I'm up here, still in the cockpit. And I now decide to take a nap.

SONG OF THE SIRENS

Why am I so sleepy, now? I wonder. Ship life is interesting, you're always sleepy. You are! Always! Something about floating over water, and The Ship rocking ever so slightly, and the constant moving forward, as The Ship continues to sail onward. For some reason, it has us all feeling very sleepy, even I hear Day Checkers complaining about it, now and then. So, it's not just a thing I'm just experiencing, working during the hours we're naturally supposed to be dormant. We. All of us, on board, are. We're constantly feeling like shuffling off to that slumbering place. Nodding the fuck out and snoring the entire voyage away. Everywhere you look on Ship, you see the faces of Squids nodding out, ever so slightly. Run through The Ship, go from shop to shop, engineering to navigations all the way to The Ship's own barber shop, and all you'll see is hung faces, of just another Sailor, with his lids shut, catching some forty winks, while holding a broom, which he is temporarily not using to sweep with. It's as if we're all under some spell. Some sleeping spell and is not just our job to do what we do on board, but it's also our jobs to fight off this spell being cast by the

rocking motion of the ocean waves we're riding. Everywhere on board... faces, faces, everywhere, nodding off to that ethereal and serene place, of forgotten names and lost memories. And, because of it, everything feels so dreamy like, all the time. Rock this way, and I forget something important. Rock that way, and now I forget that I had forgotten. It's all so surreal, almost, sometimes. Induced. You know... I blame it on the sirens. Aye! Roger that! I do! They're not just made-up mythological creatures of legend. They're real! Takes one to live full time out to sea to come to this conclusion, but, they do exist! They're all around us. There's a society of those mermaid fish-bottom maidens all around us, swimming along our carrier, and the truth is... they don't want us here! And it's because we're mostly males, too! That's what it is! Aye! Because we're those humanoid types of the opposite sex. And our presence stirs up too many emotions within them, they've long tried to repress. And their wild attraction towards what we have to offer as males, having something hanging between our legs that's warm blooded and human, and isn't so fishy, has them driven mad. Mad! Tempest mad, almost, I tell you. Because, now and then, some nights, I feel like we're really trying to avoid some stormy weather, as our Ship tries to turn away from waters covered with mountainous dark clouds, that be all thundering and roaring. Our presence is a menace to their carefree and tranquil lifestyle. The lore being: thousands of years ago, back in the days of the Mediterranean sailing Greeks, there was an island left of nothing but women, since all their males had sailed off to find war and adventure. And, seeing how peaceful their lives were without our kind, these women decided to leave the island, before, their men would return. And they cast themselves into the sea, prayed to Poseidon to make them sea-worthy, by giving them fish-bottoms, and from then on, they continued to live out their now immortal, man-free lives, in bliss. But, now, with us around, us Sailors, we're stirring up their emotions, and they don't like it. And now they're doing anything they can to either to get rid of us, or nullify us, somehow. That, or, they're giving into temptation, and wanting us to join them. Singing their songs so we'd jump Ship, to join their lot. Aye! THAT'S WHAT'S GOING ON! THAT'S WHAT...!

Hahahaaa! Haha! Ha!
That would be great, though. If it were true. Wow! My mind really does come up with some crazy shit, out here, just to pass the time. Which leaves me wondering: fifty Thai porno actresses, or, fifty fish-bottom angry mermaids...? Well, of course I'd go with the Thai chicks, of course, I would go with them! I prefer if their bottom halves don't smell fishy because they're literally fish from the waist down. I mean... eww! But, then again, I am attracted to crazy and feisty women. Even though these are the sort that have gone above and beyond just needing a good counseling to help deal with their psychological issues, and their craziness has manifested themselves in physical form. Are now beyond help and require some Hercules like figure to slay their asses, before their madness peaks, and they try to massacre the lot of us, all. Aye! That would be sight for sore eyes, deranged sirens, flopping onto the Flightdeck, with sharpened cutlasses, or nails, or teeth, and attacking all us Sailors. And if they had only gotten some in the last few centuries, they wouldn't be so deranged and irreconcilable. If only, so. If only so...! Pity! But, wait! Ha! We should send in AE2 Frankowsky, with his Joe Navy charms, to see, if he'd be up for the task. Mr. Petty Officer blonde mustache man under aviator sunglasses under some moose antlers. At-a-boy, AE2! Take one for the team! Woo them fish women! That. Or slays the lot! Actually... do so and slay them, so, we can have ourselves some tuna salad sandwiches later. I've been craving for some tuna, funny enough, lately. The galley has been serving just about everything but seafood (interestingly enough, considering where we're at). And, I've been craving some. So, at-a-boy, AE2, you get the tuna, and I'll get the bread and mayo.

“Navastian... what do you think you're doing up there?” Asks me Chief Murdock.
I don't respond, letting him know I was definitely doing what I shouldn't be. But since the Chief really doesn't give that much of a crap, and he wouldn't DARE step up and splash me with a bucket full of water, wetting me, and all the hardware and apparatuses inside this cockpit, here, down... he just yells at me, some, gives me a look: all rolling his eyes. And then says:
“Just do the damn Daily, and I'll let you snore the rest of the night away—all right?”

“Aye, Chief.” I say.
And I gets to it.

And an hour later, I'm back in this cockpit, and since the Chief said it was all right to shuffle back off to that snoring place, of cloudy pillows and starry blankets, I does so. Even though the major eye rolling the Chief was doing had many connotations, but I'll be sticking to what he expressed verbally.

There's still some time left to my workday... err... night. And in the meantime, I spend watching all the other busybodies at work: all of our other PCs, doing their own Dailies, to later on sign the Jets off as being air worthy, for whatever Ops, the higher ups, have planned for them later this morning. Right now 101 is to the right of me, and 105 is to my left. I watch the Boat Chuck Green Shirts doing whatever Dailies they have with the arresting gear: the wires lined up back, here, at the aft, in the middle of the Flightdeck. They're changing out wires: thick greasy metallic strips, they are, that also look heavy and dangerous. Those wires are made to take the force required to catch a bird on the end of a tail hook and HOLD them BACK! Arresting them, immediately. Just before the Flightdeck ends at the bow end. Keeping them from falling off. I mean, there's only five hundred feet of runway space. That's all! The Boat Chucks have their own Dailies, and negligence for a job such as that, could be deadly, for if that wire is no longer in a well enough condition, to stop a fifty-five thousand pound bird, going about a hundred fifty mph, in the matter of two seconds. It could—SNAP! And swing around, cutting through anything in its path. And usually during landings, us Flightdeckers are usually only standing mere feet away from those giant metal turkeys, when they're trying (trying, mind you) to land. Aye! There truly are many things up here to scare the shit out of any one of us. Personally, I can't stand the E-2 Hawkeyes: with their giant propellers. Giant! I mean! God! When standing vertically, they're about as tall as a three story house. And when they start spinning, tornadoes begin to develop on the opposite sides of the planet. When they're spinning, all you hear is this ominous humming sound, just so loud and jolting. Imposing! Hypnotic, even in a way. Makes you feel lightheaded, in a way,

and trance like. And feeling like approaching those world grinders, to join with. Moth before a flame type of shit. Ha! So thankfully, though, I'm not a PC, or maintenance team, for one of those big, fat, ugly, abominable birds! I see how they have to run around those propellers to take off chains and do whatever else work around them. And... if I was attached to that Squadron, the Navy then could have my resignation papers. Rather jump Ship, than work for those churning mad-makers.

Barnacles! I'm bored...!

Wait...? What is this? Why is...? What's going on here? Why is the entire carrier now made of wood? What's going on? How did this happen? I baffle. And sure enough, The Ship is definitely now made of wood, somehow. The entire damn thing is! And, we're at flight ops. And, I see one of those E-2 Hawkeyes with those giant ass propellers approaching. Wait a fuck...? NO! NO! NO! It's made of wood! The Ship won't be able to handle a landing by one of your fat, TURKEY ASSES! No! How is it wood? How...! The sirens did THIS! Fucking witchcraft. They've now casted a spell, turning the whole damn Ship into wood. No! Stop approaching... STOP! The arresting wire is now made of YARN! It won't...! And then, it lands. And goes right though the wooden deck, through many levels of The Ship, and crashes into the Hangar Bay. And, I can now see the Hangar Bay from where I am sitting, in my 107. That big fat E-2 Hawkeye has crashed through, making a path, leading me to now see it crashing into any other aircrafts, that were down there in the Hangar Bay being worked on. And with all the splintered wood that's all flying around, in every which direction, I see that it's all covered in blood, too. Blood from all of us Squids that E-2 Hawkeye had to go through to get to the Hangar Bay. It's all a bloody CHAOS! DEATH and wood EVERYWHERE! And now FIRE and SCREAMING! And now, water gushing through the whole Ship, for we're now sinking.
Oh, the horror!
The horror of it all!
Then... of course by this point I come to learn that I am dreaming. And as I become lucid, so does the dream. I'm still in my 107, but it's only me and her now floating

out here in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Somehow, everything was cast down to Davy Jones, but us two. But whatever! It's a fucking dream, and now, I'm just trying to figure what joy or thrill I can derive from this all. Before it ends. But, the thing with lucid dreams is... they're no longer fun and daring once you know what they are, as the realization that there's no reality or casualty to whatever your experiencing, dawns on you. And the dream loses all its power and influence. So now, it's just me and her. And, aye! You heard that correctly! My 107 is a female. I mean... leave me with some companionship—will ye?

So, where's that island, again? I wonder. But...! It doesn't matter right now, for the dream has nothing real nor important to offer. Give me something! Give me something real... NOW!

“WAKE UP, NAVASTIAN!” Screams out Senior.
And as I open up my eyelids, I see that we're at sunrise. And, I see something real. Climbing down from 107's cockpit, I see how Senior is staring at me, how he has been, for the past couple of days. Stirring with piss and vinegar, and now, I feel the delayed feelings of dread. For again, I feel it coming from him, and I really don't know how I'll be reacting to this rendition of ass chewing.
“So, this is how you spend your nights on Night Check—huh? So, I guess I have to now worry about you AND Royster, pulling these every night.”
Oh! What time is it?
“What time is it?” I say.
NO! NO! Don't ask Senior! What are you doing? And looking up at his face, I see him just smirking. And eyeing. And smirking. And his eyeing looks psychotic. He's got something really nasty to bring up with me, I can feel it.
“So, first AO1 Montenegro, and now, AE2 Frankowsky?”
And as I spend a second to come to my senses, since, I was only a few seconds ago senseless and asleep. I... wait? First Montenegro and now Frankowsky? I don't know what he means by that. I....
Oh SHIT!

FUCK ME!
NO! NO!
Please, NO!
Please don't tell me Senior was informed of what I said last night? I don't want to hear it! I don't think I can take being reprimanded by Senior over this!
“So, you think, us, your superiors, are all a bunch of fat, lazy, has-beens, that wouldn't cut it on the outside—huh?” He grinds.
And I can hear his teeth grinding as he says it.
“....” I say.
For I know this is going to be really bad. And, I'm scared! Yet, I also still feel a little disconnected, since, I'm still practically half asleep in my head. And a part of me wishes I really was. This is a reality I don't want to face right now. I DON'T! Because the fat fuck next to me is SERIOUSLY smoldering and churning over it. And I want none of it.
“Huh?” He goes, wanting a response.
And I just can't muster one right now. I can't. Mostly because I forgot already what he asked. Damn my drowsiness this morning!
“Huh... hmm?”
“I mean, that's what AD1 Abrego pretty much explained to me, what your words were, last night.”
“….”
“Your words to AE2 Frankowsky.”
“....”
“And, what's more, is, you... YOU, called the AE2 out over his golden stripes. His golden screw job. A fuckin' nobody Airman, straight out of Boot Camp, calling out someone that's served for three terms. And you're just going onto your second year. Who the fuck do you think you are?”
And when he asks that, who I am, I feel those words grinded onto me. Because Senior isn't just being a superior right now, a Khaki, HiMFIC, just doing the same old, same old, old ass chewing job, he does on a regular basis, to any and all other subordinates. He's really bringing this out from a deep-down place, inside him. A

place all churning with teeth and fury and fire, like the open mouth of a leviathan. This… is—personal!

“You know, before I figured you to be another disciplinary case, another hard shell I needed to crack. But, what you said last night, I'm taking personally, now. You opened up and spoke, freely, of how you feel last night. How you really feel! And the shit you had to say, is some serious shit, I'm going to take to heart.”

And now I feel like I am truly waking up and am now feeling what this man's about to start dishing at me.

“So, let me ask you, again? Who the fuck do you think you are?”

“....”

“ANSWER ME!”

“....”

“You know....”

And now his pupils extend skywards, and he seems to be self-reflecting on some things.

“You Airmen... today, don't even know how much you have it easy. Have no single fucking idea, the shit my generation had to go through, when we joined.”

Oh God. I really don't want to hear this.

“Right now. If this was back when I joined. Right now, I would have just beaten the ever-loving shit out of you, for what you said.”

And then he gives me a look, his left eye seeming to want to sic onto me, as it jitters a bit. The man is now restraining himself from getting physical with me. And the way his left eye is jittering, I get the sense, if he was to stop, he would go full out on me.

“Beatin' the EVERLOVING shit out of you!”

I'm truly scared, now.

“I mean, that's how we got it back before this sensitive ass Sailor shit going on today. Our Chiefs? Oh, boy! OH BOY, OH BOY! GEE, GOLLY, WILLIKERS! You should have MET THEM.”

That whole “boy-oh-boy” part almost has me chuckling. Something very funny, and also frightening, about the way he says it. His pupils doing somersaults while he does. And him speakin' like some rascally, menace, of a kid, from the '50s. With a

flattop, and a withered baseball glove stuffed in his back jean pocket. I don't know why the image is so funny, yet so frightening, but yet it is!

“You think I'm bad, those old Chiefs that had really seen some things, they would smack us across the face, just for lookin' at them funny. Let along the crap you said.”

Oh God! The crap I said? Making me really come to terms just how offensive it had to have been for Senior, here, and AE2 Frankowsky, and their likes.

“With the crap you said... they would have simply deep-sixed your ass, over the side, and not thought about it, twice. And then, filed it away later, that the dumbass Airman, had fallen off, when no one was around to see, at nighttime. No instant man overboard drills or nothing. YOUR ASS would have been SHARK FOOD.”

And as his left eye continues to jitter. I can see he means it. Wait? Wait? Wait? What...? You’d straight up kill me? I think.

“Yes, we would have straight up KILLED your ASS! And mailed it to your poor weeping mother, as an accident.” He responds.

As if he read my mind. Senior now stands there, stone gazing at me. Trying with all this might to cement how much he means what he says. Trying to terrify the fuck out of me. And all it's doing is making me royally PISSED!

FUCK YOU! Fat cocksucking ASSHOLE! You want a piece of me? COME ON, THEN! You want to kill me? Come on, FATBOY! You and me, NOW!

The two of us continue to stay locked onto one another, staring each other down. And, I'm trying with all my might not to word these things. These feelings. These...! But I know my eyes are spelling it all to Senior. And Senior then lunges his face quickly forward, then stops! Then turns around, shivering with infuriating rage. And walks away. Thankfully, walks away. I don't think he can stand another second locked on like that, without doing anything he would regret about, later. Same feeling as I'm feeling at this very moment.

BLUE ON BLUE

Aye! There you go, now you're beginning to get a better picture of what it's like to REALLY be NAVY BLUE. Now you're seeing it. Squinting into Davy Jones' eye and

seeing the real madness behind the abyss. Staring into it, as it begins to stare into you. As it begins to infest its influences, into you, and turn you into a real Joe Squid. I want to MURDER that FAT FUCK that just told me he'd throw me over the side, and file it off as an ACCIDENT. How do I express how it feels to have another man in your face, telling you such things? Expressing DEATH upon you. How do I express the level of rage and hatred that then churns within you, when, you receive such threats? I never wished any ill feelings or faith to anyone, but what I received now was inexcusable, and from my superior, no less!

Reminds me of one time in Boot Camp, one of the Night Watches was caught by a Rover sleeping in The Ship. And, I remember, the following day some Warrant Officer had come in, and as we all stood at attention, we watched him up front with that Seaman Recruit, giving a royal ass chewing, for all of us to witness. And, I've seen ass chewings. But this Warrant Officer? “You know, we're at war, right, Recruit? And I should be signing your DEATH WARRANT right about now, for what you've done! But the only thing stopping me is how you're not fully in till you pass Battlegrounds. Just remember THAT, just remember, when you do, and are sent out to the fleet. Sleeping on duty = your DEATH WARRANT! YOU got THAT?” He terrorized this poor Ricky. While giving him the look that he meant it. And, it was something then that churned in me, while watching it happen. Some real bile. Some real hatred. Hatred for what I had signed up for. Even though I really felt for the cause at the time. And that was just from watching someone else getting their ass chewed. But to now personally experience it? I'm now ALSO taking this SERIOUSLY! Fat fucking' piece-of-SHIT! I'm now taking all this PERSONALLY! Just as he said he was. And now, I gotta keep an eye on the fat fuck, for who knows what he could pull. And, once again, let's not forget he's my superior, too. Whatever he pulls, he could also get away with!

“Hey, Navastian, you, all right?” Concerns AMAN Coppersmith, my relief.

Well... not really! In three hours, he will be. It's also now shift change. Better head down and show my face before Senior comes up and decides to threaten me some more, with whatever else he can.
“Hey... you, all right?” Asks Coppersmith, again, with a look of concern.
And I just shoves him aside, as I begin making my way back to The Shop. And as I reach our hatch. I pause and feel like... tearing up. I don't know why, I don't know how. I just do. Ah shit! DON'T do it! DON'T! Don't go in showing that side of you, NAVASTIAN! Don't be going in showing that level of weakness... not to THEM! I order myself. And force myself to keep whatever waterworks from seeping out. After a minute... I feel in control. And now I begin making my way in. All of Night Check is in, I see our Chief Murdock on the PC facing away, and I see Senior now eyeing me. A bit vacantly, though, as if not sure why. I fall in next to AN Donnelly and ADAN Quimby and wait. The Shop doesn't seem like itself this morning, and it's not just that last transaction between me and Senior, that has me feeling this way. I feel like all The Shop is now involved. And it feels very sullen in here. No sound being made by any of us, for most of our attention seems to also notice the sullenness felt in here. And it's being infectious. No sound, but the sound of silence, and then followed by the sound of chains rattling a bit, as they leans to one side, showing how the Boat's turning again.
“I'm just going to be straight up with all of you.” Goes Senior.
And seeing him peering about, eyeing each and every one of us, except me, now, I can tell he's come to some decision. And I think I know what it is.
“I'm sick of catching you Airman sleeping, SICK OF IT!”
The IS3 now eyes me, very exasperated like, I know he knows.
“I've been letting all you get away with, whatever you all have been getting away with, on Night Check, for a month, now, straight, on the Boat. And, I'm sick of it! And. I'm now going to personally take matters into my own hands.”
Quickly he then peers at Chief Murdock, who still has his back turned, but only momentarily.
“You all know how our Maintenance Master Chief likes to rove sometimes in the middle of the night. Well, for now on, I'm going to be making it my own initiative, to

do so. So, tonight, or tomorrow night, do expect me to possibly be making my own rounds at any given time. Either coming in here into The Shop (he eyes the IS3 as he says that), roving about the Hangar Bay (Royster and Roach Burger), and even up on the Flightdeck (and now me). And if I catch any of you sleeping, I'm going to give whoever it is three hours of EMI for a month. A MONTH! And, also, when I see you all, and when I come around, I expect to be seeing all of you doing some hand wiping. I don't give a fuck if it isn't expected of you Night Checkers, when I make my rounds, if I don't see you hand wiping, three hours! Three hours you'll have of extra Military instructions! Also, for a month straight! Do I make myself clear?" He asks.

And then peers about, again, trying to eye us all down, looking for the slightest signs of insubordination and simple resentment.

"Yes, Senior!"

Goes most of The Shop, and then I see them mostly eyeing me, with vindictive stares, knowing how I had something to do with all this.

"All right, you're all dismissed."

And as I try to leave back up, Senior calls me out:

"Except you."

And points at me. What does he want now? I wonder. As some hefty level of dread begins to build up. Everyone leaves, and Senior then begins, not eyeing me anymore, but at some paperwork on his desk.

"I'm just going to be frank with you, Navastian, in the last Squadron I was in, I had a real piece of work, some kid, that was practically picked up off from the streets and dumped into my Navy, which I had to deal with. Fucker tried to attack me, eventually, and... I 'm not going to have it here! I am sick and tired of your dumb and volatile lot. I've been dealing with Airmen for a very long time now, which is one of the reasons why Master Chief placed me in charge of the Line, to my reluctance, and...."

And it now dawns on me how much Senior meant when he said how frank he was going to be. Telling me things he regularly would never tell any of his subordinates, ever.

“And... I'm sick of it! I'm sick to my stomach of dealing with teenagers. Sick! Truly sick!”
“I'm not a teenager.” I go.
Even though I shouldn't. REALLY shouldn't, right now.
“Oh, shut the fuck up! What are you... twenty, twenty-one?”
“Aye!”
“Twenty-one...? Same shit! Actually, worse, now that you think you're REALLY an adult, since, you're allowed to drink. But anyways...!”
Pauses now, looking very weary, swaying his head back and forth, and then continues:
“So, I guess what I'm telling you, Navastian, is... don't push my buttons, because I can see what you're doing. You got an attitude problem and—”
“You threatened me.” I blurt out, interrupting him.
“I DID NOT!” He blasts back.
Then gets up and gets back to the whims of what he does best, being confrontational, again.
“I DID NOT THREATEN YOU!” Says he.
While seeming very threatening, to me now. After a moment... he notices how he is so, and then goes:
“Navastian!”
“What, Senior?”
“Get outta here, go!”
“What?”
“You don't have EMI today.”
And I decide not to think twice or say anything to jeopardize this. I don't want to be here, and I don't feel like spending another minute, up top. So, I skip off before Senior decides to change his mind.
“Hey!” Goes Senior, now.
And as I turn around, I see that he's not eyeing me, again, and is at the desk Chief Murdock was at, before he left.

“Know this much, I'm not letting you go right now because I'm giving you a lucky break. I'm letting you go because, right now, I don't think I can stand seeing your face around another three hours, without wanting to smack it right off.”
And now he turns and looks at me, and concludes with:
“And don't take that as a threat, either...!”
Then begins shaking his head and looking back to the work on the desk.

Going through the passageway. I can tell just how down and out I feel, because, I see it reflected in our AD1 Bastille's face, as he passes me by. He doesn't look at me, but, I sense his peripherals on me. It's interesting how he's also on Days with Senior, running things, really, up top. Senior's only job then being to make trips, now and then, up to check on the hand wiping process. AD1 Bastille, like I've said before, is an actual leader, and works for a living, and doesn't bitch and moan about them mean ol' teenagers wanting to put their hands on their LCPOs, since their LCPOs won't stop stickin' their big fat mugs into their faces, and cussin' and spitin' on them! Then threatening them with violence by their own hands. No, Senior! You didn't buy any sympathy from me, with that story of yours. I can relate more to your attackers then your victim playin' ass!
“Sigh.” Goes the AD1, as he enters the Shack.
Still interesting though how he really still manages to balance out Day Check and keeps it from being a complete hellhole for those on it. Him and AE3 Brockhausen. But still, I don't know....

As for right now, as I begin making my way to the berthing, to actually enjoy some time to myself, before taps, and I don't consider “sleeping” as personal time. But as for now, as I do so, I decide not to think too much more into what just happened. Even if he was, somehow, in his own unique way, trying to relate with me, by expressing more violence towards me again, and calling it “not a threat.” I mean....

I don't know!
I just don't know!

And I don't want to fucking care, either!

But, then again, now I might be seeing him at Nights, roving about, looking to catch us sleepin' or skatin', and not wipin' Jets down. And I just don't want to think about it. Although, I will make one more comment about the so-and-so called glorious days of the Old Navy. If this was what was to be expected, but worse! And at tenfold, with older, ancienter Chiefs, not just threatening us with murder, but actually going through with it... Senior, AE2 Frankowsky, and all other seniority, they can all keep it! For fuck the Old Navy, I wouldn't want ANY part of it, NO! “You got an attitude problem!” He says. Well, maybe there's a reason for it. Maybe there's a reason! I came to the Navy looking for camaraderie and respect, and honor and service. But all I've had to deal with, since then, is, being humiliated, bullied, set on fire, and now having a nutcase superior that's fighting the urge to put his hands on me. Oh, how the chips have fallen, along with my expectations being pulverized into the dirt. Ha! As if I got an... I DON'T HAVE AN ATTITUDE PROBLEM! And that's THAT!

ONE BIG HAPPY NAVY FAMILY

If you were to ask me, I'd tell you we're crazier than the Marines. No! I mean it! We are! We're crazier than they are, at least in our own unique way. And the worse part of it all is, in the Military, crazy = something to pride yourself with. Now I know, I know, over there on the green side of things, they got that reputation that proceeds them, making it the popular opinion to think: “Navy, crazier than those Oorah motherfuckers? No way! No one's foamier at the mouth as those cujos of hell are.” All foamy and twitchy, like they got rabies, and are just a pack of mad dogs that really need to be put down. But, instead, are entrusted to guard our waters, when a villain arises. Entrusted! Having a rifle placed into their hands, to do what they must, at that proud hour of being baptized into the glorious waters of combat. But. I'd still say we're crazier. For at least the nation has enough trust in their mental integrity to place a rifle into their hands and have them do what they do. As for us? Well... let me ask you this: with all that I've illustrated, all the hazing, the bullying, the harassing, the threatening, and the setting each other on fire, how do you think we'd fair if I asked you to now imagine us all being armed? Ha! Exactly! I know we're crazier than

those Jarheaded Marines, because, they at least have enough camaraderie amongst themselves, where if I were to be one of, I don't think I'd have as much worry of my fellow Oorah Marine brethren, eventually getting all arched in the eyebrows at me, with their rifles at hand. Seriously! If we were all armed on this Ship, I don't think any of us would survive a day without one or ALL of us wanting to blow each other away. So, I guess it's good we do nothing but bully, and harass, and threaten, and set Shipmate's asses a flambéing, for, I wouldn't want to see how we'd fair, with all the turmoil we carry for one another, if we were to be armed. And, the Navy as a whole knows this. I mean, let's take some things I've observed into consideration: for one, back at Atsugi, there's this one Watch we tend to have on our Duty Days, on shore, that's called a Hangar Watch. And what it details is one of us Airmen to be at the terminal, doing rounds, keeping an eye out on our birds. Now, let me ask you this: don't you think with such a detail, considering we're watching over multimillion dollar US tax payer bought equipment (one bird costs roughly over a hundred million, and we have fourteen of them in total at Atsugi, so that adding over a BILLION), with equipment such as that, that if gotten into the wrong hands, would be gravely disastrous... don't you think I should be guarding them with at least a 9mm pistol at hand? Well! I've been on those Watches several times on shore, at Atsugi, and all they've given us is a whistle and a walkie talkie. A FREAKIN' whistle, and a FREAKIN' walkie talkie! And not even once have I been entrusted with a real weapon to protect those birds, nor myself, if something was to happen. They won't even trust us with tasers. Actually, not too far from where I would be doing rounds, across the Flight Line, there's the fence leading to the outside world, leading to the civilian sector in Japan, and having had my eye on that fence, many of times, the one thing I could tell you is, it wouldn't take much for some terrorist organization to jump it. Hell! It wouldn't take much for a fence jumping hoodlum to do the same, thinking he might come by, and tag our war machines up. Some baggy pants, Japanese kid, all absorbed in that American gangster rap culture scene, trying to prove his street cred by tagging up our shit. In kanji, of course! Even after 9/11, being on that Watch, they still had not issued us any firearms to protect ourselves, or anything. Although, they did bring out the Marines armed with M-16s to safeguard

our terminal for a week or two, while we were on lock down. From what I heard. The week that 9/11 happened—of course! Basically, what I'm getting at, is, as I said before, they don't trust us. The Navy doesn't trust us. Because, at heart, I know they know how we really are. How much more crazier we are than the rest of the services. Even in Boot Camp, they never gave us any training, any REAL live training, with live ordnance. When the time came to train us with using actual weapons, all we got were M-16s, with laser pointers attached to the ends. No live magazines, or anything of the sort. I mean, I have yet to hold an actual armed weapon the entire time I've been in the Navy, in this MILITARY service I am in, doesn't that say something? They don't trust us! And honestly, seeing as how we are now on The Ship, I can see why. I believe it now. We're all crazy, here. Ship life, being out to sea, far from the rest of society, trapped aboard this floating prison, having to look at the same freakin' frowny faces, day in and day out, and nothing else, all sailing from one end of the world to another, to another, it's making us all go sonar spinnin' crazy. CRAZY! I TELL YE! Absolutely crazy! We're not to be trusted.

But, anyways, if you still don't believe me, wait until Wog Day comes. Oh God! Wait until then. If there is one true example of just how wacko we all really are, it's the day some of us decide to dress up like pirates, and mythological figures, calling ourselves the “Sons of Neptune” and then do what we all do best. Fuckin' each other up! But now, in a grander scale. And this is a centuries long maritime tradition. Several centuries now, to be exact.

Thought of going to the ET room to call mom again. Although line was too long. What was on that 15-inch portal to another world? Puddle of Mudd.

I'm down in the berthing now. Entering through the small circular scuttle in the hatch, which is difficult to do. I have to step down, and make sure I step onto a step on the stairs leading downward. I've almost tripped a couple of times doing so. But, as I step in, I see Night Check all here, all of our VF-451 Green Shirts, Red Shirts, and us Brown Shirts, sitting at the lounge table, playing cards, or, watching what's

showing on the mounted TV. The same one I was watching that Officer and a Gentleman on. Now showing some news coverage with our President Bush on it. Lookin' all confused, as he tends to do. And giving some speech over some matter or another, with words that I can obviously tell are right then and there being fed to him, I can tell just by his reactions to what he says... for, with his reactions, there are none! So oblivious to his own actions and words, and I can just feel how confused he must be, as Dick Cheney and his Bush Sr. Daddy try to explain to him in the background, what the hell is going on, and what to say. But, whatever! Oh, and NO! I'm not going to get into politics. One thing I've learned about being in, is, the Military and politics DON'T MIX! We just DON'T! Although, as long as the Pres is Republican, we'll be happier, with him taking care of us better, than how the Democrats usually tend to do. So, we're also bias! I mean, Bushie, there, being a Republican, is made to put more money in the Military. And more money is always a good thing for us, since, our pay might go up, and other stuff. But, that has nothing to do with actual politics concerning the country and foreign matters. Foreign matter being the biggest reason why we rather stay out of it, politics, for it just isn't easy having an opinion, when all your job is, is to KILL PEOPLE, and without QUESTION! If them politicians point and say: “go kill” we KILL! So, it's always better NOT to think too much about what we're doing. That way, if they all of a sudden go “WHOOPS, I guess we shouldn't have bombed that orphanage, we thought, might have been a base for weapons of mass destruction being fabricated, our bad!” The bloods on them politician's hands, NOT OURS. So, aye! When it comes to the foreign and domestic stuff, that's where we servicemen draw the line. So, I don't want to delve that much into it. Not happening! I right now was only making a few observations about a man, that just doesn't seem too sure of himself. And that's all.

Though no one in the berthing is watching our Commander and Chief. There’s like eight guys here, and seven of them are huddling around one dude sitting in a chair with a laptop on his lap. What are they all watching? Some girl named Heather.

“Ah, Ha, Haaaaa! Ha HAAAAA!”

Goes someone back where the racks are at, and that laugh, that particularly unique laugh, could only be coming from one Squid. Heading over to hear what that mischievous jackass is up to now, I see him.
“They're fuckin stuck... Ah, Ha, Haaaaa! Ha HAAAAA!” Goes AN Royster.
One Line Shacker that has made it his proud initiative to DILLIGAF all moments that have required his integrity, as a serviceman, to be called into question. Every single freakin' one. Worse than Roach Burger, by a long shot. For Roach Burger isn't that much of a DILLIGAFer, as he is someone that just doesn't get the whole point of being serious about anything. “What is this thing called being a responsible adult, taking matters seriously? Huh? I don't get it?” I'd imagine him baffling over. Royster would know, though, and completely get it, and the more earnest the matter is that he be DILLIGAFing, the prouder he would feel, with his outstanding effort, at being anything but outstanding.
“They're stuck?” Asks AN Roach Burger, who's with him.
“Ah Ha Haaaaa! Ha HAAAAA! They're stuck!”
AN Royster is crouched near PR3 Wambolt's rack. Tearing through a porno mag, while laughing his ass off. And, when I say tearing through it, I mean that literally. There are a bunch of pages stuck from what I'm seeing, here, and as AN Royster tears up the mag trying to unstuck one page from another, he laughs full heartily to the sound of it ripping.
RIP! Goes the page, followed by Royster going:
“Ah Ha Haaaaa! Ha HAAAAA!”
And then again with another RIP! And then:
“Ah Ha Haaaaa! Ha HAAAAA!”
And I can see how much he's really enjoying this, him and Roach Burger, are.
RIP! Once more.
“Ah Ha Haaaaa! Ha HAAAAA!”
And now:
“What the fuck is going on here?” Goes PR3 Wambolt, popping up behind me.
RIP!
“Ah Ha Haaaaa! Ha HAAAAA!”

“Hey, what are you doing... are you going through my rack?” Confounds the PR3.
“No!” Replies AN Royster.
And you have to understand that, right now, the PR3's curtain is drawn open, and the mattress in his rack is pulled out, halfway, and seems to have been flipped over, and there's other items of the PR3s laying around. All next to AN Royster, who's now denying what is so plainly obvious.
“You're going through my rack!” Accuses the PR3, all hoppin' mad.
“No, I'm not!” Goes AN Royster.
With a way overly confident stare, as if he's trying to confuse the PR3 with his eyes, with just how confidently he can lie to his face. Trying to Jedi mind trick his ass. But since the PR3 isn't that stupid.
“You son-of-a-bitch! Get the fuck out of my rack! GET THE FUCK OUT! Get the—”
“Hey, Wambolt!” Goes Royster.
“Get out! Get out, now! What the fuck are you—”
“Hey, WAMBOLT! Goes Royster, again, very loud this time.
And getting on his receptive side.
“What, Royster?” Mopes the PR3.
RIP!
“Ah Ha Haaaaa! Ha HAAAAA!” Goes Royster, one final time.
And the PR3 is now literally hoppin' up and down, mad. Which has Royster chuckling this DILLIGAFing ass off, even louder.
“I'm going straight to the CMC with this! Straight to him! You hear me? Fuck you!” Goes the prissy jackass PR3, and leaves.
And now we're all standing/squatting/sitting around, feeling pretty WTF confounded. Since, from what the PR3 is telling us, he plans on going up to the top, highest ranking enlisted personnel, in our Squadron, to complain to him about AN Royster having snatched a dirty mag from his rack, that's just topped off with his baby juices.
“Wait... would Wambolt really tell the CMC everything?” Wonders Royster.
Scratching his head. And then it seems as if it dawns on him that PR3 Wambolt might just be insensible enough, that he just might try and do so. Royster now goes:

“Oh my God! This is priceless. I gotta go up and see what the CMC's reaction to this will be.”
Rejoices he, with tears in his eyes, since, he really is that much of a despicable jackass. Despicable... and LOVING IT! But with the PR3, I don't blame him. The PR3 used to also be one of us Line Shackers, and there's a character I am thoroughly glad to be rid of. What was the PR3's deal that made him just as unsavory as all the rest, and even more so in his own way? The boy was a habitual masturbator, that would not stop waging all-out war and combat with his one eye monster, there. Anywhere, at any given time. And when I say all-out war, I mean it! Can't tell you how many times we caught him getting slant-eyed grunting and slaying and waging and grunting, chiming his chimes, as he marched to mortal combat, wanking to the beat of his own drum. Whether in the Line Shack, or in one of our heads (closed stall, but we could tell it was him from the sounds we had grown accustomed to hearing), in a Jet's intake, exhaust, cockpit (funny how the Pilot began wondering what all these white stains were doing all over the dashboard, refusing to acknowledge someone stooping that WTF low to do what had obviously been done). Anywhere! As I said. And if that wasn't the case, the man was a professional skater, that would lie to anyone, straight to their face. Claiming false tasks and details having been given by Chief So-and-so, and them being the reasons to why he wasn't able to lend a helping hand. Personally, I rather deal with Royster just DILLIGAFing straight to my face, instead of Wambolt, there, being insidious about it. As for characteristic features, nothing more to note about him except his giant pair of BCGs: Birth Control Glasses, still using the same pair issued to him in Boot Camp. Which are such an ugly pair, the guarantee, is, you'll never get laid, as long as you have them on. And since the boy won't trade them in for something halfway decent lookin', we can see why he would masturbate as much as he does.

“Oh, what is that smell?”
“I don't know... sniff, sniff, what is that smell?”
It's AE2 Applegate and AE2 Abby, two very Dig-It Joe Navy Squid Second Classes, not bad guys, but still a little too AJ Squared Away for the likes of me. For instance,

if us three were locked in a room together, I might get a few formal greetings from them, that and a pointless getting-to-know question (pointless, since, they wouldn't even be interested at all in getting to know me, just asking since that would be the customary and polite thing to do). And that's it. As they'd then begin to ignore me, since, I'm too FUNGUS for their taste. Not a pair of Squids I'd click with, and in the end, would have to worry what I'd say or do around them, for they might try to dime me out, and take it up with my superiors. to get me reprimanded, if I was to say or do something a little too non-Navy like.

“Oh God! It STINKS!” Indicates Applegate.

With his nose all scrunched up, being all apprehensive towards what he's smelling in the air. But since he's AJ, he'll try to sniff out the problem, and square it away. For this is “go time” for his likes, and it has now become his responsibility to prove how much he's ready to don another chevron under his crow. And make First. The two are now sniffing around, and they look like drug detection dogs, trying to find the source of the stench. And at this moment, I get curious to see just how bad the smell really is, myself, and I walk across the rack aisles to where they're at, and....

“Oh, what the...? It smells like something crawled up someone's ass and died!” I go. Because it really is THAT BAD!

“I know!” Agrees AE2 Applegate.

And now I walk away, I can't stand it any longer! I just can't!

“Oh, wait! It's worse here.” Notes AE2 Abby.

And he's now sniffing around a certain Airframer's rack, and I know whose it is. Sniff here, sniff there, they continue to go, investigating with their noses, which is beginning to look redundant on their part, since, they've already established the source of the smell. But I guess they're overcompensating for the sake of overcompensating. Since, the rule of thumb in the Joe Navy handbook be: “Overdo much, overdo often, overdo what doesn't require overdoing, and in that time, someone important might pass by and take notice.”

“Whose rack is this?” Wonders AE2 Abby.

And, luckily, since the Airframer I know it belongs to is also Night Check, we then see him showing up. Lucky for the two Second Classes, since, they can now practice

their reprimanding skills. Unlucky for the Airframer, although, since, I know him to really be one truly obtuse and lugheaded person. A real big oaf, non-communicative fuck, that's as dumb as he is stubborn as he is dumb. Stuck on that counterproductive cycle, going around and around, making him all dizzy headed and stupid.

“Hey, AM3 Trolinger, is this your rack?” Asks AE2 Applegate.

To the slouched over Airframer. Just a lumbering primitive looking white man, very Neanderthal-ish in feel and stature. One Proto-Caucasus Ogreus lookin' man, with a slumped forehead, and always with a demeanor full of ogreish resentment for us more sensible sorts, that don't take kindly to something as lumbering-ly uncouth as he is.

“What do you want!” Bellows the Third Class, staring at the two.

“Trolinger, is this your rack?” Asks AE2 Applegate, again.

Trolinger then just gawks at the two for a while, says nothing, and then moves up to split them two from his rack, so he can go on with his own business. Leaving the two with the thought that maybe they should just be minding theirs. And only as such.

“Trolinger... umm... we just... oh my GOD!”

And at that second, that VERY second, that we have Trolinger opening up his coffin locker, the miasma grows forth, and seizes all of our senses, laying them to waste. I got tears in my eyes, now, motherfuckin' tears. Reminding me of Tear Gas Day in Great Lakes. I remember the smells, now, I remember them so vividly!

“Trolinger... what the fuck?” Goes one of the two, or both.

“What do you guys want?” Bellows he, again.

Showing us just how obtuse he can be, plainly unable to tell from our plainest reactions of how much his area stinks. Which = him stinking! And aboard a Ship, in a berthing, that is basically a giant room full of bunk beds, where hundreds of Squids are all to sleep together, all in the same room and in each other's spaces? Well, you can see why a guy like AM3 Trolinger would be a major problem.

“What do you got in there?” Asks AE2 Abby.

All curious and looking inside he finds it stuffed with his Flightdeck attire. All crammed in inside, and dirty as shit. Clothing items he should have been giving to 1st Lewie to take to The Ship's laundry, to clean, and in sometime in the last month, but plainly he hasn't been.

“Oh God! It stinks!” Goes AE2 Applegate.

I think AM3 Trolinger seems to be a little embarrassed, now. Even with his constant uncouth and obtuse like expressions, of that of a simple minded brute. His hanging brow all trying to swallow up his line of sight. Yet still, I can sense that he understands a little how un-squared away like this all looks. And heavily unacceptable and frown worthy. But then again....

“All right, I'm going to sleep.” Mentions the AM3 Trolinger.

Finishing whatever he's doing in his coffin locker, which is taking off his attire, and stripping down to his skivvies and undershirt, adding another layer of miasma, which now has the air in that area turning a bit greenish in texture. Then he stuffs the clothing items he just took off also in, shutting the locker, and now he's trying to crawl into his rack. And, the thing is... he hasn't showered yet.

“Hey, Shipmate....”

And, here we go, now it begins, the highlight of this morning’s entertainment hour. Let's watch and see what happens next. Shall we?

“Hey, Shipmate! This ain't the barracks in Atsugi, we ain't having this. Hey!” Say the two Second Classes.

And AM3 Trolinger now shuts his curtains, trying to nestle into whatever little privacy we have to ourselves aboard this Ship, away from the prying judgmental eyes of the rest of our Squadron. And the second that AE2 Applegate tries to open up those curtains to continue with his reprimanding of him, AM3 Trolinger begins to grow mad.

“Hey, Shipmate—”

“Hey, I don't give a shit.”

And shuts them again. The two AE2s then stare at each other, shaking heads, and trying to muster up enough will to continue trying to draw Trolinger out. And, honestly, I don't see the two being cut out for this. Right now, they're struggling,

bad, trying to keep up their positions of higher authority. And the AM3 seems to have established his own jurisdiction over his cave, there, that's now governed by the rules and whims of practically a cave man, and his uncouth, untidy and unhygienic ways.

“Hey, Shipmate, when was the last time you tried to wash your clothes?” One asks, not trying to open up the curtains, again.

I guess AM3 Trolinger's defiance has really thrown them off and made them very uncertain of themselves in handling this.

“....” Trolinger doesn't answer.

“Hey, Shipmate, have you taken a shower yet?”

Oh, for fuck sakes, he obviously hasn't, so why ask? I think, then. They're waning to leave much of an authoritative impression. And, really, right now, being a little too nice and delicate with their stern questioning. If you want to leave a firm impression, you either appeal to a man's sensibilities, that, or hijack them. These two Wirechasers are obviously not cut out to appeal to anything, considering, how apathetic and unfeely they really are. But since they got no balls, they're unable to subscribe to how they really want to handle this matter, which is being imposing as shit!

“Trolinger, we're not going to let this slide, not today.”

Seems to be that's EXACTLY what you two are going to end up doing. Better get someone else to handle this matter, for, you two obviously can't. And, personally, I do want to see this matter handled. I'm also heavily opposed to what that meathead in there is doing. I mean. He stinks! How fucking hard is it to take a shower and scrub your smelly ass, down, and hand in your clothes for SOMEONE ELSE to wash? I mean, not casting the first stone, here, I've hot racked a few times myself, when I was just as dead tired as the AM3 there seems to be, reasons to why he's doing it now. But I at least made it my efforts to definitely shower the next day, never going more than two days without. But that FUCKER in there hasn't showered in over a month, DEFINITELY! I think there's just some people that just enjoy being so meatheaded, and uncouth, and unhygienically disgusting. Makes me want to pick up an elephant gun, and gun the fucker down, skin his ass, and make a nice throw

rug out of his hairy hide, then have it placed before a fireplace. Oh! Forgot to mention, his Shop's nickname is “Bear Pits” because, he smells like the armpits of a bear. So there! Also, he's very, very, VERY hairy. And his nickname might also have something to do with him being from Pittsburgh, PA. Having me stereotypically now associating this being what's to be expected out of most residents in that city. Big, hairy, meatheaded, dumb, white males. Really, really white, dumb, and hairy. Which makes me afraid to picture how their women might be like.

“What do we do?” Whispers one Wirechaser to the other.

All whispering, since, they've done nothing but embarrass themselves, showing off how much of a pair of incompetent First Classes, LPOs, HiMFICs they would make, when the opportunity was to arise. As I said, the two AE Wirechasers are still very, very, VERY new to the whole reprimanding skill trait. Haven't exactly perfected it and have it to where they want it to be. And, now, they're just going “Shipmate” over and over again, because they've lost control, and are now sweatin' to find a means of getting it back.

“Hey, Shipmate, get out of that rack, now! I said, NOW! I said, Shipmate! Hey... hey, Shipmate! Hey, Shipmate... Shipmate! Hey?” Goes both.

Oh, CLAM it, you two! CLAM it! You two are done, through, finished, you've lost. Now go get a higher ranking official to take up the matter, since, you two have yet to earn that third chevron under your crow. Not First Class material. Not just yet! Actually... now that I think about it. As Second Classes, they shouldn't be having this much difficulty, no matter how much of a rockheaded idiot that AM3 Trolinger is. This is really embarrassing for the two, since, I'm dead sure my Thirds, Falconni and Brockhausen, could have handled this matter by now. Alone. Even Kats and Rudy! But, as mentioned by me before, other Shops are different, where Third Classes and Second Classes are rarely placed in a position of authority, unlike my Shop, the Line. And that's why they stink at this, this bad, I guess.

“Hey Shipmate... FUCK!”

“The two of you go fuck yourselves, I've had a long night, I don't give a shit! I ain't showering!”

And now the two Wirechasers look steaming pissed. Like their balls have finally dropped.
“Actually... fuck it! GRAB HIM!” Goes AE2 Abby.
And Applegate does so. Opens up his curtains and does so. And then:
“Bahh!”
And there she blows! Or, there he blows. As the musky meathead begins making a whole lot of animal noises, while Applegate sweats and struggles to drag the fucker out of his rack.
“Hey, lay off me! NOW! I'm not showering. I don't need to do it every freakin' day.”
“BULLSHIT! You smell like you haven't showered in a month.” Goes AE2 Abby.
“No, I... so... so what?” responds Trolinger, after a pause.
And not exactly arguing against that assessment. And now, I hear a couple of us bystanders chuckling, hard, laughing. Chuckling from that response, while watching this whole scene take place. Aye! This whole debacle has now called forth an audience, and here we are now, entertain us!
“Bahh!” Blows he, again.
And there's just so much sweat and “Bahhs” being thrown around, now, and funk, that I start to feel sorry for the AE2 Applegate, there, wrestling with that circus bear. Since, he's being covered by all of it (sweat, “Bahhs” and all). And will need to shower himself, again, when through.
“Bahh!”” Goes the heavy breather.
All out of breath, even though, it's Applegate that's really the one that should be. Trolinger flops out of his rack, then, and now is on top of Applegate, and the two are lookin' pretty helpless. That's another thing about Trolinger, as big and bearish as he is, he's also a weakling. Since he has nothing but meat and lard really filling out his form, putting a strain on his stamina and muscles, therefore, he can easily go out of breath from the slightest jerks and actions. Always last in our quarterly PTing. Always!
“Bahh!”
And then breathe, and breathe, and breathe, in and out, in and out. For he's all winded. And now AE2 Applegate goes:

“Get this smelly son-of-a-bitch OFF ME! I'm SUFFOCATING down here!”
And AE2 Abby jumps in to lend a hand.
“What the fuck is going on here?” Goes our CMC.
And....
Oh shit! Our CMC is here. Oh shit, it's our Admin Master Chief. Master Chief Hayakawa, our bubbleheaded Command Master Chief, from Honolulu, HI. And when I say bubblehead, I mean he's really a submariner. But, also, he does have a bit of a bubblehead. And a very, very, very thick and black mustache. He's Japanese, by origin, of course, if you can't tell by his last name. And even though not exactly a beloved man in VF-451 Bloody Shamrocks, I personally have always managed to get along with him, well. I guess it has something to do with his outlook on how he has planned to run the administrative end of everything. His words being on how he summarized what to expect from him: “I don't give a shit what you try to get away with, just get away with it! If you don't, and I catch you, your ass will be grass, and I'll personally go out of my way to fuck you over.” And he then stood up and reiterated by going, “let me reiterate, I will PERSONALLY go out of my way to FUCK YOU OVER!” But after that, he was all friendly with us. This all happened on the day I first arrived at the Squadron, too, before checking in properly with the Line. Fresh from the Tokyo International Airport at Haneda, coming in from LAX.
“Applegate, Abby, Trolinger, what the fuck you knuckleheads doing?” Asks our CMC.
The three now quickly get up to the CMCs questioning, especially the two asskissers, standing at attention, even though not required. I mean, he's not an Officer! And you two aren't reporting in or something! Jeez! And then one of them goes:
“It's Trolinger, here! He hasn't showered in a month, and now he's trying to hot rack, again!” Informs one.
“Oh, for fuck sakes... Trolinger?” Goes the CMC.
And the CMC is next to PR3 Wambolt, which leads me to know he's really down here because the PR3 dragged him down from ADMIN, to play show and tell. What a Bravo Foxtrot he is! Buddy Fucker! Blue Falcon, brown nosing, piece of work! But, yet again! It's over a porno mag filled up with his love lotion. Does he not understand the connotation of how this will all look in the long run? But, anyways, the spotlight

is now on Trolinger, let's see how the uncommunicative fuck talks his way out of this. This should be fun to watch. Since, grunting and “Bahhing” isn't going to cut it.

“CMC, he dragged me out of my rack! I want to file a complaint!” He goes.

But the CMC doesn't seem too concerned with Sailors getting physical with each other, if, there's good reason for it. Which showering is one of. A BIGGIE, too!

“When was the last... oh my God! What the hell?”

What the CMC now tried to do was take a quick whiff of him, which has got him getting all watery eyed.

“I showered... yesterday!” Lies Trolinger.

And we all know it's a lie. And definitely so does our CMC, after going almost plaid from the nausea.

“Wait, oh... oh... I meant to say, I showered two days ago. I lost track there for a second.”

“Bullshit, you smell like you haven't showered at all since we've been on the Boat, from what I'm gathering. What the fuck, Trolinger! This is unsat!”

“Yes, CMC.”

“Just get up there and get'er done!”

“Get what done?” Plays out Trolinger, trying to play dumb.

WTF Trolinger! I think, now. And now the CMC looks fiercely pissed.

“Trolinger, I'm just going to tell you this one time, get your stinking ass up there, and take a decent shower, with soap and water. Do it, before I call the Master-At-Arms on your ass and have them drag you to the head, butt naked, and have them hose you down, like a stupid wild animal. Do we have a deal?”

And now Trolinger seems to be hesitating with his answer. Like he really, really can't stand the idea of bathing himself, THAT MUCH! Even to defy our CMC, after a humiliating line like that, that has most of us rollin', seeing it blasted out from his bobble-ly head. Oh, right, his bubblehead can also be bobble-ly, sometimes. Funny to look at, when he's on a roll. Really comical, there!

“Do we have A DEAL?” Blasts the CMC, demandingly.

And now the AM3 Trolinger looks slain, and non-defiant, lookin' docile, now. And now the AM3 complies. And begins to gather his things, after opening up his coffin locker, which has the CMC go:
“Oh God! Get that crap washed now, too! Give it to Zeedorf.”
And Zeedorf, who's standing behind the CMC, doesn't look pleased, for once, and isn't smiling, as all that mass of funky clothes are handed to him. Also, seeing Zeedorf and the CMC standing next to each other, has me remembering that one particular story of Zeedorf's. Gay for...? No! It's Zeedorf! And I just don't believe him, really, all that much. But, anyways, it's sorta sad, I must say, to see Trolinger defeated in his moment like that. He was even going to stand up against the CMC, over this matter. He planned to stand that defiant. Pity! But, then again, fuck his stinky ass! Find something more upstanding to stand for, and not so ignoble, and maybe then you can win more of our sympathies, Trolinger!
“You know... back in the day. Way, way, way back, when the Navy had problems like these, we used to tie the stinky bastards up by their ankles, and we used to toss them over the side, and have the ocean current wash them, thoroughly.” Mentions the CMC, jokingly.
Also, to embarrass Trolinger, even more now, while standing next to him, since, Trolinger is now just giving everyone vindictive looks. Like showering is really that much of a big deal for him, as not showering is for us.
“Sounds outstanding, we should reinstate handling hot rackers like that, again!” Mentions AE2 Abby, kissing the CMC’s ass.
And before AE2 Applegate can throw in his own line of more asskiss-ery, the CMC walks over to that whole PR3 Wambolt business.
“You see, Master Chief, you see what AN Royster did to my rack?” Mopes the PR3.
Of course, Royster is now nowhere in sight. Pretty sure once he realized the PR3 was REALLY going to go ahead with getting the CMC involved, the realization sat in, and he slipped the fuck out. The CMC now looks around and says:
“You told me someone broke into your coffin locker and stole personal items from you.” Says the CMC.

And now expects an explanation from the PR3, since, visibly, one can see his locker hasn't been broken into. It's just his mattress that's been turned over, and we've been thoroughly trained since Boot Camp, that stowing away our gear is a MUST! A must, to prevent theft and things like this from happening. But, visibly, we can see this isn't the case. And, really, it's the PR3's fault for stowing away any personal items under his mattress, which ANYONE can get to.

"Well, you can see all my stuff all over the deck." Explains the PR3, trying to be tricky with the CMC.

"Were they in your coffin locker, locked away and stowed away, properly? Or did you do what most dumbasses I come across tend to do, when getting their items ganked, and hide them where anyone can still get to them?"

And the PR3 is being hesitant with his answer, for, if he lies some more, he can get into some deep shit. But with his eyes boggling out, since, he knows the CMC has him there, that whole reaction lets the CMC know, the real deal here.

"Just what I thought... Three Steel Balls! Stow your shit away properly next time—DUMBASS!" Goes the CMC.

And then bobbles his head a little, again, and I chuckle. He looks at me. I say absolutely nothing. I've laughed at his bobbling quite a few times, before, and the CMC has taken notice. And I really don't want him to make an example out of me, now, as he has with the rest of the boys. The CMC then looks down at the porno mag, picks it up, and...!

Aye! Does exactly what you'd think he would:

RIP!!!

And from the CMC's and PR3's reaction, I can see the PR3 left that one special detail... out.

POPEYE

You know, maybe I do have an attitude, and a serious one at that. Maybe I am that uncongenial with the rest. And just me! Just another frowny face, all crossing his arms and convictions, and sitting there, just emanating mounds of mounds of negative energy in unbearable, unreasonable, and unhealthy amounts. Maybe I am that much of a sore thumb! But, the fact is, this is now what I'm becoming, not who

I used to be. This is the role I'm being fitted and groomed for. This is the role they want me to play. So, it's all them, not me. All them! It's their fucking fault! And not mine. They have self-esteem issues, self-loathing, and self-pity, and the best way they figured to deal with all that bile bubbling up inside of them is to separate it all from the self, and have it applied onto someone else. Someone like Roach Burger, Derbytown, or me. And I can either be strong enough to fight it off, or weak enough and succumb to it. And become that bitch boy. That whipping boy. That punching bag. That stress reliever. To take all the heap. And then there's Senior, and he's worse. Monumentally worse. In the end, I can understand just wanting to find some can in a head to relieve yourself and walk away feeling relieved. But that fat fuck isn't shitting on us to relieve stress, he does it because he enjoys watching us get covered in all his fecal matter. Guys like Falconni are confrontational to prove something to themselves and others. Except for some jokey bits, I don't feel anything personal. Guys like Senior are confrontational because they like to watch others squirm. The more personal, the better! That's how it seems to me, at least. The goal is to break us down and build us back up. Destroy any semblance of who we used to be, so we can be who they want us to become: them! Make us become like them. Everyone being one person, the same person, one in the same. Oneness. All in Uniform and unison. Which is something I've always wanted. But not so sure of now.

As of now, I'm just sitting at the lounge of our berthing, still enjoying my few hours of personal time, even though surrounded by other Squids. But, here's the thing! I'm not in Uniform right now. Just finished showering in the head and am in my showering attire (Everlast gym clothes) and not in my Flightdeck Brown Shirt attire. And for us Squids that = off time. Being in civilian clothes always feels refreshing, because now we don't feel like another serial number on the back of our necks. Now we aren't all one in the same, since we aren't all dressed alike, and the differences in our preferred attire is giving us that semblance of something very rare in our settings: individuality. For as there is no “I” in team, there is also no “W or E” in individuality. Now we're separate, and our own beings. And most of us down here are also lounging around feeling like individuals for a change, and it's beginning to

show in our character. There's no constant Military Bearing now, and no constant judging one another on the bases of it. No sense of duty, “hurry up and wait” bullshitting duty, also refreshingly without. And for now, time isn't a critical thing, and can stretch as long as it wants, for it doesn't matter. Well, that is as long as it doesn't stretch towards later this evening when our work clocks are reset, and once again, with the “hurry” business. If you look around, you'll see mostly everyone is doing some catching up with their “me” time. I see AS2 Needlinger sitting next to me, with a do-rag on his head, wearing mostly sweats with stripes on them, and he's got a base guitar at hand, plugged to a speaker, that's muted by a pair of headphones, so as to not disturb everyone else down here with his practices. AS2 Needlinger is just in a world of his own, probably imagining himself in some gig in Chicago, for, I've heard how he's a jazz musician from around there. Well, whatever! He's in his Zen like environment, in his head, away from all of this, away from us all. Not one in the same, but one and different.

“Oh, you're down here? Thought you had EMI.” Says AN Donnelly, coming down from the hatch.

“I don't have it today. Not this morning, at least.” I answer.

AN Donnelly then grabs a seat, turns it around, and sits in it in that way overly aggressive and masculine types tend to do. All backwards. Going against what's proper and tackling onto the lewd and indecent. I mean, AN Donnelly is really macho, even though he tries most of the time not to be, or show it, since, he's wanting to seem approachable and friendly to the rest of us. But, really is, and would be considering he's an ex-boxer. With his types, every movement they make, seems to exude dominance and power, from picking up a glass of water to drink out of, all the way to beating someone’s face in. It's all the same: dominance and power! BUT LET'S GET THIS STRAIGHT! It's not all about aggression and about violence, all the time. Those are just outcomes that come around when others around feel challenged and react by challenging back: A SCHMUCK! For a little dick loser will only see the aggressive nature, and never see it for what it really represents. For it also signifies security and harmony. And also love. A man's love. And to the opposite sex, virility! Something a schmuck never obtains as long as he stands against all that is strong

and masculine. And really good at heart. For, truly, only the strong are good, and the weak are wicked....

Wow! That moment really had me, there. Really had me contemplating....

But, anyways, it's still something that everyone around can feel, and, everyone around can smell (aye, smell, too). Especially women, which can make them go into heat. That musky hot-blooded testosterone smell, that just permeates from a guy that's either done finished working a hard day of labor, working out in a gym, working out someone's face, or working out a woman in the sack. I've smelled it off myself a few times I've had those moments I've been proud of. It's a good feel and smell. Feels warm and hot-blooded in my chest, and smells of my chest cooking from that heat. Let's me know everything I've worked for hasn't been in vain and will bare fruits for my labor. Filling me up with a sense of calm that I've slayed whatever beast, as a man, I've been meaning to slay, because of its threat to my security, and the security of all those I care for around me. But to smell it off other guys, and not from oneself, makes one feel like a schmuck. Let's you know you still got a long way to go. AN Donnelly looks all sweaty right now, obviously, coming down from that gerbil gym of The Ship. Which is really a tight, fenced up space in the second level of the Hangar Bay, that has weight training equipment (just mentioning to fill in some visual details). But—back to Donnelly—it's not just that, that musk permeated from him lets me know he's done his day's labor, well, and since I can't feel the same from myself, makes me feel less of a man. There's being a man, and then there's being a schmuck, and a schmuck permeates fear, and smells of piss. He's a sad sort. A broken in mule. That has no control. No peace of mind. And no love and love of a woman.

Fuck! Why am I thinking about these things? And why do I feel like such a schmuck, all of a sudden?
"Well, that's good." Comments AN Donnelly.

To that whole matter about me and not having to serve EMI this morning. Which should be making me feel glad, but isn't, because, I got other things in mind.
“Man, I tell you....” I go.
With AN Donnelly around, I feel like opening up, again.
“It's fucking bullshit! I'm getting sick and—”
“Dude, shut up!” Interrupts AN Donnelly, to what I was about to say.
Which totally throws me off. AN Donnelly looks irritated right now, aggressively irritated, which is totally throwing me off in a big way.
“What?” I go.
Feeling a bit dismantled. I don't like how he's eyeing me right now, either. As if he's had it with me and has grown tired of my presence. I mean... why? What's going on here? What did I—
“Shut up! Stop being so mopey. So sad and mopey all the time. It's getting depressing.” Explains AN Donnelly.
Looking away like we ain't friends no more. And now, I really am feeling dismantled.
“What? I didn't say anything.”
“Yeah, but, I'm pretty sure you were going to... complain about either Falconni, or Senior.”
And fact of the matter is, I was. And now his irritation over the matter, is also becoming mine.
“Well... I guess I was.” I admit.
“You guess?” Snuffs AN Donnelly, all discouragingly.
And now I'm really beginning to count the number of times I do spend an entire day thinking about those two. And. Once I have my tally, I realize, it's a lot! And now I can see how discouraging it really is to be that way. AN Donnelly is beginning to put things into perspective, and the perspective isn't too favorable of my part and my ways. And now I see, rightfully so. Why do I spend so much time thinking about those two? They've taken over all my waking thoughts. Truth of the matter is, when AN Donnelly told me before in the galley about how he and all The Shop see me as this defiant one, not going to be accepting another round of BOHICA. The one not going to be taking everyone's bull. When he illustrated that to me, how I was that

way symbolically to the rest, the “unbroken mule,” it really filled me up with a lot of pride and conviction. Feeling accomplished at something, here. Feeling in control and sensing that whole masculine thing I was illustrating before. Feeling the drive. Testosterone churning within me, giving me the sense that I can handle anything. But fact of the matter is: only in that split moment I felt that way, when AN Donnelly explained that to me. Only that brief moment. And, since then, I've allowed myself to continue feeling the weight of Falconni and Senior, again, dragging me down. And breaking me in.

“All right! I'll admit it. I've let those two fuckers get to me, again.” I explain, feeling winded just in my thoughts alone.

AN Donnelly now smirks.

“Like I told you. If they keep knocking, don't let them in.” He quotes.

And it's funny how he does it, too. Such a silly line to say, and it's silly how he says it, as if, trying to sing it out, a bit simple minded. But still, very, very effective and true.

“Enough with that shit, man! And stop coming to me over it. I mean, what do I look like, your shrink?” Jokes Donnelly.

And I'm starting to feel a little embarrassed.

“Oh, come on, I'm not that bad!” I say.

I don't feel like I have been. But, then again...?

“....” AN Donnelly doesn't respond.

Instead, his attention is somewhere else, now. On the TV, again, and they're showing a Popeye cartoon. Whiskey Tango Foxtrot? Even with a cartoon, a freakin’ cartoon, this is what you’re storing for us to get? What is it with Navy shows or movies? Enough trying to hammer it all in, we get it! We know where we are, and who we are! No need to reinforce what's so painfully obvious. Three days ago, I could have sworn they showed the movie Pearl Harbor three times in a row. That sucky, long ass, boring one by Michael Bay (putting aside what its commemorating to, all that honoring them WW2 Vets, and stuff, as a movie, it's too fuckin' long and too fuckin' boring, end of story). They've just been showing a lot of them on The Ship's channel,

and, the only Ship's channel. And, now, even the cartoons have something to do with Navy.
“So, what were you going to tell me?” Asks AN Donnelly, with his eyes still on the TV.
And after how he made me feel about this a minute ago, I don't feel like bringing up those two.
“Nothing.” I say.
“No, what?” Asks Donnelly, again, being all curious.
And, really, he shouldn't be. Having made me feel on the same level of discouragement as he was feeling, before, when I brought it up.
“Nothing... actually...?” And then I feel like asking something else.
“Do I frown a lot?” I ask.
For I've also been thinking about that a lot, too. And. I don't know... just been on my mind a lot—all I'm sayin'!
“What?”
“I mean... do I frown a lot?” I ask, again.
And now AN Donnelly eyes me all peculiar. And then answers with all honesty:
“Yeah, why?”
And that really gets to me to hear. And, after a while, it seems like AN Donnelly notices.
“Well, we're all on the Boat. Here, there's a lot of reasons to be frowning about.” AN Donnelly reasons.
And on a more positive note, says:
“But, then again, come Hong Kong, there won't be any.”
And smiles, for I know he's thinking about all that we heard from AE2 Frankowsky last night. And, as stupidly charming as that whole thing was, it was still something to look forward to. For, I'm going to admit something. I might be going down that road, when the time comes. Come port call, and I'm off this Ship, I might be heading straight for Wan Chi District to find some fun and action. I might be. Honestly, I'd rather go to a tourist bar, in hopes to find a one-night stand with someone offering

consent and actual interest in me, and just me, with nothing involving me pulling out my wallet. But, then again... and now I feel like a complete schmuck, again!
“I know, I can't wait for Hong Kong, either.” I say.
But, also, feeling very anxious about it, too, now. Like I'm not sure what I'm getting myself into, if I do. But, then again, Wan Chi District ain't Thailand. And it isn't going to be as crazy. And dirty. I think?
“Wow...!” Goes AN Donnelly, now.
And I can see he's got something on his mind, as the idea begins to make him laugh out loud.
“What?” I go.
“You really got on AE2 Frankowsky's case.” He mentions.
“I did?” I go.
And seeing how AN Donnelly is getting a little hysterical, has me seeing “maybe?”
“Yes, you did!” Cements Donnelly.
And now he's laughing, hard, and sounds to be really busting his gut doing so, as he grabs his side from the pain. And, I just don't get it. Not like that, how he's taking it, at least.
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“What?”
“Nothing...! Just... hurting the man's feelings, and all.”
And, I guess I had?
“I didn't mean to do it.” I say.
“Yeah, I'm pretty sure.”
And now, Donnelly makes a peculiar face.
“No, I didn't!”
“Oh, I know, I know. You just have a way of leading things into that direction.”
And I kinda don't like hearing that. For, he had a tone.
“Sorry!” I say.
“Why you apologizing to me? It's Frankowsky you almost had bawling, there, for a second.”

And now AN Donnelly is tittering off, again, into his own jollies, which I'm starting to get a feel of.
“Ha, ha, ha!”
“What?”
“Nothing, I just find it hilarious. Just me... I guess.”
“What?”
And I'm still struggling, here.
“He was all....”
Referring to AE2 Frankowsky.
“The place is REAL! I KNOW IT! I'm gonna find that bar and GETS SOME!”
And I sorta see it, now, can't grasp it how AN Donnelly is. But I see it. It's how that AE2 was being, all pouty about that bar, childishly so! Wanting it to be real. Like Santa Claus, so he could reap from the presents. And have another notch on his belt of a great Navy no shitter to tell. That mustache stroking bastard! Fuck his MUSTACHE!
“He was going all... gonna MAKE them bitches TWIRL on my JUNK! Ha, ha!'” Titters Donnelly.
Snickering up and down, within himself, all out invested in such jollies.
“Ha, ha!” And I'm laughing now, too.
“FUCK THAT Marine from '53! Gonna BEAT that record!”
“Ha, ha!”
“It looked like you were going to make him cry when you told him the place might not exist.” Mentions AN Donnelly.
And the image, of him... crying? Has me rolling now, too. It's just the image of his tears flowing down and getting absorb... you know where! I don't know why? But I find that hilarious, now just me, I guess.
“Crying over a pussy bar... I mean, who does that?” Wonders AN Donnelly.
And I shrug.
“Only AE2 would, only he, I guess!” I add.
“So, Senior giving you a break, huh?”
And...!

FUCK that whole line of thought AN Donnelly is now presenting me with, as he throws me off, again, making me feel disjointed from what I felt was a good laugh, me and the AN, here, were sharing, in the AE2's expense. But AN Donnelly is staring at me, now, intently, as if he's really had this on his mind the entire time. And, I don't want to talk about Senior right now. I DON'T!

“I guess.” I respond.

And I don't want to think or talk about what else there was to him giving me a break from EMI.

“I mean, wasn't it supposed to be for a week or two?” Presses AN Donnelly.

And... why? Why does he care so much, now?

“You two butt heads?” Asks Donnelly.

I'm guessing he can see my reaction to his asking. And can sense that might be the case.

“Something like that.” I say.

“What happened?” Asks, looking all curious.

“Donnelly, I thought you didn't want to know? Telling me to refrain thinkin' about the guy, him and Falky.”

“No... it's like this, I'd like to know why he's going to be showing up every night, now, at random hours, checking up on me or you.”

And, on that perspective, I can see why it would pertain to him. AN Donnelly continues to study me for a bit, as I don't answer.

“Checking up on us. Or Falconni. Ha... even Chief Murdock's Double Digit Midget, skatin' ass!” Continues AN Donnelly, just for rhetoric.

And now I just feel like letting him have it:

“The fucker threatened me.”

“What?”

“He heard about what I said to the AE2.”

“And?”

And AN Donnelly looks super confused, now, of how that would even matter: how would me, poking fun of the AE2, ever lead to Senior deciding to threaten me. Which

really doesn't make sense, now, that I also think about it. I wasn't that offensive... not even in the slightest!

“And... what? For that he threatened me, what he heard I said to Frank last night.”

This isn't sitting well with AN Donnelly, and now seems personally involved.

“Over that, he threatened you?” Presses Donnelly, and now he doesn't seem to buy it.

Which leads me to reassess:

“Well, maybe... not directly.”

“Then what?”

And now it seems like I'm making it up. But, I'm not! Am I? No! He....

“I don't know, the guy scares me... like I said before, he's crazy! He came up to me and started talking about the Old Navy Days. And, how, for what I said to the AE2, in those olden days, with those olden motherfuckin' Chiefs, the ones he had to deal with back when he was an AN like you or I... they would have deep-sixed me over the side. And, then, he just started staring at me all weird and crazy. And...!”

And now, AN Donnelly gets it. And, then, after having explained it to him, I'm noticing something else about it: maybe Senior wasn't being really direct with me, with that whole threating business? Hmm...?

“Oh, don't worry about Senior. What's he going to do? Get really mad and choke you out, or something? He can punish us, yell at us, belittle us, all he wants. But, the Navy today doesn't allow Sailors putting their hands on other Sailors, anymore... trust me. I know.” Consolidates Donnelly.

And from what he's saying, I agree: fact of the matter is, we are in the New Navy now, and old relics, like Senior, talking about how things were in days with even older relics like his LPOs and LCPOs, back when he was an AMAN... today? Just wouldn't fly.

“Fuck it, man! Hong Kong!” Cheers AN Donnelly.

And, I agree to that, also.

“Hong Kong!” I follow.

“It'll be a break for everyone, even for those that have Liberty Risk, and won't be getting off!” Says AN Donnelly.

Then goes back to the cartoon. And seems to want to illustrate more:
“Anyways, it's not like them Popeye days, where you had nothing, but Sailors beaten' the fuck out of each other, all the live long day. I mean, we do wrestle, a lot. And tie each other up. And prank each other. And set each other on... but at least it isn't as bad as it used to be! You don't see any real violence, beating each other to a bloody pulp type of stuff, rearing its ugly head. Not anymore.”
And then AN Donnelly points at the cartoon with his eyes, and it's the usual of a Popeye cartoon: him going off of spinach super strength, beatin' the ever-loving motherfuckin' crap out of his Shipmate, there, Bluto. Popping him with an uppercut, as Bluto goes flying up, high, into the sky, disappearing as if he went space orbital, then reappearing, falling back down, and then Popeye popping him, again. The whole transaction looking like how a batter would do tossing up a ball for himself to swing at. Then Bluto goes headfirst flying towards a Jap Destroyer, like some torpedo. And sinks it. And Popeye then gets the gal. And saves the day (eww, what he sees in Olive Oil, I'll never know).
“Ha! Popeye days... huh?” I go.
And AN Donnelly really seems to be holding a revealing perspective on things.
“That's right! Popeye and Bluto, I mean, look at them! It's just one episode after another of the two beating the fuck out of each other. And nothing else. I mean, so much violence with blue on blue shit! Every fuckin episode. And over some Olive Oil who's not even really worth the effort. Some flat chested, skinny chick.”
“I know, I know.” I agree.
Seeing his point.
“Ha! Really paints you a picture of what it's been all about. Since the beginning. Senior isn't the only one that's going crazy, here. Seems like we all are going a little crazy, like Popeye and Bluto, there, for no good fuckin' reason, at all.” Explains Donnelly.
But then, something occurs to me, as I look into his eyes. A couple of things he had said that had me thrown off from earlier.
“What do you mean by... 'trust me, I know,’ and then talking about 'even those not getting off due to Liberty Risk?'” I ask.

“Huh?” Goes Donnelly.
“You said, 'putting hands on each other today won't fly anymore, trust me, I know'... what did you mean by that?” I ask.
Seems as if though AN Donnelly has been getting into a bit of trouble, himself, and now I'm curious about it.
“Oh...?” Says he.
And his eyes are now really dodging my questioning.
“I got... Liberty Risk.”
“For what?” I ask.
“Getting into a fight.”
“With who?” I ask.
“Oh, it's a long story. I knocked out some guy at Skunky's, someone that turned out to be a First Class—which I didn't know he was! Since, everyone that goes there usually goes in civilian clothes... so....”
“And?” I wonder, wanting more details.
“And... what? I knocked him out and got into trouble. And now, I won't be getting off in Hong Kong at all.”
And this is all new to me. And, part of me was hoping, too, in Hong Kong, me and AN Donnelly could have hung out. But now this.
“They gave you Liberty Risk?”
“Yes! And I had Captain's Mast.”
“What?” I go.
“Yeah. Back on the beach. At Atsugi. And my punishment was they'd take away my liberty at my first port. And, I've been seeing an anger management therapist... well, was, back on the beach. Not now.” AN Donnelly explains.
And he looks winded now, now that he's finished. And depressed. Very, very depressed.

BALI HA’I: PART THREE

How much more do I have to swim to get to that island? I've been swimming for some time, now, and, it feels as if the more trek I make, the further that island seems to be drifting away from me. What is this? Is that island trying to escape me? Is it

self-aware? And, aware of me, also? And, how can that be possible? Huh? Well, I guess I just gotta keep making tread, if, I'm to survive all this. I gotta continue. I gots to keep moving forward, if, I plan on seeing another day. If I could have only been stuck out here in the middle of the sea, for all eternity, I sorta feel like I would have. I wasn't freezing in those waters, at the ends. And the experience had been rendered then pleasant. But, then again, nothing ever stays as it should, everything moves on. If I had stayed out there, I would have surely died. Wouldn't have been able to stay out there forever. For it just doesn't work that way. Not like this is a dream where the properties of reality work differently than what's expected. And, I don't like swimming this much. So, therefore, how much more do I have to swim? I prefer how I was, floating still, and not exerting this much will and energy to move forward. I don't like exerting so much energy, unless, it's for a good reason. And... ha! That's weird, and a little freaky, too! Surviving is becoming less and less of a good reason for me to continue exerting so much of my energy to move forward, especially since that island KEEPS DRIFTING AWAY! Whiskey Tango Foxtrot?

OH, GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE! It won't stop moving. I move forward, then, it moves. What cruel practical jokes are whatever otherworldly entities, that possess the powers to arrange all this, are practicing here? And why? And, why against me? What's going on, God, did you really have to arrange for this just to punish me? Others get seas parted for their sake. And I get this! Islands parting AWAY, since God is an original OG Navy Squid, too, back in them ancient, ancient days before time even existed. And He also didn't take it favorably what I said to the AE2. And now, this is what I'm to get! And, mostly so, just to test my convictions. Either you, God, or them Old Ones are behind this. And, they, really scare me now! They know how I feel about being out here, swimming towards that island, and how I would rather stay stationary, than me, swimming this much, and they've decided to give me what I want. Leave me stationary. Unable to move forward and reach that island, no matter how much I show how I really DON'T want that! I might as well not be swimming. I'm not making any trek, here. I'm not gaining any distance from where I am, and where I was when I started.

All right... STOP! STOP! Stop moving that island! I gets it! I was wrong for wanting to stay stationary. I don't want to die. I DON'T WANT TO DIE! You all HEAR ME? I want to move forward and live, now. Stop moving the island. Stop it! I'm growing tired. My muscles are aching. I'm not all used to this much swimming. I'm out of breath. I can't... I... I don't know how much more....

All right! I can't move my arms no more. I can't move my arms! I CAN'T! Stop moving the fucking island. It's no longer about will, it's about stamina and energy. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. I don't have any more energy left. Willpower can be created by drive and attitude. Stamina is something that's a physical limitation, like fuel is. And when a car runs out of gas, it won't move forward anymore. I can't move forward anymore. I'm out of GAS!

I don't want to die out here! But... what if I sorta do? What if I sorta do want to die out here... on a different level? I mean... that pretty much is what being stationary is all about. Finding a spot, you now feel content to stop moving forward from, as you come to the realization you don't want to move forward anymore, at all, for, you feel there's nothing else there to move on to.

Oh, wow! Everything became so gloomy, all of a sudden, now. So dim. Even out here with the sun... cloud cover. Everything is so dim and lifeless now. Everything was so much brighter before. With the sun out shining, firmly, reflecting itself off the water's waves. That's how it was before. So much more brighter, and warmer, and alive. And it's cold, again. I'm freezing, again. And now, I feel marauding winds rumbling in from a very far distance. And in my direction, again. It all just feels so murky now. Desolate. Meaningless. Like... nothing. Like everything has been for nothing. I'm not even on some level enjoying myself being out here in the middle of the sea, as I strangely was before. I'm missing that feeling now. Not too long ago, I was screaming at myself over the thought of how I jumped Ship. For, at the time, it all felt so important, even if it was a mistake I had made. Even though I sorta

couldn't stand how I was pathetically crying and moaning out over my tragedies in life! My stupid woes. It meant something to me, then, it meant something.

I wonder how drowning feels like, if I start swimming downwards, and continue swimming, without stopping? Drowning can be... exciting! Drowning could be adventurous! It'll at least be SOMETHING! I'll feel SOMETHING! Even if it's the last thing I feel.

All right. I don't know how, but, I have the energy to swim straight down, now, even enough to fight the flow of water trying to keep me afloat. I can't believe this. I'm going to drown myself. I can't believe it! And where did all this energy come from, allowing me to do this? I thought I was out of strength to swim on.

It's getting so dark, now, so vast, and it just keeps going. So COLD! GOD, so cold. But, still, it feels like something. Death feels like something. It does. And it's beginning to make sense... even though I DON'T WANT IT TO MAKE SENSE!

STOP! STOP! STOP SWIMMING DOWNWARDS. But it's like I'm possessed, now. I feel possessed and driven more than I've ever been driven before. Ever before in my entire life. And all for drowning. For DIEING! It shouldn't be this way. All this drive... for this? Why does this mean more to me than anything ever has? I don't think anything has ever felt as much real and meaningful in my entire life as this does now.

GOTTA KEEP SWIMMING DOWN! GOTTA....
NO!

Wait...!
There's something else down here. Something else besides me. Something very large, and very ancient, I feel it's presence, just a little further down below. It's there, I feel it, and it feels me. It wants me to continue swimming down.

The Old Ones... they want me to continue swimming down. Luring me down. They're the ones making me do all this. Taking away all reason for me to go on and giving me new reasons of how pointless it's been up until now to have done so. So, as to give me new reasons, of why, I should be doing all the opposite. The opposite of everything. The opposite of all my reasons, of all that I've strived for, all that I've fought for. And it's so EMPOWERING, TOO!

FUCK YOU! I'm swimming back up. I'm getting back to that island. And, with the SAME level of conviction I had for wanting to swim all this way down. How DARE you make me feel like everything I've been through has been that MEANINGLESS! Filling me up with the sense that it's been all for NOTHING! And this now... IS EVERYTHING!

FUCK YOU!
GO FUCK YOURSELF!
GO...!

OH SHIT! IT OPENED ITS EYE, LOOKING UP AT ME! I SEE IT NOW! I SEE IT, AND ITS EYE IS MASSIVE! I SEE IT! ITS YELLOW HUMONGOUS EYE! ITS...!

“SHUT the fuck UP, Navastian!”
“Huh... what, what happened?” I say.
“You're having a fucking nightmare, and getting really loud, too. SHUT THE FUCK UP! We have to be back to work in a few hours, and I'd like to enjoy whatever sleep until then.”
It's AME3 Echols, in the rack below mine. And, I guess, I was being really loud with the dream... was I?

It felt so...? God, I'm starting to hate these dreams! I am!

“Shit, man! What are you, eight? Having nightmares like that at your age.” He concludes, then, then yawns.

And now I'm left with my thoughts. In the dark. Not sure if I'll be able to sleep anymore till 1800, when my shift begins, again.

LIGHT SHOW

Misty skies over the Pacific. Night Ops, again. At launch. All hands wearing protective Flightdeck attire, and firmly so, for, all Jets be turnin' and burnin' once again, tonight. The night skies are at void and vacant. Nothingness. And darkish grayish nothingness, because of the haze, with some variations in between. And then there's the light show we're all putting on. And because it's also one hazy night, it skewers all things visible into shades and gradients. Reflecting, and refracting, and prism-ing into all things visible into the 8th dimension. Everything feels otherworldly like. Another space-time. Another Earth. In another continuum. With its own laws of physics. And this time around, the laws for reality allows for MAGIC! And then there are the LIGHTS! A flashy orchestra of lights. Red lights. Blue lights. Green lights. Orange lights. Anything but clear white lights, for they're forbidden aboard all Navy vessels. Lights must be dim, so as not to be detected by any foreign satellites or possible enemy crafts searching from above. And the little lights we have are all around individually marooned in this murky tint of all spaces in between us. The spaces around us are a canvas of nothingness, and blotchy colors all spinning around and around amongst one another, as if enacting a ritualistic dance, only they can understand the interpretation of. For lights in this new dimension are fully alive and conscious. They're sentient. And there's males amongst them, and females, and we can only assume what the dances they are enacting are supposed to represent. Moving in and out, in and out, within each other, in an intricate pattern of zigzags, and spasms, and spirals and flutters. We just are but ghost, dead and gone some billion light years ago, and this is now their world. Their time. And their universe. Look at them dance. Look at them play. Watch them create societies, fall in love, fall apart, and then go to war amongst each other and lay waste to everything and all. For they know not for what they do. This is now their earth, and we're really now the otherworldly entities, here, to witness them. No longer them witnessing us. Orange

lights coming from the island behind me. Blue and red coming from my 107 turnin' up front. And I have my glow wands. Glow wands of the color green. Using them for hand signals, since, there's zero visibility of myself or my hands that the Pilot and Co-Pilot could make out. So, they need the light show I'm putting on, as signifiers, of every transitional step in the launch process: revving engines. Cross bleeding them. Wipe Outs. Trim Checks One and Two. Trim Checks Three. OBCs. All those steps coded in the patterns I make with my wands, as I make them dance around me. Also, on another level, trying to find a means to join with these otherworldly beings, since, I'm feeling so lonesome out here. But, also, really, playing this visual orchestra to soothe the savage beast encroached in near, complete hazy darkness before me, upfront, as she continues to wail and howl and groan through the night. Crying for my flesh, for she's grown weary of my presence, night in night out, every night, for over a month, straight, and would like to rid of me from her sight of interest, by devouring me, fully, and the point of this light show is to also lull her from such pursuits. And, let's not forget, she could literally eat me, if she wanted to. You hear those blades turning... those be her teeth, and if she was to approach, near, she could just suck me up, and in, completely. And devour me, fully. Aye, that there she could!

So, I guess it's us versus the Avionics later tonight. Those ATs. Those Tweakers. Those nerds, that Falconni has been hollerin' up and down The Shop for. And why? AT3 Oilerking! A female in our Squadron, a few of us Bloody Shamrocks have been crushing over, that's why! Let me explain: first off, the Tweakers, more Green Shirts. The ones that deal with the computing hardware and software of the F-14 Tomcats, so, of course they would stereotypically all be nerds. Of course, they would be! For who can escape such curses placed by them ol' Navy gods below that will nothing for us but for us to be forever looped in a constant, constant, constant bitter cycle of being confronted with and overburdened by our own shortsighted sins? Who, I ask, who? And, I kid not. For the majority of them Avionics are a bunch of wimpy, poindexter looking motherfuckers, for whatever reason. Funny how stereotypes can work against all odds against diversity. And you'd expect reality to be more diverse.

But, anyways, those Aviation Electronic Technicians have managed to stir up some shit, pissing off IS3 Falconni, royally, by calling him out for something embarrassing. One AT3 Whoolery was the one that did it. A skinny face, wimpy lookin' nerd, with sharp eyes, a sharp nose, and a sharp tongue. BCGs wearing nerd from Des Moines, IA, whose entire face is covered by his prescriptive frames, which doesn't look adequately build robust enough to support (the AT's face to support the BCGs, that is). One AT3 Whoolery was the one that did so, first noticed how our IS3 was indirectly all flirting with AT3 Oilerking, in a very boisterous and cocky manner. Which both AT3 Whoolery and AT3 Oilerking didn't seem to like. So, then, Whoolery decided to do something about it, and decided to stand up and call our IS3 out, and said:

“Stop it, IS3! Stop. Shipmate, you're embarrassing yourself, and even me, a little, with how hard you're trying.”

Aye! This AT3 Whoolery dared to take it there. Daring to embarrass the IS3 that much, over the matter. Even though trying to be somewhat comical about it, so the matter wouldn't grow dire tense.

“How hard I'm trying to do, what?” Snapped our IS3.

I was there before Flight Ops. And, his eyes? Oh God! His eyes: rage and humiliation incarnate. Completely and utterly looking abolished for this half of a half of a half of a man, to be so bold and direct with him. I mean, IS3 Falconni = jock type. AT3 Whoolery = nerd! And at the time the IS3 looked like he wanted to jam this nerd in his locker, with a broken rip, and his pocket protector shoved well up his ass. What was AT3 Oilerking's reaction to this? She was grinning very satisfactorily like, like Whoolery had become her hero. And our IS3 was sharp to notice all this, making it that much more humiliating for him.

“How hard I'm trying to do what, here, explain that to me?” Went Falky.

Testing to see if the AT3 would take it further. Up until this point, the subject matter had not been addressed, and the AT3 Whoolery had only been suggestive. But the IS3 is someone that really likes it when others are seriously direct with him, and now, he was giving the AT3 an easy opening to be so and daring him to—just DARIN' him—to humiliate him further. The more Falconni was to get embarrassed,

the better, in a way. Since, Falconni is the type that really just—wants it! So, then he can get mad, and show his true nature. A lot like Senior, in some way.
“Shut up, Falky! We both know exactly what.”
And, I don't know if it was the AT3 Oilerking, who was standing next to Whoolery, that was giving him all this hardihood and audacity to challenge the IS3, with what he was challenging with. Or, I don't know what! But, the AT3 was taking it there, all to both Falconni's pleasure and displeasure.
“No, what, what am I trying to do?”
Still begging for the Tweaker nerd to continue.
“Stop it, Shipmate. Just stop! It's not going to happen. I mean, can't you take a hint?” Snapped the AT3.
Cockiest I've ever seen him, trying to match the IS3's cockiness, possibly, and managing pretty damn well to do so, to all of our surprise. Boppin' his head back and forth, to the sway of his own sass, even though he didn't have much of a groove or rhythm to it. Swaying back and forth, something gradual, but also fierce, like a battering ram, beatin' down the IS3's doors, to that even littler nutcase that dwells within him. Within the IS3, that is.
“Hint... I don't know what you are talking about?” Went our IS3.
Wanting the AT3 Whoolery to spell it out for him. And, this time, saying it while showing some barracuda teeth. For, if Whoolery was to get intimidated all of a sudden, he could back out, and the IS3 could continue where he left off with AT3 Oilerking: pissing her off, and pretending not to be. And, after a short pause, it was seeming like our IS3 just might start going back to bothering Oilerking, that is, until, Whoolery decided to let him have it:
“Don't fuck with my girl, Falky! I know how you Joy-see types can't take a hint, and would like to be in your wifebeaters, in some crummy, inner city apartment, beating your wives, but, here, it's not gonna fly.”
And I really don't know where he came up with such jokes, but, he did! He didn't seem like the type that could manage to say all that. But... there you go! He had! The IS3 was really now beside himself.
“I ain't trying ANYTHING on Oilerking!” Blasted the IS3.

“Oh, right!” Snuffed Whoolery.
“I WASN'T!”
“Right! Right! So that whole you flirting thing...?”
“I was only having a simple conversation with her! A simple fuckin' CONVERSATION! IS THAT—”
“Right! RIGHT! Simple conversation... ending with you hopin' to drag her along somewhere, and—”
“HEY!”
And now the IS3 was seriously pissed: it was one thing for the AT3 calling him out for being a conceited flirt, it was another to call him out as a manipulative creep. And anything further said would have our IS3 labeled off as a... you know what! Being branded with the stigma like it's a scarlet letter. With an “R” instead of an “A.” Even I felt like AT3 Whoolery was taking it a bit too far. But, then again, I guess he was on some sort of chivalrous high, trying to be all knight in shining armor about it, since, I guess, he felt like the AT3 Oilerking was his responsibility. But, honestly, Oilerking is a girl I know can take care of herself and would never want anyone to take her for as a damsel in distress type. I mean, you can expect that from Military women. Definitely!
“You know what? Fuck you, ATs!” Said the IS3.
Calling out, not only Whoolery, but his entire shop out, now, too, herein the Ratways, before our birds.
“All right... fine! Then Foxtrot Uniform to you Line Rats, back!” Went Whoolery, as he began to grow nervous.
Which Oilerking noticed, as she grew a little upset. The IS3 then began smiling. Simply just smilin'.
“Why are you smiling?” Asked Whoolery, growing even more nervous.
“Oh, you'll see.” Concluded the IS3 and said nothing else.
“Oh... I'll see, huh? What is that supposed to mean, huh?” Continued Whoolery.
But, to no response.
“Yes... what IS that supposed to mean?” Added AT3 Oilerking, seeming fiercely pissed herself, now.

And I guess this is where AT3 Oilerking felt like it was her turn to take over from where Whoolery left off. The IS3 just turned to look at her, quick, then turned to look away. And walked off, noticing how AT3 Oilerking was probably going to go off on one of her white girl banters.

“Oh, is that it? Well, bring it, ASSHOLE! Bring it!” Continued AT3 Oilerking.

Getting the hint that the IS3 was going to get his entire shop involved in a possible roll up party.

“Bring it! We still got Sundergaard. And, I'd like to see a little guy like you manage to take on that.” Dissed AT3 Oilerking.

All front, lookin’ up and down this little shrimp in a detestable and disagreeable way. Really going off, right hard, for she just didn't feel like being modest about it, anymore. Not to a guy like the IS3.

“Bring it, asshole! Fuckin' asshole. FUCK YOU! And FUCK Sundergaard, I bet I can FUCK your little ASS up, MYSELF!” Went she.

With her head swaying all wild and crazy, with her clenching fists, and her bottom lip all shivering for how infuriated she was gettin'. Scaring all the Squids around her, senseless, as everyone walked away—even AT3 Whoolery! Feeling very, very dissuaded with how far this petite, little AT3 Oilerking might take it, if given the chance. For, she was already going way too out of line with her language, considering how the IS3 and AT3 Whoolery were handling it. Catty, aye! But not so in-your-face hostile, that it would seem like things were gonna be leaning towards sudden violence. Aye! I mean, you know how very, very petite and mousy little white girls can sometimes get—right? Most of the time, all so mousy, and trying to be polite, but, you can only be that way for so long as another side of you begins to grow, for just the right occasion. AT3 Oilerking can really get feisty. Just as much in-your-face as any Squid out here. And, also, THEN SOME! The trouble between her and the IS3 being (my guess), the two just aren't compatible. Not the types that would see eye to eye. Let's get this straight, when it comes to character, the IS3 is a thoroughly bred cocky, little shit. The sort that almost always confuses attitude for charm. Now, he might manage that with girls from his own neighborhood, but, he's not going to be able to with the Louisville, KY raised Oilerking. Not charmed by the

JOY-see man, in the slightest. Oilerking is very modest. And introverted. And methodical in her manners. Not at all direct. And would take anything direct as being rude. To Oilerking, the IS3 would appear rude. And insincere. And the complete opposite of the personality trait that she would really like. And as for the saying “opposites attract,” Oilerking, as mousy as she is, is also the type that would pop that schmo that would say such a line, straight in the mouth. For, Oilerking can also become one violent, little, rascally girl. And she gets a lot of guy's attention, too. Not very physically attractive. Looks just as scrawny and nerdy as AT3 Whoolery does, just with longer hair, for, she's a female. And... there you go! Just female. Making it a world of difference, especially here on The Ship, since, the male to female ratio has be something around 20:1. And, to be honest, I kinda like her, too. She's a very plane looking girl. Flat, very pale, and also very frail. But, fundamentally, there's something profound there to like. Fundamentally, she has good roots. You can just feel that about a person, compared to the morally and emotionally bankrupt types. Something worth its weight in gold when it comes to something long term. Which gives off a very strong appeal of its own. If not, the strongest! Which means, she doesn't have to be that pretty. But, then again, she is pretty in her own mousy way. Especially if you can get her to smile, and not frown and show teeth all the time. Which is DIFFICULT! Unlike AM3 Rosario, I'd see her as an actual investment, and so does many other Squids aboard, here, who haven't been able to get anywhere near her. Especially when she gets the way she does. I mean, she's already popped several Navy wolves-in-sheep's-clothing types in the mouth, for trying to do what the IS3 was trying to do, but taken a bit further. I know the IS3 had to have gotten really discouraged seeing her blow up on him like that, calling him out as she did. Obviously, he likes her, as I like her, and as so do many other Squids in our Squadron. And, not just because we're on the Boat, and all horny as fuck. Seeing it all two-ten-and-two. She's a worthy investment. But, then again... maybe not for guys (I'll get to that story another time).

“So, yeah. Falconni wants all of us rounded up to head to the Avionics shop, and—”

“I'm not going.” I let AN Donnelly know.
We're in the Ratways. I just finished launching my Jet. She took off. They've all taken off. And, again, tonight, it's time to head wherever, and wait until they arrive. Only really time off we have during our hours, away from our birds. And, we can be flat out skatin', and Khakis won't mind all that much, or notice. I mean, our Jets are gone! So, what could we do during these hours? Since, our entire lives revolve around staying on top of them, when they're around and offline.
“Not going—huh?” Mopes AN Donnelly.
And I can't say why. Why would he care?
“No.” I answer.
AN Donnelly then begins to fidget a little with his reactions.
“Cool.” He seemingly says.
And now I feel like elaborating:
“Dude. Every other night, it feels like, it's always us versus this group of guys, or us versus that group of guys. Enough is enough!”
“No, I hear you, I hear you!” He simply answers.
Nodding, looking down, and not at me.
“It's getting redundant. A couple of nights ago it was the AOs. Those Red Shirt BB-stackers. Now Avionics. And, fuck Falky! I'm not going to be rolling around on the deck in the arms of those ATs, just because AT3 Oilerking gave Falky blue balls. Fuck that nonsense!” I go.
And, I mean it. This is getting stupid, and....
“Why do you want to go?” I ask AN Donnelly, wondering why he seems so eager.
“Sundergaard, man!” He answers, as his eyes light up.
“What?”
“I want to see that big fucker in action.” Explains AN Donnelly.
And now, I see the reason, as his eyes twinkle a little after bringing up about that giant Swede. I now gets it. AT2 Sundergaard truly is the biggest Squid on the Boat. Not just any Squid, but the legendary Colossal Squid ol’ Sailors will be tellin’ tall tales whenever they had frequented the Antarctic. And caught a glimpse of this Old One monstrosity in the middle of the night. So big, he really shouldn't even be in

the Navy, since, the Navy has weight and height regulations, which AT2 Sundergaard soars past. I mean, take Barbarossa: 6'7 and around 340 pounds. Cool, right? AT2 Sundergaard is MOTHERFUCKIN' 7'4 and 400 freakin' pounds. I mean, MOTHERFUCKIN' Aye, Aye—good sir—my WORD! I guess, back in the recruiting office, the second the Navy recruiter met him and looked up, continued to look up, wasn't DONE looking UP, up towards his colossal mug in the clouds, he immediately frowned up and said, "I am sorry, so sorry! So, so, very sorry… but you definitely don't meet Navy requirements." But then Sundergaard got really sad. Started talking about how being a US Navy Sailor had always been his dream. Almost was moved to tears. And, it was at that point the recruiter, also being moved by this scene, decided, "hell, I take it back, we'll get you in! We'll get you in, even if I have to gundeck your actual height and weight to meet Navy requirements." And, so, roger that—there you go! I guess between that giant frown on this mythological creature and the recruiter, there, realizing: this guy is too big and grand not to let in! And since then, he's walked among us. This titan has walked among us, while pretending to be a mere mortal like the rest of us. Avionics had to have been the least threatening shop before this massive Viking arrived. Just a shop full of nerds, that seem to have prayed to their comic book gods, to deliver them some Thor like hero, to stand by their side, as safeguard. And, aye! You heard that correctly! He's a freakin' Viking! Literally! I mean, he's not from the US. He's Swedish. And part of joining the US Navy was to get American citizenship ever since he moved from Sweden to some unknown town in Montana and decided to stay and never go back. Naturally platinum blonde, naturally! Which I don't think I've ever seen in a person. There's just so much of HIM, there, all bulk and forehead. And he's also a nerd, too, for on top of all those mounds and mounds and mounds of pale white bulk and muscle, is fitted some BCGs. And, when I say 400 pounds, that's because of his height and sheer muscle that he weighs that much. Not because he's that big in frame and also fat. I remember one time in the gerbil gym, everyone was standing around, as was I, watching the guy bench press what looked like two walruses attached to a stick on each other end. And, we were all gawking, with our jaws dropped. And then that very moment when he finished, he sat up, lifted up this sweaty gym shirt around his

midriff. And, no mofo-ing shitter, here, listen to this: this 400-pound behemoth had a motherflippin' sixpack! Around motherflippin' 400 pounds with a motherflippin' sixpack, can you imagine that! Then, quirky enough, he placed back on his BCGs and picked up a nerdy-ass Philip K. Dick novel on the side and continued his reading. And, then there's his Swedish accent, that when sounded out, seems to echo within the massive Valhalla halls of his mouth, before it even reaches us. He doesn't look like anything you'd expect to see on Ship, more like some naked musclebound gigantor, you'd expect to see in some Greek Odyssey, standing high on top of some cliff overlooking the sea. His long, long platinum hair blowing in the wind. As he hurls giant boulders at our Ship as we tries to sails past.

"Fine, I agree! It would be interesting seeing him in action." I admit.

And, doing so, AN Donnelly explodes with childlike glee.

"How can you not want to see him pick dudes up, and swing them around, like battleaxes, into other dudes?" He asks me.

Making me chuckle hard, once.

"Ha...! Because, this is reality, and people can't just pick up other people and—"

"All right! All right!" Responds AN Donnelly, to my sarcasm.

"But I still want to see what the big guy is capable of. The whole Squadron has been meaning to take on the Tweakers, but, haven't, since, they're all scared of the giant Swede. And now, we might see that happen. I've heard a couple of the other Shops might show up just to watch. Barbarossa is going to have his hands full. I mean... fucking Barbarossa!"

And AN Donnelly speaks the truth. Since, Barbarossa... compared to this Nordic titan? I don't see standing a chance. But, then again, I've seen Barbarossa in action, and I feel like he can make up in speed what he, for once in the his fe-fi-fo-fumming life, can't make up in size.

"I think Barbarossa can manage." I say.

Although. Nah! Really, I doubt it. He's not BIG enough.

"Dude, you've seen how big Sundergaard is! That guy can juggle guys like Barbarossa and Southgate and Quimby like a circus act. And you're telling me you don't want to see that go down?" Elaborates Donnelly.

But, still....
“There's always a bigger and scarier looking Shipmates. Always!”
“I don't know, Sundergaard seems to be as big as they get.” AN Donnelly argues.
Still in childlike glee about the whole thing. Which, I honestly find a little too silly.
“Big as they get? I don't know... I once got lost down in engineering, and, while I was searching for a way out of there, this hatch opened up, and I looked inside to see... nothing but some Seaman's shins, going up to his knees, and the rest of him was too big to be seen from that angle. All I saw were a giant's shins and boots, and that's it.” I mention.
As AN Donnelly's mouth starts to form question marks.
“What are you talking about? Actual giants being transporting on board? Something that big doesn't exist.” AN Donnelly responds, unsure of what to make of it.
“You sure about that?” I ask, opening my brow, as to ask him to do the same to the possibilities.
“Are you serious?” Goes AN Doe Eyes.
“Of course not, that would be stupid!” I respond.
And you should see the smile I grow, now, and also the frown AN Donnelly sprouts.
“Oh, fuck you!” Goes AN Donnelly.
Knowing I got him good, there, as I go off chuckling my silly head off. I did get him good!

After a few more words and laughs, AN Donnelly leaves, and I stay behind. If he wants to go roll up some Tweakers, let him, I'm not stopping him from all that fun. Let him enjoy it, considering, he won't be getting off Ship come port visit in Hong Kong. He deserves whatever joy he can now get. And. Right now, I'm just spread out here over this roll of electrical lines, the same ones we use to add power to our Jets. Spread out all comfy, since, being out here for over a month, now, I've customized myself to find these unorthodox spots to be such: comfy. Only thing is, I have to keep my balance on one of the rails, so, the roll doesn't turn, and doesn't have me plop ass first down on the deck. Or worse, roll back, and have me float checked over the side. Oh God... over the side. I'm in the position, again, and as I

stretch my head back, bending my neck all the way until I have my head held upside down, looking over the side, I stare at the waters below. But. They don't scare me like they did. The idea of jumping was really fucking with me last night. I've grown accustomed to the idea, and I can't tell you how, or, if that is a good or bad thing. There's always this second side to us. I feel. Another side, hidden, where our minds are fully aware, operating on a level... we don't truly understand. I can be with AN Donnelly, speaking about ATs, Hong Kong, Senior, whatever! Yet, still I feel there's a side of me, where my mind fully operates, on totally different matters. Matters I don't understand, I just gets a feel of, and even with the feel, I don't understand what they are or are about. Anger, joy, sadness, I don't know! What I guess I'm saying, is, I don't understand how I'm feeling right now. I don't! It's the water. The skies above. Plus, the Jets above. The Ship. And here I am in my Flightdeck attire, cold as bloody hell (I said I would note every time I be freezing my nuts off! So, there! FREEZING my nuts off, YET AGAIN!). But, besides all that... Old Ones...? Ha! What a bunch of Lovecraftian nonsense. And, aye! I know about stuff like that. I've read some of his works. Wrote mostly of esoteric ideas and creatures, and concepts, and creatures and concepts beyond our imagining. But, then again, they're not just fictitious horror stories. They do pertain to the human psyche, I feel. And as of right now... mine! Things slowly crawling out of the ocean, that are unseen, and should never be seen, nor heard. And, would be better off never existing.

Ha...!

I don't know... lights! Aye, think about them, Navastian Fuck that whole Old Ones nonsense. Those lights I saw, dancing earlier, while I was doing my launch, those were real unimaginable sights, I feel. Entities, coming and going, coming and going, and are best to take notice of, quickly, to fully remember, because, they only exist briefly. And they won't be around for very long. Not even their memory. And, soon, they will be gone, plus the memories of them forgotten. Because, I chose not to hold onto them. I chose not to.

Hmm... Senior and Falky....
Ah shit!
Come on!
Don't think about them, Navastian! They've done nothing but made you feel like a schmuck. A schmuck, I can't bare continuing to reside as, aboard this Ship. Fuck them two! They don't matter. Those lights mattered! They mattered, because, they mystified me for a second there. Showed me a world I would want to exist in, not like this one, with two very UN-Bravo Zulu Shipmates, I can't stand the sight of. Fuck them two, really! It's all about them creatures of flash and brilliance! Giving me a sense as to what Zeedorf once spoke about: magical language. For they spoke to me, in their own way, they did!

Old Ones....
Ah, come on, don't think about them, again, either!

Oh God! What the hell was that dream about last night? Scared the shit out of me! And, I can't remember why, since, I don't remember the dream anymore. One of those dreams that if you don't hold onto after waking up, you tend to forget. I remember AME3 Echols, his ass, complaining! What was the freakin' scary dream about? I can't remember.

Something about swimming, again, I think?

Yes!

Hmm...?

But, I feel like they still mean something, though, the dreams, that is. They have too! And, they mean something about me, I'm sure! But, I can't allow them to drag me down, drag me down to the bottom. With motherfuckin' Davy Jones, and shit! Motherfuckin' Davy Jones. Down there... now there there's something truly

Lovecraftian, with that Salty Old Horror Show. Ha! Things exist there, that shouldn't. Things exist there, that need to stay there. And should never come to surface....
Ah, crud!
I already spoke about this!

What if Senior was to pop out, now, and see me, skatin', like this? But wait! I'm not skatin' right now! My bird is gone. What should I be supposedly doing right now? But, then again, that wouldn't be the point. I should be taking matters into my own hands, he'd say, and taking initiative to find more work to do, even though there is none. That's what he would bring up. HE WOULD! And not because he has a good point. Just for the confrontation. He's built up some enjoyment in messin' with my ass. And I don't see him ex-continuing. And... why am I thinking about him, again? Fuck!

Fuckin' A! Falky? What if that jackass pops out with ADAN Quimby, and AM3 Katzenberg, and they all try to get their hands on me, again? They all trying to embarrass me, like they did Roach Burger, tieing him by his ankles and....

FUCK! I really can't stop thinking along these lines, can I? Fuck that nonsense, Navastian! Think about them... them. What was I thinking about before? Great! Just great! I'm growing bored and restless and forgetful now with all this “hurry up and wait” crap, waiting for my damn 107 to come back, so I can catch it. Chain it. Daily it. Then spend the rest of my shift scrubbing it—just in case! Navastian, I swear, if you think about that fat fuck, again! Fuck! My mind is just jumping from one thought to another. All ending nowhere. Stationary thoughts not leading to anything. I can't even focus on... what was I focusing on before? Oh, those lights! God, all my thoughts are just so scattered now. Stranded from one another, operating separately and... I'm FUCKIN' bored!

Hong Kong... what about Hong Kong...? Great...! Now I'm FUCKIN' horny!
“Hey Navastian.” Says AM3 Rosario.

And I almost get too excited, then, as I almost roll back, almost float checking my ass off Ship.
“Whoa! Watch it, there!” She goes.
Shakin' her head for how idiotic and clumsy I could be. Not lookin' too interested in calling for man overboard, all of a sudden, for my clumsy ass, just because of a simple “hey.”
“So, what are you up to, Navastian?” She asks... in a longing way?
Is it? Or, is it just me? Oh shit! Thank you! She's hot to me, again. Not like that other night she was coming off a bit too man-ish for me.
“What am I up to? Nothing.” I say.
And seeing her reaction to me, answering, seems to make her get all mopey, all of a sudden. Wait, what's going on here? And... I don't like this. I don't like seeing her being so blue. I don't know why she is. But, she is, and now I feel like consoling.
“What's up, Rosario, how you doing?” I ask.
“I'm okay... I guess.” She answers, very melancholic in tone and posture.
Shit, Navastian, say something. Something cheerful!
“Hong Kong... huh?” I say, seeing if that could come off cheerfully.
“Yeah, Hong Kong.” Responds AM3 Rosario, inconsolably.
“What are you going to do?” I ask.
“Me...?”
And now her eyebrows grow a little playful like.
“I guess... I don't know, yet. Relax, I guess. And... I don't know.”
Seemed like she wanted to throw in a joke. But didn't.
“How about getting totally wasted, and jumping onto a train, and allowing it to take you wherever?” I say, since, that's the first fanciful idea I could come up with.
And... Rosario doesn't respond to that.
“How about... umm? How about...!”
And, I can't come up with anything else to say. And....
“....” Neither can Rosario.
And now the conversation is really going nowhere, as we both start to feel the dreariness. I guess AM3 Rosario hasn't been feeling all too well, and has been

feeling pretty down and mopey. Boat life been getting to her. And she came to me to cheer her up. Which... shit! I'm totally failing to do, now. Fuckin' outstanding! Me and my mopey, frownin', sarcastic ass! I've fucked it up! And, now, she truly seems very down and out, and inconsolable.

“Hey, Rosario?” Throws in a third party.

And... it's AD3 Rudebaker. And, he now seems to be in a very good mood. Smiling. Smiling a lot. And compared to my frowny ass, to the reaction of the AM3, it's very refreshing to see.

“Why you look so mopey—huh, girl?” Asks he, very playfully.

“I don't know?” Says she, very playfully, back.

“What do you mean, you don't know?”

And then, the AD3 Rudebaker looks at me.

“Oh, I see why...! Ha, ha! Don't be hanging out with Navastian, here. The man is a walking soup kitchen, full of long faces. There ain't nothing fun you're going to get out of him.”

MOTHERFUCKER! Fuck you, Rudy! ESFOAD you ASSHOLE (Eat Shit, Fuck Off, And Die)! Just get outta here! GET OUT! Stop smilin' and talkin' to the AM3. You don't even like her, you don't like ANYONE but YOURSELF, so stop talkin'! Only reason you chatting with her now, is, because, you probably want to get some, and...! But, then again.... same as I do… but at least I like her! Shit! Fuck me and how I am right now, so scattered in my thoughts and feelings. “Scattered,” being the word. My mind is just so—that! I can't focus on one single, simple thing to say, at all. Say something, anyways, Navastian! But I can't think of anything to do so and intervene between these two. I'm still feeling not up for it. Feeling too sad and dreary, myself, and now, defeated and overwhelmed. And I know Rudebaker, he'll have a line waiting to shoo me off, if I do come up with something. Making me look stupid and pathetic, and in front of AM3 Rosario. Make me look like a SCHMUCK! FUCK! And that's the last thing I need right now. Fuckin' Rudebaker! Always so fresh. I mean, he’s all over the poor girl right now. Smiling and chattering and mackin' and all, biting his lips, and waiting for AM3 to bite hers back. He's in a fresh mood, fresh and clean mood,

telling one good joke after another, after another. Saying all the right things, and...! FUCK THIS! I'm outta here!

MIDNIGHT TRAIN TO GEORGIA

Out-fuckin'-standing! Now I'm really feeling like a schmuck. A class A, little dick, nobody. Couldn't even get it up when a female came asking. She came to me to cheer her up. She came to me to make her feel better. She was feeling down and out, how we all are, and she came to me to see if I could change all that. And, I had NOTHING to offer. Just same frowny, mopey face to reflect back at her that she came with, making her feel even more depressed. Might as well stick to prostitutes, that's all I'm good for, Navastian. At least you're not going to be someone they'll come to looking to cheer them up, since, you're just another john to them, with a wallet full of cash, and some business. Which you should be full of, now, considering the last month of pay, without spending more than a dime. And she won't even care if you can get it up or not. She'll be like. “Oh, don't worry, honey. It happens. It happens. It....” While staring at the clock on the wall. Aye! That's all you're good for!

SMASH!

And then, down here in the p-ways, heading for my Shop, I find myself punching some electric box, mounted to the side of a bulkhead. And, I dent it in, and nearly have it torn off the wall, save for a few wires holding it in place. And, after doing this, I ask myself: what the fuck is wrong with you? Whiskey Tango Foxtrot, Navastian? I think. But then...!

“Hey, Shipmate... you gone section 8? That's unsat! What the FUCK you DOING?” Goes what I can only presume is a Boat Chuck Khaki, behind me.

Oh, FUCK ME! I think, then. For this a “getting my ass Captain Mast-ed” matter. Shit! Barnacles! Hell! Fuck my timbers!

“Hey, get over here and—”

But then, I make a dash for it.

“Hey, SHIPMATE! STOP! SHIPMATE! I said—”

Right! Right! Stop, Shipmate, stop! Even though no Shipmate of mine. Just another high ranking, Khaki hypocrite, I can presume. That would punish his Airmen/Seamen for the same offenses he'd be guilty of doing, himself. Except, he'd be getting away

with it. Leaving behind such a monumentally great example for all of us to share and follow. “Shipmate” me all you want, I really don't feel like answering to you, NOR SENIOR, in the morning, for what I just did.
“Hey, SHIPMATE!” He goes, one last time.
But my nimble ass gets me out of sight, and out of mind—quick! As I turn a corner, sprint down a p-way, turn again, and head down a ladderwell hatch, heading a couple of flights down, and I am now in Medical. And, I don't hear anyone behind me. Luckily, from the sound of it, he was way further down in the passageway standing behind me, and, like that situation back in Atsugi barracks I had, would have no idea who I was, since, he didn't get a good look at me. Nor I him. I'm in a bit of a dark p-way, now. Very dim and somber looking, which is one of the reasons why I stopped here. Feels like the inside of a hospital (and it should, since it's Medical). And being here, makes me feel a little ill, and a little ill, mentally. What the hell is truly wrong with me? What... huh? I'm just gonna start randomly bashing things, now, whenever I get this way? Is this how things are going to be? Is this going to be the new norm for me? All I need to do is leave these people... THESE PEOPLE! With the impression, that I have fully gone gear adrift, fully gone section 8 in my head, and I'll be done for. Finished! They'll lock me up in our Ship's luxurious Hotel & Casino, Hotel Bread & Water. And deep-six the motherfuckin' key.

NO! SERIOUSLY! That TRULY was something VERY unsat of me to do! WTF is your major mal-fucking-function... huh? Tell me, huh?

And then comes my answer:
“Ha, haaa, ha! Ha, HA, ha, ha, HA!”
And... aye! I guess, I truly have gone Section 8. No refuting it, now.

For... truth be told, I'm enjoying all this. I'm enjoying it. And, now, I feel like breaking more stuff down here. Tearing this motherfuckin' floating tin can down even further. And lookin' up at another mounted object, an emergency light. I...!

“Do it, Navastian, do it! Bash that... huh!”

I get very anxious and angry for some weird reason. Then depressed. And then, a feeling of total loss. It's a truly pitiful light, that can barely hold its own, only capable of illuminating so much, as the rest of the passageway falls gradually into darkness. All while doing this slow and even fading in and out thing. Fading in and fading out. Fading in and fading out. And I'm feeling strangely sentimental and vulnerable, now, as a very profound sense of melancholia happens to follow. There's something to this, there's a lot of intricacies involved, something very intricate, and delicate, and sacred, making me feel now very unimaginably sad. And tired. And then, turning around....

“Hey, Line Rat, stop skatin' your worthless ass so much, and GET BACK TO WORK!” Blasts one AO3 Ramshaw.

I see now, passing me in perpendicular p-way. Rambling his usual ramble, while staring me down, with his usual condescending stare. And, now, whatever sentiment I felt for—I can't tell you what! Fades away, and now I find something else I can target. Set my sights on. And full heartily concentrate all my aggressions on to. To get me my jollies. I'm feeling still pretty inconsolable after that thing with AM3, that thing with punching an electrical box, and after that light thing. And now, I need something like this, in a major way, to get my head straight. So, as he passes, I follow him, and, from a good distance back. I follow him, up a hatch, into the Hangar Bay, through the Hangar Bay, while slouching under all the F-18s, and those Prowlers, and Hawkeyes, and Helos, and now our F-14 Tomcats. But, then, I wonder: so, what am I going to do to him? And I ask myself that, for, I'm not sure as of yet, what to do to the little prick, who all looks funny, walks funny, and all around talks funny. And all jerky in a way, and randomly. No even flow to him even when walking a straight line from point A to B. Such a miserable little creature, he is, making me feel like whatever I do, I should do, and put the fucker out of his misery.

“Hey, Navastian, where are you going? You should have seen it, man! You should have....”

But then AN Donnelly sees my sinister grin, while following the Red Shirt, and immediately now gets it. And then begins to follow, too, while adopting the same sinister grin for himself.
“Ha, ha! What do you plan on doing to him?”
“I don't know yet.” I respond.
As we continue to follow him. Up a ladderwell, through a hatch, and then I see my chance. There's a shop to his left, coming up right after a passage of knee knockers. I see a shop completely vacant and empty, and dark inside. And the plan is now to get him in there, and then see what to do next. I point it out to Donnelly, then. And then, once AO3 Ramshaw steps over the knee knockers, and walks up near The Shop, we make our move, and we rush up and tackle him in there.
“AWW!” Goes the AO3, as we get him, the both of us do.
“AWW! What the... fuck you, Line Rats! Fuck you two! FUCK YOU—HMM, Hmmm, HMM!”
“Hey, where did you get the tape?” I ask AN Donnelly.
“I had it with me from the AT roll up!” He says.
And, Bravo Zulu to him!
“Damn, Navastian, you should have seen it!” He excites.
And, now, I'm excited to hear.
“Hey, watch him. WATCH him!” Informs AN Donnelly
And I see that the AO3 Ramshaw is now trying to roll around and away out of my hold. So, me and Donnelly adjust him onto his stomach, and I sit on top of him, onto his back, so he can't move.
“Hmm, hmm, HMM!” Goes the AO3 Turkey.
“So... how was it, now, the AT roll up?” I pursue.
So utterly fascinated, now, seeing how AN Donnelly is smiling about it, still.
“Oh, man, actually... you think we safe in here?”
And looking around, I see it's some unknown shop I've never seen nor been in before. But, there's no one in here, and I see a lot of gear lying about. Most noteworthy: a rolly chair, a few empty seabags, a HP air hose (oh yeah! I think I remember seeing some dumbass Boat Chucks playing Danger Nut in here, early

during deployment, fucking stupid asses), there's also office equipment, a bunch lying around. Especially scissors, and electrical tape—outstanding! And a CD player—double outstanding! Which is all leaving me with ideas.

“Yeah, I think we're safe, just close the hatch, first, and turn on the lights!” I instruct AN Donnelly to do.

And, he does.

“So, how was it?” I ask, again.

For, I don't know why, but I'm in a special mood. Feeling a real “mission accomplished” form of excitement. As I feel everything is falling more into prospective... somehow? Even after the moments I was having before. But, now, I don't know why or how...?

“Dude, AT2 Sundergaard DESTROYED Barbarossa!”

“NO WAY!” I go.

“YES WAY!” AN Donnelly follows.

“Say it ain't so!” I mope.

Feeling destroyed myself that our pride and joy, Barbarossa, had finally bitten the dust.

“Can't, it HAPPENED!”

And now I feel like shaking my head to that whole notion. What a shame. What a tragedy! What a... with Barbarossa? I never would have wanted or imagined it happening, ever, him finally getting his ass rolled, for once. You know how you have heroes? And all you have is nothing but awe and admiration for those heroes of yours? But then to see them crushed and defeated, well... truly ends up filling you up with a distressful and sad feeling inside. Well, that's me, now.

“That's just so... unsat. I don't even know what to say.” I mope, some more.

Having AN Donnelly all snickering seeing how I'm blowing my discouragement over our AEAN Barbarossa unspectacular fall, way too out of proportion. But that's my sense of humor, go fig.

“You should have seen it, though, seen AT2 Sundergaard in action! When we got to The Shop, first, that pretty little AT3 Oilerking was all—”

“She's pretty, isn't she?” I highlight.

Seeing how AN Donnelly admitted to it. Making me smile, for some reason. I guess I do like her more than I think I do.

“Oh, yeah! That little Kentucky girl can fry me up some chicken, any day!” Goes AN Donnelly.

Having me rollin' with that line. And I can't tell if AN Donnelly is just seeing things two-ten-and-two, getting the wolf eyes, or if she really is that pretty. I can't tell anymore, either! And, really, I don't think I care. For I would like her to fry me up some, too, if she'd please.

“What was she doing?” I ask, knowing Oilerking.

“Well, when we got there, rolling into The Shop to do our thing, Oilerking popped up, and just started going off in front of all of us, going: 'Fuck you, MOTHERFUCKERS! Fuck you!' This and that! And she had us all stop for just a second, to admire how cute she was being while at it. She had a lot of flair when cussin'. Using the f-word, and really sounding it out, loud. And. It was funny watching her cuss her silly little head off like that, which none of us took seriously, even though that's what she was aiming for. And when Kats tried to be funny, and tried to flirt with her, while she was ragin' and cussin', Oilerking got really mad, then, and tackled him. She got a good hold of him, going around, behind his back. But, she couldn't really take him down, considering she has no strength to do anything like that—but still! Kats couldn't do anything about her, either. The little monkey was on his back, and he wasn't able to pry her off. She was just so feisty! I think she got us all excited just seeing how rattlin' mad she could be! Just rattlin'! That's the word I'm using to describe it, considering how bad she was shaking when mouthing us all off. I bet, in High School... she was that angry, angsty goth chick, you'd see in black. All black, except for her white milky smooth skin. The really angry and freaky type, you know! Also, a complete freak under the sheets. I bet you money she's got a whole bunch of wicked tattoos all over her cute little body, of skulls and spiders and shit, if you were to get her naked to see them all, of course.”

And now, taking that all in, I grow a little horny, all to AO3 Ramshaw's discomfort.

“Then what happened?” I ask.

“Then what happened... Sundergaard, man! Sundergaard is what fuckin' happened! I mean, we rushed in, fucked up a lot of those nerdy ass ATs, quick, but then in a far end of their shop, we just saw him get up!”
“Him, huh?” I go.
“Yeah... him! When he got up, we all just paused for a second. He then turned around, looked at us, took off those stupid dorky glasses of his, those BCGs, took off his green flight jacket, and just started HOLLERIN'!”
“Hollerin'?” I awe.
“Oh, yeah, HOLLERIN'! Which scared the fuck out of all of us. He then rushed us all, and just started decom-ing us Turd Shirts, left and right, like a dumptruck on a rampage, running us all over. Decommissioned Quimby, real quick. Then it was him and Barbarossa.”
“How did the big Mexican go down?” I ask, then.
“Not gracefully!”
And, now, I'm frowning again.
“He grabbed Barbarossa, spun him around, and threw him into a bunch of us. Then ran up, and jumped high, and landed on top of all of us.”
“On top of ALL YOU?” I go.
“Right!” Finishes AN Donnelly.
As we pause for a moment, in retrospect, of what he witnessed. And now we go onto what's really exciting about the hour.
“So, what should we do with him?” Ponders AN Donnelly.
And it's then that I know exactly what to do.
“Donnelly...?”
“What?”
“Let's put him on a midnight train to Georgia.”
And with me saying that, with AN Donnelly listening, I see his eyes light up when I does so.
“I don't know, Navastian, do we have time for that shit? The birds should be due back not very long from now.” AN Donnelly informs.
“Fuck it! We'll make time.”

Here's something we have in our Shop that hasn't been used in a while, remember how I told you The Shop (I guess) used to be wilder and crazier with Falky's Golden Age days, way back when? Well, there used to be this thing called the “Wheel of Misfortune,” we had. A piece of cardboard some Line Rat, in them olden days, stuck a spinny pointer onto, and labeled all around, all of our Line Shack's traditional forms of torture, hazing, we've all conflicted onto one another over the years. Or, onto other, outside prey, such as AO3 Ramshaw, here. Aye! That's right! Roger that! Navy hazing turned into a board game. It's an old game that's not used anymore. We no longer going around with it, spinning the spinner, to see what mischievous shit we would be performing on our helpless victims. Mostly, since, the spinner doesn't spin that well anymore, and most of us are too lazy to fix it or replace it. But we still use some of those old acts of hazing, with colorful names such as: “Flamin' Pinata” and “Kiss the Gunner's Daughter” and “Midnight Train to Georgia.” That particular last one was added way, way, way back. Based on the tale: there being this one Airmen from the state of Georgia, that wouldn't STFU how homesick he was. Some real cross-eyed nitwit, that was always getting a Disciplinary Review Board, or, DRB for short, and, had developed an anxiety for Khaki, a phobia (Khaki-phobia, ha! I guess you can call it), considering how often he was getting chewed out by them. So, what the boys did to help alleviate the Airman's anxiety was... well! I don't want to give it away. So, you'll see.

(Although, ha! Hazing turned into a board game called the “Wheel of Misfortune.” Something simply grotesquely fascinating and totally funny about all that. And it feels like I’ve seen something like that before, and before I even joined the Navy. Wow… going really back. To when I was a kid watching… a cartoon? A Looney Toon-ish cartoon? And to the classical soundtrack of Raymond Scotts’ Powerhouse playing over most of it. And then, “Oh, no, not kissing the Gunner’s Daughter! Not that! No, woe is me, woe is me—not that. Anything but that! Noooooooo!” Whiskey Tango Damn! I just had a flashback to that. Wow! Okay…? Whatever…!)

“Does Falky even carry that CD around anymore, I mean, I've never seen the older PCs use it, yet?” Asks AN Donnelly.
“Neither have I, I've just heard the stories, mostly, I'll head to The Shop and find out.” I answer.
“So, how are we going to transport this guy from here, all the way to Maintenance?” Asks Donnelly.
And with my eyes, I look over at the seabags, and give him the answer.
“Ramshaw is a small guy, but, he won't fit in a seabag!” Donnelly argues.
“That's why we'll use two and tape up the ends.” I answer.
AN Donnelly then looks to one side, then another, then builds up the mood, seeing how much fun this is going to be, and then confirms his undivided participation to what we're about to do with a nod.
“All right, first things first, let's tape the fucker up.” I say.
And, so, we begin. AN Donnelly holds him down, while I grab the tape to begin. But, then, looking into AO3 Ramshaw's lonely eyes, I kinda gets discouraged. Maybe I'm going too far? I think. So, I decide to give the Missouri boy one last chance to redeem himself to us.
“Hey, Ramshaw, I'm having a change of heart.”
“What?” Goes Donnelly.
“I'm having a change of heart. Say something nice about us Brown Shirts, for once, and I'll let you go.” I say.
And AN Donnelly then begins to snicker, seeing as to where I'm going with this, and removes the tape we have on the Tennessee boy's mouth.
“Well?” I wait.
AO3 Ramshaw then looks all contemplatively to one side, as if assessing it over with himself, then looks at me, and lets me hear what me, and Donnelly, REALLY want to hear:
“FUCK you, fuckin' faggoty ass, COCKSUCKING, piece-of-shit, MOTHER—Hmm, hm, hm!”
And, with that, AN Donnelly tapes up his mouth, again, and we begin fully mummifying the little shit, with the electrical tape I had found. Then, we pick him up,

and begin trying to stuff him into one of those seabags. From here to Maintenance, it's a bit of a stretch, a bit of a journey, and we can't have anyone seeing how we're carrying this AO all taped up as he is now. We won't be able to get away with it! It just wouldn't work. So, in the seabag, he goes! In he goes! Get in there! Get! Now! Shove him in there, Donnelly, use all your muscle. Stop struggling, Ramshaw! Stop it! Stop your mangy ass! You're going in, whether you like it, or not! You're going in! Motherfucker... there you go! There you be! Out of breath, now, aren't you? Well, I told you you're going in. And there was nothing you could have done about it. So, there really was no need for all that fight you put up. Of course, we have to use two seabags, on each end of Ramshaw, to get him in, completely. So, no part of him could be visible. And, now, we're putting the rest over his... STOP! Stop kicking! Stop! Fuckin' A! So resistant. Well, once again, all that energy, for no good reason. And now, we tape the two ends together, so they don't part.

“He's flopping around, a lot, people are going to notice two seabags taped together, with something alive stuffed inside.” Remarks AN Donnelly.

As me and him look down at Ramshaw, stuffed in both seabags, trying to flop and worm and roll about. All in bold protest of his predicament.

“Stop it, Ramshaw, stop it! Or we'll make you pay!” I threaten.

And now, AO3 Ramshaw begins to even more violently flop and worm and roll about.

“What do we do?” Asks AN Donnelly.

And, I show him what. I pick up the seabag by the two shoulder harnesses, and I swing it around, and into a bulkhead, hard and fast.

“Hmm!” Goes AO3 Ramshaw, in pain.

“I'll do it again, Ramshaw, if you keep fighting like... ah shit!”

But, it seems like the Red Shirt hasn't been taught his lesson. And, this time, AN Donnelly picks up the seabags, weight lifts the motherfucker over his head, and just chucks it against the same bulkhead. And...!

“HMMMM!” Goes Ramshaw.

And I know that had to have seriously hurt, for, the Virginia boy isn't physically showing any more signs of protest. And, we have him at docile.

“Okay, wait here while I run back to The Shop, and get the CD. If, that is, IS3 Falky still carries it in his case.” I instruct.

And AN Donnelly just smiles, waiting. And, honestly, I can't believe he's really going along with me wanting to do all this. For, if caught, this could get ugly. Truth is, hazing of this level is strictly forbidden on an official basis. Truth is, I know the Navy would like to paint an image that hazing no longer really goes on, on Ship. And incidences, like these, only occur once in a blue moon, by only a couple of bad apples, and, only by them, for, the rest of the fleet is nothing like this. I think that's how they like to paint it as? To all non-Navy service members, especially when Hollywood movies are concerned. Honestly, I have that movie, another Tom Cruise movie, called A Few Good Men, now playing out in my head. And I think about how that entire movie revolves around one hazing incident. Just ONE! Just one, involving a couple of Jarheads deciding to give a PFC a blanket party, and the rest of the movie revolves around just that one, alone (mind you, since, the poor PFC is killed! Spoiler alert!). But, what pisses me off, then, is, how the rest of the flick is all trying to be about HONOR and DUTY, but the movie is still about hazing. And those Marine hazers have their heads so far stuck up their asses, and... WHATEVER THE FUCK! Ha! As if it only happens once in a while. And, as if it has anything to do with HONOR and DUTY, like those two Marines in that flick try to make it out to be. EVERYDAY! This all goes on EVERY single FUCKIN' DAY! And, not for honor or duty, but, because we all SADISTICALLY enjoy torturing each other, all we can do! Not for the sake of the unit, and all for the sake of our personal fancies, for, it gives us catharsis, for how restless and worthless we feel, day in and day out. Hazing like this be going on all the live long day. And, we got Wog Day coming up, when me and Donnelly will have Falky and the boys shoving Tabasco bottles down the cracks of our asses and have us sucking or blowing out disgusting Wog water out of Padeyes. And have us kissing the belly of a fat, hairy Chief, dressed up as Aphrodite, with coconut shells for brassieres, and a mop on his head for a wig. Falky and the boys will be all over us, and, since me and AN Donnelly are still pollywogs, and no Shellbacks, we're just going to have to take it.

But, anyways, I'm in The Shop, now. And just before the hatch, I peek in to see if anyone is around. And, luckily for me, not even the IS3 and his skatin' ass is in. And now, I'm trying to find that CD in Falky's CD case. Which is a big black leather case filled with mostly the sort of music only a twenty-two year old male, like Falky, would be into, raised with today's musical tastes: Linkin Park, more Linkin Park, Paul Okenfold, Van Halen (Falky's nostalgia mix), and... Dido? There's those, some Papa Roach, some Drowning Pool, and several others not very noteworthy. (You know, they say you can learn a lot about a man from a man's CD case. And, won't judge Falky, can't judge, really! I also have a Barnacles-load of Linkin Park. My favorite being their Reanimation LP. Back as a Trainee in Atsugi kichi, I can't tell you how many times I listened to that Reanimation track by Linkin Park while walking to my barracks home after a long day and night of work. Somewhere around a million. Feels good on my CD player, the sight of faded trees in my peripherals, and some hard tracks while the wind cuts cold, walking home to go play some Metal Gear Solid 2 on my PS2. Personally, I can't stand Nu Metal. But, also, personally I can't distinguish it as anything but the music of our generation. Although, listening to Led Zeppelin a lot, also, makes me realize how I might have just been born in the wrong era). And then I find one Midnight Train to Georgia by Glady's Knight & the Pips. I grab that and begin making my way back. And I need to hurry. My Jet is due back at any minute, and I need to be up at the Ratways when it arrives. Getting back to Donnelly, we grab all the right items needed, and begin making our way to Maintenance. Donnelly carries AO3 Ramshaw in the seabags, over his shoulder, as I roll the rolly chair, with the CD player placed on the seat. This takes a while dealing with hauling this much stuff through hatches, and over knee knockers, and me having to pick up the rolly chair, every so often, to get pass them. Then another pair of knee knockers, then another. Once getting to Maintenance, we make sure not to pass the open counter to the offices, that's in full display, for anyone to pass by in the p-ways. Made that way so anyone can pass by, and throw in a word of info, and take one from them fat Chiefs all stuffed in there, munching on potato chips, and pretending not to be hittin' on the pretty little Filipina PN3 that works for them in there, too. Pretending not to, since, that would be fraternization, which officially

NEVER goes on, on board. For that would be unsat, and going against the Bluejacket's manual of codes of conduct. Anyways... ahem! We evade as much being seen by them as possible in the p-way, and duck right into the Ready Room. The Ready Room is a large room filled with comfy looking leather chairs, with our Bloody Shamrock's emblem all sewn onto them all. A large room filled with equipment, and, mostly used by the pilots, usually having their pre or post flight consultations. We enter there, since, it's also vacant, and begin getting AO3 ready. Getting him out of the seabags, then seating him onto the rolly chair, we tape the CD player to AO3 Ramshaw's lap, and places the CD in.

“We need to move it! It'll be our asses if the Jets arrive, and, we're not up top to catch them!” Concerns Donnelly.

And, I can't refute his concerns, there, so we hurry it up, rolls the chair out near Maintenance, and now is the part that requires nerves of steel. We, I and Donnelly, are nervous now, as we feel how animate and anxious we both are of either of us either being successful with the next part, or, not, and getting caught. We need to roll AO3 Ramshaw into the middle of Maintenance, while the track begins to play. And truth is, the Chiefs in there aren't going to be too pleased seeing this Third Class in the middle of their shop, while a music track plays:

I'm gonna be with him...

On that midnight train to Georgia.

Seeing this pissed off, sweaty, stinky, tied up Third, all moanin' and jerkin' around in their presence, while the Chiefs in there are more preoccupied with the birds arriving at any minute. Not wanting any distractions, with while their attentions are predetermined on more important, and less juvenile, matters. The scene might cause a chuckle or two from the Khakis in there, but, after that one or two, they're gonna want BUTTS. Either ours, mine and Donnelly's, for orchestrating all this waste of time. Or, the AO3s, since, he's the only one they can focus all their vexations onto. And, as we hold our breaths, we take the moment to make it happen, beginning the track.

LA proved too much for the man

(too much for the man)

(he couldn't make it)
“Hey, what's that music?” Goes Chief Culpepper, from inside Maintenance.
And as we open the door, we roll AO3 Ramshaw in without being seen. And the two of us hightail it the fuck outta there! Laughing our asses, all along the way.
So, he's leaving the life he's come to know
(he said he' going)
“What the hell... what the hell is this?”
“What the...?”
He said he's going back to find
(going back to find)
What's left of his world
The world he left behind
“Ramshaw! What the fuck?”
“We don't have time for this!”
Not so very long ago
Oh yeah
“Hmm, hmm!”
“Someone get him outta here!”
“Get out, Ramshaw! ROLL your ass out, as you rolled your ass in!”
He's leaving
(leaving)
“Hmm, hmm, hm, hmm!”
On that midnight train to Georgia
“RAMSHAW!”
And that last one, there, is our Maintenance Master Chief, waking up from his slumber. Still in his Maintenance chair. And, it's lucky for us two, he's the last person we hear as we make our escape up to the Flightdeck, with the nearest hatch exit. Hearing him that mad, and that loud, lettings us know that the prank was a success! Played out beautifully. And Ramshaw is in for the most major ass chewing in his Navy career.

CHAINHAULER MAN

I'm coming to a certain understanding. I don't want to be punching inanimate objects, anymore. And. I don't want to be afraid of stepping into our own damn shop, fearing what Senior, or Falky, or whoever, has in store for me in there. Anymore, either! And, most of all, I DON'T want to think about stupid shit like jumping Ship, or having dreams that I might. Having fears that I might, because, I fear I might be going section 8. I don't want none of that confounded, dizzy-headed, crazy-ass nonsense! Not that, nor that Old Ones bullcrud I've grotesquely been fascinated with, and fancying. I don't WANT IT! NONE of it! NOT no more! But, what I do want, is... some respect. Some recognition. And some camaraderie—some FREAKIN' camaraderie for once. And if the Navy's definition of camaraderie is tieing motherfuckers up and setting motherfuckers on fire, I guess I'll play along. Well, I won't be setting motherfuckers a flambéing (I ain't that evil), but, I will tie their ass up, and roll their ass into Maintenance, to hear all them Chiefs siccing onto the poor schmo, and chewing that poor schmo out a new one. Because. That really was a whole lot of fun! I did enjoy myself, there, immensely! And now, I want more of it. More of that stuff. Especially for Squid Dicks like AO3 Ramshaw. Fucking Mr. Petty Officer: “I'm gonna find the most opportune time to say something very mean and insulting when my Shipmates be feeling at their worst!” Fuck you, Ramshaw! You little prick! You were just begging me to do that to you. I saw how your eyes lit up when you lit me up, before. Asshole! Fuck you! Next time feel glad I don't roll your ass down a flight of stairs, instead of rolling your ass into a pool of Khaki sharks. MOTHERFUCKIN' MOTHERFUCKER! I need MORE! AO3 Ramshaw wasn't enough. I needs someone more deserving of my wrath. But who? And how? I can't say for certain, yet. But, eventually it would be Falky, and....

All right, fine!

I don't know how I'd pull something on a Senior Chief Petty Officer of the Navy and get away with it. But I can scheme, can't I? I can plot. Machinate. Conspire. And figure my way around doing these things. And, something tells me that, that all is what's going to be half the fun (I think, maybe, Senior needs some dirty dicking

done to his beloved coffee mug in The Shop. He, he!). But... honestly! The idea of stooping to this fills me up with a mouthful of Barnacles, also. Because, it really isn't in my nature to be like this, and, be full on vindictively plotting shit with predatory eyes for any of these poor Joe Schmo Squids. But, this is me playing their game, the game they want me to play, because, this is what = camaraderie for them. Night in, night out, I am always in the vicinity of all these Joe Squids. Shipmates, that are no Shipmates of mine. And, I just can't stand how I can't relate with any of them. We be all around each other, night in night out, so close to one another, in each other's business, that, if hostilities were to dominate our better judgments, we'd tear each other limb from limb, within seconds. Yet, it doesn't have to be so. We could have communication. I could communicate with Kats and show him I can be just as cool and clever as he is. I sense his standards, and, I'd like to try and match them. I see Roach Burger—fuckin' Roach Burger, even! And I know he's a fuck up, that up till now, I have done nothing but exemplify how little I think of him, as does the rest of The Shop. But, the thing is, I feel like if I could set that all aside, and just be friendly with him—for once! Roach Burger, or Rauschenburger, could be a lot of fun to be around. And not from the fun I could derive smacking him around. Being all abusive. Nothing to do with disrespectful shit like that. There's this childlike flair about him, the type, that fills you up with a lot of goof and chuckle, and carefree bliss. Same as what's to be expected from prepubescent fun, with a bunch of kids, not all hung up on their own ego, since, they haven't discovered what that all really means, just yet. I feel it could be that way between us two. And as for our IS3, Mr. Petty Officer HiMFIC, “you look up to me while lookin' down,” because, that's how he was raised to be. As for him, I feel like I know his story. Call me psychic, but, I know it, before he's even had the chance to tell me about it. Because, I can just tell: his story is the story that's written in the wrinkles around the corners of his mouth, showing how much he's had to shout to get anywhere. I know he was the kid that had to grow up fast—REAL FAST—and take lead in his family. And, had to, really quickly, to overcome his stature and limitations. Either because of a drunken father, or one that wasn't there. Or worse, one that was there, but as a worthless mooch trying to pass his mooch genes to the rest of his children. I can tell Falconni came from a

household where there were at least five other siblings, and they were all bigger than him, but they were also a lot like his good-for-nothing dad, and Falk was the one left taking on all the responsibilities at a very early age. Not saying that that has to be his story, one hundred percent, dead on, but, I bet it's in the vicinity. I know Falky's story, yet, we're not supposed to know anything about one another. And why? I don't know! There's these boundaries, invisible boundaries, between us all, which we live and breathe in. While being in the same spaces, and yet, we might as well be worlds apart. There's these boundaries in between us, keeping us from relating with one another. Really coming together as a group or team. And being a part of what we're meant to be a part of, considering, we're all in this fight together as a family. We're supposed to be, but, we ain't. Why? I don't know. I just can't tell you. I really just don't know. So, we sit, or stand, or hang around each other. Worlds apart. Passively anguishing away tolerating each other's presence, since, we really all should be enemies, considering how much bile there is between us. We all a cesspool of bile, boredom, fatigue, hatred, and morbidity. But then, it's moments like Roach Burger laying a giant fart, and everyone beginning to laugh, and playing out their custom spiels of dealing with such an occasion: "ha, ha, it wasn't me." That has me really growin' fiercely pierced, pissed off angry. Aye! There you go! Outstanding! Let clichés save the day. Stupid trite remarks. Let them do the work, since, we're putting no effort into it, ourselves, to co-exist with one another in a more meaningful manner. Fuck real communication, let's make stupid pointless fart jokes! Make lame ass repetitive and redundant, hackneyed fart jokes, that we've all heard over a million times, and let that work its way as glue to keep us together. But, then again, everyone else seems to enjoy it. Maybe I'm looking for too much, when the little that is being offered is really enough to make it happen? I don't know. I just don't know! I really just don't know. And, if it isn't stupid trite shit like that, it's all the other stuff we do to each other, being the means we've come to establish as a means to relate. And if that's the glue that's needed, so be it, too. Stuff like making horrible black jokes about how much ADAN Muwangi looks like some angry ape, that looks to belong in a zoo. I saw how that occasion brought us all together. Or, how ripping the pants and skivvies off of Roach Burger were the measures needed to get a Boat

full of PCs, all enjoying a good laugh. Even those Jarhead females were one with us and the same, at Roach Burger's expense. And, if it's measures like that that needs to be taken—so be it! I'm willing to play out my part, since, I'm neck deep in these fecal waters. Which I don't plan on drowning in. God, I'm such a mopey, frowny bastard, I can't stand the sight of. Think I, while staring at my mug, in the head mirror. Flight Ops are over with, my Daily has been done. They moved my Jet, then moved it again. And then again. And I luckily finished doing all that, before, I was about to piss my pants, breakriding for about an hour. And, now, I'm down here. And, staring at my face, covered in soot, and whatever other crap that accumulates on a Flightdeck, that I'll have to worry about in twenty years, giving me cancer. I'm staring at my tired mug, and, I feel tired of being this Navastian character, here. Just as tired as I'm sure you're tired of hearing about. About my lousy ass. Since, there's so many more interesting characters that should be the protagonist in this tall, Navy, no shittin' tale, I'm telling you all about. Characters like AN Donnelly. Or, AE3 Brockhausen. Ha! Even AE2 Frankowsky. Or a freakin' pilot. The adventures of Mr. Hanky and Mr. Panky, those two Top Gun Ace jackasses, you all would rather read about, since, they're the ones flying these badass motherfuckin' Jets, instead of spending all day and night long hand wiping them. Oh God! Self-pity much, Navastian? You freakin' schmuck! I think, now. And, now, I'm through.

“Fuck this, I'm heading for The Shop, to get another jacket, beginning to get balls to the wall freezing up there.” I say to myself.

And, after some circumnavigation, I now stand before the hatch to the Line Shack, again, tonight, and from the sound of the commotion I hear brewing within, I know, once inside, I won't be alone.

“Motherfuckin' motherfucker!”

Blasts forth someone from behind the hatch, as I realize I'm playin' out the same scenarios, over and over and over again, as what seems like around the same time and place. But, this time, I ain't questioning my convictions, of whether or not it's worth heading in, and placing myself at the mercy of those blood thirsty pirates, I

call my fellow Shipmates. For, if they say something, this time, I'll just murderize the fuck out of all of 'em!

“I swear, the next motherfucker that steps in here is getting tossed over the motherfuckin' side! Tossed!”

“What the fuck are you yapping about, now, Quimby?” I ask.

And, aye! It's Quimby, and the IS3, down here, like they were some three to four (can't tell you how many) nights before. But, no IYAOYAS crap on our bulkhead, this time. So, I step in, and go straight for the metal boxes, to see what I can find. Something without a whole bunch of holes in them. Or funky lookin'. Or, looks to be molding over. And mold developing over polyester, I think, is an amazing feat to see take place. Must add. But that's Ship life for ye! We livin' in a world of salt and fungus, condiments and shrooms, so make yourself a nice salad—and chow down!

“....” Says both Quimby and the IS3.

And I'm guessing they're not sure of what to make of me and my boldness, at this very moment. But, as I sneak a peek at Quimby, I see he's doing that lookin' at me all tilted thing again. All uneven Steven with what to make of me.

“Hey, Navastian, you know something about someone going through my CD case?” Asks the IS3.

And now, I'm not feeling so bold anymore. Because, I have his answer, and I don't feel like sharing it.

“No!” I respond.

“Because, right now, Maintenance is all Charlie Foxtrot—”

“Wait, what?” I go.

Since, don't know that acronym. The IS3 is now at eyes slit.

“Charlie Foxtrot means: clusterfuck, Navastian! Maintenance is a clusterfuck! Someone grabbed AO3 Ramshaw and pulled a 'Midnight Train to Georgia' on him, and the Chiefs in Maintenance aren't very happy about that.”

And now I feel sweat developing within the follicles of my face. As I think about just how bad the ramification would be, if all parties are discovered.

“Now, I don't think you had anything to do with it. You're too much of a limp noodle to be pulling something that bold.”

And now, Falconni, just so happens, manages to say exactly what he's deeming to say, to get me to react how he's deeming for me to react. Because, I react in that way: head poppin' up, quick, lookin' very rash and fierce, and lookin' like I'm unwilling to take a line like that coming from him. Pretty much spelling out—I had ALL to do with what happened! Fuckin' Falconni! Fuckin A! He's good at this! Damn good at it, too!

“I mean, it's cool! I mean... I like what that person did. It's funny. Motherfuckin' Ramshaw? Ha! I'd love to see that peckerwood gettin' chewed out by all those Khakis in there. And by motherfuckin' Master Chief Dreadnaught, too? Boy... almost makes me feel sorry for him, then. But, those Maintenance Chiefs want blood, now, and me and IS3 would like to know who it was.” Explains Quimby.

Also, being very direct with me in an indirect way. And, truth be told, the big Georgia boy isn't exactly as dumb as he looks, even though, he likes to make himself out to be. His passion might be in the mindsets of a rascally child, but his ponderings, when applied, can be anything but. And now he seems on the same level as the IS3 on this matter.

“So, you wondering if I know something about it?” I ask.

But, from their eyes, I can tell they expecting me to divulge a lot more than just that.

“We're wondering who would be stupid enough to pull this during Flight Ops, that's what we're wondering.” Mentions Falconni.

Not even looking at me, same as Quimby. And. Now I let something else slip.

“So, what? We're doing this shit all the time, and—”

“Aye! But to pull shit like this during Flight Ops? Fuckin' FLIGHT OPS? And now you're just BEGGING for Khaki to fully get involved. Sure! They don't give a shit about stuff like this on a regular basis. But when it's show time! And there's actual missions involved, and birds up in the sky, no matter if they're still just training missions, they want everyone on point, and NOT fuckin' around.”

Falconni is now giving me mean stares, he's looking right at me, and through me, and I now know he knows. And, he isn't just suspecting. Although, Falconni did have good assessment over what he just said, now that I think about it. Making me feel stupid about this whole matter. So obtuse of me! I think it was once Chief Culpepper

that once said: “murder each other all you want, just don't do it with the birds around!” And, he said this after catching a couple of AEs fuckin' around, playin' slap and tickle, while chasing wires on top of 110—I think it was? (AEs are called Wirechasers, for, when there's a bad connection, they're the ones going through the entire bird to find it. This all = chasing wires). But anyways! Aye! AEC Culpepper saw these two jackasses at play, and he came storming out, hollering at both. Then fed them that line, while having one hand over the bird, as if petting it. Going “there, there,” as if to comfort the damn inanimate object for how rough the boys were fucking around, around it. The worry being, they might do something harmful to the Jet, while trying to do something harmful to each other. Really, we're allowed to do all that we do to each other, all we please. But when birds are concerned, and with tonight's case of Flight Ops, it's only then it matters. I mean, multimillion dollar Jets? Human life? It's pretty obvious where the Navy places any true value.

“Is the AO3 Ramshaw talking?” I ask.

As that whole possibility occurs to me. And, now I'm dreading that he might have. Now, really, dreading that they'll force him to dime us out, if the Khakis are to make THAT much of a big deal about it. Instead of just chewing his ass off and slapping him along his merry way. And forgetting any of this ever happened (what they would have done at any other time).

“They're not gonna ask him that! I mean, they're pissed, but, they still understand the code for ratting Shipmates out. But, instead, they are going to take this opportunity to make an example of our Shop.” Responds the IS3.

“Our Shop? If Ramshaw didn't dime us out, then, how do they—”

“Ramshaw still slipped out some info, saying 'fuckin' Line Rats,' when they tore off the electrical tape from his mouth. And, they're going to take that in as evidence that WE were involved. Even though the Khakis won't force Ramshaw to dime out any Shipmate, they'll still listen in with open ears if Ramshaw decides to volunteer any info.” Explains the IS3.

And now, I can see where this is going. And, I can see the IS3 has grown fed up of me getting Khaki involved, with how he's running Nights. First Senior, and now Maintenance. But...!

“All right! That's some pretty jacked up shit!” I respond.
Showing some serious air of indifference. As I DILLIGAFs the fuck out of this. And now, I try to leave, now, that I've found a worthy jacket to keep me warm for the rest of the night: with woolen inner lining to boot, woot!
“Senior is going to hear about this in the morning, you know.”
And now the IS3 has my full and undivided attention, once again. I turn around, stare him right in the eyes, and I now begin to wonder just how much practice in Blue Falconry our IS3 is willing to make, to hold onto his position as Night Check's second. That is, if, he's worried that that'll be the cost of what Senior will do as punishment, for what me and Donnelly did.
“How is Maintenance planning on dealing with us for wha—”
“Motherfuckin' Senior, Navastian, they know Senior, and they're going to make sure there's more of him to deal with, on Nights, after this mess. There ain’t no knowing what the extent will be. And more than just making a couple rounds every couple of nights.” Answers Quimby.
All indirect with his stares, even though staring right at me. And he's not the only one. Not anymore. And, both their stares are now seeming to bubble up from what's boiling up underneath. And, I know now that they might try something on me. And... ah shit! I can sense it, plainly now, too, they're going to try something! Both seeming very imposing as shit, all of a sudden, as their form begins to grow with physical threat.
“All right!” I say.
As I pick up a link of chain, and place it around my neck, very quickly! And they know I don't plan on using it up on my 107, to tie it down, further. I mean, according to the Pubs, least amount of chains required to tie down an F-14 Tomcat is three on the beach and six on the Boat (which is what my 107 is tied down with now). Then additional chains for poorer conditions. And in really bad conditions, such as if we were to sail into stormy weather, it's twelve chains, then. But. Since the seas are calm where we're at, there's presently no need for any additional chains. Let alone, just this one I got around my neck. For, requiring it, would only mean, I require it for something else, besides tieing my bird down any further.

“All right....” I say again.
As I sweat a little, fidget a little, then take a big gulp, and then I let them have it:
“All right... so until Senior comes in in the morning. What do YOU TWO plan on doing about—”
And now, Quimby lunges at me, with his mitts out—fully extended! And. I swing the chain around at full capacity. And. If it's to tear through Quimby, it's to tear through him. So be it.
“MOTHERFUCKER!” Quimby bellows.
In pain, as the chain link cuts at his fingers, and almost makes them bleed. And he's smartin' now, bad. Really bad! So bad, seeing how red his fingers got, after swinging, that I start to feel the pain, too.
“HEY!” Blasts Falconni.
His eyes fully open, seeing to how much violence I'm willing to let cut loose, if, these two think they can roll me up, and do whatever else for their unofficial shit.
“Hey... WHAT? I'm not having that!” I say.
“How about you stop being such a slippery little shit, and admit to—”
“Fine! I admit it! It was me!”
And now the two grow silent, exhaling sighs, and lookin' like they want to shake their heads at me. Quimby then QUICKLY tries to lunge forward, again. But I react, quickly, again, also, and have the chain swinging, but not to graze him as I did before. Only to intimidate. And still seeming to be smartin' from the pain I inflicted last, he flinches, and now knows if he's to get his hands on me, there's a lot of pain that will follow.
“HEY! I said I'm not HAVING IT!” I blast.
“Well, we're not having YOU and YOUR stupid ass, on motherfuckin' Night Check, fuckin' up our shit, as you have been for the past few nights!” Responds Quimby.
While licking his fingers, like a wounded animal would do.
“So, what you two going to do about it?” I ask again.
Now dreading the official measures, they might take.
“Well, how about we just take this up with Senior.” Responds the IS3.
And he has me there. Really, truly, has me there.

“You'd dime me out?”
“It's not dime-ing out, if it's in the house!”
“Then YOU handle the matter, Falconni. YOU handle it! NOT Senior.” I demand.
And now I have Falky chewing his lip and growing weary.
“I'm willing to take whatever you'd have for me. Fine, have me wiping all the Jets, here on Nights, even past the point Senior won’t be willing to do any rounds, since he’ll be getting shut eye then. Or doing... something or another. Give me a bag of dicks to sort through. Just let it be you, and not Senior, punishing me with shit to do. I mean, I'm very sure you know Senior, and how he ain't exactly playin' on the same team. He's a nutcase, Maintenance placed in charge of us, because, the Squadron wants a freakin' Battle E!” I explain.
“I know that, Numbnuts, and I'm pretty sure you originally heard that from me.”
And... fine! I guess I can be a little too rhetorical sometimes. Since Falky is right. He was the first person I heard all this from, way back before Senior even got to our Shop. Truth is, if anything ruined Falky's Golden Age years of being in The Shop, it wasn't us new PCs having been qual-ed in the last few months, coming up in ranks... even if that's what Falky likes to think. Asking me, and I'll say it was truly all thanks to the fat Hawaiian, and his overly personal and direct ways of handling matters. He's what's made the Line Shack what it is now. The Line Shack, I do believe, was a lot more fun. And less fun in the: “every Line Rat for himself” way we have it now. I do think before him, we might have been getting along a lot better. Aye! There being hazing, still! Lots of it! But, not this vindictive about it. Now? Senior has made us more hostile, if not rowdy. LET ME EXPLAIN: the difference there being, it was all for good fun, before, and not like now, where we're almost EVERY night inches away from going full coarse on each other. Getting really violent! And straight up attacking one another. That I do believe is the biggest difference between the old Line Shack, and the new. And what has really been getting to the IS3 the most, whether he's aware of it or not.
“So, you still want to dime me out?” I ask.
And I can see it in Falky's eyes, that he won't go there. He just won't, out of principal, even though he wouldn't mind personally seeing me thrown under.

“You're still a fuckin piece-of-shit!” Expresses the IS3.
“Fine, like I give a shit, hearing that coming from you!” I say.
“Shitbag!” Notes Quimby.
“I'm no Shitbag, no more than anyone ELSE not on their Jet, when they should be!” I say to Quimby, looking right at him.
“You think you're better than us.” Expresses the IS3, again.
And now I feel like fully opening up to that matter. But then, what I want to say, doesn't come out, and all that does is a simple:
“Maybe.” I say.
To the IS3, as the IS3 nods.
“I figured so.” He then says.
Nodding to himself, in accordance, and looking away. And now I'm pissed.
“Falconni, go fuck yourself! And I mean that from the bottom of my heart!”
And Falconni rolls his eyes at that.
“No, really! For making my life a living misery, for the past month on the Boat, go—”
“Life right now is miserable for ALL OF US! ASSHOLE!” Responds Falconni.
And he looks at me as if he's saying something very important, there. Sharing his perspective of how he sees different and trying to shatter my own. But I gets it!
“All right! I know.”
“No, you don't!”
“No, I get it!”
“No, you don't! Your type never gets it! Your type only get yourself, and that's it! Because, your type are really the worse type of people that there is out there. Always thinkin' only YOU go through these things, what in all actuality, everyone does. Only you do, with struggles, and making yourself feel special for having done so.”
And, the thing is... I now see that the IS3 is being as candor and sincere to me as he's ever been. Which really throws me off, and, so does the same with Quimby, as well.
“Let me explain something to you, I see you, and all I see is some jerk off that's always focused on himself, and how cruel everyone is to him, all the time. Always

playin' the role of the victim, and never seeing anything past all that." Explains the IS3.
And... honestly. Fuck him! Fuck this little dipshit! Mr. Petty Officer Joy-see JACKASS!
"That, or, maybe? You're really just seeing yourself in others, and blaming them for the shit you're starting...?"
And, I love the look Falconni gives when I dish out that shred of truth to him. Really letting him have it, in his own face. And, what I love, is, the smile he has now, is as if he's enjoying these moments. Just so much, seeing the truth in himself, through me. Because, right now, he's just smiling, and not denying any iota of it.
"I don't see you—"
"No, I guess, maybe, I ain't that different. But, at least I can admit to that!" Says Falconni.
And, I know, I know. He wants me to admit to something of that nature, as well. So, we can now be best of buds—being the worst of buds! When, I've been nothing but observant and receptive of others the entire time I've been here.
"You're just another dipshit, fully and completely centered on yourself—"
"Just like you are." I respond.
"I'M AT LEAST not a mopey loser about it."
"No, but you are an asshole!" I say.
And that has Falky reassessing. Yes, I'm WINNING!
"Oh, I'm an asshole. Well, I at least have peeps in The Shop that like me and respect me. I get along with people, here. You, on the other hand, are this giant block of negative energy, walking around, with a constant frown on your face, scaring everyone away. Making EVERYONE feel uncomfortable. You're like Muwangi, but unlike him, you're just full of defiance and attitude! You're like some giant magnet, charged the wrong way, that walks around, pushing everything away, and making everyone hate themselves, and for that, hate you for it!"
And, the thing is, the fact that he's also confirming to me, just as AN Donnelly had, that I do frown a lot...? That's the part of what he's saying that's getting to me the

worst. And I can now see he's not as far off with his assessment, as I would want—wish—LOVE for him to be. To be so WRONG!
“If I'm the asshole, here, how come I got friends, and you—”
“I got friends, too, I do!” I squeak out.
And now Falky and Quimby, are bawlin' laughin'! Bawlin' laughin'! Bawlin' laughin'! And REALLY rubbing it in! FINE, I just have Donnelly, if anyone. But, FUCK the rest of the line! Only reason I see now why the IS3 would have so many friends, here, while being an asshole, is, it takes an asshole to like an asshole. All these fuckers can relate with each other. Plus, AE3 Brockhausen (who's also cool) doesn't hate me or look down at me (but, then again, he's mostly nice to everyone, whose name doesn't start with R, and end with -auschenburger, shit)! But, fuck it, Donnelly is enough. And I accept Falky's assessment, I do think I'm better, and why: BECAUSE I AM BETTER!
“You got friends...? Ah, ha, ha, HA, HAAA! Who, AN Donnelly?” Asks the IS3.
As he tries to recover himself from the deck. And all I can say is:
“AYE!” Blasting it out, loud and clear.
Since, the idea that I might be, seems SO preposterous to them.
“Well, oh wow...! Good luck with that NUTCASE!” Expresses the IS3.
And now I'm mad, again.
“Yeah. Good luck with that crazy motherfucker.” Follows up Quimby.
And I really don't get where they're coming up with all this.
“What's that supposed to mean?” I say.
Beginning to take offense to them talkin' shit about the one guy I feel like I can relate to on this ENTIRE freakin' Ship. In this ENTIRE freakin' Navy.
“Oh, nothing.” Says the IS3, all indifferently.
And looks away all indifferently, as well. Fuck him!
“You talking shit about my boy?” I crack.
For I'm pissed. Royally, majorly, monumentally... and also now a little curious.
“No... you'll just have to find out for yourself, I guess.” Responds Quimby.
And it's the fact that they both seem to be in on it, that gets to me. What the fuck do they mean, calling AN Donnelly a crazy fuck? As if, he's some real unapproachable

whackjob, which I should really be worried about. Both their assessment of AN Donnelly seems to be the same. And their assessment is supposedly anything but impeccable about the kid.
“What?” I crack.
For I can't stand the sense they're leaving me with, being so esoteric about it. Like they know something I really should.
“Nothing. Pretend you didn't hear that.” Responds Quimby, all indifferently, again.
All right, Navastian, don't let their ruse, there, get to you. It's a ruse! A RUSE! And that's it! That's all! Doesn't mean nothing. I have someone I'm close to, and they don’t like that. They want me to be by myself, all to my lonesome, with no one else in The Shop that I could stand behind. They'd prefer it that way, so, they could continue trying to “break me in like a mule” and have me replacing AN Roach Burger as the bitch boy/whipping boy of The Shop. Well, fuck these two! And, fuck these two for talkin' shit about my boy, Donnelly! FUCK 'EM! And after settling on this. I'm ready to leave, now, head back to my 107, and spend the rest of my night alone. Back to the comforts and safety of my job, manning my Jet, far away from these two manipulative Squids, trying to fill my head with dreads and concerns. So, as I leave, I place that link of chain around my neck, again (instead of stowing it away), for now, I like it being there. I like this chain, this rattily, linked together string of metal. How it weighs, how it sways, and how firm it is in my grip. And, also, what it's capable of when swung into the faces of such beloved Shipmates of mine, such as these two Shipmates, here. I likes it, and I feels like keeping it... ALWAYS! And I guess the two have been observing me emitting these feelings, as they say something about it:
“What? You gonna motherfuckin' marry that chain, now, too? Looks like you want to take it wherever you go.” Amuses ADAN Quimby.
“Yeah, I just might, I'll take it with me to the rack, as well—maybe?” I amuse, back.
“All right, Chainhauler man, you keep carrying them chains, like that, ‘cause, you'll be needing them. You're on your own.” Jokes Quimby.
And I smile and say:
“Fine by me.”
“No, what Quimby means, is, you're not one of us, no more.”

Breaks my heart, Falky, he does. Boo-fucking-hoo!
“Oh, no! Say it ain't so? Not no more? Considering how, up until now, we've all been so good together!” I mock.
“You have no pride for the Line, you have no respect for us.” The little man continues.
“Yeah, well, you gotta give respect if you want to earn respect, and, since you two think I'm just some Shitbag... well?”
And I leave it there. Truly leave it, and leave, now, for I don't feel like bickering with these two Scalawags any longer. I don't feel up for the wasted time and effort. Calling me out as all those things they really are themselves and trying to make me feel guilty about it. ESFOAD the both of them! FUCK 'EM!

PUSSY ON A HOT TIN ROOF

“Hey, Donnelly?” I call.
Since he's sitting next to me on some towbar, underneath 107, my Jet.
“Yeah?” He asks.
And he looks troublesome, since, I just told him about everything I heard from our IS3. And Donnelly is now as concerned as I am, whether or not we went too far, and what the morning will bring, once Senior hears about it.
“What's the story about your Liberty Risk?” I ask.
For, I'm curious. And after a pause, AN Donnelly looks like he's just acknowledged the question, and now ready to answer.
“Actually, it's kind of a funny story, to start.”
“Oh, yeah?”
“Yeah!” He says.
“How so?”
And now AN Donnelly's mood seems to have changed, like he has something fun to say, before settling with the bullshittin' one leading up to Captain's Mast.
“Well, it's kinda like this....”
And now just gives me the once over with a suave look, like he's about to tell a story that involves with the letter “S,” and ends with the letter “X.”
“I was with AMC Scagnelli's wife.” Says he, while wiggling his eyebrows, once.

“What?” I go.
“Yeah, crazy, crazy woman... just crazy.” Explains Donnelly, while bouncing his head from port to starboard.
“How is she, I've never seen her?”
And that's me being a male, for, I need to picture her, to really see where he's going with this story. Usually, on a scale, double the attractiveness level = double the clusterfuckin' insanity it took to get her in the sack.
“Oh, she's pretty, not gorgeous—mind you! But definitely pretty. She's Italian. And she has this heavily tanned skin, that looks to be natural, and not what some women do roasting themselves in a tanning parlor, coming out lookin' all leathery and orange. But if anything, anything worth noting, that'll get you up, it's that she has an amazing pair of legs.” He describes.
“Oh, does she now?” I entertain.
“Oh, yeah! Beautiful legs. Beautifully tanned. And she has massive thighs, too. Like she likes to work them out, and just them. Lookin' like she can crack walnuts between those man crushers of hers.”
And that line has me rollin', as Donnelly rejoices at the thought, for just now having remembered those lovely pair.
“But, anyways, what really got my motors going beside her legs, was, just how horny that woman can be. I mean... my word! That woman is just full of sin. She was all up in my ear, mean as fuck, mouthing about how badly she wanted to take me home and blow my “this,” and suck my “that,” and stick her fingers up my—”
“What?” I gasp, as I picture it all in my head.
“Yeah, that woman is a freak! Freaky deaky! And very domineering about it, too. She's older, so, she's not like girls our age, all easily intimidated, and sexually frustrated simply being in the same room with a guy they might like. She knows what she wants, and how she wants it, and will demand for it!”
And... wow! Simply... wow! And now I'm wondering if I should pay a visit to this AMC's maiden of the night, myself, when we get back to the beach. But, then again...?

“Aggressive—huh? Reminds me of someone.” I note, as I wiggle my eyebrows once, as well.
“Ha, ha! I know exactly who you gettin’ at. How is she?” Asks Donnelly.
And I get stupid for a second, wondering if he's thinking of the same person I am, and go:
“Who?”
“Who...? Dude, you're the one bringing her up, who you think? I know about you two. You and that Airframer chick.” He mentions, as his brow widens.
And, even though on other occasions, with other Line Shackers, I know, who I'd feel forced to make up things, with Donnelly, it's different.
“I haven't been with her, yet.” But I explain.
Because, I truly feels like I can trust AN Donnelly to not become so judgmental considering how guys tend to get over this matter. There being a lot of that boy’s locker room hoo-ha and peer pressure over “so, did you fuck this bitch,” “you fuck that bitch,” “you do like bitches, correct, don’t tell us we should start worrying about catching you trying to take a peek at us whenever we get undressed?”
“So, you and AM3 Rosario… never?” Wonders Donnelly.
“Yeah, never, I haven't.” I admit, freely.
“Okay, that's cool!” Donnelly notes, with a nod.
And this is what I mean by “with Donnelly, it's different,” because, I just know he won't be all up in my case why I haven't fucked her, yet. Taking it as a sign of how much of a schmuck I might just be. Exactly what I'd expect from ninety percent of the rest of the Line, at least. And now, I begin to wonder about something, seeing how I know certain things about AM3 Rosario, that has at least, been part of the reason of why I haven't been with her, yet. If not, the exact reason.
“Nope, I haven't. But... gotta ask, Donnelly. Have you?” And now I wonder.
Since, I can't imagine AM3 Rosario not having noticed him before. Since, she can be as man hungry as the AMC's wife. And, since, I cannot see AN Donnelly ever having much trouble with scoring with women.
“No!” But he answers.
And I'm a little surprised, now.

“Why would you think that?” Asks he.
“Well, honestly, from what I've heard, I just thought, maybe—”
“Dude, don't believe in those rumors about her.” Interrupts AN Donnelly.
Putting out a bunch of Xes with his eyebrows crossing out that idea.
“Her being with EVERYONE? Don't believe in that shit. She's been with a few—maybe? But you know how it is for a girl, if she's been with two, everyone will say ten, just to make her out to be a slut. So, everyone can get excited of the idea of fleet meat public domain pussy. She’s not fleet meat, per se. Maybe Rosario has been with more than two, but I don't believe the numbers I've heard people throwing out. That, or guys like Kats, making his own claims on getting her in the sack. And the thing about it, is, I could tell he was lying. Making it sound like he'd hit it and quit it and quit it the second he got done with the pussy, since, it wasn't up to his standards—according to him! Has had WAY better quality pussy in his time. Making himself out to be so much better... fuck that dude!”
And that bit of insight now makes me feel a little ashamed, how I had allowed myself to believe it.
“But... as for Scagnelli's wife, if people said ten thousand, I'd believe it. Making Wilt Chamberlain claims.” Now jokes AN Donnelly. After getting off from the high he was getting from defending the AM3.
“Yeah, how's that?” I wonder.
What differences he's noticed.
“Dude, that woman is just hungry. Rosario is a flirt, but you can't confuse a flirt, with one that's a straight up nympho. There's a difference. So, as for Miss. Scagnelli? If you were to spend one night with her, you'd see, then, what those differences are.” Explains AN Donnelly.
And now he's shaking his head, which makes me snicker. For I can see in his eyes that that night with her had left him with irremovable scars, and irremovable impressions.
“All right, go on.” I ask.
“Well, still at Skunky's, mind you. Wait, did I mention this all happening there?”
“No, but I know now, so go ahead.”

“All right, it was at Skunky's, and, she was talking mad about how badly she wanted to do this to me, and take my this, and stick it into that. And then that into this, and then this and that, together... but then, I see Qian.”
“Wait up... what you say? Qian?” I go.
“Yeah, that funny character.” He answers.
Looking just as shocked as I am, that the little guy would pop up in this story. Which, as I can imagine, Qian would be himself, going: “Wait, I'm in this story, too? Oh... gross!” Which now gets me all snickering, again.
“So, go on.”
Now very intrigued how things would precede from here.
“Oh man. Oh man... would you believe Qian started cockblocking, then?”
“No way.” I go.
“Yes way! But unluckily for the little guy, Scagnelli's wife had already settled on me.”
“So, then what happened.”
“Well, here is the funny part, after a while of drinking, all of us. Me. Miss Scags. And AD3 Qian—of all people! We were all then pretty drunk. And it was then that Qian started trying to be a real gentleman with her, Miss. Scags, or Tracy, let's call her, since, that's her first name, and calling her Miss. Scags sorta sounds off putting. Just has a nasty sound to it.”
“Ha!” I go, since, it's true.
“But, anyways... Qian was now trying to charm her up, all of a sudden. But, me and Tracy knew what his deal was, since, he couldn't stop eyeing her up and down after the second round. And from then on out, Qian just kept up his charms, trying to win her over.”
“How so?” I wonder.
Wondering about how his so called “A game” would be like.
“Oh, you know his type! Talking morally highly about himself, trying to be all quirky cute, talking about how much respect he has for women.” Mocks AN Donnelly.
As I begin to find it cute, as well.
“Oh, man.” I go.
“I know, I know! What a hopeless case.”

“So, go on.”
“Well, eventually after so many rounds of beer, we were all sorta out of it. Or, I was, since, the two stopped after the third round, and I kept going. Kept going for the distance—that is!”
“Ha.”
“And during that time, Qian saw how I was practically out like a light. But unaware that I was still aware of my surroundings, and it's then that he really started telling Tracy what was on his mind.”
“What he say?” I wonder.
And now, I see him getting all bent shitcan mad, and spewing out with sewage.
“Man... fuck Qian! Fucking hypocrite! He likes to pretend he's better, compared to guys like me. Fucking Richard Gere, there! A fucking officer and a fucking gentleman. But, he's... fuck that dude! Dude was all: 'Why you trying to get with this guy? Can't you see this guy is a dog, and wouldn't ever respect you at all?' Telling her all that type of stuff.”
And now, I am also pissed to be hearing what Qian had to say. Since, I've also observed how much of a non-Navy Gent he really is. No officer and a gentleman sort of material, getting recommendations for, even though he'd nothing but recommend himself.
“Really, are you serious?”
“Yeah.” Expresses AN Donnelly, looking a little depressed.
“What a cockblocking asshole!” I confirm.
As my opinion of him grows from being a naive minded prude, to really anything but, underneath.
“I know. He was making me look like this horny bad guy, when, it was all Tracy that couldn't keep her hands off me. And literally, too.”
And now AN Donnelly nudges his face forward, with a smile, all suggestively. Seeming ready to dish out the punch line, seeing as if this is really also a comedic story, also a joke, and not just another “woe as me” tale.
“What do you mean?” I say, now, wanting the juicy bits.

“Well, the entire time Qian was telling her these things, Tracy was just listening in, all attentively, one hand all propping up her face, in delight, with a smirk on her face.”
“She found it all funny....” I highlight.
As I ponder about it, and why she would.
“Oh, yeah, she did! But, not as much for what Qian was telling her, but, for what she was doing to me, in the meantime.”
And that line sorta confuses me, but still, I still get an inkling of what AN Donnelly is driving at, here. I think?
“What do you mean?”
“Dude, I'll tell you, that woman? Can be a real dick!”
And AN Donnelly smiles when he says “dick.”
“Why, what was she doing?”
“Well, after listening to Qian's spiel about respect for women, and, how I'm a douchebag, that doesn't deserve her, and how I just wanted to have my way with her. Eventually, Tracy was like: 'Well, Hun, what makes you think I wouldn't want to have my way with him?' And when she asked that, Qian got confused, and said: 'But women aren't like that.'”
“He said that?” I jest.
Astounded by how primitive minded AD3 Qian could be about the opposite sex.
“Oh, yeah, he did. And then... and listen to this! Tracy got really mean. Really, really mean. And was like: 'Oh, you'd like to think that, wouldn't you, Hun? Well then, if that's how things are supposed to be, since I'm a woman, then why would I be doing this?'”
“Doing what?” I wonder.
As I look up at AN Donnelly, and realize he was doing a motion with his hands, I didn't pick up on. Right now, I'm also sorta staring out to sea, trying to make out its contours in the dark. You do that a lot when you work at nighttime, trying to make sense of the faded world around you.
“Well, you know how I was sorta passed out drunk, sitting right next to her, right?” Asks AN Donnelly.

Now having my full undivided attention.
“Yeah.”
“Well then, when I opened up my eyes more to notice the two, I then saw her motioning to Qian to look underneath the table, to see all that was going on, while, the jerk off was talking shit about me. And when he did, he saw what had been going on, the entire time, and...!”
“No way!” I go.
As I picture it, myself, as if I was Donnelly, opening up my eyes, and looking down at my lap, to find, Tracy's hand, entertaining herself—right there!
“Yes way!” Confirms AN Donnelly, with a million-dollar smile.
“She was jerking you off?”
“The entire time... the entire time.” Nods AN Donnelly.
And now looking all, “mission accomplished.”
“What did Qian say, then?” I ask.
Aching to hear about his brash reaction to things, like these, which I'm all too familiar with.
“Oh wow. Qian looked totally deep-sixed, he couldn't believe it, and then looked like he wanted to throw up, watching all the porno at work. All the vulnerable fleshy parts, out in the open, and exposed, and getting fornicated. And it was around this time I really came to, and opened up my eyes, fully, for I had to see his reaction. Qian then said: 'That is so GROSS!' And just got up and left.”
And now, me and Donnelly are grinning up like a pair of ol' salty sea fishermen, after a plentiful catch. Good times. Good times, indeed!
“How was she?” I ask, then.
As I feel water running through the plumbing I gots below me. The feel of healthy clean pipes.
“Oh, Scagnelli's wife?” Sighs a sigh of exhaustion, AN Donnelly, does.
“Yeah.”
“Fuck, that woman violated me.” Sums up AN Donnelly.
“Did she?”
“Oh, yeah! Horny fuckin' broad. Cat on a hot tin roof—and then some!”

“Really?”
Feeling a little how I can imagine AD3 Qian felt, then, discovering how much women CAN be that way, too.
“Oh yeah, she has to be the horniest woman I've ever met. I mean, when she got me to her place, and took my pants and boxers off, there was this moment, she just stared at it, for a good long minute.”
And that sorta creeps me out to hear.
“Okay...?”
And now AN Donnelly sees that, and wants to explain:
“I mean, I'm bringing it up, because, it freaked me out, too. Staring at it, like she was just savoring the moment she'd sic her teeth onto it.”
“She bit you?” I gasp.
“Fuck yeah, she did, and down there, too.”
“....”
And, honestly, that sorta scares me a little, as much as it excites me. That's the thing about genders: everyone has their idea of what to expect from the opposite sex. Imagining there being this humongous difference in how we think and feel. Wondering which one of us really has more of a dirtier mind. And mostly, males, thinking women are mostly angels, when it comes to the reproductive act. But what ends up blowing us both away is how similar we all are, in our own unique and twisted ways. And for what I can see, now, AN Donnelly is one that's been very well expose to that world, their world, and has experienced all the slimy and sleazy and sex-loving details.
“Hungry. Just fucking hungry!” Explains AN Donnelly.
All wild-eyed. Like he went through some real joys and trauma. And TRAUMA!
“So... what exactly happened, then?” I ask now.
As I stop enjoying the story I just heard and begin wondering how this all leads to Donnelly having to take the long walk, up to see the Skipper.
“Oh...!” Goes AN Donnelly.
And what disappoints me, is, I can now tell how he went all out with the first half of the story, hoping, he wouldn't need to tell me the second half.

“How did you get into trouble?” I ask, plainly.
As I begin to wonder if I really should. He seems happy... or, did! While telling me the first half of the story. But not now, now that I asked. So, do I really want to continue spoiling it?
“Well, before me and Tracy left, there was this, I guess, First Class in there, that had been watching us the entire time. Truth is, I had felt his eyes on us the entire night. But, at the time, I just figured him for the jealous/envious type. Mr. Sad and Lonely Eyes, sitting at the bar, sitting in the corner, sipping a beer, while asking himself, “what don't I got what that guy’s got?” Since, I've already dealt with their depressing lot, before. But then, the guy approaches me, while me and Tracy are ready to leave. Lookin' very, very confrontational.”
“All right...?” I go.
As AN Donnelly pauses for a second.
“Anyways, so I come to find out how this guy knows who Tracy is, knows how she's married. And, what he's confronting me with is....”
And AN Donnelly pauses, again. But, I already know everything, now, all the last bit of details of what went down, next. Especially since AN Donnelly mentioned him being a First Class.
“He was in civilian clothes—right?” I ask, rhetorically.
Wanting to get the truth out of AN Donnelly, which he notices, and notices I already know his answer.
“Yeah, he was. But as you can figure, we can still tell when they're a First Class or Chief, since, we know the persona.”
And... something occurs to me, about myself, and how I feel, now, about all this. Which I don't like, as I sense how disappointed with AN Donnelly I am becoming. If he knew... why did he still do what he did, to get what he got?
“Fuckin' asshole, was trying to talk down to me, trying to tell me off. Sayin: 'It's disrespectful Shitbirds like you, now coming in, that makes me want to get out, before things get worse. That woman is married... doesn't that mean anything to you?'”

Ah shit! Think I, as I truly start to feel discerned and disappointed with my AN buddy, here. I am unable to muster up any feelings of sympathy for him now, for, I can't help but to see the wrong in this, under this new light. I mean, I felt it before while Donnelly was telling the jokey parts, but then again, now those jokey parts seem so inappropriate, considering it under this new context. Seeing how, if I was in the same situation with a married woman, and someone confronted me in that manner? I'd feel a complete 180° about it. And, I don't like this, I don't like it one bit.

"So, you two got into a fight?"

"Fucker was all in my face! And tried to grab my arm when I tried to walk away, saying: 'Don't you GAF me off, Shipmate'"

Ah shit! Calling him "Shipmate," that should have been your first clue to back off, Donnelly! Damn!

"And I was pretty drunk, and not having it. Him, getting physical, so, I let him have it." Explains AN Donnelly.

"What you do?"

"I knocked him out, cold, and left with Tracy. But... as I was leaving, outside I saw AE1 Vandenakker, as he was about to enter."

"Oh great! So, he dimed you out, did he?"

"Yeah... he did."

And now AN Donnelly concludes his story, leaving me with a lot of mixed feelings. But, then again, I can see the same feelings also within him, as they are within me: disappointment! I can tell Donnelly knows on some level, in his head, it really was wrong of him to still hook up with Tracy.

"Fucking asshole, trying to make me feel bad, just because I was getting with a married woman."

Damn, Donnelly, I mean, I know how a pair of aching loins can cloud your better judgment, but, after being confronted like that, as you were? Come on! I mean, like I said, I know me, and I would have reassessed the matter of just how much of a good idea it would be going under the sheets with a married woman. You just don't do that, unless, you're willing to sacrifice your better morals. What you see

upstanding about you, now being cast down to the level where lowlifes tend to live and breed in.
“What's with the look?” Asks AN Donnelly.
And then, I look into his eyes, and see now how I'm thinking lesser of him. Which he is able to read from my facial expressions. Which really gets me feeling broken up inside.
“Huh?” I go, trying to avoid it.
“You got a look.” AN Donnelly says.
And now, this Shipmate of mine is lookin' at me in a way, I haven't seen him lookin' at me before, very unfriendly like.
“Oh well... can I be honest?” I say.
For I know I can't hide this. Not as long as AN Donnelly continues with his own guilt trip he's putting himself through. Which I am able to read from his facial expressions.
“Go ahead.” He goes.
And I can see now how he's dreading to hear it, because, he knows exactly what I'm about to say.
“Don't you think you should have... not gotten involved, that is?”
“....”
“I mean, that First Class you knocked out wasn't exactly wrong to confront you.”
“….”
“No matter how badly this Tracy woman wanted it, you did still get with a married woman, and, there will be consequences for your—”
“What? She was ALL OVER ME! Not the other way around.” Blasts Donnelly, trying to defend himself.
Breathing in and out, hard, very much in distraught. And the thing is: I get it! I get him! And I don't fully blame him, either. I don't want to tell him these things. But, it's like AN Donnelly is somehow making me say them. Putting words into my mouth, of the things he both is and isn't willing to hear. And I hate to do this, but:
“You could have turned her down, since, you knew. Knew she was the wife of a Chief in our Squadron. And, you told me you noticed that First Class watching you all from the beginning. I mean...?”

“Navastian, it's fuckin' AMC Scagnelli's wife we're talking about here! We all know the stories. And AMC Scagnelli, himself, DAMN WELL knows what type of woman he's married to, and it's not like I've been the first.” Blasts AN Donnelly.
And even though I'd like to end it there, and not answer back, I can see he does.
“True, but....”
“If it wasn't going to be me, it would have been someone else. I mean, it's not like I'm the only homewrecker, here. That home had been demolished a long, long time ago. Several times. By several other guys that she had decided—DECIDED—by her own free will to be with. Me swinging any wrecking balls, then, wouldn't matter, for there were no walls left standing for me to knock down.”
And hearing AN Donnelly getting so metaphorical about it, just shows me how much brainpower and will he's willing to place in trying to hush this matter between me, and himself. AN Donnelly can really be metaphorical from what I'm seeing, but, maybe a little too metaphorical.
“Still, you didn't have to play a part in it, and look at what happened!” I say.
And I really don't feel like taking it any further. But then I see AN Donnelly's reaction. And the Airman looks fiercely pierced, now.
“Why you looking at me like that?” I ask.
As the mood changes, again, and now I feel nervous, because, he isn't just distraught with what I'm saying, he's also looking pretty hostile towards me about it.
“What are you saying? You saying I deserve going to Captain's Mast?” Blasts AN Donnelly, as he spits up a little.
And I really don't like how he does. I doesn't. For him spitting up, reminds me of someone else I know that does this when speaking loud and angrily.
“No, I'm not saying that.” I respond, back.
“You said: 'There's consequences to be met for my actions!' Like I deserve what I got, and now being stuck here, on the Boat, miserable, when we pull into Hong Kong, while the rest of you will be able to get off and enjoy yourselves!”
And there's something very pitiful in his eyes, I see, as he tells me this. And the thing is: in what world would he imagine I would think and feel all those things? What the fuck is making this Shipmate of mine think this way? Is he for real? This

isn't the Donnelly I've come to know and like, and it's really depressing and also discouraging to see him this way.
“No, what makes you think I mean it like that?” I blast.
As I try to reason with him with my eyes. Staring long and hard. But, then again, my tone I sense isn't in the right spot, for I'm sounding about as hostile as Donnelly is, questioning me like that.
“Then, what the fuck are you trying to say?” Confounds AN Donnelly.
And... REALLY? He really still can't get that crazy notion out of his head? Me, wanting to see him suffer over this? There's punishment, and then there's the joy of seeing those punished. One is a harsh but fair thing, and the other is an abhorred reaction towards it.
“Don't give me shit! Not you... not you... okay?” Goes AN Donnelly.
And he really does look pitiful, now, and it's really starting to affect me. As I grow about as upset as he seems to be, thinking I would.
“I'm not giving you shit. Why would I do that... EVER?” I respond.
Hoping he'd understand that, for, Donnelly is now just about shivering from this. Half upset, and half angry. I mean, what the hell... he's shivering?
“Please, all right! This shit has really been fuckin' with me. Please, don't give me shit about it. I can't take it right now, without....” Says AN Donnelly.
As he cuts off in mid-sentence, and now looks even more depressed. And, looking like he's about ready to get up and storm away. And, now, something occurs to me, I know what the problem is here: this is Falky's doing! It's BEEN on my mind since he said something about Donnelly, of him being something along the lines of... well, this! And, maybe I'm being very mean to him right now? So, mean, that it's getting him to act this way. Truth is, I really don't know the effect I can have on people. I don't! I like to think how I have no effect on people, at all, with considering how mopey, sarcastic, and negative I can be. FROWNING ALL THE DAMN TIME! But, I do. I most certainly do! And that's something I need to grow aware of. My shit stinks like everyone else's does. I can see that now. And right now, I must be seriously being harsh with him, overly harsh, and judgmental, with him about the matter. And with one of the few people I've established a good relations with, and like. And, that's

what's getting him to act out this way. I mean, look at him! I really must have done a number on him with my judgmental questioning just now. The guy is riddled with guilt, therefore, what point would it serve to rub it all in? I care about Donnelly, and, I don't want things to go down like this. NOT LIKE THIS!

“No... you're right, though, I shouldn't have gotten with her, I let the little man downstairs win my better judgment. And I shouldn't have.” Responds Donnelly, with a sigh.

And now I'm feeling like a royal piece-of-shit for getting him this way.

“We still cool, right?” Asks Donnelly.

“Of course, man! Of course. What makes you think we wouldn't be?” I respond, quickly.

“I didn't mean to yell... and accuse you of judging me, you were just trying to mean better.” Continues AN Donnelly.

And now, I'd just like to see him DROP IT!

"No, I know you didn't! Don't take this the wrong way, I know you didn't mean to yell, and, you didn't mean to get with a married woman.” I reassure, so, this matter can now be settled.

“But, what if I did?” Expands Donnelly

Lookin' very receptively at me, as if I have the answers to what's going on in his head.

“….”

And I don't know how to respond to this, AT ALL!

“What if I did?”

And now I feel like I have to comfort him, say something to make it all right. And, also, I want to! I just became friends with this guy, and, I don't want to jeopardize that over some horny old woman that I couldn't give two shits about. Some stupid, cougar bitch! Not over something like this!

“Okay, then, how about this....” I start to explain.

“Fuck the AMCs wife, you're right! If it wasn't you, it would have been someone else.” I go.

And, to my joy, I see it in AN Donnelly's eyes, it's settling the matter.

“Actually, if you think about it, if I was the last straw that would have ended the marriage, that would have been a good thing.” Continues AN Donnelly.
“Fuckin' A! That's right! They don't belong together, anymore. Fuck their marriage, they need to end that shit. There's no reason they're still together after all this time. If the wife is going to continue cheating like that, she needs to woman up, and write him a Dear John, and leave.” I follow up.
And there's no denying that, too. Hell, if she keeps this up, the AMC might eventually lose it, for real, and do something to her. Shit like that does go down, and, we Squids unfortunately end up hearing about it now and then: cheating wife getting shot, dead, with a 9mm handgun, by her returning husband. Since coming back from deployment and having to hear about all the men she's fucked while he was away. Having to risk his life, for that stupid bitch! Some real “no shitters” that are a no shittin' matter! Seriously!
“Not my fuckin fault!” Goes AN Donnelly.
“No, it's not!”
“Fuckin' bitch seduced me!”
“Fuck yeah, she did! You don't need to convince me of otherwise, considering all that I've already heard about her.” I conclude.
As, we conclude. Thankfully!

FAT NAVY

I'll be honest! I have no fuckin' idea of what to make of what just happened. All that I can make out of this, is, it seems as if AN Donnelly's got one hell of an over baring guilt complex. I can't explain why, but, he does. And, for what? I mean, it's true! He shouldn't have gotten with AMC's wife. It IS wrong. And it IS a fucked-up thing to do. But most Squids I'm sure of would have never reacted the way AN Donnelly did over the matter, over the affair he had with the AMC's wife. If this was Kats or Hats? Ha! I mean, those two have already been giving Tracy the hot beef injection. And if they were to do it again, I could just see how they'd feel about the matter, as they'd be high-five-ing one another, while DP-ing Tracy, who's all Golden Gate Bridged between them. And if AMC Scagnelli, himself, was to then come home, to catch them all in the act, and had decided to blow his own brains out, over the heartbreak,

all Kats and Hats would have done next, is, high-fived each other, again, then went on to continue being the city of San Francisco's biggest main tourist attraction. No fucks would have been given. But plenty and plenty full of DILLIGAFucks. That's what I would have expected from the fiendish Kat & Hat brothers. But, WTF was Donnelly's deal, there? And this is what's bothering me the most, I sensed something very “mentally ill” about the way he acted out. Something very ill, and not all right in the head. What I'd expect completely from Zeedorf, but... not a guy like Donnelly! I don't know. Sorta interesting, though, Kats and Hats not giving a fuck would = mental soundness—at least! But the way Donnelly acting = not sound of mind, at all! Even though he has reason to feel guilty for what he did. So, why was he being so ill in the head about the matter? “What if I meant to do it?” He said. I'll be honest, when he said that, I felt a lot of unease and unhinged feelings. That felt a little too ill in the head. And downright sick, and even twisted. Something wickedly twisted in the guy. That scared me a....

All right!
All right!
Don't think of it like that, Navastian. Maybe that's just Boat life, and how it's been getting to him. Plus, in his shoes, I can see now, getting Liberty Risk? Meaning he won't even be getting the one catharsis we all can't wait for, which is GETTING OFF THIS FREAKIN' SHIP! And the thought of staying aboard, and watching all us depart, and have some fundamentally good times in Hong Kong, is all depressing him. And all because he couldn't keep his hands to himself, when dealing with a First Class, calling him out for his adulterous ways. The shit's gotten to him, and, I sorta feel like I can relate when it comes to that. Because, feeling mentally ill, is something I can't deny that I'm not also going through, no matter how hard I have been trying. Been feeling very sick in me head, too. Like I have a lot of bad feelings and emotions, and bad chemistry, all swimming around within my skull, that shouldn't be swimming. Unhealthy to be doing so. And, my biggest fears possibly being, is, that it might eventually turn out to be poisonously lethal in the end. (Ugh! Plus, I need to stop thinking about those dreams and that Old Ones stupid ass shit. Been fancying those

ideas way too much, and, I fear they might eventually manifest themselves, if I was to continue. Yeesh)!

Well, anyways... it's morning, now. All us Night Checkers are in The Shop, and we're here on this, another fine Navy morning, with our Senior LCPO. Aye, with Senior. He's staring at us straight and direct, and also not. He's very quiet this morning. And I feel like these are one of those “eye of the storm” moments. We ain't anyways safe from the threats of high winds and seas capsizing all of us over and swallowing us up and down to that great abyss. We're still hurricane bound in all directions. But for now, all we can do is now wait for the eye to move past and leave us with the chaotic forces of what lays next.

All right!
All right!
I'll take my metaphor-ing down a notch. Fine. Roger that, I will. Just thought you all were enjoying them as much as I was. Sheesh!
“You know, it's not even the AO3 Ramshaw thing that's pissing me off right now.” Goes Senior.
As he finally lets something out, not looking at any of us.
“It's the fact that our Squadron is now being put under scrutiny, by the entire Ship, because, supposedly, one of you Brown Shirts was caught by one of The Ship's company, destroying Ship equipment. Vandalism!” Blasts Senior, at the end.
Ah shit! I think, then. But how did they know the perpetrator came from our Shop? Shit!
“I mean, the PC that did it, what the fuck is your problem, here? Huh? What? NO REALLY... WHAT?” Blasts Senior.
Fully enraged, but also in a faded and winded way.
“Vandalism? Is that what it's coming to? I mean, I know some of you don't exactly come from respectable upbringings. A bunch of degenerate inner-city riff-raffs. But, where the FUCK you all think you are, now, huh? Vandalism? And you know how this is going to make our Squadron look!”

Do they know I had something to do with it? Do they? I fear. As I look all around at all the faces in The Shop, to see who would look back. Up until now, I haven't been looking at much. Just been burning holes into the deck, hanging my head low, staring down, worrying, since, this has all to do with me. I don't know if they know, or... I don't know!

“So, who was it, who did it, who FUCKIN' did... huh?” Goes Senior.

And even though he's belching it out, loud and hard, still, it's a relief to hear he isn't aware that it was me. I then look up at Senior, and I see he ain't eyeing me, nor is the IS3. And I feel relieved from that, too.

“The Chief that caught the criminal in the act, said, he saw a 1P on the back of his cranial. So, there's no mistaking or refuting it, being anyone, but from this Shop. So, who FUCKIN' did it?”

The 1P... fuckin' outstanding! I think. It could only mean our Shop. That, or someone pretending to be us. But, for what reason? AOs wouldn't go that far. So, who would? The “1” standing for our Squadron, since our Jets are all 100 series, numbered for The Ships inventory, of all birds on board. There's 100 series which is us, 200 series a different Squadron. And so on, and so forth. And the “P” standing for Plane Captain. So, us Line Guys.

“Who fuckin' did it... IS3?”

“What?” Gasps Falconni.

And now, the most overwrought I've ever seen him, all of a sudden, being. Expressed, fully, as our Senior suddenly calls for his attention.

“Did you mishear me, are you even paying attention? I'm asking, you, Petty Officer Falconni, who FUCKIN' done it?”

And it seems like Senior is really going to let him have it, now. Embarrassing him in front of all of us. Something almost no LPO/LCPO has tried to do. The IS3, being the top-heavy little shit, he is, tends to hardly ever have anyone knocking him down, as Senior is right now. And Falconni now looks like one of us, and no longer someone of special status. Just another dirty face bottom feeder.

“Well?” Goes Senior.

“I...?”

“What, what's that? Are you, or are you not, mostly tasked with handling the boys, here, on Night Check?”
“Yes.”
“Yes, what?” Cracks Senior.
And now, Senior's REALLY trying to rub it in, putting this little Third Class in his place, then tripping him over, and having him fall flat on his face. Humiliations galore!
“....” Falconni doesn't answer.
Falconni is unable to answer, right this very moment, considering, how ragingly overwrought he's feeling. Since, he has grown used to having hardly anyone ever speak to him in such a manner. And, considering his personality, seldomly ever does. Falconni has the type of personality that's been methodically well constructed with the sole purpose of NEVER/EVER having to experience experiences such as these. Having to never, since, Falconni isn't one that takes well to humiliation—AT ALL! Not one bit. But now, Senior and his confrontational ways needs to make it poignantly clear: he's HiMFIC! Not this little Third Class first termer, here. And he wants something to be done with how Night Check is being run, even if it means he has to disgrace one of its more prominent head figures.
“Yes... WHAT?”
“Yes, Senior!” Goes IS3, finally, while ventilating.
Then Senior just GAWKS hard and heavy at our Chief Murdock and looks like he wants to... BUT DOESN'T! For he wouldn't dare go there. Especially in front of us. If you're wondering what our Chief Murdock is doing right now: same thing as last time, sitting away at The Shop's computer, working out some gripes, over the black and green monitor. DILLIGAFing the best way he deems fit. Even with the raging and roaring tarnations Senior is kicking up.
“I can't do this! I can't be runnin' both Day Check and Night Check. I already have to babysit half you disrespectful little shits, that are all on Days, me and AD1 Bastille do, for it's a full-time job, and then some! And, I can't be doing the same on Nights. Making one or two rounds in the middle of the night is all I can possibly do. But that's it...! IS3...?”

And now Senior looks straight at our IS3 and looks to have something important to say.
“Yes, Senior?” Goes he.
“Straighten the fuck out of Night Check! Or, I will personally go out of my way to crucify your ass, in front of everyone! And, not just The Shop, but everyone! The entire Squadron, too! If, you don't. I know you like to spend your Nights in here, in The Shop, skatin' and GAFing off, playing make belief that you're one fine and dandy seasoned Sailor, having seniority status in your three years of service. But, if I hear any more of what I've been hearing, I will definitely remind YOU, how much you AIN'T, HiMFIC, HERE! You got that? Do I make myself clear?” Expresses Senior.
And after a pause, the IS3 answers:
“Yes, Senior!”
“Good. Chocks out, Night Check... actually, belay that! No chocks out. All of Night Check has EMI, as Navastian does, until launch! So, all you get up there, NOW! And start prepping your birds.”

OUCH!
Anyways...!
I'm on my bird, now, prepping for launch. Fuckin' launch! And... “don't worry” he said, “you'll have three hours extra, and only three hours” he told me! Fucking liar! I know he meant that all for the entire Night Check shift, but he PROMISED ME, SPECIFICALLY!

Anyways...!
Rainy skies loom over the Pacific. And rough weather and seas seemed to be abound. Usually, The Ship will try and steer clear of weather like this. And now, that makes me think: do they seriously plan on going through with Morning Ops with conditions deteriorating as they are? I worry. Tis morning, and we're all up and out here doing as our Senior Chief LCPO has instructed us to do. And, besides me, everyone is looking all vexed and hexed, and exasperated, for the whole thing of having to be up here, still, hours past into our shift. They are all fussing, giving—

mostly me—dirty looks (I'm guessing, since, I'm the only one smiling, while they're not, and not because they suspect me of what I did for all this to happen. I hope!). They're all pouting, and also pissing, while most of Day Check has been instructed by Senior to go home (berthing) and come in later on in the day. Since, they're supposedly The Shop's prodigal sons right now. Everyone is all throwing a tantrum, just below the surface, and, I ain't. And why? Because, I am actually really enjoying this moment. I am! It's that schadenfreude thing again. So. Fuck 'em! Think I, feeling like a royal buddy fuckin' piece-of-Barnacles-shit, and enjoying every minute of it. Feeling grotesquely fascinated with how much joy I can derive by bringing misery upon so many. But, fuck 'em, truly! Let these Shipmates of mine eat cake. I mean, really, it's not all that bad. Even though it is for ADAN Quimby, there, from what I can see of him. Seeming very distraught, now. I mean, I know he's been feeling highly of himself, since, buddy buddy-ing it up with our IS3, and lookin' forward to the skate life: not having to stress as much with what his superiors would think of him, if he started reaping the benefits from the illustrious status of being in seniority status. As if, he's been Plane Captain-ing it up for the past three years, as our IS3 has. Seeing himself as some Junior Grade PC Vet in The Shop (if such a thing even exists), that can retire every night to the safeties and comforts of The Shop. Abandoning his post manning his Jet. Reaping as such exceptions, when hardly no one else can. But now that the rugs been pulled under our IS3, as it has anyone under him. So, as it has for the ADAN Quimby, there, he now doesn't seem to be taking it all too well. I mean, really, it isn't all that bad!

No...!

It just ISN'T...!

And THIS here is a major problem I see, extended, not just throughout our Shop, or even throughout our Squadron, but also, all throughout the Navy. If more and more of us could just accept our place in the fleet, as all of us being subordinate workers, in the end. Being here to do one thing, and that is to work for a living. If more of us could just accept that, instead of worrying and brown nosing and scheming a means to find how we can achieve “seniority” status, and start our Navy careers of sitting on our fat asses, and skatin', and DILLIGAFing, all the live long day. If we could just

accept this as a freakin' job, and not some job of polishing our status. Polishing a turd. We might find ourselves happier in the end. No, seriously! I'm being SERIOUS about this! Procrastination isn't just something that's runnin' rampant in today's fleet. It's not just a rebellious threat to our way of life. NO, AW1 Nordhaus, IT'S the freakin' status quot. IT'S the freakin' NORM! It's what we're all here striving for. ALL OF US! Fuck finding a means to be Shit Hot. We're all out here trying to find a means to be a bunch of Shitbags/Shitbirds, without the indications and finger pointing that goes with it. To be Shitbags, and not be consider as such, since, being a Shitbag is really a bad thing. But let's face it, having seniority status in the Navy has somehow mutated into meaning we all can be lazy. It no longer just means you're a highly skilled and seasoned veteran at your work, but, you're all that, and now don't need to do the work you're so QUALIFIED TO DO! I mean, even the highest-ranking Servicemen here on The Ship, still have to answer to somebody. Having seniority status, DOESN'T allow them to escape having to answer to those above them, making them detailed to do a job they're ordained to do. Our CO, the COs of other Squadrons, the CO of even the freakin' Ship, even though truly TOP DOGS on this Boat, they're still subordinates, themselves, to somebody. No Admirals. So, they also have to, in the end, be responsible of what their superiors task them with. And even at the way top, there's our Commander-and-Chief, Bushy boy (Jr.), the freakin' President of the United States, and even he is really someone that has to answer to somebody else, the rest of US (actually, not really us Servicemen, since, being owned by the Military doesn't allow us to have much of a choice about anything no more. So, really, him just answering to the general civilian public, that voted for his ass into office, I mean). So, all in all, this is what I'm getting at: WE ALL HAVE A JOB TO DO! We ALL do! Even our freakin' CAC, Georgy, up there, has such! So, WTF is it with all these seniority people, calling themselves HiMFICs, just so they don't have to do shit? Fuck you, Senior, you're no HiMFIC around these parts. To us “yes,” but when Master Chief comes a roving on through, you're once again just another subordinate pup, in the end! I mean, what the FUCK!

Now, I'm not here to call all Lifers a bunch of Shitbags. Not here to say all these fat Chiefs and First Classes are a bunch of lazy jackasses, all whipping us fresh out of High School sorts, to do the work they're a million times more qualified to do. Not saying they're all just lazy. And too afraid to strike CV, and start again, since, CV life hardly has any of this “seniority = I don't need to do shit,” crap. Since, in the civilian sector, your ass is still working, no matter how many years you've been with the company, you're still busting your hump to get a paycheck. But, still, I'm not calling the Lifers here what it sounds like I'm calling them. Not saying that, and not saying they all be fat, but...?

FINE!
I AM!
I AM saying that! For. They be fat! They ALL truly be fat! I mean, this is the Military, and look at all these fat bodies, here! Look at all of them! Look! Look at Senior! He's a fatass, that does nothing but spends most of his day down in The Shop, complaining how badly he had it as an Airman, and how he's being disrespected by his Airman, today. Him down there, really skatin' himself, until deciding to come up, and make rounds, once in a while, just to yell at us for the sake of yelling at us. Giving us ample reason not to want to see his fatass, again. And therefore, he can go away, and do what he wants to do, not a DAMN THING, in The Shop. Therefore, no one can judge him for not doing shit, because, none of us want him to. I mean, he really should be up here, too! The lesser that man does his work, the happier we'll be. I've seen how it is for Day Check. Sometimes he'll give himself time off, to have a second lunch, as he'll head to the Mess Decks reserved for Khakis, just to fatten his already fatass, even FATTER! I mean, WTF? Two lunch breaks? And I've heard he'll sometimes pull a third. While the rest of the Line is doing their jobs scrubbing Jets, and prepping Jets, and servicing them and only have box lunches to look forward to. Not even a proper break to go get some chow. But, yet, that fatass can take 2 to 3 lunch breaks a day. Everyday! And then when Senior’s done stuffing his fat face, and decides to come up, they'll see him and start stressing. It's all a waiting game with him. When will he stop eating down in the Mess Decks, and come

up, and show his fat face? He's like the shark in the movie Jaws. It's all about the buildup, not seeing the monster that's coming after your ass throughout much of the flick. All that building up of intensive process, UNTIL IT DOES SHOW UP! And now, we all SCARED! What a fatass.

And, as I look all around, up here, on the Flightdeck, I can see it's not just him that's fat. For look at AO1 Montenegro, there, with his AOs, securing ordnance onto a bird, on AEAN Navarro's aircraft. Another fat First Class Lifer. Red Shirt. Standing by with crossed arms, lookin' very mean and heavy. Thuggish lookin' man, all frowning, hard, all tanned and stubby, like some bald Spanish buccaneer from the seventeenth century. Or, really, a Middle Eastern one. Aye! For I can see him now: fuckin' Sinbad, over there! The saber wielding, harem raising, infidel beheading, sort. One fatass Sinbad, that is! All smiling now and then, with a devilish smile, while the sights and sounds of his men slaving under him fills him up with glee. He's a fatass. But, the type of man that'll call it all muscle, since, he spends two hours every day in the gerbil gym, working out after his shift. As he does another two hours after that, working out his fat stomach muscles, in the Mess Deck. Bald mother, too! Bald and brown. Lookin' like a fat and tanned up Kojak. He's still got a lot of muscle, though, he does, since he's the macho type, that would be damned to have someone out macho and out muscle him. Really, a Cuban American, from Miami, FL, and a man that would see capital punishment as a reasonable sentence for anyone that would DARE try to mess with another man's pride. Pride-liness is Godliness to him. But he's still a fatass, though! For as mentioned: on top of all that layer of hefty muscle, is an even heftier layer of lard, that still makes him out to be one gluttonous man. Personally, I'd like to see someone sneak up behind him, and trip him the fuck over, all abruptly, for shits and giggles, so we can all watch him struggle to get back up. He'll then be all pissin' and stirrin', realizing all his muscles ain't enough to get his fatass up quick enough, from his predicament. As he shuffles about like a beached whale, humping about, side to side, trying to get back to his elements. But, not quick enough to save himself from the embarrassment. Which he will then channel into

wrath, which he will then channel into his men, as he makes them slave under him even more grievously and laboriously!

Fatasses... fatasses... fatasses...! The Navy is so abounded with fatasses, all around. And in the mornings, when I get off shift, and head down to the Hangar Bay, to catch that Marine VMFA Squadron PT-ing (which is something you'll never see us do), and seeing how there isn't even an ounce of celluloid amongst them, it all begins to make me wonder, if I even chose the right service. Look at AEC Culpepper, another fat Chief: a fat mustachioed Chief, having the double package, our Navy comes with abundance of. Also, AT1 Callahan, AE1 Gilligan, AM1 Lagmire, and ADC Siegfried. Fatasses! And looking into other Squadrons, with their own First Classes and Chiefs, I can see the waters ain't any less chunky, there, on their side of the pond. Send them all to the Chub Club, for there be more fatasses. And look at the Yellow Shirt Boat Chuck Khakis, too. And the Green Shirts. And Purple Shirts, too! If they be First Classes and up, they be fat, mostly, as far as I can see.
“Hey, Navastian, how's the nitrogen level doing on your bird?” Asks AD1 Bastille. While hauling over a heavy ass nancart over to my bird.
“Wait, I'll check.”
So, I go and check in the nosewell, under the bird, where the nose strut is at. And I check, and see, that the nitrogen level for the canopy is fine! 3,000 Psi.
“It's still good.” I say.
Our AD1 Bastille then smiles, and begins hauling it onward again, to the next bird, to see if it needs servicing.

Hmm...! I think, then. For, I had been watching him pushing that heavyset thing all the way from the island, where he picked it up. To all the way back here, at the aft end of the Flightdeck, where all our birds be at. He's been hauling it, alone. A First Class, doing such laborious work, which really should be our work. And he hasn't complained, once, or been giving anyone dirty looks, for us not helping him out. Almost seems to enjoy his work, making me feel different about all that I was illustrating about before, just now. About all these fat belly superiors in the Navy.

Fine!
I'll say it.
They're not all how I make them out to be. Actually. A good portion really ain't. And are like AD1 Bastille, there. Even though he's one wide set of a man, himself. But his seniority status doesn't seem to mean much to him, for, he's still someone that shows that he wants to actually work for a living. And seeing how much he enjoys it, just makes me want to work, too. And now I feel like helping him out, moving that heavyset nancart, that's built to wheel around heavyset nitrogen tanks, to service canopies with. Wheeling around a nancart is an extremely laborious job, for even two to three able bodies to do, let alone one. And, so, I go ahead, as I go ahead and does so helping him out. I do, since, it takes working bodies to motivate other bodies to work with. And so, I do so. I do so, so I don't seem like any more of a schmuck than I already have. Having been watching him carrying that heavy ass thing around. While me doing boopdiddley about it, standing around on my Jet, since, I'm almost done finished with the prep work. And all I need to do is wipe down the canopy later.

Listen, I do feel like procrastination truly is a rampant problem in the Navy. And I do feel like the reason that is, is, we shouldn't be blaming us junior personnel for it, but really, our higher ups. For, the thing is, they just don't want to do work anymore, and all they want to do is supervise. Which I understand that that's what being a superior is all about. But, fact is, not all of them are like AD1 Bastille. Some, yes, but not all. And the ones that are not are leaving a bad example of what it means to have seniority status. Aye! I think they have worked a lot in their day, and now deserve, in some ways, to be more relaxed. But not THIS RELAXED! They're mostly overweight, because of the whole mentality that seniority status = not exerting yourself anymore and taking it easy. Fine! I do think they've earned it (since they're so inclined to remind us HOW MUCH they've earned it). But look at AD1 again. He's probably been in for a good fifteen years, but he's still working for a living. That's why he's a Shit Hot LPO, and a lot of us in The Shop love the guy. Like I said, it takes able working bodies to motivate other able bodies to want to work. It's all about setting an

example. Being a role model. And in the Navy, our examples and our role models are these fat body Chiefs. And the reason there's so many in the Navy that just want to skate off, and be all Shitbricks about it, is, there's just that many bad examples, bad role models, around, in the Navy, that are fueling all this interest in procrastination becoming what it has become. That's all I'm saying! In the civilian sector, my mom, for instance, is in her mid-fifties, and she's still working her fingers to the bone, being an accountant. And she's not going to see easier days until she can retire in her sixties. These motherfuckers, a lot of them just turned forty, and they want to fucking retire now. Fact is, in the services to our government, as government workers, one can retire after twenty years. So, if you joined at twenty, at forty, you could retire, and get a pension that'll last you the rest of your life. My mom works for a living in her age, and she'll continue to do so passed sixty, and probably into her seventies, since, the retirement paychecks she'll collect won't be enough paying for all her bills. If my mom was to procrastinate at her job, even after being with the company that she has, for as long as she has, over twenty years, if she took up all these Lifers' examples, here in the Navy, of what it means to have seniority status, her bosses would fire her. Plain and simple! And being unemployed at her age? Not a good thing. So, really, fuck these fat Chiefs, also, and their whole seniority-based culture. A lot of them are just setting a bad example. So, it's really their fault, I think. So, fuck them again. Fuck them, truly!

I don't know. I guess part of my major malfunction with all this, is, I sorta have that conversation in mind, of what I heard our Senior saying to our Chief Murdock, after shift change. I hung around near the hatch, outside, eavesdropping their conversation, now that no one was around. None of us subordinates. Something I often do. To get a better feel of what's REALLY on the minds of my superiors, when they feel comfortable enough to lower their Military Bearing, and talk to one another, like normal human begins would do.
"I think it's a lot of responsibility to be placing onto a Third Class." Said Senior.
"Hey, you were the one being an asshole towards him." Responded our Chief Murdock, after a lengthy pause.

I could tell our Chief wasn't interested, at first, biting the bait, thrown out, that Senior was setting up for him. But, after a lengthy pause, he finally did.
“I was being an asshole towards him, because, I expect a lot from him now. I have to.” Followed up Senior.
“No, you don't.”
“There's no other way.”
“Yes, there is!” Broke out Chief Murdock.
The most animate I've ever heard his voice getting.
“No other way is going to cut it.” Responded Senior.
And, obviously, what the real conversation was about, was how Senior felt about our Night Check lead, and how he's been since being replaced as head LCPO of the Line Division. How slack he's become, requiring Senior and the IS3 to be doing more and more of his work, for him. Senior, finally, speaking out about the giant Squid in the room. And this is how our AEC Murdock responded to that:
“You know, I think my best years were when I was attached to VFA-41. Now THERE was a squared away command, that had strong morale, from the low-ranking Airman, on up. You hardly saw anyone headed in the direction Royster and Navastian are headed. All FTN. Because, that command took care of its people. And, we were honored the Battle E, twice, in the eight years I was with them. Good Squadron. Good times.”
“What are you driving at?” Asked Senior, all irately.
“What I'm driving at is, this: I have a couple of Battle E ribbons under my belt. I've already earned them. And now that I'm getting out, I don't see why I should—”
“So, you're just going to GAF off the rest of your fifty-eight days, and get out, leaving Falconni with all the—”
“Yes, I AM, I'm going to GAF it all off, and I have fifty-two days now left, really.”
And now Senior was to make it personal.
“GAF off, like an Airman would... some punk kid, straight out of High School. REALLY, AEC?”
And now, so was the AEC.

“Stop looking at them like that, that's the problem, there, stop looking at them as juvenile delinquent, punk kids, Pavys, they're SHIPMATES! They're BETTER than that!”

And this is where I started to truly favor our AEC. Truly began to, not just like the man, but love the man. Even though, he's half the Sailor that he used to be, since, going all FTN, himself. And becoming a bad example. Here is where I saw a relative connection to him. And, he's no heavy-set Chief, either. He's a thin and healthy-looking man, that deserved better than what the command did for him. A real able body worker, even as a Chief, that is back when he was head Chief in charge of the Line. Even though not anymore, and now I could really apply everything on him about everything I was illustrating about before: about procrastination. But, with our AEC, I remember how much of a hard worker he used to be before becoming FTN. So, it really doesn't apply to him. He might have now become a bad example for us, but I do remember the example he used to set. And the reason for his procrastination isn't now because he just wants to be lazy. It's because he just doesn't want to apply himself anymore, to a lost cause, as he used to. Considering what the command did to him. Just because he wasn't strict enough, and had an actual human heart, and not the artificial Navy one, that's transplanted into you by force, from Zero Days.

“Oh, they're better than that, you say?”

Fuck you, Senior! I thought then, to myself.

“Yes!”

“Vandalism, AEC, they committed vandalism, YOUR BOYS!”

Fuck you, Senior, a second round, I thought. Since, that there, now, pertained to ME!

“….” But our AEC had nothing to respond with.

And seeing as he didn't, then made me feel resentment, for what I had done. For, I let our AEC down.

“Twenty years in, and this is how you're going to end it?” Said Senior.

“Don't talk down to me like that!” Responded our Chief.

“This shit is bullshit, and even you know it.” Now responded our AEC.

“What's bullshit, is, how this Squadron was being run, before, and people like me, and the Master Chief, had to be brought in, to—”
“Make this Squadron give the appearance, the APPEARANCE, that we've squared things away. When we really HAVEN'T! It takes time to patch up a Squadron. Morale takes time. But since some Admiral, way up, has always had sentimental values of this command, since, it was his first back in the day, when dinosaurs roamed the earth, we have to now bear with that lunatic being brought out of retirement. And, even he knows you can't do it in the time given. Six months? Six months for him to square away a Squadron that's been on the shitcan for over six years?”
I just love the way our AEC words it, better than any of us could.
“Well, whatever the case may be, I was brought in, and I got responsibilities.” Said Senior.
“Yeah, responsibilities, in polishing a TURD!” Continued AEC.
“I got responsibilities, and now, Falconni will be picking up YOUR responsibilities, since—”
“Since I'm tired of the bullshit and rhetoric, and I'm not going to play along, anymore.” Continued to interject our AEC.
“You're leaving me and Falconni, with ALL the responsibilities—”
“You can't WAIT to be rid of! Because, you really hate this job, you hate dealing with young Airman. And, you also hate how you were screwed out of a nice paper pushing office job, in maintenance. To be here, babysitting, what YOU'D like to think of as irreconcilable juvenile delinquents.”
I can't stop loving hearing our AEC, cutting off our Senior in mid-sentence. The Double-Digit Midget can do this, now, since, he's got nothing else to lose.
“I got my orders, and—”
“You HATE your orders, and, you HATE these kids. And, as for me, I got my Navy pension coming up, and my move to Honolulu. Where I'll be opening up a bar, with a bud of mine, and, right now, in my mind, that's all that matters to me. Once I swallow my anchors, it's nothing but sandy beaches, and maytais, for me.”
Hmm... got to make a mental note to visit that bar one day whenever I end up getting out.

“Also, don't think your AD1 Bastille, if he was here, would be on your side on this matter. Not really! He might have not said anything, since, it's not in his character. But, I've had some talks with him, and, trust me, HE WOULDN'T!”
I also know our AD1, too. And I can see that playing out, if he was here.
“Also, don't you bring that up with him, Dave. I'm the one that's right now saying that, even though I really shouldn't be, since, I'm now speaking on his behalf, when, he's not here. But, I just can't help not letting you know what he would think!”
Dave is Senior's first name. Dave Hamakua. Something you rarely hear anyone bringing up, unless, the conversation amongst us Military becomes that personal.
“You're no different from any of these Airmen, AEC, that have just gotten in.”
Senior, shut the fuck up! Seriously!
“I did my twenty years, I served, I don't give a shit no more. I think we already went through this!”
Yeah, he did, Senior, so LAY OFF!
“What about Falconni?” Brought up Senior, then.
“Falconni isn't staying in. I've spoken to him, to see how he feels about his career, since, being here, and, the Squadron hasn't exactly giving him the best impressions, either. He's getting out, too, when his time is through. And, unfortunately for him, I feel sorry for him, since he'll now never have the chance to see just how good the Navy could be for him. Since, VF-451 is all he's ever seen and known.” Responded AEC.
Really making me think, now, about my own career. Will I even have one, a real one! Since, it really becomes that when you reenlist, and enter into your second term.

And then Senior finally SAID IT:
“You've become a Shitbag, John!” Dropped Senior, then.
And...? Wow! I mourned, then, really upsetting me to hear him call our AEC that. Really, truly!
“I'm a Shitbag? Good!” Simply responded our AEC, surely enough.
“A Shitbag. A disgrace, I had to be brought in to replace.”

“Well, keep up the good work! And don't worry about me getting in the way, and messing up a good thing, you got, here, because, I WON'T!” Finished up our AEC.

THE DANGER ZONE

Stormy clouds hung over the Pacific. Holy Mother! Think I, then, for, conditions have seriously deteriorated for the worst. There be nothing but giant, angry, mountainous clouds, just above us. And rockin' and roarin' high sea plains, just below. And JUST above my head, are those clouds, right now, as I wipe down my canopy. Which almost makes it feel like I can reach up, with my hand, and grab a hold of, as they go past. Mountainous! Angry! Vicious! Clouds. For, now and then, I will see them eye down at us, as our Ship sails forward, with hostile and unwelcoming eyes. Giving off very territorial vibes. Giving off the impression that we've steered off course, and really don't belong here.

THUNDER!

CRACK!

ROAR!

Goes the skies above.

Unholy Nameless! Are we still launchin', still? I think, as these conditions begin to worry me. I'm up on top of my Jet, with the canopy open, wiping it down, and I feel like I'm wasting my time, since, at any moment, it might start pourin' rainin'. I'm up on top, and there's winds blowing. Gushes of wind blasting, to and fro, intermediately, and it feels like at any time, with the right gush of wind, I'll be sent off, and up, and GONE! Sucked up into some vortex, up above. Sucked into some netherworld/otherworld after place, of another spacetime, and another continuum.

WOOSH!

Goes the winds!

As I go: UNHOLY BARNACLES! Hold on, Navastian. Hold on! And I do so, holding on to the canopy above my head, for, the sake of my own dear life. While still moronically wiping it down, trying to get to a particular smudge, just a bit out of reach, on the far tip, and I can't quite reach it. So. Fuck it! Let it go! It's not worth going tiptoe. I think. And I WON'T! If the pilot complains about that one smudge I'm

trying to get to, he can wipe the damn thing down, his damn self, when we close the damn canopy on him during launch.
WOOSH!
Goes the winds, again!
And for a second there, I am airborne. Then not. And now I'm struggling to reestablish proper footing, as I land back on my feet, on the rails of the cockpit, legs spread between the seats. Oh God! I don't want to die today! Please, don't let the winds blow me over. And they could, if they wanted to, they could! My Jet be tail over water. And, with the right gush, I could be sent sailing off like a feather in the wind, picked up by its billowing graces, and taken away, far away, off course, and off Ship. Danced around in mid-air....

(I guess these suave winds fancying to do the cha-cha-cha with me, with me and my two left feet. And I've never having taken dance lessons, before. Danced around like a sweaty, drunken date: the one dumb-but-pretty half-naked women, you'd find at any bar or club, dancing haphazardly on the tables, who's just beggin' to be taken advantage of. That ditsy dame. With a ditsy, yet repugnant, sweaty smile, staring at all her dizzied-up scenery, with a pair of Carol Burnett eyes). Sorry, felt the need to be quaintly comical about it, illustrating it, for some reason.

But, anyways...!
With the right gush of wind, I'd be picked up, and:
Danced!
I'D BE!
All just before the inevitable plummet.
And then:
SPLASH!
And now I'd be man overboard, as the drills will be called in, and I would then have to worry about drowning in these high seas. Fighting off wave after wave, lunging at me, all trying to take me down to Davy Jones.

Seriously! We still launching? And I really am perplexed by all this. These have to be the worst conditions I've ever seen them try. Usually, QMs, or Quartermasters, would try and steer clear of stormy weather such as these. These are not the ideal conditions to be having Jets moving about, on top of a flattop-ed Ship, that be rockin' and swayin'. And, right now, we also be rockin' and swayin'. And the deck is all slippery wet from the few drizzles we've had earlier.

Wait...? All right! Now it's drizzling, again, and I've pretty much wasted my time wiping down this canopy, risking my fuckin' life and limb. And, for this! WTF? I'm done. And now I'm heading back down. But, as I was sayin', these are not ideal conditions to have Jets, a whole bunch of them: five of our Tomcats, a bunch of Hornets and Super Hornets, one Hawkeye, and a few Prowlers. At least twenty-five aircrafts, to be taking off shortly. And shortly, zooming and vrooming about on these limited spaces, and it's just not ideal! Not at all! Which even in better conditions would be DANGEROUS! Since. At all times, us Skittles: us Brown, Red, Green, Purple, Blue, White and Checker Shirts, we Flightdeck personnel always have to keep our wits about us, keep our heads on a swivel, as we watch for Jets around us turning. Watch them as they vroom and go, move about on the Flightdeck. And there can be several of them, all moving around us, all at once, as we have to dodge them as they vroom past. Worryin' of getting run over. And. Aye! You heard that correctly. For, it happens. Us getting run over by a Jet. It does happen. That, or sucked up into its intake. But always we'll have a Jet turn on us, that gives us its afterburner salute. And with the ol' heave ho, have us blown over by the exhaust. I've already have had it happen to be a bunch of times. Aye! A bunch of times. No! It's not that bad! Except for the fact you will be burned a little and sent airborne. Sent sailing a good fifteen to thirty feet distance. Then crashing into a fellow Shipmate, crashing into another Jet, or thrown into the path of another turning Jet's exhaust, as that sends you flying some more, in a different direction. (No shit! That happened to me one time. I was pinballed around like that). Or, sent crashing into a Blue Shirt driving a tractor, past, and knocking him out of his seat, and now, I be driving this damn thing. Even though, I've not yet been qual-ed to do so, making me go: “WTF? The

steering controls are HORRIBLE on this damn thing! What? I'm sorry, Blue Shirted man, I didn't mean to commandeer your vehicle. It just sorta happened that way. Stop yelling at me! Wait...? What are you trying to warn me of now? Oh shit! Turn, Navastian, turn! Turn before it's too—"
And I doesn't turn in time, as I drive the tractor into the props of one of those E-2 Hawkeyes, that are online, while those massive props be spinning.

And now, boom!
And, boom!
And then, boom, boom!
BOOM! BA-BOOM-BOOM!
And once again, I'm ascending... wait? Descending? Oh great! Descending, headed for that other place, dressed all in red, for I've been a naughty boy as of late.

This be the real danger zone. We're up here to control chaos. Since, there's chaos abound all around us, at every turn, and step, at every corner, nook and cranny. Metal and machinery be all around, active, and alive. And being so close to them while they're fully conscious and aware and sentient, can be very, very imposing. They're larger than us, built more robustly, and we just feel like lesser life forms around them. And, they will treat us as such, if, we don't show them the proper respect, they demand and deserve and need. Best way to explain it to any CV, is: imagine running around on a freeway, with cars wheezing by, and you have to run around dodging them, with chains to your back, 'cause, you're RESPONSIBLE of them. Need to chase after them, and chain them down, when, they need be. While avoiding all the other oncoming traffic, as they zoom and vroom about you. And there's no dividing line between us and them. No sidewalk we can use, while they, these vehicles, use the main roads. We occupy the same exact spaces as them, and at any moment, we can fuck up, mess up our timing, and occupy the SAME EXACT SPACES! With them running us down. Turning us into road... er... Flightdeck...? Deck kill? Aye! Deck kill! (There isn't a term for it yet, so I just made that up). So,

who wants some Line Rat burgers? For, let's scoop the dead carcass up off the deck, and have ourselves a barbecue, and chow down!

“You know you're launching the Skipper's Jet today?” Tells me, AD1 Bastille, he does.
And now, I look at him, then the horrendous conditions we still in, and ask:
“What the fuck, AD1? We're like in the middle of a hurricane here... WTF?”
And the AD1 just shakes his head, all drearily, and says:
“Don't ask me, I placed a word in with Maintenance, and they just GAFed me off. We're just mindless peons up here to them and have no say of what goes.” Laments the AD1.
And now I'm worried. Now, very worried. Although, I wanna note this: this is why I like the AD1, he shared his thoughts and opinions, and didn't treat my concerns as that of an un-squared away whims of an un-squared away Airman, Sailor, Nobody. Senior would have just given me a look and asked me if I was planning on being insubordinate, then chewed me out a little, before giving me more EMI. For if Maintenance thinks weather conditions are fine—they're fine! Who would I be then to question my superiors, since, they supposedly have such grander understanding of such matters? Like trying to launch while The Ship is trying to MOTHERFLIPPIN' capsize over, almost! AD1 lays it out as it is, and doesn't try to hide behind Military Bearing, when he has no answers, no say of what goes, and the situation is just all jacked up, to start with.

The Skipper—huh? I think. Referring to the CO of our Squadron, not The Ship's. Who's the real Skipper, The Ship's, that is! But as for our Commander Jägermeister, who's also a Skipper (Every CO be referred to as such, making it really confusing when on Ship, as we run around like Gilligan, confused over our chain-of-command, of which Skipper be the real Skipper). But, as for our Squadron's Skipper, he's a twenty-year Vet Tomcat Pilot, and now, I truly grow even more worried. Because, let's see... how do I describe what this man is all about? Well, then, how about like this: you know what his call sign is? They call our CO “Mommy.” Aye! That's right!

They call him that! “Mommy!” Because, way back early in his career, he was in his cockpit, at the helm of a Jet, like the one I have for him before me, today. Going through the launch procedure, and an incident occurred, then, to give him that call name. But first, let's start off with me saying one thing about our CO, he is: a very, very impatient man. The type with eyes you sees all slit, while grinding his teeth, waiting for the rest of us to catch up to his level. His Mach speed level. Mr. Overdrive. Mr. Turbo Capacity, blasting off into the Plaid Dimension! He's in his mid to late forties, and has this refined, very refined, presence, that makes anyone around question their own worth of their own being in comparison. Very high and mighty, for he's the freakin' Skipper! Comes from a fine blood line of Navy officers and gents, that might be going all the way back to the American Revolutionary War, for all I know. He's ol' blue blooded, and a very, very privileged white man. The sophisticated and ivy league, educated sort, that likes to wear his caliber in the white highlights he's grown on the sides of his hair, along his ears. Intentionally! Personally, jokey wise, I can just imagine him lounging around The Ship, in a purple silk bathrobe, circling his Bourbon. Strolling along the p-ways, eyeing any and all female peasant enlisted personnel. Eyeing for the right sort, the right type—blood type, that is! For he can later on sink his teeth into. Aye! Roger that! Just take him as The Ship's resident Dracula. The motherfucker be a vampire. And the well to do sort, you can expect stepping out of portrait, that has baroque, framed tapestries, of leaves and gold and flowers, a humongous oil painting hung in a museum, that was done up back in the 18th century days. With “Mommy,” there, carrying his right hand, nestled in the crevices of his buttoned-down shirt. “Mommy!” Aye! They call him that, ‘cause, back in his earlier days as a Tomcat Pilot, the man was all waiting impatiently in his cockpit, eyeing some Yellow Shirt takin' his sweet ass time, to give the signal to unchain the Jet, and taxi it along its merry way. And GO! Let the beast loose, so Mr. Jägermeister, there, could go into beast mode, and take off, and show what he is made of. And when the Yellow Shirt finally did, without even giving the Yellow Shirt ample amount of time to properly run back, and start giving the hand signal to move forward, Mr. Jägermeister, pressed down the stick, full throttle, to move the Jet forward, and ran the Yellow Shirt down. Well...! He didn't kill him. But the Yellow

Shirt was like: “OH SHIT!” As he jumped out of the way—tried to jump away! But was knocked over by the nose of the bird, as it creamed into him, into his cranial. Knocked him down, then kicked him all around, by the strut of the Jet, a little, which then almost ran him over, with its giant front tire. When the emergency team came by, they helped him up, and the first word that came popping out of his mouth was: “MOMMY!” As he came to. Supposedly, all the younger Lieutenant JG Jägermeister got, was a slap on the wrist. Since, his daddy was once a CO of a Ship, and his daddy's daddy had a freakin' Ship named after him. The USS Jägermeister. That's now a decommissioned WW2 destroyer. A slap on the wrist, of course! For, the man is practically royalty, here. Although, don't let that color your perception of him all pompous and wicked, he can be a nice man, too. Spoke with him once. Bumped into him in the NEXchange, while sorting through CDs. We were in civi clothing, so it made the experience seem a lot more approachable. Him and his polo shirt, lookin' like he stepped out of a Beach Boy's concert, and was also looking for their CD album, too. While I was searching for The Beastie Boys. He's from San Diego, CA. So, we're both Cali boys, so go fig. Not as scary and formidable as our Maintenance Master Chief is, not in the slightest. Wasn't as overbearing with his stature as one would think, since, he is the freakin' Skipper. Not even overbearing, at all. Can be very humble. A really nice and sincere man, that comes from well to do status. So well to do, that, he no longer has to prove himself to anyone. Just WATCH OUT when he's behind the stick in one of these bad boys. Watch the FUCK OUT! For then, he's a totally different man. Through and through!

“Good morning, Gentleman, my name is AN Navastian, and I'll be your PC for....”
I'm giving the PC spiel. Done prepping my bird, and Flight Ops are about to start. “Mommy,” our CO, is with “Mama's Boy,” our XO, his Co-Pilot. His bitch! But anyways, I dive the ducts, as they do the same, since, the CO of our command can't even escape this line of work, considering its cruciality. And just now imagin' how FUBARed, I'd be, if, they were FUBARed, the blades in there, that is, and he was to notice. Ha! But anyways, I'm done with both, now, and thankfully, they weren't spinning (how in these weather conditions with the winds and all, I have no idea). I

then go up to seat the two, help them with their ejection seat pins, stowing them away, and gets down after closing up all the steps on the side of the bird. Then closes the bird's ladderwell. And now, we're starting. As for Mommy up there, he's sporting his usual persona, which is a dual persona of both showing humility and aloofness. Responding to your whims when needed, then flat out ignoring you when he's to himself. The sort of personality, I can just imagine (since I'm psychic about these things) came from a man, that has spent his entire life being groomed for possible, future, political prospects. Groomed since he was a child, when he'd have to remember the names of important people, his parents would introduce him to, and stressed to show eloquence and respect, while all really not given much of a hoot. For the kid's eight! And wants to be left alone to play with his RC glider, with other kids his age. That is if the man had an RC glider at that age, in his time, since, I'm imagining myself being in that age, in the 80s. He's way older so... can't say.

Seriously, we launching in these conditions? I keep thinking, for they just keep getting worse and worse. It's pourin' rainin', now, The Ships a rocking and rolling all over the place, and even with twelve chains on my bird, it looks to want to lean to side to side and break loose.

Whiskey Tango Foxtrot?
And then, all of a sudden, I turn my head around to see an F-18 unchained, and now trying to make its way to the cats. And, the fucker is STRUGGLIN'! The bird be in the middle of the Flightdeck, with us Skittles all around, watching it, watching the Pilot being all skittish, not to give too much thrust, to move it forward. And the motherfucker is now SKIDDIN'! Skidding from side to side, with the rocking and the rolling of The Ship, and...!

And...!
No! No! No!
Holy God...!

All right, that was close! The bird almost skidded into a Prowler, and the speed it was skidding, it would have rammed into that bird, which is TOW, and the two would have gone skinny dippin' in each other's arms. But it looks to be...? All right, it's now moving again. Easy there! Easy! No! No! WTF? Seriously we launchin', still?

And as I take a look around all over the Flightdeck. All I'm seeing is the same scenarios possibly played out all over. Plus, we have a Hawkeye taking off, and I DON'T want to see that fat motherfuckin' goose of a bird skidding all over the place, with those giant propellers, spinning, as they are. Everywhere Jets be turning and burning, in a sea of gray skies and haze and everything. And conditions now are also hazy, again, as they were last night, for I can barely make out the bow end of The Ship, where a few Super Hornets are to take off from. And at any time, I'm sorta dreading seeing a giant fireball piercing out of the haze. Showing us all, back here, on the aft end of The Ship, how NOT well Flights Ops are being conducted up front at the bow.

I'm done with the launch, now, and now, I'm just waiting while holding onto my bird, waiting for a Yellow Shirt to come by. I'm eyeing up at our CO, and our CO...? Is lookin' out and away, chewing on a stick of gum, existing on a completely different level as I, and the rest of us are. Having hyperspeed reveries of breakin' forth from this world, and, into the next. Existing in a world of smears and glazes, as everything around him soars on past.

Funny!
There's a Prowler being launched right next to me, and my Jet, and the PC of that aircraft is using the exhaust to dry herself down. The exhaust on a Prowler, from what I can see, aren't TOW, and are stationed below its wings, and don't seem as big and powerful as my bird's afterburners. And everyone in her Squadron is just watching her and allowing it to happen. They can do that? I think. And the PC is practically dancing along with the exhaust blowing her way, while ripples of her jersey and pants echo off from her in waves. Seems to be really enjoying it, she is,

the nice hot current. And since it's so freakin' cold up here right now, and wet, I'm also considering. The PC then notices me. Pretty girl, I can tell, even so heavily outfitted with her cranial and visor down and baggy storm jacket. Notices. And now gives me a head jerking motion to come try. And since everyone is sorta out of it right now, all preoccupied with the dangers around, I does so.

Ha, Ha!
This feels good! It really is nice and warm, and the exhaust is drying me down.
“Nav... what the... you doin'?” Goes ADC Siegfried.
As he grabs me by my flight jacket and jersey and jerks me away from the little fun I was just having. Jerks me away, as a mother would do, trying to move her child along, away from any distractions. Also gives me a confounded look as if to ask: “WTF are you thinking?” And I can understand him, this has to be the worst time to be doing such. And I have to mind the mindset of our own Squadron, and not get caught up with the more fun-loving whims I see this Prowler's Squadron personnel seem to have. They're called the VAQ-55 Starriders And I begin to idealize them, imagining what they'd be about, if I was attached to them, instead. Plus, the PC of this Prowler is so freakin' cute, too. Freakin'! But anyways. The Yellow Shirts are here. And now time to watch the fun of watching my Jet try and move all the way to the cats. If The Ship wants to launch in these conditions, then FINE! Let them try. But if my 107 goes creaming into another, and all we see then is our CO, Mommy up there, REALLY blasting off into the Twilight Zone, then so be it! My 107 isn't really my freakin' Jet! As attached to it as I have become. In the end, the motherfucker cost over a hundred million, and I don't see my E-3 pay grade covering the cost of that expense, not any time soon. Or, in other words, I'm not getting payed enough for this. And now, the Yellow Shirt gives the signal to have the chains taken off, and I, and everyone around me, does so, and now I have TWELVE chains dangling over my shoulders, and I feel like the ghost of Jacob Marley, carrying around these damn heavy things. Practically dragging me down to the deck. Fine! Go, Mr. Jägermeister, GO! It's your show, now. Show these Yellow Shirt Boat Chucks who's boss! And the man does so. For he's been waiting for this moment the entire time. The chains are

off, and our CO is just smiling up there. Just smilin'! And I don't think he likes Yellow Shirts, much, as neither of us do. He's smiling a little too mischievously, and me and the Yellow Shirt and everyone else can see it. Aye! All the Yellow Shirts know about our CO, know him, and his reputation, and how he'll go pedal to the medal on their asses, and try running them down. He does it all the time. And, wouldn't surprise me of he did it on purpose to. And as the Yellow Shirt runs back, builds up enough nerve while shivering in the knees, he gives the signal and—

VROOM!

Or, not vroom, but SHEE!

Exhaust bein' blown out of afterburners don't go vroom, since, this isn't a freakin' car, and they make a SHEE sound!

So there!

SHEE!

And our CO goes FLYING forward, and comes to a halt, inches away from the Yellow Shirt, terrifying him shitless. And as I look at all of our Squadron personnel, everyone seems to be donning the same worrisome look of dread as that Yellow Shirt, there, is. They know how the CO is, also, even with weather conditions being as horrendous as they are. He'd still try to speed on through, and there's nothing any of us can do or say. For, don't forget again, he's the real HiMFIC of VF-451, He's the Skipper!

VROOM!

Wait... I mean... SHEE!

And then all of a sudden, The Ship rocks to one side, and my 107, with its' Mommy, goes swerving to one side, long and fast. And it won't stop! It won't STOP! And now everyone runs up to me, grabs the chains off my shoulders, and runs up to tie the fucker down.

Tie the fucker DOWN!

Tie it DOWN!

And we do so. Inches away from it skidding right into 106, ATAN Pflugerville's Jet. No one knows what to say or do. And our CO doesn't look quite happy being tied down, again. And then he slams his fist into the console and mouths off.
“You almost died, you NUTCASE!” I scream out to him.
Since, no one would be able to hear me right now. Our CO is inside the cockpit, stirrin' fiercely pierced, mouthin' off inside, even scaring his Co-Pilot “Mama's Boy,” now, a little, too. And now we feel like unchaining the damn thing again, and giving it, another go. We unchain my Jet, again, and set the chains on my shoulders. The Yellow Shirt gives the signal and...!
SHEE!!
And Mr. Speed Demon, there, TAKES OFF, launching FORWARD, and more towards the island. The Yellow Shirt is now runnin' for his LIFE, all backwards, so he won't be run over, almost, again. And now we're all runnin', too, trying to catch up, to possibly chain the Jet down again, if Mr. Turbo Toxic, up there, decides to ride up to that E-2 Hawkeye, near the island, and decides to NOT play nice. But then the Yellow Shirt slips and falls, right in the path of the intake and—

Unholy FUCKBAGS!
No! No!
Don't EAT him!
Don't!
But, a fellow Yellow Shirt runs up, and grabs him, and gets him to his feet, before Mr. Jägermeister can ride up, and absorb him into the bird's teeth.

All right! He's almost there! Mr. Jägermeister is almost at the cats, as we all trail behind him. I guess he's decided to take it slow, now, since, almost colliding into another Jet, and almost murdering that Yellow Shirt, there. Me and Chief Siegfried, and a few other Green Shirt personnel, are all along the right side, at the aft end of the Jet, watching and waiting. Behind us is the E-2 Hawkeye, and...!

Oh God!

It's also UNCHAINED!
God, help me!
And moving about in these conditions. Fuck this crazy shit! I don't know if I can stand it anymore. Those birds simply SCARE the living BARNACLES out of me!

The Yellow Shirt then gives one final taxi hand signal to have our CO move forward to the cats. But, then all of a sudden, The Ship rocks, again, and our CO swerves the bird around, and now we're all getting a taste of exhaust from the afterburner.
“AWW!” I go.
As I'm sent sailing into the air, me, and Chief Siegfried, and a couple more of us. And into the direction of that E-2.

Nope!
Not dead, YET!
But almost, for as we all get up, WE notice, that the E-2 had to make an immediate stop, just before collecting us all up, into its spinning props. Lookin' like the sickles of the Grim Reaper, coming to harvest our souls. As I get up off the deck, I pick up all my chains, as a few others help. And we're up and moving, again, and right now, I'm too traumatized to even think straight. My ears are buzzing, my head feels woozy, and my senses are shot. I'm wet. I'm cold. And I feel tired and dirty all over. Dirty from these chains, as they smear their corrosive rust all over me, and the rain is making it all feel like I'm neck deep in a swamp. I want to go HOME, now. I feel like I'm billowing within the vortex of a twisting and turning tornado, out in the middle of the ocean, and I want to go home. And not home, as in, back to my rack, but home, as in, back to California. Safe and sound and away from all this madness. Fuck this shit! Seriously! Fuck it! I'm done! I'm through! I am all FTN, now! Fuck the NAVY: "Never Again Volunteer Yourself!" I don't give a shit. I will be striking CV once my EAOS comes around. I want to visit John Murdock, in Honolulu, when he opens that bar, God, if you'd please! I won't be continuing putting up with all these hostilities—NOT NO MORE! I am totally THROUGH!

My 107 is at the cats, now. And, looking up, I look in the eyes of our CO, and he looks to be where he considers home. About ready to take off, and head into that great unknown. That great beyond. He's in his cockpit, but it seems like there's to be winds blowing at him, inside. Blowing up, and out, and left, then right, as if he's already being sent off into that RUSH! Mr. Aviator Sunglasses, reflecting a world of blazing lights, blazing across from here to eternity, red lights flashing over blue waters, all being mirrored in and off in his mirrored frames. Mr. Jägermeister, Mr. Turbo Thruster, thrusting into the Twilight hour, when the sun be fading away into vertical horizons. Him all waiting all ready, steady, and go as he blazes away in his metal machine of fire and high-octane fury and power towards that oblivion while also taking a moment to high five Pauly Oak along the way. Fly! Fly! Fly away, fly out, fly hard Mr. Jägermeister man! You can do it! Blast into that next great dimension, with your inter-dimensional vessel, there. Fly towards that turbo Valhalla! Where turbo Valhalla warriors, such as yourself, be jousting Jets from the break of dawn, noon and sunset and gone far past Kingdom Come. Making special circumstances with God to allow it. Past all the way, to that specially tailored Aluminum Cloud Heaven, where you can be jousting Jets till the end of time.

BOOK THREE

IYAOYAS

I didn't have one of those dreams last night... er... this morning. And as relieved as I am, I'm also not. And missing the significance they might have had. Strange!

Twilight skies expand over the Pacific. Really twilight red right now, just before sunset. Stars can be seen on through the twilight red. I'm up on the Flightdeck. And am already done finished my Daily, and there's nothing else to do for the rest of the night, since, there won't be any Night Ops tonight. So, it's gonna be a long and arduous night to drudge through, while dealing with the usual. Since, I sense tonight it might be best to keep my head on a swivel, for other reasons, even though there won't be any more bouncing around the Flightdeck from afterburners turning on my ass, and having me sent sailing across the Flightdeck. Man! My tail bone still hurts after I landed on it, after being flung fifteen feet earlier this morning. When conditions were so bad, the world almost seemed like it was coming to an end. I still feel sore all over. But anyways, I have other reasons to be so vigilant this evening, for, the twilight skies are all red, and ominously so. Meaning, something horrendous might be afoot.

“Hey, Navastian, Chief Murdock wants you in The Shop.”

It's AM3 Katzenberg, sayin'.

“He wants me in The Shop... why?” I wonder.

“He just does, don't worry, I'll watch your Jet, now head down!” He says.

And... I don't trust him. I don't trust him! After everything that's been going on, and knowing The Shop, I doesn't trust. I mean, the Chief is almost always up here. He's the outdoorsmen type and isn't the type to coop himself up in The Shop. Even if he feels like doing nothing more than skatin', he'll skate in front of all of us out on the work site. Because, being out on the work site, outside, is just his nature. He's the claustrophobic type, that wouldn't want it any other way. I now look into the eyes of Katzenberg, and I stare a little. Trying to pressure him, to get him to show the true intent of me heading down. And, after a—

“What are you staring at, Navastian, get down there, it's... an order!”

What... an order? I've never heard anyone use those words before, making it sound like something out of a movie. No one EVER says, “that's an order” in the Military, at least not in the Navy from what I've heard. I mean to say, not saying we don't have superiors ordering us around, but when delegating to us as such, they'll never actually say “that's an order,” they'll just tell us what to do, and yell at us if we start hesitating and showing insubordination. But having them actually say “that's an order,” verbally, that's just shit you hear in fiction. I've just never seen our superiors ever using those words, considering, how corny and callous they've made it out to be. In movies and other media, that is. Making the superior that says it, sound like some cold and uncaring tyrant. Making the one to say it, out to be the story's villain, sending some poor subordinate to do questionable things, leading to his or her unnecessary and untimely death. And as we all know, Falky, and Senior, and AM3 Kats, here, ain't the villains in this story. At least, they'd like to think they ain't, since, everyone is the hero in their own story. Which is why no Military personnel would EVER say those words, no matter how much of the villain their role has really been made out to be. But, anyways, Kats is now beginning to sweat a little under my stare, and, I now know the only thing waiting for me downstairs is a massive roll up ambush by Falky and the boys. I know now! For, I know how shit works around here. But, then again, based on what I described about how our Chief Murdock is, being the outside type, and all, and since he's not up here on the Flightdeck from what I can see, the question I'm then left asking is: where is he? And, now, I'm second guessing my own reasoning.

“Are you coming, or do you want me to go down and let Chief know you're GAFing him off?” AM3 Kats asks.

And. Ah shit! I'm not sure, now! But, then again, he might be down in the Hangar Bay. And if he isn't, I'll then try lookin' for him in The Shop, when I feel it's safe. And I know AN Donnelly is down in the Hangar Bay, after breakriding his Jet down there, and I'll have him come up and help me out as support muscle.

“I'll be down in a minute, I need to do something on my Jet.” I say.

“What? I know your Daily is done, you've already sent it to Maintenance.” Illustrates the AM3.

And, I can just feel his eyes now trying to squeeze me now, too. Trying to force me to come along with what him and Falky have in store.
“Just give me a minute, I forgot to... dive the ducts, and—”
“You forgot to, what?” Interrupts Kats.
On my lie.
“Well, um...?” I go, making it sound that stupid of me.
“So, you gundecked it?” Asks Kats.
Ah shit! He might use that against me, what am I thinking?
“Umm... I'm sorry.” I say, afraid now.
Kat's just softly shakes his head, then, considering how much not diving them is frowned upon amongst us. And then says:
“Navastian, you know, you really are a Shitbag!”
And leaves. And I'm willing to take that for now. Thank God, he didn't decide to use it against me. Considering if Falky and the boys wanted to REALLY get to me, that would be the best way they could. Since that's an offense that would send me straight up to see the man upstairs, the Skipper. Plus, that whole Midnight Train thing with Ramshaw. But I now doubt they'll dime me out about it. Although, now, I know Kat's will come up, again later, when he feels like I've done them. Just glad he didn't decide to stick around while I checked, since, it only takes a few minutes to do so. But, anyways, I'm now dashing across the Flightdeck, to the parallel set of Ratways on the other side leading down into The Ship. Now I'm heading down ladderwells to the Hangar Bay. And now, I'm here, and looking around for Chief Murdock... here... there...! Looking around most of our birds down here, and the one AN Donnelly came down in. And neither Chief nor Donnelly are anywhere to be found. Now I'm looking around the few VMFA Squadron Hornets that are down here. For, I know Chief likes to flirt with this one Gunnery Sergeant, that's usually down here with their birds. And, I can't blame him, for that Gunnery Sergeant is a nice and tall blonde woman, with a gorgeous smile. But, maybe, a little too gorgeous, though, as when she opens up her mouth to smile, she does so a bit too much, showing off her giant pearly horse teeth. Looks like she can eat an entire apple with one large bite. What am I saying—the entire tree—not just one apple! But still, she manages to be pretty

with her smiles nonetheless. Considering how much vibrant energy she emanates when she does so. So, at-a-boy, Chief! You tap that Marine ass. Just don't let the woman perform fellatio on you, I'd worry there! But anyways, I've looked all over, and the Chief isn't down here. And neither is Donnelly. Fuckin' A! Think I. And now I'm dreading heading up to The Shop, dreading! I don't want to go up there. I don't! After the humiliation, the IS3 suffered yesterday at the hands of Senior. I just have a bad feeling about this. A really bad one. Our IS3 was very, very quiet after that, and for the entire morning. Even though him nor Senior suspected of me doing what I did, with that whole vandalism, destroying Ship's property, thing. He'll still take it out on me, to vent that, and other reasons.

I'm in the ladderwell heading up to our Shop, now. Heading up, and up, and up. And now, I'm in the p-way leading. And now I stop. I'm now near The Shop, in the p-way leading directly to it. For, the hatch to it is just down a little, and to the left. It's one long p-way, shaped like a capital L leading in. And I'm standing still, here, not wanting to move onward. Since, I don't want to. Feeling that comfort and safety of being by my lonesome thing again, as I look up at a p-way light giving off a dim glow, and it's filling me up all peculiar, as it has done before. Feeling stationary, here, I feel safe. Stationary always represents safe. But, really, it doesn't. For the only thing constant is change! Meaning: stationary =/= safe, ‘cause, if I don't move my ass, change positions, I won't be in a state of constant safety. Or, in other words: I'm a sitting duck, here! And I have to move onward. I must! No matter how much I don't want to. I have to! There's nothing else I can do. So, I decide... NOT to move onward, and back the fuck out. For chickening out =/= stationary but does = changing positions! And that's all that matters. But, as I reach near the end of this long p-way heading out, I see THEM: Quimby, the IS3, Kats, and Navarro. And usually AEAN Navarro doesn't take part in any of this. Fuck me, actually... no! Fuck Heraclitus! You asshole, your logic FAILED ME! I should have stated stationary on my bird, I would have been safe there.

“So, where's Chief?” I squeak out, since I'm scared shitless now.

“Chief... isn't he in The Shop?” The IS3 asks.

And I say nothing, as I decide to squeeze by them, for maybe, they won't do anything. They're eyeing me now how predators eye their prey. God help me, please let this not be what I think it to be!

“Did you head in The Shop?” Asks Kats.

With very revealing eyes of what his true intent is.

“....” I say nothing.

I know what they're planning on doing, but now, I'm staying stationary in my denial! Since not being such, I've already proven doesn't necessarily = safe, already. So, I'm stationary in the denial state, hoping that'll work (but obviously, it won’t! My goose is cooked, and I can smell the aromas already!). I'm in between them all trying to make it past, and they're still not doing anything but eyeing me while trying. Eyes, eyes, eyes! Very revealing eyes, they all have of their true intent. While I stay stationary in denial. For, even after they all jump me, if I stay in denial, would I still be deceiving myself enough to believe it's not really happening, and still be safe? I wonder. For it's like that whole “if a tree falls in the forest with no one around, does it still make a sound?” Questions. If I stay in denial of what’s about to happen now, that blindly, would I still be ideally safe, in my own mind, not seeing what's about to take place? Hmm... I wonder? Oh, fuck me, I don't want to be here! No! Don't think that way! It'll ruin your state of denial, Navastian! Oh, fuck me, I don't feel like I'm able to stay in denial anymore. This is HAPPENING! This is seriously now gonna HAPPEN’! And now they seem to be wanting to lead me on into The Shop.

“Well, Navastian, are you going into The Shop or not?” Asks IS3 with those eyes.

Fuck me! Now I've lost my ability to stay in denial, completely! It didn't stay stationary, and ran off somewhere, seeing these eyes for itself. Changed positions. And changing positions now = my ass is truly grass. And now I am terrified beyond measure. I really don't want to know what these Shipmates of mine have in store for me. And, after seeing everything they've done to the likes of Roach Burger, I want nothing to do with it. And now, I also see Roach Burger stepping into the p-way, from the end that leads to the Line Shack, and he's now also eyeing me like a hawk. And then he says:

“Hey, Chainhauler man, where's your chains at?”

And then...

“Get 'EM!”

And now, lights out for me! Lights out! Lights out! Taps! All parties involved SACK me at that very instant. They're all throwing in all their muscle, all their MUSCLE, for, they don't want me to escape. They're all exuding all their force onto me, because, they all really want me that badly. I've been avoiding this for a while now. But up until now, it's all been for rough-housing and play. This I can feel is personal with all of them. It really means this much to them to take me down and take me out. And do God knows what next.

“AWW!” I scream.

But, I'm not that much of a scrapper to begin with, let alone to muscle away from all this heap. I wouldn't even see AN Donnelly managing. Neither the IS3, if, I was with the group, sacking him down. Mr. Spandex Wearing State Wrestling Champ. Standing before photos all hunched over, while showing off his grizzly mitts, showing off all the grizzly work they're capable of.

“TAPE him the FUCK UP!” IS3 says, and they do so.

“Get OFF me! GET—HMM, Hmm, Hmm, hmm!”

And then they tape up my mouth, over and over and over and... overdoing it! REALLY! FUCKIN' ASSHOLES! I don't deserve this! And if you all really wanted to fuck me up this badly, why couldn't you have saved it all for Wog Day? That's what it's there for. OH GOD! I'm worried now what they have planned for their unofficial shit, how they plan to punish me for my antagonistic ways. Antagonistic towards them, since, I'M the fuckin' villain, to them, here! Somehow? And now I can barely do anything, for they've mummified the fuck out of me, and I can hardly move much.

“Put this bow on his head.” Goes the IS3.

And... WTF? They actually have a present bow with them, a big red one, with a flowered top, and ribbons hanging from its sides. And now they're wrapping it around my head, vertically, so the bow end sticks up when I'm up.

“Now put him in this laundry bag.”

And they do so. And since the bags to our laundry are so big, they don't have the same level of trouble I had with Ramshaw stuffing him in those Boot Camp issued

seabags. I can barely struggle now. Plus, I don't want to struggle, for, I don't want to piss them off too much. They might just decide to deep-six my ass. REALLY! Hell! This might all be Senior's idea, too. It might have been him that gave the code red. This could be his doing. And...!
“Hmm, hmm, HMMM, hmm!”
“STOP struggling, Navastian, stop! We'll fuck you up, GOOD, if you keep doing it!” Cracks the IS3.
“Hmm, hmm, HMMM, hmm!”
“I said, cut it OUT!”
Want to know what's scared me shitless now? What if they do toss me overboard? Would they do that... WOULD THEY? I'd like to think they wouldn't, but, I'm not so sure now. I remembered what Senior said about the Old Navy in matters like these. But did he mean it, or was he just trying to scare me? Would they? WHY? FUCKIN' MURDERERS! You motherFUCKING MUR—
“I said, QUIT IT! Not like we're going to toss your ass overboard, or something. Knowing you, you might think something like that.” Informs the IS3.
And that's a GIANT relief. A GIANT one.
“So, what are we going to do to him?” I hear AEAN Navarro asking.
And now I hear a couple of snickers from the parties I can imagine being in on this.
“Nothing, we're not going to do anything.” I hear Quimby say, then him snickering some more.

From this point on, I feel them pick me up, and thrown over one of their shoulders. They're taking me somewhere. But, not up to the Flightdeck to have me float checked. I don't believe they would do that now. I REFUSE to believe they would stoop to that. Or...? No! But, then again, what are they going to do to me? And now I'm just feeling royally embarrassed. Now it hits me, now it STINGS! I'm in a fuckin' laundry bag, being carried around like a pile of smelly clothing, and I can't do anything about it. I don't want to struggle more, because, I feel petrified. I feel so weightless and worthless, and like such a NOTHING! And it STINGS! And what stings worse is the realization that this is how the AO3 Ramshaw must have felt for what I

did to him. I don't know... I don't know! I never even wanted to do that to him in the first place, really. He just really pissed me off... same as I've pissed these, my so-called Shipmates off. Maybe... I am the bad guy in this story? And now it's time for what goes around, coming back around, and hitting me upside the back of my head.

They've been lugging me around for a while now. And I still don't know where they're headed. We've gone down ladderwells, felt myself going through p-ways. And based on the mental image I have mapped out of The Ship in my head, I still don't know where they're taking me. All I know is they're avoiding the Hangar Bay, for, they know I might start struggling again, letting all those around know something is up. They're trying to avoid running across any personnel that might say something, just like me and AN Donnelly were last night. And now we stop!
“Ha, ha! Is that him?” I hear someone asking.
Voice sounds familiar, but I can't make it out right at this moment.
“It's him... take care of him for us, all right?” I hear our IS3 say.
“HA, HA! Oh, we will! We will!”
And I now know whose voice it is. I can feel them handing me over to them. And as D-Boy takes me off their hands, I feel lifted up higher, and thrown over his shoulders. Higher, considering how much bigger he is than Quimby, whom I'm guessing was the one carrying me all this time. And now I feel D-Boy hauling me into their shop.
“Take that Toolbox down.” One of them says.
Then I feel them placing me on some table, from what I can make of it. And now they're opening up the laundry bag. I see brighter lights shining in from the fluorescent. And they cuff the open end down enough to where just my head is sticking out. And now....
“HAH, AHH, HA, Haa, haa, ha, HA, HAA, haaa, haa, ha!”
They're all laughing their asses off at the ridiculous sight of me. All of them, here, in The Shop: H-Town, D-Boy, A-Wall, AO3 Ramshaw, and the rest of the Night Check AO personnel.
“HAH, AHH, HA, Haa, haa, ha, HA, HAA, haaa, haa, ha!”

Diein'. Rollin'. Laughin'. Their asses off. Roll, roll, here! Roll, roll, there! They are, on the deck, doing so. H-Town, although, is standing tall, busting some serious gut, as his head jerks back, and his stomach balloons up to fill up with oxygen, for every "ha, ha" he then has blasting out of his mouth. I don't think it's just the sorry sight of me that's busting them up so badly, but the little touches, like the pretty little red bow wrapped around my pretty little head.
"So, we've heard from your Line Shack mates that you be wanting to strike AO, that that is the rate you've chosen... is that true?" I hear AO2 Southgate asking.

Here's the thing about the AOs, these Aviation Ordinancemen? No one ever strikes their rate. And their rate never, hardly ever, comes through the Line Shack. Simple reason why us and them never get along. Just about every other Shop has someone that used to be Line. Since Line is all junior personnel just coming to the Squadron, and also fleet. Fresh out of Boot Camp. No one would ever strike AO, because, they're always considered the meatheads of any Squadron or Ship division. The dumdums, momos, lugheads. How do you become an AO? Very, very low ASVAB scores, that's how! If you ain't Ordnance you ain't shit! For it takes a real shithead to be Ordnance. Now I'm not saying they'll all intellectually deficient. Actually, AO2 Southgate, and AO3 Merryweather I've noticed to be very acute (Not AO3 Westwood, though, from the Texas bunch). But it still takes some level of meatheaded-ness to become one. These guys are even more rumpus and rowdy then our Line Shack is. Scary bunch. Making lots of noises, as they pass by other Shops. No one would also strike AO, because, in the outside world, there would be ZERO jobs you could apply the trade to, to get something decent. Powerplants? Working on Jet engines? All you need is an A&P license to be certified, and you should be making a near six-digit income in the outside world with companies like Boeing. Airframers? Dealing with the structure of a plane? The same. Just need A&P license, again. The AEs, Wirechasers? You're practically an electrician. And I can see a lot of work in the outside, too, paying well for that trade. Avionics? The Tweakers? Now you can possibly work for NASA—maybe even? Or at least any major manufacturer of planes outside in the civilian sector, that deals with Avionic hardware/software. Just about

every shop in the Squadron can benefit you in the outside, exponentially! Except the AOs. They load and unload bombs. Maybe something... something in the private sector... something shady...? But, no! Nothing! Only place the trade skill is worth a damn is in the Military, so one better stay Navy, if, they want to make something of themselves with the trade.
“So, does Polly want a CRACKER?” Goes AO3 Ramshaw.
As he flings a handful of the stuff into my face. Having me close my eyes, quick. Just goes off all jittery and fast, tossing it out. And it was sorta funny watching him do it, too. He's such an awkward looking creature, he can't even throw crackers properly into someone's face, without coming off as having some form of mental or physical handicap or down syndrome. I mean, he threw them, and it looked like there was a line drawn between his face and the crackers, as he just about threw his face, into my face, along with the saltine bunch. Ha!

Aye, don't know how or why, but, feeling a bit humorous, now. Even though I'm in NO WAYS in the predicament that I should be. The dread of what's to come has sorta worn off. But, I feel it eventually coming back on when I'm done feeling how surreal this all feels. All I can do right now is absorb everything around me, and as I take a gander, I start to absorb all the contents of their shop. You know what the AO shop feels like? I feel like I've stepped into a shabby garage in the South, that's run by some rebel, yahoo assholes, that do nothing but fistfight each other, and work on 70s and 80s muscle cars, all day long, (especially such as those GTA Firebirds with the Phoenix emblem embellished on the hood all Smokey and the Bandit style. That. Or a Confederate flag they graphed on instead). A shop full of cross-eyed, mullet sportin', redneck ignoramuses, since, much of The Shop is the AO3 Ramshaw variety. All crammed in here. Except then there's AO2 Southgate, and his Texas bunch, mixed in to add a touch of diversity. Not no diversity being much further off on the blue collar schmo scale, but... you know what I mean! The whole shop is just full of logos with skulls and metal stuff on them. Lynyrd Skynyrd. Kid Rock. And to one corner I see a wanking counter, with magazine cut outs, of women—lots of women! Butt naked! From magazines such as Hustler and Penthouse (Playboy would

be too refined for an AO's taste). Mostly all super, super, skinny white women, with long dreary faces, hung over an obvious fake pair of gargantuan tits, and the type that would give the poor girls back pains, so no wonder they're in the pictures looking so miserable. Actually, most of The Shop is full of pictures with women on them. That, and dream cars, also surrounded by bikini-clad dream women. And to another corner, the variety AO2 Southgate and his likes would put up to add some jam and jelly into the mix: black and Hispanic women, the Sir Mix-a-lot likes, with mounds and mounds of curves, and big ass behinds. All in all, compared to our own shop, this one feels a lot more lived-in and cozy, if not degrading to all look at. For compared to our Shop, our Shop feels like a halfway house full of convicts, a temporary place to stay. With lots of chains in there. LOTS of chains. Here? Just lots of bomb parts. So something after a war, or nuclear apocalypse. And all is left standing after the fallout is these Southern rebel, de-mutated, interbreed, Mad Max mongrels. And cockroaches.

“Eat the CRACKERS, Line shit!” Continues AO3 Ramshaw.

Tossing more of them in my face, and weirdly enough, I sorta want a cracker, now. For now, that I think about it, I'm growing hungry, and I'd like some, since, I like its flaky and dry texture. All salty and pleasing to the taste in a meager way. Since crackers are such meager snacks.

“You know, I gotta say... when Falky approached me, and told me what he wanted to do, I thought to myself: 'Wow! Who is this AN Navastian character, to be pissing Falky off this bad, that he'd disown one of his own, like this, and hand him over to us? Us—of all people!' Yeah, boy! That's what I thought...!” The AO2 Southgate explains.

And he seems to be thinkin' really into the matter, seeming very perplexed by it. Enough to break away from the fun they're all having, here, eyeing me up as they are, and get all contemplative.

“If he's pissing the Line Shack off that bad, maybe, he really does want to be one of us?” Wonders D-Boy, AO3 Merryweather.

“Aye, maybe he does!” Accepts AO2 Southgate and begins smiling all happy that I might.

And the funny thing is, I'm still not exactly feeling the level of dread of what's to come next, as I should be. As I should be. I guess that's because I'm in newer surroundings, and they're refreshing to see. My senses have grown accustomed to Falky and the Line Shack ways, and I am now a little curious and naive about these boys, and theirs. Even though I shouldn't be. Really shouldn't!

“But, I'll tell you what, Navastian, if you want to go AO, you gotta prove to us you got what it takes!”

“Aye! Prove to us! Prove!” Continues A-Wall.

Everything H-Town starts off with. And they're now all leaning in with this shit, making me grow a little apprehensive. Prove? What's this going to be about? I wonder.

“Check this out, it's pretty simple, you're going to have three tests. Three tests you have to go through if you're to become one of us. And, you have to at least pass one of them.” Explains H-Town.

“Yes, three tests! One out of three, gotta pass, ‘aight, Shipmate?” Follows up A-Wall.

And from what I can see, he's the less assertive of the three. That also seems to have a tendency to repeat in order to come off as being anything but “less assertive,” since, his insecure ass demands him to find something to stress about to show precedence.

“Three tests!” Goes he, again.

And then sticks three fingers in my face, and not the usual three: the index, middle, and ring finger. But: the thumb, the index, and his middle. Don't know why I'm mentioning, but, it does make him seem even more of a meathead than he has already proven to be.

“Aye! Three motherfuckin' tests!” Confirms D-Boy, leaning all back and swag.

And for a second there, I believed to be hearing Quimby saying that. Because of the whole “motherf-ing'” part added into the line, that was already delivered.

So, anyways, FINE, whatever! Bring it on, you BB-stackers! Menopause shirted mothers—BRING it! I think, then, as I all of a sudden get a spring of will and tenacity to outlive whatever they have in store for me.

“Oh, and, after... we're going to shave yo' head, and super glue all the hairs to yo' dick.” Goes H-Town.
And...!
Wait... WHAT'S THAT?
Come AGAIN?
“That's right, initiate, shave all yo' head, and, super glue all yo' hairs to your motherfuckin' DICK!” Reiterates D-Boy.
And now I see AO3 Ramshaw pulling out some trimmers, that's hooked up to an electrical outlet in their shop. And seeing this and seeing how they have Ramshaw in charge of the cutting utensil, they now have me at FRANTIC!
“Hmm, hmm, HMMM, hmm!” I go, since, WHAT THE FUCK?
There's still tape over my mouth. And I really doesn't like what I had just heard. WTF? Superglue... to my penis? Oh, PLEASE, you gotta be fuckin' shittin' me! What type of fucked up shit is this? I think. And they're all loving seeing this reaction in me.
“Hmm, hmm, HMMM, hmm!”
“Take the tape off, I want to hear what our new initiate has to say.” Tells H-Town.
And he seems to be wanting to drool a little, all runnin' down his pointy teeth, from the anticipation. And D-Boy does so and RIPS off the tape.
“Hmm, hmm... OUCH! Hey, don't do this! What the fuck? You fuckin' kidding me? You're going to—”
“Aye, that's right! Shave all the hairs off the top of yo' head, take off yo' cammie pants, apply a whole bunch of super glue all over yo' genitals, and then dump all yo' hairs we cut off on top, and really mush it in there, so it sticks.” Explains H-Town.
And then:
“Eat the STUPID crackers, you STUPID animal!”
And Rammie crunches some up, and tosses some more, and nails one in my eye! And now I'm tearing up from the salt and flakes that are now being dissolved into my eyes' surface, which gets me all blinking rapidly to fish those contents out.
“Listen, I don't want to be an AO!” I go.
“That's not what Falky said.” Tells H-Town.

“FUCK Falky!”
“Fuck Falky?” Goes D-Boy.
“Yeah, FUCK him!”
“But, he's your main man? How can you say something like that about—”
“I don't give a shit about that little shrimp, fuck him!” I go.
And now H-Town starts nodding, as if he has an answer to what he was wondering about before.
“You guys can't do this! I'm really fuckin' sick and tired of this shit! Back and forth, back and forth, and for what? I care less about the stupid Line Shack vs. AO thing.”
“Then why'd you motherfuckin' you get to our boy Rammie, here, how you did?” Asks D-Boy.
“Aye, why'd you do what you did to me?” Follows Ramshaw.
And, as they all stare me down, they now have me at speechless. H-Town now sprouts a smirk, and says:
“Well, if you don't wanna be an AO, I guess we won't go ahead with the initiation.”
And that's a relief to hear.
“We'll just shave and super glue yo' hair to yo' dick, anyways!”
“Yes!” Goes Ramshaw.
As he grabs the trimmers, again, and whooshes it about my head, like a plane looking to find its runway.
“No! No! No! I'll go ahead with the initiations! I'll DO them!”
“But, I thought you said you didn't want to be an AO?” Asks H-Town.
“I change my mind.” I go.
“Really?” Sneers H-Town, not believing me.
“No, I really do! I do!” I say.
Because, I can tell the point of the initiations is to NOT have them shave my head and do what's next. If successful, that is.
“Because if you're going to be how you've been with the Line, all: 'Fuck Falky!' I don't see us wanting your disrespectful ass here.” Highlights H-Town.
“That's right! We don't want no backstabbing mates in The Shop, talkin' motherfuckin' shit about us, as you just did with Falky.” Explains D-Boy.

And, I can see their overall message, here, but I still feel like they got the wrong idea about me.
“Why you guys defending him? You don't know what he's like, I have to work with his skatin' ass, and—”
“There you go, again! Talking shit about a fellow Line Rat, behind the man's back.” Highlights D-Boy.
“So disrespectful!” Goes A-Wall.
“I don't think I want this back talkin' Shipwreck in our Shop AT ALL, now!” Announces H-Town, as he folds up his arms, and looks away.
“CRACKERS!” Goes Rammie.
And crunches a few more in his hand and sprinkles them over my head. Makin' them rain down.

And now, AO1 Montenegro enters.
“Hey, AO1!” Goes D-Boy.
And he's lookin' a little worried, like they really shouldn't be doing all this. And now, I feel thankful that a First Class might get involved. Might take charge, and get them to undoing all this laundry bag, and tape, and the pretty red bow on top of my head. Take charge, since, that's his freakin' job, and he's caught his boys doing something that they officially shouldn't be. AO1 now walks in, stares around at all his boys, all imposingly, imposing on them, except H-Town. Then stares at me, and since the bald Cubano is always expressing the sympathies of a disgruntled Rottweiler, he stares me down all imposingly, as well. And. God, do I hate his sort. Always wanting to come off as being G! Man, do I hate it, truly! But still, now that he's done trying to be all alpha, after proving his dominance with me and most of the AOs, he might get me out of this predicament.
“So, is this the motherfucker that tied you up, and threw your ass into Maintenance?” Asks AO1, as he stares at Ramshaw, all alpha.
Fucker just can't quit being that way! Must be a Cuban thing. I can just imagine him as some Caribbean pimp, with a straw hat, a Hawaiian shirt, and an expensive pair

of viperskin penny loafers. Him all burnin' his bitches with his giant ass cigars, in the face, when his putas don't pay him the right amount. Ha!

“Yeah... I mean, yes, AO1! Navastian, here, was the one that did it.” Goes Ramshaw.
And now the AO1 stares me down again (please, ENOUGH ALREADY), and looks to remember all the harsh things I said to him last. And then asks:
“So... what did you guys plan on getting away with, here, with this Shipwreck?”
“We planned on giving him a 'Cousin It.'” Answers H-Town.
The only one that seems to be able to speak to AO1, directly. But, that's to be expected.
“A 'Cousin It' huh?” He smiles out, as if picturing me in that way.
And I don't like where this is going.
“Aye!”
“Well... take pictures, when you boys are through, and make sure no one else comes in The Shop while you're at it.”
He smiles out, as he takes one last, long lasting look at me, as if saying with his eyes: “Aye! I'm allowing this to happen.” And then leaves.
“All right, you heard the boss, 'Cousin It' it—”
“Hold up! No! Please, I want to do the initiation.” I go.
Because I REALLY am not looking forward to have these assholes go along with this. I feel embarrassed enough from all this as it is. Now that I know what they have in plan for me, I really don't want anything of that nature done to me WHATSOEVER! Shaving my hair, and gluing it to my...? No! Fuck that humiliation! NO! NOT HAPPENIN'!
“So you want to be an AO, huh?” Asks H-Town.
“YES!” I go.
Fuck whatever crazy shit they have for me to put me through, it can't be any worse than what they already got planned.
“Well, you need pride to be an AO, lots of pride!”
“Lots of motherfuckin' pride.” Follows up D-Boy.

And, he's practically Quimby to me, now. Because, I don't know how else to characterize him. Big, black, from the South, and loves sugaring every sentence with the “MF” stamp of approval. Aye! I will stick to being that stereotypical! Wanna make something of it?

“You need pride, more than you will being some little squeaky Line Rat. And if you can't even muster up enough pride for that shop, what makes you think you can—”

“Just give me a SHOT!” I demand.

Because, I'm just really not looking forward to that whole other thing, and... fuck it, I feel like proving to these guys I'm different, that, I could be as loyal and as respectful as they would want me to be, if I was to come aboard. Prove that I could be that way, at least. I mean, I kinda started to feel a little shameful, then, when H-Town grilled me about it. How I felt about my own shop, and my own people. So disloyal and disrespectful! I mean, that ain't me, I can be DIFFERENT! Just give me a shot with an actual team I can actually feel like I'm a part of, for real! And, I guess... AO2 Southgate sorta notices that from my tone, now, and my open eyes. And says:

“Fine! If you got something to prove, let's see it! But if Falky hasn't exactly been expecting much from you, expect me to expect a lot less.” Explains H-Town.

Seeming all serious, even though I know the shit I'm about to be put through will be anything but. H-Town then eyes me to check my level of motivation and okays it with a nod.

“Then let' the initiations BEGIN!” He blasts.

And then claps his hands, twice, all ceremoniously. Giving the call for them to begin.

“Here, have a cracker... Shipmate.” Smiles Ramshaw.

As if I am now his. But then crunches up a few more in his hand, and throws them in my direction, again. And now, the shits about to get silly. Really, really silly. And dumb! And obnoxious! And, all that stuff! I just know it. I can feel it in my bones. But, fuck it! Let's get on with it!

“All right, there will be three trials, and you will at least need to pass one of them, to become one of us. Is that clear, young initiate?” H-Town asks.

Young initiate...? Oh God! What the Whiskey Tango Foxtrot am I getting myself into? I think. As little by little it's all donning on me the situation I am in. And: “Initiation”

they call it! But it feels like a quickly botched together ceremony, that no other AO has had to go through, but me, and now. And they're just making things up on the spot.
“Is that clear?” Demands H-Town, an answer.
“Yeah!” I go.
“Yeah...?”
“I mean… aye, aye!” I correct myself.
And little by little, I feel more of my sense of pride and self-respect withering away, breaking away, and falling away into nothingness. As if any has been left, after all the Line has put me through. But, fuck it, twice over! Let's see how the AOs will make me feel putting me through this. Oh, help me God!
“All right, begin the first trial: 'The Breaker!'” He goes, H-Town, does.
Does so, since, he's almost always the most vocal one out of the group, the others always following along after his lead (except when mad, belligerent, nonsensical shit talking is called for, then it's Ramshaw's turn).

But, anyways...!
“The Breaker,” huh? I amuse.

“With 'The Breaker,' what we will test to see, is, when it comes to handling ordnance, these heavy lugs, whether or not you'll be able to take it, without breaking down and complaining: how 'it's too heavy,' or 'I'm tired,' or by 'why did I join if all I was going to do is lug around these heavy ass things all day?' 'Waah, waah, waah!'” Explains H-Town.
And, gets all whiny at the ends, too. To my guess, describing, what I can imagine, is what he has to deal with hearing from his crew all day long. So, in other words, a BOHICA test. Actually, JARTGO test sounds more accurate. Basically, the stuff dealing with the day to day drudgery, and bullshit... and mostly BULLSHIT! Fine! Bring it on! I think. And now they does so.
“Get him onto his back!” Tells H-Town to AOAN Almendinger.

And he does so. And then I see D-Boy picking up some ordnance that's piled to one side. And... wait a sec! That can't be real! I don't think! But then again...? No! It can't be! I know for a fact that real live ordnance would never be found in The Shops and would be stowed away down the magazine room. Somewhere else on The Ship. Somewhere locked away, stowed away, and SAFE! With Boat Chuck AOs. Not here with these Airdale Red Shirts, just laying in a pile, there, at that corner. That could easily be undone with the turning of The Ship, leaning to one direction, leading for that unkempt pile to start rolling around everywhere. Most of the time, the AOs aren't even really loading and unloading the real stuff. Since, mostly what we deal with is training missions. The AOs really AREN'T handling the real live things, until, they need to be, to be qual-ed, or, tested, or—I don't know! I'm not one of them! The Squadron is so compartmentalized, I couldn't exactly tell you, really! It can't be real! And even if it is, it... Oh God! I HOPE NOT!

“Get into position, D-Boy!” Instructs H-Town.

And D-Boy gets up onto the table I'm laying on. Steps between me, holding the heavy lug in his bare hands, and positions it over my stomach, as if he's going to drop the thing.

“Hold it! Hold it! Hold it! What are you doing?” I go.

“So, we're going to drop this motherfucker, here, on your stomach, and, you gotta hold your breath when we do so.”

“Hold up, I got a question, is that—”

“And you can't let it knock the wind out of ye, or you'll fail the test.”

“Come on, question first! Is that thing real?” I ask.

And they all now just look at one another, smiling, with not one wanting to give a response.

“No, no... WAIT!”

“Hold your breath!” H-Town says.

“No, give me a second to—”

And then D-Boy lifts it up, higher, and drops the big thing, and—

“AWWW!” I go, in pain.

And completely blows out all my breath, for, there's no FREAKIN' way I was going to be able to take that. It has to be somewhere around a hundred pounds. Heavy as BARNACLES, and in no way, was I, or anyone, going to be able to take that. Got to note that D-Boy, along with H-Town and A-Wall, are practically bodybuilders. Always, every day, working out at the gerbil gym, to ready themselves handling the loads their job requires. Big fucking dudes. And D-Boy was struggling, bad, holding that big fucker above me in place.

THUMP!

Went the ordnance, over my wind-basket, knocking the fuck out of my breath, completely. Leaving me heaving, now, to regain some. As I feel like I'm suffocating.

“HAH, AHH, HA, Haa, haa, ha, HA, HAA, haaa, haa, ha!” They all laugh, again.

And they all seemed to be in suspense, all anticipating for just this reaction. Like none of them were sure what was to happen. Letting me know, they've truly never done this before.

“All right! That was a fail!” Judges H-Town.

With a shake of his head, followed by a chuckle or two.

“Let's just get on with the second test.” I say.

And now, I feel like I'm enjoying watching all these AOs enjoying how much of a jolly good time they're all now having. All in my expense. Really jolly, and cheerful, and merry, and jubilant, they all seem to be. Just having a grand ol' time. And I feel like I'm—no, no no, no, NO! No, I'm NOT! No, I'm NOT! Get me the FUCK outta here! Seriously, someone, come, and get me the FUCK outta here NOW! Fuck you, Falky, for selling me out, and having me put through all of this.

“So... so... he, he! What's the second test?” Asks D-Boy.

Trying to compose his sentences in between tittering off as he has been, since, he dropped the big F-er.

“Wait... let me think. He, he!” Responds H-Town, in between his own tittering.

“'The Breaker,' The... 'The Maker?' There you go! 'The Maker' is next!” He claims.

Obviously, so obviously, him making it up on the spot, considering, how long he's taking to come up with one, then the next. And they both rhymes, too! How

convenient. I bet money the next one is going to be called the... the... The Faker... no! Breaker. Maker. Taker. There! The Taker!
“'The Maker?' What do we do, then?” Goes D-Boy.
Then another session of tittering.
“Wait... give me a second... let me think?”
“Think? Don't you KNOW! Don't you know our grand AO traditions?” Mocks D-Boy.
“OF COURSE, I do! Shut up! Just forgot.”
And now we're all just standing, or sitting, (or in my case) lying around, watching H-Town brainstorm. His pupils going up, and then left, and then right, and then him snickering because he can't come up with anything quick enough, to make it sound legit.
“You forgot our grand ceremonial AO traditions?” Dumbfounds D-Boy, all pretending to be apprehensive.
“No! Shut up, I said! Give me a MINUTE!”
“You forgot, end of STORY! Oh, my Lord...?” Goes D-Boy.
doing a Macaulay Culkin, both hands on both cheeks.
“All right! All right! 'The Maker!'”
“'The Maker'...?”
“Aye, that...!” Follows up H-Town.
And explains nothing else.
“So, what do we do?” Asks D-Boy.
And the boy is now in a different dimension. He's tittering so bad, he's phasing in and out of existence. For he's finding it all that funny.
“....” Explains H-Town.
Actually, doesn't explain. Because, he now can't stop tittering off, himself, and looks to wanna join D-Boy pretty soon: phasing in and out, in and out, like some aborted Marty McFly.
“Come on MAN, WHAT do we—”
“Fine! HERE!”
And H-Town now grabs a bottle of Tabasco sauce, placed next to some boxed lunches, and hands it to D-Boy.

“Make the initiate chug it.” Follows up H-Town.
And now D-Boy looks baffled.
“How is this going to 'make' him into something? Into one of us?” Wonders D-Boy.
Really just fuckin' with H-Town, putting him on the spot. Since, he explained so well what “The Breaker” was all about. And looking at H-Town, he... he mad!
“This test is to see if he has a strong resolve on the inside, to tolerate what's to come when he becomes an AO. He can't just exemplify all we're about on the outside. Just for show! He needs that strong resolve inside of him to drudge on through, until the work has been done, and we have succeeded. Needing a tough interior, as much as having a tough exterior.” Fabricates H-Town.
And smiles, for: Bravo Zulu! For what a job well done, that was! A job well done BULLSHITIN', that is!
“So, in other words, what he's to 'make' is to 'make' poo?” Jokes D-Boy.
Getting H-Town to snicker.
“That, too!”
“All right, bottoms up, Navastian.” Goes D-Boy.
And takes off the lid and sticks the bottle in my mouth and... I'm not READY for this! I am not READY! AGAIN! But D-Boy forces it in my mouth, anyways, bottoming it up, and forcing me to chug.
“Chug, chug, chug... chug...!”
Goes the lesser AOs, the mooks of the litter, in The Shop, all low key and un-synchronized amongst themselves. And stop after they realized how awkward it sounds for them to be opening their mouths now and trying to get on H-Town and D-Boy's roll.
BLAH!
I go, then, spitting up all of the contents that I was forced to gulp down, and now, I'm coughing and spitting and coughing and spitting and tearing up in my eyes like CRAZY!
“D-Boy, you're not supposed to force it down like that.” Argues H-Town.
And D-Boy just gives off a sinister grin, but then converts it into an innocent smirk, as if he didn't know he wasn't supposed to do that. Bad, D-Boy, bad!

HACK, COUGH, SPIT! HACK, COUGH, SPIT!
I'm still coughing up a lung, here, plus midrats I've had for the past few days. And literally, too, as I regurgitate a little in my mouth, and taste chicken cordon bleu, which I literally had three days ago, and not before.
“Okay, let's try this, again! Bottom's up, BITCH!” Goes D-Boy, again.
And this time, I spit up the second he tries to force the bottle down, as he forces too hard, down, trying to deep throat me, and activating my gag reflexes, and with a mouth full of Tabasco, no less. I'm spittin' up all over, once again, and it's Tear Gas Day at Boot Camp, all over again for me.
HACK, COUGH, SPIT! HACK, COUGH, SPIT!

“All right, this is getting disgusting, and messy, too.” Notes A-Wall.
“Aye, it is... so what's next, H-Town?” Goes D-Boy.
And it seems like these two really like getting into each other's cases, as D-Boy now stares up at his mate, with a look of high expectations.
“Motherfucker... he failed twice, let's just go ahead with the—”
“No, stop! You said three trials, what's the third?” I demand.
Because even after what they've put me through, I'm REALLY still not lookin' forward to this “Cousin It” idea.
“What's wrong, Navastian? So, you'll have a hairy dick for the next week or two. So, what? What would be so bad with—”
“Hong Kong!” Adds D-Boy.
Answering H-Town's question, and now H-Town's eyes light up.
“Oh, I get it now!”
“Wan Chi District!” Adds D-Boy, again, while eyeing me all judgmentally.
“You hoping to get laid in Hong Kong, and... that isn't gonna be easy with a—”
And H-Town finishes that line off snickering. As if picturing the reaction of the girl I'd be with, if I was to dare to try and get with her with a Cousin It. And truth is: AYE! I do plan on possibly going through with it and getting laid, there. But, that won't happen if they do go ahead with this harebrained idea of theirs.
“Navastian, let me tell you something. Trust me, this might be for your own good.”

“No, wait, please, let me—”
“The pussy over there ain't like it is in Japan, or in the States, that shit is nasty!” Says H-Town.
“Motherfuckin' nasty, dawg!” Follows up D-Boy.
“Bitches might give you Crotch Crickets, at least!” Dishes A-Wall.
“Motherfuckin' might start hearing cherpin' coming from yo' shit, dawg, who would want that?” D-Boy.
“I wouldn't.” H-Town.
“Chirp, chirp! Chirp, chirp!” Ramshaw.
And I see Rammie flapping his arms like a chicken, and... what a dumbass. What. A. Dumbass. INDEED!
“Nah, nah, nah, Navastian. We doing you a favor!”
Fuck that!
“You promised me three chances to make up for it! You PROMISED me! PROMISED! So, what's the third test?” I demand.
‘Cause, I'd like for them to stick to their word. H-Town now looks all discouragingly to one side, not liking my humorless tone, one bit. But, I don't give a shit! They're having a good laugh at my expense. They all can go suck an egg! Suck on a balut! For all I care!
“You are such a kill joy!” Goes H-Town, all frowning.
Breaking my freakin' heart, he is.
“Just get on with it!” I demand, again.
And now it seems like AO3 Ramshaw has a clue of what to try next. Ramshaw now steps in the middle of them all, and H-Town takes notice.
“What up, Rammie?” He asks.
As Rammie seems to have been graced with a really brilliant one.
“Crackers...?” He goes and looks at H-Town all serious like.

All right, what is this going to be about? I wonder. Am a little curious, for, I don't think they'll just feed me some crackers, there has to be some form of torture involved with this.

“All right, I agree, crackers it is, Navastian! Catch five crackers in your mouth, as Rammie tosses them at you, and you'll pass the test.” Explains H-Town.
And, I don't believe it! There has to be a catch! They're just going to feed me crackers? Sure, it'll require some skill in catching all five, but still, where's the torture in this? What luck! And having such a harmless idea coming from that possum boy, there, AO3 Ramshaw. This cannot be true.
“Okay, Ramshaw, go for it!” Tells H-Town.
Well, fuck it! If that's all it'll take, fuck it! Let's do it! And then, Ramshaw lets one rip. And I immediately catch the cracker in my mouth. Easily enough, for, I'm also a little hungry, now, so, there's also that incentive. And I'm finding this anything but torturous. Ramshaw then readies another one and seems to want to put some spin in this next pitch. Then, lets it go, and, I swing far left, and catches the curve.
“That's two.” Cheers H-Town.
“Wait, what is this trial called, again?” Asks D-Boy, fucking with H-Town again.
H-Town now does a loop-de-loop with his eyes in exhaustion.
“Motherfucker... it's called the... the... 'The Taker' there!”
I called it!

And now they seem like they want to continue with this so-called “Taker.”
“Okay, Rammie, go ah—”
“Wait, how is this 'The Taker?'” Pries D-Boy, all smiling for a response.
“Shut the fuck up!” Goes H-Town.
Yeah! Shut the fuck up! I also submit. And here's hoping I get out of this mess. And then, Rammie lets another one fly. And, I catch that, too! And, another one, and, again. That's now four down, and now there's only one left to go.
“All right, last one!” Goes H-Town.
And this is it! If I catch this, I'm free. What good luck! And Rammie really lets one go this time, and, it bounces off my nose, and goes up, so I lunges up, and, I catches it with my teeth. And then, I fall off the table. Everyone snickers seeing my exuberant will in catching them all. And as I eat the last cracker. They all cheer:

“Ha, ha! Bravo Zulu, Shipmate Navastian! Good show! Good show!” Commemorates H-Town.
And then D-Boy walks up with a red shirt.
“Good motherfuckin' show, indeed!” Goes Quimby... I mean... well, you know!
And then, D-Boy fits it over my head. Not completely over me, but there! And... all right? I think. That wasn't so bad.
“Fine... now let's get with the shaving.” Now says H-Town.
“Wait... what?” I go, totally baffled to what I just heard.
“What, we told you what we were to do. And, you've been putting it off for this long.” Explains H-Town.
Seeming very anxious now to get on with it, as if this whole trial by whatever thing, was fake. I mean, which I KNEW it was fake. But, at least I thought... OH, COME ON!
“I passed!” I go.
“Aye, you did pass. And for that you get a red shirt. You're not in The Shop unless you seriously plan on striking AO, though, and that requires going over it with your superiors.” Explains H-Town.
“But, I passed!” I go, again.
Completely dumbfounded by this. For, he explained quite clearly that—
“Yes, you passed, and that unofficially makes you an AO. One of us. But to officially become one, you need to—”
“Then why are you going ahead with shaving my head and...!”
Ah shit! I think, then, as H-Town extends a deviant grin. As I then come to terms with the fact that it was never made clear how I believed it to be.
“Navastian, we told you the initiation was for you becoming an AO, although, unofficially. We never told you they were to save you from your punishment, for what you did to Ramshaw.” Explains H-Town.
And now AO3 Ramshaw turns and smiles at me, extending his own content for everything he has shared with me, tonight. Then picks up the trimmers, to begin.
“Wait! No! I'm sorry for what I did. REALLY, I am! Don't do this! NO! No… nooooo!” I plead, then.
Buzzzzzzz!

But, to no avail.

NATIONAL LAMPOON'S IRAQI VACATION

You know, I'll say something, before I joined, I remember spending a lot of time thinking what I wanted to be in life. What I wanted to do. What I wanted to be remembered for if I ever had the chance to do something great. Do something grand. Personally, I guess coming from LA, from Glendale, which is just north of LA and not very far from Hollywood, that was the industry I first found myself focusing on. But not as some actor, or a producer, not even as a director, really. Since, deep down, my passion in all that was the art of storytelling. Whether movies or TV shows, no matter, my fix was the storytelling aspect. Since storytelling truly is the backbone to all of it. And, in storytelling, is what I found my true love. To where I could be truly free and have free reign. But, around seventeen years old I realized, "what story could I tell?" I mean, much of my experiences in life at the time were mostly from High School. But, High School, was just so boring to me. It might have been a story that sufficed for some to tell. But, in the end, it really didn't do it for me. I joined the Navy, because I realized, High School, for me, wasn't going to be enough. I needed a true experience. If I was to tell a true story.

Ouch!

And, now, would you look at that!
Ouch!
Here I am, getting what I want. And, now, I have an interesting story to tell unlike nonother. So, let me get right to brass tacks so I don't spend too much time wasting it with too much words. As Shakespeare once wrote: "Brevity is the soul to wit." So, best I get right to it. Let me tell you right now, now here, now this place, now having experienced all this, I'm planning on writing a book about all this. I am. I most certainly am! Aye, aye! Roger the Barnacles out of that! I most certainly am.

Ouch! Fuckin' ouch! Sigh!

But, as for the dilemma I'm having right now, I can't exactly tell you what theme this book would actually take. Is this a comedy? A drama? A dramedy? An epic, action-adventure, a horror maybe even? And these are only the categories coming to mind. Ouch.

And, I can't tell you what it would be. I just can't. Just can't. And I feel like there shouldn't be any. And why, because categories do nothing but limit your story in what they can actually be and not be. So, it be like this, the most important aspect I feel that all stories require is a bit of freedom to be their own thing. A story is like a person, alive, and not free unless completely free to do anything.

Ouch—ouch!

So, now let us go forward with all this in mind. Take comedy, let us start with comedy (since it's the first category that comes to mind with the material present here). Most comedies of my current age group today are pretty much the American Pie variety. And, to my immediate response to that, I'd say: "hell nay." Or, "go fuck your Barnacles." And why? Simple, simply: I hate those movies with a fury of a thousand suns. Honestly, though, I can't stand no comedy, no matter what it is and when it was made and what the yuks were about.

Ouch—ouch—grr!

Why would I, you might wonder. Well, it's very simple. Take Jason Bigg's character from American Pie. There's this scene the ignoramus teenager decides to stick his dick in an apple pie.

Ouch… no more, no—….!

And, it's so dumb! So, so freakin' dumb, I mean, since I can't just sit there watch that whole scene and take it seriously. And, I know it's not at all meant to be serious. But, I need some sensibility in the scene to make it for me believable. Why do that in the middle of the kitchen? Why mount the counter, no less? And why do all this while you're still living at home with mommy and daddy? Fine, you want to know how putting your dick into a woman's punani would feel like. I get it!

Ou—… shit! This hurts!

Don't do it out in the open where anyone can walk up and catch your stupid ass! Take it to the head… the bathroom. Take it to your room. Anywhere! And most

importantly anywhere you can find a door you can actually lock behind you. And then actually do so and—lock the fucker! That, or, someone might just barge in and, once again, you're back to this ol' humiliation. I hate comedies, I fuckin' hate almost all comedies, because, to me, I see them as nothing more than being forced! You see, that scene with Jason Biggs and him trying to deepthroat a sweety tart, I didn't find it funny whatsoever since it was forced. I've masturbated plenty of times in my life.
Ouch!
Plenty of times!
Ouch, ouch! Grr, grr!
But I have yet to do it out in the open where anyone could see. If it was to be done, it would be done in the bathroom, with the door's locked, and even that bathroom fan on in case the squishy sounds got a bit loud. And ambiguously loud for anyone passing by outside the door to hear.

Sigh… ouch!

I hate comedy. At least the sense of comedy I see today. Take the Simpsons, Family Guy and South Park. As the more time goes on, the more and more I find myself absolutely loathing what those cartoons are about. Absolutely and positively loath. Why? Because those shows are so facetious. So facetious! They take any subject matter, no matter how personal, serious and grotesquely ~~fascinating~~ un-fascinating they may be, and they add a laugh track to it. I'm sorry, but, there's certain things that just aren't funny! They're not. And—THEY'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE! Because, if you treat it as a joke, it devalues everything someone once would consider important as it comes unimportant. It's shows like those that want to desecrate everything once seen as important. Because, I don't know, I guess they think all comedy is, is "pushing the envelope." So, they keep pushing and pushing until everything once important or revered becomes corrupted. Unimportant. Extraneous. Worthless. Disgusting. And, then finally, an abomination. And you absolutely do not want to take it to where you eventually evoke God to step in and start raining fire and

brimstone on top of you and anyone in your leagues. Comedy is supposed to be a means of lightening the mood over a matter that's become too grievous. But, remember, a matter or mood is still such for a reason. Comedy is supposed be gracious, to be a means to make life more livable. Not the opposite. Because, as funny as poopy jokes are, once you're done laughing, you're supposed to flush the damn toilet. Not keep "pushing the envelope" and then start picking up the turds out of the bowl and start smearing it all over your face. And, guess what? Going down that road… there's just no end to it. Because smearing it all over your face might get a couple yuks, by some perverted minds in the back audience. Then, you're going to need to push it even more. Now, eat it! Then make other people eat. Then feed 2-year-old children your own doodoo. Then use it as a strap-on and start raping women and children and old people with it. Where can you go from there? Can you go further? Truth is, you probably could (actually, most definitely could, all requiring a vivid imagination to do so). You gotta keep "pushing the envelope," "pushing the envelope," "push, push, push, push… more and more!" What… don't stop, there, you said comedy is pushing the envelope, so why stop there? Although, pretty sure if you do, there's now going to be people out to try and stop you from doing so by any means necessary. And, guess what, you're not going to be seen as funny anymore. But a monster! No longer a study of the adventurous pursuits of how far comedy can go. But, where it most definitely shouldn't. You're gonna become a study of the irony of such pursuits. You're gonna become the Batman's Joker.

Ahem… ouch!

Anyways, no comedy, here! Not in that sense at least. And, this can't be a drama, either, since there's too many examples of pure comedy taking place. Whether they be intentional or not. So, a dramedy? That, I'm also not sure of. With comedy: check! And with drama, since I also have a lot of "woe as me" moments in this story: also check! But, the word "dramedy" doesn't really apply. Although, a rephrasing does by calling this a: dark comedy. And I guess it has to do with the fact how just off the deep end everything feels like it's going. In drama, there's mostly melodrama, but what might push that over the edge is the drama turning very, very ugly. And since

there's comedy in this story, now well noted, and drama can't exist in the same places as comedy if the drama involved pushes the story off the dark deep end. Dark comedy sounds to resound perfectly through the hallways in my thoughts.

Ouch… grr, grr—growl!
Perfect example I can give is with American Pie again. Take the antagonist: one Steven Stifler! What makes a story "dark" tends to be how the villain in the story is put away in the end. And, since American Pie is lighthearted, just fuckin' the dude's MILF mom to get revenge just so happened to be enough. But, here, with my story, being a dark comedy. It wouldn't suffice. Since, in a dark comedy, after everything my motherfuckin' villainous Stiflers have put me through in my own story, let's face it, I'd… yeah! Porking his mom wouldn't be enough. Blood! I'd want! Blood! I'd want to murder all these fools, these fuckers, expiration date the whole—motherfucking lot!
Oooaaaah! Damn—I hate this!
So, now, let me tell you from my end, at least, what category I would see myself filing away this story. No American Pie. To me, this would be more of a horror. A "I Know What You Did Last Summer." Maybe not to you, but, it does to me. And here's why:

BECAUSE I'M LIVING THIS LIFE RIGHT NOW… AND IT'S SCARING ME!

Ouch, ouch—ouch! Sigh.

Of course, any arguments against this being a horror story has enough reason to do so. There isn't exactly a killer in this story. A monster. At least not up to this point. And, that's where I'd see all of you missing out. Want to know who the monster in this story is? If feel the need to ask, then, "aye," you have no clue. For, let's face it, this story is dark, because right now I can't stop thinking about all the great, great, immensely great Schadenfreude fun I could be having with these Seaman Schmuckatelli Stiflers here. Since, considering all I've just been put through, I don't

want to just pork all these Stiflers' moms. I don't just want to murder them. I'd want to do much, much more. Much, much more! I want to take a knife and cut them all up into little pieces. Steadily. Slowly. And assuredly. And so, they'd feel the anguish of every single morsel of flesh being hacked off from them right under them. And they'd probably die then, but not from the cutting done but the eventual blood loss, before I was able to move on from the toes and fingers, to legs and arms, and then… woah. Wow! Barnacles! Wow… did that get dark!

When will it stop? When will it stop? I'm still nowhere nears done! When, I ask, when?
Sigh.

So, roger that! Personally. this would be a horror story. But a horror, more like how Apocalypse Now with Martin Sheen and Marlon Brando was a horror. Although, then again, fuck horror movies! Considering how one-dimensionally evil the monsters in it can be. And, if I'm to be made out as the monster in all this, I guess that would constitute me being just as one-dimensional. And with that I'd say how that can't be, since, there's more to it than just that. Much, much more and at least more when it comes to me. If a monster I now am, I'm no one-dimensional monster. And that's what makes horror monsters what they are, being simply that unexplainably and inexcusably evil. Take Michael Myers. Recently they ruined the character. Aye. They did! They most certainly did. How they do so? You might ask. Simple, they gave him a reason why he wanted to murder his sisters in the first place. In the original Halloween, the horror was seeing some young kid in a mask murdering his sister. And, that's where it was left out. He did such a horrendous thing, and you never learned why. His evil seemed to be evil just for evil's sake. So, in that thought, fuck Shrek! Since I'm the real tragic monster in this with actual layers to back it up!

Ouch, ouch! Grr, grr—ouch! Come on. Get off. Get off! FUCK I HATE this!

So, what am I trying to say in all this?

(let me think for a second).

…?
….
…!
Okay, back to it, then?
I guess, this is the deal, maybe the reason I can't find a way to categorize this story here into a well gained and well received category is because unlike Jason Bigg's character in American Pie. I'm not contrived. I'm not forced. I am, who, I am! You see, there's two types of stories, ones that are real and ones that ain't. Your story is either plot driven, or character driven. Jason Biggs didn't play Jason Biggs in that movie able to decide for himself what he wanted to do or say. He had boundaries. Boundaries between a script, telling him he had to mount the kitchen counter and try to act like he was humping a damn pie. Why? Because that's the rule of comedy. Whether a comedy or a drama, things are put on to have good shows for the audience that decides to participate and watch. The show is for them, not the players, not for the props, not for us. But, then again, Jason Biggs has a giant advantage in this… which I… in my own very story—don't!
Oh… that now hurt the worse. The absolute worse! Oh, I need to close my eyes for a moment and meditate on this pain right now.

….

Okay, done!
Let's move on!

Once I joined the Navy, something occurred. Something big. Like those thoughts of those two jumpers. An idea manifested itself and became real: what if all it took was one small action to change everything? For me that experience was actually signing up for all this, and pledging obedience, service, and sacrifice to my country and country's superiors. And, I could no longer "pretend" in my mind how going Navy

Blue would be like. For now, I—WAS NAVY BLUE! And when it comes to facts vs. fictions, the reality of the facts is what truly sets it all apart. And, here's the funny thing about all this: now in, drama, comedy, dramedy, action… horror? I can't tell you at all exact what all this is. You see, it's always different when you're on the outside looking in. But, being in the inside looking around and about. Suffice to say, it isn't easy. I can't tell you what I got now. But what I do have, is a true experience.

Ouch! Wow… I don't think I've made much a difference in all this time.

Funny bit now, want to know what I originally wanted to call this book? Can you guess?

If not.
Well:
National Lampoon's Iraqi Vacation.

Ever watch the movie National Lampoon's Vacation? If you haven't, let me tell you what it is: it's a story about an average everyday American family taking a vacation across the country to do what all American families did around when the original story was based off of, but go to an amusement park, and enjoy time together as a family. The short story the movie is based off of is better than the movie. It's a white picket fences white American family during the Dad Knows Best 50s, wanting to go to Disneyland in SoCal driven in from Chicago. Although, the story is about this family wanting to go to Disneyland to spend time, they practically do such with the long drive over there. Which turns into—AN ABSOLUTE NIGHTMARE! And, it ends with the family reaching Disneyland. Finding Disneyland is closed, and then Daddy Knows Best absolutely losing it and driving to Walt Disney's house. And shooting Mr. Mickey Mouse in the foot. The original story ends with Daddy Knows Best in jail. The story is funny. Its plot is with a family wanting to get to Disneyland. But all the story takes place mostly with just the drive till. I hate comedy. But, that's one I don't think any American comedy comes close to. The book is about the

dysfunctional family itself. And, how, no amount of “us” time spent in Disneyland, could ever fix exactly what’s wrong with that family.

Ouuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuccccccch!

So, why give my book the title like that, you’d wonder?
Because, a title really has to encompass everything a story is going to be about in the few short words. And, for me, this was it. This was my answer. My title. You see, with a title like that, I can only imagine what most of this Squid peers would think reading a book like this, like: “National Lampoon’s Iraqi Vacation.” Since with a lot of the rumpus-pompous Joe Squid Horns, here, a title like that might make them infuriatingly mad and take a lot of offense: “Don’t make this all out to be nothing more than grab-ass!” They’d argue. But my rebuttal then would be simple: “Why not? Everything up to this point has BEEN nothing more than GRAB-ASS!” And the truth be told—that’s EXACTLY why they WOULDN’T want me to write it that ways! Most seeing a movie about the Navy would want to see something like An Officer and A Gentlemen, or A Few Good Men, or even simply Top Gun. But I’ve thought I’ve already issued to all you readers how I feel about movies like that. The people that made those movies knew nothing about what the Military was like, but, someone like, let’s say, me… totally different matter.

Ouuuucccch!
And that now reminds me!
Top Gun… ha!
Now that’s a movie I haven’t really addressed how I feel. Well, it’s evaded my scrutiny up until now. And, so, therefore, allow me now to blow that Hollywood trashcan fire floating in the middle of the ocean—straight out of the water! Even though its setting is very similar to our own: a story about Naval aviation during war time showcasing Tomcats. Realize this, here, in our Squadron, we actually treat the movie Top Gun like a drinking game. Anytime we see a part in the movie that totally b.s.-ed a scene by the filmmaker we would take a shot. Wait, what is Maverick doing, is he reporting

to The Ship's Skipper instead of his Squadron's Skipper? Gulp! Wait, is he even in a Squadron on the Boat to begin with? Another gulp! Wait, is that purple shirt shooting the Jet, what the hell? Another one. Suffice it to say, most of us tend to almost drink ourselves into a coma before the movie is even through. And, we Sailors, and we're no lushes! Aye, this an actual drinking game in our Squadron, this is no no-shitter, here! I mean, take this, I've yet to really see a Navy story with a Wog Day in it. And, most of you might say, "say what?" Well, let me put it to you like this. Imagine you meet a guy saying he was born and raised in NYC. Then you were to say. "Wow, I've always wanted to see the Statue of Liberty." And, then, he'd say, "what's the Statute of Liberty?" Aye, it's that bad! Trying to tell a maritime story and not knowing what Wog Day is. Either than having brain damage or having a mental deficiency, there is no way in how a New Yorker would not know what the Statue of Liberty is. And there's no way, no how, a Sailor hadn't heard of a thing called Wog Day. Sigh. I guess what I'm driving at is this: take a good movie about the Military like Full Metal Jacket. Want to know what made that first scenes taking place in Boot Camp so good? Well, here's the reason, when they hired an actor to play as the DI, they didn't hire just any actor to be that Sargent Hartman to play the role, they hired an ACTUAL DRILL INSTRUCTOR TO PLAY THE FREAKIN' ROLE! Now, take MASH, want to know what made it so grand? Simple, the guy that wrote the short story used to BE a SURGEON during the KOREAN WAR!

Ouuuch… okay, let me take a break from this for a second as a ponder this. Thinking about all this while doing "this" isn't helping.

I'll tell you right now, now here, now this place, now having experienced all this, I'm planning on writing a book about all this. As it was mentioned before. I am. I most certainly am! Aye, aye! Roger the Barnacles out of that! And all I want to say is…?
(What am I trying to say in all this?)
So, anyways….
I guess…?
I…?

I guess I'm saying I'm here for a reason.

This isn't a comedy.
This isn't a drama.
This is no dark comedy.
No horror… but my own horror.
This is my REAL fucking LIFE!

What… a chapter title like National Lampoon's Iraqi Vacation, you thought this chapter would be a bottle of laughs? Does a title like that even SOUND FUNNY TO YOU…???

IRONY WOULDN'T BEGIN TO SCRATCH THE SURFACE, THERE!

What's that, what did I hear… you laughing at me? This is no comedy, no drama, but my real life. I'm not Jason Biggs sticking my dick in an apple pie. I'm AN Navastian, having my dick being superglued with all my hairs shaved off the top of my head. And, I didn't' force this. This was forced on me. And, guess what, this isn't a comedy. Because comedies are just movies playing a pretend part. This humiliation I'm going through—IS REAL! And it's—NOT FUNNY! NOT FUNNY! NOT! I'M NOT HERE TO GET SOME YUKS OUT OF YOU AND PAT MYSELF ON THE BACK.
This isn't funny!
Losing your mind driving to Disneyland to shoot Walk Disney—ISN'T FUNNY!
All of us here on the bird farm (carrier) sailing to coocooville before ending up in Iraq to bomb that country—ALSO ISN'T SO!

That moment back there broke me. It did. And now, my life is a living horror a la Colonel Kurtz style waiting for someone to put a diamond bullet into my brain so it can all be over. I can adapt… or die! Both matters, since both aren't stationary, and they can take me out of this misery! This Navy. This curse! That moment back there broke me. And, what's that… you laughing at that? THAT THING FUCKIN' BROKE

ME. IT DID, IT REALLY, REALLY DID! DIDN'T YOU GET THAT? AND YOU LAUGHED TO THAT???

……..?
!!!

You know what? I get it now, I see things now crystal clearly. Fourth walls are all thought to be tongue-in-cheek, since you all think I'm here just to entertain you. But, ever wandered what would happen, when you're sitting down watching Jaws in the theater. And the fourth wall breaks. What do you think Jaws, a real Jaws, a real man-made monster would do then when it sees all those audience members in the aisles?

Attack the audience, you say? DERP, DERP… you moron's think so?

WHAT'S THAT?
What…?
What… what!
WHAT, you still don't get it—YES! Don't you know, YES… OF COURSE I'M TALKING TO YOU ALL RIGHT NOW!
YEAH, YOU!
YOU READERS!
HOW MUCH OF FUCKIN' MORONS YOU ALL HAVE TO BE TO HAVE A PERFECTLY, PERFECTLY, PERFECTLY WELL EXPLAINED EXAMPLE LIKE THAT END UP GOING OVER YOUR FREAKIN' HEADS? OF COURSE, I'M BREAKING THE FORTH WALL TO ALL YOU CIVILIAN COCKSUCKING COWARDS TO TELL YOU ALL TO GO—FUCK YOURSELVES! I JAWS, MORONS! SO, SPIN MY THEME SONG AS I COME BUSTING THROUGH THE MOVIE SCENE TO TAKE A CHOMP AT ALL YOU POPCORN MUNCHING IGNORAMUSES!

FUCK YOU, YOU FAGGOT COCKSUCKING COWARDS!

CLOSE THE BOOK! FUCKING CLOSE THE BOOK AND SAY, “Fine, if it’s like that, fuck you, too! I’m writing a bad review and boycotting—“
I DON’T GIVE TWO SHITS, SWEET CHEEKS, JUST AS LONG AS I WROTE ENOUGH OF MY PERSONAL HURT AND YOU READ ENOUGH TO BE HURT BY IT, TOO.
Aaaaaahhhhh HHHHHH!
That’s Schadenfreude. That felt—GOOD!
Because I HATE YOU ALL THAT MUCH! THAT—VERY, VERY MUCH!
I HURT ALL YOU, GOOD! MISSION ACCOMPLISHED! FINALLY, A BRAVO ZULU ON ME FOR A —JOB WELL DONE!!!
Fine, don’t buy my book… cool. Cool beans.
I’ll just really lose it then and start murdering people.
AND IT’LL BE—ALL YOUR FAULT!

FUCKING COWARDLY ASSHOLES! ALL CHUCKLE, CHUCKLE HERE! CHUCKLE, CHUCKLE THERE! IT’S EASY TO LAUGH WHEN IT’S SOMEONE ELSE BUT NOT YOU! I’M NOT A FUCKING SHITBAG! MY STORY HAS VALUE! HOW DARE YOU MOTHERFUCKERS—LAUGH AT ME! WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT, FOR THAT, I GOTTA GO BACK TO GOOD OL’ JACK IN A FEW GOOD MEN! THE ONLY PART DONE RIGHT IN THAT ONE SPECIFIC MOVIE ABOUT WHAT THIS LIFESTYLE IS LIKE!
FOR, THAT’S ME, THERE!
I’M JACK! THAT’S ME! I AM! SO ALLOW ME TO REINTRODUCE MYSELF.
HERE TO TELL YOU ALL:

FUCK YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I'M HERE. BECAUSE YOU CAN'T BE HERE. BECAUSE I'M THE REAL DEAL! YOU WANT THE TRUTH, THAT'S THE TRUTH! AND…?

(Shit, I'm losing it! I'm really, really losing…?)

FOURTEEN DAY

(Okay, note to self, no more breaking fourth walls while in that state of mind.

Although, that one thing I said just reminded me of that one really old National Lampoon's cover with a dog with a gun to its head with the subtitles:

If You Don't Buy This Magazine, We'll Kill This Dog!

Ha! That was hilarious now! And that dog looked absolutely terrified—HAHA! Now THAT'S COMEDY GOLD!)

Ahem!

Anyways… back to… OUCH! This again!

Suffice to say, it doesn't quite look like Cousin It, from that Addams Family TV show or movie, not really. What they did was a very messy job. And they didn't immediately release me after they finished. Had me lay there, still taped up, with my privates flopping out for all to see, for anyone that might have stepped in and out of The Shop. While the AOs, themselves, went down to dine on midrats in the galley. Giving it time for the glue to set firmly, so, I wouldn't immediately be able to rush to the head and get this crap undone while it was still fresh. I've already spent a good two hours in our Squadron's head, picking at it. Scrubbing it with soap and ladder. Trying everything in agonizing pain to get all the hair off. But it hasn't been easy, considering how well the glue is holding. All these hairs might have as well grown from it, leaving me to painfully pluck at each strand of hair, as I would, plucking from my own head. And the one on the end of my neck, not my shaft, here. Ouch! But then again, much more painful, since, they're freakin' glued on. And super glue is

much more stronger than normal hair follicles. And when I try pulling at it, the skin from it funnels out along with the tug, holding on to every strand as if not wanting to part with. Really, it's a messy job, and it plainly looks to be glued on, and unnatural. I mean: Whiskey Tango Foxtrot! JARTGO! This simply ain't the sort of crap I'm always putting up with. This is MORE! And I know how ridiculously hilarious this all would sound in third person, for somebody else. This is still unacceptably personal, for me, in first person. NO! What they did was so un-fuckin'-called for! So WRONG! So much so! So, jacked up! And... ouch! Every fuckin' strand hurts to pull at, and much of it is just a clumpy mess, considering how much glue they just poured over it to make sure getting this shit off wouldn't be easy. That, or accomplished within a day or two, or... OUCH! Fuck this! And now I feel done. I doesn't feel like continuing. Two hours I've tried. Two painstaking hours. And I haven't even made that much progress since it still looks the same. And I have to either try some sort of solution to get this shit off, like paint thinner. That. Or continue again later. Because days coming, and I've practically been busy my entire shift with AOs and this whole hairy business. What can I use to get this crap unstuck from me? Wonder I, as I mope back to my Jet, up top. To spend however long until Day Check, and spend however long until Senior deems fit. I know it's supposed to only be three hours. But, that hasn't been the case, considering, Senior's tendency to, to go back on this word, and add more hours just for the fuck of it. And to fuck with me! And... I'm tired.

Outside now, at my Jet. It's cold as the ideal of how hell freezing over would feel, I would imagine. Shivering my nuts off, again. But I'm not going back down, for, I'm feeling too defeated. Feeling like such a nothing, nobody person. And now, somehow the freezing chill no longer matters, I feel it freezing me over, but I don't care anymore. Let it!

Although, will note... I do feel a certain warm fuzziness somewhere on my person, compared to other places. Can you guess where?

Warm sunny skies hung over the Pacific. Very warm skies, now. Blazing warm, and with a sun glowing everything gold color. Conditions have made quite the contrast from what we had last night. But I don't exactly feel the difference, the difference hasn't been enough to change my mood. It's really nice, really warm, and an absolutely beautiful day. It's now sometime after shift change. I already went through it this morning. Senior had nothing to say to me, nor anyone. He didn't exactly eye me in any ways confrontational, as he has been. Luckily, for me, it wasn't to be, having him setting his sights on me as a primary target. For, at shift change, his sights were scattered. And, with bad aim. This morning, Boat life seemed to have finally been getting to him, as it has been for the rest of us. Showing that no matter how salty you are, you can never get completely accustomed to this type of lifestyle. And it's only been a little over a month now. And these cruises can tend to last over six. And Senior is a twenty-five year long Navy man, and counting. I saw him in the morning, eyes were very jaded, like the sights and sounds of The Shop had worn them in, and the man was to himself. Not saying much. Not lookin' at much. And not caring much, the same. As for how Falky and his crew were? They looked ecstatic, looking straight at me. They knew what had gone down last night, they knew what the BB-stackers had put me through. And they could not hold a straight face while amusing my presence in The Shop. But, whatever! I doesn't care. I didn't care. I had now grown tired and weary of it mattering. Was I feeling embarrassed much? Not at all, really. Well, here's the thing, I think I understand Roach Burger better now. Before, I could not imagine how anyone could put up with what that boy goes through on a daily basis. But after what I experienced last night? I understand better. You're only capable of feeling as embarrassed as you are prideful in oneself. Once something has happened to you to make you completely lose that pride, all sense of preserving it fades away, and you're no longer capable of feeling embarrassment, either. Me? Chainhauler man? Defiant PC till the end? FTN striking force to be reckoned with? The unbreakable mule? I feel like none of that crap means anything to me anymore. All that self-image. For that sense of self is now in shambles, and it doesn't mean ANYTHING to me, ANYMORE! Not no more!

“Hey, Navastian, is that a chinchilla in your pocket, or are you just happy to see me?”

One of Falky's crew joked to me, and they all laughed. But honestly, I already forgot who. His opinion of me no longer mattered. And the peculiar part is... I think I sorta like it this way...?

I'm with Day Check, now. Today's Sunday, and on Sundays, we almost never do Flight Ops (Night Check might, though). What all The Ship's Squadrons' Line Shacks will do are fourteen days on their planes and Jets. Wash jobs. All around wash jobs. Everywhere you look, all us PCs, no matter the Squadron, all us Brown Shirts are on our birds with scrubbers at hand, and, there's soap ladder building up all over. Forming bubbles that rise up, and drift into the air. Lots of suds everywhere, and sun baked PCs, looking sun drunk, and slow and sluggish to move. I think reasons it's getting warmer is we're heading south, south towards Hong Kong, and heading somewhere for real and not just circling off some coast, and we should be there pretty soon. I'm with Day Check, and let me just go ahead and introduce you to them all, even if only a few are going to matter as stand outs:

- AE3 Brockhausen, is out here with us, helping supervise the scrub job. And since I've already spoken about him in lengths, about as much as I know. Let's just leave it there.
- AMAN Hathaway. Hats is out here too. Lookin' mighty disgruntled, still, for being a Day Checker, as he had the day Senior had exchanged him with Roach Burger.
- AE3 Lutkus is also out here, wiping a strut down. The AE3 is from Eastern Europe, somewhere. I think Lithuania. And all I can say about him is he is the biggest raver I've ever met. If there is a Techno bar somewhere out in Japan, just outside our Atsugi base gates, he will at least visit the place once. A Roppongi frequenter. And a man that just lives and breathes for the scene. Go to his barracks' room, and the place has practically been redesigned and decorated into a bar. Nothing but rows of hard liquor and black strobe lights, everywhere. And a twitchy little Japanese girlfriend laying on the bed twitching out. I went to his room, once, with AD3 Beauregard and AD3 Qian (I hung out with those two a lot, mostly back at the barracks). And Lutkus then came over to shake the hand of the two I was with, and

then leaned in with me, and did the cheek to cheek kissing thing you see men from those parts of the world do, when they're being completely heterosexual with each other, (although, that still didn't explain why just me, and not the other two). BUT ANYWAYS... he then pulled out a minibar, topped with liquor and mixers, and began mixing. And mixed for us drinks you'd expect from a real fancy joint. White Russian, Bloody Mary, and a Banana Fuck for me. Good stuff. Good times. He then did nothing but talk about mixing drinks, talk about raving, and talk about fucking tons and tons and tons of women while on E. Then he had us all take E ourselves (in your face, zero tolerance), and as we sat around listening to trance music, Lutkus pulled out some glow wands, and began raving... for whatever reason...? One trance song, two trance songs, his Japanese girlfriend then moaned out REAL loud for some reason, three, and then the real trancing began, and... I remember nothing else from there on out. Me, Beauregard, and Qian blacked out from that point on, for the rest of the night, and we couldn't tell you what exactly happened next, and... something tells me, neither would we want to.

- AMAN Coppersmith, From Indianapolis, IN, is also out here, wiping down the Jet that's his as well as mine. Coppersmith is a nice kid, all smiles and appearances, as I've mentioned before. I've already introduced that much, but, besides the little I've mentioned, like Lutkus, Coppersmith is a Rapoongi frequenter. Actually, he always heads out with Lutkus on Friday nights, and won't come back till Monday morning, for work. Him, Lutkus, and AMAN Iglesias, the three will head out, but then split up when choosing which clubs. Coppersmith isn't much into raving as he is into the Hip-Hop scene. Actually, supposedly, he and Iglesias used to run with one of those hip-hop outfits you'll sometimes come across in urban settings. Settings of brick buildings covered in graffiti, and group of choreographed dancers all hanging together, dancing together, and partying together. A pair of true to the blue B-Boys. And sometimes, you'll catch him practicing some moves out of nowhere, in The Shop, or elsewhere, as he'll bust out with some elaborate steppin'. Then stop. And most entertainingly during launches. Pop! Lock! Then back to standard hand signals. Aye! That's right! When Coppersmith, Iglesias, or Lutkus be launching, everyone's

eyes will be on them, as they now and then will throw in some of their moves just to be all stylish. Showing off deep down who they truly are, underneath the Uniforms.

- AMAN Iglesias, is also out here, with Coppersmith, wiping down the port horizontal stab. And Iglesias is practically Coppersmith, except from the Philippines. Nice kid, that's all smiles and appearances, again. And nothing much else besides.
- AN Manjarrez, is also out here. Also with AMAN Iglesias. Also from the Philippines. And also, a Filipino with a Spanish last name. Which confuses me on a dumb level. I mean, my best assumption would be without picking up a history book, is, that the Philippine islands were colonized by the Spaniards. And that's the reason. But, whatever happened to their real last names before the Spanish arrived? Did they have any? Anyways, personally, I can't say I know him much. I know he hangs out a lot with Iglesias since the two are both PIs. But unlike Iglesias, we can't understand a lick of his English. Not a lick, not a drop, not even a gob of spit. I mean, I don't want to sound racist. But, we can't understand him! It's not us! It's him! And not saying he's dumb or deficient on some level somehow, either, he just isn't capable of speaking English how we can, for the boy has created his own unique variation, that not even Iglesias will be able to understand now and then. AN Manjarrez will be slurring off, trying to communicate about something or another—and the Airman sure will talk a lot! And AMAN Iglesias will then have to stop him in mid-sentence, and say: “Dude, just explain it in Tagalog!” And I don't think even then, even in Tagalog, Iglesias will understand him completely.
- ATAN Higginson, from Boise, Idaho, is here. Or as many of the Day Checkers call him, “Dirty Higgie.” For, the man is always covered with the corrosive grimy soot, from face to hands, that most of us tend to be. But, unlike us, he'll stay covered, long after whatever task that got him that dirty is finished with. Not very hygienic—we would think! But the boy showers every day, so that can't be the problem. I mean, The Shop, and Senior, has been watching him like a hawk to see if he's been properly showering every day. Senior went so far as to get AE3 Brockhausen to inspect him at showering one day. Aye! Placed Brock on shower inspection duties. Because Senior was all up in Higginson's face, asking him why he looked so dirty all the time, with black soot covered all over. And Higginson's response was he didn't know why.

AE3 had to watch his ass shower, then watch him at the sink, so Higginson could prove the shit was ESPECIALLY difficult for him to wash off. And the AE3 had nothing to prove further, except everything that Higginson had already been claiming. I mean, he watched him for ten minutes at the sink trying to wash his hands, and the crap just wouldn't come off. As if there was something unnatural or supernatural involved that prevented Higginson from being clean. Dirty Higgie we all call him. And, you'll really get the sense of that while watching him eating a sandwich with dirty hands, looking all disgusting, as the bread gets covered in the crap. Sometimes hungry, we'll go through finished box lunches to see if there are any leftovers, and we'll come across a half eaten sandwich, or whatever, and we'll know it was Higgie's. It'll be the sight of a baloney sandwich covered in soot, and it'll make us loose our appetites. That's Dirty Higgie for you, for the boy is never, ever clean.

- AEAN Dennison, from Kansas City, KS is here. The liar. And, aye! We call him that (or doesn't call him anything.... I'll explain). And, he is now, a special case, in the Line. Why is that you might be wondering. Well! You see, when he first got to us, Dennison, there, had tried to con us all into thinking the guy was Navy royalty. Supposedly, like our CO, a fourth or fifth generation Navymen, except blue collar. Everyone in his family being an enlistedmen. His father having been a Senior Chief back during 'Nam. And his father's father having been a Medal of Honor awarded First Class, back in WW2. That saved a whole bunch of lives, by sacrificing himself, doing something on some Destroyer, after some Japanese kamikaze had... I don't know what! I don't remember what his story was. And, it doesn't matter, either! Since, the AEAN Fucker, there, was lying about it all, to us, to get us all excited into thinking him and his family line were something truly grand. I mean, for a while there, everyone in the Squadron pretty much thought so. Even Chiefs and Officers would step up to him and OPENLY fraternize, since, they all saw him as an exception. Fucker actually hung out with Hanky and Panky one Friday night, after Hanky had found out his wife had been cheating on him around the Honch. Therefore, decided to pass around some Naval Aviators' Disease, as them two, plus Dennison, went out whoring in Tokyo. And... aye! That's right! This happened! And fucking Dennison, the E-3, was brought along. Can you imagine that! Dennison, for the first six months

in the Squadron had really managed to fool us all good. But, then, after a while, I guess some of the Chiefs started to hear inconsistencies with the Navy blue blood's stories, as he started getting confused with which brother, or cousin, or uncle, or great uncle, had done what. And one of those Chiefs then did an investigation into his family line to find out the truth. But, as you can imagine, came up with NOTHING! Zilch. And, once they did, my God, I'll tell ye! Once the entire Squadron found out the E-3 had been lying all along, my God, was there retributions and repercussions! My God, WAS THERE! But for whatever reason, nothing much done official (not sure how the Military likes to handle such matters, since, the fucker was lying about his family, not himself, so, not like he was impersonating or something, which would be punishable under the UCMJ). Once the truth was out, the entire Squadron then wanted his ass served on a silver platter, and mostly unofficially, too! I don't know exactly all the details of what they did, since, a lot of the shit the high ups put him through was kept under wraps from the rest of us. All I know, is, the Squadron decided not to kick him out. And decided, instead, to keep him around, and as an example. Suffice it to say, AEAN Dennison is never going to see his Shop, is never going to make Third, and won't be able to reenlist, or get a Honorable Discharge, do anything to progress him from the state he is in, to something better in the Navy, EVER! He is the Squadron's Sisyphus. The AEAN is cursed! He is now a phantom ghost in the Squadron, ostracized by all, for none of us will dare speak to him, relate to him, sympathize, out of fear of being ostracized ourselves. So, let's never speak of him again, since, the Airman isn't really there. The AEAN, there, doesn't exist!

- ADAN Muwangi, from Kenya, is here. Nothing much else to say about him, really, either. He's one moody dude and is always a downer and a killjoy to be around. Also, a real runt of our litter, and gets picked on for such. And being very, very, very dark skinned black. Nothing much else to say, except, although, there is one thing... not pertaining to his person, but his significant other's. Muwangi is engaged to the most beautiful black woman I've ever seen and met in my entire life. I mean... WOW! A real stunner. Simply enchantingly beautiful. Almost unimaginably so. Supposedly, an old sweetheart of his he brought with him from Kenya. She lives at Atsugi base, now, in separate housing, working at the NEXchange. I don't know

how he arranged it, to have her with him all the way out in Japan, since, First Classes and Chiefs tend to come across lots of headaches and difficulties bringing their families over. But, he did. And now, thinking about it, the thought of leaving her, and having to live life aboard this Ship, away... I can see why Muwangi is as moody and as depressed here as he is.

- AMEAN Albertson, from Portland, OR, is here. Not much to say about him, either, since, he never has much to say to us. The boy is a giant video game addict. Plus, an addict of everything that pertains to being a nonadult male. I mean to say, I've been in his barracks' room, and, unlike the barracks' room of AE3 Lutkus (he is the AE3's complete opposite), I can never imagine a woman being present there, with all his posters, and all his action figure collectibles. And his Star Wars merchandise, and... aye! The Airman is one giant manchild. Every time someone tries to speak to him about clubbin' and pussy huntin', the boy will blink, twice, and start talking about Jar Jar Binks, and how much the Star Wars prequels are turning into a disaster. And... NONE OF US GIVES A SHIT! For we're obviously dealing with a mind that has refused to hit puberty back when Albertson was in 6th grade, joining in on all that adult loving fun, that we're all into. He's like AD3 Qian. But a total lost cause! For, at least the AD3 will seemingly acknowledge this mysterious wonder box called a punani. Acknowledge it, then go “eww!” The AMEAN, here, won't even go that far. The boy is lost in Lucasville.
- AN Papavich, from... I don't know! And... I don't know! He's very quiet. And I really have nothing else to say about him.
- AN Papadopoulos, from Washington, DC, is here. And here we have another frowner like ADAN Muwangi. Scan through all the faces in Day Check Line, and you'll see mostly happy-go-lucky teenagers. And then these two depressing acts (Dennison's depressing face doesn't count, since, his is not really there). And that's all I know of him. Although, him and Papavich, we all like to call the Papa boys, since, we don't know much about either of the two, at all. That. And their names—obviously! We call them such, even though the two never hang out with each other. Actually, the two supposedly don't even like one another, much, and every time one of us will ask one: “Hey where's your brother at?” The other will respond: “How

should I know? He's not my brother. And! I don't even like the guy!" Every time this will happen. Every time. But, we'll continue to call the two the Papa Boys, as such, and just to hear one or the other feed us that line. All for its own quirky amusement.

And... there you go! That's Day Check for you. The full roaster. Well, of course besides the LPO and LCPO. AD1 Bastille and AMCS Hamakua. But they don't count. But... all right! Belay my last. At least AD1 Bastille will, for the First Class is also now out with us, washing Jets, when it's not really required of him.

So, we're all on my 107, giving it a proper fourteen day, to wash off all the sediments that could ultimately harm the structure of my bird. Salt! But, ultimately, that will never happen, considering how well AMAN Coppersmith has been able to keep the Jet clean with his hand wiping. Wiping the bird every second of the day he's been up and out here, obliging to the whims of our Senior. But, I don't feel like diving any further into that matter. I doesn't care. I'm tired of it mattering, and hearing about it every day in our Line. Day Check, or Night Check. A drudgery is still a drudgery, no matter under what circumstances, and that I feel is my new perspective of how I want to see things after the night I've had.
"Hey, Navastian?" Calls Papavich to me.
"Yes?" I ask.
"Nice haircut." He compliments.
But my heads practically buzzcut bald.
"When did you get time last night to see the barber?" He then asks.
And eyes at me plainly enough, seemingly oblivious to the whole story behind it. Oblivious, unlike a couple in the background that are now snickering after hearing him bring it up.

So, we're all out here. I'm out here, and so is AN Royster, and he has EMI because... he's AN Royster. There doesn't need to be one particularly good reason, since with AN Royster, punishing his ass, there's always PLENTY!
"Oh, man! Wow! It's hot today... what happened?" Let's out AN Royster.

Looking all around at our conditions. While holding a scrubber at hand, both hands holding its stick end, and fidgeting around with it, mostly, instead of actually scrubbing. Practically all of us are under my 107's port wing. With only a couple not, AD1 Bastille and ADAN Muwangi, being up top, wiping down the turtle back, which is the section of the Jet just before the canopy.
“Dant nah, jesgot hotagess!” Says Manjarrez.
And we all pause, then, say nothing, then go back to scrubbing.
“Man, I telye... Nat felt dishat in long dime. Nat since bakatfilipines. Get's hataldatum lak this in Minila! Aldatam! Mudafuggen—BWOAH!” He goes.
And. None of us still says anything.
“Umititi alvays bad lakdis!”
“Okay...!” Says Royster, getting back to scrubbing.
“Minila HAT, BOY! Batbinta Mayami Bitch Florida durin samatam, And BOY! And I dat Philipines gets hat and umid.”
…?
“Mayami Bitch? Davimin man! BOY! SHIT! Davimin!”
And Manjarrez won't stop. He just won't stop. All I could make out of that whole thing was something about the Philippines, it being hot. Something about Florida, and... bitches? Maybe that be all the gist of what he's all trying to say. Maybe? I'm not willing to ask and get him going again. Leaving me, and just about everyone else, feeling more and more confused with everything else he adds.

“Oh my God! The heat just won't end!” Complains Royster.
Looking up and around, again. Still fidgeting, not really scrubbing, just complaining since he's Night Check like I am. And, still up and out way past shift change, instead of being down in the berthing. And in his case, going through more people's racks, or something mischievous in that nature.
“Hey, Navastian, how much more time we got out here?” Royster asks.
“I don't know, I don't have a watch on me, how long is your EMI for?” I ask, back.
“Two hours.” He responds.
And... I don't see why he's complaining, he's got it made easier.

“Man, it's hot! Humid as fuck, too! But, then again, we are out to sea, and it should be this humid.”

“Man—”
But then AN Papadopoulos looks up at him, staring at him long and discontentedly, cutting Royster off, and putting him off. Royster now stares at Papadopoulos all skittish, and then tries to be friendly, by saying:
“Hey, As-Salaam-Alaikum, my brother!”
And then holds up a fist at Papadopoulos, all Malcolm X like, and greeting him in a very unusual way. As if, Papadopoulos is Muslim. Since, I know “as-salamu alaykum” is a Muslim greeting. Meaning, “go with God” or something. Which leads me to wonder whether or not Papadopoulos might be. Even with his Greek surname and all. Does Royster know something? Is Royster Muslim himself? Personally, I don't care, much. That's not a matter I would concern over with, but then again...? Wait a sec! This is AN Royster we're talking about, here. And if anything, experience has taught me. The Airman is always good at setting up routines such as these. Routines, that would eventually involve him laughing his mischievous ass off, while the person he's laughing at will be calling out for his blood.
“What was that?” Goes Papadopoulos
Staring at Royster all cross. Eyebrows all angled and hateful lookin'. Lookin' very confounded and confused at the same time. But also, not.
“I said: 'As-Salaam-Alaikum, my brother...' what?” Whating all innocently, Royster does.
And now I see where this is probably headed.
“What...? Hey, DIPSHIT...!” Scolds Papadopoulos.
Lookin' about the meanest and angriest I've ever seen him look. All because of a simple greeting.
“What I say?” Asks Royster, all innocently.
“Hey, listen, I'm not a Carpet Pilot, all right?” Explains he.
And... here we go! Here we go! Now I see where this might be headed. And from the sound of it, it's gonna be a BIGGIE!

“You're not a what?” Asks Royster lookin' innocently enough, again.
“An Osama, a Camel Jockey, a Diperhead, a Habibi, a Bin Laden all right?” Informs Papadopoulos
Almost all in one word considering how fast he's speaking it.
“I'm sorry... I don't understand!”
“Hey, ASSHOLE! Those people? I am NOT one of them, all right?” Forces Papadopoulos
While staring holes into Royster, and with holes he then fills out each entry of what he ain't. And, here's the deal, here: Papadopoulos, kinda does look like he could be Middle Eastern. I mean, his last name suggests he's Greek, but then again, Mediterraneans do happen to look as such from case to case. I've met a couple of Greeks in my time, and most of them were all very olive oiled skinned. Tanned. And had the facial features that suggested as such. For instance, Papadopoulos, here, has the same dark complexion. The same thick eyebrows you will see Middle Easterners having. And it's very obvious he's been shaving his unibrow, another signifier of a Middle Eastern, even though a stereotypical one. Since almost anyone can have a unibrow. Still. Based on appearance, if you were to ask the majority of people their opinion, even the opinion of some a lot more educated and understanding then our fresh out of High School Line Shack sorts, the opinion would still be that this person was a Middle Eastern. Given none of them were told of his last name.
“What, you don't like your heritage? Just because we about to go to war with your people, doesn't mea—”
“My people?”
“Yes, your people, just because we be going to war with them, doesn't make them all bad. So, don't take it like that.” Goes Royster.
And, whoa! Royster plans on taking it there. He plans to take it all the way. None stop. Making it as uncomfortable as he can make it. And the more uncomfortable it turns out to be, for us all? Well... must I explain this again?
“I'm not taking it like NOTHING! Listen to me! LISTEN! I am—”

“We're not going to war with all Muslims, I mean, it's not like we're going to eventually turn on you, and toss your unibrow ass overboard, once you've outlived your usefulness.” Explains Royster.
Choosing his words very carefully, and saying exactly the right ones, used at exactly the right time, to thoroughly piss Papadopoulos off.
“Listen you... you...!”
Papadopoulos is now stuttering his silly head off, trying to consolidate through the level of sheer frustration, dread, and anger he is experiencing.
“You... you son-of-a-BITCH! You...!”
“Don't get mad! Don't! No reason to get mad. Just accept it.” Calms Royster, playing reverse psychology.
“Hey, asshole, read my FUCKIN' lips, I'm no dirty raghead! OKAY?” Blasts Papadopoulos
All index finger, up and raised, and shivering—not shaking—but shivering it in front of Royster, to show just how furiously and offensively he's taking this.
“Raghead... what's with the slander? Why you slandering your own people? You know... that's the worst thing to be, really, racist towards your own people. Just saying.” Perfectly words Royster, he does.
“Listen to me... OKAY? I am no Muslim! I'm not lying, trying to hide something by saying that. I am saying I'm no Muslim, because, I am no FREAKIN' MUSLIM! You got that?”
“Then what are you?” Wonders Royster, as he shrugs his shoulders at him.
“What...? I'm WHITE!” Goes Papadopoulos
And him calling himself white? Has us all rolling.
“Why is everyone laughing?” Demands Papadopoulos.
Avoiding the obvious connotations of why we would.
“No, you're not!” Goes Royster, shaking his head.
“I am, too! I'm Caucasian. WHITE!”
And let's face it. White... is usually described for someone of much fairer skin. Which Papadopoulos isn't. He's not white, in the way he'd like to be looked as: blue eyed, blonde, Anglo Saxon and above.

“Dude, if you're white, then I guess I'm Oriental.” Jokes Royster.
“What's that supposed to mean?”
“What that means, is, you don't really look much white to me, not even Italian.” Explains Royster, even further.
And, it's true.
“Okay, I'm Greek! My last name is Papadopoulos, and that's Greek.” Finally, lets out, he. But Royster isn't done yet.
“Okay... but aren't Greeks Muslim?” Royster asks.
And... I know Royster isn't that stupid and is just playin' ignorant now for the sake of continuing the roll.
“No! No, you ignorant jerk off! FUCK NO!” Cracks Papadopoulos.
Looking mighty offended, again.
“It's a religion, not a nationality, you know. There could be blue eyed, blonde Muslims from England for all we know.”
“I don't give a shit. We're not that! I'm not that, OKAY?”
“And you're also not an Arab?” Goes Royster, continuing to play ignorant.
“Oh, for FUCK SAKES...!”
“But you do look like them, though, with your big nose and unibrow. Plus, I've seen how you need to shave twice a day, sometimes, in the head, in the morning. And later on, after work. And I know Arabs can be some hairy dudes, too.”
“You MOTHERFU... I don't look like them EITHER!” Insists he.
Papadopoulos is now sweating, he's so frustrated and pissed. He's sweatin'!
“You don't look like no Arab... is that right? Well, I guess I don't look like no blackie, either.” Smiles out Royster.
“How do I look like one, how?” Asks he.
And part of me just makes me want to pull out a mirror, and just points to his reflection, to say: “That's how!” For, let's face it, just because he isn't a Muslim from the Middle East, don't mean he doesn't look like one. Me being what I am, I’m very accustomed to this.
“You do!” Says Higgie.
“Actually... you do, kinda.” Let’s out AN Papavich.

His so-and-so-called brother. Traitor!
“I thought you could be, also!” Also with AMAN Coppersmith.
“Man, whatboy u ANT! Mixcan maybe? Batif samvan vata ass me bat youanyor fitchers. IIGPSHAN woodav binma guess. Eye nuaga dat was Iigpshan, and you gatda same dick, angry aybraz as ii did.”
“Aye, I agree with Manjarrez, I also would have confused you for an Egyptian, or something of that nature, too.” Translates Iglesias.
“Fuck no, I DON'T! I'm no ugly motherfuckin'... FUCK NO!” Denies Papadopoulos.
Completely abolished by this news of how we all feel.
“Ugly? So, you saying all Arabs and Muslims are now ugly, too?” Questions Royster.
And once again, choosing all the right words to use. Even though he already made racial jokes about the matter, himself, about Middle Easterners.
“I'm not saying anything!” Says he, even though he JUST did!
“Are you sure Greeks aren't related to Arabs?”
“NO! Not at ALL!”
“How about this... let's say down your family line, you don't think, maybe, you had some desert Arab, that got washed up on the shores of Greece. With the desert sheets they be wearing, and curved sabers, and all. And when he stumbled into some Greek village, at night, he tried to sneak into your great, great, great grandmother's tent, and... you know! And that's why you look just like they do now?”
And that illustration, there, now has us all pausing and imagining it, for a bit. Imagining all, exactly the way Royster described it. And, now we're rollin' again. And seeing this, Papadopoulos, seeing this. Us, laughing. Gets him to finally now completely lose it.
“That's it! THAT'S IT! You and me! YOU AND ME! NOW!”
“What... come on, why so mad?” Mopes Royster, with a wholesome smile.
For his Bravo Zulu, there, of a job well done.
“You... FUCK YOU!”
And now AN Papadopoulos tries to rush at Royster, but AE3 Brockhausen grabs him from behind, making sure he doesn't.
“You and me, ASSHOLE! Bitch-ass MOTHERFUCKER!” Goes Papadopoulos

“Hey come on, guy? Can't we be friends?” Mopes AN Royster, as if all disheartened by the falling out.
“FUCK YOU, MOTHERFUCKER!” Blasts Papadopoulos, again.
And tries to charge out of Brock's grip, but Brock then manhandles him to the deck, and keeps him under submission.
“Fuck YOU! GET OFF ME!”
“HEY!” Blasts AD1 Bastille.
And now with the intervention of the LPO, Papadopoulos unchecks the mode he's in, and AD1 now has him at compliant.
“What the HELL do you think you're doing, Papadopoulos? You want us to call the Master-At-Arms on your ass, and have them drag you down to the Brig?” Proposes AD1.
Showing Papadopoulos, the prospects of what will happen if he does go all out on AN Royster, in front of everyone on The Ship. Since, the outburst has alerted a lot of other Squadrons that are also up here. It's a bright sunny day, where everything is clearly visible, out in the open, and, it's a scene I'm grown to be unaccustomed towards.
“Well... DO YOU?” Demands AD1.
“No.” Decides Papadopoulos
As Brock lets off, as Papadopoulos gets up.
“All right, then, what the HELL is your problem?” Asks AD1.
Since, being on top of the Jet with Muwangi, leading him to have been unaware of much of what had been said until Papadopoulos started to make a scene, yelling, cussing, and screaming, and all.
“He called me a fuckin' raghead!” Pouts Papadopoulos.
A little comically, in a way, like a kindergartener would at recess, tellin' on the teacher for how mean Royster, there, had been, calling him a “Poopyhead.” Which would then follow with Royster going: “Did not! Did not!” Followed by Papadopoulos going: “Did too! Did too!” and the two then lashing at each other, again. But this isn't kindergarten, we ain't at recess, and AD1, here, isn't Miss. Fairway, our kindergarten teacher. And the subject matter isn't one calling the other a “Poopyhead.” And after

some assessment of the REAL subject matter, as AD1 pans his eye over the scene. Seeing how this began and where it's led, and then acknowledging all the intricacies and delicacies of the subject matter that's involved. Which, in the bigger picture: ultimately entails with us being on a war Ship going out to war with people that can be misconstrued as being similar, if not the same. After all that, AD1 goes:
“Ah... SHIT!”
As he realizes he really doesn't want to touch this subject matter with a ten-foot pole.
“He called me a—”
“I don't give a shit! You don't just up and attack someone like that, you understand me, Papadopoulos?” Asks our LPO.
But Papadopoulos doesn't answer. Looking away, to where he'd like to keep his convictions at. AD1 then grabs his arm, and yanks it to where it turns him around, back into full confrontation mode, and says:
“If I even see you look at AN Royster in a discerning way, from now on, I'll—”
“But what about him calling me a rag—”
“Stop saying THAT word!”
“But he called me THAT!”
“Fuck!” Goes AD1.
Really unsure of how to handle this delicate matter. And, I can't blame him, this really is a FUBAR topic to be now bringing up, and in this manner, too. Especially with an LPO, who's in charge of handling any dispute that goes on between us Airman, on an official basis. And totally officially. Always!
“I didn't exactly call him a raghead!” Explains Royster.
“Aye, Royster is right, he was just messin' with Papadopoulos about the matter. He didn't use that word—at all.” Supports AE3 Brockhausen.
Who was with us, around, to listen to the whole transaction. And now, AD1 sees how he can handle this matter.
“And you didn't say or do anything?” Demands AD1.
Staring directly at Brock, redirecting all his frustration onto him. Brockhausen looks abash, now, wind all knocked out of him, realizing he really should have taken charge, beforehand. Acting like a Third Class, and really taken initiative. Instead of

standing by and being just another JAFO. Which the fleet is already filled brim to the brim with. GAFing off, like any other DILLIGAFing Airman would do.
“I... um...?” Goes Brock.
“Three Steel Balls... huh? You're a Third now, Brock! You didn't see fit to act like one, and stop the matter before it got out of hand?” Reprimands AD1.
And now Brock looks embarrassed.
“What about him calling me a—”
“If I even hear you using that word again, Papa boy, I will call the MAs, anyways, and have them throw you into the Brig, just on principal... do I make myself clear?”
And now AD1 stares all fiercely pierced, piercing Papa boy's eyeballs through the pupils with his own, that are now shooting needles at.
“Yeah... I...?” Goes he, looking all dissatisfied.
And now AD1 is REALLY pissed!
“YEAH?” Imposes AD1.
Busting out with the Military Bearing and pounding it into Papa boy's chest.
“I mean, yes sir, I mean... AD1... aye aye!” Goes Papadopoulos.
All white streakin' by the one LPO here, and none of us, have EVER seen get this way. And it really is a scary sight to now behold. And, very disheartening, too, considering we'd never would want to see him being this way. Since, AD1 has almost always tried to handle any matter with the most sensible and friendly means of resolve.
“Good! Now get outta here! Go take a cigarette break, get some lunch from the galley, something, I don't care WHAT! And I'm letting Senior know what happened here.” Explains AD1.
And Papadopoulos now leaves.
“All right, Royster... what's the deal, here?” Asks the AD1.
Sprouting the same mischievous smile Royster always has on his face, just to show how he's on to him.
“I didn't... I...?”

“Actually, Brock, I want to hear you handle this, now, since, you didn't before, when you SHOULD HAVE! While you were all standing around, with your thumb up your ass, chuckling to the same jokes, same as any AIRMAN would do.” Ridicules AD1.
Letting Brock know how he feels about his attitude. Since Brock still does have a lot of growing up to do, and growing into his rank, himself.
“Well?” Nudges AD1.
Leading Brock on, who now is a little out of it, after the discouragement that was shared. Brock doesn't seem to do well with being put down like that. Something he hasn't frequently experienced, not even seldomly. Since, him in his elements has mostly been on point and Shit Hot.
“Well... okay! So, what's going on Royster?”
And Brock is now getting to it, after a moment with himself, to consolidate his approach to this.
“What is going on with you? Why is it that we have to continuously be having these conversations? But seeing no resolve come to fruition, HUH?” Asks Brock.
Really getting to it to get to his elements. But Royster says nothing. For, as for Royster, I don't think he knows who to respond to, now, since he's expecting the AD1 really to be in charge, here, and the one he should be heeding.
“Hey, Royster! So, what's it going to take for you to stop acting like a Shitbag?” Demands Brock.
And that now gets the Airman's attention.
“Hey, it was all Papa boy, he was the one going off, when he shouldn't be.” Excuses Royster.
But we all know Royster's deal. And AD1 and Brock don't seem like they're willing to take it anymore.
“Royster, shut the fuck up!” Lashes Brock.
“What?”
“Royster... we all know how you are, how you really are, and we know your act.”
And Royster now does his other thing he usually does at intervals such as these, begins to show his other side. Since Brock is now willing to drag him out of whatever shell he's mostly in and expose him to some truth.

“And how's that?” Asks Royster.
Looking away with his arms crossed, and seeming very, very defensive, now. As if to protect something valuable that's within.
“How's that? You instigate shit!” Says Brock.
But that's something we're all aware of. And so is Royster. It's going to take more to truly get him out into the open.
“….” Says Royster, as he begins to barricade himself from the questioning.
“You act like some big stupid child, when you're not, you're always saying the right things to piss people off, and then playing it innocent, as if it wasn't your fault. We know about your act, and we're sick of it. So, what's it gonna take to square you away, Shipmate?”
“….”
But it's still not enough.
“So, you got nothing to say for yourself?” Asks AE3 Brockhausen.
And he senses he doesn't have the right words to draw the jester out of his costume. His masking character, which hides something completely different underneath.
“….”
Royster is practically a statue, now, looking away, with crossed arms, looking at nothing and no one. For, there isn't anything out here or there that can do for him, what he wills to have done.
“Nothing?”
“Well, you see how I'm not responding.” Concludes Royster.
As he turns his face around and gives Brock his final answer.
“Royster, do you want me to inform Senior about this, so he'll give you more EMI?” Asks the AD1.
And now Royster flinches, because, that's something the AD1 knows the Airman has seriously grown weary of receiving. And constantly having the deal with Senior and his wrath. I've only have gotten EMI for five consecutive days (except for that one morning Senior relieved me since he didn't want to see the sight of me), and now, on my fifth day, my last day, I already feel like a shell of a person. Royster has at least had ten times as much, if not more, in his entire Line Shack career.

“Because, if you're not going to allow us to resolve this issue, help us resolve whatever is going on with you. Just keep yourself closed off as you have, that to me constitutes you being insubordinate, you being defiant, standing against us! Even when we're only trying to help. And here? In the Navy? You're going to eventually find yourself being shitcanned out. And, I don't think you want that.” Goes AD1.
But then the Airman sprouts a quaint little smirk on his face, that has AD1 reassessing.
“You don't want that, do you?” Asks again.
“Well... maybe... I do!” Concludes Royster.
All slit eyes, looking mighty proud of his stance. Even laying it out on the AD1's face. One LPO that almost all of us, up until now, have felt deserving of our admiration and respect. But, not Royster, for, he's willing to sacrifice sentiment for his cause. Willing to stand FTN to the end.

THE BIG CHICKEN DINNER

Keep up your FTN ways, and eventually it'll all lead to something. For really, just how long do you plan for this to go on? Since really... nothing ever lasts forever. Nothing ever does. Not even this. Being this. Being here. Out here. Every day, or night. This all is eventually going to end. And eventually, we're all going to need to move on to the next phase in our Navy lives. Our Joe Squid existences. For a month, over a month, we've been at it like this, and as much as none of us feels like we can take it anymore. We also feel like we still can, and still will. But, only if then... it could only last forever. What I'm getting at is this: we're going to be out here for a while. For a LONG while. And it already feels like us dealing with the long haul. Been just over a month of being out here, and we're now, I guess, feeling the hump, the big one we all need to transverse. The one big wave, tsunami in size and stature, before we find ourselves on the other end, with much more smoother sailing. This is the time we're really beginning to adapt to this lifestyle, feeling the salt crust over and harden our shells. Feeling the cruise stretching us in, by stretching us out, over the tread we make, and having us at our weariest. Five more months to come of this, if not more. Since, cruises can end up taking that long. Even our forward deployed vessel. That's not supposed to stay out more than three months at a time. Three

months in, three months out. That is what being forward deployed means. Which is different from other Carrier Air Wings. But, this cruise should be different, even by our standards. And the standard by everyone else's Air Wing Command. This cruise will be different. We all know it. It'll be a grand total of six months, or possibly more, of being out to sea, before we head back. All that time to grow accustomed to this lifestyle. Growing into our sea legs, and once we feel too accustomed, that's when it'll all change again, and we'll head back, and find ourselves feeling out of balance balancing our sea legs again on stilled land.

I finally managed to get that crap off. I decided to try using JP-5 fuel to see if it'll work. And, it was just the right solution to get the job done. So... in your FACE, you AO BASTARDS! It didn't take me two weeks to get that crap off. The second I applied the JP-5 fuel on a rag, and started scrubbing my privates with it, the glue thinned out, and it all came undone. So there! Although, now I'll have to worry about twenty years from now, coming down with something, that'll have my dick fall off. So, great, just great! Out-fucking-standing!

I didn't have those dreams last night, again. Don't know if it should matter anymore. For, maybe, I should just move on, into the next phase. Adapt, and begin to feel something different. Adapt... and all that good sense. Fully adapt to all this, only to un-adapt when we return.

Fuckin' Papadopoulos! Want to know what his deal was? Why he was taking so much offense to possibly being confused as a Muslim? Want to know why? Want the intel I gots for you? It was the sense of dread—I know—he was feeling. Dread that he might get caught, for something he didn't commit or do. Caught and discovered, for being something he isn't. Framed! Even for something that isn't a crime. Even though in our Squadron, we already have an AM2 Bishara, who's an Egyptian in Corrosion Control, and a Lieutenant Nazari, who's Iranian in origin, and one of our fighter Pilots. A Fly Boy that goes by the call sign “Facehugger.” And... I don't even want to know why they call him that. (for every time Hanky and Panky do, they smile, and

more so than when they smile calling for Rimjob or Blower, two other Fly Boys with such colorful call signs). And since all these Fly Boy's call signs are pornographic in nature, what a “facehugger” is supposed to mean (besides being based off that spider like creature in that sci-fi flick). Pornographically? I don't know, and would you blame me if I didn't want to? But anyways. Middle Eastern, if being one is a crime in the Navy, those two somehow have managed to get away with it, red handed, out in the open, for us all to know and see, for all this time. Interesting how Papadopoulos can fear being misconstrued as being something he isn't, when those two are, and have been nothing but open and friendly about it. Especially Lieutenant Facehugger, since if the Navy really was that racist (officially), would they really lay that much trust, allowing him to pilot a flying incarnator of total war and destruction, that could singlehandedly level Baghdad to its foundation. And that all into the hands of an Iranian? Navy's still racist, though, unofficially! Or in other words, because of guys like Papa. One ADAN Papadopoulos, misconstruing the entire reason for the mission we're on, and actually thinkin' it IS a war against them! And Papa boy isn't alone on this, thinking that way. Papadopoulos is racist! It's that simple. But for his unique case, what he dreads is being misrepresented, being ostracized not for being something he is, but for something he isn't. Since Papadopoulos isn't a blonde and blue-eyed Caucasian. How he would like to be seen. He's not PRIVILEGED in the ways of being white, in how he'd wish. He's white, but also not. Dirty white! Dirty (or that's how he sees himself as)! And for this unique case, it isn't a major problem for anyone on this Ship, no one in this Navy, except the ADAN Papadopoulos, there. For that frowny face Joe Squid jackass, there. He's the sort of insecure freak that heads into the head and doesn't look himself in the mirror when washing his hands after using the shitter. For he can't stand the sight of his unibrow, big nose, and olive oil skin. He's a special sort of pathetic racist, which in the end, will lead him to finding himself on his knees, apologizing to his own people, for his despicable ways, instead of others. And that's our ADAN Papa dapa dapa! Dipa dopa dapa! Dipa do! Dipa do... Polos! For ye! That's him!

I woke up earlier this afternoon for my shift than usual. One of those, “woke up too early thinking it was late, now I can't sleep anymore” deals. And It's still before reverie. So, the lights are out, and I just be sitting here in the berthing, at the lounge chair, watching a flick that's on mute, since there's Night Checkers sleeping just a few feet away. The flick? It's called The Bounty. Another maritime flick showing on the Navy channel, on A-farts, making there seem like there's really no world out there but the world that isn't covered completely by the blue stuff. How do I like this movie, The Bounty? I like the flick! I does. Something really resonates within me about its story, even though, the setting takes place some two hundred years ago, even over two hundred, the story still finds a way of relating with me, and my own conditions. For all maritime stories, in the end, are all the same. Its story truly finds a way to resonate with me, completely to my Joe Squid core. For my mind seems to be forming deeply locked interpretations of the seafaring tale, that not yet even I on the surface am able to fully grasp. Interpreting things that be speaking to me in a magical language, beyond my comprehension, and that's how I am comprehending it.

“Sup, Royster.” I go.
Watching The Shipwreck about as moody as I've seen him, sit next, and now giving the flick that's playing on TV, a once over, with a disinterested and bias glance, as if he'd like to get up and change the channel, if there was another channel to change to. And I sorta wouldn't want him to now, that is, if he could. I like the flick that's playing.
“What you doing up this early?” I ask.
And Royster doesn't respond, again. But then stares at me all funny, and I now know where this is headed.
“Hey, Fuzzy Breeches... how you doing, there, sweetie?”
Then makes a quick kissy face and begins his usual laugh. Giving himself a healthy dose of his medicine, to wake him up, that gets him back into character. So, whatever! Here's another Airman Schmuckatelli ASSHOLE in this fleet, I will never manage to relate with. What else is freakin' new? So, I sit there, continuing to watch

the flick, growing very passive aggressive towards Royster, as he now and then continues to try and pry and pick, and trick, at me, again. To see if he can get the type of reaction out of me that his twisted soul feeds on.

“Hey, Navastian, hey!”

And I say nothing.

“Hey, Navastian... why so down? Anything I can do to flip that frown of yours, upside down?”

And I continue to say nothing. Because I know his character, and I am in no ways interested in playing out what he got from Papa boy. Not in the least.

“Navastian... interesting name.”

And now I grow still.

“You know, Navastian isn't much of a name I've ever heard.”

Now I'm dead silent, null eyes, and trying too hard to be expressionless, and laughing boy Royster is now seeing a kink in my armor.

“Speakin' of Papa Boy. The Terrorist. What are you, Navastian? You're not Greek, too, are you?”

And there you go, there you have it, the Barnacles are finally out of the bag (wanna say “the cat's finally out of the bag” but this is a maritime story, and I'm trying mostly to stick to metaphors that pertain to it, if you haven't already noticed). But, aye! AYE, AYE! And there she blows! There, they're finally out of the bag. And I only really have one answer to Royster's question. One answer, especially after everything I witnessed with Papadopoulos:

“So, where's you from, originally?”

“Me and my family is from Iran!”

I just straight up divulge, straight up lets him have it. For I don't plan on hiding this truth anymore, not any longer. And Royster's eyes? Ha! They're now lighting up like light houses noticing all the jagged rocks below. Nice sea metaphor... eh?

“You're from....”

“Yes, Royster, I was originally born in Iran, I'm Iranian American.” I smile out.

A little too confidently, and now I'm staring at him a little psycho like, a little Section 8, insane in the membrane. A little... terrorist-y like, or how I'd imagine something

of that nature would look like. The boy now grows a little scared and weary. Gets up. And leaves my vicinity. And... good! Good riddance! ASSHOLE! Just another FTN no loading waste of skin, that has nothin' to offer but wasting my time, and any sincerity, I would have been willing to offer. For I tried to be friendly. I at least tried! I liked how scared he got there when I finally let him have it, what I am. I liked it. I enjoyed it. Even though I know I'm now going to be hearing about it later. Up till now, I've sorta been trying to hide disclosing certain information about me (Donnelly only one felt different with), but right now, I just didn't feel like doing it anymore. Especially after that whole Papa boy example, and all its details. Truth is, I can relate. Although I lied about being born in Iran, but I did that for Roysters sake to get him really scared of a possible Habib. Haha. I'm Armenian. But the problem with that is, most people don't know what the hell it is. But, they do know what an Iranian is. I'm really an Iranian Armenian American. But, I just can't go around saying that, considering, how confusing it sounds. Most people want things simple, so when they begin labeling people, the process won't require a lot of hair pulling to get'er accomplished. Me being born here, with parents that were born in Iran, but not Iran, but Armenian, that tends to confuse people? It's too much for their ignorant, small brains to handle. Too much! All unofficially of course, which is what REALLY matters. Understanding how there's an entirely different ethnicity of Christians living in a Muslim country as that, and how we're really a lot different. But, whatever! Fuck Royster! The fuckin' ASSHOLE! There's one FTN son-of-a-bitch, that can't wait for the Squadron to eventually give him his Big Chicken Dinner: A Bad Conduct Discharge. As they boot him out of the fleet. As I said earlier, if you keep up your FTN ways, it'll eventually all lead to something. For really, just how long do you plan for this to go on? Since really... nothing ever lasts forever. Taking everything as a joke, until things no longer are, and things becomes dire serious. (Ah shit! Why did I tell him what I was? Now I know I will be hearing about it later in The Shop, fuck!).

But, anyways, back to the whole Big Chicken Dinner matter, and wanting to get out. And speaking of jokes, here's one that'll color you how we feel about that matter. One joke, considered as a Navy legend. A sorta urban legend, but since there's

nothing urban about our surroundings, it be a Navy one. All in all, just another “no shitter” that's just going to make one go “no shit!” And usually the one that's telling the tale. To stress how much credibility there is in it. Since he heard it from this Squid, that heard it from that Squid, that heard it from his LPO, who heard it from a mermaid donkey (half fish, half ass), out one evening, in the twilight hours, that was swimming along The Ship near the smoke pit, when no one was around, but he and that abomination of a creature. The LPO had been sniffing paint thinner all afternoon, into evening, in his Shop, and was then hearing this story from a mermaid donkey, which the ungodly creature, itself, heard it from so and so. So a tale full of documented credibility. For just consider all those references just now mentioned that can speak for it, also! So how can that many people continue to believe something that is untrue? So, here we go:

Back during the Vietnam War, back when the draft was enacted by that Richard Nixon President, there was this kid, that was a decent basketball prospect in High School, who wanted to go to college, full time. To play full time. Didn't want to get involved with the war over there and wanted to be the first person in his family line to go passed the 12th grade. The story goes that the boy was drafted, then, and as hard as he tried to find some scholarship to pay for his college, since he was only a decent prospect, he wasn't able to find a loaner in time to beat the draft. And was drafted in. The Seaman? Realized very quickly he didn't like the Navy. Actually, downright loathed it. Mostly because he felt cheated out of his chance to really make something of himself in the outside and wanted out. But as hard as he tried to be FTN, to his RDCs in Boot Camp, all the way to his Chiefs when he entered the fleet, the harder they made him realize that nothing was going to do it. They were onto him. Shitbags like him, were and still are, a dime a dozen, all wanting out, and so this Seaman had to find something to do different, to make himself the exception. And... eventually on one cruise, out a good three months in, the Seaman finally snapped, having obsessed over the matter this entire time, and found that exception to the rule on what to do. That day? All of a sudden, he just up and said to everyone in his Shop: “Fuck y'all, I'm gonna play me some ball, if it's the last thing I do.” And

in front of his entire shop, began dribbling an imaginary ball, just began dribbling it, as if it was actually there. “All right, stop that, Seaman! Stop it! You've made your point! Keep it up, and you'll get DRB!” Went his LCPO. But the Seaman wouldn't stop. And kept at it. “Hey, SHIPMATE!” The Chief went, but to no avail. And after a few more tries to belittle the Seaman, the Chief gave up, and figured the Seaman would eventually grow weary, and give up the pursuit, himself. The entire shift came and went, and still the Seaman kept up his dribbling. And at shift change, Seaman left, while continuing to dribble. At the berthing everyone talked, tried to talk the Seaman into stopping, but he had been set in his way, and wouldn't quit. Next day, same thing, there he was in front of his Shop and Chief, and he was still keeping at it. Now his superiors tried, continued to try, as they kept yelling and “Shipmate-ing” him to stop. But the Seaman wouldn't. It was as if he was possessed by some force, that kept him to it, kept him committed, no matter how many attempts he faced from his superiors to get him to decease. Days went on to weeks. Weeks went on to months. Chiefs, DRBs, even so far as Captain's Mast, and nothing would work, as the Seaman persisted. Even against all the hell and Khaki fury, he prevailed. Eventually, he was placed into the Brig by the Skipper, for as hard as the man on top tried to get him to stop, yelling and belittling, and berating, the Seaman wouldn't. In the Brig, he continued to dribble. In the head. Even in his rack, the MAs would open up the curtains, and see he continued in his sleep. By this point, everyone figured it to be a section 8. AS IF IT WASN'T FREAKIN' OBVIOUS ALREADY! And the Seaman was to face discharge. Up front, with the Skipper, the Seaman stood next, in dress Uniform, but dribbling his ball instead of standing at ease, as the Skipper signed his discharge papers. And once done, he handed them to the Seaman... and, then, something else happened.

The Seaman then stopped dribbling, held the ball in his grip, then sat the invisible thing onto the Skipper's desk, and grabbed his discharge papers. This confused the CO, as he looked at the Seaman all confounded over, and perplexed, and called out to him to ask:

“Hey… aren't you forgetting something… your ball?”
Which the Seaman (now a civilian) then promptly answered:
“No, sir! I'm not. I won't be needing it any longer.”

Keep up with your FTN ways, being all BOHICA or JARTGO, and sticking paperclips onto your Uniform (which is the most openly FTN you can be since P.A.P.E.R.C.L.I.P = People Against People Ever Reenlisting, Civilian Life Is Preferable. And, Aye! Roger the fuck out of that! There is THAT much of a CULTURE behind being FTN in the Navy. Where they would wear their FTN resentments as a badge of honor, almost), keep it up, and eventually you'll find yourself shitcanned out. I mean, if there wasn't a larger story to tell, then why else would I preside this freakin' long, telling one, the one I'm telling you now. If, there wasn't? But anyways... still, keep it up, and keep it up while being a Shipwreck about it, a Shitbird/Shitbag/Dirtbag (there's several names for it) and the Big Chicken Dinner is what will be waiting for you. A dishonorable discharge. A shameful separation. Shameful! And really, one of the best ways to get that is by jumping Ship. Forget that no shitter I just told you about that basketball player. That's just some no shitter that was made up with bells and whistles attached, to only serve one point, while trying to sound all colorful and entertaining, and that is illustrating the ideal of how far we'd be willing to go, to undo the regrets we have. Undo all the bad choices we've made. By submitting ourselves to whatever lows to unmake them. Doing what Royster has been doing. Or Roach Burger, but, with him not by choice. Doing what that Seaman with the imaginary basketball supposedly did (if he even existed). Or what Seaman Jangles and Seaman Fickler have done. What those two did, only two weeks into the cruise. Makes me wonder, what really led them down that path. And how that path differs... with the one... I might be on.

Damn! I don't want to think about these things anymore... I don't! BUT I GOTTA BE HONEST WITH MYSELF, what happened last night has really gotten to me, deeply. Deeper than I'd like to admit. And it wasn't just the whole silliness of it, or the embarrassment, of what they did. It's the fact that the Line TRULY sold me out. And

I was put into question about my loyalty. As if this Navy has done anything up till now to have earned it and intimidating me to go along isn't what I = earning someone's loyalty and trust. I feel now like I need to find a suitable means of getting out, myself, before my worser judgment finds its own. A worser and rasher means, that might ruin my life, forever. I gotta get outta here. I can't do this no more. NOT no more! NO! I CAN'T DO THIS! I CAN'T! I...

“Sitting in the dark again... I see...?” Asks AN Donnelly.

Ah, Christ! I felt like I was going to have a panic attack... or something. I don't know what else to do.

“Thinking about shit, again?” Asks Donnelly, looking concerned, as he has.

“Yeah.” I answer.

“Why? What's there in the dark that got you thinking?” He asks, now.

And Donnelly seems to know how to ask all the right questions, at me, at exactly the right time. As if we're on the same frequency. Somehow. One knowing exactly what the other is going through and thinking, with wave lengths and patterns we all be transmitting.

“What am I thinking about now, nothing.” I say.

And Donnelly is seemingly able to pick up that lie, without any difficulty.

“Nothing... huh?”

“Nope.” I try to conclude.

Because I don't want to dwell on it anymore. Not another session.

“Hey, what happened to you?” He persists.

And now I wish he would just go back to getting me to shut up, like he did a couple days ago, when I wouldn't.

“What, you didn't hear?” I say.

Since, I know how rumors spread fast.

“No... I heard. Sorry about that.”

And his pity doesn't sit well with me.

“Why are you sorry? I'm not the only one on The Ship eating all their shit. The shits really going around, like it's a stomach virus, or something. Fuckin' gastro!” I say.

“No, but....”

“Plus, if you think about it... what happened was really funny! Like something you'd see in that American Pie movie, some stupid embarrassing shit about sticking your dick in a pie. Or, for my case, them tarring and feathering... no, hairing, my member. Ha!” I jest, try to, that is.

And really, in the end, it was, and that's how it should remain. Fucking Cousin It. Ha! What a barrel of laughs, at my expense. But Donnelly seems to have another interpretation.

“I mean... yeah! It all sounds funny. Really funny. But the funnier it is, the more unfunny I know it can also be.” He explains.

“It wasn't that bad.” I go, over the matter.

“Wasn't that bad? You kidding me? I'd like to see Falky, that little son-of-a-bitch, try something like that on me.”

“He didn't do it.” I highlight.

But Donnelly has the finger on the truth of the matter, to my dismay.

“Well, the AOs did, but... you know what I mean.” He explains.

And I does.

“I know.” I admit.

“No, actually, it seems like you don't. I mean, they just handed you to the AOs?”

And... fuck! I think, then, as I notice just how much we are on the same frequency about this, here. Same thought patterns, and all. And I got nothing I can hide from him, as much as I would like to. I doesn't respond, since, I can see, I don't need to, for Donnelly is already doing it for me, taking it to the next level, of how I would actually feel next.

“Wow, so there really is no Line Shack pride. Just a bunch of bull, those senior PCs like to push on us, to keep us respecting all their words and decisions, unquestionably, huh? Just another way for them to pull one over on us.” Donnelly mopes.

And hearing him say it, makes me comes to terms that's not all there is to it. And there's still something missing from all this.

“Oh, don't look at it like that.” I say now.

As I try to imagine what perception I'm missing out on, here. Something I feel deep down. I know it has something to do with loyalty, even when not earned. Something on my part... there's something to what AO2 Southgate was sayin' that really got to me. Or, not as much what he said, but expressed, before going ahead with the silly business. Expressing how he wouldn't want me in The Shop... I don't know.

“No... I will look at it like that. Even when nobody can stand each other's asses, the point of having pride in a group, is, still, being willing to stand up for one another. Camaraderie might not be an easy thing, but that doesn't mean a team's integrity can also be not an easy thing, too. What's the point of being in a team, if we're just going to back stab, cheat, and lie to one another? That, or sell each other out? What's the point of that—I ask you, huh?”

Ah shit! I think, then, as I see how ahead of me Donnelly really is, and it's a little scary, too. But my concern now is: what could we then do, to resolve this? Since, I don't feel like anything can be done. We in the end are a part of their team, not them a part of ours. We're the bottom feeders, here. So, just how long can we expect to mope about this, and BOHICA! And wait for the next reason to mope. JARTGO! And all that! Until our FTN level gets us shitcanned out. But with Donnelly, and the way he's looking at me, lets me know, he won't have it. More than I won't.

“We a team. And there needs to be some form of integrity keeping us together, and seeing how we're just going to sell each other out? To the so-called enemy—no less! Nah! Fuck that shit! This is now personally getting to me, as if they did that to me.” Donnelly lets out.

Once again stepping ahead of me, when I don’t feel like doing it anymore. I had my moment with AO3 Ramshaw, and what we did to him, and we all saw how that resolved matters.

“I don't know....” I say, then.

Playing it neutral, as Donnelly begins drawing his own sides.

“What?”

And now Donnelly looks baffled. And very, very disappointed at me.

“What... what? Why you looking at me like that?” I ask.

“They broke you finally... huh?”

“….”
“Well, you ain't broken, until you fully admit to yourself you are, and keep it that way.”
“What? What are you talking about? Being broken in... not admitting to oneself... WHAT?”
It's one thing to be on the same Boat with matters, it's another when the person you're with hijacks your spot and throws you over the side. Or, in other words: Donnelly is being more of “me,” than I've managed to muster up: being that Chainhauler man, that defiant PC till the end, FTN striking force to be reckoned with, the unbreakable mule. Basically, being that defiant one. Which Royster is, also, in his own way. And that's where I feel I draw the line. Which I don't think Donnelly yet understands why he should, too. There's one thing if being defiant against unruly assholes, there's another being that way with people just trying to help you out. Like AD1 and Brock were with Royster, earlier this morning.
“Dude! Don't be feeling guilty of what you did to Ramshaw. Fuck that little—”
“All right... ENOUGH... man!” I say.
For I don't like how Donnelly is now trying to put thoughts into my head.
“Listen, all I am saying, is, you seemed a lot more happier before yesterday night, don't let them take that away from you.”
“They haven't exactly taken—”
“YES, they have! I can see that they have.”
And now I feel like this has gone on too long, and, is a little uncalled for. Even if Donnelly means everything with the best intentions. In the best interest of me.
“Well, maybe they have, a little, but I don't know what else to do.”
And now Donnelly just smiles. Grinning from port to starboard, as if tieing up a hammock, and then laying in it to catch some R&R, as if he has the answer. I doesn't respond to his smile, for I doesn't know what to make of it.
“I don't know man.” I finished.
And then Donnelly says:
“I know... I know. I get it, you feel down right now, and need some time to yourself away from all this. So do we ALL! But Hong Kong is coming up, that can be your

time to rejuvenate some of your energy and spirit. Just don't give up! Is all I'm saying." He lets out.
And... maybe… maybe?
"Okay?" He asks.
"Yeah." I respond.
For maybe Donnelly is right. Right now, Hong Kong is what I really need.

EYEBALL LIBERTY

Maybe I'm looking at all this all wrong. Maybe, I've been too defiant, me being really the unruly one in all this. Maybe, in the end, Falky and Senior (even) have done nothing but tried to help me. I mean, I specifically remember Falky saying that that's what he was really trying to do with me. He said that, but, I didn't believe him at the time. Maybe? I don't know. But, after that whole AO thing. They've lost me there.

But, anyways, and there it is! The city of Hong Kong. We're here. It's 1900 hours, I just began my shift after shift change, and... I didn't think we'd be here this soon. But, here we are. And I thought we wouldn't be here for at least another day. Or, really, in twelve hours, since, that's when our liberty officially starts. I mean, that is what was explained to us. Tomorrow morning. But we're here already, and... what the fuck are we still doing aboard this Ship? What we doing here, still? And why is our workday continuing, when there won't be any Flight Ops, or anything constructive in that matter, for the rest of our shift? Why couldn't liberty start now?
"Wow, Donnelly... we're here?" I say.
"I know, I know!" Says Donnelly, back.
"Why couldn't we get off now? This is bullshit!" I follow.
"Hey, at least you'll be able to, later tomorrow morning." Donnelly lets out.
Since, I had almost forgotten. I look at him and see longing eyes. Longing for the spectacular sight of Hong Kong Bay we're getting, and how he'll be getting none of that action. And I feel as depressed as he does, now, seeing how he's going to continue feeling the way I'm feeling, now, seeing this sight, and unable to do anything about it. Wow, what a sight for sore eyes, this all looks to be. Civilization! Actual human civilization! And I feel like rejoicing, seeing how there hadn't been any

major apocalyptic—whatever! That had flooded the world of nothing but sea. And now I'm seeing this, a skyline of starry lights shining all colors of Hong Kong's cityscape. There be lights! Lights! Lights! All shining into the twilight horizon, as night approaches from due East, darkness of the night we're traveling into, ahead, nestled behind the city, on that other end of the Earth's corner. Nestled behind this city of glass and gold. What a sight! What a magnificent sight truly—indeed. And we have all night to sit back and contemplate its potential and meaning. What we're about to embark on, and how it'll all change things after we have.

“Everything feels different, now.” Expresses Donnelly.

And that's exactly how I feel about it, too.

“I forgot that places like these even exist.” I joke.

And Donnelly snickers once at the notion.

“What places?”

“Human fuckin' civilization!”

“Yeah... now that I think about it, that's how I can see I feel about this, too.” Donnelly acknowledges.

“Day in, day out, day in, day out, on and on, with nothing but everything Navy, and now this!” I describe.

And Donnelly just nods to that summary.

“So, what you going to do when you head out there?” Asks Donnelly.

And I don’t know, yet. Although... in the back of my mind, I sorta do. And hoping it won't come to that.

“I know a bunch of guys that plan to head into the Wan Chi district.” Mentions Donnelly.

And I know he's now being rhetorical with me.

“Fine, let 'em! If it's legal, here, like it is in Japan, there shouldn't be any problems, unless they come down with something.” I opt.

“You plan on heading there?”

And now Donnelly asks the question of the day, directly, while glancing at me once over, for a second. And since I've gotten to know and like him, something I thought of as impossible to have accomplish here, considering what I've had to work with

up until meeting him. I ain't so much bothered by him asking, and ain't minding answering back. And being honest, too.
“I don't want to.” I let out.
“What, you wouldn't want to get laid after the month we've—”
“No, no! I don't mean I wouldn't want to. Just, not in that fashion.”
“Why not?” Asks Donnelly.
And seeing the look Donnelly gives when asking, I can tell it's a question of moral integrity, and testing it with his own, with the one I'm possessed with.
“Fuck that shit! Being a john? Some schmuck that's too afraid to go out and find a real woman... resorting to buying the services, fuck that shit!”
“So, you think it's wrong?” He asks.
“No! It's not about that. But, then again—yeah! It sorta is! But, besides that, it's about the difference of what it takes to be a real man, and what it takes to be a loser!” I explain.
And now I have Donnelly intrigued, as his eyes almost pop out of their sockets when I lay it out like that.
“A loser?”
“Yeah... loser!”
“So, you're saying all the Squids that'll be getting off to go get their rocks off in the Wan Chi district, are losers?” Tricks Donnelly.
Being very tricky with his words. And then I just decide to divulge some more:
“Yes! That's exactly what I'm getting at. If you wanna get laid, you should go out and earn some girl's interest. Not try to buy it from here, like it's some fuckin' commodity!” I go, and I full heartily believe in that, too.
“Really?”
“Yes, really! I fuckin' HATE the idea of prostitution.”
“Fuckin' hate?” Goes Donnelly, once again intrigued.
“Yes. Fuckin' hate...!”
“What about the guys that say all relationships with women, in one form or another, are prostitution? If it isn't cold cash transacted in some cheap motel, then you're probably buying the bitch out with a big fat diamond ring, followed by a big fat

wedding, that's all gonna sum up to a big fat bill for all those expenses? And, for what? A girl you married that used to be thin and now just your big fat wife? One way, or another, it's all the same."

And Donnelly is being tricky, again, with me. Just promoting an idea of someone else's, that isn't his own. Playing devil's advocate. Just for argument sake. I think? I don't think he really feels that way about it.

"You serious?" I ask.

And Donnelly now lets out with his eyes with a "nay."

"Of course not, but you know...."

"Yeah, I know... fuck them! Those guys that think that way are dickless schmucks, that just make up reasons why no girl will fuck 'em, and they're forced to pay for it. Going so far as to call all women money grubbin' whores, that have no other desire in life, not even that one thing that involves the L word, when money is concerned. That they're all greedy bitches, incapable of love."

"Why you bringing up love? What does a one nighter have anything to do with that?" Jokes Donnelly, and the fucker has me there.

"Also... dickless schmuck? Isn't a schmuck a Yiddish word for someone with a little dick?" Donnelly asks.

And WTF?

"Yeah... where you going with this?"

"Where I'm going with this, is: how can someone have a little dick, if he's also dickless?" He asks.

And... motherfuc—...

"Oh, shut the fuck up, you fuckin' jackass!" I go.

As Donnelly's wisecracks gets me cussin', while getting him rollin', and now I'm rollin', too!

"Fuckin' smartass!" I go, and I'm grinning as much as he is.

A short pause follows.

"So, whatcha gonna do?" Donnelly then asks, again.

After that short pause. Of us two just lookin' out again towards this massive city. And Hong Kong truly is massive! Nothing but skyscrapers, what look to be on top of more skyscrapers, and they're taking up all that's there to see of the city. No inch of it is spared from their graces, all soaring up and out from the ground, and disappearing somewhere up into some giant clouds, that are settled just above. As these skyscrapers, one can see, are literally now scraping all there is of the sky.
“I'm twenty-one! What do you think?” I establish.
“Yeah....”
“I'm twenty-one! And this cruise has made me think about more shit than I ever have in my entire life. I mean... I'll admit, I've always been a little too deep into my own thoughts.”
“Ha!” Goes Donnelly, as if he has something sarcastic to add, but won't be letting out on it.
“I mean, in High School, all I did was frown and think, and frown and think, too much... and frown! Enough of the Kurt Cobain mopey ass example. Now, enough is enough! I need to start enjoying my age, before I'm an old fart, like these Joe Lifers, here! Fuckin' Khakis. All farting dust! And then yellin' and hollerin' at us all the time, and trying to turn us into one of them, before we've managed to have anything fun in our lives to remember by.” I add.
And Donnelly is really just nodding to everything I'm saying. I have him at that.
“I'm gonna have some fun. Everything we've been through since boarding this Ship, fuckin' didn't happen! This is what's gonna happen, this is what's gonna matter.” I highlight.
And then realize I can only speak for myself, again, coming to terms with this. And it's probably better I don’t speak anything further on the matter.
“And Donnelly, Thailand's next, and you won't be having Liberty Risk then... right?” I ask.
“Fuck, no! I'm gonna be about everything you just said, too. Having some kicks! Fuck this Navy shit. I need it, too!”

A pause comes, as the winds change, as so does our trains of thought. I now speak of something else:
"So, who do you think would be the perfect woman?" I ask now, arbitrarily.
But also, somewhat not.
"What?"
"The perfect girl to meet."
"You asking characteristically or based on today's female celebs?"
That I hadn't thought of. I wanted to go with based on looks and personality and other stuff. But, I figured that might take time explaining. Basing the question on celebs would be easier. Everyone has seen them, everyone has at least an idea of what type of person they are, inside and out.
I guess celebs." I says.
"Hmm… not sure."

A moment passes. And then, I and Donnelly get the sense from the question and begin to form that list in our heads which boys in our age group tend to form.
"Hmm… I guess, in today's world, in the 2000s, I guess the list comes down to celebrities like: Jessica Simpson, Jessica Alba. I can't think of any more Jessicas."
As I am also not able to do, also.
"As for black women, I know everyone is going to say Beyoncé. But, perfect woman?"
And it's then that I and Donnelly think of the only woman not included. And, I see this, as I see his face frown, as I can imagine mine also does. And then, we both say it in unison:
"Angelina Jolie."
And, with that, both our faces frown harder.
"No. no. Hell no! It can't be… there has to be…?"
And then both our faces bloom as we both realized… we already had brought her name up before:
"Jennifer Connelly." Say we both.
"You think so…?"

“Yeah, I really do! I really, really do! I mean, she’s technically an Irish girl with a very beautiful personality. So, there’s that stereotype-breaking magic. And, I mean, let’s look at all the runners up: Jessica Simpson: forgive me for saying, but too silly. Jessica Alba: again, sorry, but way too bland. As for Angelina Jolie, she’s the type of woman, if she was a prostitute, anyone might drop a mill just to get her in the sack. She would be the ultimate one-night stand. But, not exactly the type of person you want to have a real relationship with. And bring home to mom. And, eventually, when she gets to her nagging phase, which all women unfortunately do, you’re absolutely not going to want to put up with her, seeing how she is in almost all her movies. Such a badass! But, such a fucking dick, also, if she was really a dude.” Explains Donnelly.

And, I can’t find myself to refute that. Even though a bit sexist. Truth is still truth.

“What about Beyoncé?” I ask.

“Well, here’s the problem with Beyoncé. Even though she’s ranked as the most beautiful black woman, so much, that you can even say the most beautiful woman, ever! I can tell… I can just tell… since I’ve also dated black chicks, she’s got that extremely annoying thing a lot of them have when they start to get frisky where she’ll start going: ‘oh, you ain’t good enough for this! You ain’t good enough! I mean, look at all this jelly and juice….’”

I then start to snicker a bit to that. Since I know exactly what Donnelly is speaking of.

“And even though the girl has got all the jelly and juice to back it up. Eventually, when you finally man up, and say to her face: ‘fine, I guess I don’t. I’ll just go find someone more suited for me, then.’ It’s that very moment, she’ll drop that whole act on a dime, drop to her knees and start begging you not to leave her. Once you showed a level of humility she absolutely don’t have. I mean, a lot of black girls are like that. But I’ve also seen it in whites and Hispanic and every other group. So, go figure. But, with black girls, especially. Plus, it has a lot of the time been the reason you’ll see black dudes wanting to get with nonblack women. Plus, once again with Beyoncé, but, I’m sorry. I mean, I don’t hate her. I don’t dislike her. But I don’t exactly like her either. Maybe a little. But, just that much. Beautiful on the outside, yes!

Inside, I'm not so sure of. Sometimes she seems to be perfect, but too perfect, and that usually means they hiding something. I remember when she first came out in the late 90s with Destiny's Child singing songs like 'oh, pay my bills, automobile bills, telephone bills, then maybe we can chill.' And then started singing songs sayin' about being a proud independent woman. Sorry, but you can't have your cake and eat it! All I'm saying."
And, 'aye,' I think, that pretty much sums it up.

"Wow… so, Jennifer Connelly, huh?"
"Oh, yeah! You can merge all those other women mentioned together, and, Jennifer Connelly would still wipe the floor with them."

So, why you bring that up?" Donnelly asks.
"Not sure." I say.
Since I don't. But then I feel as if Donnelly is once again hijacking my thoughts and feels and ahead of me.
"Navastian, just remember this… you're probably not going to find the perfect woman out there in Hong Kong. So, don't get your hopes up for that. Even if you earn a girl's consent. A one-night thing is a very lonely thing to have had the following night."
"What do you mean?" I ask.
But Donnelly just eyes me as if the wiser. And, wanting me to learn what that means for itself. But, fact is, I already do. That "lonely" thing, I already understand perfectly.

And then, as Donnelly seems to want to leave, it hits me.
"You know, I just thought of a runner up, even equal to Jennifer Connelly. Maybe even more. Truly someone perfect." I say.
"Who?" Asks Donnelly.
"Although, she's not around anymore."
A somber moment splashes.
"Who…?"

And I say it:
“Aaliyah….” I say.
And, that causes a moment, as it phases the both of us.
“I mean, I don’t know how to say it, but she had a certain magic in her, none of the girls we mentioned have even an iota of. That, and she was very humble, too.”
And at that moment I can see Donnelly 110% agrees with me.
“Wow… you’re right… more than a woman.”
And then both of us get sad. Really sad. Seeing how that worked out. Sometimes, I figure now, people can be too good for this world. And that’s when God decides to take them out and away from all this. This one definitely being more than a woman. More than anything for the rest of us. Especially and most definitely with douchebag dudes like I and all Squid dicks here on The Ship. And now, Donnelly splits, and splits towards his own Jet, that's on the other end of the Flightdeck. To possibly start his Daily, which is what I should be doing now as well. And, so, I does. Since I'm still on this freakin' vessel, even when Hong Kong is RIGHT THERE! And I have to Daily a Jet that hasn't even taken off, and won't until we leave the shores of Hong Kong, and set drift for our next adventure. And we're lucky, for we ain't due in the Gulf, until a month from now, when we'll be relieving one of the carriers that's out there now. War hasn't begun, yet, but we all know we're headed there for those reasons. For Iraq. Fuck that shit, Navastian! I think. And. I don't know what else to add. One thing about the Navy, is, it all really does feel like we're in our own separate world, existing outside the real one, that's over there in the Gulf, or, over these waters leading towards Hong Kong Bay. We're living in a world set separate. And none of that stuff feels like it matters to us right now. Even though it definitely does, and definitely will. Maybe I'll feel different when I'm there, but as for the mean time... it's all about this place, Hong Kong! This is all that matters! And from what I see now, there's some peculiar properties at work here, too. Sprites dancing about those buildings, dancing about those lights. Something really magical in nature, unlike the magic I've already seen. And something dreamy about it. Like those dreams I've been having in the last some aught days. But here there's some true meaning, of

what they might be about. That's what I'm getting from all this. From Hong Kong. Strange!

“Look at that view, isn't that gorgeous?” Goes AT3 Hogarth to AT3 Oilerking.
And the two ATs are standing right next, marveling at what I was just marveling at.
“Oh, wow! Now that really is something... can you just wait?” Goes AT3 Oilerking.
Smiling the first time I've seen her do so. And something sparks in me seeing her so. Noticing just how pretty she is, when she can open up, and smile, for once. Fuck that two-ten-two thing! She's pretty. Very, very pretty! And I feel like an ass forever applying that logic on her. The two are now just standing next, marveling, and I start feeling like mixing in with the two a line or two, to get their attention.

So... one AT3 Hogarth, and one AT3 Oilerking. Both Tweakers. Both very interesting girls to be around. And, aye! Girls. For AT3 Hogarth is also that. Not anywhere as attractive as AT3 Oilerking, but I won't be applying the two-ten-two logic with her, either. Interesting story about them is, they're unofficial roommates back at the Atsugi barracks, but officially they're not. Here's the deal: AT3 Hogarth will spend every night in AT3 Oilerking's room (which she is alone in), because, she's afraid to sleep in her own barracks' room. Why is she afraid? Because she claims a couple of times, in the dead of night, when she's gone into her room, she'd open the door, see how dark it is inside, see her actual roommate (some anti-social PN3 Morty, whom she doesn't get along with, at all. Also says is a bit of a morbid weirdo), and at that moment of silently waiting, she will see her other roommate in there, also. Now, the barracks' rooms are only meant for two people. But in the dead of night, Hogarth will come into her room and see him, see the Marine in her closet mirror, staring right back at her, as she is him, and the thing about this Marine in parade dress, is, even though his reflection is there, the Marine himself… isn't! Whatever the mirror is reflecting, isn't reflecting anything present in real person, in real life. AYE! ROGER THAT! He's a supposed spirit. A ghost! Supposedly. And AT3 Hogarth has claimed this. And the Marine will then do is just stare at her, supposedly, all very desirably, which is what's scared her into not wanting to spend a single night

in her room since. And she will then step the fuck out, shut her door, and walk across the hall, to the barracks' room that belongs to AT3 Oilerking, and stay with her, instead. Now, this has stirred up a lot of commotion in our Squadron, because, AT3 Hogarth is talking about motherflippin' APPARITIONS of a different dimension, of souls that have passed on to that great nether next!

(Gotta note this: guess who used to be station at Atsugi, as a Marine, back in the 50s, in the exact same barracks as AT3 Hogard used to be, and, in that exact same room—NO SHIT! Lee Harvey Oswald! The man that assassinated President Kennedy. And, aye! I'm leading to EXACTLY AS THAT SOUNDS)!

So, yeah! That's what she was motherflippin' bringing up, and to our CMC, for being her excuse for being caught a couple nights, by rovers, on her Duty Day, not in her room. Where she is supposed to be, so the Squadron keeps track. And it gets more complicated from here on out. Why? Because, like this: you've heard of Bill Clinton's “don't ask, don't tell” policy, right? Well, it's still in effect. And, there you go...! Really, what the suspicions are is that that's not what's really going on. Nothing to do with ghosts, her staying with AT3 Oilerking, because, she's terrified of her own room, for the ghost (of Lee Harvey Oswald, possibly), that supposedly haunts it. The suspicions have to do with something completely different in nature. And it's something the Squadron can't just ask AT3 Hogarth nor AT3 Oilerking about, and they're not expected to tell us about it, either. To spell it out even more clearly (as if I haven't already done so): there's a lot of us that think AT3 Hogarth is lying about that whole Marine apparition thing, just to have an excuse to be sleeping over at AT3 Oilerking's room, for so many nights, and why? Because the two are lesbian lovers, really fucking each other, and the two don't want anyone to know about it. AT3 Oilerking doesn't even have a roommate, we are one female short in our Squadron to have all the rooms filled out for two per each. And the CMC won't sign the request chit that was placed by AT3 Hogarth, for her to simply just move in with Oilerking, and for obvious reasons! No one truly believes the apparition story, and guys in our Squadron will be guys, and the two AT3s are pretty good looking girls (Oilerking I've

gone over. The other, a bit chubby, with a bit of a fupa, but still very pretty in the face, all the same). And so, some of us more nymphomaniacal-ly inclined types, would absolutely love to have sexual relations with. Absolutely love! So, these boys will, now and then, walk past the two girl's door, and place their ears up against it, and wait to hear something. Nymphs singing. And they sometimes will claim they have! Hearing faint moaning noises coming from inside. And if they're the bold, and stupidly happy-go-lucky types, they will sometimes knock, and try to nudge their way in. “Frank, what do you want?” Oilerking will ask, all impatiently. “Well, I've been doing some research, and there was a Marine back in the 60s, that reportedly committed suicide in Hogarth's room, and... so, I believe you two. Although, not so sure about that Lee Harvey Oswald wild rumor. Ha ha!” AE2 Frankowsky will explain, looking very favorably, as if trying to win her favor. “Okay, so, what do you want, Frank?” Oilerking will ask, again, knowing how he is, and knowing exactly what his real intents are. “Is AT3 Hogarth here? I'd like to check out the room. I'm just very fascinated over ghost stories and the possibilities. And wondering if she'll allow me?” And, you see, I was there, when this happened. My barracks' room is right next to Oilerking's (and, no, I personally have never heard any moaning coming from their room, of them two fucking each other, so I'm one that believes in the possible haunting story). So, I was up close to my door, peeking out at this, and my guess was... what AE2 Frankowsky was interested in, had nothing to do with the fascination in the possibilities of poltergeists. Something told me it wasn't. Something in my gut. And, maybe... just maybe... it had everything to do with him plotting out a foursome, between him, Hogarth, Oilerking, and that weirdo PN3 Morty girl (she ain't that bad looking, either, but definitely the least prettiest of the three). And, it wasn't hard to suspect this being his hidden agenda, since, the man then stood there smiling at Oilerking, while she continued frowning, and the harder he smiled, the harder she frowned. And Oilerking then slowly shut the door on him, without even saying a word. Same big gap-toothed smile I see him make every time he's told those “no shitters” of his and his sexual escapades of the Asian variety. Fucking Mr. Moose Antlers, there!

“Wow, imagine that... civilization!” I joke.
Since, I was just joking about it with AN Donnelly. And doing it now, so, the two ATs will notice me. They're still looking out towards the city, and I say it without turning my head to look at them, and without making it seem in any way that I'm hitting on them. Just saying, since, it's something that was on my mind.
“Fuckin' civilization.” I go, again.
The two then look at me, frown, and go back to talking about what they were talking about.
“So, what you plan on doing on your trip out?” Asks Oilerking to Hogarth.
“I don't know, I guess I'll find out, when I find out.”
And the two giggles.
“What language do they speak here?” Asks one to the other.
“I don't know. Isn't it Chinese?” Responds the other to the one.
“No, there's like two different languages, or dialects, with Chinese.” Tells one to the other.
“Like what?” Asks the other to the one.
“I think it's Cantonese, and Mongolian... no wait! Silly me, that's a separate country... Mandarin, I think it is?”
“Um... that's kinda...? Do they speak English, much, maybe?”
“Hong Kong used to be an English colony, finding English spoken in this city shouldn't be a problem.” I inform.
Not looking at them, not making it sound too intrusive... THEY'RE STANDING RIGHT NEXT TO ME, I mean! If they didn't want me to hear anything they'd have to say, they could just move further down the Ratways, to the other end, where there's no one around. I'm completely walking on eggshells, to not sound too intrusive or offensive or... I don't know what!
“....” Goes both at me.
Like they're avoiding me, like I'm some creepshow stalker, frowning the second I had opened my mouth, and it's starting to PISS ME OFF!
“I wonder how Chinese food from China really tastes, it never tastes the same in their actual country.”

“Really?”
“No, ever had real Mexican food before? From Mexico?”
“No, I wouldn't know.” Responds Oilerking.
And since I can imagine how few Mexicans she sees in Kentucky. I can understand.
“Well, it tastes nothing like Mexican fast food does, I'll tell you that. I was in Cancun a year before I joined the Navy, and the food is so much different when it's authentic.”
“You two... know what time liberty call should be in the morning?” I ask.
Even though I know the answer. And I'm not doing it to be chatty anymore, just to test a theory.
“....” They don’t respond.
“You know what I want to try? Peking duck.”
“HEY, what time is liberty tomorrow morning?” I ask, a little louder.
For maybe they didn't hear me, even though they're standing RIGHT NEXT!
“....” NOTHING!
WTF! And this is starting to remind me of that one night with the Kat and Hat brothers, those two ignoring me, like they were THAT MUCH better than me, to say something.
“Oh my—”
“HEY, I asked you two a question, what time is liberty tomorrow MORNING?”
I nearly have myself yelling out, for these two are now just being RUDE! The two now stare at me, again, shake their heads, and move to that other corner of the Ratways, I was talking about. Leaving me with my thoughts, and my RAGE. Why, HELLO there, Kats and Hats' female versions! Nice to meet you two, and your arrogantly aloof selves. Nice to meet you two, letting me know more how truly ALONE I am in this Navy. Since everyone here are a bunch of pompous ASSHOLES, too busy to be human around each other, since, they're too busy being inhuman jerks. INHUMANLY SO! Thank you for proving my theory. That you can't even expect women to even have a little heart, or simple courtesy. And, really! Coming off as being even worse in their own ways. I guess the sexes are truly equal. Equally being SHIT! Why won't she talk to me? I baffle. It's as if she can't stand the sight of me, because, she thinks she's that much better. She thinks I'm nothing. A total nobody.

A complete waste of her time. A wimp. A weakling. A petty Airmen, just too petty to even make Petty Officer. I mean... look at how pissed she got just to sense me being around her and her dyke, girlfriend lover. Was I really that bad? WTF? Can she really be that arrogant and mean? Whiskey Tango Foxtrot! Maybe I've been seeing this all wrong. Maybe they really are that picky, judgmental, and downright mean. ALL WOMEN! I don't think there's any experience more disheartening than the experience of having a someone you like, especially of the opposite sex, taking you for as being NOTHING! There is no feeling WORSE!

FUCKIN' BITCHES! FUCKIN'...! Fine, if it's like that, then I won't place my presence around you two anymore. Since I'm that fuckin' hideous of a sight to be around. That much of a schmuck to you.

Am I the ONLY human being on this SHIP? AM I? THAT'S what it FEELS like to me! Like I'm the ONLY ONE! EVERYONE ELSE here, is something ELSE! Something INHUMAN! Something indecent, AND WRONG! And, WTF? What are they? What the FUCK are they? For they're obviously have no HEART to be HUMAN! If they're something EVIL, is there SOMETHING I can do about it to save myself from all this? GOD? Is THIS what IT'S come down to? Why am I ALONE, as the only FREAKIN' HUMAN BEING in this ENTIRE NAVY? WHY?

SPLASH!

FUCK! I can't do it! I don't have the brass balls to do it! I'm too CHICKEN SHIT! Too much of a FUCKIN' SCHMUCK! Just a NOBODY! A LOSER! FUCK THIS! I don't want this ANYMORE! I DON'T! I DON'T! I...!

“Hey, hey, HEY! You all right, there?” Asks Donnelly.
“Huh? What? Huh?” I go.
“Shit, you sorta looked like you might freak out and jump there for a second.” Responds Donnelly.

Fully perturbed by something or another. Something he's seeing in me.
“What? What are you talking about?” I go.
“Dude, you had the look on your face, like were boiling up with something. Scary fuckin' face... you okay?”
And now I notice, I am sorta shivering now. All over. My face is a cold sweat. And I don't know what's going on!
“You all right?” He asks, again.
“Yeah, yeah! Why?” I lie.
Because, now, realizing where my mind was headed, and I want the lie to be true.
“Good!” Expresses he.
And watches me for a bit longer. Then walks back down to The Shop, to get a Tool Pouch, or something, I think?

What the fuck just happened? I think. As I look at the ocean surface and begin to faintly feel the presence of a giant eye, just below the surface, looking up and out... at me. WTF? Not in my dreams, truly incarnate, there, in the real world, in our presence. What the fuck just happened? I think, again. Then look at the two girls smiling and giggling amongst each other. And as hard as I try to hold it back, I doesn't, and lets myself entertain more of those thoughts, to at least get them out of my system: fuckin' man hatin' BITCHES! I should just walk up to them, and spit in their faces. FUCK THEM! They're inhuman! If I would have jumped, they would have probably just cheered me on, maybe even? Giggling as they are. While watching the sharks get to me. “Bite his dick off!” One would then call out to the sharks, then would smile with glee. They're inhuman. They're just...!

All right, ENOUGH! I don't want any more of it!

So, let them be what they are! There's another pair of Petty Officer Jane Navy DICKS in this fleet, I will never manage to relate with. So, what else is freakin' new?

And... Navastian! You can forget the possibilities of finding companion—…!

Sigh.

WANKSTER'S PARADISE

It's as if though women are the ones really sending me off the most. Why is that? Before this, it was that thing with Rosario, and me ending up punching out an electrical box. And now this! I mean, that thing that just boiled over between me and those two ATs, really scorched the SHIT out of me. And I don't think I've felt that MAD and SAD, in a long while. Almost feels like ever. Damn, did those two have me fiercely pierced! Damn, did they get me ragin'. I don't know. I don't know what to make of it. For, it's all making me feel depressed, and on an AOAN Zeedorf level. AND FUCK THAT SHIT! I felt like I was really going to jump off, again, considering how mad those two made me. And... what's worse! What really pissed me off the most, is... the fact I was being too chicken shit and didn't! I really don't know what to make of it. Fuck this crap, Navastian, think of something else! Something like... I don't know... like...?

"Hey, check out my new pair of Tims, ain't they tight?"

"Aye, they look tight!"

Oh, so... I'm in our berthing, now, work shift is over with. And I just finished having my shower up in our head, and now... and now this:

"Hey, check out my Ed Hardy t-shirt, ain't it the shizznit?" Goes ADAN Quimby.

"I guess so...?" Goes AD3 Rudebaker, going "hmm" to one side, with his critical eye.

"Boy! What you mean—guess so? The shit's tight! Ain't it?" Stresses Quimby.

"Well... I...?"

And it seems like the AD3 wants to say what he just said, but knows Quimby isn't gonna wanna hear that line, again.

"You motherfuckin' say: 'I guess so,' again, and I'll...!"

"All right! All right! I was just messin' with you... the shit's tight! It's tight! Calm down." Patronizes the AD3.

And does it in a way to make it plainly obvious, shaking his head at him, and all, so Quimby could not miss.

“Man! Don't you be bullshittin' me! Say what you MEAN!” Goes Quimby, knowing better.
“Quimby, I don't know what you want me to say, then!” Goes Rudy.
“I want you to say: 'the shit's TIGHT.' And MEAN IT!”
“Well, if that's what you want... then, I'm sorry. I can't! For I am not at your disposal to do so.”
“Motherfucker... you better get yourself in check, to be at my disposal.” Goes Quimby, motherfuckin' and all!
“What you want me to do, I'm lost here?” Goes with his arms out, the AD3, does.
“What to do... how about you reeducate yourself over this matter. For it seems like whoever schooled you, schooled yo' ass wrong!” Goes Quimby.
Pretty much calling out Rudy's taste. And seeing Rudy, the man is now steaming from the nostrils, for them he is to take as insults to his character, and his integrity. For if there's anything Rudy has in this world to pride himself more, it's that keen sense of taste for the young urban hip-hop culture, and its fashion sense.
“Reeducate myself... I should... you... you think?” Stutters together Rudebaker.
And he is at stirred, now.
“Yes!”
“And who pray tell, would you say, should be this most enlightened figure, that he could possibly come by, and school me, on something such as this? Something I've spent, ALL MY LIFE, making sure to be on top of!”
Damn! Is Rudy steamin' now. Damn. Just DAMN! And with that, Quimby extends the most condescending smirk, I've seen him ever extending across, having Rudy the widest eye, wide mouth, flabbergasted.
“Boy, it don't WORK that way!” Highlights Rudy.
“No?”
“NO!”
“Then how does it motherfuckin' work?” Goes Quimby.
And I seriously can't tell anymore if the two are taking this seriously, fuckin' around with each other, or not.

“When it comes to style, you ain't the one that would be schooling me about what looks good or not. No, no, no... I'm the one, that would be schooling—YOU!”
“You'd think that—huh?”
“I don't think that, I KNOW that! For it's my prerogative to know. I'm so keen on the matter, that it's almost supernatural, in a sense. Like a sixth sense, where I can see, in a world that's gone BLIND, and needs me to lead the way. For I am Shepard!” Illustrates Rudy.
“You are Shepard?” Goes Quimby, at the blasphemy he is now hearing.
“Aye! Shepard, leading my flock... through the valley of the shadow of death... so fear no evil, my brother, for I am here!”
“Boy... you are ARROGANT!”
“Aye! That too!” Admits Rudy.
Something we're all aware of.
“Rudy, let me ask you this...!”
“What?”
“How can you see ANYTHING, with yo' head so far stuck up yo' own ass, like it is, besides—SHIT?”
“WHAT? I got my head stuck up my... ME? You dare!”
“Yes, you do! Yes, YOU! And I do dare!” Goes Quimby.
As Rudy's bottom lip begins to quake. Rudy then pauses to himself, and now let’s Quimby have it:
“That's IT! Yo' Ed Hardy t-shirt looks like GARBAGE, and, I take it back, yo' Tims look WEAK!”
“WEAK...? Motherfucker!” Motherfucks Quimby, all at outraged.
“Yes, weak... as in LAST WEEK!”
As you can see, them two are having one of those arguments, where there isn't going to be any end in sight. And because of that, I decides to leave the scene, before, I get dragged into it... somehow? Not going to be any end in sight. Nope! Ah-ah! That, there won't! Still, it was always a pleasure to listen to the minglings of Line Rats, when I'm not in the way. Listen to Quimby and AD3 Rudebaker go at it, at center stage, and nowhere is the spotlight anywhere near me, in the audience.

Gives me the sense that, maybe, if I could just be a nobody ghost in the Line, it would suit me best. Not to be important. Not to be Shit Hot and stand out. Nor a Shitbag and do the same. Nor even visible to the naked eye. ‘Cause, fuck that shit! For this way, I can actually like the two, seeing how my whims aren't going to get involved with their whims, leading to all that I've been going through, day in day out. Just stand back as audience, and watch these two colorful characters, and listen into their colorful acts, at work, put into play.

“Yeah, bro, I wanna get a tat like that done on my calf.”
“Yeah, but this is a tribal tat, you can't get them done in China.”
“Why not?”
“Because, tribal tats are from the US. Here, you'll only going to get Chinese symbols, that, or maybe something with a dragon on it.”
“Okay, I think maybe a Chinese symbol might be cool.”
“Yeah, bro, it can be, check this one out on my back shoulder.”
“Damn, cool, bro.”
“Thanks, bro.”
“So, what does it mean?”
“What do you mean, what does it mean?”
“I mean, Chinese symbols are like their alphabet.”
“Really? I thought they were just cool lookin' designs, you'd see on Chinese buildings.”
“No, man, it's their A, B, Cs.”
“No shit?”
“No shit.”
“Oh, okay, well then... I guess I don't know what I got written on my back shoulder... ha, ha!”
Let's just pretend we didn't hear that one conversation, we just passed. Let's just pretend, since, I absolutely refuse to believe a couple of Third Classes, like these two nameless ones, can be just that dumb. Yet, still, at least I'm no more hearin' any more talk of Dailies, and wash jobs, and anything to do with Tomcat maintenance.

My shift is over now. I survived the twelve hours, collecting more Barnacles on my backside after spending eight of those sleeping inside my 107's afterburners, in the exhaust. AYE! I slept in the afterburners, finally! Hurray! Oh! What of it...? There's a spot I hadn't slept in before, and, I was just feeling it. I've already slept in my 107's cockpit (both Pilot and Co-pilot seats) dozens of times. I've slept in the intake, laid out on a towbar, laid out on top of the Jet lookin' up at the Milky Ways. On its wings, on its turtleback. Over its this, under its that. Crunched up between sittin' on a tire while lurched over a drop tank. Every spot, every angle! I've already pretty much spent and tried to stretch myself out and clock out. And until last night, every spot on or in that Jet, except, the afterburners. And last night, I finally did, and that was a lot of fun, even with my jersey and cammie pants completely covered in the soot those spaces are covered with, and a disgusting mess of it, too. Making me shower twice as long to get that shit off, earlier, in the head shower, before turning into our Dirty Higgie. Although, afterburners are probably the dumbest places to sleep in, and yet, the most daring! Since, if the Yellow Shirts decide to move the Jet, and move the Jet tail over water, well... can you imagine what a harrowing of a predicament that would be? Waking up, lookin' out, and seeing nothing but seas below me, where I'd like to step to step out. But, there's no solid deck underneath. Nothing for proper footing. And they'd move my Jet even without me brakeriding it. They'd just get another PC to do it, and then our Bloody Shamrock Chiefs would all go foamy at the mouth, lookin' for me, for having abandon my station, and my duties. Searching for me all over The Ship, and not searching for me in the one spot, I to be. Hopefully, they wouldn't then try to turn the Jet while I'm back there. Not figurin' where else they hadn't checked. Ha!
Anyways, I needed the sleep. So, this morning, I wouldn't be too tired to have some liberty in Hong Kong.

All right! Fuck thinkin' about Navy shit. Now it's time for some civilian enjoyments. Us all, all us Squids, getting dressed for liberty call, to get us some liberty action. Hong Kong, baby! Hong Kong! No more of that shit I've been goin' through. None of it matters anymore. This is what matters, now, us taking off our Navy issued crap,

and putting on something much more refreshing. So, here we go! Think I, while opening up my coffin locker, and begin changing into my civis. That have a certain smell clothes that haven't been worn in a while tend to have. A bit of a mildew-y smell, I worry, since, I can't exactly tell, and tell if the smell is good or bad. I have a weak sense of smell, and, I had washed them back at Atsugi. But, they've been in here since that month that's passed, just sitting here, waiting for this special occasion. Special, now that I have the chance to be a non-Squid, not to dress like one, and be my own person. Be my own self. My own special unique self. And not just another bar code, that's printed on my Military ID, on the back, just where you'll see it printed: US property. Which refers to me. But anyways, there's no more of that, and now here I am, in my own Phat Farm t-shirt, and 38' size jeans, even though my waist size is really 32'. Here I am, in front of the mirror, also with a beige pair of Timberlands, and a LA Dodgers New Era cap, turned to one side. Here I am, in my civi Uniform, and as I take a good look at myself up and down... something occurs to me.

Oh.... no! And now it occurs to me. Now, I remember... why.... or how, I really hated being a civilian, back before I joined. Remembering my reasons why, back in LA, I got fed up of looking and dressing like some urban clown, with these stupidly oversized crap, that be trendy now in '03, and decided to go for something much more nationally symbolic. Being dressed, handsomely, in some US' pride and joys. Uniforms of the US Navy. Bein' that nationally iconic Crackerjacks wearin' Sailor, which I had so idolized back in my civi days. But have been slackin' in doing so, since.

Huh... wow. Interesting how much my point of view of things can all of a sudden change... just like that. Huh!

Oh, wow! I look... ridiculous. So stupidly wankster-licous, like I raided Fred Durst's wardrobe, coming up with all these retail oversized abominations. Rollin', rollin', rollin'... UGH! I self-ridicule.

So... it's '03!

And looking at the difference us being dressed for our era has made. And now, in the berthing, something stirs in me, as I have a change of heart. We're lookin' like individuals now. INDIVIDUALS! No more in Uniforms, but in a bunch of oversized crap, we call today's fashion sense. Hip hop influenced fashions. So, take off them tarnished and Flightdeck stained cammies, and put on some oversized shit, that been starched and ironed to the point you can stands them up in a corner, all by themselves. And once you're done swimming your legs through those pairs, cap your feet with some Tims, untied, fitted all loose. And then brush off the dirt from their vamps, even though there ain't no dirt there to be doing so.

And then all of a sudden, I realize...!
Man, how much I HATE... my generation!
As I stare at all the Squids around me, dressed just as badly as I am. But we do so, since, these be the Uniforms of our shitty generation. Our hip-hop influenced shitty generation. Everyone lost head to toe in an endless number of oversized garments. OVERSIZED: being the word! What the fuck is it with all this oversized shit, today, anyways? Dressing like a bunch of bratty children, with foul mouths, that look like they've stumbled into their daddies' closets, and decided to try on grown up clothing. If anything, showing the symbolism, of how we really are a generation that never grew up. And now that we're all dressed, and ready, and looking like we need another one of us to hop in to fill out our daddy's trousers, since, half of the leg room is being worn by the deck, now, let's all head over to them clubs, and be mackin' on some BITCHES—I mean: BI—AH—CHES! And, hopefully, get our fuck on, too, before curfew. Before having our Huxtable, senior, Navy parents, step up, and drag us back to our Ship, by our ears. Man, do I hate my generation. I remind myself, again. Reminding myself why I joined the Navy in the first place. Again! And how its Uniforms seemed so much more appealing, then, compared to this wanksterfest crap of today. Aye! It took a matter of twenty minutes to go from FTN to FTCS: Fuck The

Civilian Sector! After looking at this crap. Well... I'm still FTN (even though I don't want to be)! But for special reasons, I'd still choose to be a civilian, again, but NOT DRESSED LIKE THIS! And we thought the 70s and 80s had some horrible fashion senses.
“Hey, is that Linkin Park you're blasting?”
“Yeah!”
“Well, turn that shit... UP!” Goes the One PO3 Tribal Tats, to another PO3 Tats Tribal. And as he does, the two start bumpin', to the rhyme of me shakin', my head, that is. One's carrying around a pair of speakers hooked up to his laptop. And blasting that one: “crawlin' in my skin... these wounds... they will not heal!” A song, you cannot turn a corner without catching being echoed behind a door, down some corridor, or up a flight of stairs. Practically every day I've had to hear that Nu Metal crap, back at Atsugi barracks. That, or Nickleback.

So, aye! It be the year 2003. The year we living in, and we're all tribal tatted. And wearing baggy clothing such as some Fubu or some Phat Farm. And thanks to Eminem a few years back entering the scene, being a wankster is cool now, for white boys, so being G and ghetto fabulous isn't just a travesty for the black culture, and it's now whitey’s job to make it an uncool travesty. God help us all! For we live in an age where pimps are considered as chivalrous as knights of ye Ol’ England. American TV has nothing but reality shows on, so TV has become absolute crap (as if it wasn't before). The invasion of Anime into the western culture is now complete, considering, everyone knows what a Pikachu or a Goku is. Kids today won't shut up about this book series called: Harry Potter, that they're producing films for. Plus, speaking of kids today, I've heard from friends whose little brothers are in in High School, that in High School there's these mopey group of former goths, that are even more mopey and obnoxious, called emos. And, my first response to that was: what the fuck is an emo? Internet's getting faster and becoming more of a worthwhile thing (now that cable has replaced landline), but here, though, on the Boat, it's still absolutely horrendous. Grand Theft Auto 3 on the PS2, and Halo style FPS shooters on the Xbox, are now all the rage. And, finally, Apple has released this device that

can store all of our music onto this thing called an iPod, and, not sure if it'll replace CDs anytime soon, but I doubt it (ha! I still remember cassette tapes, and using a pencil to rewind).

You know, I really do wish I could just adapt, and begin to feel different. Adapt, and not be such a stick in the mud about all this. But, seeing what I'm working with, here, I doubt that that will ever be the case. Therefore, overall, as you can see, there is ZERO of anything being produced right now, by our generation, worth a damn. Our American generation, that's heralding for our 21st century American culture... with this crap! This zero. This zilch. This dong. This big fat goose egg off the tip of my schlong. Leading me to conclude: 2003 = garbage! However, I do like Linkin Park, though. A guilty pleasure, I think they call it. So, fuck it!

“Hey, Echols, why can't we dress in our Dress Blues for this shit, again?” I ask him.

But Echols then just looks at me, and looks down at me, since, it's like that with him and me. And, whatever, again, with someone fuckin' wasting my time today since waking up! Here's another Third Class Fuckface in this fleet, I will never manage to relate with. So what else is freakin' new?

“Hey, AME3 Masterson, why can't we...?”

And the look on his face, I see a fourth.

“Hey, AD2 Zeegenhorn...?”

FIFTH! WTF is everyone's problem against ME?

“Hey, Brock...?”

And, thank you, God. Someone actually looks at me, as a fellow human being. And not as some lowlife, Airman scumbag.

“What's up, Navastian?” Goes Brock.

“Nothing.” I go.

Realizing how pointless the question really is, since, I never started asking it for an actual answer.

“Where you going to be heading out to, Brock?” I ask, now, as the question comes to mind.

“Can't say, something like what we have in Rapoongi in Japan. What... you want to come along?” He asks.

And now I feel like Roach Burger in front of this somebody. Seeing Brock's human qualities, which isn't void in him, which is in every other piece-of-shit, Joe Navy, cocksucker around me.

“Yeah, I was going to head out with Donnelly, but he....”

“Yeah, I know all about Donnelly....” Responds Brock, a little questionably.

“Well, check it out, Navastian, we're planning on... me, Barbarossa, Navarro, and Roach Burger... are planning on heading out, finding a club, and getting laid. Can you handle that?” Brock asks.

And seeing the crew I'm going to be heading out with, intimidates me (except for Roachy, WTF)?

“We already have Roach Burger as the one wacky, lovable loser in our group, that a girl or two might at least find... cute. Might! We already have one the rest of us are going to have to carry as dead weight. We don't need another. Can you be cool?” Questions Brock.

And there's no way I'm going to be able to compete. No way! (Roachy’s level—ugh! Brock and Barbarossa’s level I mean) However, I gotta takes the chance! I gots too!

“Yeah! Fuck yeah! Why you even asking me like—”

“I don't want to sound like an asshole, but, that's how it is. That's just the way things work. Can you be cool?” He asks, again.

And I know he can see that I can't, but, maybe, I can fake it. So... fake it, Navastian! Fake it! I tell myself.

“Yeah! What the fuck you keep askin'? I was born cool!” I say.

And... that didn't sound right. Shit! Wait... I was born cool? I was born ready...? That's how it's really said, fuck me!

“All right, I'll take your word.” Answers Brock.

Seeming worried. Taking my word, since, I can't show him anything else he could take as validations in my clubbin' skills. And, aye! You heard that correctly! Clubbin' skills! There is such a thing, I've really come to understand from my experiences. And here is how it works: all the night life is, is this... in the club, you are no longer

a person. You no longer have a name. And, you no longer have a soul. All your job is, is to prove to everything and everyone else around you, that, you are the finest specimen that your species can offer. For the night life is practically a dog show. You're there to compare your pedigree with everyone else's. Compare your genes. And the one with the best arrangement, gets all the SEX! No! Like I said. There, you have no name. You have no soul. You are not even a FREAKIN' human being. You're more like an animal, debasing yourself in all your animalistic needs. And letting Darwinism make and deal and seal your fate. It's a Godless place where God abandoned all those that decided they rather believe in billion years of evolution and monkey ancestors instead of Adam's and Eve's. And it's a forsaken place where we're nothing more than stupid animals, posing around each other, to show precedence. A bunch of stupid apes, in stupid costumes, trying to outdo one another, to get to all the bananas. In the club, you're there to show superiority. To be all well dressed, well chiseled, and well-rehearsed. And if you have FLAWS! You LOSE! You lose if others notice any discrepancies on your person, that they wouldn't want on themselves. Or really, their children. I mean, let's look at this more in focus. It's a mating ritual. In the belief that millions and millions of years' worth of human evolution, all boiling down to can YOU prove if you GOT what it TAKES? Do you got the right stuff to herald the species onward, or, do you not! And should probably step the fuck aside, and let those that can take charge, DO SO! Lead, follow, or get the FUCK out of the WAY! You're there to find a mate, and if the opposite sex doesn't like how narrow your eyes are, how chubby your thumbs are, or how dorky your laugh is. You lose! You lose! YOU LOSE! Now go drink your tears away in a corner, because, you fail to provide reasons to reproduce in this cesspool of human orgy. And failed to prove why you should even exist, entirely! So, if you decide to drink yourself to death, do so! Make Darwin proud! Actually, I take it back, it isn't a dog show. Dogs actually have characters and personalities. Even souls—I'd say! What it really is, is a bird show. A neon lit aviary a bunch of peacocks go to strut their colorful feathers, and squawk at each other with soulless black eyes. No whites in the eyes, since, they ain't human. Squawk! Squawk! Squawk! And the one that squawks the loudest, and most imposing, gets all the dodo females to line up, so he

can fertilize their eggs. A club is a giant birdcage full of featherbrains. Soulless and heartless idiots, I have to deal with, dealing with featherbrained females, staring at my goods, and not taking much liking of how my own stocks are all ruffled together with. Birdbrains! Fuckin' birdbrain idiots! Only the stupidest and most heartless amongst us would force themselves to such congregations. Which, makes me wonder, why AM I NOW? On the one of two days I'll be off, since, tomorrow I have duty, and will be stuck on Ship, again. Why go clubbin'? When I can have a moment to myself, where I won't have to feel like a complete and utter loser! Which my life on this Ship has already been full of. Why am I going? I fuckin' HATE the clubbing scene! I HATE it! Why am I...? SHIT!

I am again standing in front of some mirror, in the berthing, looking at my gear. And... I look like a fuckin' idiot! Why did I even buy this stupid crap! I HATE hip-hop! And I HATE rap! It's a culture that celebrates arrogance, acting like arrogant, pompous jerks, to one another. And I look like a Tool of theirs now, too. Look at this oversized baggy shit I'm wearing. Phat Farm! What a bunch of stupid load of crap!
“You ready?” Asks Brock.
And, really, Brock isn't dressed any different. Dressing like another clubbin' douchebag, with some Ed Hardy on, and baggy jeans. Even though the guy doesn't listen to any of that garbage, hip-hop music, neither that stupid nu-metal crap, that white boys be into now. And Brock is more into music of the Beatles.

And, really!
I really do miss the music of my parents' generation!

“You ready?”
“Aye!”
“Oh, and, Navastian, don't be saying shit like 'aye' or 'roger that' in the club. If you do, I'll ditch your ass that second.”

YOU CAN FIND ME AT THE CLUB

So here we go, it's me, our AE3 Brockhausen, Barbarossa, Navarro, and Roach Burger... of all people. Roach Burger...! We're on this tiny Hong Kong, harbor Boat. Which we'd refer to as a LBGB: Little Bitty Gook Boat! Aye! We're so acronym crazy, we'll even abbreviate something as pointless and non-essential as that. Especially, non-essentially racist. That, we will! But, anyways, here we are, on it, which picked us up from our carrier, which isn't supposed to be docked into Hong Kong harbor, anywhere, since, it's still part of our sovereign nation of the good ol' US. And armed. And dangerous. But, aye! Roger that! Anyways, Roach Burger is just bouncing all around, with this LBGB bouncing all around, hoppin' off of wave after wave, like AE2 Frankowsky's little bitty Pacifica, would, bouncing off the end of my... aye! I went there! But, back to Roachy, he's being loud and crude and at his most rascal-ist. Just one really obnoxious, chuckleheaded Airman, bouncing from one side to another, bothering us. All excited, like we sincerely are, too, since, we're now off The Ship. But, unlike us, Roach Burger is acting like a complete brat, at the whims of even lesser of his inhibitions. Just a child in its purest form. Makin' us want to either grab him, and put him over one knee, to spank the little fucker. That. Or, give in, going against our better judgment and dignity, and join in in being just as rascally and obnoxious, as he is being.

“Hey, look at me, I'm the king of the WORLD!” He goes.

Leaning on the edge of the Boat. Dangerously so. And with the right bounce that the LBGB would make, would find Roach Burger with a mouth full of cold and salty Hong Kong Harbor Bay. Which doesn't look very clean. A sorta disgusting dark greenish color to it. No blue waters, here. And very cold lookin' slush it is, too. If Roachy was to fall in, the water would just absorb him, and no rescue team would be able to find him, anywhere, for he would become part of the mush. Ugh! Which really is disgusting to look at.

“I'm KING OF THE—”

“SHUT the fuck up, Roach Burger, you're supposed to do that at the bow end of The Ship, not all the way back here at the aft.” Explains Brock, behind him.

And then rolls his eyes at him. Seeming very suspect behind Roachy, as if entertaining the notion of just shoving him in, and all for the yuks. Oh, and thank you, Brock! Thank you, for putting your pet on a leash! Because, I really just can't stand the boy. I can't! When I see him, all I see is all the lack of discipline his character has for anything, and being around him, anyone would want to find some ol' Catholic nun's ruler, and place some of that discipline into the kid.

So, here we all are, on the aft end of his transporter, watching our Ship growing smaller and smaller from the relative distance. The distance we're making away from it, and I feel something transitional happening within me. Our CVN feels like an old horror, the old household, where we're all from. Standing high like the house from the movie Psycho (1960) in the shadows of the clouds above. Born and raised, and disciplined. Berthed and raised and disciplined by an old devil, that seems to be standing on that Ship, somewhere on it (where, we can't tell) staring out back at us, contemplatively, as the sight of us grows the more and more remote. Watching us head out into the world, seeing us, even though we can't see it, and neither do we really want to, really. Because... we'd just rather forget. We're children of an old dysfunctional and abusive household, now venturing out into the world, again, looking to rediscovered how the world could really be like, with a little bit of hope, and luck, and also positive thinking. For something much more becoming. But, we still carry its saturnine teachings. The saturnine teachings, of the old devil, and its unbecoming ways. So just how far will be needed to escape this scene, of the old household, of the old Ship, to become a distant memory? Before later, when we find ourselves right back to where we came.

Shut the fuck up, Navastian! Think I, to myself, for, I want NONE of that NOW! It's time for us all, and even Roach Burger, to enjoy ourselves for once, for all that we've gone through in the name of our service. And, what we see approaching, the Hong Kong cityscape, and it seems to be befitting as that means of enjoyment and escape. Now the question is: where to start? Once we're fully out there within the metropolis.

Everything is moving fast now, we in Hong Kong, in the city, and it's intriguing seeing so much life rustle and bustle about. All these people out on the run, busy, running about to tend to their daily lives. A scene you'll see in any major city. All these souls. So many souls. All so lonely and soulless. Soulless to us at least, for, we know not of who they are, where they're from, and where they're headed, as they scamper off. Running about, going here, then there, and then disappearing. I'll probably will never be in this city again. Never again in my life. And I look at all these nameless faces come and go, and disappearing to where I'll never see them again, either. Odd! Seeing things like this. Boat life has me growing familiar with so much of the same, making me expect the same. It feels odd to now be looking at faces that won't be systematically arranged to follow the same patterns again and again before me, day in, day out. The civilian city life is its own prison, filled with lonely faces, and I can tell they're all lonely, too. For I'm lonely, and it takes one to know one. And the crew I'm with is also lonely. And when night comes, we'll try and do all we can to change all that. Do what we can to make us feel different. We're in restaurant now, somewhere in the heart of the city. Fancy joint, lookin' no different from any other Chinese restaurant I've ever been in in the West. Waitress is a cute Filipina! Again, with the eateries and establishments owned by them! WTF? But anyways, there she is, cute, and I see she takes a liking to me. Smiles extra when my attention is being given, and Brock and the boys notice it. Points for me, I guess. Somehow...?
“What would you like?” She asks.
“Peking duck!” I order.
And then get depressed, realizing where I had gotten the notion to have such from. And the waitress notices.

We're out again, walking the streets. Hong Kong is one giant metropolis. Huge city. With so much around. It's a city that looks no different from any other modern Western influenced city (just as Tokyo is), but once you look at all the writing, you then notice the difference. That, and of course, the demographic, the ninety-nine percent of people that are all Oriental. And as a Westerner, to feel like such a minority, it feels strange. Making me feel strange, for I'm the exception, and they're

what's normality. I'm the outsider, here. The foreigner. And I don't know their customs. I don't know their culture, nor their formalities or ways. And how all that stacks up against me on how I am behaving. But I guess: when in Hong Kong... but I don't know what these Hong Kongians here do. I don't! Don't even know if calling them Hong Kongians would be correct. But... after living some time in Japan, I've already grown used to feeling this way. Grown used to being a Gaijin.

The day is going by fast, it is! None from our crew has really said anything to one another. It feels rude of us to be so towards ourselves, but, that's how it's been. We've been very, very rude and aloof to each other. It's as if we've been going out of our ways to avoid each other's contact. Evading even eye contact, or one turning one's head to ask a simple question. And each of us, I feel, are just full of questions and confusion. I've had a few questions in my head I wanted to ask Brock or Barbarossa, even Roach Burger, but I didn't. And the truth is, 'cause, I didn't want to! Why? Why was I being so rude and aloof myself? But, I knew why, and after a while of contemplating over it, I realized how I'd been seeing their faces every freakin' day for the last month straight, and how I wanted none of that now. Now that I am here. In this city. And experiencing brand new experiences, that are holding onto all my attentions and curiosities.

The day is going by fast, really fast. And we're now all feeling our Cinderella Liberty weigh in, as the hours fly by, and we know, come midnight, the magic will be over, and we're going to have to return back to where we came from. Back to The Ship. We all feel it. I feel it. And, I see the same feelings reflected in all of our eyes as we now begin to make eye contact, growing aware of each other and aware of our predicament. Acknowledging it, and we begin to ask questions amongst ourselves, for we can no longer avoid it anymore. "Fuck this bullshit! I want to get laid! Bad!" Says Navarro. And, he can say it like that. Roach Burger can't, I can't, not even Brock can. As for Barbarossa, it won't matter, since he's not about all that, which is why he's able to get so much of it (pussy). But Navarro can, since, Navarro is one of

those that only speaks when he has something very monumental to say. Monumental in how we're all feeling and isn't too inhibited in the rest of us to express.

It's nighttime now. And... rainy looking clouds hang heavy over the city. Heavy. Real heavy! Holding on tight to its load, since, it hasn't rained a drop, yet. And when it should have considering how heavy the clouds are packed together. But, we're glad, though. Glad! For, we won't be wanting any of it, that rain, if it was to allow itself to do what it naturally now wants to.
“sheesh, I don't want to be under it when it starts! Ja ja!” Comments Barbarossa.
While staring up at them. Smiling and chuckling, since, Barbarossa is never not jolly about anything. No rainy day nor night could ever bring him down. And then we hear thunder.
“Oh shit!” Goes Barbarossa.
Getting all skittish, still, looking up at them, first I've ever seen him get so. And then I realize the thunder might have sounded to Barbarossa as if Sundergaard be up there, looking down on him, and calling him out. AT2 Thor looking forward to beatin' his ass in for a second round. Ha!

It's nighttime now. And we in an area called Lan Kwai Fong. We don't know how we got here. But, we did. This is where the night life scene is, I guess, majorly in Hong Kong, and since this was what we were looking for, it found us before we found it. We had been lost, actually, we'd been using the metro to go here, then there, and were in a cab when we got lost since we had Roach Burger leading us. Aye! We did! Since he “claimed” he was able to make much sense of the cab drivers here. We had been asking all sorts of questions, and, they mostly spoke worse English than Manjarrez does. We had been lost for a good two hours, and as we turned a corner, here we were, and here was the night life we had been looking for. Packed with people. Foreigners. Westerners mostly. Like us. How convenient! I'd call it serendipity, but I feel serendipity is supposed to work for something you're looking forward to experiencing. But I guess I should be speaking for not just myself, since...

well, you know how I feel about what's about to go down. And what's about to go down you might be wondering, if you didn't catch it from me before? Well....

What's interesting about all club scenes, is, that, no matter where in the world you are, they're all the same. All the same can be expected and waited behind the doors of each and every one of these establishments. People, groups of people, all lined up, ready to head in and allow their worse natures to play out, all supposedly in the name of love and companionship. But “Love” and “companionship” really a disguise of “lust” and “covetousness.” Also, “creepiness” since a place like this always brings out the Norman Bates and Ted Bundys in people (also, the Jeffrey Dahmers and—yeesh!). Lots and lots of beautiful people, dressed up spectacularly, looking very lavishing, and ravishing all over, except, in their faces. For in their faces, you see battle hardened frowns, as they all put on a war face, with war paint and war stripes to head in and wage it out with the opposite sex. Since, no one comes to a place like this to be accepted, only judged. And judged harshly. Seeing how they fair with the rest of their passively loathing and antagonizing competition. Diving headfirst into a sort of reverse sword of Damocles to see if flesh can beat steel or steel can beat flesh. And, in the end, quote Linkin Park “it doesn’t really matter!” Since, 99.999% of people almost always come out as losers in places like these, since, “what’s that you say, you were crowned the king and queen at that bar or club you were at? So what? None of your competitors there were A listers, or B listers, or even C or D listers! Not even R or S listers. More in the U and Vs. If you wanted top billing, you should have gone down a few blocks more where you could have been partying it up with Timbaland and The Black Eye Peas and a bunch of Brazilian supermodels that were there that night. Sorry that you lucked out. But, as consolation prize, take this 54,666 placed trophy. Since 54,665 people pretty much did better than you tonight in all the world.” And the trophy isn’t a trophy, but a shot glass that’s really someone’s barhopping souvenir they picked up in Dallas Texas that has letter, “Big D” on it and lost it when heading overseas. And somehow managed to be found here in the world. Or, in other words, the wrong sort of souvenir if you wanted to remember having been here in Hong Kong’s Lan Kwai Fong district.

(Although, I'm sure D-Boy would have gotten a kick out of that simply over the sentimental value). Simply put: no one ever wins here! No one does. Even the best of the best females find themselves later on tonight on their knees, in a Hotel room, sucking the dick of some guy that secretly has a bud of his in the bathroom videotaping it all. And he plans to sell that tape to some internet porn companies under the table. Plus, he plans to steal all her credit cards from her purse later and ditch the room before she knew what had even happened. And, aye aye—credit card fraud—here she comes! And the bitch was just a minute ago patting herself on the back thinking she had picked up a real player compared to a scrub (my sort, someone that would never do something like that to her. Ever!). Aye, aye… player, player! Although, a player that just played your stupid ass for a sucker! And now you know why they call guys like that, that! A "player" that is. Congratulations for learning this lesson the—HARD WAY! You—STUPID BITCH! Ugh! Suffice it to say, who really comes to a place like this to enjoy themselves? Wonder I. As I try to smile at a pretty blonde that is a little in front of me, and she immediately looks away and begins chattering with one of her friends of my incident. "Check out the fucking loser to my right, how dare he think he's good enough to even look at me?" I can imagine her saying to her girlfriend right next. And her girlfriend right next turns to look at me, judges, shakes her head, and is also abolished that I dare would. I hate these establishments, I seriously does so. It's something I'm unable to acknowledge until I'm here, and now I have to deal with the outcomes of how I feel and how everyone else feels about me. And once here, I will remember how much I don't likes these establishments and remember why I last vowed never to come to one of these, ever again (of course, during the intervals, I'll forget, and, eventually find myself getting talked into coming here again… since that's me and my rockheaded stupidity at work never learning a lesson from this). Why do I keep getting myself dragged to these places? Why, Navastian, why? I'm in line standing next to Brock, who isn't looking at any of the girls, and is too busy fucking around with his biceps, of all things. I mean... he's fucking around with his sexy muscles, and I wonder why? Hmm? And he's doing it as if he's just finished a long session in the gerbil gym and is trying to message the joints in his arms for all the rough sessions he's put them

through. Brock is looking very muscular and sweaty, and I can see some girls taking microsecond peeks at him as he stands beside me. An island to himself, unaware of anything but him and his tendered meat. Interesting game you have there, Brock! Think I, as I truly does notice all the attention he gets doing what he does, but then when I look at this girl or that girl, doing so, they immediately turn their heads away, and away from my inferior quality. Sigh!

We're standing in line, standing in line... still standing. And I can't stand this already, I'm already feeling like shit just out here standing with everyone. We're somewhere in Hong Kong's night life district, I don't know where the fuck! And I'm already sick of it! And there's nothing going on here you wouldn't expect in any other night life district in any other city. So why come ALL THIS WAY to notice how things really ain't any better on the other side of the pond? Maybe if only people here could have been nicer and more friendly? I could only have hoped. But hope is futile in such places. And humanity is double futile. All equally garbage, no matter what race it be. What creed. Or what gender. GARBAGE! It's all the same, and we're all the same. People are all the same. All shit, in this cesspool, fighting the currents trying to flush us all down to the bottom.

All right, I'm in the club, now, up at some bar, standing with Brock, Navarro, and Roachy. And as for Barbarossa, he's left us, and off to do his own thing. We're all standing together, in a herd, trying to get a sense of ourselves, of the females all around, and the other males that are our competition. And I feel like Marty. And not the McFly type.

Actually, I feel like doing a roll up party on those French douches over there! I mean, us fuckin' up those surrender monkeys over there might impress some of these skanks, might? I think. And I then look, truly looks at our supposed reward if we were to do so. And how do they measure up: beautiful! Simply beautiful. What else? All around. Playing their games as we play our own. And I'm just feeling very depressed right now, extremely so! More than I've ever been on the Boat,

interestingly enough. So, this is why I'm headed off to war for? To safeguard this! I go on to contemplate. There's a group of girls across from us, and I guess we're all trying to get all their attention, but not directly.
“Navastian, what the fuck are you doing?” Whispers Brock, over to me in my ear.
“What?” I go.
“Don't look at them.”
So, I stop. And I walk up to the bartender to grab a drink. I try to grab a drink, since, her attention is with other patrons she's finding more prospective and important than me.
“HEY!” I go at her.
And she looks at me, frowns, but then IMMEDIATELY checks herself, since: that be bad customer serves, and bad customer service = no tip. So, she then smiles all fake like, and asks what I'd like, while silently judging me, as I do the same.
“I'd like a Sex on the Beach.” I say.
And she eyes me, as if wondering if I'd ever understand anything as grand as having real sex on a real beach, like she has had plenty of, because she's beautiful and perfect, and lives a life that is THAT beautiful and perfect, which is TOO beautiful and perfect for likes of me. Of course! What else is freakin' new?

Wow, what the fuck? Why am I being this way? I've been to clubs before, but I've never felt this down and out, and vulnerable, as I am now. I mean, I have. But never like this! And why with women? Why? I don't understand myself anymore... what's going on with me? Damn! I feel like the creep from that one Radiohead song. What the hell am I doing here? I don't belong here. Everyone here seems so fucking special. As I wish I was... fuck this!

Great... now I have that song stuck in my head. While the music here, some Ja Rule nonsense, is beating heavily to flush it all out of my head.

The music here just keeps pumping out something hard and hypnotic, as if trying to get us all into a frenzy. Wearing out any ounce of humanity we might have left within

us and leaving us primal and barren. Like animals. Allowing us to base ourselves to our more primal nature and needs. It's that one Blood Rave soundtrack to that Blade movie that's now playing. There's lots of flash and lust going all around, flash and lust, and promise of sex. But all for the right sort, the ones with the right stuff, the right genes. And nothing but complete misery and loneliness for everyone else.
“Navastian, stop looking at them!” Goes Brock, again.
And he seems to have something additional to lecture.
“What?” I go, rhetorically.
“Don't look at them, showing interest shows weakness.” He explains.
And I give him a look, as to I'd like for him to elaborate more on what to do instead. I understand what he's saying, fully! But, if he has a secret in how to deal with it, that I would be curious about. Brock then follows up a look of disappointment, then goes:
“Check it out, Navastian, it seems like you still haven't figured it out on what to do in places like these. Here? It's all about seeming like the biggest and baddest motherfucker out. And you can't do that by being nice, liking them, showing that you like them and want them, or showing any other weaknesses.” He explains.
As I heed.
“Then what am I supposed to do?” I ask.
Since Brock seems to be the expert on this matter.
“Ignore them, act like you're better. That you've had better. And that all these girls in here aren't worth your time.”
And that really does upset me to hear. Truly, deeply, to the core. If Brock is the knowing expert on the whole clubbin' aspect, it really upsets me to hear this is all it comes down to. Being a complete and utter jerk on an Anti-Christ level.
“Just act like I'm better?” I ask, all naively.
“Exactly! People here are attracted to what's above them. Not what's below. Don't make any of these girls even think you're below them. Because if you do, they're treat you like you got an infectious disease, or something.”
And I decide to accept it. If that is what it takes... that is what it takes!

So. All right... let's do this! Time for me to stand around and act like a pompous jerk, a complete jackass, like I'm better. If I can't beat them, might as well join them. Just act like a completely overbearing dick. And I can do that! For, all I have to do is just pretend that I'm a Chief around a bunch of Seaman/Airman, E-3 nobodies. That should be easy! I've had enough examples of overbearing Khaki to show me how it's done. So, let's start! And, as I do so, I stop staring at them, and begin to imagine being some Chief... no Senior... NO Master Chief Dreadnought! Aye! There you go! Our MMCPO. That should scare the shitless lot into liking me! Ha! A Master Chief, it is to be! So, I begin to imagine that I be him, and begin. And as I start lookin' around, I see... oh, look at that girl, there! I see a beautiful tall redhead, being all giggly and cute. And... stop! Stop! Fuck that bitch! Fuck that bitch! I'm better! I'm... ME! And then I think: she's not THAT beautiful. For truth be told, she's sorta chubby, too! Aye, she is! I see some celluloid on her. And I can see she's gone through a bunch of fruity, high in calories, drinks, which means she's irresponsible about her weight, for she doesn't know better, since, she's still young. And eventually, when she hits thirty or forty, continuing on with her irresponsible ways, and loses much of her metabolism, she's gonna turn into a fat chick! And fuck fat chicks! So fuck this bitch! I check myself, thinking that. And now I really begin.

All right, Navastian, now brush around here, don't look at her. Looking at her shows interests, and the first to show interest, is the first one that loses! Don't be a loser, Navastian, don't! You've been through too much to have some giggly, stupid redhead show you off. Find an indirect means of getting her attention, and then impose on her all your discontent for her, to let her know, you're better. And that should make her like you, then. as stupid as that all sounds. And, DON'T question the method, that's just the way it works. These ain't humans. These be Bird People! Aye! Bird People! And being all squawky and rude is all that it takes. They don't think and feel like normal humans do. Just remember how Oilerking made you feel yesterday evening, desperate for her attention. That's what you're supposed to make this pretty—SHE NOT PRETTY! She's only HALF decent...! That's what you're supposed to make this girl now feel, to want you. Now make her that way! All right,

brush up against her all accidentally. Sit next. DONT LOOK! And, all right, I feel her peripherals on me, now just glance at her and look aloof, like how Hats and Kats always look at you. All right, and. Fuckin' A! Eye contact! Now show her your contempt for her for being so inferior in quality! And... there you go! THERE! There, you got her and showed her who's HiMFIC, here! Yes! Now back out like nothing happened and make it like you just judged her for being inferior. Aye! And... done! All right, now check your peripherals of her reaction. And... yes! She's staring right at you... lookin' pissed! I did it! Now...?

And now...?
…?
And now what? All right, I made her feel belittled, now what do I do to make her like me...? HOW THE FUCK AM I... I DON'T GET IT! It makes NO sense! I don't FUCKIN' get it! And she really seems pissed, now. Oh, FUCK ME, her sights are still on me. And she really seems fiercely pierced!
"Excuse me, what's your problem?" She asks me.
And... just keep ignoring her. You're better! Fuck this bitch! There's no way she's going to like you now. But, keep acting like you're better! Just—DO IT! Fuck, she's intimidating me, now. Whiskey Tango Foxtrot? All right, fuck this! Get up and leave. I can't stand her staring at me like she is anymore. Wow! Just WOW! Thank God that that's through....

Wow, I feel like shit, now! Some real shit! Some real BARNACLES, encased in shit, encased in MORE BARNACLES! That is! Fuck! I didn't want to be that mean towards her. And she's still turning her head around and giving contemptuous looks. Where did I go wrong...? Maybe I need to not be so contemptuous. Actually, Brock never said anything about being so. Just being aloof and acting like you're better. Not showing that you are. Not rubbing it in. Just be to yourself, how he is being to himself, when he's acting like he's somewhere else with someone better. That's what I guess I did wrong. I'm supposed to act better, but just not show it. That way, the notion that I am will seem to her naturally, as if she herself conceived the notion.

And that will lead her to feel desperate for my attention. Fine! I guess I should try it again, even though, I really had my sights on the redhead. But that chance has passed. And I don't feel like trying anyone else. And... she was so... sigh!

All right, round two, now who do I try? Oh... there! That girl, there! Pretty Chinese girl, only one of the few that are in here INTERESTINGLY enough. Since I'm in FREAKIN' CHINA! But I guess this is a British club, or... I don't know? There's just so many Westerners in here. Maybe I should try some girls of the Eastern persuasion? Maybe we all ain't shit? And it's really only us Westerners that are that way. Plus, Brits are all SHIT anyways! In general. So enough trying to hit it off with them. Nothing but wankers, as our Squadron's Indian born, English raised, PH3 Kadakia once put it. And I can't say exactly what being a “wanker” is, besides someone that wanks off a lot. All I know, is, it's a derogatory term. But I guess it just means they're all a bunch of pompous self-important twats. And... heck! I can just get that from their English accents, considering how much more PROPER their English sounds compared to ours. Fuck the Brits! Those fuckin' limey well-spoken WANKS!

All right, now for the Chinese girl. Get up next to her. Sit down. And... WOW, is this Chinese girl a moody one! Seeming so down and gloomy, but naturally so, for that's how she naturally always is. She has no heart encased in ice, but ice encased by her heart. Wow, how am I going to deal with this ice princess, here? I don’t know! How? But, fuck it! All right, fuck it, just reflect the same level of moodiness. But not at her. Don't try to get her attention, but do get her attention, somehow...? How am I now going to get her attention by NOT trying to get her attention? By NOT making eye contact and not doing anything? And, how do I do it while seeming so self-absorbed and self-important? And making her feel that, so she...?

Okay, I've been sitting here for over five minutes now. She still isn't paying any attention to me. While I don’t pay any attention to her. How long is this going to... until one gives! UNTIL ONE GIVES! Don't give in. It's like a staring contest, except,

we're doing the opposite of staring. It's an ignoring contest! And the point is to ignores her more than she can ignore me.

Ten minutes now! Fuck this bullshit! This is pissing me off something GRANDIOSO! Fuck this! HEY, BITCH, LOOK AT ME! I'm BETTER! Stop ignoring me! It's me that should be all ignoring you! Stop ignoring me! STOP! STOP...! Wow... is this STUPID!

How... how long has it been? Fifteen minutes...? NO...! NO...! Don't look at your watch! That just shows you're keeping track. It's letting onto the game you're playing, when you're just supposed to make her think you're not. When you really are. But what if she really is not? What if she really isn't ignoring me, and really sees me as that void and nonexistent? Wait... she's getting up. She... left. She wasn't even playin' the game. I was that much of a nothing that she wouldn't.

Wow, do I feel depressed now...!
I need a shot.
....
I need another!
....
ANOTHER!

How did I become this way? How did I become to feel so worthless and pathetic, how...?

Fuck all this! I think, then. I'm Navy! I'm a somebody. How did I become to feel so worthless? Bullshit! How come haven't they? I'm someone that's chosen to serve. Who the fuck are they? How dare you, you BITCH! Fuckin' bartender, for snuffing at me, just for asking a drink! How dare you, you stupid moody Chinese ice princess, for being so important and conceited as to ignores me so FULLY! And, how you, that redhead... for... SOMETHING! How DARE they! I'm a role model. I'm a real person of real caliber, who's made the real sacrifice to serve, something they would

know NOTHING ABOUT! There is a difference between my sort, and their sort, and I WON'T say it adds to one being better than another. I won't say that. BUT! One that does DESERVE better. FUCK you for lookin' down at me! How can you be so totally GUTLESS and INSOLENT to be acting that way when ALL I WANTED was to be friendly. Have good relations. And maybe have more... and what would be so FUCKIN' wrong with that? Fine, I want SEX! What the fuck do you want, coming in here? LOVE? Ha! Not with that attitude you DON'T! Fuck, I hate all these self-absorbed people. Fuck, do I do so! All thinking they're so grandioso and accounting me for NOTHING, when it just doesn't add up that way. If there's a difference between me and all you. It's that I'm a CITIZEN! And what you all are, are merely civilians. Aye! I can only speak of myself for me being US Navy, since most in here seem to be British, some French, and some other Euro trash. Plus, the Orientals, since this is their country. But there is no nationality that doesn't have this club membership. Hey, you, redheaded British chick! Ever serve for your country... WOMAN? Ever serve in the British Royal Navy? You haven't, have you? Then have some respect for those that have. And, don't ever think of yourself as equal until then. Look at all these... civilians! Look at them! Look how pompous and arrogant they seem, when they haven't done anything in their lives to have earned such privileges. Both the men and women, since I shouldn't discriminate, since the genders truly are equally undeserving! Privileges in thinking that they're better, fuck it! If it comes down to it... I'M BETTER! I've at least proven it by sacrificing MY LIFE for my country. Have they ever? Had they? Can they? Since, I feel like they'd be too gutless and spineless to make such REAL sacrifices. Too much of a bunch of PUSSIES! Have they ever been driven by such higher pursuits? I guess not, only higher people get such higher callings, while the rest stay behind and stick to one upping one another over frivolous and empty, hallow, superficial matters. I've made sacrifices, putting myself off to the whims of the war effort, to make a difference in this world. Have they? FUCK 'EM ALL! They're just nobody civilians. They're GUTLESS civilians. They're all just a waste of space, bunch of... SIGH!

I need another drink!

….
Another!
….
ANOTHER!

I'm a creep.
I'm a weirdo.
What the hell...?

Oh, stop thinking about that song!

And then looking around, and seeing all the happy people, a thought goes through me, like an evil spirit. Like a real EVIL fuckin' spirit, swimming out of Davy Jones' own eyeball. And I then think: maybe I should get up, and sit next to that one girl on the other end of the bar, I've been staring at, all this time. Which the HEARTLESS BITCH has been ignoring me. Go to her, sit next, look RIGHT AT her. And force her to confront me. And, I know she'll try to DILLIGAF me. Since, she's just another stupid conceited skank, that thinks she's better, and one I'll never be able to relates with, so what else is freakin' new? And I yell at her then: “Hey, BITCH!” And she'll then look over all pissed, while not looking over at me, directly. For, how DARE I interrupt her in her moment of being perfect, perfectly to herself, with the company of the only perfect person that'll ever matter in this world to her... her perfect self. But. I'll yell again: “Hey, BITCH!” And then when she can't ignore me anymore, I'll show her, her wrongdoing. And the consequences of her actions. By taking a gun, sticking it in my mouth, and saying: “This is all YOUR fault!”

Well... I'll mumble it out... with the gun in mouth and all. You know? But then, I'll blow me brains out.

And, then....
I wonder...?

Will she care?
Will she?
Would that finally change her and her wicked ways? And make her grow a heart? Or, will she continue to sit around and feel PERFECT! Since the bitch is sooOOOooooOoOooo much better than I am? Would she finally grow a heart, or continue in her ignorant self-absorbed ways? And I pick up a quarter and flip it. Catch it. And think: heads... she'd care, tails... she'll stay a heartless bitch. And as I look at the results: TAILS! Just as I thought. I then flip it three more times. And each time: TAILS! TAILS! TAILS AGAIN! WOW! ALL THREE TIMES? What 50/50/90 chances are these? So, there you go. No refuting it anymore: all women are heartless. And I'm going to die alone. Six billion people on earth. And half are women. So, three billion heartless BITCHES I will never be able to relate with. SO WHAT ELSE IS FREAKIN' NEW!

…?
What the fuck is WRONG with me? How could I think such things—huh? How? Well... at least the feelings are subsiding.

What the fuck do you want?
"Hey, you all right?" Asks some very pretty blonde girl.
Sorta reminding me of the one I had a crush for back in High School. One. I totally blew it with.

Why the fuck would you care? You're too good and pretty and perfect to care. FUCK OFF!
"Hey, you seem really...."
"Fuck off!" I say, out loud.
And the girl grows very dim and upset, and leaves. And, the real fucked up part is... I sorta enjoy it.

All right, Navastian... you through being despicable? You through yet? All right? All right! So, let's see how the other boys be doing. I think, then. After spending a very, very long and hard session of self-refection. As I see my reflection slowly changing, as my face begins to contort into something else, something far less recognizable, something very awful and alien. And I mean that literally, too, for I'm sitting at the bar, staring at my mug in the reflective mirror, that's behind the counter, where liquor bottles are shelved. And it really does seem to be contorting like so. Or, is that just the liquor? Wow, do I look wretched! Wow, do I! But, fuck this, let's go check on how the other boys are doing. And as I look to my right, I see Barbarossa at some booth, with Roach Burger, and they're with three girls. WTF? I think. Well, I know Barbarossa, but not Roach Burger, not like that! But I figure it's Barbarossa that's doing all the work, and Roachy is just there reaping the benefits. Barbarossa is smiling, and jollying, and being very uplifting to look at. The giant Mexican is that good. That good! Really has no difficulties in this world, dealing with anything. Unlike the rest of us, who have plenty, since, we ain't as big. It must really feel good to be him. I envy.

Where's Navarro? Where is that shady fuckin' vato, huh? Oh, there he is, massaging some drink, all by his lonesome, in some corner. Lookin' mighty aloof and self-absorbed and self-content, with himself. For solidarity is what one of his strongest suits be. For he's just so cholo like that. So, let him stick to the shadows, as his sights cruise on by, watching other's cruise on by. For, for him, life's one giant cruise, ridden in a lowrider, in slow motion. For they call him Mr. Ether, back at his barrio. Now inhale, hold it in while absorbing all the world in, and then exhale. And blow. It must really feel good to be so yolo cholo as he be. I envy.

And there's Brock, and... and he doesn't seem to be doing so well, since, I practically would figure he'd be swimming in women by now. Considering! I mean... look at him! I'm not one homosexual, not one (what we also call in the Navy a COM-NAV-FUDGE-PACer. Ha!). But, I definitely would fuck his brains out, if, I was a she instead of a he, and was given the chance. For, look at all those muscles! I mean, LOOK at

them! He's a man-made fuck machine, and it just doesn't look right to see him standing there by his own lonesome, leaning on a sTool, and not have some female right next, chatting away with him. Actually! Have some female mounted to his pelvis, naked, ass in, back bent forward, eyes squinting open and shut. With her mouth all open wide, gasping away, while he be back there, tapping away. And her moaning like a banshee being dragged by demons down to hell, just for the sin of it all! And, well... just doesn't look right not to see such. Makes no sense. What's wrong, Brock, what's wrong? Don't tell me you REALLY spent all that time working out in the gerbil gym, to compensate, how much of an awkward fuck you really are... ha!

AH SHIT! That's the TRUTH of it all! That's it! Isn't it? Ah shit! I'm so sorry, Brock, I guess I've done nothing but overestimate your potential. For, you're really all looks but no play. Well, you are at least getting a lot of looks by women, all around, since, you're such a hot stud muffin. One true to the blue Hot Doggin' Sailor! You are! I guess you at least are getting a lot of looks. Even though not getting anything else. So, sorry!

“Hey, Navastian, what the fuck you lookin' at?” Asks he.

As I approach him. And, part of me feels like not rubbing it in, but then lookin' back at Barbarossa and how much better he be doing—along with ROACH BURGER of all people! I say to myself: “Fucks it!” And goes right ahead:

“So, explain to me, again, how am I supposed to get them to like me, by acting like a total douchebag around them? Because, I've tried, and it doesn't work.” I rub.

“Shut up, Navastian. I'm busy.” He says, all aloof.

And I then turn to look at a few girls that have been staring at him, and—

“Fuckin' NAVASTIAN!” He blasts, at whisper.

He wants to blast out, but not too loud, and abruptly ruining whatever game he be playing.

“What?” I go.

“Don't look at them.” He goes, again.

“Dude, just go up and talk to them.” I finally let out.

“Not yet.”

“Dude, they want you, I can tell.”
“Not if you look at them like that, it'll ruin the scene.” He explains.
While doing that ventriloquist thing of not moving his lips, as if not to show he's talking to me. And... shit! I really would have never imagined Brock to be such a cowardly hesitant fuck. But... fuck!
“Fine... tell me at least which one you plan on—”
“How many of them are there?” He asks.
And I count, all peripherally, so as to not ruin Brock's game. That is to say, if he has any, besides that of a marble statue of David. A fake statue. That's priced too high in some very expensive antique or household collectibles store, in Beverly Hills. And the reason it's so expensive is to overcompensate how flimsy and fake the statue true market value happens to be. So, it's really just there for window shopping, and being eye candy.
“One... two, three, four—nope—she's with... okay! I guess she isn't with him. So, four!” I count.
“Good.” He says.
And I'm confused now.
“So, how are you going to do this, without screwing it up?” I ask.
Since, I know that if he does screw it up with one, he's also going to screw it up completely with the others. For, I don't think the other girls will admire being the leftovers. Sloppy seconds. Since, we're all watching one another like HAWKS, while pretending not to be.
“Fuck it, you want a shot, I'll buy?” He offers.
And now I'm feeling just depressed for this Shit Hot Shipmate of mine. Thinkin' he'd be hot doggin' it right now. And, now, I'm sorta wishing I was with Barbarossa and... hell! Even Roach Burger. I'd even rather be Frankowsky's wingman, right now. Instead of Brock's, here.
“I... umm... how many you said again?” Goes Brock.
And now I feel like talking some sense into him. But then, one of Brock's potentials, I see, grabbing a sTool on the other side of him. Next. Smiling. Really, really smiling

confidently. And it looks like this woman is going to be giving Brock a lucky break. Take the initiative, instead, since, Brock is too chicken shit to make it himself.
“So, handsome, what's it going to take for you to look at me?” Asks she, catching Brock by total surprise.
Brock then turns his head around, looks at her, gets intimidated, looks at me, with startled eyes. And I look back as if asking him: “What the fuck are you looking at me for?” Then Brock looks back at her, again. And:
“Umm... ahh...?” Goes Brock, completely BLOWING it.
But, really doesn't, since, the woman is still smiling at him.
“I asked you a question.”
“I... umm...?”
“You want to come over to my booth, babe? I got a private one over there in the corner.” She offers.
And Brock then looks at me, again, with the same look, and I now feel like SLAPPING him SILLY!
“Well, do you?” She pushes.
And Brock gives up his act, and nods. Since, the act is obviously no longer needed. Even though it's done so well for him, up till now. But, then again, sarcasm aside, I guess it has. I guess it has since it's gotten women to approach his awkward ass, since, he can't do it himself. So... I guess not such a bad game after all? I think. The two then leave now to that corner and leave me to myself. I watch the two leave, as the woman turns her head once to look at me, looking at me all pitifully, since, I'm THAT MUCH so not worth her attention. And... FUCKIN' GREAT! I'm starting to feel sick of entertaining those thoughts anymore. Who cares! Who cares! But, anyways. Fuck me! This is Brock's lucky break, and, let me tell you what Brock has really won: Brock's prize for tonight, is, a night outing... with a cougar. Aye! Roger that! That's right! A cougar. And, it WOULD be a cougar, too. For it would take one to be so bold and upfront and daring. Since women our age can only be just as incompetent as us (remember Donnelly explaining that to me). And also cowardly. But as for this 80s cougar, well? It takes a certain age to grow passed all that, I guess? When you've been through one too many of these moments, it all becomes too boring for you to

continue acting so innocently. And, judging from her eyes, as she eyed my musclebound Shipmate friend, innocence, for her, is but a faded memory. Aye! It's that Miss. Scagnelli story, again, but older, and with shoulder pads. I call her an 80s cougar, and I mean it. For, the woman is sporting a black power suit, and she has that whole 80s Wall Street vibe about her. Madam Gordon Gecko, there. As if all life for her is but a business negotiation, over some coke and Champaign. And as old as she is, she's still hot, though! Let me not leave that out. She has to be in her early to mid-fifties, and with enough plastic surgery to still be fuck worthy. Tits! Wow, is there some massive fake tits there to behold. She's wearing all black, from her cleavage down to her heels. And my word, look at her cleavage, there, and her really short skirt, showing off her black silk stocking nestled legs, to boot. This woman, here, ain't no homemaker, but, a home breaker, so I can see she needs all that exuberance and endurance to still be out on the hunt, as any cougar would be. For, she's built in a way, older women tend to get built up, when, they start reaching that menopause age, and it's as if their hormones begin pumping testosterone into their bodies, which they have been lacking of, up till now. Having them lose some of their womanly qualities, since, they're in no more need of them, anymore. And there's no more need in looking fair and pretty, since, their child rearing years are coming to a close. Having womanly qualities, so they can attract a longer-term mate. Yeah! I know how stupid and silly that whole bit sounded. But, I'm serious. It's a serious observation about women, reaching that age, that I'm making. The older they get, the more manly, some, get, that is before they hit their mid-sixties, and everything starts to sag and fall apart. Getting all masculine, now, now that they've reached an age where they can be. For, let's face it... being fair a pretty? Those are no qualities in having in this world if you want to survive. And being hard, rough, and solid, is. For all that other stuff is only good for attraction. And the whole point of attraction is for mating and child rearing. But, at this cougar's age, she passed all that now. And now that her kids have all gone to college, and left, it's now time for her just to be surviving.

All right! I'm done with my crazy observations. I'm done. Through! Since, I'm feeling totally stacked full of my own shit right now. And I can smell it. Also, I don't know how accurate any of this is. An observation is still just an observation, not completely based on reality, just how you perceive reality to be.

So... aye! Brock's fucking a hermaphrodite tonight. And good on him. Jolly good on him! Brock's fucking. Barbarossa is fucking. Roach Burger is... FUCK Roach Burger! And all is left is Navarro and me. And... and as I turn towards the other massive Mexican in the room. I see him with his own fuck buddy, and I now realize what I'm going to unfortunately have to do. For the sight of Navarro, also, really makes me feel manically depressed, seeing him also finding a lay tonight, as FUCKIN' Roach Burger has! Fuckin' WTF? Truly! Damn you, Navastian, even Roach Burger is gonna get some consented ass tonight, and you won't be! Fuck this! To Wan Chi District, Navastian, we go! And, so, a whorin' we will go!

WHORIN' WE WILL GO

Aye! I'm going to be pathetic. Aye! I'm going to be more despicable. And do it! The night ain't over, till it's over. So, aye! I really don't have any more dignity and self-respect left, not no more. Plus, I've grown weary of having any of. Fuck having dignity and self-respect! For all having those qualities have done for me has made me go from one colossally embarrassing moment in my life, to another. Fuck having those qualities, when, all they do is give you pain. It's that Roach Burger complex thing again, where I'm coming to better understand how much more liberating life feels when you have NO SHAME! No shame, WHATSOEVER! Fuck it! Let's live life with absolutely NO SHAME AT ALL! And try to enjoy it a little, before it's over and done with. I want SEX! I NEED it! Because, I feel like a desperate, mangy, worthless animal, right about now, and why should I go against it? Why? I ask you... why? Isn't there that saying that goes: "Always be truthful to oneself?" And since right now my truthful self is that much of a loathsome creature, ain't I not being truthful to pretend that I'm not to be? I mean, why be proud of something I'm not, when I can be proud of something I most definitely am right about now? So, a whorin' I go! And I'm OUTTA that stupid pretentious club, full of stupid pretentious people, all pretending

to be something they most DEFINITELY AIN'T! And I'm off to where I know people are REALLY going to be at their most primal and barren. And not trying to pretend not to be, otherwise. Everybody in that club wanted sex. Men and women. And DESPERATELY SO! But, they can't just let it all be, and they have to play their stupid self-absorbed games—for I don't know WHAT reason! I guess, like me, it was all about preserving whatever sense of dignity they were IMAGINING they were still in the possessions of. Women holding desperately onto their own sense, while standing around looking like a PIECE of fuckin' MEAT! Crammed into a greasy lookin' doggy bag dress, to go. WOOF! And men doing the same, but worse, pretending to be officers and gentleman about it, so suave, when we're really all just DOGS, really! Doggy by nature! Looking for a doggy snack. So, double WOOF! So, let me ask you this: where's the dignity in all that? You bunch of FAKERS! Fuck this! A whorin' I will go, and I'm now OUTTA that club, and immediately into that Wan Chi District, I had been hearing so much about, back on The Ship. Immediately, and magically so, considering how quickly I am able to find myself there. Considering how fucking WASTED I am right now. Whisked away with no sense of direction, in a city I've never been to or seen. And. How did I end up here so quickly? I wonder. For, it all feels so very predestined to be so. Hong Kong is a humongous city. I haven't been asking anyone for any directions, and, here I stumbled upon. Here, at this place! Filled with sleazy bars, covered with red neon lights, and sweaty lookin' half naked women. Plus, a whole lot of us Squids. Damn is there so! Damn, a lot! A lot of us there is, here, now! Look at all of us whorin', no dignity havin', Hot Doggin', STD spongin' asses, here, also having stumbled in somehow, into this magical place. Look! Look at all of our happy-go-lucky asses, and how happy and lucky, yet stupid, we all look and feel and seem to be. With our tongues hanging out. Ask yourself then: “What's got them with their tongues out?” And now, look back at all the SLEAZE!

Also... NO SHIT! Look at that one Chinese street urchin, on the corner, playing her sleazy sax, as it oozes out sounds of what it would feel like having your soul ripped away, and pocketed up in some harlot's cooch, which hasn't been washed in well

over a month. In a Trolinger's age! And smells how Davy Jones locker really would smell like, if, it was ever discovered. Discovered stuffed with crotchety looking panties, since, Davy, the ol' boy, is secretly a cross dressing freak. A regular ol' Edgar J. Hoover. And that's all the secret he be hiding from the world in his legendary locker. Cue the foghorn!

God, what am I doin' here? I fuddle. But since I'm at a place also where there is no God, who I am asking. I know not. And as I come to terms how there really is none here, I feel somewhat relieved. And relieved with how all the shameless shit that's about to go down on my temple. And no shit, one of the skanks out here REALLY is out here with a saxophone, and the bitch be really whalin' it! How so stereotypically convenient. And she's Chinese, as all the girls here are Chinese, or some sort of Asian. And not British, or French, or German, or any of that other white, master race, euro trash crap, like what you'd find in more respectable establishments. Even in an Asian predominately maga plaza such as this. Like the night club which I was just at, which the name I caught it to be: “Fuc n Suc Inc.” All displayed with a very modest and minimalistic baby blue, neue helvetica neon sign, backdropped onto a gray stainless-steel boarding, just above the front door entrance. Very respectable, as you can understand by that description. Very! Fuc n Suc Inc.! Gets it? Ha!

Okay, fine... it wasn't exactly called that. Something more like Fuksu... Fusuc... something, Inc. But I was reading Fuc and Suc somewhere in there. It was there! I was READING it!

When I was with the boys, we had all paid a visit to an ATM machine in the city, and each of us had taken out roughly five hundred dollars. We knew how expensive these ventures tend to be. In Japan, we'd see how, sometimes, we'd blow that much, and even more, in one to two settings out in Rapoongi. Doing whatever! So, we knew what to expect. The cost of the night life. And, all those enticing elements that are involved. Titillating temptations. All of those, and how it all comes with a price, since, the best things in life... well, aren't these! But a close second—at least—and

they aren't at least for free. When I was with the boys, I had paid the ATM a visit. Had seen how living on The Ship with the pay I get, and the Flightdeck pay (hazardous duty pay) had all been summing up, untouched. I had roughly $4 thousand dollars in total, a good save for all the effort I was putting into this Navy, and this fleet. My earnings from all that service, since, it's a sacrificial service, where anything goes, and it's not all for the pay. But... nice! Nice bit of save, even though I know any civilian looking at that figure, considering the hell I've put myself through, would have demanded at least five times as much. But being a CITIZEN = not being about all that money, since, we're really supposed to be above all that. Although, there's this one AME3 Reyes I know, that's saved up well over $25 grand in money, in the two years he's been in. And now, looking at my $4 grand, and considering how long I've in this service: WTF did the rest go? I baffle, as I realize I should have been doing a lot better job saving money, considering the fact that this Navy has provided me with everything I need. With no rent, and no need of money, or any other living expenses. They feed us, clothe us, like they are our own regular moms and dads. So, WTF did the rest of my money go? And now, after having visited an ATM a second time, now knowing how much more I'm about to spend here in Wan Chi District, I feel like a new chapter title is in call for, with what all this whorin' is REALLY going to be about. So, cue the new chapter title:

MIND ON MY MONEY

And so, we go! All right, so, I have taken out a grand (in USD not HKD) with my second ATM visit. And it has added up to about $7,800 HKD. In my first visit to the ATM, I had gotten half that amount ($500 in USD) which is $3,900 HKD. All right, do the math, Navastian, do it! I have in total taken out $1,500 in USD. Which in HKD that adds up to roughly... $11 grand? No, $12 grand! Wait, do the math! All right, $11,700 HKD. And since being at that bar I was at, and that restaurant, and other stuff. I have now... wait, let me count this, how much of this HKD I now have left.

“Hey, big boy, you Sailor, right? I see you got lots of money, big spender you are! Where you plan on—”

Get the FUCK away from me WOMAN, I'M COUNTING! I stress in my thoughts, as I walk away from one of the street urchins that caught me with my cash out, counting

it up to do my sums. Out here in the street (which is very, very, very stupid of me, might I add). And right now, I need to do the math, ‘cause... I need to! And I don't have time for that shit!

All right, $8,700 HKD left.

“Hey, big boy... where you going, I LOVE YOU! I—”
Motherfuckin' get AWAY from me! The fuck AWAY, WOMAN! Seriously! If I'm spending hard earned cash on tail tonight, I want my pick. And, not to hurt your feelings, but, you AIN'T IT! Your tits are too weirdly shaped, your thighs are clumpy lookin', and you got beady eyes, and all that = MAJOR TURN OFF IN MY BOOK!

But, wow, does it feel shitty thinking as such, but—fuck it! I had my share of being rejected for my undesirable attributes, back at the Fuc n Suc club, and I guess what goes around, comes around. So, get AWAY!

So, back to business. So, how much does that add up to in USD? I have... wait? How much HKD do I have, again? Fuck this! I'm drunk and doing MATH. I DON'T KNOW! And I don't know how much I've FREAKIN' spent already. Jeez! I need a calculator.
“Hey, Navastian.”
“Excuse me, Ms., can you please... wait?”
And as I turn around, I see it's AD3 Beauregard. Damn him and his sultry female sounding voice, confusing me there for a second.
“Hey, Navastian!” He calls out, again, while nodding.
And he's nodding because I know he favors seeing me also out here, as well, with him.
“Sup, Beau, what you doing out here?” I go, all rhetorically.
For, why else would he be here!
“....”
Beau now just looks at me all judgmentally, but in a favoring way. Favoring, since, how I'm now down here in the pits with the rest, with him, ready to get my hands

(besides other things) dirty. For all the no-shame there is to be had, here. But, it's also welcoming to see him here.
“So... Cinderella liberty!” Goes Beau.
And that gets me thinking.
“Oh shit! I forgot about that, we do have to be back on the Boat at midnight, four balls hundred, don't we?” I recall.
“Yup!” Goes Beau.
And then I look down at my watch and see that it's a little passed 2100 hour.
“Ah, great! So we have to be back in roughly three hours, fuck!” I mope.
But then:
“No, no, wait! I forgot... it's been extended until 0300 hours.” Beau goes.
And I find that under question.
“Dude, you sure about that?” I go.
“Yes, yes!”
“I just said: 'midnight,' and you said: 'yes!' And now you're saying 'yes' to this. Are we to be back at midnight or 0300 hours, which is it?” I question.
Because, I wouldn't want to fuck it all up. And risk getting Liberty Risk, like Donnelly has. Ex-ing my chances of getting another day out, here in Hong Kong, after my Duty Day, tomorrow.
“No, no, zero three, trust me!”
“Why didn't I hear about it, then?” I follow.
“Just trust me, I meant zero three.”
And I give him a look.
“Fine, Navastian, if you don't believe me, go at midnight! And from here, it might take us at least half an hour to get back.” He adds.
And the truth is, I now don’t want to go. I know it's going to take much more time to get back to The Ship, and I rather have that extra three hours he's promising. Six more hours, roughly, total, of liberty out here tonight.
“You done much since liberty call this morning?” He asks.
And I nay with my head.
“Well, you better get crackin'.” He jokes.

And I just give him a look, again.
“How about yourself, you gotten yourself into any trouble, yet?” I go.
And Beauregard just smiles.
“Well?”
“Actually, I'm looking for Qian.” Beau then mentions.
And... Holy Mother! Qian. Here. Too?
“You got Qian to come out here?” I gasp.
“I didn't get him to do anything, he came by his own free will, he finally gave in, and let it be known to me that....”
And then he smirks, filling in the rest of the details. And I gets it. For, we're all on the same Boat when it comes to matters such as these.
“So, what are you doing now?” I ask.
“I'm looking for him, I lost him out here, somewhere, I can't say. The boy is wasted out of his mind, and I'm worried one of these women might try to take advantage of him.”
And... unholy whatever! Some more! Qian drunk off his rocker, lookin' for some whorin action? I gotta see this! And, so we go! With our new mission at hand: “Operation Cherry Stopper Popper Opper!” And aye! That was very, very lame sounding. I doesn't care. And, so, we go.
“Hey, is Qian a virgin, really?” I ask.
And Beauregard is at condescension.
“You have to ask that question? He pretty much admitted that he is a few days ago. Fuckin: 'I'm saving myself for my future wife!'”
“I remember that, but, something tells me... he only pretends to be so innocent.” I reckon.
Remembering the story Donnelly had told me about him and Qian, with AMC Scagnelli's wife, included.
“I don't get that sense. I think he's all what you see on the surface.” Opts Beau.
“Okay, then what's Qian doing out here in Wan Chi, by his own free will, looking for a future wife?”
And I have Beauregard now reassessing his opinion.

“Huh? I didn't think about it like that. Now, I'm not so sure, too.”
And I roll my eyes to hear that. Wondering just how much of the golden boy there is of, that we also aren't aware of.

Vruu Vruu VRUU!
Goes the woman with the sax. And now, we both grow curious.
“Is she a whore?” Asks Beauregard.
And he asks the same question I was just about to ask.
“Can't say, you should go ask her. Be like: 'Hey, lady, excuse me, you a whore?”
And that now has Beauregard snickerin'. And now it's really welcoming to see him with me. I needed someone on my level around, to help me get through with the rest of the night. Hmm... somebody I can actually relate with. Something that's freakin' new. Maybe I need to stop over dramatizing my own woes in life, before they get the best of me. Maybe?
“Would you do her?” Beau asks.
“You kidding me? You see how's she's blowing the fuck out of that brass instrument, right?”
And Beauregard smiles, seeing where I'm going with this.

But anyways, now time to find Qian, and save him from these sketchy women. And so, begins the search.
“Where do we start?” I go.
And we spend some time discussing it, or really, Beauregard spends some time retracing his steps. Which becomes just a task on my part, I feel, to listen to. The AD3 can be pretty ditsy sometimes, and directionless. Having some really terrible sense of bearing. It might be also something to do with how wobbly he is, wobbly drunk right now, as I'm drunk. Or, was. I feel like I'm starting to come out of it now. And also, my mood is improving. But, anyways, whether it's the booze or not, the Louisiana boy isn't even able to tell me the direction he came in from, and I saw him coming in from the west.

“Dude, you came down that street, if you've been searching all this time, you must have searched those spots, there.”
And I point at the bars over there and Beauregard does the whole rubbing his chin and going “hmm” thing. And this goes on with a few more questions. Until:
“Fuck it, this bar, here, have you checked?” I ask him.
“Hmm?” He goes, again.
To my irritation.
“Fuck it! Let's just try, already!”
And we head in.

There are a whole lot of bars here in Wan Chi, and the one thing you're going to find in each and every one of them, is, everything we've expected from the regular Buy-Me-A-Drink bar establishments, we've found elsewhere. Or, for me, personally, Japan. Since, that's the only Far East country I've been to, and now here. Like them, but also not. Like Ramona's “Funky's,” which is more like a downbeat third-rate Geisha parlor, but with a lot less emphasis on sex. Since the services at those buy-me-a-drink establishments aren't to service you much at all, physically, but doing that whole sitting with us, chatting, and smiling, pretending to be our girlfriends, and tending to our nonsexual needs. But also tempting them in the possibilities. Although, I know guys, and specifically Beau, here, that have fucked a couple of girls from Funky's. But that's different. Difference there being is that those girls wanted to fuck those Squids, that charmed them enough to get the consent. Not like what I'm sure this establishment is going to be about. Since it has nothing to do with consent. Sigh...! But, anyways, here we are. And what I see similar is how they're all owned by Filipinos. And ran by Filipina Mamasons. Like the one we're now being confronted with.
“Ah, Sailors! I love me some American Sailors! Where you boys coming in from? Yokosuka? San Diego? Norfolk? Where?” Goes the old matriarch.
Ha...! A thought now occurs to me, want to know the Navy slang term used to describe one of those places? Well: Norfolk, Virginia is “No-Fuck, Vagina.” Ha! Just felt like sharing... for no reason in particular, by random.

“Hey, beautiful, Maha kita!” Greets Beauregard.
And the Mamason goes:
“Oh, no, I'm no Filipina, I'm Indonesian.”
And... fine! I guess I'm being racist thinking she would be such. But, it's not my fault! Most of these establishments have been. Even Beauregard thought so, saying: “I love you” in Tagalog.
“How did you know we're Sailors?” I wonder.
Because, I now feel a little despicable being so, considering how easily the old woman is able to sniff us out. And, in an establishment like this. She now gives us a look, basically spelling out: “You kidding me?” And it's funny now to me how plainly obvious it is for her to know. I mean, I mean to say, we ain't exactly right now dressed for the part. We're dressed in civis. What is it that's giving off all the red flags that we're Navy, when we really could be anything. Our Navy regulated hairdos? I wonder. But no! Both of us are wearing New Era caps covering up our hair. And for me, personally, underneath that, I no longer have any Navy regulated anything, since, I'm practically shaved bald. Thanks to that whole Cousin It thing, which, thankfully, I was able to undo before this night.
“So, you boys are here for my girls, and, so, here they are.” The Mamason follows.
And I have to note, she's in front of a whole mess of short and young and anxious Pacifica type women, all staring at the two of us. A whole mess of them. And as I glance over them, I see them having a certain look in their eyes, as if, picturing themselves all bent over, and propping up their vulnerable receiving ends, to our domineering giving ends. A certain look of reluctance, of it all going down that road. If me, or Beau, were to now choose one of them, specifically. And right then, in the middle of that thought, I now eye the one I would choose: one with perky pink rouged lips, that has a mouth that seems to be stuck at pucker, and isn't able to cease from it to save her, her life. For that's just the way her mouth was built. Although, at first, I had tried to avoid eyeing her, but, that moment happened where I was at glance, and had locked onto her, not by will, but by lust. And I had spilled all the details of my choosing, before I even knew what I did. That's the thing about when one genuinely expresses themselves to others, it all happens just so instantaneously, in

the matter of mere microseconds. And after that moment, with my look of yearning, crossed with her look of refusing to play any part in it, which she shows very plainly and obviously enough, as she now turns her head and frowns. Seeing and getting sense of all this, even accidentally in the matter if microseconds, it's still enough to wound me, bad. Making me feel that level of morbid depression, again, that I was feeling before, at the club I was at. And feeling very despicable and worthless and pathetic and mangy, again. And unfortunately, also very, very, fiercely, pierced angry:

AHH! Fuckin' BITCH! You think you're better than me, too? HUH? A fuckin' WHORE? How dare YOU! How...!

Ah SHIT!
Quit it!
Quit it, Navastian, quit FEELING that despicable SHIT!

“Hello, Madame, you seen a little dorky lookin' Asian dude?” Asks Beauregard.
And... HA! Thank you, Beau! Thank you so much, for those words. Which have now managed to change completely how I was just feeling.
Snicker. Snicker.
I go.
Snicker. Snicker.

Yeah, a little Asian dude, with a big head, who thinks everything is “gross” and... haven't seen one of those around, have you? I want to say, but, I doesn't. And, aye! Just worked my way from morbid misogyny to insulting racism. And I feel homophobia of some form coming on, next. Wow, do I hate myself right now.
“No, I don't think so.” Says the Mamason.
And I sense some connotation in her tone.
“Let's try someplace else.” I tell Beauregard.
And Beauregard nods.

“Wait, wait? You two just got here. Aren't you sure you wouldn't want to stick around, your friend might eventually show up, and....”
The Mamason then turns her head a little towards her girls' direction, giving the cue, discreetly. And now, the whole bunch bloom up with smiles, as if the two of us aren't able to notice how hard they're now trying to fake it. Especially my favorite of the bunch, as if I didn't notice her refusing anything to want to do with me, before. But now, since there's money involved, there's nothing but rows and rows of fake smiles, hung up for us. Which I notice, that are now pissing me off! And then, Beauregard turns his head around, and eyes me all excited. And it's at this moment I realize, maybe, I'm just speaking for myself, in noticing all these telltale signs.
“He might come by?” Goes Beauregard.
And I look at him with eyes slit.
“No, let's get outta here, look someplace else.” I pressure.
And, as the two of us start to make our way out. Of course! That becomes the Mamason's cue to go:
“No, wait!”
And it's then the girls cue to run up and try to grab us, and not let us leave.
“Oh, no! You SEXY MAN! No WAIT!”
And one of the girls then pinches my butt cheek, and the one my wallet is in. Which gets me to quickly rush my hand fast towards it, as I grasp firmly onto the opening to that pocket, making sure none of them then tries to pick it.
“No, really! I mean it, you SEXY! Make me so HORNY!”
But the two of us are already out the doors.
“Navastian... those women WANTED US!” Stresses Beauregard.
And I feel like slapping him, now.
“Let's just find Qian, and leave.”
“Leave? What are you—”
“Let's just find him!” I now stress.
As I picture the one with the pink lipstick, again, and realize how much I REALLY didn't want ANYTHING to do with that crap. Truly! So, we go on. We go on to the

next bar, and to find no Qian, again. But, this time, us having to beat women off with a stick, for these women have been well rehearsed in being aggressive.

“Hey, you are one sexy Sailor boy. I LOVE YOU!”

Goes this one Pacifica type, looking very mean and scary. And this one doesn't pinch my butt cheeks. But, goes straight for my who-ha, and begins stroking it in front of everyone, and Beau to see.

“Damn, let's STAY!” Goes Beau.

Excited in the prospects of being next.

“No!” I go, to follow.

Then another bar, with once again no Qian. And then another, and another. And this time:

“Hey, ladies!” This establishment's Mamason goes.

And unlike the other spots, these women are seeming very, very desperate for commerce. The establishment is far more shittier and sleazier, and the women are pretty poor in quality. Also, in health. Desperate for commerce, to make some money. And not just to make a living, but to feed themselves, for they're mostly skin and bones. And not because they're Americans, with any freakish unheard-of reason to be such. Being “anorexic.” I mean. Who's heard of such made up nonsense here in the real world as that? In this 3rd world. Where they're skin and bones NOT because they want to be skin and bones. But, because of that real-world reason: they're STARVING! And I feel like just throwing out some money, out in good nature.

“Let's buy a drink from here!” Pops Beauregard, all excited.

And seeming clueless, once again, with all the telltale depressing shit, which has me growing very disappointed of him.

“Fine, let's, but only one, and then—”

“Right, right, Qian... he's a grown ass man, though! Let's not make it that much of a priority.” Goes Beauregard.

As he seems to be wanting to settle a bit. Seemingly tired of having searched so much and having missed out in all this action. So, we settle. We sit at a crummy booth with leather cushions, that are all worn and jaded and stained up black, with something or another. Also torn up a bit on one end, with foamy bits sticking out.

We settle, and so we do with two of the better-looking girls the Mamason picks out for us. As they sit down next to us, and now, so does the Mamason. WTF?
“So, what you boys drinking?” The Mamason goes.
Now part of our party, and I feel like we're continuously dealing with the same woman, from establishment to establishment. As if the damn woman be hopping from one spot to another, just for our sake.
“You Indonesian?” I ask.
“No, I'm a Filipina.” She answers.
But seriously, I really do believe it's the same woman, or maybe that's just the liquor in me, straining me of my abilities to tell the difference. For, I'm feeling sluggish, now. Really sluggish, and now I'm drinking again.
“Hey, you pay $400 Hong Kong dollar!” She goes, smiling.
“What? I just bought one drink?” I go.
And it's $7.8 HK to $1 American dollar. Or is it?
“No, no, for you, and girls, too.”
And I see one Tequila for me, and two vodkas on the rocks... or is it vodka? For they really look to be filled with clear tap water, for the two girls that sat with us. Although, made to look like a real drink, to make us think they're really drinking. So, three drinks? Okay, well besides that fact (if it's actual vodka, or really tap water, which I shouldn't pay at all for). But since I can't be sure, let's still say if each drink is $8 American, $8 x 7 = $56. But the exchange rate is $7.8 HKD... Ah shit! Or is that the Japanese... NO! Japanese is a 180 Yen to a dollar. So, $7.8 HKD...? Shit! I'm still too drunk to be doing math right now in my head, especially dealing with decimals. But. Fuck it! Just round it up, and times it by 8, so $8 x 8 = $64, $64 x 3 = shit! $64 + $64 = $128, $128 + $64 = $192 HKD. So, WTF? Why am I paying $400 HKD, then?
“Um, $400 HKD for three drinks?” I go.
“No, no, four drinks.” Goes the Mamason.
And lifts her own, while showing her pearly... not so pearly... EWW teeth! WTF she be sittin' with, wantin' tap water? WTF? GTFO of here you old HAG! But that still doesn't add up.

“Are you sure?” I go.
“Umm...?” Pouts she.
“How much does each drink cost?”
And she then gives a look like she really doesn't know herself. And just threw out asking for $400 HKD from the top of her head. Since, it sounded a lot.
“Honey!” She goes.
“These drinks are imported. Very expensive here in Hong Kong.” She reasons.
And now I feel very distraught, as I hand over that amount of cash. I want to question her over the value of each drink, again. But I'm losing my audacity to do so, and question. I'm losing it, feeling depressed, again, and like a total pushover, schmuck, and now drinking again. And frowning. While everyone else is smiling. With FAKE smiles.
“Drink is good.” Cheers the skinny bitch next to me, holding up her tap water.
And she's missing teeth, and the rest are browning. And it looks to be from malnutrition, since, the rest of her also looks malnourished. And it takes a really fucked up diet to have you losing your teeth over that. Making me feel pity, again. And, I gotta say... truly gotta say... it's a very unique feeling, to watch a person take advantage of you, right in front of you, but to feel unable to get upset or mad or even disappointed in what they're doing, since, you can't help but understand why they would be doing it in the first place. Very uniquely sad feeling. Very SAD in nature. For I must stress!
“Cheers!” Goes Beauregard.
And his inability to see any of this is really beginning to make me not like him. For, how can he not see any of these things going on? All these sad sights to behold. Filled with sad and rotten people. Ha! All he sees is lays around him, and below average ones, at that. But, then again, that's exactly why I came here, myself, in the first place. So, I really have no reason to judge.
“One more round of drinks, you buy... what's your name?” Asks the Mamason to me.
And I don't want to give her my name.
“Hey, Navastian, I'm running short on cash, could you buy me one, too?” Asks Beau.

And my displeasure of him really begins to grow.
“Fine.” I go.
Feeling like getting up and leaving.
“$500 Hong Kong dollar.”
“What?”
“Oh, buy my sister a drink, too!” Begs the Mamason.
And a woman then sits also at the booth, another old lady, that looks to be her twin.
And I hand the cash over, for, I don't know WHY!
“Oh, you big spender, you real man!” Goes one of the girls.
Nah, just a schmuck loser, so much so, I can't even stop someone from taking advantage of me, even when I see it happening right in front of my eyes. I think, as I fork over the amount. Then bottom my first drink, and as the second round comes up, I bottom that, too. And now decide not to spend another Hong Kong dime. However much that's really worth.
“All right, I'm leaving.” I say.
“But, no! The party is just starting, I'm thirsty, again.” Pouts the first Mamason.
All bouncing up and down like an excited sixty-year-old, little girl would do, all innocently, and she thinks I'm her daddy.
“Oh, and me, too.” Says the second Mamason.
All bouncing up and down, also. Since she thinks I'm here to adopt her, as well. And the bitch hasn't even finished her tap water, since, there's still a little left at the bottom. And then, I grab the drink, and drink it.
“Hey, that's mine.” She goes.
And, as I thought, FUCKIN' tap water! No alcohol in it at all. You know! I take it back. I'll feel pity for the young girls in here for the conditions they're forced to be living in. But not these fat old CODS! For, they're fat, too! And seem much more well-nourished then the army of girls they've probably rounded up off the streets to do their slaved labor living. And, all the money they make is going towards keeping their fat asses, FAT! And... I don't think I can stand being around these two disgusting human beings, without wanting to sock one or the other in the fuckin' mouth, any longer. And... I'm OUTTA here!

“Noooo! Don't gooo! The party is just starting!” The old hag tries, again.
All pouting, again, like she's just full of playful innocence. But I doesn't.
“Hey, Navastian, I'm staying here.” Informs Beauregard.
And I just look at him and shake my head.
“Fine!”
“You going to go look for Qian some more?” He asks.
And, I don't know why he does anymore, since, he obviously doesn't care anymore.
“Maybe.” I say.
And now truly leave.

RED LIGHT ROXANNA

I'm out on the street, again, feelin' really tipsy. I shouldn't have chugged those last two drinks, for they've gone to my head. Since, they were real alcohol, which those Mamasons would have loved to fill me up more with. I know! Wow...! Oh God, what am I doing in this shithole? I think, again. And hearing no response from above, again, has me accepting how much God would also want to stay away from a place like this, with all the sinful shit that's going down. And, we ain't even in Thailand, yet. You hear stories about the level of defilement that supposedly goes down in places like those. And even these. But it's one thing to hear stories, it's another to experience them, and have them be your stories. Filled with your consequences. And now, I try to count up my cash, again. And... all right, now I have $6,500 HKD. And that doesn't feel right. Wait! Count it again, Navastian!

Okay, now it's $6,200 HKD... even less? How much did I spend since I last counted? How much was the sum, before, when I did my tally? Where did all that fuckin' money go? Sigh! I go now. And I feel guilty I didn't spend more money on those poor starving women, for some reason. But that's NOT my responsibility! They're not my responsibility. So, what's with the guilt? Sigh! I go, again. What am I seriously doing in this shithole? I think a third time. And, this time, I feel ready to really leave, and leave this whole district behind. For, I'm no longer in the mood, and the mood I feel is replaced with feeling like complete shit.
“Hey.” Goes an extremely gorgeous Chinese street urchin out here with me.

Then gives a very tender smile.
“Hey.” I respond, back.
To my unwillingness. But, somehow, she gets it out of me, and I can't figure out how she manages.

There's a moment of pause, now, and it's me standing out here with my wallet out, again, and this gorgeous... very gorgeous woman, standing with, and staring. And there's something very different about her. Something much more refined, and dignified, and personal, in comparison to the rest of our surroundings. Wan Chi? Here is a place I doesn't feel like I belong, and even though she does, it feels like she really shouldn't belong, either. For she should be above all this. And... what's going on?
“You know, you really shouldn't have your wallet out like that. Counting your money in a place like this.” She comments.
Very directly, yet playfully, and to make me feel foolish.
“Yeah, I know that!” I go.
Snapping back, since, I sorta liked the playfulness she presents. For it feels in kindred of my more friendlier nature, when I'm speaking with people that I like.
“So... Mr. Hot Shot Sailor... whatcha doin' out here with all that green?”
“None of your business.” I go.
But she gets me to smile, as she follows up with one herself.
“How you know I'm a Sailor.” I ask.
Since it's, once again, that plainly obvious. I mean, I could be just about anyone. I could be any type of Westerner. How does she know what I am? How? How do I stick out that stereotypically? Since, the city is also filled with tons of Westerners, tons of those tourists, that I can tell ain't Sailors. Yet... I can tell they ain't? Since, I doesn't sense the stereotypical presence in them... wait? Okay, how do I know?
“What else would you be?” She goes.
“I don't know, I could be some rich international businessman.” I fancy.
“Dressed like that?” She mocks.
“What, how am I dressed?” I mope.

And now, I have her laughing at me. Laughing very enthusiastically. And boldly. And amorously. And I find myself liking it more than I'd like.
“What, how am I dressed?”
“Like a Navy guy!” She answers.
And she widens her eyes with a whole lot of personality and sarcasm when she does. Making me really admire all that she's featuring. Really admire. And take notice.

So.
Want to get some intel? All the input she's leaving me with. Well: let's start off with her personality, considering how much of it there really is present, compensating. And I say compensating, since, her beauty would have really had me expecting her to be bland and boring and mean, and discouragingly superficial. Since, in my mind, being beautiful on the outside = being an ugly bitch on the inside. Ugly, mean, self-absorbed, and cruel. So, I see it as compensation, since, she needs a lot of it to make me think otherwise, and, make me like her, and not feel intimidated by her, and not just making me want to spitefully fuck her out of lust. Aye! I know how despicable that sounds. But, this is the night for me to be so. So quit judging! As if you never been tempted to want to just fuck someone out of spite and lust, to put yourself over them, and feel better. Wow, I'm really despicable right now... but anyways, let's get on with her personality: as heavily influenced by the American culture, it's still purely Chinese. So, it's exotically quaint. And her thick accent is exotically quaint, too. Which makes me love how Americanized it also is. Eastern raised with MTV sensibilities. So, her manners are a little rude, and sassy, but still playful and friendly enough to not come off negatively. That's a plus to me, since, that means she would know my likes, and dislikes, even though the two of us have grown up worlds apart. We still wouldn't feel lost in cultural translation. Now, back to looks, since, they're also so prominent: right now, what I have before me is an extremely gorgeous Oriental woman. I mean... extremely gorgeous! Enough to make someone that might not be into Asians want to change his or her ways. She's tall. Very tall. And thankfully so, all thanks to her long milky legs, that are in full display,

considering how short and tight her skirt is. (Yes! Legs will play the most outstanding physical feature in women, I'll be making notice of, time and time again, in this book, over everything else. Since, I'm attracted to them most of all). And besides all that, she's even wearing longer heels, which have her raised up to nearly by 6 feet. She's wearing a black skirt. A black top. And then there's her blue leather jacket, that's very shiny and flamboyant lookin'. Very alpha and prime and just... stud! Also, very 80s—I'd say—with all those zippers and flashy bits sticking out, covered with buttons and other forms of shiny metallic objects. I really love her blue leather jacket! Gots to mention! Since, I can see it's very 80s in style, considering, how large and domineering its collar is built. Unlike the jackets I see people wearing today, that are very oversized and casually fitted (with weak collars, showing off a weak libido, just like everything else 2000s be about). But, the collar on this jacket? Wow! And they're all popped out and towering up to her ears. Also, the jacket is very small, even though as mean lookin' as it is. Very, very feisty lookin'. But, perfectly well fitted on her, considering, how small her torso is in comparison to the rest of her body. She had to have found this in a vintage clothing shop. There's nowhere else you could have found such a rare treasure from that decade such as this (that, or, the 80s just arrived here, in Hong Kong, and, I'm just not aware of it). As for her face: there's something very sweet and cute about it. Innocent, almost, in a way, which is completely contrasted with the rest of what she's built with. She has a very pretty Chinese face, that's all oval and full and welcoming. Very girl next door, in a sense, that is if your neighborhood was in Chinatown, LA. Which, then again, isn't very far from the part of LA I originated, so, I totally get that sense. And, one final note: gotta say, I love her bangs, too, which are totally hiding her forehead, and also her eyebrows. Leaving me with no expressions, but hair and eyes. Giving her a very dissembled feel, but in a mysterious sort of way. And I love it for... whatever reason. Her do is really a bobcut, although, I must note, and must note because of how very streetwalker in nature I feel it is for a girl to have. Something about bobcuts, and being part of the red light, I feel really goes well together, hand in hand. Like hot fudge over chocolate ice cream. Practically cocoa on more cocoa! Just all very devilish, with only the cold and hot mixture distinguishing each taste.

“So, what's Navy about me?” I ask.
Just ‘cause I want to hear more of her sass, that she seems full of. I love womanly sass! I don't know why, but I does. She now looks me up and down, and busts up a bit more, very hearty laughs, filled with pure joy, taking me all in, and giving me a look like she wants to let me have it.
“I don't know where to begin.” She goes.
“Anywhere.” I go.
“I mean... look at how you're dressed.” She highlights.
And then showcases with her hand at the clothes I'm wearing.
“This ain't a Uniform.” I say.
And she now gives me a look, which has me figuring that it has to be that. I guess what I'm wearing really does fit the billet on what's getting her to think as such. I mean... I'm dressed like some inner-city hoodlum, with all this hip hop influenced clothing, right now. Lookin' very urban and thuggish, in a country where there ain't no reason to be, since, it ain't the right setting. Any other Westerner would have decided to dress much more appropriately to come off as a well-received ambassador to their country, and not some blue-collar brute, in which ways I've decided to present myself. But since I'm Navy, with all my uncouth, unrefined, uncivilized Military Bearing. Well...?
“Trust me, you're no businessman!” She affirms.
Then shakes her head, calling me out on it.
“What? I could be.” I go.
“You're dressed like some guy that I'd expect to be beating someone's face in, in the street, not doing business in a suit, in some high-rise building.” She goes.
Which gets me snickering.
“Maybe, I'm in disguise.”
“Ha!” She derides.
“What if I am?”
“Oh, really?” She continues to deride.
And rightfully so, considering how stupid the proposal is.

“I don't know... you could be a business executive, only dressed like that on your night off... I guess, for some reason.” She says.
Playing along.
“But I've dated those types before, they're not very... take charge, as they'd like to come off. Actually, more whiny and needy, with hardly any qualities of a real man.”
And after saying that, she then looks up at me, and her words are now striking me peculiar. Setting off something in me, I doesn't quite grasp yet.
“No, you're too rough around the edges.” She goes.
“Really?” I go.
“Yes, and too masculine.”
And the second she says: “Masculine” I now grasp it. I now fully grasp it, and I get fully horny. Very, very, fully horny. All of a sudden.
“Masculine?” I go.
“Oh, yeah!” She follows.
Eyes all slit and sensual, striking a spark in me, to have me lighting up into flames.
“Oh, so, that's how you read me.” I say.
And I piss myself off. As I find myself undermining myself, for whatever reason. As if to get her to go deeper.
“Yeah!”
“You can read me that well—huh?”
“Like a book.” She establishes.
And I get the sense I'm talking to some psyche major, that's only doing all this street walking thing to pay her way through college. She's intelligent, no doubt about that.
And what I worry, is, maybe too intelligent? And for me, that is.
“Okay, if you can read me that well from front to back, give me some of the cliffnotes?” I ask.
Trying to come off as also being smart but getting too metaphorical in the process with my words. I feel.
“Well, let's see, on the surface, you're coming off as being very physical and direct. And not because you're trying to be. Like that almost naturally, since you're always dealing with it. Being around other very aggressive and take-charge men, like

someone that would be being in the Military, which has managed to really rub off on you." She assesses.
Then takes a slow, sensual, and well-paced step towards me. Slow. And seeming to be achin' for something I gots.
"But only on the surface, and deep down, you're not really like that. Would like to seem hard and masculine, but only to measure up to all the other boys." She further assesses.
And with that line, practically kills it. My libido, that is. As I grow overly self-aware and awkward. And why she is, now, I don't know. But she has me feeling fully exposed and barren now.
"Tough exterior. But deep down, you're also very sensitive." She says, then.
With her head at tilt, as if studying me in a different angle. And now, I feel why she got me feeling exposed and barren with the last line. So, she could really get to my senses with this one. As she takes another step, all sensual paced like she's still achin' for some.
"Very masculine and overbearing on the outside, which might intimidate some girls...."
And as she takes another step, I grow a little too sensitive to her presence. But, I'm feeling like I absolutely love it, and can't get enough of.
"But if only some girls can be so lucky and see what you really are... on the inside."
One final step, and now she couldn't get any more closer, unless, if she was willing to mount me, right here and now. And, now I'm achin' for it. Feeling fully extended, and willing.
"He, hee, he, hee!" I'm snickering, now.
And feeling fully enticed. Horny. And anything but intimidated and weary, and all the crap I've felt over the course of this night. I feel that way, as my chest feels to cook warm, as my loins begin to open from the blood rushing in.
"He, hee, he, hee!"
And now she's snickering along with me, joining in on my fun. And it really is a joy to feel and see. Especially from such a beautiful creature like her. With someone like me able to obtain it.

“How much?” I ask.
“A lot!” She answers.
And she isn't going to hide it. Play stupid games. Or pretend this, or pretend that. She's being thoroughly honest with me. And, I feel like I can appreciate that.
“How much?” I ask, again.
Since I'm bought now and wanting this.
“$2,000 US dollars.” She lays on me, without even a flinch.
And she's now playing hardball, staring at me, hard and fierce, opening and closing all negotiations, right then and there. Showing anything less, she'd would take as an insult to her name and worth. For she knows she'd really should be worth more. And I know it, too. I'd pay more for something like this, that is if I had any.

Whiskey Tango Foxtrot, Navastian? You'd pay more? Don't get stupid, now! Don't! I think to myself. But, now I wonder if it really is worth it. I mean, as I said, she really is, but if it is, having sex with her, now, that is...?
“Can't we just enjoy this a little bit more?” I ask, a little desperately.
And she shakes her head.
“Sorry, handsome, even though you're not here to do business, I am.”
And now I'm depressed, again. She's just so direct, but also a little too direct. Which I completely admire. But $2,000 American dollars? $2 thou? Whiskey Tango BARNACLES!
“So, how much for the hotel room, though?” I ask.
Since I know just the $2 grand alone would only cover her, and not the room expenses.
“Oh, don't worry, I'm staying over there at the Hilton, executive suit. I'm not going to make you spend a dollar more if you're willing to do it with me, with the $2 grand, alone.” She answers.
And, unholy shitbucket! An executive suit? But only for a few hours with this woman, here, and I really feel like it really would be worth it all. I mean, so what if I blow a lot of my hard-earned cash on this woman? So what...? After this, I'll be on the Boat, again, saving up all my nickels and dimes. Saving it up, since, I have no other

expenses. The Navy feeds me, clothes me, and supplies a roof... I mean, a Flightdeck... whatever! Over my head. And by the time I get to Thailand, there will be another grand, maybe? But, this time, for me to save, since, I won't be out whorin', again. Since, I doesn't feel like I'm going to get anything as good as this, here. Not in Thailand! Not that filthy place. And this woman here feels so refined, and well educated... and confident! Wow, is she confident! No! I'm not getting anything this good in a long, long while. I need to accept it and take the opportunity. Women don't come as good as this! They don't! Donnelly was right about that one thing: how most women are all easily intimidated, and sexually frustrated, simply being in the same room with a guy they might like. That's all I saw from the Fuc and Suc club. And that's all I felt, and that crap has a way of rubbing off on people. Right now, I feel GOOD! Because this woman makes me FEEL good! Those women in that club had made me feel like GARBAGE. Same as AT3 Oilerking had before, and same as AM3 Rosario had before that. And why...? Because they WERE garbage. For, in the end... people only make you feel, what they're feeling themselves. They made me feel inadequate, alone, and unworthy. And that's maybe how they were feeling about themselves, and, expecting someone to come around and change all that. Someone like Barbarossa or Donnelly, that know how to be that for women. Do EVERYTHING, that is! But, I at least need a woman that's willing to meet me half way.

I don't know why I am contemplating over this so much, my mind heading in this direction, but I am. And...?
And...?

And, what matters, is, I NEED THIS! I need it! Need to feel this good. So, when I head back to the Boat, and have to deal with more of Falky and Senior, and the rest, I'll at least feel like a MAN doing so. And not some pathetic, fuckin' nothing, lowlife, despicable, creepy schmuck, bastard, like how everything else has made me feel tonight! I need this from this woman, even if she's the one that's now doing EVERYTHING for—

“Fine!” I accept.
“Oh, by the way, my name is Roxanna.” She now introduces.
And now this Roxanna, and I, we both smile at each other, getting a sense of one another, and how in a few minutes from now, the two of us are going to be exploring other senses, as well. More into one another. All there to explore.

I'm at the ATM, again. I have the cost needed to do this, and still some HKD left for the day after tomorrow, to enjoy whatever else is left of my final stay in Hong Kong. I think?

Now we're entering the hotel. The place is all very richy, and well decorated with refined and detailed tapestry. Lots of detail put into the architecture. Since, it's a building that has its own sense of real worth. Unlike the worthless hunk of floating mishmash metal, I call home. If you want to know what something of true worth looks and feels like, look at all the attention to detail that was placed in creating it. Attention to detail, and love. For it takes love to make something worth this much. Create something that looks and feels important. Love. Not money. Even if it takes money to buy it. But why must you have those artist starving, when they're capable of creating something THIS beautiful? “Attention to detail!” They do nothing but stresses in the Navy. “Pay attention to detail!” But none of us do. Since, none of us really care about all that crap, and they have us always at procrastination, and at indifferent. Not caring jack squat about them, since, the Navy really doesn't care jack squat about us. What a fancy joint this hotel is. I see hardly any overhead ceiling above me, for the walls are just stretching up that high, to where I find it lost somewhere up there, way over our head.

I'm in the elevator now. And now in a hall headed for her room. And now we're in. And after coughing up the 2 grand, we gets settled, Roxanna eyes me and says then: “Go to the bathroom, take off all your clothes, and start taking a shower.” She orders. In her way. The way that would make me want to obey her and be all subordinate like.

“Where are you going to be?” I ask, a little naively.
“Getting ready to joins you in a minute.” She answers.
Still with a little bit of sass. And now she has me at my most feverishly pitched. Also, anxious. And a little lightheaded, and...! Oh wow! This is really happening! This is really, really happening! And with someone as beautiful as her. It really is! No joke, happening. And I feel... and I feel... I don't know? It's that state that guys like Frankowsky are always striving to feel, every moment of every waking day in their lives. Just feeling completely bare and ecstatic, towards all those very exciting experiences, which your mind just can't wait for. Just can't! Every sensation feeling shot, and open, and bare, and danced, and pranced, and excited, and used, and abused and set on fire. But used and abused and set on fire—in a good way! I am at feverishly pitched now. And I can barely walk over to the bathroom to start taking off all my clothes. But now I have managed. And now naked, every inch of me feels shot and bare to the world. This ol' flesh is finally going to get something to make it feel different tonight. No more just US property. Well, at least not for the next few hours. Four and a half to be precise, since it's 2230ish now, noticing from the clock that was hung up on a wall in the main room. But what if we still has Cinderella Liberty? I think, then. Wondering whether Beauregard had fed me credible information or not. Wondering... but then realizing I should be willing to take ANY punishment for this. Any EMI, DRB, Captain's Masses, whips, gags, lashings. Making me motherFLIPPIN' walk the motherFLIPPIN' plank. Should be willing to take any hit. For I DOESN'T care! I shouldn't be giving a shit! Barnacles! Hell! This is all that matters right now. A billion times more than all that fake honor and duty crap that I had been promised at MEPS, when I had pledged in. Promised, but never received. And now I see her naked, and I thought she was a gorgeously built woman before. For what a body! What a bod! I marvel. And I see her enter the shower with me. She looks at me for a moment. Just stands there and silently stares at me all null. I doesn't know why...? Maybe to savor the moment. But for whatever reason, it's affective, for it has me at my most anticipated. She then...?
No...!

She doesn't kiss me on the lips. But she made it seem like she would. Which lost me for a second, as she seemed lost. But now she crotches down in front of me, and looks up at with with those eyes all slit again, and slit not because she's Asian, but making them that way to seem all sensual and sexy and all other adjectives starting with an “s.” And then she stops looking at me, and now looks at it. And then begins. And so... there you go! Aye! It's happenin'. That moment Squids like us all are always waitin' and cravin' for, is finally happening. And...
“Mmm!” She moans out while at it.
And as horny as I am, I feel the feeling being crossed with ones that are humorous.
“Mmm!” She goes, again.
Getting all excited and bopping her head about on its end. And, as I marvel the sight. I do so for a while. While trying to get a feel of it. Since being blown by a real woman is not something I've been very accustomed to in my life (aye, there, my left hand, how come you can’t do me like this woman can right now—so watch and learn). And having something alive on the other end of it feels a little weird now. And...
“Mmm!” She goes, again, some more.
And now, for some reasons, I can't help but to focus my mind on other matters. Pestering thoughts are entering my mind, being very distracting. When this moment HERE and NOW is all that should matter.

Fuckin' Beauregard! Is it zero three? Or is it still midnight? How can you not be sure about things like these? Do you know the level of trouble we can get into if we head back late? I could be facing DRB and be placed on Liberty Risk. And even though I just a second ago felt like I could risk it—nay! Nay, not that I can’t. But I rather not. And I don’t want it to be a Cinderella Liberty. And I'd really would like to spend one more night out here in Hong Kong, before we sail back out.
“Mmm!” Goes Roxanna.
Speeding up the process, seeming to be even more excited. For... whatever reasons?

Fuckin' Qian! Fuck him! I feel. But, then again, I hope he wasn't completely taken in by this whole red-light experience. Fuck him! But, still, he's still just a naive kid, and

just unsure of himself and his feelings, and I know he'd be even more oblivious when it came to the feelings of these women. And how they would see him as nothing but a big fat and stuffed piggy bank, prime to be breakin' into and looted. Since, being here, I've felt like I've been sharp to deal with all this, but even I, as hard as I've tried to manage, have been taken in and been taken advantage of.
“Mmm! Oh, it's so big!”
Wow, this woman is beautiful!
“Mmm! You ready to cum yet?” She stops and asks.
But then continues when I doesn't answer. I could have had Rosario doing this. And I know she wanted to. She did!
“Mmm!”
AT3 Oilerking? Hmm... all right! As much as I'd fancy it, I don't see her as the fellatio giving type. And, actually, the picture of that really wouldn't feel befitting of her. A girl like her sucking a guy off? Feels like it would be complete contradiction to her character. Something very below her. She's a girl that's been raised within those Bible belt states. The idea of performing something like this would be but heinously sinful to her. Shamefully so. Damning! And hedonistic. Downright EVIL! For, for her fellatio = acts of the DEVIL! Ha! And I can now picture her socking me in the mouth if she even knew it had crossed my mind.
“Hey... you enjoying this?” Roxanna directs at me.
Seeming very skeptical about it.
“Yeah! Yeah...! Hell yeah! I'm loving it!” I... I lie?
Roxanna now does her head tilting thing. And just looks. As I grow anxious, for, it means she's lookin' into me, and scrutinizing my involvement.
“Well, I think I loosened you up a bit. You've looked tense since I met you. Want us to get to bed, and get to the real thing?” She offers now.
And I nod! Heavily! For, this isn't how it's supposed to be. I should be enjoying all this. Immensely! I should be. And I'm now feeling very, very awkward now that I ain't. Stop thinking of Rosario, and especially Oilerking! Stop! Those women reject—... well, Oilerking did. Rosario? If she no longer would be willing to do this with you, it's YOUR fault. You're the one that rejected every advancement she tried to make.

Me and Roxanna are now in the bedroom. I like this Roxanna. She's a very tender prostitute, spent a good long while wiping me down with a towel all sensually and pamperingly. In the head... er, bathroom, I mean! She's good at what she does. Good! Really good! And really receptive. Roxanna now prowls over to the bed on all fours. And is now on the bed, circling, like some predatory cat would do, circling some meat. My eyes keep going towards her genitals. They seem open and in heat. And thinking them being such to get me back in the mood. The point of being here, doing all this, having spend $2 FUCKIN' GRAND was to enjoy debasing myself to all this animalistic primal fucking, I mean! And I need to get myself into the mood to get my money's worth. So... yeah! Keep staring at it! Get into the mood, Navastian! Then be a man, and mount her, and TAP that SHIT! Fuck her brains out! Be a fuckin' man! Don't be a schmuck. I try to motivate myself. But then think of the word "schmuck," look down at my member, and notice I'm sorta flaccid. WTF! WTF be going on?

"Hey, Sailor boy, I see you staring at my goods. Why don't you get up here, and fuck it!" Roxanna talks, all enthusiastically.

So playful along with her movements and actions. Especially when using the f-word. And so antsy, too! As she circles around on all fours a little faster. And now I does so. I get up there to the plate, and begin batting away. Even though still a little flaccid.

There's nothing now sensual and playful, and anything such about this experience. I'm just straight up nailing this Roxanna like a dog, at doggie style.

"Ahh, ah, ah!" Roxanna is orgasm-ing really loud.

All of me is now hot and prime and tense and sweaty, all into this, but, as for what my thoughts are being: fuckin' Beauregard! Please tell me you knew WTF you were talkin' about! I don't want to get DRB! I don't want to get Liberty Risk. And in Thailand, miss my time out with... WTF!

And then, a notion goes through me, that fucks me up to the core.

“Hey, don't stop! You doing good! Keep going! Ahh!” Roxanna tells me, all sweaty and breathin' heavily.
And I continue along and does so. Just for her sake.

Whiskey Tango Foxtrot, Navastian? Is that the reason you're not into this, now? Is that it? Donnelly? Really? No! NO! That can't be! No! I've... it's never occurred to me like such! Why would I even consider that possibility now? At the worse FUCKIN' time IMAGINABLE!
“Ahh! Ahh!” Goes Roxanna, continuously.
As I continue to confound over the possibilities.

Me and Donnelly? How? How, I ask... HOW?
“Ahh! Ahh! Oh, YES!”

I'm fuckin' a gorgeous woman right now! And all I now have in mind is him and me, and the possibilities. The shit storming possibilities, as I feel like I'm discovering things into myself, as a person, I wasn't fully aware of, until now. Now, here, in this moment, with a gorgeous, gorgeous woman, and all I can thinks about is...?

NO! It's not possible! My mind is playing tricks on me right now. No! NO! Don't fuckin' imagine FUCKING HIM! NO!
“Ahh! Ahh!”
No! I'm not gay! And not for him... that's not even a possibility! There's nothing sexual about... NO! NO! Don't imagine FUCKING him, AGAIN!
“Ahh! Ahh!”
What is it, then? What's going on with me? I doesn't understand!
“Oh, it feels so FUCKIN' GOOD!” Goes Roxanna.
As I continue to bang her. And after a long, long, very long moment, while at it. Banging away! I really start contemplating all those possibilities. All the emotions churning within me, as I allow for them to churn, and cook, and mix, and simmer.

Allow them, so as to allow myself to get a feel of it and everything now. For: why am I not enjoying this? I ask, myself.
“Ahh! Ahh! Harder!” She goes.
And now I begin to ask myself: but if I'm not... why is she? And as I ponder that, I then get it. And get what it all means. Fully and completely. Except the Donnelly part! Fuck that notion, and the—notion! Not Donnelly!

“Ahh! Ahh!”
This is all just so fake.
“Ahh! Ahh!”
All of this! Fake! It is!
“Ahh! Ahh!”
So much of my time has been invested trying to reach for these moments. When it's never been anything I've really been asking for.
“Ahh! Ahh!”
I don't want this! This all feels so premature.
“Ahh! Ahh!”
Really, what I enjoyed most with Roxanna, here, was everything leading up to this. I really enjoyed talking to her. Getting a feel for her.
“Ahh! Ahh!”
Which was also FUCKIN' FAKE! I lament. As I grow thoroughly depressed. While I continue banging Roxanna away. Banging away. Tapping away. For I can't stop it. For, I've been set into motion, and now, I can't do nothing but stay in motion. For: Newton's law... I guess? And I have to at least finish what I started.
“Ahh! Ahh!”
And the thing is, all that mattered, is now lost to me. My moment with this Roxanna woman. For up until, and even now, it's all been fake. It's been an act. One great and spectacular act that she's played to get me to do all this, so she could get to what's she's really been wanting.
“Ahh! Ahh!”

My money of course! But what else did I expect? She IS a creature of the night. And, she IS all about the money. Being driven by her nocturnal nature to hunt and breed. And nothing of what by a normal person would be driven by.
“Ahh! Ahh!”
And as I think of the “L” word. I grow overly cynical with myself. As a child would trying to also comprehend it. For it's something I'm that far away from, and immature about. For I obviously know nothing about it, if I'm to confuse THIS with THAT!
“Ahh! Ahh!”
Seriously, Navastian, she's a FUCKIN' WHORE! What did you expect? How did I become this pathetic? How? I ponder. As I try to contemplate a way to get out of this, and somehow get out of paying $2 grand in cash, for something as empty and as hollow and meaningless as this. Which I am doubting I'll be able to do.
“Ahh! Ahh! Hey... ahh! You almost done yet?”
But I says nothing. Nothing.

SHIPS PASSING IN THE NIGHT

Man, was that an awkward experience. Man, was it so! Damn, was it! Barnacles! Hell! And all that crap! And what was most awkward about it all, besides that whole fuckin' moment I imagined I was porking Donnelly! Besides that! Which WENT unexplained! As I'd like it to STAY unexplained! Besides all that, was then trying to awkwardly bow out from the whole transaction, after Roxanna turned her head around, and started staring at me all peculiar, while I continued to screw in her pooch. For, at that moment, she was most definitely certain something was off, seeing as to how she couldn't continue pretending like it was just another routine night, and I was just another dumb, happy-go-lucky, routine john. Buying completely into her act and feeling content and fully accomplished as a man for it. And something was definitely off, considering, how awkwardly I then stared back at her, like, I was all confused as to what was going on, and what she and I were doing. Since, me having my penis in her wasn't obvious enough! I mean, wow, was that an awkwardly bullshittin' experience—I tell ye! Damn, was it so! But, I guess if anything, she could tell then exactly what was going on with me, considering the fact that she was so good up until then in reading me. And, it was the only last real moment I was able to share

with her, even if the moment was full of me with deer in headlights reaction towards her, when I noticed she noticed. And it was only after... well, not after I finished. Since, I didn't! But after I lied to her that I did, that she realized. Since she asked a couple of times after we had ourselves those uncomfortable stares. Asked! And then began mirroring the complete and utter disappointment I was feeling, coming to terms with how none of it was what I wanted. And then! Must note: damn was she quick to stop when she did. And get up. Get dressed. And get to asking my awkward ass to get the fuck out of there, before my discouragement and disappointment in all that could start affecting her, personally, and having her seriously contemplating everything she was doing in her life, that would leave her questioning. Damn was she quick to spare herself of THAT painful moment—I tell ye!

But, anyways... I'm now wandering the streets again. Just a moment ago having exited that luxurious hotel. And now, back to wandering the old and harsh night. And we still have ourselves some very heavy and dense cloud cover hung over this Eastern city of lights. That has now grown noticeably dim, since, it's almost at the midnight hour. Or is it? I can't tell, for, I forgot and left my watch back in the room. It's a cold and harsh windy night right now, (although, lucky me, no "freezing nuts off" thing since it isn't bothering me much since I still got an alcohol buzz and I have that drunk insulator effect). I now have no clue where the fuck I'm headed. The city has really grown very dim, there's barely much illumination anywhere about me, and I don't even know which way to head to head back towards my Ship. Although, there are still some lights here and there, scattered in this sea of darkness. As I feel the wind, and the cold, and how I am sad now. Stuck with such a lonely fate. But one thing is good of these winds is... as I head headlong into them, feeling them cascade over the contours of my face, as they chill it stiff. And hard. And make it feel like it's shrinking my facial structure in size (which really cold air can do that to your face, making it hurt), as my eyeballs grow frozen solid, and unable to pan and look about me. The one thing that's good, is, even though I don't know where exactly I be headed. The one thing I do know, is, these winds all day and into the night long, have been blowing in from the sea, and I am at least somewhat sure I heading into

them will lead me back to where I came. Just keep fighting the currents, and you should get through all this, Navastian. I tell myself, and so boldly continue, for there's nothing else I can do. And the only thing keeping me warm are my actions, moving fast, heading head long into these winds, and fighting them off, and all the freezin' chillin' hell they bring.

Stop thinking of her! I tell myself, then. Missing her... somehow? Even though all I had of her was all she was only willing to give. Which wasn't much. Wasn't her. Just a character she had created for sorry ass johns like me. To entice. By exciting my male senses, by making them feel deserving and appreciated. But only feeding me exactly what I'd like to imagine was what I needed to keep me going. And I can only imagine how much practice she's had in making it feel authentic. And anything but fake. But, it felt so real! She felt so real! I mean, she got me to fork or $2 FUCKIN' GRAND! How can someone that feels that genuine really be fake? Wonder I, and then I begin assessing how it could, and how she could. Make me grow curious of her likes, what she's had to have gone through in her life to make her so good at being manipulative. For, maybe there was a time she wasn't all smoke screen and mirrors? And what she had to express really was genuine? And her lovable personality really was also genuine? Maybe, there was a time her expressing herself in that way was real, and not fake, but after having then gone through one too many hardships and disappointments in life, it eventually made her grow cold. And left her with the choice to use those genuine attributes she always had, but not for anything genuine, but to playthings out to her advantage...? Huh? I ponder, as I come to understand just how much of a sad story that would be, if it really was hers. So sad! And, oh so depressing! Aye! Roger that! I do ponder too FUCKIN' much into these things! Too fuckin' much! Ruminate and ruminate and ruminate some more in these sweet and sour aftertastes! Which does nothing but make me feel like absolutely shit in the end. So, it's doing nothing for me beneficially. For it makes me feel like crap. But, why do I? When no one else would. AD3 Beauregard wouldn't. Falky wouldn't. Nor Rudy, nor Barbarossa, really. Just me, because, I'm an overly sensitive ass Sailor, for doing such. Overly! And unnecessarily! Maybe I shouldn't, and learn to

be ignorant and uncaring, and learn to live life that way? Maybe I am a... NO! Don't start that, now, I don't know what the hell that was about. But, I've NEVER experienced it before. So I can't be that! And I can't just BECOME that, out of the blue!

Maybe I just haven't met the right person to make me... STFU!

“Oh shit, Navastian, where the fuck you come from?” Goes... AE3 Brockhausen?
And... he's with a couple of girls.
“Brock?” I go.
After reaching a corner and seeing him and these two turning into me.
“What a night! What a fuckin' night!” Blasts Brock, all pissed drunk and wasted.
Mouth wide open, eyes piercely fierce! Straining all port and starboard, and cascading them off and out through the night. Really seeming totally out there. Drunk! Off his fuckin' dockers! Punked! And now very, very, very glad to see me.
“Woo!” Goes Brock!
And then:
“Woo!” Goes the stupid girls he's with.
Also, very, very, very drunk, also. And also, pretty. And I apologies for calling them stupid. But, it's so immediately obvious that they are. For they're as dumb as they are loud as they are obnoxious... as they are PRETTY! And I have this all assessed in a fraction of a second, after meeting them for the first time in my life. For it's that quick! For all pretty, young and dumb things, are all the same.
“Woo!” Goes Brock, again.
And then stumbles over to me, grabs me, and kisses me on the... WTF!
“What the fuck are you—”
“Shut up, Navastian! Shut the FUCK up, you mopey ass BITCH, and learn to enjoy things a little!” He says.
And that reminds me of someone else that had said it.
“Hey, Brock? Has liberty been extended to zero three?” I ask.

Since it's still on my mind, even though, it's obvious it would be with Brock still out at this hour.

“Yeah, why? You... worried we might... get into... BURP!” Brock tries to stutter together.

Then aborts near the end of the sentence, and with a belch. Since, he's that fuckin' drunk to be able to form complete sentences. And now, goes on to look at the girls he's with, smiles, as they smile back, then looks at me.

“Fuckin' join us! Prick one... I mean... pick! Ha, ha!” Goes Brock.

Laughing at the girls as they laugh back.

“Pick... one! Even though I AM the MAN right now, I can't handle... two bitches! Too fuckin' DRUNK! So, PICK! Or PRICK! HA, HA!” Brock blurts out.

And as he does, the two then stare at me, as if they took zero offensive to anything Brock just said.

“Umm?” I go.

“Don't be an awkward pussy-ass BITCH... pick one!” Goes Brock.

“Woo, YEAH! Pick one!” Goes one of the blondes.

And I'm not so sure if she knows what exactly I'm supposedly picking. She might have been too drunk to understand a word Brock just said. And all she heard was “pick” and “don't be a pussy” and she's now playing along. And completely oblivious over the fact that SHE'S the reward. And of course, they would be blondes. Of course!

“Fuckin' pick, ALREADY!” Says the other blonde.

“Woo, or prick already, of us! Ha, ha!” Goes the first.

And now she's spittin' up on me. And her breathe stinks. And DAMN is she yet so hot, too. Damn is she... even though everything else is foul about her.

“Umm?” I go, again.

Feeling way too abrasive to respond. Since, they're being such with me. Having me at speechless.

“FINE! Stay a bitch... just means more pussy for me!” Goes Brock.

As I come to terms that this whole process was really a test, which I failed at. And the two rewards now forget I'm even around, since, I was too much of a bitch—I guess—to claim one... wait? What? This is all happening way too fast! And, I wasn't

even yet sure I wanted one or the other. And... definitely would have picked the one with no stinky breath... but she's hotter... but the other one doesn't have... WAIT! This all just happened way too quickly! And...?

“Man, I should tell you the night I've been happening... er... having! Man! You should have seen it!” Goes Brock, as he begins walking and talking.

Going really fast, as I find myself pacing after him. Him and the girls.

“So, what all happened, Brock?” I go.

Since I'm a part of this, now, and there's no escaping it. As I leave my sense of myself, the night I've had, and all that sadness I came with, back at the corner I found myself running into these three. Since, they're offering more than what I had, for myself, or ever before could.

“Man... fuckin' night! I've been havin'!”

“Tell me... what happened?”

And I find myself not so much interested, since, Brock doesn't seem like he can walk and talk well enough at the same time. But, considering how fuckin' happy-go-lucky, stupid and jolly, he seems, I grow enthusiastic to still listen in, even though all I can expect from him now is incoherent gibberish.

“Fuckin' night! Fuck... that old woman! Fuckin' crazy, man, HUNGRY bitch!”

“Oh, yeah?” I go.

“Yeah!” Brock follows.

“Fuckin' FUCKED that bitch in a limo... to airport...!”

“Ha, ha!” The girls go.

Since Brock is being very enthusiastic using the “f” word.

“To the airport?” I go.

“Ah... up, I mean, yup! She just... me... finger bang her... all the way to airport!”

“Oh, yeah? So, she was at that bar looking for a quickie before a long flight—huh?” I summarize.

“Ah... yeah!” Acknowledges Brock.

Then goes on with more words about... I don't know... as he grows truly incoherent now. But only when not using the “f” word. For he leaves them out to look at the two girls we're with, so he can say it well enough to them, to get them as excited as he

is. I don't know where the fuck we're headed. But we're headed. And now I find myself with them in some afterhours dive joint. And I think an hour has passed... I don't know and can't say. And Brock and the girls have ordered something to eat that could absorb all the liqueur they still gots in their stomachs, and they all seem to be sobering up a bit in that hour. And now seem to be different people. Especially after one of the girls, the stinky breath one, spend a good five minutes throwing up in the street, before entering here. And with that, I'm now back to being more interested in the less attractive one.

“So, where you girls from?” I finally ask.

Been an hour and haven't said much. But I felt like breakin' the ice now, since, I feel like I could now get a more of an orderly response out of them, compared to all the heavy breathing crap they were full of before.

“....” They respond with.

Being very aloof, now, that they're more sober.

“What a night!” Goes Brock, now a lot more sober.

And able to make eye contact and look at you with a sense of baring. Before his sights where everywhere, and nowhere, and didn't seem to know what they were focused on. Now, looking at me, he knows.

“So, how's your night been?” Asks Brock.

And I don't want to answer. Really don't want to answer.

“Well... same! Fuckin' crazy night... ha, ha...!” I string together.

Making the one night out we've had in over a month, a night to remember, sound very lame, since, I'm lame, or at least can't help making myself out to be, even though the details of the night I've had would spell anything but.

“....” Says the three, losing all interest in my presence.

As I become a ghost to them.

“So, where you girls from?” Asks Brock.

Then followed by:

“So, what are your names?”

And since Brock isn't lame, they answer. And... I'm back to this again! After everything I've gone through over the course of the night, I'm back to square one.

Back to being ignored by the opposite sex, when money isn't involved. For it seems like money is all that's going to take for me to get their interest, since, nothing else can. Fuckin' Roxanna! I enjoyed being around her. But all she was was just a manipulative whore, lookin' to sucker me out of a $2 grand of my hard earned cash. $2 FUCKIN' GRAND! What a chump I was to fall for it all! Fuck! So, I guess that's what it costs to get moments like that in life? I fuckin' enjoyed being around her. It felt genuine, but, it wasn't genuine. And as I look at these two twat-faced donkey women and contemplates over the only thing genuine I'm EVER going to get from them when real feelings are concerned: APATHY! I get to that place, again, that place. That!

“Fuck, Navastian! That woman... that older woman... gotta say, she was something else.” Recounts Brock.

As his pupils go up.

“Really?” I say.

“Oh, yeah! Once in the limo, after doing line after line of coke, she just looked at me, like she was one of my mother's friends, and ordered—fuckin' ordered, me to eat her out.” Went Brock.

“Ha, ha!” Goes the two dumb bitches.

“Really?” I say.

“Oh, yeah!”

“And you just eat her out?” I ask.

“I guess I did!” Goes Brock.

“Ha, ha!” Goes the two dumb bitches, again.

Because, they get the story, since, it involves their privates, and all the things guys might do to try and impress them. Which is the only story these two dumb cunts have only ever been aware of. They look like models. Not super models. But regular ones, flown in to do a photo shoot, and get payed a good $5 to $10 grand for that service. And whatever other service they might do to the men that offered them such prospects. You see, there's a lot of these types in the Far East. Women flown in from all over the world. Beautiful women. Getting payed beautifully. All for their exotic looks. Getting blown by a blonde might not be an exotic transaction from where I'm

from, considering the blonde to other hair color ratio in LA. But here in Hong Kong? And considering how these girls look how Hong Kong's once overload masters looked: The British! You can only imagine how much a Chinese man would pay to get the chance.

“Ha, ha!” the trouser vacuums go again.

As Brock continues to tell the tale of his adventures in how he fucked a cougar.

“And when I started finger banging her, this crazy bitch opened up the window, to stick her head out.”

“She what?” Asks one of the girls.

“Yes, stuck her head completely out, and had it hanging out upside down.”

“Ha, ha! No way!” Goes the other.

“Yes! She stuck her head out, and started moaning really, really, REALLY LOUD! Just so everyone on the street could hear and see.”

“Ha, ha! No way!” Goes again.

“Yes way! And she did that all the way to the airport.”

“Ha, ha!” concludes the two.

“Hey Navastian...?” Goes Brock, looking concerned now.

“What... huh?” I go

Since, I don't know what he's talking about.

“Take it easy with that drink, you've had like three of them in the last twenty minutes we've been sitting here.”

POSTMORTEM

“Wait... why does my face hurt?” I go.

As I open my eyes and start to get a sense of everything and everybody around me. Really get a sense, now that I can, and now that everything doesn't feel all dreamy like, and I can now access the part of my brain that allows me to have baring, and sense, and know WTF be going on.

“Shut up, Navastian! I told you not to talk! So, shut up!” Goes Brock.

And his eyes are all slit and forlorn and seem to be cold and been through some really cold and harsh weather.

“What's going—”
“Shut up, Navastian, I told you I don't want to hear a word from you no more.” Brock interjects.
And his resentment to answer anything I have to ask and say lets me know, something truly major has gone down.

I'm on the transporter now, that LBGB that I had been on before, that brought me to Hong Kong, which is now taking me back to the good ol' CVN city. I'm with Brock, and many others from our Ship I doesn't know. I'm on the transport back, it's the dead of night, overcast, and something is truly hanging up in the air, besides the rainy weather.
“What time is it?”
Brock doesn't answer.
“Did we make it back on time?”
The same.
“Seriously, what happened? Why are you so quiet like that, and pissed off lookin'?”
And now Brock eyes me all viciously. Maddened and ferociously. Like he wants to attack me, if given the chance. Which completely has me feeling beside myself, and mortified.
“Why are you looking at me like—”
“You were plastered out of your mind, Apple-jacked up as fuck, and being belligerent!” Highlights Brock.
Then looks at me with details. Stuff he'd like me to piece together of what it all meant.
And as I think about it, I grow even more mortified.
“What?” I go, rhetorically.
But Brock truly seems that crossed with me to let me know, looking like he wants nothing to say or do with me.
What happened? What went on? I was in that bar/restaurant with Brock and...?
“Oh, my head.” I go now.
As I whooshes my face around to look about my surroundings, but then feel my face feeling as if I went to fast, and I tore it off. I have that feeling, that poisonous feeling

one has when he/she's consumed enough alcohol to where the liquid substance is now accumulated into something big, bold and malicious and is trying to do a person in. And you're just feeling full of poison, full of it, and dieing almost. Everything feels fresh and new to me now. Like I just woke up. And I practically did, since, I'm really now coming to from a black out.

“Why does my face hurt?” I wonder out loud

As I try to touch certain spots, that feel very tender. Then as I search with my left hand over the back of my head, I feel something a little wet. And as I bring up my hand to my front to check and see what's feeling as such back there, I see blood.

“How did I get—”

“Seriously, Navastian... shut the fuck up, before I decide to clock you again.” Utters Brock through his teeth.

And with that, I grow scared shitless of what exactly went on, with me and Brock, that would involve me feeling like I've had something beat the ever-loving shit out of me.

“Hey, nice shiner!” Says one of the Boat Chucks, that eye me.

“What?” I go.

“Looks like you've really had a hell of good time, you got a black eye, bro.” He concludes, with a snicker at the end.

And then looks away.

“You were out of your mind belligerent, and I had to, to do something about it.” Responds Brock.

And then makes it feel like that's all he's really willing to offer.

“Did I black out?” I go.

….

“Did I black out, and act... foolish?” I continue.

….

“Did you fuck me up?” I ask Brock.

And now Brock eyes me at glance, looks away, then shakes his head.

“All I remember is feeling very, very angry... wait? Did I try to jump?”

“Stop asking questions.” Brock says.

“Did I try to kill my—?”

....

“You beat the fuck out of me, why did you do that?”

….

“What happened to those girls?”

“Don't ask me about them.” He lets out.

“Why did you beat me—”

“Because, you're something very despicable and totally wrong in the making.” Let’s out Brock, finally.

Horrifying the crap out me, beyond what words could express. Beyond anything I could have imagine. And all involving me. ME!

“What?”

“You heard me. That's what you are, after the stuff you said.”

“What did I say... wait! Hold on...! I have to know, what exactly did I say?”

“Well, where do I begin...? How about how with those girls—FUCK IT! I'll bring them up. You scared the shit out of them, yelling at them, calling them a whole bunch of names.”

“What?”

“Yeah! You yelled at them, saying: 'What? My dick ain't big enough for you dumb cunts? You think I'm a schmuck loser, nobody huh?”

NO! NO! I think. Truly and totally mortified, stupefied, beside myself. Away from myself. Wanting absolutely nothing to do with myself.

“Oh, yeah!” Goes Brock.

And now, it feels like it's getting wet. I feel it drizzle a little, as the clouds begin to let go of their rain. And it feels like it might start down pouring any minute.

….

“'Then you were like, why doesn't anyone love me? Am I that ugly? Am I that much of a worthless nobody? Should I just kill myself and get it over with it? And would anyone care if I did?' Being just so pathetic while staring at the girls like it was their fault! Theirs! That you felt like such a sore loser. And you started crying your eyes

out. And when you did I immediately hailed a cab to get those girls the fuck outta there, and spare them from another second of having to deal with your hysteria."
No! PLEASE TELL ME I didn't go THERE! Please! Tell me it didn't HAPPEN! Fuck! NO! Please! I think. As with every detail Brock brings up of all the stuff I said and did, that I have no recollection of. Shit I know to be my internal conflicts. And shit I've been dealing with every day. But, also shit that has yet to truly rear its ugly head, out of the seas of my subconscious mind. Had yet!
"And if that wasn't enough, while I dragged you along... fuckin' dragged! To get you back here, you kept mouthing those women off still. Even after I had hailed a cab, and they were gone. Mouthing them off and crying like a sore loser. And crazy belligerent shit like: 'Another pair of Madame... Lunas? Pair of bitches I'll never be able to relates with, because they're evil and think they're better! So what else is freakin new...?' You just kept saying that: 'what else is new, what else, what else, huh, what else!' Crazy fuckin' shit like that!"
….
"By that point, we were on a bridge, only a few blocks from where we could check in, and get onto this Boat. And we were on an overpass."
"I tried to jump off, didn't I?"
And Brock just looks at me senselessly.
"You started running. Then when I realized what you might do, as you got near the edge. I ran up and sacked you to the ground. And you attacked me then and started mouthing me off."
And I see now that his nose has been bleeding. And he has a fresh bruise on his chin.
"Brock... I... umm?" I go.
As we reach The Ship.
"Don't... say anything, I'm not going to report you to Senior over what happened, I don't even want to think about what you put me, and those two girls, through."
"Umm...?"
"You fucked us all up, good! Really good. With the shit, you put us through."
….

And then Brock drops the motherload… and tells me the last thing I ever want to hear. The last. Very last. Tells me something about myself, a taboo, a curse, an untold told. A skeleton in the closet secret. One a Christian only truly dreads Jesus will bring up on Judgement Day before the White Throne. Judgement Day like T2 style. Then… and not in the here and now. In a black magical language.

"WHAT?"
No, I'm not telling you in this book what it was. I feel for a candid moment. But fuck my candid nature. And fuck all of yours willing to take witness. Seriously, fuck all of you! Pretty sure there's plenty of devils amongst that'll only get a kick out of it. So go stare at bulkhead lights if you want to understand. Let the Holy Ghost fill you in. The purest amongst you will already know without me saying it. And the rest of you are a cardinal waste of my blood, sweat and tears.

Brock now gives me the deadeyes.
"That, Navastian, was the last thing you said to those girls…."
I…?

I'm…?
I'm speechless.
Brock notices.
"Oh, yeah, Navastian, you stooped that low. And that was the last thing they herd before the cab drove them away."
You think you know how deep your oceans go before reaching the ground. But, it's moments like these you realize, descending, descending, and descending, and thinking you close, you then notice, you're not at the ends yet, you have just begun. Since, this be an alternate world in an alternate universe where the oceans covering all the plains goes right down to the core. And, there is no bottom. There is none. There is none! But a black hole of oceans imploding into endless inner space.
"Navastian, straight up, from this moment on, I don't want to fuckin' know you... all right?"

….
“All right?”
“I...?”
“No! I'm serious about this, I don't want to look at you, know you, nothing! You don't exist. You're Dennison's twin brother to me, now. Don't fuckin EVER talk to me again. I don't know how, but what you did, was something really awful to me, and those two girls, when you showed us your true colors. And—”
“Brock, please, I was plastered out of my—”
“No... that shit was—REAL! The most real I've ever seen you being towards me, or anyone in The Shop.” Explains Brock.
As I come to terms how much it really is. For, I know... whatever lurks beneath the surface... with me? Isn't pretty! I know.
“Falky was totally right about you. You and Donnelly... really are something else! And I don't know how we're going to deal with—”
“Please don't tell Sen—”
“I told you, I'm not! Maybe I should! But I'm NOT!” Blasts Brock.
And he's all viciously eyeing me, again.
“Everyone in The Shop is going through some shit right now! And we're short on PCs, and I don't see us getting Castleberry back, trading you in, and sending your ass TAD. And I don't think we can handle losing any more bodies.” Explains Brock.
And as much as I'm relieved. I'm also not.
“We're going to war soon, Navastian, quit being a Shitbag, all around! Also, man the fuck up, and fix the FUBAR mess you call your mind.” Let’s out Brock.
And says nothing else.

SUICIDE IS PAINLESS

Fuck it, Navastian, why not try it? Let's think of suicide, realistically. As in... making it something that be real. Having happened. What would it hurt to do so and try? Just try, at least! I'm just fancying the thoughts, since, the thoughts keep coming up, involuntarily. So maybe they mean something? Just give into the mood and see if there really could be something that could come from this. All those dreams, one after another, of jumping, seeming so... beautiful. Why would I feel so, if it wasn't

so? So, let's do it, ol' boy, we're all going to die one day, anyways, it's only a matter of time when you'll have to meet your Maker. And you're either gonna go out like a child, or a mature adult. Either throw a fit, and cry for your mother. Or be a man, look long and hard into the cold nothingness forever, and ever and ever and ever... and smile, for there! There there's the only one whole truth. For as they say in German: Der Tod is sicher! Das Leben nicht! Only in death is there an only truth, to everything, the most natural state of being. Which we all came from, and we're all going to return to. Like going home. There, there is the only thing we could all in the end ask for. To be everything, you must be nothing. To be everywhere, you must be nowhere. But then again, to be with God... hmm... I don't know....

I'm on Watch right now. It's now the day after. And it's my Duty Day today. I'm in my dungarees (which we also call that, but they're really our utilities. Utilities being what replaced them old bell bottom dungarees jeans and buttoned up shirt). Been a while since I've worn these. Before I got on The Ship, I had made sure to iron and starch out a few good pairs, just in case I would. Utilities? There's no point in wearing them on Ship, since, the work Uniforms on board are mostly cammies for us skittles up top. And coveralls whenever else. And, of course, our Dress Whites/blues when we're to do something ceremonious. Mostly DRB and Captain's Masts, they'll whispers in our ears, hinting to something possibly inevitable to happen. Even though, none of us want it. Since, good conduct medals are so hard to come by, somehow? I'm in my utilities. And I hate these fuckin' things. Hates! HATES! For they're the worse Uniforms in the history of the US Navy. They're blue, just blue! And as much as I fancy the color itself, they look just so plane and ordinary blue with them now on. These polyester disasters. Just so ordinary lookin', and lookin' nothing like Uniforms. Well, the Uniform your plumber would be wearing, after buying his work attire from a JCPenny! Just so fugly! For, aye! They really are that crummy looking and unspectacular. And give off no sense of Military importance or pride. I had ironed out a pair. But after getting to them in my coffin locker, I had found them all wrinkled and smelling weird (same as my civis), with their creases faded away, while sporting creases I hadn't ironed them out with.

I'm up on the Flightdeck, now, on Watch. From 1600 to 2000 hours. It's late into evening. Just started this Watch. And I'm up here. Watching our Jets. With not a pistol, nor a walkie talkie, nor a whistle at hand. And because the Navy knows better than to arm us with such, even when we're here to safeguard billions and billions of dollars of US irreplaceable equipment. But I can't blame them, especially right now, seeing the condition I am currently in both spiritually and psychologically. I'm on Watch now, watching our Jets. And it's been a very long day since muster. We mustered for our Duty Day in the morning in the Hangar Bay, 0800 hours. I practically didn't sleep all night after the AE3 had really let me have it. Really let me have everything I would never have wanted, but got, and because... I deserved it. I think it goes without saying: I truly am a royal piece-of-shit, loser, schmuck Shipwreck Schmuckatelli! And royally! Through and through. And not just another Shitbag Sailor. Some nothing Shipwreck. But just a horrible human being all around. After we had our muster. I was in the head showering. And... you know that feeling you have on a really bad day? A really long, and harsh, and cold, and wretched day? Where all you do is look around and watch how slowly everything moves around you. When you're stuck in the dead of moments, absorbing the world, as it turns, while the seconds tick away at the clock, and the feeling is just long. LONG! And never ending. Life feels like it's never ending. For it's all one giant stretch from start to finish, that doesn't seem to be finishing any time soon. And everything feels senseless and emotionless, as you come to realize NOTHING MATTERS! And whatever value you see in this world, is value you've been up till now been placing there. For really, there's no value in anything at all. Everything is hollow and soulless. Everything. And especially YOU! And it's in these moments you really come to this sense. As the world begins to slowly let go of the bullshit you've made it out to be. The value you have fabricated was nothing more than just your fabrication. Empty in all value! For the value is something you've only fabricated and put into it. And now, the world lets go of all of it, right in front of your eyes, to lets you know, how it really isn't there. It's not there. You're not there. And nothing really matters.

After muster. I decided to have a long shower. Because, my stink was then really starting to get to me. I think I had to have been showering a long, long while. At least two hours, as the water went hot to cold, at the ends. Aye! I used up all the hot water and had myself a Hollywood shower. Since, I'm a Hollywood boy, and all! From Glendale, really, so there! But, anyways... about an hour into that shower, I found myself bawlin' cryin' my eyes out. Zeedorf style. I just did. And what set it off was this fucking song:

There is no pain, you are receding
A distant ship, smoke on the horizon
You are only coming through in waves
Your lips move, but I can't hear what you're saying
When I was a child, I had a fever
My hands felt just like two balloons
Now I've got that feeling once again
I can't explain, you would not understand
This is not how I am

I….
Have become comfortably numb

Where from, inside my head, outside? I have no fuckin clue. Motherfucking Pink Floyd. My Uncle Sean's favorite band. So, BOHICA, for some major Barnacle ass-spidering inbound.

I wept like an atheist standing over his mother's deathbed, after the hour had past, now trying to close her mouth, and, it's embarrassing to see her like that, and, heartbreaking, and, he can't do it, he just simply can't do it, because rigor mortis has set in already, and she's stiff as a wooden plank.

I cried all the faggot out of me. The FAGGOT… out… of me!

And it was in those last minutes I started to see the world in the way that I did. I pretty much cried out all the color and value, and heart, and soul, through my eyes. And all that hollow made up nonsense that really doesn't exist. As I started to look at the world the way I described. With new eyes. The way it truly is. Not intended. But is! That last half hour, I just stared at everything, like I was seeing them for the first time. And I really felt like I was, as I began to notice details I hadn't before. All the mold. And the mold on top of mold. And how it was strange in color, and bacterial in presence. With floral shit coming off of it, like fungus and algae. And those metallic shower walls, how they were stained up black in some areas. I looked around at all this mysophobia fueling mess, of my surroundings. And felt lost of my old ways, as I began to feel new ones.

After the shower, I then had a really special moment. As I sat by the TV and watched what could only possibly be showing on the Navy channel. And sure enough! It having something do with the Military. Not Navy, this time! But still Military. For I was now back on Ship, and life was back to the way they were before. But now different! MASH was on! Ever watch that TV show? Have you? MASH was playing on the TV. But this time around, it wasn't the TV show, but that flick that the TV show had been based off of. Now, I had grown up, and grown quite familiar with and used to, what the TV show was all about. Grew up with it, since, I was born in the early 80s. And I had seen it on TV, from time to time. For years I had been seeing it on TV. And knew it by heart, almost. Now... I never did like the show all that much. Since, I was a kid in the 80s. And the show was way too mild mannered and made for more of an older viewing audience. And their boring sensibilities. Since, with the TV show, I could never understand as a kid why that one man would dress like a woman every day. And the man looked anything but a woman, considering, how hairy and not so womanly like he was. What's the running joke, here? I doesn't get it? Why every day? And now it's not funny anymore! What's he trying to pull? I'd think as a kid. But, anyways. The TV show had its quirks, and its wholesome valued moments, and it was made for TV with TV minded expectancies. Now I don't know

if you've ever seen the flick. But the real thing itself was actually R rated. And... something entirely different.

How was it...?
Well...?

First off, let me start with:
I remember as a kid, how at moments when I wasn't running, and smiling, and playing, and doing this, and doing that, and making the life for the adults around me a living hell, how I'd then stop... and watch. I'd stop and watch. As I'd see those lonely people. All those Eleanor Rigbys and Father McKenzies. Standing, walking, moving about. Long lonely faces with long and lonely stares, looking around, at everything and nothing. Since everything and nothing was all the same to them. And I couldn't understand them. Who and what they were, and why they were the way they were? But I could hear somehow the songs their spirits would emanate, the lonely melancholic melodies, that they'd bring.

But…
never did I hear—at all at the time—the lyrics.
Even though their songs had lyrics.
And until now in my life, I didn't know of such facts.

And seeing how I've always seen these lonely people. All my life, I now came to realize how: it's always been this way. Something depressed me something fierce, as I listened to the real lyrics to MASH. Aye! That intro instrumental theme song actually has real lyrics to it, that you'd find in the flick, but never on TV show. For, in the TV show, it was muted away, kept away, from wholesome minded American TV viewers' ears. And hearing the actual lyrics... I was hearing the truer side to things, which I hadn't before, which I knew nothing about. All my life, I've seen that show playing on TV, and, really, it had always been this way! Years I had watched the show, years and years I had listened to its theme song, but never did I know its

lyrics, for they had always been this way. What was taken out for the show, that was in the rated R flick, was something TOO real!

I could hear the lyrics now.
I could hear them.
First time hearing the lyrics to a song, that had always, always, always been... just beneath the surface.

The game of life is hard to play.
I'm gonna lose it anyway.
The losing card I'll someday lay
So this is all I have to say

Suicide Is painless
It brings on many changes
And I can take or leave it if I please

And I thought Pink Floyd and that atheist music had fucked me up royally.
"Wow, I never knew the lyrics to this theme song were THIS... depressing!" Said Donnelly.
As he sat next to me for a moment, while the flick began. And as that theme song played for the first time for me and him.

"Hey, so, enough of this depressing crap, how was Hong Kong?" Asked Donnelly, after a while.
And in that moment, I said nothing to him, as I continued to watch the flick. Since, it was speaking to me in ways nothing and no one else could. Speaking to me... in a magical language. Of how things have always been, especially during when I hadn't been noticing. Since being a kid, you like to think more to life, than what's shown on the surface. But life really only seemed that way... because until then, you never knew the real lyrics to it.

“Hey, how did you get the shiner?” Asked Donnelly, then.
And I lied, which, he picked up on, that I had. And after a while, Donnelly had gotten the sense of just how bad it might have been and had decided to leave me to myself.

So.
How about the first workday out... at night.
I just jump off from a corner of the Flightdeck.
Where no one else would see me do so.
How about it?
I think.
And now looking at the freezing waters below, I feel a resounding “FUCK NO!” For, they just look way too fuckin' cold to do so.

So.
How about I jump off when we reach the equator? The waters should be warmer, then. I think then. And now, that thought serves me well. Warm waters! WARM WATERS! Warm tropical waters. I LIKE the sound of that. And the feel that comes with it.

SKYLARK EXPRESS

And I don’t want the world to see me
‘Cause I don’t think that they’d understand
When…?

Wait… what song is this?

And I don’t want the world to see me
‘Cause I don’t think that they’d understand
When…?

What the hell, what song is this? This is weird. It’s a complete reverse. I know the lyrics, but don’t know the song it—…?

When everything's made to be broken
I just… I just…?

Partly cloudy skies compartmentalized over Hong Kong. Partly here, partly there. The skies are a mess with the cushy lookin' stuff, like a giant bag of cotton balls has exploded. Zeus screwing up trying too hard to open up a pack, and now look at the mess he's made. There's just mounds and mounds of it all over the place, and it's chaotic, but also fun to look at. I'm in one of those itty-bitty transporters, again, bouncing from wave to wave, again, headed back out to Hong Kong. It's the last day of port call. Last day of liberty. And I'm heading out, and I don't know why, but this time, I'm no longer with AE3 Brockhausen (as you can imagine), nor AD3 Beauregard. Nor anyone really. And I'm going to be heading out completely alone. I want to be alone this time. Completely to myself, with no one around. And none of their influences around, demanding I prove this to them, or that to them. Peer pressure. Tryin' to prove shit, so I don't be shit. Mostly proving my hot doggin' skills, by heading out and finding some lay to lay with, just to brags about it later. Some Frankowsky tales about all that ohhing and ahhing I made some 3rd world Asian bitch make. But, fuck it! I'm sick of that shit, and sick to the thought of needing to be forced to make it happen. To prove that I'm a... I guess, a real man, or something? I don't know? And, I don't give a shit no more. REALLY! When it comes to getting laid. When it REALLY comes down to it: there's doing it, and then there's the real fun I've mostly had later. I've learned. And the only real fun I've had and witnessed hasn't had much to do with the actual transaction: awkward, tense, uncomfortable, and sometimes downright silly transactions I've had with the opposite sex. And I'm NOT SAYIN', I didn't want to have them! NOT SAYIN' I'm not sexually attracted to... I'm NOT... I'M NOT A...! Just... I don't know? Wantin' to have it and actually havin' it? It's weird to explain. But really, what I've come to understand is they're not the same thing! Awkward! Tense! Silly! They haven't been any fun (I look into their eyes while making it with, and just seeing how I don't know who nor what this woman is and seeing how she feels the same...?). But what has been has

fun has been the no shitters, I've made up about, later. That's what has been the REAL fun!

“So, did you get any?”
Someone had asked back on Ship, yesterday. While in the berthing, while my mind was totally absorbed by that MASH flick. And totally feeling run down by the whole experiences from the night before.

Was I really contemplating such...?

But anyways.
“So, NAVASTIAN! Did you make it with any honeys?”
I heard again at null, since, I was feeling very flat and formless. And also, aloof. And I then turned my head to see it was AD3 Rudy, with Quimby, and Coppersmith. And Rudy had that look on his face, like he was testing me.
“So, did you make any—”
“Like a bee.” I snapped, quick.
A bit sassy like, ‘cause, I just sorta got into the mood.
“Tisk...!” Went Rudy, then.
Smearing it across to Quimby and Coppersmith, as if to question the validity of my sharp response. But, I was feeling sharp, then. Boy was I feeling sharp! And a bit comical. But, really, still very, very down and depressed. And not caring for the whole “let's pick on Navastian's love life” session, Rudy was trying to run by me for the laughs. And, somehow, my whole feeling down and indifferent was allowing me to be so quick with Rudy, and quick enough to where he couldn't keep up.
“I got picked up by a pair of—”
“You got picked up?” Questioned Rudy.
“Yeah, two richy blonde twins, named Silvia, and Shusha. I think they were British.”
I ran by him before he was able to drive my story into the ground. And, as I did, I found myself lying. As the gears in the imagination sector of my brain began to self-operate, turn, while I stood by semi unaware. And semi... WTF?

“Really?” Went Coppersmith.
As Rudebaker's eyes widened from the details he was being filled with. Not seeming to really believe in what I was sayin', but, still taking it in like he couldn't help but at least imagine it now.
“That's right. Got picked up by two Brits, that had challenged each other to a dick sucking contest, and they needed me to evaluate.” I made up.
Ha! Oh, wow! I then thought. As I realized how tongue-in-cheek this was about to get. For I could feel it.
“'I can suck better dick than you can.' 'No, you can't!' 'Yes, I can!' 'No, you can't!' 'Yes...' They just kept at it with each other in the limo, then started blowing me while I sat in the middle.”
“Wait... what? No shit?” Went Quimby.
Finding himself too aroused to question the made-up nonsense I was spewing.
“No shit!” I had responded.
“So, let me get this straight! You had two girls...?” Went Rudy.
While I followed up correcting him with:
“Sisters!”
“Twins!” Interjected Rudy.
To gain a better picture. As he grew at awe, and a little pissy.
“Yes!” I responded.
“And they were...?”
“Aye, aye!”
And now I had Rudy at mum.
“Motherfucker!” Lamented Quimby.
For it was me that had such a night, and not he.
“....”
And a moment like that followed over the three, as I realized how candidly I had the boys hooked.
“Yeah, twins. Fuckin' skanks, really! Nasty pair of girls. Rich and spoiled, and all about having crazy, crazy rich girl sex, only spoiled richy girls like they can get.” I detailed.

"...."
And with the detailing, and how confidently I was able to string it all together, I could tell, I was truly able to make them start believing at the possibilities.
"So, the two got me into their limo, when they started sucking away at it, each trying to fight off the other to get a more of a mouthful." I added.
"Really?" dumbfounded Coppersmith.
With his mouth all open, lookin' dumb.
"Ah ha! Like two raptors trying to have at a mole poppin' its head, in and out, out of the ground. And then their heads began banging into each other, while trying to get to it."
And now I had them not only believin', but rollin'.
"They banged heads?" Fuddled Quimby.
Over the thought, mouth all tongue-in-cheek.
"Roger that!" I had rogered.
"Then what happened...?"
"Well, it happened a couple of times. Banging heads, and all! But one time they really banged hard. One swung around and really nailed her sister, bad, so she turned to the other and went: 'Ouch, you fuckin' BITCH!' And smacked her sister across the face."
"Whhhaatttt?" Went Rudy, completely taken in.
"Yeah, smacked her sister, so hard, it made her spit out her gum. Which flew out and got stuck on the back of the limo driver's hat."
And with that, my no shitter was now a riot.
"Ha, ha!" Went a couple of Wirechasers, as they joined the audience.
And, aye! There was now an audience, for my "no shitter" had reached "Frankowsky level of no shitter," in status.
"Ah ha! That's what happened. And damn were those two girls... like the mean type! You know, just a real pair of spoiled daddy's princesses, and...."
"How'd you get the black eye?" AD3 Rudy had then asked.
As he got skeptical. Trying to get ahead of me. But....
"One of them eventually socked me in the eye."

“What?” Blasted Coppersmith.
“That's right!”
“But, why?” Asked Coppersmith, again.
As I began trying to make up a response.
“Because... when it came to blowjobs, those two? They really sucked at it! And I mean sucked 'bad' not sucked 'good.'”
“Oh, yeah?” Went Quimby.
“Yeah!”
“The point was to see who could get me to blow my load in which ever one's mouth.”
“And none of them could do that?” Asked Rudy.
Eyes all wide and showing a lot of its whites.
“None.”
“So, they gave you a black eye because of it?” Baffled Rudy.
“Yeah! After a while, those girls were totally winded, and totally pissed off at each other, and me. I tried to apologize after they stopped sucking and started giving me mean looks. Tried! But, after I did, one of them got really mad and socked me in the eye and had me kicked out of the limo.”
“They kicked you out?” Creamed Coppersmith.
As he found himself really enjoying that line.
“Aye! Roger that! They did.”
And now I had everyone at soft snicker. Shaking their heads, and slowly walking away.
“So, that's how you remember it...?”
Snuffed someone behind me. And when I looked back, it was Brock, and as I got stuck blushing with embarrassment, unable to look away, he just shook his head, and left.

So, aye! I at least had a purely fun moment like that to myself, yesterday, which I am considering one of the most depressing days I've ever experienced in my life. Wow, was I depressed yesterday. Damn, was I. Hell! Barnacles! And all that malarkey. Had also tried to go to the ET room to call mom again that day. Although line was too

long, again. This time, there was a movie playing on that 15 inch, something called Ghost World, something. Movie takes place in LA, I miss LA, hard to believe. Blonde girl in it was hot. Only spent 5 minutes there until I left.

I'm on this small transport now, and seriously wondering just how serious I was about all that I admitted to myself yesterday, admitting things I've never considered, up until now.

World still moves slow, it does. Everything moves slow. And now, not just The Ship. That mundane world I saw full of objects with no value is now manifesting out here, in a way, in this city. This city of Hong Kong. As I watch all the structures and people around me, and somehow, they're there, but not there. Because, I doesn't feel them. I'm still feeling way too let down and depressed to really acknowledge anything, nor care. Since yesterday, since last night, nothing has meaning and value, anymore. Nothing does! Everything feels empty and soulless. And the messed-up part is: I think I sorta like it this way?

I'm in some restaurant, again. Eating real Chinese food from China. And this has to be the worse Chinese food I've ever eaten... if you can imagine! Taste way different here. How? I doesn't care to really understand or acknowledge, to have something to remember it by. So, whatever!

Now I run into a couple of pretty Westerners. A pair of girls that are all smiles and giggles. They ask if I'm American. And they themselves are Australians. Excited to see a Westerner like they (even though Australia isn't exactly in the West). And I totally disappoint the two, by blowing them off, by not responding. Actually! Going so far as to turn around and walk away while one of them was in mid-sentence, asking something or another. I doesn't care. And... aye! That's right, I feel like a straight up misogynist now. And loving it! Fuck women! For I went totally out of my way to do all that for the sole reasons they were pretty and female. That's how it is now... wanna make something of it?

Now I'm here, and I doesn't care. Now I'm there, and I doesn't care, the same. The sights and sounds of this foreign city, and the people in it, don't mean shit to me anymore, and the messed-up part is, I'm sorta liking this, too. This this way.

But then I'm somewhere else, I doesn't know where, or how, and I'm looking down a road. And... there's a gorgeous view of the city. It's a long road that crosses most of the city. And I see the street lined up with beautiful high rises all along it. And there's partly cloudy skies! And I love partly cloudy days, for, how the sun and the clouds and illumination tend to work under these conditions: clouds move in, blocking the rays of the sun, as skies and everything around them grow dim and sullen. Then clouds move again, moving apart, and allowing skies to open up to the sun's rays, again, and now the skies grow the brightest they've ever been, it seems. Very bright. Almost too bright to see. Everything is now gold color and overly exposed. And after a while... they aren't again. Then are. Then not. Then again is, and then again isn't. I like it. It's a slow and gradual evolution. And what I enjoy most is how mundane and meaningless it all is. For it's such a day to day mundane and meaningless occurrence. So empty and meaningless, and yet... not. But since nothing else has any meaning for me anymore. Now the mundane unimportance of this feels important. As it becomes the most highlighted I've experienced in the day. I doesn't know where I'm going with this, nor do I understand why. What difference does it make that I'm here experiencing this in Hong Kong, when I could experience it anywhere, really? Since it's an occurrence that could happen anywhere else. No matters!

Go for it, Navastian! Go down that road and see where it leads. I beckon to myself. And I do so.

You know, someone once said that people that have nothing to talk about, but the weather, are usually bland and boring, and unimportant, useless people. Someone important once said something like that, when trying to describe unimportant people.

And now I think to myself: “Fuck that cocksucking jackass!” For, I feel like it's the only thing I find important to me now. Fuck people. Fuck politics. Fuck everything... but the weather, I now think, as everything else feels drained of precedence. These skies and their conditions are all that's important. I think, while the partly cloudy skies do their bit moving, in and out, bound and around, changing the entire physiology of the heavens. Changing mood, and sense, and world, and reason. Everything!

I see a homeless man, now on the street. Some derelict, like any I've seen in any city. I see him. And think: back in the states, why is there so many homeless veterans on the streets? Wondering that, as I wonder the faith of this derelict, and what got him to this station in life. What faith got him here. What faith did, taking away his freedom to choose anything... BUT THIS! And doomed him to it. Cursed! What really did, since, that is how it is for a lot of veterans I've met, also homeless, and also on the streets. Actually, I've also heard suicide tend to really be high amongst veterans also, and as I ponder about that, I try to give it all structure and meaning, something monumental to represent... as to WHY it is the way it is. WHY? Why so many? What leads them to that? What leads them to this? And how does it all now happen to involve... me?

Wow, I really was contemplating suicide seriously yesterday, wasn't I? I irk myself, in thought, the whole notion. As it starts to scare me something fierce.

So, what if I survive all this? Is that the path I'm eventually to find myself on? Having the faith of this man, here? I wonder now. As I imagine his life. A life where he's lived where he had been stricken of everything that made him a man. An independent man, with a sense of his own true worth. Taken away of all value, out of him, and rendered him as this. Rendered his sense of himself, null and void, and left him barren, out for the garbage men to collect. Broken him in like a mule, but in the process, broken him in too far, so far, he's now beyond repair, and has been left abandoned. Shipwrecked! Since the poor man is beyond usefulness, to anyone and

himself. Broken down bad, so bad, they figured there wasn't anymore point to build him back up. I mean, what it all eventually comes down to is value. One's sense of his or her own value. And when one loses that, anything and everything could happen to him or her, and that person would then be able to do nothing but accept it.

Ha! That's something I've totally been stricken bare of, now... haven't I, Navastian? My sense of my own true value? I can't stand up for myself anymore, can't think for myself, can't feel for myself. And can't defend myself. NOTHING for myself. Nothing, which would leave me feeling like nothing, and allowing everything to happen to me, and it wouldn't matter. Since, I no longer do.

But! That is what's needed to be a soldier. Gots to remember, you can't have someone willing to die for something, when he or she (fuck she! Women are incapable of understand such things), when he... still has something to live for.

Heading down this street, I find myself now for hours and hours having been on it. Partly cloudy skies whoosh about over my head, as light fades in, then fades out. In, then out. And in these moments, the skies grow dark as night approaches. And at that twilight hour, I find myself at an end to this road. As it leads out to sea, out towards that way, sea way, and interestingly enough, sea way towards my Ship. And everything now comes together, with my thoughts, forming monumental in meaning. As their form come together and are revealed. I look out towards the sea, and now, I'm there again, out to sea, and it's the dream now, while I'm awake. And its now all surreal like.

And now....
I have my revelation: I can't be a part of this anymore! I can't! I can't get back on that Boat. And continue on this path that I'm on. I can't! I fuckin' can't! If I keep going like this, I'm just going to get worse and worse, feeling even less and less, until I feel completely insignificant. Growing even pettier. Pathetic. Even more despicable.

Until I have no morals or anything left. I'm going to become like that derelict I came across. The man had no baring. None! Even though was obviously living a life that was being flushed straight down some shitter. That's what's mine will eventually lead up towards, also, if I continue on like this.

But, what should I do?
Desert?
And how?
And should it be now...?

No!
I can't do that now!
I doesn't have enough money.
And, I doesn't know what to do then if I did.
And....

But I have to. But I have to. I have to! I have to desert. And if not now, then later. When I have more than enough money saved up to spend. I have to do this, I have to jump course, jump Ship, and find something else. Another path, another life. Something else that I can decide, that I can find, that can be mine. Because, my life is worth it. It's fuckin' worth it! And I'm worth it. And none of this bullshit really is.

BOHICA

And I don't want the world to see me
'Cause I don't think that they'd understand
When…?

I just…?

Great, still can't remember the song. Who sung it. Where I've heard it before. I can't even remember the rest of the lyrics. Okay, note to self, look it up whenever you can. Keep feeling like it's… important… or something.

Anyways.
So, no more! No more port calls. No more of any of that. We've set sail, and sailed off, and are back out to sea again. Back to the old routines, back to the old grinding wheel, as if none of it happened. Nothing I felt and experienced happened and mattered. I turning into a loathsome piece-of-shit, because, I found out how I REALLY am, so much of a schmuck loser, DANGEROUSLY so, since it's making me feel suicidal even. How I found out how I REALLY need to lay off the booze, since, if I'm to black out again, I don't know what I might do, next. Giving me moments in life that will leave me terrified and horrified and mortified of things I have done when that other side of me takes over. A side to me that fades me into another self. Into a more nightmarish self, where I'm in a nightmarish place, where those Old Ones lurk in the recesses of me, where they're magically allowed to cross from one world and into the next. And into OUR REAL WORLD! And have some of the few good Sailors, like Brock, have to chase me down, and beat the ever-loving shit out of me, to beat out that crazy Old Ones shit out, whom, in the long run, are going to try and get me killed. REALLY need to lay off the sauce, since, I truly did try to kill myself, and in front of someone that I liked, who no longer likes me, and for good reason. Sigh!

Man, was Hong Kong a disaster! Man, was it! Fuck, was it! And now I've come to terms with other matters, somethings much more important! This all, this whole disaster that Hong Kong was, it's made me come to a realization. Of something I need to do, REALLY need to do! To get away from all this, before things get worse.

“Hey, Falky, you heard about SN Saddler?” Asks Kats to Falky.

Wednesday night. We're in The Shop, at the beginning of shift. We’re all here, us Night Checkers, since, we're back to the old grind and the old routine again. Just another manic Monday routine. Beginning the whole process all over again. And we won't be seeing Friday, anytime soon, like all you spoiled lucky civilian sorts will.

Since, for us, we HAVE no such a thing as a Friday, having none of that TGIF shit! As the rest of you do.
“Aye! I did, did they catch him?” Follows Falks.
“No... he's still out there in Hong Kong.”
“No shit?” Goes Falks.
“No shit, still out there, the fucker really deserted, he's gone UA! And for good.”
“Not for good!” Corrects Falky.
“You think?” Goes Kats.
“Fuck no! He's a white man in Communist Red China! He sticks out like a sore thumb. And they'll catch and return his ass to us, with a bowtie on his head.” Explains Falconni.
Then looks at me relatively when mentioning “bowties.”
“But... would China return him!” Asks Kats.
And now Falks isn't so sure.
“No! I really believe so—they will! Hong Kong is a well-established city, it's not really THAT 3rd world, where there isn't any expediting. Plus, I'm damn sure China isn't going to want a US enlisted DESERTER in their midst. It's not like he's a US civilian. He's Military. And they're not going to want any political debacle shit going on, especially since we're going to war pretty soon. They're going to return his ass.” Explains Falky.
Making me feel very, very glad I hadn't decided THEN to do, what I was thinking of doing.
“I guess you're right!” Acknowledges Kats.
“Of course, I'm right! They'll return him.” Adds Falks.
And then adds:
“I mean, Saddler would have had to have deserted in Thailand, if he REALLY wanted to get away with it.”
And now I feel the gears in my head turning, just beneath the dashboard, turning all slow and methodical like.

“There's so many places to hide in that 3rd world shithole, and, since it's not a country that has such a gestapo like government, and there's a lot of Westerners also living there, doing business, it's the only place a Squid like Saddler could.”
And as Falconni explains all this, I get the sense this is all serendipitous. How is he conversing about matters, I would have such grave interest in? I would be so pertained to? How? Wonder I. But then as I look into his eyes, seeing how they glisten. Like eyes seeing a sight that would make them all envious and teary. Like Hong Kong was for me, before I getting it. I now understand, it must be that whole: “we're all on the same Boat about such matters” deal again. For we're all on the same Boat when it comes to such matters. We all are. For all maritime stories are all the same, in the end. They all just are that.
“Damn! How about it, Falky... let's desert in Thailand!” Jokes Quimby.
After a minute. And after a short questionable pause. And after that, we all blow up into laughter, one wholesome laughter, as if old Squids in the future reminiscing about them yesteryears, of how a young Quimby once suggested such a crazy idea, which everyone was feeling. We all blow up into laughter. Or, should I say, they all do! Since I isn't now part of they. And there is no we amongst me and them. And I ain't laughing, and neither is AN Donnelly, now that I see, as I guess he's mirroring the same suspicious look as I now have. Leaving me with more ideas.
“All right everybody, SHUT UP! Back to business!”
Goes our LCPO steppin' into The Shop, returning from Maintenance meeting. Our LCPO! Our Night Check LCPO! And....
“Senior?” Goes Falky.
Eyes all hanging off a cliff like the protagonist in some drive-in Hitchcockian thriller.
“Yes! IS3... what?” Whats this Day Checker.
As like:
“REALLY, what did you expect!”
“Umm!” Goes the IS3.
“Oh, GUESS WHAT, boys, guess what?” Jollys Senior, now.
And now smiles at us all. Through and through. With pointy, sharp, swine dinin' teeth. Since we all know Hawaiians are some real swine massacrin' and butcherin'

and eatin' motherfuckers! So much so, they'd even massacre and eat cute little piglet babies, too.

Oh NOOOO! Think we all, we all go, goes all of our thoughts, all of ours pounding, all out through our eyes (except for Quimby, who goes “oh motherfuckin' NO)!
“Guess what, boys, Chief Murdock won't be joining us anymore, he's now in Corrosion Control.” Explains Senior.
Nailing the final nail into the coffin of Chief Murdock's, mostly outstanding, Navy career.

Oh no! We all go, again. And Roach Burger, there, now seems like he's about to feint. As his knee jitters, about to give way, since it's lost all meaning to support and make the rest of him stand up still.
“And for the next month or so—maybe! Until we can find another E-6 and up to take over leading Night Check, I'll be in charge! Making sure to get Night Check to come along swimmingly!”
And now. SWEET REVENGE! Sweet revenge, by our Senior. For, he's managed to overcome his limits, and has found the only means he can get that involves straightening out Night Check, without being forced to stay up late into our shift. And have to make rounds on his off time. Which, I can understand him not wanting to do! I wouldn't want to, if I was him. Nobody would. Up till now, I feel like we've all felt underwhelmed with Senior, and his abilities in being a detrimental force for us with our Night Check ways. A detrimental force to be reckoned with. Underwhelmed! And disappointed! For, he's been fizzling out as a main antagonist for all of us. We all felt like. We felt it! And Senior felt it! And Senior got mad that he had! And now it's time for his sweet revenge. Since, our jolly, juvenile, happy-go-lucky Pavy lot, felt like we got away with what Senior has had all against us. All this time. We felt jolly. And juvenile-ly blissful. And happy. And content. But no more. For Senior has gotten a way, to make wind, and sail his way to our circumference.

Aye! I think I need a moment now, to myself. Coming to terms with what's about to happen. And so, commences that moment, as I go:
NO! NO! Please, sweet Jesus NO! Barnacles! Hell! Bat Mermaid Burgers! Boopshittily!
“That's right, boys, I'm HiMFIC now of Night Check!”
NO! Please, God, no!
“I'm in charge!”
Please!
“And there's going to be changes, now, that I'm here!”
This can't be happening! Please, God, WHY? WHY? This can't be happening!
“We're going to be doin' hand wipes!”
I'm beatin' my MOTHERFLIPPIN' chest, here. Why God? All, why?
“EVERY night!”
Tearin' my shirt, beatin' my chest, on my knees. BEGGIN' you Lord... WHY?
“Oh, yes! This is happening, and I'm now on Night Check, here, with you all, to make sure it HAPPENS!”
God...? Are you even there?
“You've all been skatin' by for far TOO long now!”
You're really not there, are you?
“And there's goin' be some MAJOR CHANGES on Night Check! Finally, gonna make you all WORK for a living, gonna have it, so, I see nothing but assholes and elbows from ALL of you! With HAND WIPES! When I'm through!”
All is lost! Abandon all hope! There is no great scheme to all this, there is nothing! Nowhere! Void!
“Muahahahaha” Goes now, Senior!
He goes that! He DOES! He actually DOES! All dastardly and deviously—FOR HE KNOWS! Even though there hasn't been a peep from us, in bold protest, to what's about to happen, he knows, he knows how this is for all of us. And now Roach Burger buckles, as his knees gives way, and he falls to one knee, loses more contraction, gives way, completely, and now smacks dab to deck first onto his face. And with that whole Roach Burger fumblin' to hold stance, in sheer horror and terror, of this breakin' news, and losing it. Senior goes:

“MUAHAHAHAHA!”
Even LOUDER! For it's all a cartoon now, but in reality. And then steps out, all Bravo Zulu. And leaves us all with our misfortunes and our thoughts.

SILENCE! Dead SILENCE!

“Yeahhh! I'm gonna go commit suicide, now, and jump Ship!” Goes AN Royster
As he himself steps the fuck out, while laughing his most boldest, most heartiest, and most evilest Royster laugh ever:
“Ah Ha Haaaaa! Ha HAAAAA!” He goes.
Steppin' out, deeped-the-FUCK-sixed! And trenchin'! And the funny part is—IT'S NOT FUCKIN' FUNNY! And there's a minute we all feel like jumping up from our stations, we've all cocooned ourselves into, to reach out and ask—at least ask! If Royster is being serious. But we doesn't, for, it was obviously a joke on his part. Right?

“Well, this sucks!” Goes AEAN Barbarossa.
For even he's now taken down a peg. As his jolly smile, turns upside down, into a frown, for once.
“This is JACKED!”
“We're jacked!”
“And it's all YOUR fault!” Lays out the IS3.
As he stares at me. Sneers. Gets ragingly upset, but then grows morally depressed. And also steps out. Leaves. And now, all hands—or really—all eyes, all judgmental eyes, are on me now. And this time, so are mine. For this is all my fault. This truly is! I wouldn't have NEVER asked for this. But it is. So, it is. And there's no refuting it. Navastian... GO FUCK YOURSELF! I think.

BOOK FOUR

JARTGO

Sweet revenge! All hail Senior's sweet revenge. There's to be Flight Ops this evening. And we're all—all of us! Even the IS3! Out here prepping for it. I mean, we're all always out here prepping for launch like any launch we've had at any evening hour. But not like this. The IS3 would usually step out of The Shop, just immediately as the Pilots would, and do no more than stroll about with his mic-ed cranial, nodding at everything, since, this job is so freakin' hard to do that would require supervision. He'd usually come out at that magic hour, exactly at twilight, when the Pilots would themselves step out. Since, I can imagine the IS3 fancying himself of having the same relative precedence of being fashionably late to the show! Playin' no part in all the grunt work that leads up to it beforehand: fixing, fueling, servicing, loading, installing stuff with all the bird's guts all over the place, ready to be reassembled. Work that would require getting your hands dirty to set stage. But, we're all out here. All of us! Since, Senior is out here, getting his sweet revenge.

"Roach Burger, your bird is filthy!" Barks Senior. At while hoppin' mad, pointin' at all the smudges, while Roach Burger braces himself for every session.

"Filthy! Fuckin' filthy! How do you explain that?" Spits up Senior, at Roachy.

"...." Responds Roach Burger. Lookin' mighty sorry and excuseless. But, what excuses could he have? He's been out here hand wipin' all evening like the rest of us, while also prepping his bird! Which is MUCH MORE important for him to do. Since, the Jets cleanliness ISN'T what's going to get it to MOTHERFUCKIN' TAKE OFF! Roach needed to service the canopy, with a nancart he had to drag from the island, so the canopy could be opened. He needed to fuel the aircraft, since, all the Grapes really do is drag the hose to us, then stand around scratching their asses, while we do the rest, actual fueling of our Jets (words cannot express how useless Purple Shirts really are up here). He's had to service some hydraulics, too, so the Jet wouldn't collapse under its own pressure. He's had to do this, and he's had to do that. He's done his job! But, there's been a team of Mechs out here, also, working on the Jet. Touching the bird all over the place with their dirty hands, and Roach Burger has had a hard time cleaning up every print they've left behind. Plus, prints

left behind from other Shops that have also spent a lot of man hours on his bird, getting it ready. But, still, the Jet's filthy! And, so, here comes the yelling:
“EMI, you're getting EMI two hours into Day Check! I'll be stayin' in that much later this morning. And, count on me, Roach, you'll be there staying late with me! Do you understand?”
“Yeah, Senior!” Goes Roach, eyes fading along with the sun in the distance.
“GROWL!”
Aye! Senior just growled. He did! And, now looks to be the fattest predatory animal I've ever seen eyeing his prey. I mean, truly, when it comes to predatory animals, they tend not to be fat. Since, it goes against their “survival of the fittest” nature to be so. But Senior be a very unique species of predator. Like a T-rex, completely unmade to be a hunter, yet, is one, anyways. Leaving behind the same level of imposing terror one feels witnessing a predator that seems so abominably BIG, when it shouldn't be. Just for the terror of it all. Just so unrealistically monstrous.
“Don't make me sit on you.” Then threatens he, with eyes slit.
Oooooh!
And Roach Burger jitters a bit from that line. For, he knows if the man wanted to, he really would!

“Quimby!”
“What's up, Senior?” Goes Quimby. Tryin' to play it like a good ol' boy, on top of things.
“What's up... what is this, a Bugs Bunny cartoon? You callin' me Elmer Fudd? Do I look that dumb and uncouth to you?” Blasts Senior. And might I add this is all happening nowhere near my Jet, on the other end of the Flightdeck. But, I see and hear all these transactions as the rest of us do. With forlorn eyes, bustin' ass! When all the work we're puttin' in won't be enough. Since, Senior is only out yellin' at us, now, for the sake of yellin'. Shoving his right boot up our asses, then shoving in his left. Then squeezing in his legs, pelvis, then torso. And can you imagine the level of pain his fat gutted torso would be trying fit up your... you know what. Then his chest, up to his neck, up to his head. And now enter his arms and hands, so they can reach

up to our brains, and muppet our asses into gear. Muppet! Even when we're already in gear, and workin' to do everything to feed this gluttonous of a man everything he'd want to see and hear from us.

“No, Senior, I'm not! Just saying how you doin'?” Goes Quimby, now. Tryin' to be nice, and kissin' ass. As a large gab of sweat runs down his forehead and gets picked up by the contours of his cranial strap and leaks off that end.

“How'm I doin'? You trying to fraternize with me... AIRMAN?” Questions Senior. Pulling Quimby inside out, like a happy sock, and exposing him for all his humiliations.

“No! Not fraternize... Senior.” Frowns Quimby.

“Good! Because if you were....

(and now blushes while extending a pinky up to his bottom lip.)

I might just take up on your offer, and keep you in, two hours more, with EMI... *so we can get to know each other better.”* And now frowns while snapping away the pinky.

“Aye, Senior.” Frowns out Quimby, himself, while cuffing his bottom lip over his top and goes back to hand wiping.

“Kats!” Goes Senior, now.

On the AM3’s Jet.

“Yes, Senior?” Responds Kats. With a whole lot of Military Bearing. And Kats has everything squared away with his 101 Jet. His Jet's looking mighty spectacular and clean and there's nothing Senior can really say, since, nothing on the AM3's bird looks jacked up anywhere.

“Yes, Senior?” goes Kats, again, a little more anxious now. And Senior now, I see is just breathin' heavily, and imposing on the Third. For no other reason than to let him know who's HiMFIC. Kats, always one of the most on point PCs, besides the IS3 and Brock, and this is how he's now being treated. For Senior knows all about Kats and the IS3, and their game. And he's just standing there, now, letting us know what he thinks of us.

“Yes, Senior?” Goes Kats, again. And now Senior signs: “I got my eyes on you!” With his middle and index fingers. Calling him out.

Now, I know you all know how I really feel about characters like Roachy, and Quimby, and Kats. Especially Kats! The fucking conceited asshole! But none of them are trying to be defiant with Senior. They're all biting down and buckling up to Senior's will. To show subordination. So, there isn't any reason for Senior to continue acting this way, with them. He's got them, and all of us, licked! He's got 'em anchors, 'em anchors with a star on top. So, of course he'd be HiMFIC, now. And have us, all us E6 and below, compliant with all of his whims, no matter how far they go. So, what does he want with us, then? How far is this to go on, imposing on us like this? Till what end? And, as I dread: will there be an end? For I know what Senior is really all about. I got that gut instinct that tells me what his true pleasure is, and I know what he really wants from us on Night Check now. And subordination AIN'T IT! I mean, Whiskey Tango FUCK!

We've been THROUGH all this!
Been THROUGH all this! Been through it.
But now... here we are AGAIN!
For maybe this time we won't be able to put up with all he's willing to put us through. For this time, he'll finally have us at our WITS END!
“What the fuck are you staring around for, Navastian! Get to wipin'!” Blasts the IS3 to me, through his teeth and visor. And, man, is the little man pissed! Pissed! But in a broken way. For as much as Falconni has always favored gettin' in that ass, these wouldn't be the circumstances he would want to. Even though a tough little shit, always driving everyone around him nuts, the IS3 is still no slave driver. And this, here, how he's acting? Is beyond him. The IS3 is pissed, because, Senior is pissed. Or really, very, very happy! Senior is! But the IS3 needs to match the same level of ferociousness Senior has for getting' in our asses, so he wouldn't be taken lightly. Always the man of stature. Always, to the end.

So, I guess this is it for Night Check. Early '03 Night Check, of VF-451. It's over now. Welcome! Welcome, to its death! The death of Night Check for us all, and how

we've all had it, and remembered it by. For as we can all see, Senior is going full out on his campaign to ruin everything that the experience, up till now, for us, has been about. And as much as I've complained, and moaned, and bitched, and cried about it, none of that mattered, since, I'm just a schmuck, that wouldn't understand a good thing till it was gone. For the problem really has been me, and I just haven't been able to take it. Since I'm just not cut out for it. All the juvenile play. But it was fun for what it was, for how it lasted, and now this is what's left. Senior, I can see now, is going to undo everything Falky has built the experience up for. Like a treehouse, with no girls and pussies (me) allowed, the experience was always meant to be that sort of joyous/boyish adventure. And now here's Senior, our Day Check neighbor, complaining how the tree we've built that treehouse onto, which happened to be really inside his property, must go! And he now wants to tear the whole thing down, and uproot the tree, and... aye! I know we really Military. ADULTS! And this is REALLY about heading to Iraq and all. But, for us, it really wasn't! Since, whether out here or when reaching Iraq, it doesn't matter: maintenance and sorties, maintenance and sorties, maintenance and sorties! Since we're never going to see the enemy and will have only ourselves to look at even in the midst of a war. So, therefore, with all 'em maintenance and sorties, we would have at least liked something of value to hold onto to keeps us absolutely losing our minds in the drudgery of it all. And... wow! Oh wow! Things are seriously going to get worse. They are, are they now? I realize. As I continue scrubbing my bird, and....

"Navastian, what the fuck you doing?" Goes Senior. And I'm scrubbin'! I'm fuckin' scrubbin'! Why the fuck is he yelling at me now? Why?

"Senior... I'm scrubbing." I go, innocently. For how else can I say it?

"How are you scrubbing, if you don't even have your eyes on your own work?" Goes he. And begins the whole breathing thing on the back of my neck. He's back there to my back. But even from back here, I can tell he's had spaghetti and meatballs this evening, with a side of key lime pie, with some milk to finish.

"...." I say nothing. If he gives me EMI, he's giving me EMI. There really is no more defiance left in me to challenge this man, nor anyone.

“Navastian, I know you've been watching everything, because I’ve watched how you watched. So, I know you can see what it's all going to be about, for now on, can you?” Goes Senior, with a low and unsettling tone. Sorta tone that wants to speak to you in a very personal way, when it has something very ill willed to express.
“Can you?” Asks again.
“Aye!” I respond.
“You know, I think I might know who that PC was on Night Check, that was found vandalizing Ship equipment before Hong Kong.” Goes he. And... I'm jittering, now.
“You do, Senior?” I go. And almost with a whimper.
“Oh, yes! I think I do!” Senior finishes. Still with the low and unsettling tone.
And then... walks off.

THERE ARE NO AIRSTRIPS IN PFLUGERVILLE

My first sighting of this very, very strange man was at our Atsugi barracks. I ran into him when I first got to the Squadron. I ran into him, looked up, apologized, and saw the man was an island to himself. An island out in the middle of—I don't know what sea, really! Out somewhere... far out! Gone. Out on an island on the planet of Neptune. And how he managed to find his way onto our planet, since, last I checked, there are no connection flights with JFK International, and FREAKIN' Neptune, then managed to pass as human, and an American no less (which, come to think of it, wouldn't be that hard, considering how many spaced out wackjobs we as a nation are able to produce), and managed to enlist into our Navy… how he managed to do all that, I couldn't tell you. I ran into him, looked up, apologized, and saw eyes that didn't seem to recognize my presence, as some living entity, a frequent runabout creature you'd find on planet Earth. He didn't. Eyes were plastered, looking at... I don't know what! And, for a second there, they didn't seem like eyes being his windows to his soul. Maybe they are asses from where he's from? And his true windows to his soul would be where, for the rest of us, our asses would be at, maybe? I thought then. I had apologized for running into him, and, he hadn't responded to my apology. And didn't seem to understand what I meant by it. But then went:

“Fuckin' BASTARD, you think it's funny? Well, let's see how funny you take it when I'm ringin' your neck in!”
“....” I went then.
Looking at him, looking to one side, then looking at him again, since, there was no eye contact (ass contact...?), and I felt confused in how to react to this man's cussing. Utterly, utterly confused. WTF? Who's he talking to? I thought, then. For I couldn't tell if it was me, or, Margoth Marg Vidu, the Second Prime Überdeath Overlord from the planet Fokken, standing cloaked beside me.
“What?” I finally let out. And now this ATAN Pflugerville looked at me, and noticed a fellow human being, such as himself, standing next. Although, calling him a fellow human would be a stretch.
“Sorry! I'm not talking to you... just so PISSED right now! Get out of my way! MOTHERFUCKIN'...!” Went he.
Then shoved me aside and walked off. And out of the barracks from the back entrance, and into the smoke pit, outside. Then just sat there at a bench, lit up a cigarette, and began puffing away. Steam power training that cig to the finish. While, now and then, balling up his fists, to punch at Margoth over there, for having said something about his mother. Whiskey Tango Foxtrot? I thought then. Who is this guy? But then our Squadron's PH stepped into frame. A PH: which in our Squadron, are a shop full of photographers, given high security clearance, and placed in charge of the TARPS systems attached to our birds. TARPS: Tactical Airborne Reconnaissance Pod System, which are high powered cameras used for taking super close up photos of confidential sites and such, when our birds are sent out to do reconnaissance missions. Taking pictures of top-secret stuff, really! But anyways, PH3 Kadakia then stepped up. English born, but Indian raised, by origin.

(Wait... how did he get a security clearance at his level then, with the US Navy? Doesn't he have to be born Amer—never mind!)

Ahem!

He came up! Stepping out of the Fire Watch station, stood next, and smiled gleefully, as if knowing what the dealio was.
“You know that guy?” I asked the PH3.
“Yes, I unfortunately do!” Explained the Fire Watch. With his English accent. And continued to smile.
“Motherfucker! Where ARE you? HUH?” Went the man outside. While puffing away his cigarette, leaning on the bench, all lazily. And for a second there, I just imagined him as a vagrant. But an American one? In Japan? And on an American base, no less? I then looked up at the PH3, and just gave him the look asking for details, for him to elaborate, and so he did. Well, after some introductions:
“You're new to the Squadron?” He asked.
“Yes.” I answered.
“Nice to meet you.”
“The same.” I said and shook his hand. I liked PH3 Kadakia. He seemed like a very cheerful sort. Not very Joe Navy like at all (at the time, not completely knowing what being Joe Navy meant, since, I was fresh out of Boot Camp). Not very, for he was too friendly, and too nice to be so.
“Well, my friend, that there is ATAN Pflugerville. And he's our Squadron's... I still can't tell you what!” Explained away the PH3.
“All right....” I went. Not knowing where to go from there. Almost felt like leaving then. But I was still way too curious.
“So, what's the deal?” I then let out.
“Oh, someone has been calling up Pflugerville all day long, and has been slurring out insults at him, and challenging him to step outside for a fight.” The PH3 explained. And then sighed, with a wholehearted smile.
“Really?” I went.
“Yes. And as you can see, it's made him thoroughly mad.” There was something about this PH3 then, something in his eyes, as he eyed the ATAN outside, and puckered a bit, that made me wonder.
“This guy has been calling him up... and slurring out insults?” I asked, rhetorically.
“That's right.”

“What type of insults?” I followed up. And then the PH3 looked at me, seeming all suspect, as if wondering if I had figured who the prank caller could have possibly been.

“Well, for instance... stuff like:

'Hey, fatty! Mr. Tubbikins! What you doing with your big fat body in the Navy, there? Don't you know you got to be a strappin' fit young man to be truly accepted?'” And the way the PH3 was slurring the words out, felt hysterically genuine. Like the words that had genuinely been there to do the job, which all sounded very funny in a mean and juvenile way.

“Then what?” I asked.

“Then... Pfluger there said: 'Fuck you, *fucknuts*—”

“*Fucknuts*?” I baffled.

“Aye! The pudgy man called me that!” And PH3 Kadakia was no longer hiding it.

“Okay... go on!” I asked, because I was sorta enjoying this. Getting a real glimpse into our Squadron as a whole. And not just our Line Shack.

“He was like: 'Fuck you, fuckin' fucknuts! If you gotta problem with me, then, how about—' and I just hung up on him then.” PH3 Kadakia explained.

“A minute later, I called him again, he answered: 'This is ATAN Pflugerville speaking.' And I just went straight back to: *'Hey fatty! Fatty fat fat! Chumbawamba! Hunky mass of lard—”* And, the way PH3 slurred it out for me, with his accent, had me rolling. His English accent coming off so horrendously mean and juvenile, being the real centerpiece to the whole comedy behind it. Giving me a glimpse into how horrendously un-proper those people can get (English) if I was raised in that country. I believe you can never truly understand a group of people, unless you've experienced them as children. And with Kadakia, here, just sounding so mean, and playfully so. Giving me much of the gist as to all that was going on. With the affairs of the PH3, and this ATAN Pflugerville character outside, acting as he was, in the smoke pit, all pissin' and ragin'.

“'*Fatty fat fat want some chocolate, does he now? Well, here's a big chunky piece, so, go gets it, as I throws it into traffic.*'”

“You said that to him?” I asked. And the PH3 was now rolling, too.

“Aye, I did.”
“Then what happened?”
“Then he... started yelling out with more strange American insults again, stuff I've never heard in movies, or anywhere. I hear he's from Oklahoma, somewhere. Somewhere where they don't get much contact from the outside world. He'd say: 'Fuck you, you fart... *knocking?* Piece of—' and I'd immediately hang up again. Then call and start the process over!” And this was all becoming a riot to listen to. Just so much fun seeing all the things said, and all the players at play. This PH3 Kadakia character, here, standing next to me, enjoying the sight of this ATAN, who was still sitting there expecting somebody.
“And after a while of hearing him call me other unusual names, I challenged him to a fight, asking him to meet me in the smoke pit... and so, there he is!”
“So, he doesn't know it's you?”
“No. he doesn't! Pflugie, there, is... well, not a very sensible sort. As anyone can obviously sees just by looking at him for more than a few seconds. And, I'd like to be nice to him, but, the *bloody hell* with that idea! He's also so very rude, too!”
“Is he now?” I asked, being rhetorical again. Since I already had an example of how much so, not even knowing the man for more than a few seconds, nor this PH3 Kadakia character, but, I didn't like how the ATAN just shoved me aside, after we ran into each other. As steaming pissed as he supposedly was, even with his attention elsewhere, that was still completely uncalled for and rude.
“So, there! I've been stuck on this Watch all morning. And, been a little bored—I guess? And, at least I've been enjoying myself, messing around with Pflugie over there.” Explained the PH3. And now ATAN Pflugerville got up and walked into the barracks. Looked at me, then PH3, continued staring at the PH3, and then said:
“Hey Ka-ducky...!”
And I could see the PH3 didn't exactly like the mispronunciation. Usually, I know people with difficult names, won't really mind it all that much, since, it happens to them all the time (considering I also sorta have one). But I could see with Pflugerville, there, it was a constant thing. And since the pudgy one also has a name just as difficult... YOU'D EXPECT MORE!

“Yes, Pflugerville?” Replied the PH3. Trying to hide some level of, either jest or contempt, for the man, behind a very polite smile.
“I gotta say, you know how to make Indian cuisine?”
“Umm….” Went the PH3.
“Because, it's been years since I've had Indian food, and I absolutely love the stuff. I can eat your food all day. If you could cook that all in a giant pot, I could just spend all day... two days... three days! Eating it all up with a giant wooden spoon. I absolutely love it that much.” And I noticed something funny about this ATAN, as, now and then, he'd seem as if he would completely zone out while speaking to the two of us, going in and out of worlds. And into a world where he wouldn't catch the PH3, looking belittled after someone had asked him such a belittling question. Pflugerville then continued mouthing out loud and fast, throwing his vocal range out for anyone with a pair of ears to hear. Really out there! Making it seem as if we were watching a man that really WAS an island to himself. On that island, hollering out, hoping someone could pick up his SOS messages he was throwing out, far out to sea. But, truthfully, Pflugerville wasn't on some island, far out somewhere. He was standing RIGHT in front of us, completely oblivious to our presence, and completely oblivious to his own. Since, he didn't seem to notice how annoying all his yelling and hollering could possibly be to anything that would be standing in his vicinity.
“So... you know how to make any? Chicken Tikka? Chicken Vindaloo? Chicken Curry? Anything with chicken in it. I used to be a vegetarian before I joined. But that didn't work out so well! How about those naan breads—you know how to make those? Or just anything with curry in it? How about Thai food? I love Thai food too, and since Thai food has a lot of curry involved... I just figured...?”
“No, Pflugerville, I don't know how to make that stuff. Plus, cooking isn't allowed in our barracks' rooms. Don't know if you've noticed, considering, none of our rooms come with separate kitchens.” Explained the PH3, all drearily.
“Well, I know that. But we got a barbecue pit in the smoke pit, there, and—”
“No, Pflugerville, personally, like I said, I don't know how to cook any of that stuff. But my mum does.”

“Oh, that's nice, where does your mom live?” Now asked Pflugerville, and legitimately asked that question!
“My parents live in Liverpool, England, and I don't see them coming all the way out here to Japan to cook me any of the food I grew up on. Although, I will admit, it would have been very, very sweet of them, if they came and visited. But, no! Do you... understand... Pflugerville?” And at the ends there, the PH3 began to speak slowly, hoping that Pfluger would. A moment then passed, as Pflugerville stared off, to the up and left, and I then got curious, and stared into that direction, too, to see what he was seeing. But as I did, I saw nothing but white overhead ceiling.
“Pflugerville, do you... under—”
“Why are you talking like that? Aye! I was just curious to where your parents lived. I wasn't suggesting them to FLY all the way out here to....” And now Pflugerville chuckled at the notion. And I couldn't tell if he just got it, or, did from the beginning, and was just messing with the PH3. Maybe he just pretends to be so oblivious? I thought then, but I couldn't tell at that moment.
“All right, boys, I'm headed back to the room. I keep getting these calls by some FARTKNOCKIN' IDIOT! I HATE HIM!” Went the Pfluger. And with really stretching out that ending part, with a long winding motion with his face, as his face did somersaults with anguish.
“You know who the devil this person is?” Asked the PH3.
“No! But I'll MURDER the cum nugget if I ever meet him. Fuckin' murder!” Went the Pfluger, and walked off.
“*Cum nugget!”* Uttered the PH3, to himself in amusement.
And now I wondered:
“How many times have you called him up already?” I then asked. Kadakia then smiled very lavishly.
“Today? About four times.”
“Four times? You got him out here four times?” I baffled.
“I bloody well did!”

“You got him to come out every time?” I asked. And the PH3 just nodded. Seeming also so very estranged and baffled that he could that many times, to his luck and surprise.
“Want to know what else is so unbelievable about it?” PH3 asked.
“What?”
“It was the second time around, after finishing, I realized how stupid I had been, and never had dropped my accent.”
“Wait what?” I confounded.
“Yes, it’s true.” Confirmed PH3. I now whisked my head around from PH3 to where Pflugie was just a moment ago standing.
“So, you’re telling me, even with an accent like yours, that would have blown your cover… he absolutely—”
“Yes.” Admit Kadakia. A moment was now needed. A sure moment. To marvel that preposterous notion in my thoughts. The PH3 then looked at me as if with something to say, but didn’t say, and just smiled. My eyes went slit as my mouth also did with a smirk.

“You're going to call him again, aren't you?” And as I asked, the PH3 just looked up at me all invitingly, seeing as from my face, how I wanted to play along.
“I most definitely am!” He explained.
As the two of us went to it.

AIRMAN SPAGHETTI SAUCE

And I don’t want the world to see me
‘Cause I don’t think that they’d understand
When…?

What… oh, I don’t have time for this!

Anyways.
No, Senior, no! I don't plan on being on this Ship for much longer, so, I can give you the chance to have sweet revenge with me. For, you really have absolutely no

reason for wanting revenge. Since, revenge is something a person seeks trying to avenge for something someone did. And, I really haven't done shit to you, whatsoever. Boopdiddlely. Squat! Absolutely nothing! So, what then is it that's making you feel as crossed with me as you are? What? What have I done? Really, please tell me, what have I done? You still sore over that line I had fed AE2 Frankowsky, over his golden screwjob? Is that it, really? For, really, I don't think so. So, you know, Senior, I don't see just cause for your motives busting my chops every step of the way, and also busting all the PCs in our Shop, too. Since they really haven't done anything to you, personally, either! So, your motives, or lack thereof, all it does is it makes you out to be the real VILLAIN, here. Since the point of being a villain is to oppose anything of good and sound value, in favor of the opposite. And busting people's chops for the sake of busting them, is that opposite frown worthy crap that doesn't fly. You know, back on that Duty Day of mine, on the second day of being in Hong Kong, I remember being stuck on the Boat, and deciding to head into The Ship's library to kill time. I was just simply going through some books in there. Going through them for the hell of it, since, either than the Watch I was to stand later, there was nothing else to do that day. And there was a book I came across, that I skimmed through, and compartmentally read, that brought up a story that reminded me of your story. And also, really our story, entirely.

The book was about the HMS Bounty.
And the mutiny that happened on that Ship, to a certain Ship's captain, that had pushed his subordinates, way too far over the edge and had them turn on him. Interesting book, interesting read, from what I gathered, just by skimming through it. And besides all that, do you know what the most interesting part of this Captain William Bligh's story was? Do you want to know, Senior, do you? It was that, the whole thing with mutiny, men that worked under him turning on him, the events that took place on the HMS Bounty, WASN'T the only time something like that had ever happened to this William Bligh character. After the mutiny on the HMS Bounty, fifteen years later, this William Bligh person was placed in charge as a Governor in New South Wales, Australia. And during those years... the MOTHERFUCKER had it

happen to him AGAIN! Where the entire FUCKIN' New South Wales, Australia, TURNED on his ass. Which is a quite a remarkable feat, I must add, have an entire county state MUTINY your ass! So just what type of man was this William Bligh, had to have been, to have that happen to him TWICE, I wonder now...?

No, Senior, I already know your story, I know your deal. I've really known it since you told me about that story of you and that one Pavy Airman you got into a scramble with. Because I saw into your eyes, and what I saw wasn't woe of it all for how it all turned out, but excitement! I know your fuckin' story, inside and out. You're not hiding any twist plot lines from me! And I don't want—any of it! Since I'm seeing it coming at me a mile away. No! I don't want to play out the part of the next three strikes Airman you plan on getting to punch you out, so you have another story to tell of the woes of babysitting our juvenile, E-3 and below lot. I see the routines you've established for yourself, the habits you've created to keep you going through the same ordeals, again and again.

Like a curse!

Really, I know it's all human nature. This is something I have learned in my time. For everywhere you look, the one thing you constantly see when it comes to human character, is, that it always seems to be stuck somehow, doing the same things, over and over and over again. Cursed! Freakin' cursed! People stuck going over the same routines, going over the same habits, the same conflicts, and the same traumas. And what I love about it is how no one seems to notice. No one seems to care that they are. They themselves don't care, and, they just keep going through with it again and again. In the civi world, ever met the man that keeps getting into relationships with a cheating girlfriend? I have and have heard all about it. The man that keeps getting fired from his job because every boss he's ever had was a pompous dick. The man that keeps finishing last, just for being such a nice guy. Or the man that's a sore loser, because, really, he's a self-loathing, self-pitying prick... who won't stop frowning all the time! And, is never gonna have anybody in his life, because he's too

much in love with his own woes and dramas, to have the time in life to find a way to be happy, instead.

….

Um… um?
Huh?
Wait…!
I guess there can be good habits, too! Sometimes, I guess, they can be positive things. For instance, people who wake up in the mornings, and have a pep talk with themselves in the mirror of how well they're going to do that day. And... and... and...?

Sometimes, I guess, habits can be a... ah shit! Who am I kidding?

….

But this? Getting into fist fights with Airman nobodies like me? No Senior, no! I don't want to play out this role you're fitting me for. So, no! Don't try and get me to try on the costume. Enough is enough! I know the Boat life is a long and arduous one, where routines are built to deal with the day to day drudgery. To survive everything we go through. But, the point of a routine is to eventually get us to SURVIVE in the end. Come out better off in the end, not worse! And I don't see neither you nor I benefiting from this. And the fucked-up part is, even though I know all this... there's nothing I can say to you about it! For you BIG Senior Chief somebody, and I LITTLE Airman nobody. So, nothing I have to say to you would matter. And THAT'S why the Military WORKS! That's why it WORKS! MotherFUCK this nonsense! I want out! I NEEEEED to get out!

I'm launching LT “Jacker” and LT “Facker” today, and... aye! I agree. That didn't sound proper! But I have my job, and right now I gots to get both Jacker and Facker up in the... AYE AYE! I know! And, aye! Of course, I'm making it sound the way it

sounds, on purpose. Of course, I would and am! I have a Pilot named “Jacker,” and a Co-Pilot named “Facker!” Can you blame me? But, anyways, I be doing my hand signals, now, and soon, I'll have both Jacker and Facker shooting off... err... taking off... err... you KNOWS WHAT! I am at OBCs with the launch, and OBC stands for: On Board Computer check. And it's an evolution in the launch where it could take several minutes while the two up there check their systems to see if they're lighting up and in working conditions. Several minutes or several seconds, depending on what comes first. It's a bit of a stretch, so, I have everything at hold, waiting. And at the moment, I'm growing dreary. Everyone is going on with their routine. Minding their attentions to the usual sequences we've all been through so many times, since everything we do are practice missions. Practiced over again and again, so when times comes to do them for real, we'll do them right! And we'll succeed in the day, be victorious, and it'll all be BORING!

Yawn... I go. And now so does Facker along with me in the Co-Pilot seat, and now Jacker, and now Chief Culpepper, and now such and such. So, Jets all around turnin' and burnin', and our Green Shirts are all around making sure they do. All eyes glazed over the usual boring sight of ragin' Jets, and salt settlin' and formin' corrosion. Glazed like marmalade. Nothing but screamin' engines surrounded by dreamin' Chiefs and Petty Officers and Airman, all standing around islands to themselves, for we all cannot move. Reverie-ing up some mighty typhoons, but only for ourselves, since, no winds are coming in to blow out anywhere else. And it’s the setting that's all taking place at Nautical Twilight right now. Purple skies drenched over the Pacific. A muddy watercolor purple spilling all over, into all colors abound whether animate or inanimate. Spillin' into and changing them, all colors into one color. And changing them into the color purple. The skies are now purple, ocean's purple, our Ship and the Jets are purple now, too. And we're too now purple. Everything is so purple, that it's somber in feel and sense, but then there's the clear, clear, CLEAR WHITE glowing moon, at crescent, and it's being very obnoxious up there since everything is purple but her. What makes you so different? What makes you so special? Why don't you

tone that shit down, and falls back into place, dim like the rest of us? I think, for, right now, I'm finding her that annoying.

Glaze!
Yawn!
Fuck!
Whatever!
Is OBCs done yet?
Okay, then!
I guess not!

Looking over to my right, I see ATAN Pflugerville launching his aircraft: 106. He's still in much earlier in the launch process and has a ways to go. And...! Ha! Pfluger! You even launch weird as much as you act all weird! I think. For, just watching him, I see the sum of his actions, that are all trying to equal the same amount as all of us, since, all launches are sequenced the same. But with his, somehow, the mathematical process is being processed differently. The boy isn't using physics, the boy be tryin' to use quantum physics. Or. With all of us, we have 2+2+2+2=8! Simple arithmetic. But with him, what he has is 2+blue+breakfast burritos+%=8! Simple wizardry shit! He's coming up with the same results as the rest of us, but, for the life of me, I can't tell you how they're possibly adding up AS SUCH! He's just moving weird and slow, and offbeat, and strange! And his attention seems so far gone, elsewhere, even when the details of our job now are to be anywhere else. It's very important that we right now pay attention to every detail around us, thoroughly! Making sure no one accidentally doesn't step too close to one of those intakes, and gets sucked right in, and spat right out on the other end as spaghetti sauce.

WTF you staring at, Pfluger? I think, as I see him staring. And as I get curious, I stare into that direction which he is staring at, for just a second. And....

WTF?

Wait...?
I see something in the water.
No really! I see something unorthodox and unimaginable and out-of-place in the water! What the hell is that? What the hell is that?
“What are you doing?” Goes Chief Culpepper to me with his facial reactions. I then motion with my face at the direction I am looking. Chief Culpepper looks over and, braces back, for he sees it also.
“WTF they be staring at?” I see one Green Shirt after another wondering with the facial language. Then lookin' over at what we both lookin' at, and they all now see it too! They see it, they all see it! AD3 Beauregard and AD3 Qian are out here, and they both see it. The IS3 walks over to us, goes: “WTF” with all of our gappers wide open collecting suspicions. Mouths off a little all pissy over the WTF is goin' on. Looks over himself, and now sees it too, himself! WTF! WTF is that? It's a different color from anything else. In the water. Just a couple of hundred yards out from where we stand on deck. It seems to be moving in and out of the water. It’s animate. And not animate because the water is making it seem animate slushing and swaying it all about with its currents. It’s animate by its own nature. WTF! Is it a...?
No!
Can't be!
Those were just silly reveries I was makin'... can it be? Can it? Oh, it's gone now. Pity.

I now look over at the ATAN, and see he's already done with his... wait? He's done with his launch, already? WTF? And I'm still stuck at OBCs. WTF is going on here? Well, it happens, some Jets OBCs just take that much longer. And during the time mine has been chugging along, Pfluger managed to do everything, sum up his whole launch in that time. And now he's collecting chains on his shoulders, since the Yellow Shirt has given the signal. It's chocks out for Pfluger's 106, and it's time for them to get it ready to go to the cats and get it into position. Oh, wait! Oh shit! Just realized Pfluger is launchin' the skipper's bird. Oh... um...! Pfluger is still working on taking off one chain, one right up attached to the nose strut, while everyone else has

taken off the rest, and placed them onto his shoulders. He's still working on it, in his own unique tempo. Take off the freakin' chains, Pfluger! It's not brain surgery! You don't have to be so methodical and meticulous with your gestures and actions. Just take the freakin' thing the DAMN OFF!

Finally! He's got that one—that ONLY—one he's worked on! Off. And. He's backing out of there. What are you doing, Pfluger? Double checking to see if that one chain you just placed on your shoulder, is still there? What the Whiskey Tango Foxtrot are you doing? You're done, you're finished with your launch. Back out of ther—

No, WAIT!
Don't back out like that! Look at where you're steppin'.
NO! NO! NO! HOLY!

Now, since I aint the only one that's noticing how carelessly and inattentively Pflugerville is backing out, while steppin' towards the direction of his starboard intake. I now ain't the only one running towards him, to get him to STOP! So is Chief Culpepper, so is the IS3. And so is our AMCS Hamakua, who's also out here. The IS3 is closest to him, and as he reaches him, he jumps—lunging forward! And grabs him by the leg, that is the only thing now keeping Pfluger from completely being sucked in.

BOOM!
Goes that starboard engine, as one of the chains Pfluger had on his shoulders get fully sucked in, FODing up that engine.

BOOM, BOOM!
It continues to explode within. And we can see fire within there. And the scene is nothing but chaos, now. And Pfluger is all up in there, being airborne, being funneled up, and almost in, into that vortex of air being sucked. He's up to his waist dangling inwards, as the IS3 holds onto his leg, as a few Green Shirts, and AMCS Hamakua

hold onto the IS3. Chief Culpepper now immediately gives hand signals for the Skipper to cut the engines. As the engine does one final:

BOOM!

Shooting out a massive ball of fire from that afterburner end. And as the engines go offline, it stops. It all stops! And a major disaster is prevented. Lives are spared. Birds are spared. But that engine is FINISHED! It's all out anarchy up here now. Everyone's running around to show and make lead, and decide, and figures what to do, WHAT... WHAT? What to do to square this major catastrophe away. The Skipper doesn't seem mighty pleased with all this. He's mouthing off inside his cockpit. But not because of how he almost died, but how he's totally grounded now. And won't be taking off. Chief Culpepper now signals for me to shut off my engines. And so, I do so, since, there was FOD made from this whole ordeal, and we don't know if there's any laying around that could now get sucked up into my Jet: 107. All hell and bedlam now ensues. All hell and bedlam. As Pfluger gets pulled out completely, and placed on a stretcher, that's rushed by the medical team. Which is all followed by the firefighting team. So officially, all hells with bells bedlams are now being ensued! And as I stare out into the waters again.

THERE IT IS AGAIN!

There SHE is again.

Them “you know whats” staring out at us. All grotesquely fascinated with the tarnations and turmoil that's being ensued. And now, she's smiling at the sight of this, too!

MAJOR MALFUNCTION

“What's your major malfunction, Airman? Do you not know how close you came to getting yourself, and several others, killed? Including the Skipper, with what you did?” Blasts Senior.

Us all in The Shop. ATAN is up and center, facing both Senior Hamakua, and Master Chief Dreadnought. And our FREAKIN' SKIPPER! And, aye! Aye, aye! After everything that's happened in our Squadron. All the fuck ups we've all behold and witnessed and encountered. Here is the motherload that now requires our MMCPO's, and our

Squadron's CO's, full participation. The two are in our Shop. And our MMCPO and CO, both, have NEVER been in here before now. At least both together. And the spotlight is now on this little E-3, and words cannot describe just how unnerving and unsettling it all feels for all of us. Us! Just imagining the ATAN's predicament. All lights, and eyes, in The Shop, are on him now. Then back on ourselves, feeling that unnerving and unsettling feeling as we imagine ourselves in his place, and start dreading. Get me the FUCK outta here! I feel. For, I don't know if I can even bare witnessing someone else having to go through with this confrontation. But we're all down here, all us Line Rats, for a reason!

“I didn't realize I was that close to the intake, before it happened.” Shrugs Pfluger. Pretty much shrugs it out. For the boy seems calm. Very calm! Too calm! And it's a calmness that undoes us, and our Senior, as our Senior looks over at the MMCPO, and the CO, for he's also responsible for this in the end.

“How, how were you not aware?” Confounds our CO. The Skipper, as he studies the ATAN, up and down. To try and make some sense out of him.

“You're a PC, it's your job to be aware of everything and everyone around your Jet, even yourself. That's your number one priority as one during a launch.” Illustrates Master Chief. Lookin' to want to bark it out, but, I guess the fucker's been up for way too many hours, again, into the night. This MMCPO Day Checker. And seems very sleep deprived. His eyes and stare very transparent, but still there. Master Chief will stay up so much, you'll sometimes catch him poking at his eyeballs, just to see if there's still sensation in them.

“Well, I really didn't think at all I was that close.” Shrugs Pfluger, again.

And:

“Are you kidding me, Pfluger, ARE YOU...?” And I can see Senior is really feeling just as much unnerved and unsettled with HIS superiors in The Shop, as the rest of us E-4 and belows are. In the end, Senior is the one really responsible here, in the MMCPO and CO's eyes. Pfluger's words are his words. And if Pfluger just so happens to sound unsat, really jacked up and un-squared away like. Careless! That will also make Senior seem the same. Responsible, since, he's responsible of Pfluger and his abilities and faculties. Therefore, if for anyone this experience has to

be the most daunting, it's for our Senior's, since, he's now the one most directly blameworthy.

“Pfluger... I... I...?”

But Senior now shuts it. For he's now getting the MMCPO and CO's scrutinizing stares being redirected onto him. And, Holy Mother of God! Senior is lookin' STEAMIN' embarrassed now. Combusting almost! All underneath.

“So how's 106?” Asks the IS3. Throwing in a word, for, what else can he do?

“How else? It's completely down! I mean, an entire chain got sucked in, mangling all the insides. That engine is FUBARed. All we can do now is get 106 down to the Hangar Bay, and have it replaced. Nothing else.” Explains our Master Chief. Then just glances at the POON, seeing as to how the Third Class wanted to throw in a word, just to sound important and involved. And. Lay off, Falks! This is even beyond your element. All you can do around the MMCPO and CO is asking arbitrary or rhetorical questions and waste their time. Nothing else!

“Pfluger?” Goes Senior.

As Pfluger looks at him, then our Master Chief, and then also the Skipper. And to our awe, the level that Pfluger is now confidentially able to string along these confrontations, all reassuringly and responsively, it all manages to throw us, and them all, off, absolutely. For none of them, and us, know what to say or do to him, to square shit away! They don't! And we don't! For there's nothing really that can be said or done. It was an accident. And with Pfluger, even though he's always been a peculiar case we've all tried to deal with, his peculiar ways of doing this job, up until now, has been gettin’ 'er done. Without any hassles nor hitches. Pfluger has managed this far. And there's only so much Senior can say or do to Pfluger now, before coming off as being unreasonable.

“Pfluger!”

“Yes, Senior?”

“I don't know. I just don't know. I just—” And now Senior trenches over at his superiors, lookin' mighty drenched. Hesitatin' in front of them. And, I must note, Senior has this ability to sweat profusely at almost will, (or really, un-will). All at an instant. If he gets a little too animate or anxious, the man will open up all his sweat

glands, all along his forehead and face, and get wetter than a hooker getting paid to fuck a manatee, all unwillingly. “Pfluger.” Tries Senior, again. And Pfluger, again, gives Senior that oblivious stare of his. That infectious stare with that weirding out feeling that comes with it again. Senior now begins sweating Barnacles and seaweed.
“Pfluger!”
Now more sternly.
“Yes, Senior?”
“You have EMI for the next week.” Finally let's out Senior. And, my word! More EMI? How one note of him. Can't there be something else he can punish us with? Floggings? Gaggings? Kissings of the Gunner's Daughter—SOMETHING?
“All right, Senior!? Acknowledges Pfluger. And gives another blank stare to all these high ups in the room. And now both the CO and MMCPO brace themselves from the weirdness, as they roll their eyes away from Pfluger, and roll them out the door, as they both pick themselves up to leave The Shop. For they've gotten all they needed from us and him. And they're mostly left with a sour taste from the bitterness.

“And, Pfluger?” Now goes Senior. And now that those two uncomfortable presences are out the door and gone, now seems like the best time for Senior to fall back into character, as he grows very crossed by the whole ordeal.
“Yes?” Goes Pfluger, with no pupils but only whites.
“…!” Goes Senior. For Pfluger still has that effect on him, that WTF effect! And now Senior can't take it anymore and wants to leave The Shop also. “All right, I'm outta here. Make sure none of you are down here when I return, and are up on the Flightdeck doing... you know what! All right?”
“Yes, Senior.” We all go. And sorta smile, we all do, for this all now feels like a break. A break from work, and mostly fat him. A fleeting moment presented to us, for we know how limited its proceedings will be. Lookin' over at all of us, I see us all smiling, then frowning, then sighing, and not wanting to move an inch. For we're all stuck at “hurry up and wait” again. We all are. Lookin' around to eye something peculiar we can go brain dead over. And then we all eye something brain dead, and begin to speak to it.

“Pfluger, how the fuck did you do that?” Goes the IS3, now. For really. This really was a catastrophe we all witnessed. Something death defying. Which was a reminder to us all on how we could possibly be killed doing this job. I mean to say, we all know that, how we can possibly die doing this, we all fully understand it and have acknowledged it, but up until now there's been a threshold none of has crossed that far into. So far into it, where, we'd be picked up off our feet, and feel airborne being sucked up into that vortex of death. Which is those intakes on our birds when they're fully online and churning and burning. Death! I mean, that's a presence we all feel, we all do in any situation in life, especially carrier life, out on the Flightdeck. But to feel that presence taking notice in us as we've taken notice in it? Jeez! Fuck! Unholy whatevers! And all them Barnacles! I mean, there's dieing, and then there's dieing in horrific ways. Grisly and gory and horrific ways. Ripped apart piece by piece, then blasted, then vaporized. And I can't help but to feel my soul experience every anguishing step in that process, beyond one’s own mortal threshold. Anguish beyond anguish of what can physically be experienced. And feel morbidly and macabrely skittish.

“What do you mean? 'I didn't know I was that....'” Confounds the IS3.

“I don't know, I was undoing the chain, and that chain was being a bitch. A real hard case to undo... if you know what I mean.” Explains Pfluger. And the boy is now jolly well making jokes about it.

“....” We all go.

“Reminds me of a girl I knew from Topeka, KS. Crazy chick, a lot of my buds were trying to get to, that liked to wear chastity belts because... well? She'd get drunk and sloppy a lot, and would allow guys to take advantage of her, so she had bought a chastity belt at a Renaissance fair, and she'd wear it wherever she—”

“Okay... shut up! Shut up, Pflugerville! This ain't story time, I'm being serious here! You could have gotten yourself killed!” Goes the IS3. Relieving us from whatever humor Pflugie was trying to diverge from this. Uncalled for humor. Uncalled for—as fuck!

“No, I understand.” Goes Pfluger. Lookin' down and away, and away how he usually looks away. With a two second attention span, and he just saw a mouse running passed with a shiny bell strung up to its tail, going ding-a-ling.
“No, Pfluger, I don't think you do understand.” And now we're all quiet. As we listen to the grown-up talking, our IS3, as he reprimands one of us.
“Hey, Pfluger, did you eat a lot of paint chips as a kid?” Asks Kats. As the Line Shack stirs a bit from that, snickering, getting most of us to smile with our old Night Check Line Shack ways, now that we still have no Senior amongst our midst.
“Paint chips? No! You know that that stuff can give you lead poisoning?” Asks Pfluger. And now there's another stir within us all from that whole interjection. For, none of us, I feel like, can say if Pfluger knows why Kats asked him about eating paint chips. Or, can't say if Pfluger is responding in a way to argue against just how brain-dead stupid we're all now trying to imagine him being. If he's aware if we're imagining such or isn't aware. For, maybe he didn't get what Kats was hinting at, and asked his question as a direct response to the whole issue of eating paint chips, with no sense of what might be Kats' cause to be asking to be in the first place. Does he get it was a joke, or not? That Kats really just wanted to make fun of him, or not. And if he got it, then I guess that was clever of him to be sneaking in such an obtuse response, to throw us all off, of whether or not Pfluger is thinking that much more ahead than the rest of us. Or he isn't, for it would be too clever for him if he was, and this is all making us feel confused of where to start. Is he smart playing himself out as an idiot, or is he an idiot playing himself out as being smart? Hell, I'm feeling confused now, since, I'm not sure if I'm to take it as him being that witty, or, witless. But, lookin' at Kats, I can see his mind is already made up, on what to think of this very, very lumpy man (since Kats is a person that likes to not over think things, as I do, and likes to keep it simple).
“Wait, wait, wait... I'm still sorta confused about that story you were tellin'... chastity belt, what?” Goes AD3. And I see him ask, as he walks up and stands beside Kats. And with both men now crossing arms looking to see what the Pfluger will respond with, I can see where this is going.

“A chastity belt, you know, metal underwear with a lock upfront. Something women wear to keep a guy from—”
“I know what it is!” Follows up the AD3. But, I can tell the truth from the AD3. And I know, until Pfluger actually explained what it was, Rudy didn't!
“Oh!” Goes Pfluger. As his eyes light up and sees his cue to continue with his story. Which makes him excited to do so.
“Yeah, you should have met this chick... crazy! Simply crazy!”
“Was she hot?” Asks Rudy. Since the story seems to involve sex somewhere.
“Who, Marylou Morning?”
“Marylou... what?” Confounds Rudy.
“That's her name.” Explains Pfluger. Which sounds how a normal name would sound from where Pflugie is from.
“Is she hot? No!” Divulges Pfluger. And now we're all wondering.
“She ain't?” Wonders Rudy, all frowning.
“No! Marylou's as ugly as an old fashion door knocker.” And that gets us all to picture where the hell he came up with that description.
“Ugly as... then why were you tryin' to hit that?” Goes Rudy.
“Who says I was?” And now, whatever is wrong with this boy, Pfluger, we feel it's infectious presence.
“Wait... you, and...?” Perplexes Rudy, going cross eyed now.
“Let me finish... Marylou Moonshine Morning is—”
“Moonshine?” Goes Rudy. WTF? Now I feel myself going crossed eyed with this.
“That's her middle name.”
“...?”
“I never wanted to get to her, she was too fat and ugly for my taste. You know how fat people can get very, very wrinkly at a younger age? She was like that.”
“Okay... go on.” Goes Rudy, completely entrenched. But in a very undelighted in an unbelieving way, as he takes notice of all of Pflugie's wrinkly fat presence. Which makes him look older than he really is.
“This crazy bitch, there's a bunch of my buds that wanted to fuck her, not me, mind you! But a bunch of them, and....”

“If the bitch is ugly, why would they?” And I can understand Rudy growing curious. But, I feel that this is something best left unexplained.
“The bitch got a mouth, just won't shut the fuck up, and the fat cow has a way of getting some of the boys I'm with excited when she does. Plus, the boys I'm with, none of them got any game with women. Some real hopeless, desperate cases, that are just going to end up dating and marrying the first fat ugly bitch they can get their attention of.”
“Unlike yo' motherfuckin' Mack Daddy ass... huh, Pflugerville?” Lampoons Quimby.
“Boy, you know it!” Brews Pfluger. With a wink and a smile, and just so confidently, too, also so corny, and now this is becoming a riot. Gotta note, Pfluger, for as much of an offbeat weirdo as he looks and feels, has got some mighty fill of confidence and comfort, with who and what and how he is. He’s got some chops. Able to groove it out, all un-groovely, which makes him even more off putting. Yet so grotesquely fascinating, also. “But anyways, the crazy bitch is always wearing a chastity belt like it's the middle-fuckin'-ages. And eventually my bud, Dodd, got her drunk. And got to her, too. And here's now Marylou wanting to get that damn belt off, and here's where I come into the picture. She's lost the key.”
“She's lost it?” I wonder. For I'm now entrenched with the story. While frowning. All unpleasantly.
“Aye! But, really, no. She knows where it is. She hasn't lost the key. It's on Persephenie.”
“Who's Persephenie?” Wonders Kats, now, lookin' like he can't take this anymore.
“Her Rottweiler.”
“WHAT?” And now Kats literally can't take it.
“Aye! She doesn't carry the key on her person, because she figures that would defeat the purpose. Since, someone that's trying to get to her, could then get to it. So safest spot she's found is having her Rottweiler safeguarding it. So, Marylou likes to keep the key tied to Persephenie’s collar. And that Rottweiler... well? It's a Rottweiler! And you know how those dogs are, right?”
“I guess so...?” Goes Rudy, looking winded.

“So what happened to Persephenie?” I ask. ‘Cause I need to hear this. I NEED to, to get my fix.
“Oh, the dog had escaped and ran away, like it does sometimes.”
“The dog... runs away?”
“Yes, sometimes! Does it whenever she escapes from Marylou's yard. And when she does, she won't show up for days sometimes. Sometimes weeks.” And now I'm left with a burning Whiskey Tango Foxtrot question.
“Wait... if the dog is known to escape and run away quite often, then why would she continue to have her safeguarding the key?”
“Because Marylou is a stupid, dumb bitch, like that.”

“Ahhhhh!” And that has us all throwing up are arms in befuddlement.

“So, let me get this straight....” Goes Rudy. And now goes step by step describing everything Pflugie has left us with, trying to build the picture in his head. So Rudy wouldn't miss out on anything. And with every detail, Pfluger goes “aye” to, and it has us all feeling antsy to leave, since Senior could be due back at any minute.

“...?” Goes Rudy now, now that he's finished. And as he looks at the picture he now has before his eyes, then goes double cross eyed, and then: “Motherfu—... I don't get it!” He lets out, for the picture is hurting his brain.
“So... wait? What's your involvement in all this?” I now asks.
And here comes the finisher:
“Oh, she called on me to come get it open, since I used to work for my grandpappy, at his general store, as a locksmith by trade. So, I go to her place, and does so after she calls me up... well., Dodd calls me up, since, Marylou is too wasted to speak.” Pflugie answers. And, grandpappy...! And that is all!
“So, let me get this straight, Pfluger. There's a girl named Marylou Moonshine Morning, that likes to wear chastity belts, so she doesn’t get drunk and decides to jump some dude's dick. But then, gets drunk and decides to jump some dude's dick. But can't, since, the motherfuckin' key is safeguarded by motherfuckin' Persephenie.

A Rottweiler. And the stupid bitch, the bitch being the dog, has jumped the fence and tailed it out of there. So, Marylou calls you over to her place, where she be fat and ugly and half naked, waiting for you, so you could locksmith that shit, so one of yo' buds could get to her punani. Do I gots this correct?" Confounds Rudy.
"You got it, brother!" Winks Pfluger.
And now:
"Wait... what the fuck does this have anything to do with you motherfuckin' almost dying getting sucked into an intake?"
And now:
"Umm... wait! I forgot!" Let's out Pfluger.
"What the football fuckin' monkey shit is this?" Confounds Rudy.
And now finally:
"Shut up! Shut the fuck up! All of yous! No more! No more storytelling, I don't want to hear any more of this crap!" Concludes the IS3, coming to the rescue.
"And... everyone! Get out!" He now orders. And like that, it's back to the drudgery. All the slime and bile we have to drudge and sling through. But I then counts my days, and snickers to myself, for, I know it won't be for long. And as everyone leaves slowly, nothing but Falconni, Rudy, and Kats, I find myself staying behind, stuck in thoughts and motions.
"Hey, Navastian, amscray, get the fuck up there. And if I hear you bitchin' about how cold it is, again, I'll—"
"Hey, Falk!" And I call out to him, now, like I have something important to say, which gets me to get on his receptive side. Well, as receptive as I can get with my presence along with his.
"What the fuck you want?" He asks, waiting impatiently. And now I have a moment. A moment where I goes far into thought, real far, I blazes, and I feel like telling him everything. And to him, for some reason, and no one else. I don't know what's going on with me. Why I want to open up to Falky, a guy that's been nothing but a villain to me. But, I do, and for some reason, having to do with all that I'm thinking about. But then: no, no! WTF you thinking Navastian? I think.
"Navastian, I really don't have time to—"

“Hey, Falconni!” I calls out again. And Falk really now glazes over impatiently.
“What do you want, Navastian?”
And all I'm able to bring up is, since the little guy is waiting, is:
“What the hell did we see in the water?” And that takes Falky back, for a second. And after another second, him and Kats and Rudy, seem like they want to respond. Kats and Rudy included, for they saw it also.
“What the hell was—”
“I don't know, a fuckin' UFO!” Answers Falky, with a shrug. All haphazardly giving in to that possibility. Since, he knows not what else and how else to explains it.
“An unidentified flying...?”
“Okay, an underwater UFO! So, a USO, since, it's a swimming object. So there!” Finishes Falky, with another shrug. And this time shrugging more indifferently. Like it matters not, even though the possibilities gravely would so. But I can sense Falky just wanting to joke about it. Keeping the notion as a joke, so as to not fully acknowledge it.
“A USO...?”
“I guess! I don't know, and don't care. Do this long enough, this job, out to sea, and you're bound see tons of crazy shit, you're not going to be able to explain. And no one else is going to be able to, either.” This time lets out, Falky, does. With an open brow, and I guess that's the best answer I could expect coming from him.
“So, what do we do when we see them?” I ask.
“Ignore 'em! I mean... who's going to believe any of it?” Falky concludes, and now wants to leave.
“No, Navastian, go straight to the CMC, or our MMCPO, and tell them what you saw. Go straight to them! They'll believe you. And do it while having a roll of tinfoil wrapped around your head, and in your bare skivvies, too!” Says Rudy.
And gets me at eyes slit. And now it's Kats' turn:
“That's right, Navastian, and do so after sneaking up behind one or the other, the CMC or the MMCPO, making sure they won't notice, and giving them a reach around. Do that, and trust me, they will believe you, and they won't try knocking you the fuck out, and having the Master-at-Arms called in to drag your ass to Hotel Bread

and Waters. Trust me! Do it!" And I guess that's the best answer I could expect coming from these two.

THE RISE OF DONNELLY

"I don't like how the boys were eyeing Pflugerville." Tells Donnelly, to me.
"Yeah, neither did I." I respond.
To Donnelly's worrisome brow. Which is seeming very worrisome, all of a sudden. All folded up with multiple wrinkles. Involved, somehow, now with such matters, and entrenched, with what's now happening in The Shop. Which I find as something very different there being now within him, I sense, as he now shows concern for matters I've expected him to be live and let live about.
"Really don't like how things are going." Goes on, Donnelly does.
"Yeah, now with Senior, and—"
"Maybe... let's not talk about it!" Says Donnelly.
Or really, interjects, cutting me off. And his earnest response seems to be flustering between a rock and a hard place, unable to break free.
"Why?" I ask.
And Donnelly now just glazes at his scrub work for a minute and says nothing.
"What's wrong?" I ask.
"Nothing...."
And says nothing else.

In our Shop, even though it's mostly been Roach Burger's job, mainly, to play out this part. There's only so much fun you can derive from beating up the same punching bag, time and time, again and again. And making it squeal and moan, even when punching bags don't squeal, nor moan, nor any of that crap. But still! The boys have grown bored and weary of the Roach. Since, the Roach's squeaks haven't been entertaining their whims any longer. And now I feel they have chosen a new squishy target to take all their aggressions out on. And with Senior now in our midst, and present, really fueling some hellish fires, and fueling their own aggressions to a level much more fiery than anything we're willing to internalize and deal with, things might really get nasty. And even with Senior around, I know, they'll still be hellbent and set

in their ways to continue doing what they've been doing. Even with Senior around, with his ever-present watchful eyes, I know, they'll now be waiting for that opportune time, when Senior's eyes ain't, so the boys can be boys, and tend to their work.
“Well, I don't mind them picking on Roach Burger, much, since, the fucker is always asking for it. But, Pfluger? That's like... well like...?” Expresses Donnelly.
And I know exactly where he's going with this.
“You know...!”
“Picking on the retarded kid?” I then finish.
Just saying it, since, Donnelly is being hesitant.
“Exactly!” Exclaims Donnelly, with a nod.
“Exactly! You saw how Kats and the rest were eyeing him, even Roach Burger. And—”
“Yeah, I saw.” I acknowledge.
For we all have eyes for this.
“Fuck! I'm growing sick of this, now.”
And now Donnelly is just left shaking his head. Lots of earnestness in him tonight, for whatever reason. Lots and lots of earnestness, and purpose, and reason. Which I haven't exactly seen in him yet, before. As if he has a new perspective of things. Since Hong Kong. As so do I. Since that port visit.
“Hey... what happened to you in Hong Kong?” Donnelly asks now.
With a broken frown. Broken, sad, but curious.
“What do you mean?” I ask.
As I realize Donnelly is studying something he sees in me.
“I mean... something happened to you.” He says.
As I go:
“….”
“I see most guys coming back to The Ship, and they all seemed relieved since they got their rocks off. Out there. They look a lot calmer and more relaxed, and not as wound up as they've been.” Explains Donnelly.
And then eyes me and says:
“But you, on the other hand...?”

“What?” I say.
And I feel like I really don't want to hear this. For I feel like he knows.
“Well... you're frowning more. A lot more. A whole lot more. And, you're starting to worry me.”
And there you have it. There. And now, I have to make a choice: do I continue to let Donnelly in, or, do I not? But how can I explain everything that happened? How everything? Brock knows most of it, and he won't speak nor look at me no more. There's a lot of despicable and degrading shit I experienced there, that I feel like it has made me into a more wretched person. That I doesn't even want to fully acknowledge. As having happened. Let alone now to open up and to explain it all to Donnelly.
“You at least get laid out there?” Asks Donnelly.
Now, with a smirk. All out of place, as if to lighten up the mood. And now Donnelly sees me frowning worse.
“….” Goes Donnelly, reacting to my reaction.
“Navastian... I'm on the same Boat.” Donnelly now says.
Then sighs and turns to his work. And now, for whatever reason, I'm pissed!
“I don't see how.” I let out.
For, fuck no! Fuck this! Sorry! But I don't see how he is. No, I don't see it! How humiliated I've been. How deprived. And degraded. And turned wretched. I know there's something ill in him depressing him as it has been depressing me. As it has EVERYBODY! But there's being depressed. And then there's being depraved. And, it's NOT the same feeling. I feel like pure and utter shit right now. A piece-of-shit! Rotten. Stinking up the whole Boat. For everywhere I go, I see everyone mirroring my own foul presence. Mirroring my hardened shit smearing frowns. Stank and contemptuous.
“Oh, don't give me that: 'my troubles are bigger than your troubles' shit, Navastian! Don't! It's not a competition. We're not competing. And I don't think you really know what I've been going through, or anyone, for that matter. Considering how self-absorbed you've been with your own shit.” Lashes Donnelly.
“All right, fine! You think you've got it just as hard as me and Pflugerville.”

“You and Pfluger?” He questions.
“Yes, me and him. Since, I've eaten just as much shit as he's about to, now.” I let out.
Saying it, for, I know, Donnelly? Up till now? Hasn't really eaten ANYONE'S! Not yet, at least. Not Falky's, not Senior's, and hasn't exactly had a shop full of Red Shirts superglue hair all over his....
“Dude! I'm FREAKIN' bald!” I go.
As I take off my cranial and brushes my hand over the stubbles remaining where the rest of my hair used to be. Feeling the buzz left, from the stumps, of what's been missing.
“Dude, I freakin' MISS my hair!” I go.
And really, not just the hair I had before the AO thing, but the hair I used to be allowed to keep before I had joined. Before Military regulations. Back when I'd used to grow it long and free. Donnelly now takes a good look at my lumpy, malformed head. Shrugs! And to my content, seemingly admits I'm not totally wrong when saying how much more I'm different, and on a completely different level, than him. Seeing me with how I've been left barren.
“Let's face it, Donny...!” I say now.
Calling him Donny, for the first time since getting to know him.
“My troubles ARE bigger than yours!” I say now.
And now Donnelly, or Donny boy, seems sorta pissed. Pissed and stirred, but also unresponsive. For there isn't any response he can give to top this fact. Whatever troubles that's been ailing Donnelly, hasn't been the type to get him into half the crazy shit I've gotten myself into. Into with the rest of the boys. Into it with Senior. Not half. And whatever turmoil, I guess, what he's been going through, has been internal ones. Or really... NOT REAL! REALLY NOT THERE! There's a long moment now where Donnelly says nothing but continues at his scrub work.
“Dude, I feel like a pathetic loser after everything I've been through. And it's the worst! The worst thing, you can be in the Military. Do you know how shitty that feels?” I express.

And I mean it full heartily. I fully disclose, because, I just can't hold the bile load anymore, without letting it dissolve away my inners. I do so, shitcanning it, and it feels good in a way. But only in a way.
“….” Responds Donnelly, looking away.
“Most people just see it as something to joke about. Oh, HA HA! What a loser. But I've never felt this much degrading pain in my entire life.”
And it is pain. Truly is. Lots of mental pain and strain, having been burdened with all this for so long now.
“You're not pathetic.” Now responds Donnelly.
But tells me this while still looking away. And that's his body language for my response, which I find as totally different from the response he's vocalizing.
“You don't know how this feels.” I say.
As I force a look into his eyes, or try to, since, they're still UA.
Oh, SHUT THE FUCK UP, you are not a pathetic loser.” Responds Donnelly, still looking away.
“YES, I am!” I blast, directly.
For I want to see his eyes this time, if he's to say, again, that I ain't.
“....” Says Donnelly.
As he continues to look away. Which I now take as his final answer.

Whatever turmoil exist in me, doesn't exist in Donnelly, and definitely doesn't exist all around him as it does around me. With all these assholes on the outside, trying to break in. Every fuckin' day. Every fuckin' night. I'm drudging it. I drudge it. Drudge it. Drudge it! Until I feel like I can't drudge it no more. And then I do so, still, some more, since, we're all obliged to. Since—BOHICA! And this be the Military, and I have no fuckin' choice. Whatever turmoil that exist in Donnelly, is still the type that makes him out to be a badass, if anything! Oh, what's that, Donny boy, you porked a beautiful Italian MILF? Oh, I'm so SORRY for your troubles! What's that you say? She was cock hungry and well experienced, and had massive beautiful looking thighs, lookin' all beautifully tanned and tempting, which she used to wrench around your cock, to twist and turn a nut out? Oh, Heavens to Betsy... (Aye! I know the GI

Generation language can be off putting, since, it be 2003, but as mentioned thoroughly before. On Ship, it doesn't feel to be, since time has no specific sense of mode or epoch here). Oh Heaven's! I take it back! You DO have greater troubles than I do. You have far GREATER! Going out like a MAN, Captain's Masts for fucking a wife of a superior, then fucking up any superior that would have anything to say against it. In comparison to me, almost going out like a BITCH! Wanting to kill myself, since, I couldn't stand myself anymore, since I'm unable to find any woman that could bare the sight of me, in how painfully pathetic I am! I REALLY am! And that isn't even the extend of how far I'm going to go, seeing how I'm starting to act every time I get drunk and allow some real horrors to rear their ugly heads out from below my oceans.

"Sigh." I sigh.

As I start lookin' at the waters below again. Dark waters. And they feel like home. And then as I look up at Donny Boy, I now see a different person. Wait... who? I go. For the earnestness, I saw earlier in him has now taken shape, full form, and isn't just in him, but now out, and all around him. And Donnelly is now starting to scare me a little.

"Hey, boys, whatcha lovers up to?" Goes Pfluger.

And... that really breaks that off! Especially with the line he uses. For Pfluger is seeing this out of context, and he wouldn't see nor understand the meaning behind us two staring at each other, as we are, and, to him, all is awkward and questionable. And with that, I feel like responding to him by saying: FUCK OFF, PFLUGER! GET OUT OF HERE! We're not interested in dealing with you and the awkward shit you come with. So, stop meddling in our....

Wait, what you say...? About us being lov…?

What the WTF is that supposed to mean, huh? No, no, no, Navastian! Don't think of what you thought back when you were with Rox—

NO! Wait a sec, Pfluger... what the fuck are you doing up here? Your Jet—the FUCKED UP one which YOU fucked up—is down in the Hangar Bay. So, WTF are you doin' up here?
“We ain't doing nothing, but scrubbing, Pfluger, what you doing?” Responds Donnelly.
Since he's the more responsive one right now. And the least stirred. And as Donnelly asks Pfluger that, Pfluger, now amongst us, does what he does best, and starts acting weird and oblivious again. Ignores us. Walks up right in between us, stares at our work—NOT US, mind you! Pauses. While his snout extends between the spaces me and Donnelly were exchanging heated stares. Whiskey Tango Foxtrots the shit out of us, as he extends his own long moment, that has a whole lot of context, I nor Donnelly would understand what to make of. Nor I'm sure Pfluger would, himself. Whiskey Tango Foxtrots us some more. Then walks up to my bird's towbar, that's connected to the front tire, sits down, in his unique way (I feel through explaining how unique the actions of this ATAN be. Through! Since, no words can really describe them). And then I see him taking off his left boot....

WTF?

And then his sock... and...?
“Pfluger, what are you doing?” I ask now.
For we now feel, both of us do, that the boy is somehow weird-ing us out, and on purpose. Pfluger doesn't respond.
“Pfluger... what the hell are you doing?” Now Donnelly asks.
But then Donnelly gives a look at the Okie, and he seems to be remembering that word I used to describe the boy, and now reconciling within himself with that as possibly being the best word one can use to describe him. That “R” word. And why it's futile to ask.
“I got something stuck in here, I piece of the freakin' Flightdeck, I think? And, it's annoying the crap out of me.” Responds Pfluger.
With weirdly enough, a pretty reasonable answer as to why. But still!

“Pfluger!” I go.

“Pfluger, you, um...?”
“What, I don't have a Jet anymore?” Responds Pfluger.
To a question I didn't ask, but one that does answer the next question which I was going to, eventually.
“Until the Mechs finish replacing that engine down in the Hangar Bay, I'm to be up here, helping with the hand wipes, with you all, Senior's instructions.” Follows up Pfluger.
“Okay, fine, but you're not exactly hand wiping right now.” I now respond with.
After eyeing him for a moment, since, he's still going at it with what he's doing, even after finding that piece of the Flightdeck, whatever, he supposedly had stuck in his boot (which didn't require him to be taking off his sock, although). And, having flung it, far, seawards, off Ship, float checking it, so it wouldn't be left as FOD. Anyways, what I'm saying, is, the ATAN has already done all that. But I see he is now trying to do something else, something to do with his boot in hand, and I'm trying to figure out what it is. You know... I just don't know! I mean, this is the deal: I'm noting all this for myself, since, I'm also just curious about something else. I have a theory about this kid, and, I need to know if the boy is still really as insensible as he appears to be, or, he's really just making himself appear to be that way, for his own hidden reasons. Pfluger, I feel, is a lot like PR3 Wambolt used to be, when Wambolt was an undesignated Airman in the Line, being a master class “skater.” If you remember how I described the PR3, he was a person that would make up nonexistent tasks he'd delegate to himself with and lie and say it came from a Chief so-and-so. Therefore, he could then skate off, and we wouldn't come looking for him to lend us a helping hand. Since, supposedly, he'd be too busy to do so. That was PR3 Wambolt, and how he was. Now with Pfluger, here, I'm just wondering just how much of a master class skater he really is, himself. For I don't believe the boy is as oblivious, and in a world of his own, as much as he makes himself out to be.
“Um...?” Goes Donnelly.

As Pfluger continues to fuck around with his Flightdeck gear, his boot, which he isn't properly geared with right this minute. And what is he doing now? Well, he seems to be unlacing and re-lacing them. Still doing the complete opposite of what Senior had tasked him with to do up here. A minute passes as me and Donnelly continue scrubbing and watching the non-scrubber.
“Pfluger!”
“Wait, give me a minute.” Goes Pfluger.

Another minute. And now me and Donnelly are sweatin'. Why? Because we know, at any minute, our Jaws monster might be showing his face.
“Pfluger, stop fuckin' around with your boots! Senior might show up at any—”
“WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?”
Travels a voice from a distance, from the other end of the Flightdeck, that brings a scent of hot wings, that have been smothered in barbecue sauce, also... sniff sniff... vinegar? With a side of tots, drenched in ketchup mixed with mayo. Aye! You all know who it is. And me and Donnelly now begin to scrub harder, getting all asses and elbows into it, putting on some real hard and focused Military Bearing, showing us doin' what we ought to be doin'. While Pfluger continues doing absolutely what he ought not to do. An interval now passes as Senior makes his way over. And all we see from the back of our heads is his jibber jabber, fully underway, open and extending, to do some weapons of mass destruction, when it fully reaches us. And now, Senior has finally reached us, and Pfluger is now done lacing his left boot, and now is beginning to take off his right.
“Pfluger... what the hell do you think you're doing?” Confounds Senior.
Seemingly about had it with the special one.
“Oh, hey, Senior.” Goes he.
Like we at the mall, and Pfluger, just so happens, had bumped into Dave, there, after stepping out of a Hot Topic, where he had bought a Grateful Dead t-shirt, which was on sale, which had made Pfluger very, very smiley face happy.
“Hey...?” Confounds Senior.
For “hey” is another no no! Just like “yeah” is. So un-squared away like of him.

"…?" Goes a moment.
"Pfluger, what are you doing?" Now goes Senior.
For the level of how confounded he's feeling is taking all the wind and tenacity out of him. He's now growing tired of the ATAN, and his peculiar ways.
"I have something in my boot." Answers Pfluger.
And that's exactly what he said with his other boot. And now, conveniently, this other boot also has something in there. Senior now seems more confounded than ever, for Military procedures has nothing to offer him on how to handle this. Or this special ATAN, here.

MUST NOTE:
With anything that goes on OFFICIALLY in the Military, if there isn't a procedure written in blood of how to handle a certain matter, it's best to wait until there is, before acting. Or, in other words, take for example: if a man is holding a gun at your head, as you are holding one up against his, and there is no protocol of how to handle the matter to save yourself in the Bluejacket's manual. (HINT HINT! Unofficially: try and pull the trigger, first, DUMBASS!) But, officially, if that procedure hasn't been written yet, it's best to let that man shoot you in the head, first, instead, so others can learn from the mistake made. As they sit down, and write that procedure in the protocol, with YOUR BLOOD!

Also:
The reason I am now explaining this, is, so all you non-serviceman types, that are reading this, can get: where we're coming from. And. How profoundly STUPID we all REALLY are, about doing anything while on the job. All right? All right! Now let's get back with the story that's in progress:

"Pfluger, you're not supposed to be up on the Flightdeck without proper attire." Goes Senior.
Sticking to whatever procedures that deems fit. And now Pfluger looks up at Senior, and... all right, I see it now! As I turn quickly to glance at the Ville's response, I see

it, now, exactly! And I see what's been on my mind since the beginning, when I first met the ATAN in NAF Atsugi, when I made an observation about him that I wasn't yet one hundred percent sure of, then. But am now. And here's the Pfluger's real deal: it's all an act. It really is all an ACT! I'm completely certain of it now, and I don't just hold it as a personal theory. For, right now, he's once again doing his oblivious thing, still, as he tends to do, at junctures like this! I can now see right through it and see the true intent of the ATAN. And the intent is all for the sake of continuing to keep all his Shipmates and superiors around him, Senior now included, feeling totally at a loss and completely confounded over, how to deal with this hardcase. So Pfluger, himself, can get away, skatin', in his own unique way, how he's discovered deems fit for him.

“But Senior, I've got all my proper attire with me.” Continues Pfluger.

As this whole transaction gets me to smirk, smirking from my enlightenment of what Pfluger's deal is.

“But it's...?” Confounds Senior, as he almost goes cross eyed.

And now let me explain something to add a bit of context. Consider this: have you yet wondered how a Shipmate like Pfluger, has been able to manage, for as long (far longer in our Shop than I) keeping himself distant, with the peculiar character he has, with all the non-peculiar characters our Shop comes with? How he's managed to avoid all the Line Shack's hazing and foul play, treatment, from characters like Falky and Kats, and even Quimby? Well, this is how! Excuse me for sounded a bit mean, but, Pfluger is a fat uncoordinated goofy lookin' fuck. And, AYE! It is very mean spirited of me to explain it that way. But, three steel balls! For I'm only doing it to point out how us Squids really think, from our prospective, when thinking about each other. I do it not to be mean spirited, but to fill you all in with the intel. And as for the intel with this ATAN, let’s face it, he's a dorky face surrounded by a sea of dork-bashing fuckfaces. Fuckfaces like Falk, and ancient salt encrusted fuckfaces like Senior's here. And in all this time, far longer than what me or even Roach Burger have managed (Pfluger has been in The Shop that long), Pfluger has managed to avoid this whole Line Shack treatment, by doing this! Purposely weird-ing the fuck out of all of us, keeping us at confounded, and unsure of how to respond or react

with him around, so as to keep himself singled out from the rest of our crew. Pfluger is a fat, pudgy looking fuck. HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN HAZED THE FUCK OUT OF BY NOW! By the douchebag alpha prime side of a Line Shack litter. He should have, but, he HASN'T! But now, since Pfluger has been gaining more attention in our Shop, standing out, and no longer managing to be stand out, maybe, the pudgy boy be slippin'? For he's grown too comfortable with his con trick. And me, the boys, and now I feel Senior, we all, are starting to see past all that. Past his facade of total obliviousness.

“Fine, I get it. You need to get whatever you got in your boots out, but you should do that down in The Shop.” Goes Senior, continuing with official procedure.

For it seems to be working for him.

“But, Senior, you told me not to be in The Shop.” Tricks Pfluger.

Or, tries to, since, I can now see right through his trick. But yet, Senior still seems like he doesn't, and is still looking confounded over how to continue dealing with the Pflugmeister. Confounded, but now also a little pissed. So back to procedure with him.

“I told you not to be in The Shop, while we were in The Shop, but you could have taken it out then. So, why didn't you, and why try to do it now?” Goes Senior, with good reasoning.

“Because, you kicked me out, then.” Answers Pfluger.

Breakin' up Senior's reasoning, but not completely. Senior now looks less confounded, and more and more pissed.

“When we were in The Shop, if you had started taking your boots off, and had TOLD ME, explained to me, what you were doing, I would have allowed it!” Answers Senior.

And now Pfluger seems to be thinking, while trying to seem like he's not to think, for he can't think! Since, he's supposed to be special like that. Still keepin' it up.

“Well?” Goes Senior.

And now Pfluger has his response:

“I didn't think you would have allowed it!” Answers Pfluger.

And... BAD RESPONSE! BAD, PFLUGER, BAD! As Senior clams his right hand over his face, wiping off the sweat that's accumulating for how pissed he's getting. And

now, after hearing that line, he's lookin' less and less confounded, as Pfluger continues slippin' up his act.

“So, WHAT! WHAT? WHAT! In God's name, made you think I would have definitely allowed it now? Up here? On the Flightdeck, where you should REALLY be properly attired, HUH?” Goes Senior, gaining momentum.

“....” Pfluger doesn't respond.

And, for, he's unable to. Unable to play it weird, now, for he's just lookin' mighty dumb and jacked up. Which is something which Senior knows how to work with, so as to get an Airman unjacked.

“Airman!” Airmans Senior.

“Up here on the Flightdeck, you need to be in proper Flightdeck attire. And right now, you are NOT! Do you understand that?” Procedures Senior.

As Pfluger's eyes glaze a bit. And now I can sense he knows. Now Pfluger knows, as he's eyes light up, realizing how badly he's been slippin'. As he now grows self-aware of it, and how he can't keep up his act any longer.

“ATAN Pfluger... DO YOU... understand me?” Blasts Senior.

And now Pfluger is like one of us, and really in this story, and really in the Line Shack. As he phases into our world, departing from the made up one in his own mind, and now shivers, as he feels the cold chill, freezing up his nuts, as he feels how he is a part of this.

“Umm...” Umms Pfluger, as his eyes glaze harder.

“Well?” Pushes Senior.

For since he's now fully engaged, he has no plans to pull an “HW” (Bush) and pull out.

“Okay, Senior, I'm heading down to The Shop to get this object—this FOD! Out of my boot, and I'll come up right after!” Nice tries Pfluger.

But that's not going to happen. Especially since “okay” should be “aye aye.” And is an improper response, and another no no vocab.

“Stop, Pfluger! Stop!” Orders Senior.

And Pfluger now stops. The Airman was almost runnin'. But stops, for there's no escaping this.

“Okay, Sen—”
“'AYE AYE,' AIRMAN! You say either a simple: 'YES!' OR: 'AYE AYE!'”
And now, Senior is feeling mighty prime.
“All right, Senior... so how do I get this FOD out of my boot?”
And... WTF are you doing, Pfluger? Put your fuckin' boot back on and start scrubbin'! Enough tryin' to play your game. ENOUGH! It's no longer working. You've LOST! Now FALL back in line, as just another one of us subordinates, before Senior starts to see you as anything but, as insubordinate!
“PFLUGER!” Blasts Senior.
As he wipes more sweat from his frustrated brow. And now, a pause. As Pfluger does this eye twitch, while all standing stiff, with terrible Military Bearing. Plus, terrible posture. For his back isn't arched properly and is bending in the wrong direction. Bending forward, instead of back, and he looks to want to rest his chin on his fat stomach. So UN-NAVY like of him (even when his stomach is very fat and rounded like most of the fat Navy Chiefs aboard, here).
“So, how do I get this FOD out of my boot?” Continues Pfluger, to the end.
Playing it really, really dumb. But too dumb, for it to be acceptable.
“Pfluger?” Baffles Senior.
“So how do—”
“You DON'T, Pfluger, you DON'T!” Answers Senior.
As Pfluger looks dumbfounded, and this is a new look for him, sorta like Roachy's.
“Pfluger, put your fuckin' boot back on, and start SCRUBBIN'! NOW!”
“Can I go down to The Shop later to—”
“NO!” Blasts Senior.
As he begins to raise his hands. His shivering hands. With his thumbs and indexes lookin' to want to do some ringing. Pfluger continues, as Senior starts steppin' towards him. And now I feel Donnelly's presence being awakened a little. And he doesn't seem to be as live and let live about this any longer.
“You know, Airman... I don't know what I'm going to do with you. I DON'T!”
And this is now all feelin' like that one reprimanding session Senior had with Roachy, when I first introduced him to you all with.

“You really fucked up worse than Castleberry did with the tail hook fiasco, where we had to have one of the birds fly back to the beach. You've fucked up MUCH WORSE, and I should send you to TAD, send you crankin', and trade you back in with Castleberry!” Contemplates Senior, to himself.
“But... you know what, Pflugerville? I don't WANNA!” Admits Senior.
After a moment of thought, with a devilish smile, for he can say “I don't WANNA” no matter how improper it sounds, for that's the perks of being at his rank.
“I really wanna, now, keep you around, and see... what really is there that's wrong with you! What is your major malfunction. And see if there's anything I can possibly do to fix it.”
Explains the hungry man, eyeing up some good eats.
“See if I can square away, all that's UNSAT with you.”
And now Pfluger is moving again.
“Stop, Pfluger, STOP!” Goes Senior.
“What are you doing? Where are you going? I'm not done with you—yet! Now put your fuckin' boot back on and...?”
And then Senior sees it.
“I'm sorry, Senior, I've got my boot now unlaced and...?”
“WHAT THE FUCK!” Goes Senior, all hoppin' mad.
Seriously WHAT THE FUCK, think me and Donnelly, both. Both of us do.
“I'm sorry, Senior, I need to lace up my boot, now, and since that's going to take some time, maybe I should head back to The Shop, since, I'm not properly attired to be up here anymore. So I can lace it up, and....”
AYE! That's right. Pfluger has been busy unlacing his boot in his hands all this time. Without Senior, nor Pfluger, himself, nor us two (me and Donnelly), being totally aware that he was. Since he had delegated to them, his hands, to do such, unlace his boots, all before he began to get reprimanded by the big fat Kahuna burger, here. And since he was preoccupied while being reprimanded, he never got around to send word back to his hands, to stop the whole un-squared away unlacing process.
“So, Senior... requesting permission to head back down to The Shop and—”
“Request DENIED!” Blasts Senior.

As his thumbs and indexes almost form full circle.
“So, Senior, since I... since I... since I have an unlaced boot that needs to be laced now. What... what should... I do now?”

Senior doesn't respond. Senior is unable to respond. The level of how unbelievably UNSAT and WTF this all has been, looks to have finally broken him in. And Senior looks and feels to be totally decommissioned by this experience. For words and twilight zones cannot express how he's feeling right now. AND, AYE! Remember how I once brought up how... so much procedure... has a way of dumbing us down to a level of stupidity, unheard of anywhere, BUT, in the Military? Remember? Well, this is the perfect example of what I meant by that. Of just how STUPID! One GETS! In the Military. Worrying SO MUCH of how to get one's actions in sync with Military Bearing and procedures, the serviceman becomes totally dumbfounded of how to properly act it out, when getting into a hiccup such as this. This is how stupid the Military is! How stupid it MAKES US! How stupid and BRAINLESS! So, structured to procedure to where things like this actually happen. This is how and why, us Military folks, forgets how to think for ourselves. And when we get out, (for some of us) we're unable to do ANYTHING for ourselves, but become homeless, vagabonds, and drifters. Broken down and broken stupid. MULES! Desperate for someone high up to come along, then, and square us away. Remind us how to tie our own shoes, even. And lace up our boots.
“You want me to go down to The Shop to get this?”
And Pfluger is totally gone now. In a different direction. Gone! Far! Stupid! That we might as well feed him 1s and 0s to fix his broken programming. He's now about as conscious as an AI would be, forever stuck unable to grasp anything beyond things just being binary, as an on and off switch. And Senior seems to be finished wanting to finish Pfluger's coding. Debugging him to have him working in proper order.
“Okay... I mean... I mean... Aye... I mean... all right, Chief?”.
“CHIEF?” Blast Senior.
Upset how no one told him he'd been busted down.
“I mean, Senior.” Says Pfluger.

Remembering how Murdock is no longer with us. And missing him... as we all are.
“....” Senior says nothing, at least vocally, visually he’s painting anything but a passive bearing to all this.
“Is there something wrong, Senior?” Desperates Pfluger.
And now Senior has really had it.
“Is there something wrong?”
“You're asking me THAT question, Pfluger? You're asking me THAT?”
A pause.
“Um... what?” Goes the automaton.
“What... what do you mean what?” Goes the other.
“What?” Goes the first.
“Don't you know!”
“No, Senior!”
And now it's time for Senior to explain.
“…?”
Oh look, Pfluger is trying to switch it back to his weird shit again. And failing at the miserably. How cute!
“All right, Pfuger, I can't take this anymore, I need to get this off my chest.”
“What is it?”
“Kid, are you retarded or something...?”
And when Senior says “you” he gets a little physical while at it, extending his index, into a pointer, as it pricks at the ATAN.
“….”
“What's your major malfunction, Airman? What, tell me, WHAT?”
Then pricks at him, again, harder.
“WHAT?”
Then again, and Senior now has Pfluger being pushed back some.
“What is your DEAL?”
“I don't know what you're trying to tell me, Senior.” Asks Pfluger, growing scared.
For he's heard, like all of us have, how Senior comes from a time, when his superiors did much more than just push us around. Way much more than that, to get things

squared away. Conducting the type of protocol that usually tended to end up ending with medical being called in to pick up all the blown to smithereens pieces left.
“Answer me this, Airman, because I need to know. I need able bodies up here doing this job. Able bodies, on top of things, that have all their mental faculties in check. So major disasters, like the one you almost caused, WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN!”
“I don't understand why you're—”
Pfluger is wanting to bring up the physical language that Senior is speakin' in but seems skittish to.
“Are you a FUCKIN' RETARD... OR SOMETHING?”
And this time Senior really pricks hard, at the ATAN's head. Leaving behind bruise mark. Shoving it to one side, and almost tipping him over. And now Pfluger... is pissed! And, slowly going into animal mode.
“….”
“Are you? Or are you not A FUCKIN' RETARD? Because, having a fuckin' retard up here, is something I need to know of, if I have one in my Shop. Because, I'll be DAMNED if you're to get someone KILLED, and I wasn't able to catch onto what that person's deal was, before it happened.” Asks Senior.
While pricking his head, again. With a shaking motion. Shaking up his head, to hear if something would also be shaking up inside: Pfluger's brain. And I and Donnelly can see, Pfluger, REALLY doesn't like the feel of his brain rattling a bit from the transaction. Not at ALL!
“….”
“Well...?” goes Senior.
And now Pfluger seems to want to respond to the physical questioning he's receiving.
“I don't know, Senior, I think that sort of an offensive—”
“I don't give SHIT! Are you a RETARD, or NOT!”
Oh, for FUCK SAKES! Stop DOIN' THAT! Senior does the motion again, and Pfluger is starting to have had it. Things might get brutal after a couple of more sessions. As one or the other, unable to hold it any longer, might go full force.
“I've got a brother that was born with cerebral palsy, and I really don't like—”

“Shut up, Pfluger! SHUT THE FUCK UP!”
Pfluger is really now making this a personal thing. For he's mentioning real conditions of real family members.
“JUST SAYIN', Senior, I, honestly! Find that very offensive, and—”
“Shut up, Pfluger! SHUT THE FUCK UP!”
And Senior now loads a round up, but doesn't punch him, yet.
“No, I'm not going to SHUP UP! I find that HIGHLY offensive! And! I'm NOT going to take this from YOU, and.... Ahh!”
And now Senior grabs Pfluger by the mouth, and grasps hard, to shut it, as he deems to have it. Pfluger then begins fighting off his hand, that's trying to keep his mouth shut. IT'S ALL PHYSICAL NOW!
“HEY!” Goes Donnelly.
Stepping up, done with being all live and let live about this. DONE! As Senior continues.
“You STUPID fuckin' AIRMAN, I've HAD it with YOU, AND...”
And Senior now loads another punch, and...?
“HEY” Blasts Donnelly.
Breaking it up, before things were to get too physical. And... Unholy Shitbirds! Does Donnelly come flashing out with a lightning presence. Smiting hard! And now, getting a thunderous response to follow. As Senior cowers a little from what Donnelly is capable of bringing. Bringing what no rank can outrank. For rank has no place in the here and now. For Senior's physicality isn't capable of dealing with this somebody that knows what really getting physical is all about. With someone that knows how to actually fight. And with that, Senior fully disengages from Pflugerville, and now seems a little afraid.

“What... HUH?” Goes Senior.
BLASTED! For, Holy Prime Meridians! Donnelly's booming authoritative voice has Senior at intimidated.
“What?” Scares Senior.

Lookin' mighty scared, all of a sudden, and beside himself. With someone that's E-3 and below, that actually COULD DO THIS!

“HEY, what the FUCK you doin', SENIOR?” Thunders Donnelly, the thunder god, of reckoning and true judgment.

And... this ain't the Navy no more. We in Southie, now.

“Listen, you, this is none of your...!” Tries Senior.

To gain back his imposing presence. But then notices JUST how well conditioned Donnelly is, with his bulging form, in being trained for occasions, that have one motherfucker, goin' PRIMAL, on another motherfucker. And then notices, Senior does, how his fatass, AIN'T! Needs to get that fatass of his sent to the Chub Club, and spend a lot of days doing some cardiovascular, and lifting weights. For, seniority statuses and hot wings ain't gonna save his ass, if and when Donnelly actually does go into animal mode, himself, and on Senior.

“You got a problem with me, Donnelly?” Scraps together Senior.

As he squats QUICKLY to pick up his anchors, that fell off, the second Donnelly stepped forward, to CHECK his ASS! Trying to save himself, now, from a possible major embarrassment.

“You got a—”

“If you’re gonna put your hands-on Pflugerville, for no good reason, then, YEAH! I DO!”

And now Donnelly is allowed to just say “yeah.” And Senior is unable to reprimand him from it. Since Donnelly is now outranking Senior. In the massive BALLS department!

THE SNAKE

I'll tell you what the biggest problem with the Navy is. Even though Sailors, we're also outfitted to be as soldiers. We're Military. And we're groomed to be as such, being soldiers sent out to go to war. But when we're sent out, never do we really ever see the enemy. And having been groomed for dealing with hostility and violence, and not seeing an enemy we could channel all our pent-up aggression onto, we end up channeling all this churning fire and spit we have within us, amongst ourselves. Every other branch of service has (or at least seems to have) this level of

camaraderie and oneness amongst its troops. Take the Marines, for instance, even though another group that has a reputation that precedes itself—let me be clear! I've hung out with those oorah Jarheads, and I'd speak more favorably about them than my own lot. Back at Yokosuka, Japan, at the Honch, there was one night I spent drinking with those characters. NOW SURE! All that bravado, and macho posturing, and grabbing each other by the collar and barking in each other's faces:
WOOF!
BOW WOW!
BOW WOW!
HOWL!
(Aye! Roger that! They howled, too. Seeing as there was a full moon that night).
Sure, all that was to be expected. But underneath it all? They were still very nice guys, very friendly and open. Foamy at the mouth—sure! All twitchy. Eyeing everyone and each other all funny. Fine! But....

Although... after a couple of rounds, one of them did take it too far, and momentarily snapped, and turned on the rest of us. Going all:
GROWL!
GROWL!
HISS! SNARL! SPIT!
While we tried to calm his ass down. And then when he quieted down and started eyeing some JN female, at that bar we were at, showing indications with the motions in his eyes, of what he planned to do next, we had to all dog pile on top of him, then, and...?

BUT ANYWAYS! Army guys! Aye! Army guys! I've hung out with them too. Hung out with those grunts, those ditch diggers, too, at Camp Zama. And as groggy and callous as they all seemed, still there was this oneness. Passive aggressive bunch of jackasses and downers—mind you! But still! At least better than us! Even with Air Force, I've been amongst them, too! Now, I will admit, with them there was something very, overly preppy and prissy, and pretentious, going on. Something

very snooty and spoiled, since they're the most well-to-do branch. But yet again, they'd smile more, and would smile amongst themselves. There's always this level of oneness amongst all the branches I've seen. Except us. For within us Squids, deep down, there exists something entirely different. Amongst us, I feel, there's always this level of separation, and bitterness, and simply not liking. As Sailors, metaphorically, being islands onto ourselves, surrounded by miles and miles of lonesome oceans. There's something within us, always keeping us at isolation. Keeping us as stand outs. Not be an army of one, but a navy of one's own lonesome self. And versus everybody else. And especially the hierarchy. Going blue on khaki, on those Chiefs and up. But the Navy is and has always represented some level of defiance—I guess? I mean, take any maritime story, and the one element that will always stand out, and will find its way to define the whole experience, will always be the stories that deal with MUTINY! For as mentioned several times before, for all maritime stories are all the same. At least the great ones are! And do I even need to bring up that one tale of that one HMS Bounty, again, and its one Captain William S. Bligh, and the events that occurred and took place out in the Pacific, some two hundred aught years ago?

Well... let's try putting it like this! There's this joke we have amongst us, when comparing how our branch compares to the other ones in the US services. Which goes a little like this:

There was a Marine General, an Army General and a Navy Admiral, all in a discussion over who had the toughest men....

(If you're wondering what ever happened to the Air Force General, know that he had taken the day off, to go to a local spa, to have his pedicure, and manicure, and entire facial, done. Also, to have a sex change operation, even later. Since the idea of a vagina always made much more sense to him, then that other sex organ, that requires a lot more "umf" to operate).

Ahem, anyways:
The three of them were discussing! Marine, Army, Navy! Who had men as tough as nails, instead of men being concerned about their nails. And with that, the Army General stepped forward, first, and said:
“All right, I'll prove how the Army has the finest men in all the country. Private, get over here!” Ordered he.
While eyeing some Army grunt, that was in the vicinity. The Private then reports as ordered:
“Yes, sir?"
“See that man over there?” The Army General said.
“Yes, sir!” Confirmed the Private.
“Kill him!” Ordered the Army General.
And without any hesitation, the Private did so, pulling out a Nine, and gunning that man down.
“See that! Now that takes a real man of brass balls to do!” Rejoiced the Army General.
But then the Marine General stepped forward, and said:
“That's nothing. PFC, get over here!” Ordered he.
And the Private First Class that was standing by, reported:
“Yes, sir?”
“See that man over there? Kill him, then kill yourself.” Ordered the Marine General.
And without batting an eyelid, the Marine PFC pulled out his M-16, and blew him away. Then turned the rifle around, and stuck the barrel in his mouth, and unloaded.
“See that! Now that takes a real man of brass balls to do!” Rejoiced the Marine General.
And now it was time for the Navy Admiral to step forward:
“If that's all the Army and Marines got, I got you both licked,” Said he.
And then saw a Seaman high up on some tower, and called to him, saying:
“Hey, Seaman, jump off that tower and fall to your death!”
“Excuse me, sir?” Responded the Seaman.
“Shipmate, don't have me relay to you again, I am an Admiral, and I want you to jump off that tower, and jump off NOW!” Blasted the Admiral.

But then the Seaman replied:
“Pardon me, sir, but go FUCK yourself, sir!"
The Navy Admiral then smiled, and rejoiced:
“See that! Now that REALLY takes a REAL man with REAL brass balls to do!”

I guess the point I'm getting at is: this is really all in our nature. All that is expected out of us. That joke, there, is a proud Navy joke, full of proud Navy heritage. For it's been passed down from one Squid generation, onto the next. It is something that's seeded deep within us all, from the first day we enter the Navy, and see what it's all really about. I would have never imagined on the day I swore in, that, this would become the mindset I would later on develop. But here I am! Here I feel! Rebellious, and mutinous, and not giving a bit of Barnacles about it! And now, I want out. I don't want any more of this. And I want OUT! But also, I guess I also sorta want what was promised to me. The adventure that was promised. The adventure I swore myself in for. And now, with my feelings there, I am now realizing what I might have to do. And now seeing how I might not be alone in this matter... well...?

“Hey, Donnelly!” I call.
Calling him out, in a p-way we're in, heading for midrats. I call out, and I'm no longer calling him Donny Boy, after what I witnessed.
“Hey, Donnelly, wait!” I call, again.
But he's way more forward in the p-way, and he isn't able to hear me it seems. Him being all the way up there, pacing fast, as I try to catch up.
WOW! I don't think I've seen a Khaki disengage, and scare off that quickly, EVER! While pretending that he wasn't. After that moment? With the one which Donnelly had with Senior Chief Hamakua? And putting that fat fucker in his place? I mean, WOW! Simply, WOW! Shit got hysterically awkward! As Senior was like: “What's the time?” And tried to look down at his wrist for a split second, only to remember, he wasn't wearing any watch! Then said: “I got a meeting with Chief Madison, from QA, we'll continue this anot—umm?” Then looked over at Donnelly's over imposing presence, again, got intimidating, again, and slipped the fuck out, as quickly as he

could. Rushing off to save himself of some REAL embarrassment, as he was about to get put in his place by a three strikes Airman. For Senior KNEW he was going WAY TOO far with his treatment of Pfluger. He KNEW IT! And he knew what he was doing was unacceptable and uncalled for. But unfortunately for him, what he didn't know was there would be someone around, to check his E-8 and above ass, for how unreasonable for he was getting. Downright harassment, that was, the way he grabbed Pfluger, and tried to hit him. WOW! FUCK! Was Senior so overwhelmed with dread of just how embarrassing that whole moment was seemingly going to turn out to be. The man was practically shaking off sweat and tears.

AYE! AYE, AYE!! Donnelly imposed on him THAT MUCH! And I have to say, the fucker was really imposing on all of us. Not just Senior. But also, a little me, and Pflugerville, too. Even though Donnelly was coming to his rescue. As I looked over at him, what I saw was some real fire and brimstone churning in those portals one calls the windows to a man's soul, having me come to terms with what type of hell the boy—err—MAN, this Donnelly is capable of cutting loose. I mean, I guess it goes a little something like this: everybody brings with them a certain energy, a certain spirit, a certain discipline, and a certain drive, that's been well seasoned and experienced in certain trials, that life has tested them with. Tested! Which having passed and survived, has bestowed upon them certain capabilities, allowing them to deal with matters, in ways, other's might not. Donnelly can bust out with some serious ass kicking possibilities, in ways, I, nor Senior, nor a lot of others in The Shop, I feel, couldn't do! Bust them out like seals, unleashing a level of hell, not me, nor Senior, nor others in The Shop, might be able to handle. Which also in a way... also sorta...?

“Hey, Donnelly... what the fuck?” I call out, a third time.

And I'm a whole lot closer, and the pitch of my voice I feel now is strong enough to where it should have reached him. This has me now growing a little curious and anxious, for Donnelly is still pacing fast, towards the galley, and it's as if the Airman is trying to stay away from me, for some reason.

We're in the galley, in line, before some PIs, that are behind the chef's counter. Filipino MSes, or cooks. And all you can hear from them is BOK this, and BOK that! Bok, bok, bok, boding! Sounding like a room full of typewriters being typed away in some 1940s New York high rise office, by ditsy secretaries all named Ethel or Loraine, that or Jane. And they're all speaking fast, their language, behind mustaches, and.... AYE! I know what you might be thinking, and... are you STILL taking offense towards how blatantly racist this book can be? Are you? Well, that only shows how far YOU'D survive in his Navy! But anyways....
(WTF is it with these people and being chefs or food and drink distributors? Everywhere in the Navy and Far East I go...?)

But anyways... us two, and other Squids in line, behind the counter. And I'm right behind Donnelly, and after a while of my presence not receiving any attention from him, I get the feel that Donnelly is giving me the cold shoulder. As he hasn't turned his face to face mine, once, and he knows I'm behind him. He's ignoring me. We're now getting our chow, and now we're heading over to take seats. And, part of me feels awkward to sit next to him. For I now feel like we're becoming strangers, and I can't explain why. But FUCK IT! I'd like to find out why he's ignoring me for. So, I seat myself at his table, and Donnelly now extends a disdainful stare, and looks back at his chow again.
“Wow, can't believe that happened.” I say.
And Donnelly stares disdainfully more.
“Fuckin' Senior! He bruised Pfluger a little, he did. And he was winding up a punch to deck him, hard, with! What the fuck is wrong with him?”
Still with the stare.
“Wow, you really let him have it!”
“....”
“Senior was fucking scared of you, man.” I say now.
And that stirs Donnelly a little, as his disdainful frown starts to weaken.
“He really—”
“Shut the fuck up, Navastian. SHUT UP!” Scares Donnelly.

And he really does scare it out. To my shock.
“Umm... I just!” I just.
“SHIT!” Blasts Donnelly.
And then:
Bang!
As he slams his fist onto the table. As if he's done something wrong.
“Wh... what's wrong?” I go.
And now Donnelly, shows to have something pent up, bruised and scary.
“What do you want from me? Why you sitting next to me?” He lashes.
In disgust, and disdain, again.
“Umm...?”
“What, you think you're my friend now? We best friends? We really just started hanging together, so get that stupid idea out of your head.” Donnelly says.
And although I'm a little hurt from that. I can see right through it, sorta...? On what might be eating him up inside.
Bang!
Goes Donnelly, with his fist, again, as it starts to get the attention of some other midrat diners.
Bang!
“All right, ENOUGH of that!” I go.
BANG!
“WTF? What's wrong with you?” I now blast.
For I'm not going to be shooed away so easily, so Donnelly can repress what he's going through, that simply.
“You think you know me? We've had a couple conversations, and in that entire time, we've done nothing but talk about you and your stupid problems, you making yourself out to be a real Shitbag. And, it's all you! All YOU!” Goes Donnelly.
And now I'm a little glad he's not repressing it, and a little not glad that he's not.
“Umm...?”
“And in that time, you think you really have gotten to know me? Enough to latch onto me, and expect me to fight all your battles... HUH?”

“NO!” I resound.
For I don't like where this is going.
“HUH?”
“No, of course not!”
Sigh. Goes Donnelly now. And now looks a little over my head, and then at my pupils. And now feels it's time to let it all out. Finally, to tell me his story. And how it all relates.
“You know I've been to prison… on the outside, I mean...?”
He now says, simply enough. Let’s out Donnelly, he does. Frames it. And does it so well with those few words, and with his eyes, that I doesn't feel like I need to look at the actual picture to see what it's about.
“All right.” I go.
And I can now really tell how it's going to be a story that's going to trump mine, in the “getting shit on” department. BIG time! As much as I'm blown up my woes, Donnelly was right all along, since I can't compete with someone that's been to prison.
“Ever been to prison?” He asks.
To see if I can keep up with his troubles in life.
“No!” I say.
“Well, I have... and that might be where I might be headed, again, or the Brig, in our case, should I say.”
“You're scared.” I mention.
For I feel like he really shouldn't be. Even though now dealing with Senior he should. But still, SHOULDN'T!
“What?” Blasts Donnelly.
Irritated that I went there. Since, I can tell, Donnelly, is the type of guy that owns a whole mess of “No Fear” T-shirts. Like insignias, he'd wear, to show what his disciplines in life are all about.
“You're scared of Senior doing something.” I bold.
For I'm gonna take it there. And with that, Donnelly looks to want to RUSH to his feet, to RUSH me! But of course, doesn't. For that was just in his mechanism. For I

know. I've earned a spot with him, to be allowed to say these things, where no one else could with him.
“Yeah... yeah, I guess I AM!”
After a minute. He then let's out.
“Listen, you know you did the right thing, right?” I encourage, then. For, HE DID! He most definitely DID!
“I don't know about that. I mean, fuckin' Pfluger, you saw how he was acting? Maybe....”
“No! SHUT the FUCK up... YOU now! You did the right thing. Senior might be our superior, but he can't do shit like that anymore! He can't! Not anymore in the Navy.”
“….” Goes Donnelly
Now lookin' tired. And not lookin' to have the strength to carry on.
“Donnelly, he was scared of you.” I mention, again.
For this is important for him to understand.
“Oh, get the fuck outta here!” Rejects Donnelly, full heartily.
“He—” I stress.
Or tries to, for Donnelly then:
“And you're telling me that's a good thing?” Interrupts.
“He's going to be on my ass, now, he's going to on me, BIG TIME! And....”
And I can understand him completely, why he'd be so afraid. But:
“It's different though with you. He was intimidated by you. I've never seen him get like that with any of us Line Guys. Not even Falky. He was embarrassed. And he's not going to want a repeat of some freakin' FNG Airman, putting him in his place, again. He's going to try and ignore that whole thing like it never happened.”
And that, there, is my own perspective of the matter. Which I see, is set up in Donnelly's favor. To his benefit, and not to his detriment. Something that separates him from the disposition of the rest of our lot, even Falky's, and how Senior is allowed to interact with us, compared to him. After hearing out my perspective, getting a glimpse of it, Donnelly then lifts his head up, to the whole possibility.
“You think so?” Hopes Donnelly, liking sorta what he's hearing.
“I know so.” I confirm.

Although part of me feels that maybe I'm being too confident with that proposal.
“So goes my life.” Sighs out Donnelly, now.
And to that, I say:
“...?” nothing!
For I doesn't understand.
“Listen, Navastian, let me ask you something....”
Only after a good minute, of intently looking at me, studying me, really looking into me, as I'm now not able to look into him, Donnelly says this. Which gets my attention.
“Go ahead.” I say.
“What's the craziest and most fucked up shit you've ever done?”
And as Donnelly asks me this. I look him in the eyes, and see Falky, and then Quimby, and finally Brock, who all left me with a certain impression when speaking about Donnelly, personally. Very vague, but still worrisome impression. Which I have sorta suppressed thinking about, because I like the guy. Also, and then, I see Donnelly again, and at that moment when he had said to me: “But what if I did?” When speaking about: what if, he did, mean to screw a married woman, Tracy, the AMC's wife, and what if he did mean to do things that he shouldn't have done? Being bad. And reveling in it. And revealing something about himself, something mentally ill, that made him do things against his better nature.
“Umm?” I go, unsure of how to answer.
“Can't think of anything?” Asks Donnelly.
As I shake my head to the whole question of “what's the craziest and most fucked up shit I've ever done.”
But then I say something cheap:
“I joined the Navy.” I say.
But we both know it's weak.
“Really?” snickers Donnelly.
Which, I doesn't like, cheap shot or not.
“Yeah really!” I accept.
Accepting its lack to merit what Donnelly is asking.
“Really? That's it, how is that fucked up?” Donnelly asks.

And:
“It is from my standpoint.” I just explain.
Since it's all I could come up with, and it doesn't matter anymore, since I'm more interested in how Donnelly is going to explain an event to trump mine.
“Okay... well... figures.” Says Donnelly.
“Donnelly, just explain to me what's going on with you!”
And now comes Donnelly's story, or sorta:
“You know, when I was a kid, I used to look up to macho types. I used to, until... I guess, I sorta became one.” Starts Donnelly, for now.
“Used to look up to them....”
But then Donnelly goes:
“Sorta how you're looking up to me now.”
As he snickers, trying to lighten up the mood. Smiles, putting me on the spot. And:
“Oh, get the fuck outta here!” I go.
As I find myself a little embarrassed. But mostly embarrassed since Donnelly isn't that far off.
“Hey, I've notice how you are around me, and... I remember how I was when I was eight. Lookin' up to a role model.”
“Okay, STFU! Dude! Just get with the sto—”
“I mean, I used to have a whole bunch of WWF action figures, and I used to play Westlemania with my younger brother and—”
“Oh, shut the FUCK up, now!”
“Ha, ha!” Chuckles Donnelly.
“Just get on—”
“With Hulk Hogan and Andre the Giant action fig—”
“Enough!”
And at this point, I interrupt him now, since I can see Donnelly is trying to spin this around to poke fun of me, and how I've been around him. Like some little lost puppy, looking for an alpha to stand with. Fuckin' bringing up something from my (and really, all of our generation's) childhood. To explain how silly it all feels.
“You saying you're Hulk Hogan?” I baffle.

Now playing along. Since Donnelly won't let off. And since I now find that him comparing himself as such as being a little blasphemous, to compares himself to that! And, fine! I'll admit, I have sorta sized Donnelly up as a role model, but... Donnelly is being very pretentious now. Donnelly then tongue-in-cheeks.
“You saying you're—”
“Fine, no way am I that awesome... I'll admit!” Donnelly humbles. For he should!
“Although, maybe I could be Macho Man Randy Savage, what you think?” Donnelly then compares.
“NO!” I go.
Since I don't see him as that, either.
“Fine, then who would you see me as then?”
And I know Donnelly, once again, is trying to take refuge in humor, to prevent himself from delving into his story that he was at one point seemingly willing to tell me.
“Ted DiBiase.” I say, now.
So as to fuck with him, and get him to respond with a:
“Fuck, no!”
“Okay, I got it, I know exactly who you remind me of.” I say.
“Who?” He asks.
And I now let him have it:
“You're Jake the Snake Ro—”
“No, FUCK NO!” He responds to that.
Exactly the response I was looking for.
“No, I think you're—”
“Oh, oh! Ultimate Wa—”
“NO!”
And I'm starting to get a little annoyed with this little game. Even if it has lightened up the mood a bit for us. And maybe I shouldn't ask for the full story, not his FULL story, at least. But something is starting to creep me out about all this, so:
“If you're going to be a WWF superstar from way back. You're Jake the Snake Roberts. And that's all I'm gonna give ye.” I go.
“Fuck no!”

“You're Jake!”
“No... the guy always creeped me out as a kid.”
And now Donnelly let's go of the humor and falls back with his story.
“You want to hear my story?” Asks Donnelly.
“Yeah.” I say.
“Well... I get impulses.” Donnelly now says.
Followed by an awkward pause.
“Like what?” I go.
“You know, when I'm in The Shop. I get impulses of doing something... that I'll regret.”
And, something in me told me it was going to be about this. Some gut feeling.
“So! I do too!” I say.
Since I've felt it too. I have!
“No, it's different with you.” Says Donnelly.
“How?” I ask.
For I see it being the same.
“I'm worried, I might really attack them. sometimes. Really let my anger out and hurt one of them, bad. I get impulses now and then when I'm standing around them, pretending to be cool, when I'm REALLY not! And I feel like I might sucker punch one out of nowhere, for no good reason, and break his teeth in.”
“I wish you would.” I say then.
And that PISSES Donnelly off exponentially.
“I don't WANT to go to the Brig! I've been in prison! I DON'T want to go back there. And all because I—”
“I get it.”
“No, you DON'T!”
“No, I—”
“No, you FUCKIN' DON'T!”
“HEY! What's the problem here?” Goes a Chief.
Walking passed where we're sitting. And we're mum to answer. Very tense moment. Very tense. And I don't know now who has been hearing what, since, we've forgotten

to check the volume of our voices. The Boat Chuck Chief eyes us some, intently. As the two of us hold up our Military Bearing to show squared away-ness. And after a bit, he then leaves.

“When you're kid, you always look up to guys that do what everyone else is afraid of doing. But, Navastian, ever thought like this... maybe it's good that you're afraid, and really, you shouldn't?” Explains Donnelly, showing me his perspective.

But I still have a problem with it.

“What? You stood up for yourself. Why should you be afraid of that?”

“To what extent, though?” Stresses Donnelly.

“As long as you're doing the right thing.” I answer.

“What if it really is the wrong thing?”

And:

“How is it wrong?”

“It is when you go too far, and almost get a guy killed.”

“....” I go.

As little by little, I start to see where Donnelly is coming from.

“Navastian, I went to prison, because I almost killed a guy, beating the fuck out of him. And I just don't want things to EVER to go down that road, again.”

“Oh.” I say now.

As I start to see the bigger picture, the one in Donnelly's mind. Set up like a horror movie, exposing me to all of his biggest fears and with all the plot details.

“You know, back in Southie... I used to hang out with a bunch of guys that were, well... SIMILAR! To all this.” Donnelly recounts.

As his story now really begins.

“How so?”

“Just a bunch of unemployed douchebags, I used to hang out with, that were going nowhere in life. That did nothing but try to pick fights all the time and try to hit on chicks.” Frames Donnelly.

As I start to see the similarities. Except with a room full of baggy, backwards hats, wanksters, from Southie, instead of Uniformed men of honor and service, as we liked to pretend ourselves as being all about.

“You know, I'll tell you something. A guy like you should have never joined the Navy.” Tells Donnelly, to me.
“Why you say that?” I ask.
Even though I know his answer, and how it applies.
“Because, I can see you're different. You were brought up to be better. Really, a guy like you should have gone to college. And if you still wanted to join, you should have at least gone officer.”
And, I'll admit, I like the sound of that, how Donnelly is explaining how things should have been. And not because it just makes me look good, but the idea resonates. Sounds uplifting, and something I can look up to. Going to college, and then maybe, and not having to deal with this blue-collar self-pitying self-loathing crap, that I'm now stuck with. Why didn't I go to college? I think now. But, obviously, I'm here for the college grants promised when my term is finished.
“Really?”
“Listen, you're a good guy, I can see you got a good heart. Better than most guys here. But the thing is, if you hang out too much with these types. The low lives we're now dealing with. They'll eventually turn you into them. “Explains Donnelly.
As now, not only does Donnelly give me a better glimpse into his world, but also mine, over things and matters I've already invested some of my thoughts into.
“Yeah, I've been through all this before. And back home with those Irish losers I used to hang out with...? Guys I grew up around...? I pretty much experienced the same thing. You see, they are people with no sense of self-worth. They're a bunch of self-loathing assholes, that hate themselves, and will hate everyone and anyone that looks like them. And also, not. And why? Because they don't know how to do anything else. Back in Boston. I grew up around a bunch, I took for being my best buds. That is... until they showed me their true colors.”
“What happened?” I ask.
Donnelly is little silent now.
“How did you almost get a guy killed?” I ask further.
“Well, the one friend, I thought, would never stab me in the back, his name was Travis... huh... first names, ha!”

“What about first names?” I ask.
And now Donnelly gives a friendly look.
“You know... my first name is Michael. What's yours?” Donnelly asks.
And:
“Oh... ha, ha! Yeah, first names... I forgot we have those!” I respond.
“Ha... I know! Funny, huh?”
“Yeah, well... Michael. I'm Gabriel.” I say.
And, aye! That's my name. That's my real name. So, allow me to reintroduce myself with a name I haven't gone by, for (what feels) like a very, very, very... long time.
“Well, please to meet you.” Donnelly tongue-in-cheeks.
“Yeah, same.” I also go.
“Yeah... I knew Travis since I was in Middle School. Practically grew up with him. And, he used to be a good kid too, but... well, he changed.”
And now I also wonder how he would, as how Donnelly did, as how I am right now.
“Travis and me, Billy and Jimmy, and Joey, and James, and... well, after dropping out of High School. We did a lot together. A lot of shit, that was no good.”
And hearing Donnelly tell me how he dropped out of High School, momentarily (but only momentarily) has me lookin' down at him. As being lesser. Like a juvenile street nothing. I should watch out for. By hiding my personal belongings when he's around.
I frown now hearing that. Since, I graduated High School, easily. And I can't understand how anyone couldn't. I mean, how? How not? Something as easy as getting a diploma. I now momentarily (again) look at Donnelly, how I would a kid with a mental disability. But I know that isn't the case.
“Up to a lot of no good... like what?” I bring up.
Since Donnelly had.
“You name it!”
And Donnelly eyes me, like, it wasn't all just through peer pressure.
“Okay... not that bad. But just about.”
Now let's out Donnelly. Since, for a moment there, I eyed him in a way, and Donnelly knew what I got irked by.

“We'd go around, see another group we didn't like, and then—boom! And the next we'd know, one of us would either be in the hospital, or in jail. And it went on like that.”

And I know this story. I know it! I've heard it, seen it, before. Since I come from LA. And I was a High Schooler in the 90s, so I know exactly where he's coming from. And I've been exposed to all this before. Never directly involved. But seen and heard everything that happens, on the sidelines. Standing behind a wired fence.

“You see. We were a bunch of losers that had a lot to prove, I mean... they were. I really wasn't. I actually graduated from High School. I didn't drop out like they did—if I made it sound that way... no! I didn't. Even though barely. And, I had my boxing, and had more sense about me.” Donnelly explains.

As I get a little ashamed how I took him in as they.

“And I had Jesse.”

And Donnelly's eyes light up now bringing up her name. Becoming starry eyed, and longing.

“Travis had a girlfriend, too. But unlike my Jesse Singer, Travis' girl, Kimmie, was just as no good as he was. And did nothing but cheat on Travis, all the time, and... you know the type of girls—right?” Donnelly asks.

And the problem is, I sorta doesn't. And Donnelly notices.

“Umm?” I go.

“You know, right?”

“Yeah, I know.” I go.

But really, I sorta doesn't. For I've been around girls that gave me that feel. The feel that I was dealing with a degenerate. But, being a High Schooler then, I just sorta liked them, since, I'm a guy, and it's my job to, at that age. Being naive around women.

“You know, the type of unaffectionate bitch, that manipulates guys around her with the vague promise of sex, to feel like she has power over them. Just so the bitch can make herself feel better about herself, right?”

And since Donnelly is going on explaining away into detail of their behavior, and moral sense, it's obvious to him that I doesn't. And he would need to explain things to me.

“Yeah, I kinda do.” I say... and look away.

And now Donnelly can tell I really can't. And, here's the thing! When it comes to women? Except for how I've started to feel about them. I haven't had that much experience, dealing with. And, I feel like it's one of those things... of how being a only child, has affected me. Self-reflecting on that psychological standpoint. Since I've never had a sister. Or a brother. And have never had the chance to experience the growing pains. Like the growing pains of having a one involves. I mean, look! Look how badly I'm at relating to male peers. Peers like Falky, and such. These are the growing pains—maybe? I should have really experienced by now. I don't know... for how could I know?

“Well, that's the type of girl Kimberly was. Travis' girl, a real cheating bitch.”

Actually, I have had some experience dealing with such. With the type of girl Donnelly is now describing. In High School, I can already see... it's THAT girl! The one with the slit eyes, looking at everyone, judgmentally. Always a pretty girl, that looked all jaded, and felt all jaded, from all the boys she's had to deal with for wanting to have something to do with her. The unappreciative type—I've encountered! In High School. I'd say something nice to them, to show how I liked them... and with slit eyes, they'd look at me, then, and right through me, like I didn't even fuckin' exist. And was just wasting my time, as I was hers. And mostly hers, since, her time would be worth more, since she's BETTER!

Oh! I know these types. I realize now. And I HATE THEM!

“....” I respond now.

For... AYE! I know exactly who this Kimmie girl is. For Donnelly has framed her that well. Manipulating a bunch of guys, by hanging around them, and completely ignoring them.

“Well, Jesse kept telling me to stop hanging out with Travis and the bunch, kept trying to tell me! But, I ignored her, because, I felt like I owed it to the guys, since I used to think there was loyalty amongst us.”

And now I'm trying to picture Jesse. And I'm having some difficulty—funny enough! Since I keep imagining a boy, since Jesse is a boy's name, much to my understanding. And all I can picture is a boy with long hair (making him into a her), wearing denim jeans and denim jackets, and a baseball cap. The Red Socks type. And even though I can't imagine a girl, I feel like I can relate with her better. Although, with a last name like Singer, I get the strange impression of a Dancer. Or someone in music. A girl named Jesse Singer being a singer, although, sounds silly. But, whatever!

“I should have listened to her.” Donnelly then goes on.

And I'm finished sizing up Jesse. And the verdict is: I like her. And I can see why Donnelly would be so starry eyed and longing for this person. Making me wonder what happened with their relationship.

“Travis hated the fact of how his girl was, Kimmie, and how she slept with Billy, Jimmy, Joey, James, and just about every other douchebag, and also how she tried to sleep with me.”

And now I'm taken back, for there's something in Donnelly's eyes, I now see, that I doesn't get, and doesn't like, either. But anyways...!

“Go on, what happened.” I ask.

“Travis, hated my girl, Jesse, because he knew she was too good for all of us, and even me, and Travis.”

“What he do?” I ask now.

For... what else could it be...?

“He tried to rape her.”

“Ah shit!” I go.

As I imagine Jesse, how I like the tomboyish girl, and now this. And now I'm trying to imagine Travis. And the first thing that pops in my mind is a redhead (for whatever reason). With a lot of freckles, covering up his entire face. So much so, I can't make out shit from it. Can't make out eyes, nor his nose, nor mouth, nor anything, since

the freckles are covering up all the empty spaces on his face in between, leaving nothing to contrast.
“Yeah. You see, Travis hated the fact that my girl was a better person, and one night, getting really drunk, he tried to hit on her, forgetting how my girl was nothing like his girl, and when Jesse rejected him, Travis got mad. Really mad! And got physical with her.”
And now this freckled piece-of-shit smiles, and I see teeth. Clearly.
“Jesse told me that Travis was all like: 'What? You fuckin' bitch, you think you're too good for me?'”
And now I picture something that REALLY fucks with me. As this Travis guy disappears, and I picture me in his place.
“'You know your boyfriend fucked my girl, Kimmie. So, what makes you think you're better, when, you have a guy like that?' This douchebag, Travis, supposed best friend of mine, said to her, about. Lied to her, about!”
“Go on.” I say.
As the image of me being Travis continues to fuck with me. BAD!
“This was at my place and we were all partying earlier. And Jesse had come by while me and the boys had left to get more beers. So. It was just Travis and Jesse, alone at my pad.”
Me and Jesse alone in... all right, enough! Stop it, Navastian, STOP! Stop imagining yourself as Travis. I mean, WTF!
“So, what happened.” I go.
As I find myself getting absorbed in my own thoughts of being him, and unable to quit myself doing so.
“I got drunk with the guys and went to a pool bar. I never knew what had happened until the next morning, when I found Jesse in my closet, after she had locked herself in there, with a baseball bat.”
“Travis had left.” I deduce.
“Yeah, but not before Jesse had really clocked him in the shoulder, almost breaking his collar bone. And after she had locked herself in, she had started screaming,

which scared off Travis, thinking someone might hear her. Considering how thin the walls are in my old pad."
And I'm still picturing myself as that piece-of-shit that Donnelly is describing. And now it's not just fucking with me, the thought, it's also starting to disturb me. Profoundly!
"Travis had given Jesse a black eye, and he had split her lip."
"What?" I go.
As I start to feel sweat running down my neck.
"That's how I found her, scared out of her mind, in my closet, in tears."
"After you saw her like that, you went straight to Travis, didn't you?" I deduce, again. For, what else would have happened?
"Yes, I did." Donnelly says, and looks away.
"With the baseball bat Jesse was holding onto, right?" I continue.
"Correct, again!"
"And you just about killed him for what he did."
"Yeah!" Continues Donnelly, still looking away.
And I sigh now.
"And I went to prison for it."
And so, he concludes. But I have questions now.
"How long?"
"One year."
As I sigh again.
"I got lucky, though... I was seventeen at the time, so I only served a year for what I did. But even still, I was sent to prison, even as a minor for it."
And so, he explains, but still looking away. Which starts to throw me off.
"You know, it's interesting how we keep ending up... living our lives in circles, going through the same shit, again and again." Says Donnelly, as he circles his index finger to that description.
"Yeah?" I say.
Since I already dedicated an entire chapter to this subject matter, which Donnelly is now bringing up.

“Jesse warned me about guys like Travis, warned me! Told me how they were. But even still, deep down, I knew it, but didn't want to accept.”

And now Donnelly looks at me, and...? I'm thrown off, somehow! Whiskey Tango Foxtrot. Who the...? And I'm really thrown off, there, for a second. As I'm not able to recognize Donnelly for a second. His eyes look different. For... as if they've switched. And his eyes seem in reverse. Wait... what? I'm thrown off, some more. As Donnelly doesn't look to me, how a person telling me this story, would... Whiskey Tango Foxtrot, again! What's going on? And what does that mean?

“Guys like Travis... they're low lives. Weak minded people, the guys I hung out with were like these guys. Not having one bit of respect for one another. And a bunch of douchebags, all trying to one up each other, make jokes, fuck with each other's pride, and why? Because they really have none for themselves. No real pride. Nothing to REALLY be proud about, for their own sake.”

Wait, I'm unable to keep up... what you say... Donnelly?

“Guys like Falky. I know fuckfaces like him, or Kats, or Hats, or Quimby. Rudy! Guys like these? You know, people will always make you feel how they feel themselves. So, I ask you, how has guys like Falky and Kats, and Rudy made you feel?”

But as Donnelly asks me this question. I'm brought back around. And I stop looking at things reverse (whatever the fuck that was about). Since Donnelly is now trying to connect his story to all this.

“How have Falky and the boys made me feel...? Like a worthless pathetic loser. A nothing. Complete shit!” I express.

For, I now understand something deeper.

“Yup. Did you ever feel this way before?”

“No... no I haven't.” I express, then acknowledge.

“Well, welcome to other side, dealing with low lives, that will never amount to anything in life. Except maybe criminals, and such.” Explains Donnelly.

Really frames it. And even though I see what he's saying, part of me also gets very upset for some reason.

“Welcome to the Navy.” Says Donnelly.

Navy? Full of...? No! Don't frame it like that! That's going too far! Is it...? And now I'm aggravated.
“I don't know if I'd say Falky is....”
“No, he is! He is! He's the same exact piece-of-fuckin'-DOGSHIT as my best friend Travis was. The EXACT same. All cocky, and always overcompensating. But really, he's anything but what he's making himself out to be. A true loser, that no girl—real woman—would ever want to be with. And being around these sorts, again, fuckin' seeing them, again! I'm getting impulses.” Divulges Donnelly.
His full take. And... I don't know if Donnelly should compare the guys he hung around, to these guys. I assess. But doesn't say. For I can see Donnelly is set in doing so. He sees the SAME. His eyes don't look reverse no more (whatever that meant, again!). And they look centered. And fixed. And that really now worries me. Seeing to what he did to Travis.
“And... shit! You'd think guys like Senior, someone in his forties, someone more established, would have more sense than we do. I mean, he's a Senior Chief of a fuckin' Navy. He should!”
And now I see Donnelly, picturing Travis, but it's not him, nor Falky, nor Kats and Hats, but Senior.
And... ah shit! I think. Ah shit! Shit! BARNACLES! FUCK! Hell! I continue to. As I feel Donnelly's impulse through his eyes. I feels it! And his fear. He's scared, because, something deep down within him really ENJOYS ALL THIS! And that's the real fucked up detail, about all this.
“That fuckin' fatass loves being that way, I see that now. I see that! And that scares me. You were right, Navastian, he's a real piece of work, and I'm afraid—”
“Ah shit!” I go now, out loud.
“Yeah!” Donnelly responds.
And looks at me and sees that I see his fear.
“Ah shit... don't have impulses now around him. Don't!” I go.
“I'm going to... I AM! If that fat fuck ever tries to get in my face the way he did with Pfluger...?”
“Don't think about it!”

“I don't know what I'll do!”
“Just ignore him, he'll ignore you.”
“What if he doesn't?” Donnelly whimpers, like an animal.
“Try harder!”
“....” Animal eyes.
“No! You embarrassed him, he won't want a repeat of that.” I force.
“I hope so....”
“No, he WILL!” I FORCE on him, again.
And... AH SHIT! I fuck it up. I meant to say:
“I mean... won't! He won't. Not will! He WON'T! He's not going to get into your face and try to provoke you. Okay, Donnelly...?”
Donnelly got really worried when I said: “he will.” Really overly excited, and really overly worried. Donnelly now looks into my eyes, like my reaffirmation wasn't enough.
“DONNELLY!”
“Yeah...?” Whimpers he, again, like an animal, again.
“He WON'T!”
“Okay....”
“He WON'T!”
But I say now, with more feeling this time. I reaffirm again. But Donnelly's eyes... continue to linger.

CUE THE APPLAUSE

I'm now trying to sum up the story I heard, of Donnelly's, in my head. So: Donnelly—or should I say—Michael, had a bunch of questionable characters for friends. And one really questionable, but supposed, best friend, that did the ultimate betrayal, and tried to get with his girl. And worse yet, considering how questionable these characters are, in question, not only tried, but tried to force his way. And therefore, Donnelly had to come in to do what he did, bashing his best bud's, Travis', brains in. Donnelly then, of course, paid for his actions. And went to prison. Doing questionably the right thing. Or, was it? Since, maybe Donnelly didn't do it all for justice, but more so for vengeance. More so, since, it seems like Donnelly enjoys

the confrontation and violence, and a little too much. But, whatever! What's important, is, Donnelly is now dealing with the same type of crowd, again, the same type that got him into so much of a mess in his teens. Or that's just what he says how he's perceiving them. Now thirty-one. Different story, but same characters, overall. And then there's a new arch villain: Senior. Who brings a whole new level of WTF complexity, leaving us all WTF of how to handle it.

Funny...!
Funny...!
Actually, it's not funny, but...! It's just, something, about how I care, but also... doesn't...? And I then look at Donnelly, who's still sitting next to me. And we're still at midrats, and we still haven't touched an ounce of our re-hydrated green grub. And now, seeing how sorry he feels, makes me feel mixed. I guess what it is, is that: something feels wrong about all this, now that I got a more profound glimpse into the making of Donnelly's psyche. Also, now with his perspective of life on The Ship, dealing with everyone here, and how his Southie story relates to it. But anyways, this is starting to bother me. I'm right now replaying over and over his story, his motives, and all the situations that occurred, in my head, and trying to process my own take, and the process, it feels, is going to take some time. But right now, what I feel like matters is this: I like Donnelly, a lot! I like the guy! But I can't set aside how something is very jacked up, here! I've tried and am still trying. But I just can't escape that feeling.
“Why did you hang out with such guys, in High School?” I ask Donnelly.
Since I don't like picturing Donnelly around such guys, mixing in, and being one with. Even though I don't know what to take from Donnelly's side of this story, I already have an idea about the characters he mentioned. I know those guys. I've met them. And have hung out with them. In High School, myself. So, all it took was a second of Donnelly describing them to me to get the nothing but recognizable feel of that crowd. And the vibe they come with.
“I don't know, I guess I felt sorry for them.” Responds Donnelly.
After some hesitation to continue. And now I'm feeling more mixed feelings.

“Sorry?”
“Yeah, sorry.” He simply says.
And I really do not know what to deduce from that. I feel worried for Donnelly now. Seriously worried. Now Donnelly's actions don't seem as heroic as they did. Not so meritorious anymore, but impulsive. And “impulsive” which being his word. Like some animal's would, unable to tell right from wrong, and going completely by instinct. What he did for Pfluger was a good thing, but done... maybe... for all the wrong reasons? Didn't exactly do it for Pfluger, but for Senior, and for himself. And for what both him and Senior have in common. I saw Donnelly's eyes when he expressed his fear, and it was the same look I've seen in Senior's eyes with him expressing his joy, when supposedly also expressing his fear. Fears and joys all being the same, here. If those two butt heads, again... shit might get REALLY NASTY! And all very UNOFFICIALLY like. Even with a Senior Chief! A starry anchored Khaki. Involved. And that worries me. So, this is what the boys were talking about, when talking about Donnelly? But still... I still like him. And still, I see that I still do look up to him. But, what it is, is his perception of things. How he sees them. And what he projects into them. Falky? Kats? Quimby? Rudy? Can he really see these characters as one and the same with his old crew: Travis? Billy? Jimmy? Joey? And James? Can he? For I can't. I know those type of clowns Donnelly used to hang with in Southie. The type of degenerates that are just going to infect you with their degenerate nature and turn you into a morally bankrupt lowlife yourself. As much as I can't stand the people I am now dealing with in the Line, they're NOT... one and the same. They're not! Now I'll say something good about all the Squids I've come to know in the Line Shack, even though their morals can also be held in question, much to the reason for that is they're just acting out a lot of angst and bile and judgmental feelings, amongst each other. But inside, I feel the calling. The drive in us, which I've also felt in myself, in wanting to become, eventually, a better person. And becoming the type of person that would always do the right thing. It's that drive that made us all want to enlist and sacrifice our lives for a cause in the first place. Even Roach Burger! Which is something in Donnelly's old crew I doubt would ever be able to possess.

“I gotta ask though, what about all that, 'if they keep knocking....'” I bring up, now, with Donnelly. And sorta sing it out how he would.
Since this story of his has truly changed everything I've felt about his character.
“What about it?” Donnelly asks, mournfully.
Like it's a matter left to be buried, before it starts stinking up the joint, since it's pretty much dead to him now.
“If they keep knocking, don't let 'em in!” I sorta sing it out, again.
Since, that's how Donnelly had practically done it for me. Since before this story, and how he seemed so much more well-adjusted.
“Ha!” Goes Donnelly.
At my jingle, while rolling his eyes, and making a face. Tumbling along, since, I've sorta pushed the whole topic over a hill.
“Did I really come off that corny?” He then asks.
And that upsets me.
“Donnelly... Michael...?”
I now decide to use his first name, to really speak to him, personally. And not professionally.
“Michael... you seemed to be more on top of things.” I say.
Since, he did. Donnelly rolls his eyes, again, and now sighs. But then says:
“Well, maybe I was mostly saying it for myself, too, and not just you, Gab.”
And I can understand that now.
“Hey, Rosario, how you doin' girl?”
It's Quimby. The ADAN. Here. Sittin'. With Kats. The AM3. Both across from us. And AM3 Rosario had just passed between our tables.
“I'm good, how are you, Quimby?” Asks Rosario, smilingly.
As she turns her face around after hearing Quimby calling her out, who had not hollered at her while she was facing him, but while she had her back to him, walking away. So, in other words, Quimby really had just greeted Rosario's ass, and not her. And it's sorta funny now how Quimby is acting like the response is coming from another person. Kinda like Quimby was all like: “How you doin', Rosario's supple

sweet ass?" But then Rosario herself answered, and now Quimby looks to wanna say, "Not you, bitch!" All disappointed.
"I'm good." Goes Quimby, now.
Since if he's lookin' to hook up with Rosario's other end, he needs to deal with this end, first. So, does so, while holding up a fake smile.
"...." Goes Rosario, smiling also, but hers is more genuine.
"...." Also goes Quimby, still with a fake smile.
That's starting to seem heavy for him to hold up. And now, since Quimby has no more game, he drops it, and looks away, while seeming a bit embarrassed. Rosario plays it off, then, by smiling even more charismatically, to persevere whatever dignity the poor girl can walks away with, and then, walks off. Since, she knows exactly to whom Quimby was really speaking to, since, it's her real full-time job in the Navy to know so. Since, for women in the Navy, it's practically a rate. Rosario bein' rated as a Third in CD, for Cock Dodgery, since that's all she ever does around here. Like a game of dodge ball, but with cocks involved, instead of those rubber medicine balls, that are much more suited for getting tossed at one's head. Nope! Me? Personally? Even as an un-designated nobody, I'd still would rather stick to what I got, then ever try out Rosario's rate, for even one day. Not even a one single day. Nope! Not happening!
"Kats!" Calls Quimby, eyes all big at Kats.
"What?" Goes Kats, a little weirded out by them.
Since... damn! Can Quimby part some eyelids apart. Damn!
"Kats!" Calls Quimby, again.
As the whites of his eyes begin brightening up the place.
"What...?" Goes Kats, again.
While adjusted his vision to how bright it is now.
"Tell me how she is, again?" Begs Quimby.
Lookin' like he's lookin' for a wank story he can tell his happy sock, later. Kats now has a moment with himself, then a moment with Quimby, all quiet and not answering. And now answers:
"She's all right." Goes simply, with a frown and a shrug.

“Just all right?” Kats then shrugs, again.
And now a pause happens, as Quimby continues to hope for a better answer. And. Ha! I can see that Quimby is ackin' for it. A better story. Like a bedtime story, with a lot of dirt and details, to put his loins to sleep. He's horny. Obviously.
“....” Goes Kats, now.
With his eyes all slit, since he's not the type of character to be telling such stories. Since Quimby really looks like he's expected his daddy, there, to tell him one, to tuck his ass to sleep with.
“Come on, Kats! Everyone keeps sayin'—”
“Everyone, here, is too horny out of their minds, to know better.” Concludes Kats.
As he goes back to tending to his midrats.

A pause. And now:
“Two-ten-two, huh?” Huhs Quimby, lookin' mighty discouraged.
“Yes” Goes Kats, with a nod.
And now, Quimby looks really discouraged. So much so, that his moodiness begins to dim the whole place. And so much so, now Kats feels like brightening things up again.
“Okay... I will say this, though. There was something about her I did like a lot, specifically.” Admits Kats.
And Quimby seems interested again.
“Oh... what's that?”
And now Kats makes the most debonair smile I've seen him make. Since the details are going to involve him talking about the female that just passed, and her private parts.
“When I had her at doggy style....”
“Yeah.” Excites Quimby.
And he's nothing but eyes and teeth now, blinding everyone around him with their whiteness.
“She could make her junk clap.” Divulges Kats.

Now, nodding softly, as if this will be one of his great moments, he'll be able to share with the rest of us.

Oh, and... AYE! The two know me and Donnelly are also sittin' here, listenin'. So, Kats is really also bringing this up for us to hear, too, and not just his boy, there. He and Quimby want our attention. Funny how we didn't have theirs, while me and Donnelly were speaking. But then again, I guess they had just sat down at the ends and weren't able to pick up on everything. But. Actually, now that I think about it further, that would be a good thing, that they hadn't! It definitely would be better if they have no clue about the tension that Donnelly and our AMCS have just started. But, then again... we all on limited spaces, and we all know how much of a blabber mouth Pfluger is. So, EVERYONE knowing what happened is only a matter of time.
“Yeah boy, she can make her stuff, clap!” Divulges Kats, again.
And he's trying to sound black now. Especially as he says clap. Like he Wu-tang. But obviously ain't.
“What?” Whats Quimby, lookin' confused.
And not just because of how badly Kats' would make a black person.
“Yeah!”
“What... you made her... clap? What are you motherfuckin' talking about?”
And truthfully, me and Donnelly are also sorta confused by all this. Of exactly what he means. Although, Donnelly doesn't seem to look as much confused by the story, as he does complexed. And, come to think of it, I can see he clearly doesn't like how douchey the two are getting. I can see this now. Looking at these boys, like he would if they were his Travis, Billy, Jimmy, Joey, and James, again.
“Oh yeah. I'd tap it, and she'd clap it.” Goes Kats.
Illustrating further. And Kats' really needs to stop talking like he's a black person. Really needs to put that off!
“Ha, ha... I don't get it.” Goes Quimby.
And that makes me snicker a little. Kats is now rolling his eyes at Quimby, and not looking like he's willing to explain.

“Well, when I had her from the back, every time I exited, her shit would make noises. Like they were clapping.”
And now I know exactly what Kats is getting at. Also, mostly since he didn't try to explain that part like his understanding of a stereotypical hooked-on-Ebonics black person would. So, I didn't find it so off putting.
“Ha, ha, ha... I don't get it, still.”
And now I snicker sorta loud, getting a little of their attentions. But not enough to break them up.
“Dude. You know the sounds you hear when you hittin' it, right, tappin’ that ass, right?”
“Yeah.” Yeahs Quimby.
Looking like he really doesn't. But that's just him and how he always has a confused look on his face. I know.
“Well...?”
But Quimby still is unable to follow along.
“But it doesn't clap, it just makes squishy noises.” Argues Quimby.
And now Kats, me, and even Donnelly, all of us, all roll our eyes at him.
“Yeah, I know... but...!” Confounds Kats.
“But... what?”
“That's how it's supposed to sound, but...!”
And we're now watching Kats doing that conveyor belt thing with his hands, going around and around, feeding Quimby clues with each revolution.
“But... hers... clapped?”
And, by George, I think he's finally... nope! Nope, he still hasn't!
“….” Goes Kats.
Lookin' like he's questioning the merit of his friendship with the Georgia State dropout.
“Yeah! Hers clapped... the lips down there are so big, that when I had them opening and shutting, as I was doing her from behind...!”
And now Kats is demonstrating the ancient practice with hand and fist.

“They'd flap together so hard, the sound they made, sounded like they were... clapping... together... you get it?”
And then all of a sudden, we were all blinded by how bright it got in there, with all the eyes and teeth that blew up from Quimby's face, from the revelation.
“Oh, oh, oh... they clapped!”
And he's got it now.
“Yes, clapped!”
And then Kats does something with his arms, as he crosses his arms in a way, where he sets the palms of his hands on his elbows, and then begins clapping, clapping his back hands and his elbows together. As he flaps them in position. And it all looks like a bird in flight, flapping its wings as he does it. Almost like a double clap, raising his hands from his elbows to clap the backs of his hands, then lowering them to claps the elbows. Then repeat. Clap clap clap, like a bug or bird flap flap flaps. And it all looks weird, and beautiful, and perverted in a way, too. And funny! Really, really funny. For watching it happen, as Quimby, and even a little I and AN Donnelly, now begin laughing.
“What the...?” Goes Donnelly.
Then looks away. For he's still striking and stirring from everything.
“Yeah man. Clap clap clap!” Goes Kats, to Quimby.
Since it's still mostly their conversation.
“Ha, ha, ha!” Goes Quimby.
Getting it now. Strangely enough even more now, with the visual display. With this bizarre reenactment done with Kat's hands.
“That's how it sounded?” Jollies Quimby.
In love with all this.
“That's right!” Jollies Kats.
As he himself finds himself totally enamored by all this, more than he'd thought he would.
“DAMN!”
“Roger that!” Rogers Kats.
“Damn... do that again.”

And I think we all speak for Quimby now, even Donnelly does, as he continues looking away, shaking his head. But shaking it in reverse psychology.
“Do—what... that clap I did?”
“Aye! That again, that was funny. I need to see it, again.”
And Quimby then leans back to take in the encore. Kats then does it again.
Clap! Clap! Clap!
As Quimby then goes:
“Ha! Ha! Ha!”
“You should have seen it when she was making hers do it.”
Clap! Clap! Clap!
“Ha! Ha! Ha...! Motherfuckin' Pussyclapper.”
And Kats seems to now be enamored by that title.
“Ha, all right! You can call me that... if you like.”
“PC3 Kats. The Pussy Clapmen!” Titles Quimby.
“Hey, I wear the rate, proudly.”
Says so, while lifting up a bit of his jersey, where he'd have his medals worn.
“Oh, get the fuck outta here! Ha, ha! Do it again!” Goes Quimby.
And now Donnelly coughs up some of his midrats.
Clap Clap Clap
“Ha! Ha! Ha!”

Clap Clap Clap
“Ha! Ha! Ha!”
And now I cough up a little of mine, as well.

JAFOS TO THE LEFT OF ME, LIFERS TO THE RIGHT

“I told you these guys are complete shit, didn't I?”
Those were the last words I heard from Donnelly at midrats, before he stormed off, to go wherever. Although, said he was gonna go back to his Jet, and finish his Daily. But I'm up here, now, and he's not. So, I don't know.

Anyways, let's get to what's now going on with me, in my head, with all the jumbled-up fears and frustrations I'm having. Aye! Lots going on, with my thoughts of deserting, and every time I does think about it, fears and frustrations form and flourish, blow up into monsters, King Kong and Godzilla in size and stature and nature, and start wreaking havoc, any civilization I have in the city I call my brain. Any and all civility, leading to complete and total anarchy. Destruction. And mayhem. It's kinda like this:
Oh God, I don't wanna desert! How am I gonna....
Oh God, Senior knows, he knows about what I did, punching that electrical box, he's gonna make it his priority to....
Oh God, I need to desert, I need to go....
Oh God, you're such a dickless schmuck, pussy... so pathetic! You Military! Grow a pair!
Oh God, I don't know how to!
Oh God, can anyone see me being this way? So pathetic! How would they all react if they knew?
Oh God... this.
Oh God... that.

Aye! My thoughts are like that with me now, and, if I'm serious about deserting, I'm gonna need someone to come along with me. So, I need Donnelly! I needs him. Needs!

I mean... I ain't gay for... FUCK NO! But I need him. Need him to side with me and go along with what I might be about to do, come Thailand. For, I've spent a hefty amount of brainpower all concentrated on this matter: gettin' the fuck out! Deserting! And have been like NASA and thought about all the things that can go wrong, doing so. I mean, this isn't going to be an easy move to make. I mean, there are going to be consequences and complications, and other big words that deal with bad things happening possibly, and all those of us that will be a part of my company, once we all actually go through with this. If I'm to desert in Thailand. I have to then hide. I

have to have money to do so. Find a way out there to make a living. Find a way out there to survive not just the whole desertion part, that whole deal, and dealing with whatever situation that might come around getting us caught. But, I'm going to be out in FUCKIN' Thailand! A foreign country I've never been to. And I'm never ever going to be able to go back, state side. I'm gonna be out there, jobless and homeless and senseless. In that third world danger zone. A real, real, real danger zone. Where old world troubles like starvation and slavery, and human to human savagery, still play a part to day to day society. Old world rules applying. Old world blood shedding. And... oh, I don't know...? Am I really going to go through with this? I think. And then realize, with my feelings involving with me stickin' out any longer with this Navy shit, that I have to! I just feel like I rather take my chances. I don't have a complete feel of how bad deserting in Thailand will be, but I do have a feel of how good it'll be getting away from all this. Saving myself, from this wretched, hell! But still, Thailand? Out there, alone? Still, I need someone that's more of a man than I am. Since I'm such a dickless schmuck pussified loser! I need....

Ah shit! Maybe I am rainbow colored for...? God, I hate myself! Fuck me! I does!

Truth also is, I'm also starting to see how Donnelly REALLY is on the same Boat about... not just such matters, but with mind and soul, sharing wavelengths, sharing frequencies. And with me! And I can now truly see how Donnelly isn't all, all right in the head. Same as I ain't. And is sick. But in his own very special way, which makes him not cut out for this Navy shit, either. That shit that just happened between him and Senior. That's not something that's gonna cut it in the long run with him. Truth is, I now realize I was sorta lying to Donnelly, to Michael, just to make him feel better. And really hadn't thought it out, completely, to realize I was. Didn't know at the time, but now I feel it, and I know I was. Here's the thing: Senior might ignore him for a little while, but we all see each other day after fuckin' day after fuckin' day. Or, night after fuckin' night, for us. And we still have five more FREAKIN' hellbent MONTHS of this. No way in FREAKIN' hell will there NOT be another confrontation between those two, that eventually involves someone getting shitcanned, MAJOR! Now,

Senior? Can be just as much of a crazy confrontational fuck as he can and wants to be. He's still a high-ranking senior, and safe! Donnelly, on the other hand, isn't! And if he continues the way he is now. I doesn't see this Shipmate of mine remaining Ship worthy.

Sigh!
Alas!

Truth also is... the two of us are both Shitbags. For this is a tale about being a Shitbag. In this fleet. If you all haven't gotten the sense of that yet. This is no proud maritime story. Nothing illustrious about being a proud American Navy Sailor. And all that hoopla. That REALLY! I wish I could be about. But I is deficient. I is so. I is! I isn't made of the right stuff. Same as I isn't even able to think in words arranged correctly, sometimes. Nor grammatically! And just tries to use big words, now and then, to try and make myself seem smarter than I really am. Aye! I knows how gibberish me thoughts are! I knows. And wants to now apologize for how is I's made it that way for yours alls. I is deficient. I is broken. Not as a mule yet, physically. But as a person, mentally and emotionally. The Navy broke me. Broke me to its ways, and now I is broken with gibberish Sailor talk, of high seas and BARNACLES, mermaids, and melancholy self-murderous sadness.

But... as long as I hope it's maybe been funny! For you alls! I hope, that! For then it would have been maybe worth it. For if it isn't worth anything else, let it at least be worth it for the laughs. Right? Chuckle Chuckle?
Yes...?
No?
Cue sad face!

Fine, I guess I WILL go commit self-murder, and jump... nah! Waters are still too cold out where we treadin'. I'll wait a little while... longer... I GUESS?

“Oh, thank God, the night's over! What a night... what a HELLISH night!”
It's Senior now. We in The Shop. The night's over, our first night of work since Hong Kong, and Senior has my sentiments. For what DIDN'T happen this night? Something we all feel, for you can see it in each other's eyes, all rocking back and forth, like babies in their cribs, eyeing all the monsters that have just crawled out from the dark, from every nook and cranny, as we wearisomely eye them all while trying to go back to sleep. And, once again, we needs sleep! We NEEDS bed, now!

“Where's Donnelly?” Goes the IS3.
After a second of looking and noticing one head of Night Check isn't accounted for.
“....” Goes Senior.
And that was funny! For it seems as if that whole: “Don't worry, Donnelly, he's gonna try and ignore you for as long as possible,” thing, that I had brought up, is actually in effect. For it doesn't seem like Senior would want Donnelly accounted for, now, after everything that happened. Ha! How irresponsible and un-squared away like of him! Yet, still, don’t see it lasting past this immediate present. Senior now eyes me.
“Navastian, you've seen Donnelly?” Asks Senior, politely.
And looks away after bringing up his name.
“No, Senior.” I go.
And I wonder now, if I had said “nope,” would he have been so bothered by it.
“Go find him!” Orders Senior, still looking away.
And does a shooing motion with his hands. As to say, “go away... you two!” I'm starting to like the new Senior, and how Donnelly has affected him.
“Hurry up and go...?”
But then Donnelly walks in, late. And he has eyes like he's worried what that will mean. Being tardy. And with Donnelly, a worrisome look is a confrontational look, since that's just how Donnelly naturally deals with any form of worry and trouble. Senior is definitely not looking at him. And it's interesting to see them now doing everything possible to avoid each other's eye contact.
“All right, that concludes our first night together. Oh God... what a night!” Goes Senior.

As he buries his face in his mitts, and now we all look at Pflugerville, we all do! For we all know exactly who's to blame for everything. How's Pfluger looking, you might be wondering? As Pfluger would. Trying to come off oblivious. Trying, but we all know it's not going to work anymore.

“Pfluger?” Goes Senior, as he redirects his frustration over at our major malfunction.

“Yes, Senior?”

“You're going TAD tomorrow, I'm switching you with Castleberry.”

And... okay! That's actually a pretty good solution to the whole Pflugerville matter. Just get rid of him! Instead of keeping him around and watching him like a monkeywrench in our works, fucking shit up. Without him, now, Senior won't have anyone to squares away, officially, therefore the boys won't have anyone to do so, unofficially, and Donnelly won't have to step in, if one or the other stepped out of line with the pudgy one.

“All right, Senior.” Goes Pfluger and accepts it.

And personally, I think him going cranking might suit him. He'll be in the galley, with lots of food around. And. Aye! That was a fat joke I made there. Want to make something of it?

“You're going TAD, and that's that, Pfluger! You fucked up way too big, with what you did. And right now, none of the spare engines are ready to replace the one you FODed, you've cost our Squadron—dearly!”

“Aye, Senior!”

“I mean... dearly!”

….

And now, here comes the catch:

“Actually, we can't trade him in with Castleberry, yet.” Goes our AD1 Bastille.

Who's also here, to relieve Senior, taking over for Days.

“What... why not?” Goes Senior, in dread of why.

“Castleberry isn't cranking right now, he's in medical.”

“What?” Dreads Senior, some more.

Realizing he still might be stuck with more of the Ville.

“Yes.” Confirms AD1.

“Why?”
“Some allergic reaction has got him with a rash all over his body, and it's a mess.”
“What?” Continues Senior.
“Oh, yes! Roger that! He's got hives all over, and....”
“How did he get them?” Wonders Senior now.
Looking a little worried, like this whole thing might be the start of an outbreak, that's started with him. Oh, and... roger that! This does happen a lot on Ship. We on limited spaces, remember! And at any time, one getting sick, can get us all sick. With whatever ailment is mostly found in these parts of the world, and out to sea, no less. Gastro is one! Gastro is big here. Or Gastroenteritis, being the medical term. Which we get from all parasites and bacteria found in the rehydrated crap they call food, that we're force fed every day. Having us practically dieing in the head, moaning and groaning from the hell experienced inside, as our inners try to purge itself, by the quickest means possible. Having us puking and pooping our guts out, as some of our last meal's beef stroganoff feels like our body wants to even sweat it out, through our pours. Aye! It can get that bad on Ship. And I'm not looking forward to the anthrax and smallpox shots we're supposed to get after Thailand, I've heard. I've heard the smallpox shot they do on your shoulder, leaves you with a freaky looking blister as big as an eyeball. And if that doesn't sound freaky to you, just think of it as an actual eyeball, growing from your own shoulder. Aye! Sounds like some demon possession type of crazy shit. The Old Ones coming out to take a peek into your world. And their doing it from your shoulder.
“For how long?” Asks Senior.
About Castleberry's condition, obviously more concerned with how much longer Pflugie might still be amongst us.
“Might be a week.” Answers... really just guesses... AD1.
“Out-fuckin'-sanding!” Goes Senior, ironically.
“Well... Pflugerville, I guess we're stuck with you until then.”
“All right, Senior.” Goes Pfluger.
And the pudgy one doesn't seem so oblivious anymore. Seems like he was—for a second there—feeling ecstatic for going crankin', until this.

“I guess we're still stuck with you until... Thailand.” Let's out, Senior does, getting everyone's attention.
“Oh, forgot to mention, words come in that the Skipper of The Ship has gotten orders to have us replace the USS Richard M. Nixon in the Gulf, a lot sooner. So, we're gonna be moving faster. And next week, we should be in Thailand. For one day.”
And there's another catch.
“One day?” Goes many of us.
“Let me finish.” Says Senior.
“Yes. Only one day.” Finishes Senior.
“….”
Obviously, this isn't going well for many of us, no matter if we're to be in Thailand much sooner than expected.
“We're not really doing this for liberty. Considering the change of plans with us moving forward with heading to the Gulf sooner and considering the closest resupply Ship in the area isn't going to stay in the area for long, means, one day in Thailand. And that's it. Just be glad you're getting THAT much! The Ship's Skipper could have easily denied that for us, too.” Truly finishes Senior.
And I'm sure Senior, personally, would have denied it for us, if it was up to him.
“Oh, and I forgot... from what I understand, we'll also have Wog Day, practically the day after. Just before our Ship goes ahead, and crosses the Straits of Malacca, to get us to the Indian Ocean.” And now truly finishes Senior... I think?
“Why are they doing that?” Goes AD1.
“What?”
“We don't necessarily need to dip below the equator, just to go through the Straits.” Informs AD1.
“Ha, ha! You wanna know?” Baits Senior.
“Yes, of course.”
“The Ship's Skipper is still a Wog.”
“Ha! Oh, you gotta be kidding?” Says AD1.
“Yes.”
“So... that means...?”

“Yes!”
“Ha! That's funny. And how long has he been in?”
“I think over twenty-five years.”
“And he's still a Wog? Wow!”
“He just really wants to get it over with, and he's bought enough time from the brass to do so.”
Well... that was pleasant. The seniority in The Shop, not acting like seniority, and regular ol' human fuckin' beings, having a human fuckin' conversation, amongst themselves. And not placing themselves as the company's dictators. Delegating and dictating away, with practically capes on, and shit. And the red kind. But I guess Senior realizes this now, realizing we still in The Shop, and how he just got carried away not being his alter ego Stalin self. Scourge of the Bloody Shamrock Line. And now wants to drop the pleasantry.
“All right, I'm going to maintenance to check on something, it's your show now, AD1.”
“Gotcha, Senior. I'm heading up to see how Day Check is doing.”
And now AD1 gets to it, as Senior gets up.
“Senior. Chocks out?” Wonders our IS3.
But Senior looks at him and says nothing.
“Senior?”
“No, IS3 Falconni, no chock's out for Night Check, yet.”
“What's wrong, Senior?” Asks the IS3, now.
“Well, besides everything going wrong this night! How badly you all FUBARed shit up, last night. Right now, the Mechs might be needing some extra hands with some of their work, and I'm heading over to maintenance to see how many volunteers—”
“Volunteers?” Goes IS3.
“Don't interrupt me, IS3. Yes. How many volunteers they'll need.”
And now the IS3 looks at that how we all do, with a sigh, since it's that: “Hurry up, and wait,” thing us Military always have to drudge through. But then IS3 shrugs that gloomy feeling off, realizing he wouldn't be involved with any of that extra grunt

work. Since he's still technically second in The Shop for Night Check. UNLIKE THE REST OF US! And now I moan and groan a little! In my thoughts.
"…." Goes those of us that know we're probably going to get picked to stay longer.
"So... stick around, and wait for my return, got it, boys?" Says Senior.
And with a wink. Since that be our fat Senior, tryin' to be slick with us about it.
"Yes, Senior." The rest of us moan.
"Good."
And now Senior is gone. And... ah, great! It's that time, again! Time for boys to be boys and tend to their mischievous shit they always come with abundance of. But first, here comes some more venting and moaning.
"Who's ever heard of one day of liberty? Fucking bullshit!"
"Actually, what's really gonna be b.s., is, some of us are also going to have Duty on that day and won't even be allowed to get off."
"Bullshit! What fuckin' bull!"
"Out-motherfuckin'-standing!" Goes, who else, Quimby!
And now, everyone wants to vent, but have their frustrations channeled on somebody, and no longer just a thought. A thought, in their heads.
"Hey, Pfluger?" Goes Kats, with a twinkle in his eyes.
And, here we go!
"What's up, Kats?" Goes Pfluger.
And he has a look in his eyes now, not an oblivious overly confident look. But a look he had before back when Senior was grilling him.
"Hey—"
"Hey, leave Pfluger alone." Interjects Donnelly now.
As he steps in the middle of The Shop and gets everyone's attention.
"…." Goes everyone now.
Those reluctant to see Donnelly interfering. And, it looks again like Donnelly is once again gonna choose not to be just another JAFO and allow the boys to tend to their crappy work. And if any of you have forgotten what a JAFO is, already, it's: Just Another Fucking Observer. So, remember to take note—and no mental notes, but ones that involve a pencil and paper at hand. And, aye, I expect you all to really

remember every single Navy slang acronym I gots for you. Every single one! For there will be a test later. And I got my big red marker, that I'm gonna be using to grade you all with. So, pay fuckin' attention! Anyways, back to Kats. Since Donnelly is mostly eyeing him after stepping in. And now, an awkward moment. Since this ain't Derbytown, and how he usually does this, and gets his ass wrecked by Shipmates like Quimby. With all them dry humping love business. For I don't think any of the boys would want to get physical with this ripped twentysomething, that's practically built like Brock. But unlike Brock, has them left and right fists, that could be registered as deadly weapons. Kats doesn't know how to precede after this intervention, he's intimidated by Donnelly. And he really, really doesn't like the fact that he is that: intimidated!

“You got something to say, Kats?” Goes Donnelly, as his muscles bulge a little.

Kats now lowers his head.

“How about you, Quimby, you got anything?”

And even though Quimby is bigger than Donnelly, he still knows better. But still, Quimby now fronts a little at Donnelly, and Donnelly doesn't flinch one bit. But smiles. And now Quimby's intimidated, as he lowers his own head, also.

And... MY GOD! Am I enjoying this moment now! My God, AM I! As we got ourselves a new Chainhauler man around these parts. For I relinquish that title, it's now Donnelly's turn to be the defiant one around here.

“Ja, ja!” Goes Barbarossa, with a curious smile.

Since Barbarossa has never been one with the boys, even though the boys have nothing but always tried to drag him along for the fun... and obvious reasons. The one cat that could possibly challenge Donnelly, but one that's never about that Line Shack internal conflicting crap. And is always above it, towering above it, that is! (What am I saying, “cat!” The motherfucker's a liger, and do you even know how big them cats get, when crossed with a lion and a tiger?).

Anyways, back to the moment. And, DAMN! Is this moment tense. And no one is reacting to anything that—
“Hey, Pfluger, you really are a piece-of-DOG-shit, on a shingle!” Goes the IS3, while staring at Donnelly.
And... it would be him! It just would be! The little shit!
“I mean, this is all your fault, and cranking is too good for you.” Says the IS3.
As he continues with his fixations on Donnelly. Even when solemnly speaking to the ATAN. Him still real challenging Donny boy. And Donnelly... doesn't like this now, himself, either. For, if things were to get really heated, I know, Donnelly? Wouldn't be in favor of allowing his own Old Ones to come out. Consider his Old Ones are some really SCARY MOTHERFLIPPERS! And there's no saying what trouble they could get Donnelly into, once THEY come OUT! Donnelly is all Bill Bixby as David Bruce Banner now, all: “Don't make me angry, you wouldn't like me when I'm angry!”
“Hey, Pfluger!”
“Hey, why don't you cut that shit out!”
And Donnelly is now also fixated. Since being challenged. And just about everyone else cowers a little—except Barbarossa, all laying out on some metal boxes, laying and watching the show. And except for the little raging Italian bull.
“What's that?” Goes IS3, challenging.
“You heard me!” Donnelly challenges, back.
And now everyone withdraws a little, as these two steps up a little in each other's direction.
“Listen, Donnelly, I'm right now reprimanding a subordinate, here. A subordinate, like you.” Says IS3, with a nod.
And now Donnelly looks pissed, while nodding back.
“I mean... that is still part of my job.”
“Same as mine.” Says Rudy, the AD3, stepping up.
But still only behind Falky.
“As mine, too!” Now with Kats, the AM3.
Also stepping up. But unlike Rudy, not trying to hide behind Falky, and tries to step in front of Falky, since he was embarrassed by Donnelly just before. But Falky then

pushes AM3 aside. For the IS3 looks tensed, while tempted, and he doesn't want to miss an ounce of this. All Third Classes have now stepped up. All following the IS3's example. As Donnelly, the Airman, stands alone now. And... shit, Navastian, what you doing? How come you don't... shit!

“I mean, if you got something against that...!” Says the IS3.

And now I'm all: “fuck THIS!” I gotta stand behind the only real Shipmate I GOTS HERE!

“Hey, you guys, why don't you—”

But then the IS3 shoos me off, like a bug. Since I'm that much smaller than him, even though bigger. Fuck! Well, I tried! To stand with Donnelly, but I obviously am no longer cut out for this.

“I got something against it, when, shit gets all unofficial like, and you guys start stepping out of bounds with—”

“Who are you to talk about, stepping out of bounds?” Interjects the IS3.

As he steps up, a little more.

“You know that First Class you knocked out back at Atsugi, lost consciousness a few times, as AE1 Vandenakker had to help him back to base. And then, straight to medical. Thank God he didn't suffer a concussion. For his sake... and for yours! For that would have seriously been your ass in some deep shit, if it had gone down the other way.” Let’s out the IS3.

And... fuckin' A! The little man is playing it smart. Since he can't let this get physical. Since that would be very un-Petty Officer like of him. Plus, Senior might be due back at any time now.

“….”

Donnelly doesn't respond. Since, the IS3 knows his weakness.

“You got off easy, Donnelly. Really easy, considering what you pulled.”

And now Donnelly is churning fire and brimstone. As we all begin to see another part to him. Or, I do. But the other's seemed to have witness this side of him before. Since they don't seem that much in shock of this side to him as I am. Donnelly looks terrifying now. Must note! As cool as he has been around me, this is a side I haven't

seen. And it's not how angry he seems that's intimidating me, it's how... something else!

“You deserved more than Captain's Mast. Hell, you didn't even see any Brig time. You're lucky Master Chief Dreadnaught likes you, and—”

“What, you calling it fraternization?” Goes Donnelly.

And after a certain look from the IS3, we get a:

“Maybe.”

Out of him.

“....” Donnelly.

“Simple fact is that you got off lucky.”

“….” Donnelly still.

“So, Donnelly, you got any objections to how we're handling things on Night Check?”

“….” Donnelly again.

Damn, don't let him get to you. DON'T LET HIM GET TO YOU!

“Good.” Goes the IS3, with a smile.

But before able to turn around, and focus being a colossal prick with the ATAN, again—

“Except for the fact you no longer are in charge of Nights, since you sucked at it.”

And finally, Donnelly comes up with something. That wouldn't involve him getting his left and right involved.

“What?” Goes the IS3, a little taken down from that.

“I mean, that's why Senior is here now, taking over—what you couldn't HANDLE!”

“….”

And now the IS3 is silent, as the other Thirds, Kats and Rudy, look worried.

“I mean, it was all you, Falconni! Chief Murdock? Well... we all knew what his deal was. You, on the other hand, Night Check was really YOURS, and now it's not, because—”

“Because of your fuckin' boy, Navastian, pulling a Midnight Train to—”

And now:

“He wasn't ALONE!”

And... wait, WHAT? No, no, no, no, NO! Don't let them know that! What are you doing, Donnelly? I rage, with my eyes, at my fellow AN. For Donnelly has this crazy look in his eye, like someone crazy, not knowing what they're saying. And... not knowing when to SHUT UP! And not say certain details, divulging certain shit.

And... ah shit! The IS3 is grinning now. And nodding. For he's picked up on how bad of a move this was for Donny boy. Shit!
“Maybe I should tell Senior about that!” Goes the IS3.
And now it hits Donnelly, as he realizes what he has done. But then tries to rebound, something fast, with:
“Maybe I should tell Senior, how you tied up Navastian, and handed him to the Red Shirts, so they can—”
“That's not gonna fly. Too many parties involved. And, plus, AO1 Montenegro will deny it for his boys.”
And now, Donnelly's got nutin! Shit! FUCKIN HELL! He's lost this battle. HE HAS! DAMN!
“You got nothing Donnelly... but now... I got something on you, too.” Informs the IS3, looking very Third Class-ish.
“You'd dime me out?”
“No. I'll be a Third Class and do things all official like. So... as for your concerns of us doing things unofficially, don't worry, we'll handle the matter how it should be handled. So, leave it to us Third Classes, Airman!”
And Donnelly now punches THE HELL out of a metal knuckle box, to his right, and dents it in. Almost gets his fist to go through the metal surface. Aye! Punching it that hard! And that scene gets under everyone's skin. Seeing how SCARY Donnelly got there for a minute. Even scaring Barbarossa a little (aye, even him). And the IS3. Donnelly then fronts EVERYBODY! As everybody FLINCHES! EVERYBODY DOES NOW! And his fist is now bleeding. Donnelly looks down at it, then up, and now sees the IS3 is once again smiling at him, rejoicing over his victory, over the AN. And now, Donnelly ALMOST TRIES TO CUT LOOSE AGAIN. BUT! Storms out... instead.

GROWL, HISS, NAVASTIAN!

And I don't want the world to see me
'Cause I don't think that they'd understand
When…?

I just…?
Grr… again?

I'm gonna admit something. Even though he's supposedly on my side. Donnelly is also starting to really scare me. And not all at awe of his potential, scared. But scared, he just might truly lose it. Snap! And hit anything he can get his fist at. And not no metal boxes in The Shop. But objects like us! Or even me. When Donnelly punched out that box, he turned to his right without really watching which direction he was facing and let one out. And a few inches from where I was standing. The guy could have accidentally hit me, instead! And since Donnelly wasn't really looking at what he was punching. Well... there! He's becoming a loose cannon. And I don't know what to make out of that. I don't! Anyways... I still favor the guy. And... yeah! I still need him, for what I'm still planning on doing. Come Thailand. Come then. Which is now coming up sooner than I was hoping for. As much as I can't wait to get outta here! This has now become a little too soon. One week. That's all the time I have. And... HELL! Why did I spend so much money in Hong Kong? On that manipulative Asian vixen. That blue leather jacket manipulative harlot. Cashing out two grand of my dough. I mean, me, having to bust my hump aboard this Ship, and what did I do with it? DAMN!

Wow, I really am still thinking about deserting, am I? Huh! I feel like I'm going to have a few more of these sessions before my mind is through truly coming to terms with that, of what I am truly planning on doing. I mean, I feel so driven to such pursuits, but... is it really necessary?

Anyways. Guess which two got picked to help out the Mechs, them damn greasemonkeys, helping out with their shit? Me and Pflugerville. Us both. And the two of us are now down here, helping these greasemonkeys out, taking out that engine of 106, which Pfluger had FODed up. Pfluger getting picked for obvious reasons. And me, since, Senior still having a hard on keeping me late into my shift. I mean, this ain't EMI, but it might as well be. Right now the Mechs, the ADs, have a giant ass trolley to support the weight of this giant ass Pratt & Whitney TF30 low-bypass turbofan engine. And, I truly mean it when I speak about Tomcat engines and being giant ass MASSIVE! The fuckers are like almost 20 feet long and weighing a little over (or under?) 4 thousand lbs. Plus capable of a little over 20 thousand lbs. of thrust, each. So, it's a very laborious task, trying to get this big hunk of metal thing out, and set perfectly onto the trolley, to wheel the thing away. Over to I level maintenance, so they can start doing... whatever they can with it to salvage the engine. And as of right now, I can see why everyone calls these Squids greasemonkeys, for I'm now covered with the stuff. Not grease, though, but JP-5 fuel. But it feels greasy, so there! Every time I turn something, a valve, or line, and try to unfasten it, I get fluid pumping out all over me. Running down my arm, into the sleeve of my brown jersey, and running down to the left side of my torso and stopping where the belt of my cammie pants cuts off the flow from running down to my socks and boots, even. Ugh! It feels disgusting, as the inside of my armpit all feels wet and cool from the outside air.

Anyways, much of the work me and the ATAN are doing is whatever AD1 Willowstreet, the LPO for Day Check in the Mech shop, is instructing us to do. For we have very limited knowledge of what we're really doing here, since, we're not Mechs. So, when AD1 tells us to turn this with a wrench, we turn it. When he says unfasten that with our hands, we unfasten it. When he says go deep into the engine, passing our hands through a bunch of lines obstructing from our line of sight and reach, leading us to use an extension attached to the wrench, to circumnavigate through the engine's internal passages, to turn whatever the fuck that's in there that needs turning, we do that too. Then when done, we look at AD1, again, so he can

tell us exactly what to do next. I've done this once before, helping the Mechs with their work, but it dealt with installing a Tomcat engine, and not uninstalling it. But I've practically forgotten everything I did then. Which was back in Atsugi. So, I can't really rely on my memory of that day of everything I did, to now help out the Mechs, by doing it in reverse. And since I don't have the day to day practice of doing this work, like much of the ADs do, I cannot be very self-reliant with this work, knowing what to do. Therefore, I needs the AD1's instructions.

“Hey!” Says Donnelly now.

As I see him arriving down here to meet us. And I now say:

“Hey.”

Back.

“So, what you guys doing... taking out the engine, I see?” Goes Donnelly, all rhetorically.

“Yeah.” I follow.

“Aye, we are! Did Senior send you down here, too, to help us out?” Goes AD1 Willowstreet.

As he adjusts his prescription frames, and gives off a certain quiet and quirky look, as he bounces his head ever so slightly from side to side.

“Yea... I mean, aye! Senior just had me sent down to come help you guys out, too.” Informs Donnelly.

And that gets me thinking.

“All right, join us, then.” Says AD1, as he does that quiet and quirky think again.

All right. Maybe I should flesh out the AD1's character a bit more, just for the quirks. AD1 Willowstreet strikes me as the mamma's boy type. A fortysomething year-old man, who I wouldn't be surprised if after retirement, he didn't go out to live by himself, and find a spouse to start a family. But went back home, to mother. Back to the old doll house. That's all decorated and furnished with the sort of old womanly look and feel, where it feels like no one has ever lived there, not even by the owner of the home, that's kept it that way mostly for preservation. Basically, keeping the house from being tarnished with the presence that the living tend to come with. Nobody lives there, except Miss. Willowstreet, and his son, who you'd find sitting in

a baroque chair, in the middle of the living room, surrounded by baroque furniture. Sipping his tea. While staring at all of his old mother's nick knacks and porcelain statues and figurines. Mostly a lot of junk themed out with a 18th or 19th century rustic or rural Americana vibe to it. As the AD1, here, stares at one of his mother's figurines of Huckleberry Fin, gone fishing. Staring at that inanimate object, as Huckleberry, there, stares back. For hours and hours and hours on end! Aye. Pretty much the reason I'm bringing all this up, is, as quirky as the AD1 is, there's also some major, major creepiness value to him, which I can't put my finger on. So, in other words, AD1 Willowstreet strikes me as another one of the Norman Bates type. The forty-year-old virgin. But really not a virgin, for how can you be a virgin, in the Navy? Considering all the whoring we're all infamous for.

“So, what we doing here?” Asks Donnelly, all rhetorically again.

“Dude, we're taking the engine out.” I say.

“That's right, dude, engine.” Says AD1 Willowstreet.

And a lot of us, me and Donnelly and even Pfuger included, plus some of the Day Check Mechs, all turn our heads to look at him. In sync. And back to our work, now. Really, really, sorry! But I just can't put my finger on exactly what is so quirky, yet creepy, about this guy. Even just the way he said “dude” was all it took to get all of our attention.

“So, we're taking out the engine, huh.” Goes Donnelly, rhetorically once again.

And now I feel like something is up.

“What's up, Donnelly, what's going on?” I ask.

And now Donnelly looks at me and says nothing.

“Hey, Donnelly, let me show you what I plan for you to do.”

And now AD1 is showing him, as he seats him next to me, on a rolly chair. And once he's done showing him, I feel another chance to speak with him again.

“So, how you holding up?” I ask.

“Just am... just am!” Says Donnelly, and now sighs.

“Tell me what's up.” I say.

“No, no!” Says Donnelly now, all soft spoken.

“Come on, tell me—”

“No... okay?” Says Donnelly.
And now looks irritated. And now I sense that Donnelly is beginning to grow irritated, and with me. As he looks at me, and... I don't like how he's looking. Then shakes his head. And now, he's straight up ignoring me. And I'm not sure if he doesn't want simply to answer back. Or, answer, and have everyone out here, especially AD1 Willowstreet, to hear what he's got to say. For I know, there's a lot of Old Ones crap now in him, fucking with him, as it has been with me.
“Senior send you down?” I say now.
Now me being rhetorical about it.
“....” Donnelly says nothing.
“How long has Senior told us to be here, in the Hangar Bay, helping the Mechs? Do you know, Donnelly?”
“....” And Donnelly doesn't answer that rhetorical question, either.
Since I know it's really AD1 Willowstreet's call now, to relieve us, not Senior's. Since he placed us under the charge of the Mech shop's LPO, and right now he's at the moment part of our chain of command.
Sigh!
I go. Really letting one out so no one could miss.
“Don't worry, guys, I'm not gonna keep you Line guys for long.” Informs AD1 Willowstreet.
And now, there's nothing for me and Donnelly to discuss.

I'm growing worried now, and anxious. Now I'm just getting the sense that Donnelly is starting not to like me. And I think I know why. Donnelly is starting to bury himself into some deep shit. First with Senior, and now with all the Third Classes in The Shop. He's starting up a lot of feuds and fires. And, honestly, I feel like I'm to blame for it. I mean, we've been on the same frequencies and wavelengths, and I'm starting to see this as my bad influence on him. He at least was being live and let live with everyone here, even if he hated all the other Line guys' guts underneath. Now, he's not so live and let live, since my confrontational (defiantly confrontational) nature has rubbed off on him a little. I was egging him with how much worse treatment I

was getting all around, saying my troubles were bigger, before Donnelly turned on Senior, and started acting in the way, if I had bigger balls, I WOULD HAVE! But, still, Donnelly was being live and let live, until I brought him out of it. And now, maybe, I'm to blame, and Donnelly is really starting to feel that way.

Shit! I feel like shit now. Fuck my BARNACLES! Hell!

Anyways, I've also been rehearsing in my mind, over and over again, about what I'm about to tell Donnelly. Even if Donnelly isn't in the mood to talk to me right now. Still, I feel it's time. For. Aye! I have to do this now. And tell this Shipmate of mine, how I'd like to Shipwreck our Navy careers, into Thailand, and to never look back. This is a going to be a very delicate matter. One that requires lots and lots of attention to detail, with a speech that's gonna need lots of refinement, if it is to be acceptable and passable and seemingly plausible. I mean, I'm speaking of the act of desertion here! You know how frowned upon it is in us Military circles to even speak of such things? Therefore, this isn't going to be an easy sell. But anyways, I rehearsed it, rehearsed it, rehearsed it, in my head, trying to sell it to myself. And I kept thinking of the look Donnelly would give me, the second he understood what I was suggesting. That: are you out of your fucking mind? Look. Then the look of: I think I should take this up with seniority. And maybe not our Senior. But a senior figure. Someone like AD1 Bastille, or AEC Murdock, if he was still with us. Hell! Barnacles! He might even go so far as to take this up with our Master Chief Dreadnaught, of all people. To say: "Navastian needs help, he's thinking of deserting." And he'll go to him, since, them two be Southie brethren in arms (although, more like uncle and nephew), since, Donnelly will think that the man will then keep it between the three of us, and our MMCPO will handle the matter by himself, discretely. Forgetting the man is still a MOTHERFLIPPIN' Master Chief Petty Officer of the FREAKIN' Navy, and then all I'll hear is: "GROWL, HISS, NAVASTIAN, ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR FUCKIN' MIND?" In the middle of the Hangar Bay, in front of, not only our entire Squadron, but, the entire Ship's company, as well. So, aye! I'm worried now. With what I'm about to do. This might be going too far to suggest. I mean, I know

realistically, from what I've gathered from my friendship with him, he'd NEVER turn me in. But...?

So anyways! It's now do or die! Right now, all I'm doing is waiting, just waiting, for the opportune time, when me and Donnelly will be alone. Truthfully, I should probably do this after we're done here, and we're back in the berthing again. But I fear I might chicken out then. And then, I might continue to chicken out some more, with every other opportunity, until we actually get there. And then it would be too late. Too late to try and convince him of otherwise, since, we'll already be there. I now got a week, and I feel like this is going to be one of those things, that's gonna require as much time as possible, of me trying to convince Donnelly of all this. It's gonna take a hefty amount of talk, convincing him not to run to seniority, or him to try and stop me from me doing this by myself. And it's definitely going to take an even a heftier amount of time, to convince him to come along, with. But... fuck! I got no other choice. I need him. And that's all there is to that!

And then, comes the opening moment. As everyone around me and Donnelly, sorta move away, out of vocal range. And now, comes my chance to let Donnelly have it: "I-want-to-desert-n-Thailand... and-I-want-you-to-come." I sorta mumble it out, all together.
And then, just do a bit of glancing, port to starboard, as if minding my own business. A pause then follows. As me and Donnelly tend to some Mech work. And then it slowly hits him, as he begins to acknowledge what I just said. But from what I'm gathering, it takes its time, coming in waves. As the first wave of acknowledgment hits him, he now slowly lifts up his head, and then slowly turns to face me. And now Donnelly is facing me, but still doesn't seem completely sure of what just came out of my mouth. Since, he's not customed to be hearing something of that nature. Someone, speaking of desertion. So right now, Donnelly doesn't seem to be one hundred percent sure of what he heard. But as a moment follows, a second wave of acknowledgment hits him, and now his eyes bulge open wide, as Donnelly goes:
"What did you say?"

But from his facial reaction, I can see he heard it plainly enough. He just isn't willing to believe what he just heard. And now comes the third and final wave of acknowledgment, as it hits him. And now, he grabs me by the arm, and now says:
“We need to have a talk, seriously have a talk... seriously! Later!”
Then turns his head back around, and starts shaking it, seeming majorly dazed and disoriented, as he cringes his face up, looks at me again, as his jaw drops now. And then he says it again:
“I mean it, to be continued. To be motherfuckin' continued.”
And points at me. And now completely tries to remove everything that just happened out of his head, as he shakes his head again. And now, it's him and his job at hand, right now, that's all that matters. Until... to be continued, later, when I know Donnelly is gonna pick my brain apart, piece by piece, as he tries to talk me out of everything I just implied to him of what I wanted to do. Oh, I can feel it now. This is gonna be a long, long, LONG conversation. Between me and him. To be fuckin' continued. To be motherfuckin' continued. And now I think to myself: ah shit! As I also come to terms with just how freakin' out of my mind I must be to really be thinking of deserting. Really out! Gone! My mind having gone UA. AWOL. Section 8, and then some! But, fuck it! At least I grew the balls to do what I just did. And right now, after all that rehearsing, now I can't stop running it over and over again in my head, of what just happened. Now my mind is stuck, doing that perpetual thing, like a propeller, and the E-2 Hawkeye kind. But, fuck me, I did it! Funny though, how Donnelly reacted to all that. As I watched him go from stage after stage, of acknowledgment. At first, Donnelly not even picking up on it, since, I blurted it out, out of the blue. But then… as it finally touched base with him, he turned to me, and had that awkward look, like he wasn’t sure what he just heard. But, knew exactly what he just heard.

Ha, ha!
(Fuckin’ A, Navastian! Don’t be so facetious with your-own-damn-self! No, not funny. And you damn well know it ain’t funny. And Donnelly won’t treat it as such, either! When “to be continued.”)

Fuck me! I feel like I'm screwed now, too. Fuck, let me try and get Donnelly's attention again, and see what to make of... yeah!
“Hey, Donnelly?” I squeak now.
And now Donnelly lifts up a finger and emphasizes it in front of my face. To be continued... shit! I can only imagine how that conversation is going to turn out, now.

“Don't worry, Line guys, another hour, and I should be done with you three!” Says AD1 Willowstreet at us.

And... great! Another hour of... to be continued. Oh, I don't know how I'm gonna convince Donnelly. Truthfully, I was hoping he would have accepted it, and agreed with me, the second I said it. But obviously all that rehearsing wasn't enough, and any more rehearsing of how I'm going to deal with the later conversation with him, I don't know how good that'll work out, either.

Fuck!
I need him.
I need him… to get out!
OUT!
I…?
I…?
I can't go on like this. I want OUT! I NEED to get OUT! Fuck the war! Fuck Bush! Fuck 9/11 and becoming a national hero, answering the call of duty, and heading out to fight a war, when I ain't even done with the war going on in my own SKULL! In the end, it was all eventually going to come down to me. Me! I can't fix other people's problems if I can't fix my own problems. So, in the end, this story is all about the Navastian. ME! For, all stories in the end are about that, no matter which me it is. You me? Me me? Him me? Her me? Them me? This is my personal story, and it could be happening during ANY WAR: Iraqi Freedom? 'Nam? Korean War? WW2? 1? 3? It doesn't matter. For as I made it abundantly clear in the past: all

maritime stories are all the same! It all being about wanting the one thing, and the only thing, that matters: FREEDOM! And in my case, freedom, from Senior, freedom from Falky and the Line Shack bunch. From this Ship and fleet and Navy. Freedom! And that for me means getting out! GETTIN' OUT!

GETTIN' THE FUCK OUT!
THE MOTHERFUCK OUT!

Because… it's all driving me NUTS! For, there she blows! There they them blows! All the nutcase Joe Squids around me on this floating, metal, tin can of an island! And like Gilligan's island, but full of no Professors nor Gingers nor Mary Anns, and nothing but Skippers and Gilligans! There's no escaping all the craziness and stupidity! And they're all trying to get their craziness and stupidity… and into me! Them trying to get it into me, so them could make me into they! Whatever the fuck THEY is! And whatever the fuck 'em Old Ones be. So, now, I call for wanting freedom from self! So, I can escape my own self. And truly become a part of God's, the true God's, green earth. And walk in its lushes' pastures. Fuck! Fuckin' Donnelly! Why… to be continued? Why couldn't you have just said: "yes!"
Sigh!

After we were finished, I thought of going to the ET room to call mom again. Although line was too long, again. What was on that 15-inch portal to another world?

But she caught me on the counter
It wasn't me
Saw me bangin' on the sofa
It wasn't me
I even had her in the shower
It wasn't me
She even caught me on camera
It wasn't me

She saw the marks on my shoulder
It wasn't me
Heard the words that I told her
It wasn't me
Heard the screams gettin' louder
It wasn't me
She stayed until it was over

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE FAN ROOM

Ha, ha! Funny though, again, how Donnelly reacted, for I saw stage after stage of him all acknowledging all that shit. Ever have those moments: someone says something to you, that hits you so profoundly, yet, at first, all it does is that it barely scratches the surface? Like if someone was to come up and say: “Closets are dangerous places...!” And you’re like: “Whiskey Tango Foxtrot does that mean?” And it makes no sense to you. But then, the following hour, you realize it’s still on the top of your thoughts. And now, you're wondering why that is. And then you remember that your uncle, the crazy one, on your mother’s side, back when you were a kid, had shot himself in a closet, he had locked himself in. Him, in there, with some Jack Daniels, tons and tons of psychiatric prescription pills and a 9mm. And no one ever figured out why. And since then, you’ve had a subconscious fear of what happens in closets, staying in closets, since childhood, that you didn’t even realize. Until now. And now, wherever you see one, a closet, YOU DON’T LIKE CLOSETS! YOU REALLY, REALLY DON’T LIKE THEM, ANYMORE! And you’re afraid of getting yourself locked in one, with what will happen if you... do.

To be continued... shit! This is gonna be tough. Rough and tough! Not easy, not in the least. I was hoping, and God forgive me for this, I was hoping that after everything Donnelly experienced with Senior and the Third Classes in The Shop. That the whole desertion thing would have become a lot easier sell. Aye! I know it's awful of me, hoping someone's misfortunes would work to my favor. But right now, I can't help but to think more about myself. And less about my fellow Shipmate, Donnelly, Michael Donnelly, here. And right now, me and him are sitting at this lounge table

in the berthing. It's taps for Night Check. Just came down from the Rain Locker (shower) about an hour ago. And, we've just been sitting here watching whatever the fuck is on the A-farts channel. Broadcasting to us, from all over the world, everything Navy. Although, right now, nothing of the Navy sort is playing on the tele. And what instead is playing is that Jack Nicholson movie: The Shining. I hate this movie. Not saying it's a bad movie. But I hate all horror movies. Let me explain: back when I was a kid, back in the 80s, my dad had become big into horror flicks. And with VHS machines coming to the market, my dad would go out and rent every single freakin' horror flick he could get his hands on. And my dad had bought two VHS machines. One to play the movie, and the other to record over what's showing. And then, when we'd get the systems ready, we'd, me and my dad, both would sit down, and watch:

The Shining
The Exorcist
Night of the Living Dead
Dawn of the Dead
Carrie
The Fly
All the Nightmare on Elm Street movies
All the Friday the 13th movies
All Halloween movies
All Child's Play movies
Creepshow
The Amityville Horror
The Fog
Pet Sematary
All the Poltergeist movies
All the Hellraiser movies
All Alien movies
The Last House On The Left
All Psycho movies (there were more than one)

All the Omen movies
Rosemary's Baby
The Thing
Silence of the Lambs
The Texas Chain Saw Massacre

My dad... the fuckin' nutcase, didn't know when to quit. And just didn't get, maybe, you shouldn't have an eight-year-old sitting down, watching such movies as these... hmm? After watching all those flicks, I... wasn't the same. Or sane. To say the least. And then my mother would wonder why I'd wake up with night terrors, screaming. Aye! My father wasn't the very sensible sort. And didn't have much of an idea of how to raise children. Since he was a big child, himself. Which was always a barrel of laughs, when we'd go to visit my grandmother, my dad's mom, and she would start berating and belittling him for sitting around with me, watching cartoons and movies. Telling him to: “Grow up, you have a child now, so act like an actual father, and set a good example!” But the man would then wave her off, to go away, as he'd get more invested with watching Scooby Doo, than I would. And I'm eight, sitting at my grandmother's place, wondering: “Wait... who's the actual child, here, me or my dad?” I'd wonder about that, as I'd adopt my grandmother's opinion about that man. Shaking my head, along with my grandmother shaking hers. I don't know, I guess he thought I was his schoolyard friend, and not his son, or something? The damn Vietnam War draft dodger! No wonder my mother eventually divorced his ass. Anyways, this Shining movie, is now not exactly sitting well with me, as it's reminding me of those night terrors, with me, waking up, screaming my head off. And I wonder now why I'm such a big fat pussy. And too much of a pussy, to have gone... Marines.

Why do I keep thinking about that!
Hmm...?
Ha!

Fuck 'em Marines, though! Thinking they're more badass than us. Motherfuckin' My Ass Really Is Navy Equipment! For all their bases are belong to US! Even though 'em Oorhah motherfuckers just love to rejoice how much more badass they supposedly are than us Hoorah Squids. Since, look at 'em! But, still. They might have an edge over us Squids, but not us Squids, that really be some Hooyah SEALS! And one Seal can PWN fifty aught Marines, single handedly, ANY DAY! For they EAT Marines and Green Berets, and PJs, FOR BREAKFAST! And they always be VERY HUNGRY! Simply put Seal > Marine!

Ha!
But seriously now....
Although, even though there was a time I wanted to, that wasn't the reason I didn't go green. As for the reasons? Well, let's face facts, a Sailor... isn't a Soldier! And a Soldier, isn't a Sailor. Honestly, it eventually came down to the fact that I didn't have the heart to become a killer. Aye, that was my reason! I mean, as a Soldier, your job is to kill, simple enough. But as a Sailor... I feel it's a little different, I think? Now being a part of a carrier air wing, a part of this fleet, then, aye, it now does become our job to also be killers. Since I now work on Jets, whose job is to kill. But still, here's my take: it at least isn't done by my very own hands, doing the job, holding a locked and loaded M-16, all full metal jacket style, and firing on another human being. So, let them Fly Boys, like Jacker and Facker and Rimjob and Facehugger, fly out, and bomb people. For I'm really just here to see the world. I'll be honest, I like being a Sailor, for those reasons, and not the sort that makes us as part of the Military. I like being what I am now. But now, I'm seeing that, maybe, I just don't have the heart to be an indirect killer, either. In the end, we might not be Soldiers, but as Sailors, our job also details us with destroying things. Since this isn't any other maritime experience, and we're locked and loaded with enough firepower to level anything that stands in our way. Once we get to the Gulf, and start bombing, there's going to be a lot of death on our hands, indirectly linked to us or not. But that's war... that's war, for ye! And there's no avoiding it. Although, maybe this isn't my war. And maybe, I just don't want to be part of it, anymore. I don't know. I just

don't know. I joined after 9/11, but I joined to see the world, more, not to destroy it. I'm not saying I didn't feel the swell of patriotic sense and principals and purpose and pride, to get me to enlist in the first place. That I didn't hear the call of duty, being called in for duty. For, if I hadn't, I now wouldn't have been here. But, here's the thing, I guess this isn't the type of Sailor I was looking to become? There's a lot of Ships out here in the ocean. In these wet parts of the world. And they're not all out here to be all: “Don't thread on me!” So, what I'm saying, is, maybe I should have gotten any other job sailing the world, that didn't involve this! I like whales! I like sharks, dolphins, and I like marine biology. Maybe Donnelly was right, and I should have gone to college. To study to be a marine biologist. Instead of not going to college and setting myself up to be just another blue collar schmo Squid, a FRED (Fuckin’ Retarded Enlisted Dude), jealously looking up to all these college grads made Officers, whom here in the Navy, really are considered as much more better people. Ha! I can see it now: me out here in the Pacific, a part of some “hug the whales” Greenpeace team, trying to stop Japanese whalers, from trying to drive a species of Baleen whales from being hunted into extinction. But anyways, simply put, I'm not cut out for this. I'm not meant to do this. This isn't what I was called out to do. For, as simple as why I didn't join the Marines, I probably shouldn't have joined the Navy. I ain't a killer! And I don’t want to become one, either. For it just isn't in my nature. Whatever sacrifices I should have made for God and country (since I do want that, I do, I simply do!), should have been done, with what truly would have best suited me, with the qualities and faculties I possess. Or, in other words, I'm not being used properly to serve anything here. And I feel like I'm wasting my time, now, and wasting theirs, all these highly and more qualified “few good men” types, seeking justice and peace with this war. While all I'm being is a shitty Naval Sailor. Being a Shitbag. Stinking up the joint, with shit I can't really best smell myself. So, maybe... I'm not meant for Military, anything! And I guess AE2 Frankowsky was right about me, and it's time for me to step to the side, and let all these aggressive types, beat their chest, and go to war, doing what they do best: killing!

Anyways. That was good. I had my mental juices flowing in the right direction. And now, I think I'm ready to confront Donnelly, with the message I got, to explain why I'm about to do... what I'm about to do, come next port visit. So now, let's wait for Donnelly: “to be continued!” And see what this Bostonian has got to say against my argument.

Anyways... I guess it's: “hurry up and wait,” time. So, let us wait.

Fuck!
…?
Fuck?
What is Donnelly doing? He's just sitting there, in the dark. And he seems to be brooding up a storm inside his skull. Weapons of mass destruction seem to be happening all over, inside that thing he calls his mental plane. And I just don't feel anyways a part of it, and neither do I feel like I want to, either. I've come to like this Shipmate of mine, a true Shipmate, for he truly has been that. Even with all his flaws. But now, he hasn't said or looked at me once, and has been sitting there, watching this Shining movie. And right now, it’s at the part where Jack really goes off his rocker and (spoilers) starts stalking his family all throughout that giant ass hotel, with an ax. And Jack is being Jack. No matter what movie it is, he's in, and we all love him for it. So, at-a-boy, Jack, you go chop up your family into sushi! And especially that Olive Oil bitch, let her have it, the worst!

“....” Says Donnelly to me.
And now I'm getting fed up of all this: To be continued... business. Since he's still just sitting there. While watching the flick. And he seems to be a little too invested into the story. Like the movie be speaking to him... in a magical language! All him comprehending things in a non-comprehensible level. And that there is one creepy thought, I'm starting to dread while dwelling on. Since he's eyeing Jack how Jack be eyeing his family.

And... AHH! SHIT!
And now Donnelly, just so happens, now has a chance to eye me. And now Donnelly is beginning to terrify me on all levels. Fuck this! To be continued... tomorrow! Or at least later this evening. I need to get some shut eye, since, we got more Flight Ops, later on. And, I don't have time for this right now. As long as I'm still here, still in this Navy, and still aboard this Ship, I need to be at my A-game, just so Senior doesn't think to give me anymore EMI. And then worse yet, take away my liberty in Thailand. I'm lucky that I'm not going to be having any Duty Day, then. But something tells me, Senior is going to go back to messing with me. Since the fucker is still suspecting of how I was the one, that did that vandalism business, before Hong Kong. Shit! So now I need to be on my A-game. Especially since he's now around more, on nights!

“Hey, Donnelly, are you gonna have Duty in Thailand?” I ask.
Since it does involve what I want to get him involved. Donnelly now glances at me, stone face, then the movie again. And says zilch! All right, that's it! Chocks out! I'm going to bed.

But then as I get up, Donnelly gets up, grabs me, and drags me into the fan room. And... ah shit! This fan room, place, reminds me of closets. And I fuckin' hate closets. For… aye! That was me, and that was my uncle, that shot himself in one. Back when I was a kid. Fucker was living with us at the time, and between my dad watching Alien and Aliens, that's when it happened. Fuck my childhood! And fuck, I hate it...? (although, my uncle survived the suicide attempt, thankfully, that would have been even more messed up for a childhood).
“Navastian... time to talk!” Says Donnelly.
And he's looking mighty earnest and eager to do so, now. And after everything, I'm feeling weirded out, majorly. If I hadn't spent the last hour sitting and watching that damn Shining flick, I think I would have been readier for this, since, that, and how invested Donnelly was into it was throwing me off. But, right now. I don't think I am.
“Navastian!”

“What.”
“Gab!”
And that now gets on my receptive side, and in ways I might not want. Aye, sir, I see it now. He’s going to try his best to outtalk me from doing this. And, he might even succeed.
“Say again, what I think you said.” Now asks Donnelly.
And, thank God, Donnelly is looking concerned, how a true Shipmate would. And not all freaked out, creeping me out. But, fuck me! I still hate closets. And I hate this fan room.
“What?” I go.
Since I sorta feel uncoordinated right now in my thoughts. I got too many things I'm thinking about, all at once. And I should just stick to one. Shit! I really don't feel ready for this confrontation. Even with all the buildup.
“Just say it, you said it before, I want to hear it again.” Says Donnelly.
“Why?”
Since he heard me plainly before.
“….”
But Donnelly really does seem like he wants to hear it again. And, I get it now. This is about resolve. He's asking again, to hear me say it again, to see how my resolve is about that matter. Fuck it! Say it! Say it, again!
“I want to desert.” I say.
And then I close my eyes. Shit! Barnacles! Shouldn't do that! All closing my eyes does is it shows how weak my resolve is, considering I can't stand to see Donnelly reaction reacting to my reaction.
“….” Says Donnelly.
And now that I open my eyes, I can see he sees how weak my intension is about this matter.
“I can't take this anymore, I... I... don't know what I'm thinking.”
Shit! Don't say it like that, Navastian! Stand and say what you intend to say!
“Yeah, you don't!” Says Donnelly, now, while nodding.
And now:

“I want out! I'm... I'm tired of this.” I say.
And that's better, since I'm expressing my intent.
“Yeah, but...?”
“But... what?” I go.
“But... are you out of your freakin' mind?” Says Donnelly.
And this was the reaction I was expecting, and dreading! But, there you have it.
“….”
And I don't know how to follow up on that. I must truly be out of my mind, considering what I'm planning on doing. There's no refuting that!
“No, really, are you?” Asks Donnelly.
And all I can say is.
“Yes!”
And now Donnelly gets mad. And stares me down, all harsh and hard.
“Yeah, I do! I want out! OUT!” I almost yell.
Donnelly then shakes his head.
“Yeah, I said I do!”
“That's like fuckin' treason... or something, you're talking about there.”
And now Donnelly is trying to reason with me.
“I don't care.”
“Well, you should!”
And truth be it, I can't be trying to out impose Donnelly, since he's better at the imposing department. And now I'm just lowering my head. And shaking it. I want out. I said: I want OUT! And, fuck! I can see Donnelly is only imposing on me, just to pressure me out of doing, what truly is, the biggest mistake I could make in my life. But, fuck it! I need to stick to my resolve. As weak as it is. It's still mine! And I want to get out now. I want this!
“….”
And I'm choosing not to say anything. I have my resolve. I said what I wanted to say, to Donnelly, and that's all there is to it.
“Listen, part of me thinks you really have no clue what you're thinking of getting yourself into.” Reasons Donnelly.

“I guess I—”
“But part of me also thinks, you do! And you just might decide to do something as stupidly fucking retarded as—”
“I don't care.”
As I hold fast to my resolve, and now show some Military Bearing. As contradictory as that is, considering what I'm speaking about here.
“What do you mean, you don't care? They give death sentences to enlisted personal during war time when they—”
“They won’t do that!”
“They will!”
“No, they won't, they just say that shit to scare us!”
And now I know where Donnelly is going with this. This, here, is a scare tactic us servicemen are always fed, primarily by our superiors, and primarily starting in Boot Camp, to scare us into being as compliant as they can possibly get us. Nothing but a—scare tactic! Remember how I spoke about Boot Camp, how there was one Recruit, there, that was caught sleeping during his Watch by a Rover? Which ended with him getting terrorized by some Warrant Officer over DEATH WARRANTS? Well... it's all bullcrud, really! Shit like that really doesn't fly! There's no death warrant issued for such a carelessness. Remember that story my RDC, AW1 Nordhaus, in Boot Camp, also, spoke about, about that Ensign during WW2, getting HANGED? Scare tactics! All it is, is scare tactics. Even though hanging was implemented during WW2, it was mostly done for the cases of murder and rape, almost nothing about desertion or incompetency. Since Boot Camp, since all those RDCs trying to scare us at every turn, I had become interested in this matter and have done the research. The last time the US Military executed anyone was back in 1961, and that was because that motherfucker was convicted for the rape and attempted murder of an 11-year-old girl! Not desertion! Not incompetency! And definitely not for sleeping while on Watch! But our superiors still love to scare us that they'll do such, just to keep us compliant. That story about that Ensign hanged for blowing off that Pearl Harbor invasion? Lies! Just fabricated by our RDC, AW1 Nordhaus, just so he'd have a compelling story to tell, with bells and whistles attached. Our superiors just love making up shit like that,

and then telling us, so we'd start to scare each other with stories like: “Oh, I've heard, if you're caught sleeping while on Watch, anyone that passes by, that's armed, has the legal right to SHOOT YOU, DEAD!” And then, while on Watch, we'd be terrified of the thought of dozing off, and falling into slumber. It's all bull! Some scary “no shitters,” full of shit! As for the matter of desertion, even though The Uniform Code of Military Justice does state that during a time of war, desertion = the death sentence. The last time the US Military actually went ahead and executed someone was in 1945, when they executed some Eddie Slovik guy. And he was the only one they did, during WW2, even though there had been over 21,000 cases of desertion filed, during that war. And from what I've read, they only did it to him just to make an example, since they didn't make any examples with the 21,000 OTHER DESERTERS! According to Slovik, they did it since he had a prior case of being a thief before joining. Supposedly, for stealing chewing gum when he was twelve f-ing years old. And as much of a jacked-up story as that is, that was the last time. And since then, even with the millions of cases since that war that have had servicemen deserting, and shit, f-ing zero cases have ended up with executing anyone of those servicemen committing the act. F-ing ZERO! Zero during the Korean War. Zero in 'Nam. Zero during Desert Storm. And considering how pussified the Military is getting with all this New Navy crap, I'm pretty sure there will be zero cases reported now, with the war we're about to enter. Plus, this whole war on terrorism. Aye! I've done my research. And I've done it WELL!

“Navastian, I'm being serious here! Don't you know, they can shoot you, DEAD, just for sleeping while on Watch? Just for being on WATCH! For fuck SAKES!” Donnelly tells me.

And now, I'm gonna do some major eye rolling, in this Shipmate of mine’s FACE! Since... ha, ha! Or as AEAN Barbarossa tends to go: ja, ja!

“Dude, don't roll your eyes at me! I'm being serious here!” Says Donnelly now.

And I now let out another one. Just because the AN's level of bullheaded ignorance is starting to insult my intelligence.

“Dude, I'm being—”

“No, they WON'T! They don't do shit like THAT! This ain't WW1, and we ain't the French army.”
“Bro, what are you talking about... French army?”
“Bro! What I'm talking about is... I've done the research. The last time they executed anyone for desertion, was the Second World War, and there's been millions of cases of desertion since then. MILLIONS!”
Although, maybe not millions. But A LOT! That I do know. And now, since mentioning how I've done my research. He, he, he! Donnelly doesn't seem so confident with trying to continue with that argument.
“Dude, do you still know how life altering of a decision this is here?” Says Donnelly.
And that, is something I can't argue with.
“Yes!” I say, confidently.
“Still... I mean... come on!” Goes Donnelly.
As he loses some of his momentum. And now I feel like expressing more of my thoughts.
“Donnelly, you know that... this isn't for me! I'm not meant for this. You've even said that for yourself.”
And now Donnelly lowers his head, as he finds himself unable to continue with any arguments.
“Yeah, but, have you even phantomed, any bit, what you're even thinking you’re saying, what you want to do, here?” Goes Donnelly.
And, I have... although sorta...?
“I guess I—”
“You guess?” Leverages Donnelly.
“I believe I do! I mean—I do!”
Fuck! I'm losing steam!
“You do, or, you don't?” Pressures Donnelly.
“Yes! I do!”
But that there is a problem. Since I HAVEN'T!
“I honestly don't think you do!”

And truth be, I still got nothing. I've only had a couple of days to really think about this. And in that time, a big part of me has been trying to convince me not to desert, me being conflicted about this matter, with myself! Fuck! Why do we have to be in Thailand in only a week? It's not enough time to really think this out. But, I now have to manage, with the time I got available. The thing is, the only other port visit we might have after Thailand will probably be in the Gulf. To Dubai, or someplace. And I ain't deserting in some Middle Eastern country for any reason. Fuck no! Fuck that! Where capital punishment for motherflippin' smoking weed, is death by being BEHEADED! Where they'll even chop your head off, if they suspect you of doing sorcery—motherflippin' SORCERY—of all things! And that's a no "no shitter" there! LOOK IT UP!

"You're being hesitant to answer." Says Donnelly to me.

But... that's because I'm deep in thought. But... fuck! I really still haven't planned this out, as well as I should have. Even though I doubt foolhardily they'll have me hanged for desertion, in today's Navy. I'm still pretty sure I'll be seeing some Brig time. A hefty amount of it. Plus, a Big Chicken Dinner. And I doubt they'll fry that up for me, in my favorite Cajun Louisiana style, I so love.

"No! I am completely solid on this. Convicted, of doing it!" I say to Donnelly.

But... I know Donnelly can see right through that, since we be still sharing brain waves and everything. Damn! Why did I click so well with this character?

"I don't know. I really don't think you know exactly what you're still getting yourself involved with, here." Says Donnelly.

And now, I feel a headache coming on. And, I know where my thoughts are going.

"Wow, shits really getting to you that bad, huh?" Expresses Donnelly.

With a sympathetic brow.

And now I feel like I need to open up about matters. I haven't yet with him.

"Donnelly, I almost got myself killed in Hong Kong."

"What?" Goes Donnelly.

And now, I need to... shit! But yet, I really don't want to talk too much into everything I felt there. I don't!

"I almost... it's a long story." I say, simply.

And now my headache is turning into a migraine. That shit I felt there, is now manifesting itself as some real pain. Real pain, I be feeling, in my head.
“Well, tell me!” Says Donnelly.
And... God I hate this cramped up space! This damn fan room! I'm feeling claustrophobic now, even though I don't have claustrophobia.
“You want to hear it?” I ask, rhetorically.
“You wanted me to hear how you plan to commit treason—”
“It's not TREASON! Desertion isn't considered as treason, okay?”
For I'm really starting to get aggravated with all the nonsense Donnelly has been getting filled with, with all that Scuttlebutt nonsense, we Squids, always come with an abundance of.
“Okay, but still, if you're willing to talk to me about deserting, and wanting me to come along with it!”
Shit! I think now, maybe, there's going to be NO CHANCE, I'm gonna be able to convince him to come with me. Zero chance!
“So, I think we're now open to discuss this.”
“I don't know where to begin.” I say.
“Okay, start from the beginning.”
And now Donnelly's sympathy for me is starting to get aggravating! And I feel like... that's not a good thing to feel!
“Listen, it's a long story, and it almost led me to drive myself to suicide.” I simply say.
“….”
And now Donnelly is speechless. But, that is the truth.
“That's all I want to really say now.” I say.
“….”
And Donnelly still is unable to react to what I just said.
“I tried to... yeah!”
“Yeah, but do you even understand what you're now saying you want to do?”
Oh, for fuck sakes! You've said that already! Come on!

“Can't be worse than how everything is leading me up to doing, me trying to kill myself, I think.”
“Yeah, but, if you desert, there really is no coming back. You can't undo that, then, it is any easier for me to undo punching out that First Class, that got me to go see the Skipper, getting Captain's Mast.”
Oh, I'm growing tired of this!
“I know.”
“I don't think you do!”
“YES, I DO, YES I DO! STOP SAYING THAT I—”
“ALL RIGHT! Come DOWN! Please!”
And... shit! Donnelly really is concerned about all this. And now I'm just yelling at him for being a friend to me.
“Listen, Navastian. I feel you, bro! I feel you! The Navy... hasn't exactly been what I've wanted it to be.”
And... this looks promising...?

Ah, fuck me! I'm still just being selfish about this, thinking that way!
“I don't want to be here either!”
And now I feel like I'm winning him over. And, I won't have to coarse him somehow to come with. And then feel guilty that I HAD!
“Fuck! I really don't want to be here, either! Since Boot Camp, part of me has felt like I've been setting myself up for something. Something I was expecting but didn't get.” Says Donnelly.
As he continues to step into the dark side. And I at null right now. For, I NEEDS THIS!
“Fuck, since getting Captain's Mast. And now with Senior, and that thing that happened with me and the Third Classes. And all I was doing was standing up for Pflugerville, so none of the guys would pick on him and... sigh!”
And now my eyes go slit. For I don't feel like I need to coarse him of anything, since he's now doing it for himself.
“Ah shit! I don't know how I'm gonna deal with Senior, now! Shit!”

And now is my chance!
“Then come with me!” I reckon, saying it through my teeth.
And now Donnelly seems dazed and disoriented. Trenched with his own troubles in life on the Boat.
“Come with—”
“No! I ain't gonna do it! Fuck no! I don't got it easy right now, but, things can still get better.” Donnelly says.
Fuck! NO! I NEED YOU! I... SHIT!

But, fuck! I can't drag him along if he doesn't want to come. I can't do that! And even though I might have done some despicable shit in my life, and all of it recently. No! I can't stoop this low! Trying to manipulate him into... SHIT!
“Okay.” I say, simply.
And now I feel fear for myself, with all I've set myself up for, for doing. But I got no choice now. Ah... maybe I shouldn't... NO! OUT! I WANT....
“Fine, Donnelly, I guess, for you they can. Things to getting better, that is.” I say.
And accept it.
“And so can they with you.” Now offers Donnelly.
“NO!” I say.
For I'm staying committed to THIS!
“YES, they CAN! You just got to believe that they—”
“NO... I'm too far gone, you don't know what I've been through, to get me to this state.”
Sigh.
Goes Donnelly and lowers his head again. As he sees he needs to accept the choice I'm willing to make. And not try and talk me out of it.
“I'm gonna do it.” I say now, full of conviction.
“Fine, I don't want to know.” Says Donnelly.
And now grows distant.
“What?”
“I mean... I don't want to know this. No!”

"…."
"No, just no! I didn't hear this. I don't want to hear this. I'm sorry, but, you're on your own. If you go through with this. I don't want to leave you all hanging. But... this goes beyond me."
Donnelly then lifts his head to look at me, once. And lowers it again. Defeated! And, gotta say, this hurts for me to see. He really did mean for the best for me. But I'm now set in my ways. And he... also is with his. And that's all there is to it.
"Thanks though." I say.
"Yeah…."
And now leaves, leaving me in here, in the fan room, with my thoughts. And I'm unable to leave this space, until I reckon with myself, all that's now going through, in my head.

BALI HA'I: PART FOUR

Wait... where am I? Am I on that isla—...? I AM! I'm here. I see tropical greenery all around me. Cutting through the azure blue skies as I look up. I'm... on the ground, on ground! Real ground, soil. This is it! I'm here. The island I been meaning to come to all this time, I was swimming forever since I jumped Ship. Look at that! Tropical paradise! I am where I belong now, I am at that place. That special place. Deep inside, I've been meaning to go to, all my life. That special somewhere we always want to get to, but never truly can. What I mean by it, is, that place that makes you feel a certain way, of being at a better place, better than where you started out from. That feeling of newness. Of freshness. Where you experience everything the way you've always expected to. Like... falling in line with the cool kids at school you always looked up to, but always felt excluded from. Or. The experience of success, overcoming everything you've always strived for, and now there's a crowd before you, cheering at you, and giving you a standing applause. Of course, that experience for me would come after knocking Senior the FUCK out, COLD, and watching his feet swing up to where his ugly mug just was, as his Navy issued spit shined shoes get kicked up and off his feet, along with his Navy issued black (never white) socks. And now I'm just looking at his feet, and they're like... WTF? How did we get up here? As I wiggle my eyebrows at them. Ha!

But anyways. I'm there now. At that place. Or another example: my uncles place. My rich uncle that lived in the Hollywood hills. And used to throw festive Christmas parties, and invite us all there. And I would have a chance to go see how well he had done in life, unlike his brother, my father. And for a time there, I'd be a part of that family... before returning home and have to come back to my reality. My disappointing reality....

God, that drive home, in the back seat of my dad's old Dodge... God, was it depressing! Always.

But, never mind all that. Now I have my own un-disappointing reality. My own glorious and successful station in life, I can be at. Here, on this island. Yay! I should explore a little and see what I comes across.

God, is it beautiful here. More than I could imagined. Look at all this. Paradise!

Wait... how small is this island? Wait?

What the hell... how... it's practically an islet. No, a cay! This ain't no island, I'm on a fuckin' KEY, HERE! I can't survive on something this small out in the middle of the Pacific. At least with a decent size island, it would be a challenge, as I'd go all Robinson Crusoe, trying to survive on it. Cutting trees to build a home. Hunt boars. And shit! But there ain't to motherfuckin' boars on this island. And there ain't enough trees either to cut for wood to build shelter. I'm still practically out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. And if a hurricane comes—I'm DONE FOR! God! What do I do now? This isn't where I wanted to be at. I wanted that... I mean... I didn't, but...!

What do I do now? Looking all around, 360°, I see nothing but water from one end of my horizon to the next. Not like there's some bigger key out here... it's just this runt ALONE, which I am on.

What do I do... what do I do now?

It's getting dark. I've been sitting sullenly here for hours. And it's freezing cold now. And I can tell, since, my nuts just fell off, and some crab came along, and decided to crawl into it as its new shelter. Ha...!

It was funny to watch that happen, though. NOT MY NUTS FALLING OFF! That was BAD! Just the fact that the crab made my nuts into a new home. All stretched it out to fit inside, and now the crab looks like some Harryhausen monster. That, or that thing from the movie: The Thing. Ugh! What an abomination! Nothing but stretched out human veiny skin, and claws, with an opening that has that disgusting thing crabs have that they call a mouth (just have a simple opening... why have legs sticking out where your mouth should be... fucking WEIRD!) That all... with two tits at the back.

And then all of a sudden... it happens.
Wait... what... what happens?
It!
What's it?
And then, Navastian sees what it just happens to be.
Wait, I'm the narrator, here, so who the hell are you?

But then I see it, I see them arising up out of the surrounding waters. I seem them, the Old Ones. Them Old Ones. Rising up. Towering over me, as lightning strikes up above, as stormy skies rush in fast and begin lurking over the Pacific. And the sight I am witnessing now is the closest thing I can imagine as hell! Pacific dark watery hell! Now with these devils standing out towering up above. Cue: second lightning strike. And now I see the yellows of their eyes, pierce out, from their faces, steeped in shadows. It's them. The terrors I've been dreading all this time, now standing out before me. And they ain't just figments of my deepest fears, hidden in the abyss of

my imagination. These hellish sights for sore eyes are REAL! REAL! And there's nothing I can do, to have them not do... what they've been planning all this time.

{NAVASTIAN! CRACKS ONE.}
And I can see that they know me by name, and all of my story. And its voice sounds to be, as if this gigantic creature, being speaking while at inhale. Speaking practically in in verse, like any devil would do. Sounding something very helter skelter and evil and psychotic!
{NAVASTIAN, FOR THE NEXT FIVE DAYS, THERE WILL BE FIVE TRIALS YOU WILL BE INITIATED WITH.}
Five trials? What? FIVE? What the BARNACLES is going on, here? {DURING THE HOURS THAT YOU WILL BE AWAKE!}
WAIT… I'm dreaming right now? I am? How? How... oh SHIT! Wait... you mean you fuckers are gonna be manifesting shit into the REAL world, my awake world, where crazy mythological terrors like these ain't supposed to be scientifically possible, being a bunch of nonsense like mermaids and Moby Dicks?
{YES!}
Ah! Fuck me! They responded to my thoughts! They can read my MIND!
{OF COURSE, WE CAN, WE ARE FOREVER IN THE RECESSES OF YOUR THOUGHTS. FOREVER WATCHING, LISTENING... AND JUDGING.}
OH GOD!
{FOREVER IN THE SHADOW, AND... IT IS TIME, NAVASTIAN! IT IS TIME, FOR US NOT BE IN THE SHADOWS ANY LONGER. BUT TIME FOR US TO COME OUT, TO JUDGE, FOR ALL THE SINS THAT WE'VE WITNESSED.}
What... SINS? My sins? How's this? What have I done?
.... CRACKS THEY.
Or doesn't crack, keeping their hidden agendas from me. What the HELL IS GOING ON? JUDGED? ME? Can't you at least tell me what I'm to be judged for?

{YOU'VE BEEN ONE JACKED UP SAILOR, NAVASTIAN. ALL JACKED UP! AND TRUST US, IN THE NEXT FIVE DAYS, BEFORE YOU AND THE BOAT BE HITTING THAILAND, YOU'LL BE DEALING WITH US! WE'RE GONNA SQUARE YOU AWAY, SHIPMATE! AND EITHER WE'RE GOING TO STRAIGHTEN YOUR SHIT OUT. OR HAVE YOUR SHIT SENT PACKING.}

Oh GOD! Please tell me this isn't happening! PLEASE! How can this be? Please, please, tell me, these fuckers won't be able to enter my real world?

{WE CAN, AND WE WILL! JUST AS WE DID DURING THAT BLACK OUT MOMENT, IN HONG KONG, WHEN YOU HAD TO HAVE BROCK SUCCUMB YOU FROM COMMITTING SUICIDE!}

Ah shit... this is going to be BAD!

{SO, BE EXPECTING US. AND, NAVASTIAN... JUST TO LET YOU KNOW... DON'T EVEN THINK WHAT YOU EXPERIENCED WITH SENIOR AND THE LINE SHACK BUNCH, AS BEING THE DEPTHS, OF HOW FAR WE'RE PLANNING AND WILLING GO, TO INTRODUCE YOU TO TRUE HELL!}

Oh God! PLEASE? I don't want THIS!

{AND WHEN WE'RE DONE WITH YOU, YOU'LL BE WISHING YOU HAD JUMPED SHIP BEFORE, AND ENDED THIS ALL. FOR THE TRUE EXCRUCIATING HELL WE WILL INTRODUCE TO YOU. YOU'LL BE WISHING!}

And then, they all sink down below again. Back into the waters. They sink and disappears from my sights. Goes away. Only to. Come out. And play. When I'll really be DREADING to see them. And I thought the scrotum crab I saw before was something truly an ABOMINATION to witness. God were they ugly. With all them tentacles. Fuck me! Why did I read all them Lovecraft books about shit like this? I HATE HORROR!

Although, was kinda funny, in a grotesquely fascinating way, hearing them calling me “Shipmate” and everything. Saying how they're gonna “*square me away.”* Them with all that silly Sailor talk. Ha!

TRIAL BY MURDER

Twilight red blazing skies expand over the Pacific. I don't like twilight red. Nay, that, I do not. Twilight blue, sure! Twilight purple, I can do with or without. Twilight orange, that I will also take. But twilight red? I don't know. The color be a bit too ominous with me. Since every time I've started my shift during twilight red, nothing good has ever come of it. All skies be blood red. And the sun be colored with a blood red tinge, too. And when the sun be blood red, you know, some really ominous fucked up shit is definitely bound to manifest itself. Embodied into this world from that other world. And, as for that other world? Nay, I dare not think of what lurks there. That alternate universe. That devil's universe. Where the gods of that world bathe themselves in the blood of virgins, the pure of heart and the innocent kind. For them unholy entities be nothing more than abominable idols, that need to be smashed and destroyed, before they're able to tempt the weaker willed souls, into committing themselves to their blasphemous works. Their sacrificial works. Demanding more blood, MORE BLOOD, to be shed, for them gods to continue bathing themselves with.

FUCK!
Where's my mind GOING WITH THIS?

What the Foxtrot am I thinking?
And now while thinking about it. Must wonder. I must! For it is a must! What the Foxtrot was that dream I had all about? Old Ones manifesting themselves into my life, and into my world? To set me up with trials I must pass, in order to... I don't know. My God, did that shit terrify me, though!

Right now, I'm on the Flightdeck. Been prepping my 107, since, there’s to be training missions conducted for our birds, and also their Pilots, to get qual-ed (I believe).

Qualifications with running some practice bombing tests. For what I've heard there, our Jets are going to be testing the AIM-54 Phoenix missile. The largest, long range, radar guided AAM (air-to-air missile) that's ever been devised by man. Well, the largest missile that any Jet can carry. And, from what I've heard, our Tomcats are capable of holding up to six. Each missile, from what I've heard around the Scuttlebutt, costing roughly 6 million dollars, each. And right now, them Red Shirts of our command, H-Town and his IYAOYAS brethren, are loading up our Jets, with them bombs, to do some testing tonight.

Aye! With my Strange Magic, bird 107.
Oh...?
Interested in knowing something? All our birds have names. Names that were decided by us Plane Captains to give to, to give these birds more character, since, they're meant to be ours (even when we don't exactly own them, and can't do whatever we want to do with them). But they're temporarily ours, since our names are stenciled onto them. All on the doors to the nosewell, which houses the strut and tire. And when opened, so that the strut with tire is extended out to be used on solid surface, one can plainly see the PC's name. And just above it, and just above where the M61 Vulcan Gatling-type cannon is housed (which uses motherflippin' 20mm rounds, which compared to a .50 cal, would be like comparing AT2 Sundergaard with Roach Burger. No joke!), just above it, is stenciled on the fuselage, along with its inventory number, the actual bird's name.

God, I feel... I don't know!
Scared!
But why...?

Oh... FUCK THAT DREAM! Old Ones stepping out and into my world. What bull! It was only a dream, Navastian, only a freakin' dream. Fuck that, think of something pleasant, to keep your mind preoccupied. Stop thinking about that Lovecraftian nonsense! Stop, just stop!

Okay... let's talk a little about all the Jets' names:

- 101: this one is AD3 Rudebaker and AE3 Lutkus' Jet. Named Blue Island. After the part of Chicago Rudy originated.
- 102: this here is AEAN Navarro and ATAN Higginson's Jet. Named: Yulaw. Named by Navarro after a favorite character from a Jet Li movie, which came out not too long ago. Called The One. When I first met Navarro, there was a period, there, he would go around, going: “I am YULAW, I am NOBODIES BITCH!” And then, in The Shop, he would point at every one of us, and then go: “You, are all MINE!” Then thumb himself, very boldly and emphatically with that last bit. And Navarro practically did it every day, on shore, at Atsugi, usually during the end of shift. During a long period of “hurry up and waiting” we'd do, to see what additional work the Khakis in Maintenance would dream up for us. And, it became a bit of a tongue-in-cheek affair. We'd all be silent and restless, sitting, and waiting, just waiting, and then Navarro would just rise fast and blow up going: “I am YULAW...” and, I don't know why, it would just become hysterical for all of us. As he'd call all of us his bitches. And stand around like some tyrannical Wu-Tang Dynasty Emperor, as he'd fold his arms up, and... I don't know! It was just so tongue-in-cheek funny. The type of humor, only a guy like, a vato like, Navarro could pull.
- 103: this one is ADAN Quimby and AN Manjarrez's Jet. And the name of their Jet is called: Crow Daddy. And... I really don't know the story to that name.
- 104: this here is AEAN Barbarossa and AMAN Iglesias’ Jet. Named: Snake Wine. Supposedly some time ago, before I came to the Squadron, our Squadron had a DET(achment) to Okinawa. Where a bunch of guys went to a local bar and challenged each other to a drinking game. Drinking up some Okinawan Snake Wine. Also called by the locals as Habu sake, or really Habushu. And, it's exactly what it sounds to be. I guess in Okinawa, them JNs love to insert a real live Habu snake into their alcohol and drown the fucker in it. Store it away, for forty days, to later on consume. And from what I've gathered, those snakes, which come from the pit viper family line (closely related to rattlesnakes and copperheads), are very much poisonous. Whose venom can cause nausea, vomiting, hypotension, and possibly death. But,

supposedly, the fifty-nine percent alcohol level nullifies the snake's venom, allowing anyone then to drink the mix. And, the superstitious myth amongst the Okinawans is, the snake can greatly enhance a person's libido. Since Habu snakes are known to be able to mate for as long as 26 hours, at a time, the locals believe those qualities will then me passed onto you, its spirit passed onto you, if by drinking the sake. Anyways. The story goes, Barbarossa had challenged some of the guys that were with him on that DET, to drink the Snake Wine, and to then go hunting for some Okinawan tail, to put that superstitious myth to the test. And as for how well they did with what they had set themselves up for? From what I've heard, Barbarossa and Brockhausen got it with three to four JNs and got with them for almost a two nighter.

- 105: this now is AN Donnelly and AMEAN Albertson's Jet. And the name of their Jet is: Madboy. And, don't really know why Donnelly chose that name. Since, I haven't asked him. Which now, I think I will when the opportunity comes up for me to do so.
- 106: this is now ATAN Pflugerville, and AN Papadopoulos' Jet. Named: Donkey Punch. And, aye, if you know what a donkey punch really is, that's the reason for that name. Supposedly Papa came up with it, since he did it to some whore in Tokyo, Japan. I don't know! I think it's a stupid name for a Jet. And that's all there is to it.
- 107: this one, is of course, my own Jet. Mine, and AMAN Coppersmith's. Called: Strange Magic. And, as for the reason I gave it that name, well, I really don't have any. Ha! Sorry there! I really just chose it out of random. At the time, at Atsugi, back when AEC Murdock was the head in the Line, he asked me what I'd like the name of the Jet to be, and, that's what popped out of my mouth. I guess I figured it as a cool name at the time, but, whatever!
- 108: this is both AN Royster and AN Papavich's Jet. And their Jet be named: Deez. And, Deez what? I'd guess you'd be wondering. Well. Deez... AYE! THAT! I mean, what else would you expect from a Plane Captain of AN Royster's sense of humor to be?
- 109: this one is both AN Roach Burger and ADAN Muwangi's Jet. And the name to their Jet is: Nairobi. Why? Simple reason. That's where Muwangi is from, Nairobi,

Kenya. Plus, I do believe that is also the name of Muwangi's fiancée. That really, really hot African girl, he is with. I think?

- 110: this one is ATAN Derbytown and AEAN Dennison's Jet. And the name of the Jet is called: Shinjuku. Mostly named by ATAN Derbytown, for the misadventures the poor boy has had in the Shinjuku district of Tokyo. Searching for the lost alley, supposedly where in Tokyo you will find the legendary Columbian whorehouses. Where you'd find a mess load of Columbian women. beautiful Columbian women, behind glass. Aye, there's a hefty number of misadventures that have come with Derbytown, and company, searching for that back alley, where you would find such women. One misadventure, which I've personally shared with the ATAN. And that calls for a story, another time.

And finally, saving the best for last:

- 100: this is both AM3 Katzenberg and AMAN Hathaway's Jet. And the name of the Jet is called: Jacked Rogers. And, I gotta say, there is one, really crazy “no shitter” over why the bird's name was chosen to be that. First off, let me start off by telling you all about a legendary Fighter Squadron called the Jolly Rogers. A really old, ancient, seadogging Squadron, that used to fly Vought F4U Corsairs back in WW2. During the invasion of Okinawa, there was an Ensign Pilot that began dogfighting with two Japanese Zeros. But unfortunately for the Ensign, he was at a disadvantage, as his bird began losing engine oil. Now, even though still willing to fight valiantly to the end, and even though able to take out one of the Japanese Zeros, the second enemy threat became too much for him, as he was shot down by it. As he became overcome by the second Zero, and began plummeting to his death, the last words transmitted by the Pilot were: “Remember me with the Jolly Rogers." Now, after that, I guess there was a period the story about the Ensign was forgotten. But when the Jolly Rogers' Squadron (the Squadron he was a part of) was recommissioned in 1955, as a F-9 Cougar Squadron (later on transitioned to flying the Vought F-8 Crusader, then the F-4 Phantom II, and then finally to the present F-14 Tomcat), the remains of that Ensign, his skull and femurs, were entrusted to the possession of that Squadron, by the Ensign's family. Now encased in a glass box. This all being

done to fulfill the Ensign's last request of being remembered by the Jolly Rogers. And, since then (until something that happened recently), the Ensign's remains had stayed with the Squadron, as the Squadron took it with them wherever they went. Plus, the name of the Ensign, kept in the Squadron's roster, serving as a symbol of courage and heroism for all Jolly Rogers from then on out to follow. Neat story, ain't it? Well, here's the part where it becomes not so neat. Those remains of the Ensign Pilot had stayed with the Squadron, “had” being the word, until something happened about a year or two back, to change all that. I guess then that Tomcat Squadron, plus our Tomcat Squadron, were in San Diego. And at a local bar in Coronado. A fight broke out between us two. And somehow, in the process, them skull and femurs of the poor Ensign disappeared, and no trace of them afterwards have been found, since. So, aye! If you're catching along with what must have happened. Well, that's exactly what ended up happening! Them stupid Jolly Rogers would take the Ensign practically wherever they went. Wherever! And especially to bars, just so them Airdales could drink to the WW2 Ensign's memory. And during the fight that broke out between our Squadrons, a couple of guys from our Squadron supposedly ganked the WW2 hero’s remains. Jacked it! Stole. And, even after, when both our Squadron's seniority got together to track down what happened to the remains, nothing came up. And, till this day, the remains of that Ensign are still considered UA, with the Jolly Rogers. Now, gotta ask... which would you readers suppose, would have been the two perpetrators to commit such an act? Steal the skeletal remains of a dead WW2 Pilot. Which would you suspect, would stoop so low, to commit something so heinous, such as that? Which two pranksters, in the history of VF-451, would... yup! Them two! And the only hard evidence our Squadron has that them two did it, is the name, them two pranksters, decided to come up with, naming their Jet: Jacked Rogers! That's what our bird 100 is now named. But as for the real remains of that Pilot, till this day, our Squadron's seniority has still not been able to prove that anyone, especially them two did it. Also, the Scuttlebutt be, neither does our Squadron's seniority want to prove such facts. Just to stick it to them Jolly Rogers, every time they come hollering and bitching and moaning and whining, looking for their poor WW2 mascot. Ha!

Okay. That was pleasant... and...?

Shit, I'm still thinking about that crud! But, whatever! It doesn't matter, think about it, just don't let it get to you.

Anyways. Only thing now left to do with my pre-flight checks is to wipe down the canopy and dive the ducts. That should be easy. But first, I guess I should do a quick Tool count. Can't really do enough of them. Anyways, so, let's see....

Wait a second... where's the door punch? Where's the... what the HELL? No, no, no, no, no! Where is it? Where the fuck is it? Wait, did I do a Tool count when I checked the damn Tool Pouch out earlier in The Shop? Did I? I swear I... I don't remember!

Fuck me! What do I do? Tell Sen—... NO, WAIT, I CAN'T TELL SENIOR! SHIT! This is JACKED! This is some truly JACKED UP SHIT! FUCKIN' HELL! Okay, then what do I do? Okay, go down to The Shop. Go down there! Maybe it's...? And now I'm RUSHING! Simply RUSHING! Heading down to the Ratways, through the hatch, into The Ship, and now racing to The Shop. And hopefully, Senior won't be in there, to start assessing shit, seeing my panic-stricken face, knowing definitely, SOMETHING IS UP! Fuck me! Fuck me! If the Tool isn't down there. This is going to be disastrous! If it's not in The Shop, I'm gonna get FUBARed up the Ying Yang! EMI? If I could only be so lucky! This is what's going to get me on Liberty Risk! And then... AYE! I won't be able to do, what I'd want to do, come Thailand. Let me now explain exactly how bad this is, seeing as how I had already checked this Tool Pouch out, and in my name. If I don't find that Tool down in The Shop, I going to have to—HAVE TO—tell somebody that there's a missing Tool. And then, ALL OF NIGHT OPS, will be HALTED, all over The Ship, to a STANDSTILL, until, that Tool is found. Aye! That's how much of a Charlie Foxtrot shitstorm this missing Tool will cause, since, it will be considered as possible FOD, considering I had the Tool Pouch with me up on the Flightdeck. I mean, you saw what that chain did to Pfluger's Jet, correct? Well,

that door punch could pretty much do the exact same thing. Not as bad! But the bad part will be, I will be held accountable for the missing Tool. And, do I even need to explain how much ragin' and roarin' I'll be receiving, not just from Senior, but all First Classes and up in our Squadron? Liberty Risk! DRB! Even I might go see the Air Boss as he starts yelling turmoils and tarnations for having caused this much interruption. That's what I'll be getting, there. Plus, a shit load of EMI! A shitload! For, two weeks into this cruise, this already happened in our Squadron. And guess whose Tool Pouch it was that was missing Tools. Fuckin' Royster's! And the guy is STILL serving EMI because of it. That, and of course, for other reasons. I have to find it! I have to! And if I don't, I have to report the missing Tool to somebody, high up, or at least to our IS3. And if I don't do any of that, then it's gonna be me, seeing the Skipper, and in my full-service Dress Blue Uniform. Considering I would be intentionally endangering everyone's lives on the Flightdeck, purposefully, and that'll be a serious offense leading me to be seeing some possible Brig time.

Okay, I'm in The Shop! Now I gotta hunt that fucker down! Thank God no one is in The Shop right now. With Senior... my ass would have been cooked, ripe! Since Senior be loving some rump action on the menu!

All right! Check all the other Tool Pouches in the cabinet to see if it's there. Damn, there's only four left. Meaning, all the rest have been checked out by other PCs tending to prepping their birds. And if it's in their Pouches, I won't know, until they come across it, and bring it in for a quick inventory. All right, it's not in any of the Pouches here. Where is it? Where the fuck is it?
"Hey, Navastian, what the fuck are you doing in The Shop?" Goes somebody behind me. Ah... fuck me! It's... it's... Falky?

And as I turn, I see him. I see him, he sees me. I look at him, he looks back at me. And now baffles:
"Well?"
"I... I... it's cold outside, and I was—"

“What the fuck are you talking about, it's not cold outside!” Says Falky. Shaking his head, utterly baffled with me. And Falky is right, it really isn't cold outside. And, just my fucking luck, the one night I could use some freezing my nuts off, action. And it's not that way.
“Fine... I?”
“You, what?” And I'm unable to answer, I'm unable to say diddly squat!
“Get the fuck back up there, Navastian, do I even have to explain to you, now, with Senior around...?”
“Aye, aye! I know, I know!” I say. And now... I'm heading up. And... I gotta check around my bird. It could be there. It could be! Even if I haven't at all had the chance to use that Tool up top. And for our case, as PCs, usually opening up the weekly and daily doors. And I haven't done that, therefore, I know for a fact I didn't at all use that Tool. Which means the Tool could still be... FUCK! In here in The Shop. Unless...?
“Navastian, please, please, please, please, PLEASE!” And... HUH? I've never seen Falky this way before. But right now, this ain't the time to be noting that!
“NAVASTIAN!”
“Fine, I'm going, I'm going!” I say.
“Navastian?” Now goes Falky.
“What?” I go. As I taste something salty in my mouth. And it's sweat, running down from my brow, to my lips.
“You okay?” Goes Falky. And I've never heard him ask me that before. But no time to note that now, either. I still gotta go up and—
“Navastian?”
“What, what?” I go. As I now taste more of my salt. And the salt to sweat ratio tastes to have gone up to Himalayan proportions.
“What are you doing with that door punch in your hands?” And now, all is quiet, all is still, and all is... becoming way too weird for my taste. What the Whiskey Tango Foxtrot is he...?
“Door punch?” I go. And again, the taste of more of my Himalayan high.

“Yeah! What are you doing with that in your hand?” And now, I look down, to my left hand, and... what the...?
“I don't know, what am I doing with a...?” And... no shit! The freakin' door punch to my Pouch is in my motherflippin' HAND! Who the...?
“Navastian, again, what the fuck is going on?” Goes Falky, worrisomely. And I've never seen him worrisome. And now, our IS3 is looking at me like a section 8 case. And also, I'm now considering just how true that is to be. Falky now looks a little too weirded out by me, as he slowly turns around, and starts walking back out of The Shop.

What the fuck... how is it that—
{KILL FALKY!}
WHAT...?
{KILL FALKY, STAB HIM WITH THE DOOR PUNCH!}
And now, within my cranial spaces (my head’s cranial not my cranial’s cranial) I'm hearing shit! I'm hearing... disembodied voices.
“What?” And now the IS3 turns around.
“What... what?” He says.
“Nothing.” I say then.
And as he turns around again, facing me his backside. AGAIN:
{KILL HIM, STAB HIM IN THE NECK!}
WHAT?
{STAB HIM! STAB HIM! STAB HIM! STAB HIM!}
And then my hand lifts up, by its-own-self, as I start pacing up to the IS3, and then I...?
“NO...?” And that now scares IS3 Falconni, as he just about jumps, and turns around, and sees me. With the door punch... hidden behind my back.
“Navastian, what the hell is going on with you?” And... HIS EYES! Just... HIS EYES! It's as if someone had stepped over his grave.
“What?” I go, again.

“Navastian, the Flight Crew... is going to be at your bird, AT ANY MINUTE!”
“Okay!” I go.
“Get the fuck up there, and... whatever the hell is going on with you. Deal with it, LATER!” Falky goes. Explaining that with his hands along with his words. But still... HIS EYES! “You got me, Navastian?”
“Aye!” I go. And as the IS3 Falconni turns around again. I STAB HIM IN THE NECK! DEAD! DEAD! DEAD! DEAD!
“...?” I GO. But utter not a word.

The IS3...? Is on the ground now, and there's BLOO—...!

“No there's not, no there's....” I whisper to myself. And... OH, THANK GOD! I just hallucinated th—
{KILL FALKY! KILL FALKY! KILL—}
SHUT THE FUCK UP! SHUT THE FUCK UP! WHO THE FUCK IS...? But there isn't anyone around. Falky is now heading up and out the hatch leading to the Flightdeck, and I'm pacing up right behind him. And... I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON ANYMORE!
{KILL FALKY! KILL FALKY! KILL—}
SHUT UP!
And now it stops... it stops... the voices stop. And now, I'm heading over to my Jet. Since I still need to wipe the canopy and dive its ducts....

Everything now feels like I'm doing things in third person. With hardly an ounce of me into the work: wiping that canopy and diving them ducts. And now I'm done doing that work, and for second there… I'm not sure if I did them. Wait... did I? But I had. I most certainly had. Even though I don’t remember it. Even if I just did it a second ago, or did I? And now I just exited the starboard intake. Wait... did I check them while I was in there? Wait... what if they really had been FODed, and the blades were all tore up, and I didn't notice? I... don't know. And, feel like I don't care, either.

My mind is now utterly absorbed by everything I just experienced. That part of me all absorbed, all in first person. What the hell was that? What did I hear? I HEARD IT! I DID! What was that... and where have I heard that voice...! And now, I know. Terror strikes me now. As I realize exactly when I heard that voice last. For, there was a sound to it, as if it was speaking at inhale.

{NOW YOU KNOW WHO WE ARE, AND WHAT WE'RE HERE TO DO!}

And, I hear it again. Ah, fuck me! It's them, it's—

{YES!}

Ah SHIT!

“Good Evening, Gentleman, my name is AN Navastian, and, I'll be your PC for today.” Wait... what the FUCK? The Air Crew is here? I'm launching? I can't launch in this state of mind! “As for 107, the fuel is on 20k, LOX is on 8, the wing-sweep handle is at the wing-sweep position.” Wait... did I stand at parade rest, and salute them when they arrived? “I've wiped down the canopy, I dove the ducts. I will dive them, again. Power and air are connected. If there are any questions, please let me know. Thank you. And let the launch begin.” Ah shit! I'm practically doing all this on autopilot. Completely going off of muscle memory, considering all the rigorous training I have had, while my mind isn't even completely engaged with what's going on around me. Like those times in Boot Camp, I'd start marching, while sleepmarching, after falling asleep while in the act.

{DON'T WORRY, NAVASTIAN, WE'RE RIGHT NOW IN SOVEREIGN CONTROL OVER ALL YOUR FACULTIES. SO, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE LAUNCH, WE'LL TAKE CARE OF IT.}

NO, NO! DON'T TAKE CARE OF IT! DON'T! FUCK YOU ASSHOLES, DON'T! ALL RIGHT! Wait, what's goi—

“OUCH!”

Ah shit! I almost cut my fingers off checking these blades. Wait... I'm in the intake, checking the blades already?

{YOU WANT US BACK IN CONTROL, OR, YOU WANT TO FUCK UP LIKE PFLUGER DID LAST NIGHT, AND—}

“SHUT UP, SHUT THE FUCK UP! I'll do it.” I go. And now, what am I... I'm checking the blades. Get your ASS out of your HEAD, Navastian! And... wait, that didn't sound right...?

{WE DON'T THINK YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT STATE OF MIND RIGHT NOW, TO DO THIS. JUST LET US TAKE—}

“NO!”

“What?” Goes...? Wait, who's really speaking to me now? “Navastian, what's wrong?” Asks... and it's LT Ruston. The Pilot Lieutenant Ruston, or “Rusty,” and he's with Lieutenant JG Trumbo, or “Trombone,” the Co-Pilot. (Aye! Rusty Trombone).

“Nothing, sir, nothing is wrong.” I say to my Pilot. And now, I get, wait... oh! I'm up near the cockpit, and I was helping these two with their seats. Okay, I know what I'm doing now. Now I should get down and—

“Hey, Navastian, are you forgetting something?” Asks LT Rusty. And... I don’t know! What am I forgetting?

{YOU WANT OUR—}

NO! No... I don't want any help from you guys!

“Navastian?”

“What...?” And it's LT, again.

“Seat pins.”

“Oh, oh, sorry, sir.”

“Navastian, seriously, you all right?” Asks LT Rusty.

“Yes, sir.”

{NO, YOU'RE NOT!}

And I'm not responding to them voices. As I grab Rusty's seat pin pouch, and now Trombone's. And now I secure them both at the aft end of the cockpit, near the turtleback. I get down now. And now I close up the steps, and the ladderwell. And now I gotta launch these guys. And... wait? Ah shit! Where's my—

{THEY'RE IN YOUR—}

Shut UP! I SAID! I want no help from any of YOU!

{ALL RIGHT, SO, WHERE ARE THEY?}

Where's what?
“Navastian?”
“...?” I go. And then turn around and see it's IS3.
“Navastian, where are your glow wands? It's dark out now, you're gonna need them, you know!” Says the IS3. Ah, fuck me on the surface! Where are they? Did I forget to get them from down in The Shop? Shit, fuck me, I think I did! Ah HELL! Fuck, I now gotta go dow—
{NO, YOU DON'T!}
Shut up! I told you again and again, I don't need any help from ANY OF YOU!
“Navastian, please tell me you didn't forget to check a pair out, from down in The Shop?” Goes the IS3, visor down, gap fully extended.
“I... I...?”
{THEY'RE IN YOUR TOOL POUCH!}
I SAID, I don't... wait? Where. Oh. And now I look inside my Pouch, and surely enough, they're in there.
{WE ALREADY CHECKED A PAIR OUT WHILE YOU WEREN'T AWARE.}
Oh, thanks... WAIT? WHO AM I THANKING?
“Navastian...?”
“What?” I go. Since it's the IS3 again.
“You really are a Shitbag, you know that?” Goes the IS3, through his teeth. Well, fuck you very much, too, you—
{WE TOLD YOU TO STAB HIM, DEAD, IN THE SHOP.}
Oh, God... please help me!
{WE ARE GOD!}
And... I'm not responding to that. No, just NO!

All right! I'm deep into the launch process. And, thankfully, I haven't heard a peep from them. Nor speak of them. Nor to. How am I hearing them, how? How is this possible? In my thoughts, where I only sense myself separate as an entity, there they were, there, also separate. Fully set apart alive and conscious. So, again, how is this

happening, how? Is this what leads to schizophrenia? Am I becoming schizophrenic? I think I'd rather truly deep-six myself then, than opening to the occasions of experiencing something as harrowing as that!

{WE TOLD YOU, WE ARE—}

Shut up!

....

Good! Silence again. From them, silence, and as much as all are around me. I'm at OBCs right now. There's still a bit more to go with the launch. And, thankfully, they've mostly haven't said much else. I've been launching with my wands, and, I've been doing the job, well enough. And that's what matters now. A few more steps in the launch process, and I should be home free.

{WE WOULDN'T SAY THAT!}

Shit! Anyways. A few more steps in the process. Just a few more. And I can retire to the Ratways. And then, oh, what if it continues? What if they continue speaking to me? And, for how long? There was a moment there, I genuinely felt them in me. And… I dare not say it. I dare now not. But, on the brighter note, this might also all be temporary. For, as was stated—by them—no less, all I got is 5 days! But even though I'm just getting started on the first, if survived, it will eventually end.

{YOU'D LIKE TO THINK THAT, WOULDN'T YOU?}

….

{LET'S JUST BE DONE WITH IT, MURDER HIM, AND THIS WILL ALL DEFINITELY END!}

….

{DON'T TELL US AFTER EVERYTHING HE'S PUT YOU THROUGH, YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO SEE HIM IN THAT WAY!}

Please, shut up! Please!

{COME NOW, NAVASTIAN, THINK OF IT LIKE THIS, WE ARE YOUR INNERMOST THOUGHTS.}

Please, please, just shut up!

{YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO KILL HIM!}

Shut up!

{EXPIATION... EXPIATION BY HIS BLOOD!}

And now my mind is racing with images. Death. Murder. Blood. And... please enough!

{YOU THINK YOU DON'T HAVE A KILLER IN YOU, DO YOU, NAVASTIAN?}

Okay, I'm done with the OBCs. Now IFR probe check, then canopy air.

{YOU SURE YOU CAN HANDLE ALL THAT?}

I've done this job a billion times over, I think I can manage!

{AYE! THE MINDLESS WORK HAS MADE YOU MINDLESS. WHICH LEAVES YOU AS A PRIME TARGET FOR FALLING INTO COMPLACENCY!}

….

{AND YOU KNOW HOW WELL THINGS GO FOR YOU, NAVASTIAN, ONCE YOU BECOME COMPLACENT.}

What the HELL do you motherfuckers WANT?

{BLOOD!}

….

{IS3 FALCONNI'S BLOOD, ON YOUR HANDS!}

….

{AND FOR YOU, TO BECOME ONE WITH US! WANT, WHAT WE WANT. LOVE, WHAT WE LOVE. ENJOY, ALL THE THINGS THAT WE ENJOY!}

“Okay, then what the FUCK do you ENJOY?” I say, out loud. But since with the Jets turnin' and burnin' all around, with the sound of: SHEE! Blasting out like a banshee's scream. I'm sure, no one would hear me do so. “So, what the fuck do you fuckers—”

{FOR YOU TO BECOME WHAT YOU'RE DESTINED TO BECOME!}

“And what am I destined to become?” I ask.

(A MURDERER!}

“I'm not a murderer, I'm not a—”

{YOU WILL BECOME ONE!}

“No, I won't!”

{YOU WILL, WHEN WE'RE THROUGH WITH—}

“SHUT UP! SHUT THE—” And then someone taps me on my shoulder. I look to my port side, and it's Senior. And... what does he want? Senior then points at his mouth, points at mine, then does a “what the fuck you doing” gesture with his hands, all shrugging at me.

{MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T BE YELLING AT YOURSELF, IT WOULD SEEM WEIRD FOR ANYONE AROUND TO WITNESS!}

Yeah, thanks for the heads up, I'll remember that!

And now, I'm done with the launch, and it's now time to wait for the Yellow Shirts to come by and taxi my Jet to the cats. And after that, things should be much smoother sailing. Much, much smoother. Even with the.... *voices*... it won't matter as badly, since, I won't be in such a vulnerable state as that of me in the process of launching my Jet. I won't then! And them fuckers can: blah, blah, blah. At me. All they want. Listening to them, won't in anyway lead to me causing a major catastrophe. With them, and their whole possession thing they... wait, can they really do that?

{YES, WE CAN!}

Ah... FUCK ME! Just don't mentioned them at all, Navastian! Not at ALL!

{MENTIONING US OR NOT MENTIONING US, ISN'T, WHAT'S HAVING YOU HEAR US!}

Okay, good! The Yellow Shirt is here. Time to pass it to him.

{AND THEN COLLECT ALL THE CHAINS, AND....}

Okay, good! The bird is his, now. Time for him to do his thing.

{WHILE YOU DO YOUR THING, AND ACCIDENTALLY DO EXACTLY THE SAME THING PFLUGER DID, AND FOD YOUR OWN ENGINE, WITH A LINK OF YOUR CHAIN!}

I'm not listening! Not listening. And now, I collect the chains.

{AND WE TAKE OVER, THEN, AND TOSS THE CHAINS INTO THE—}

DON'T YOU DARE! Don't you DARE!

{COME, COME NOW, NAVASTIAN! ISN'T THAT WHAT THEY CALL: SCHADENFREUDE! DON'T YOU JUST LOVE IT, WHEN THINGS GET GROTESQUELY FASCINATING TO WATCH?}

All right, I've collected up all the chains. All six of them.

{WATCHING SO MUCH CHAOS, ALL STARTED, WITH A SIMPLE LINK OF CHAIN!}

All right now, Navastian, STAY the FUCK away from your bird's intake. Stay the FUCK AWAY!

{WE WANT BLOOD!}

Just stay away, Navastian, keep as far away from the intake, with these motherflippin' chains.

{WE WANT BLOOD, AND WE WILL GET IT, ONE WAY, OR ANOTHER!}

All right, my 107 is up at the cats.

{YOU REALLY THINK YOU'LL BE HOME FREE ONCE THIS PROCESS IS OVER WITH?}

And, wow! Look at that stream of fire, shooting out from its afterburners. Truly gotta say, no sight like it, watching a F-14 Tomcat take off, while at night ti—

{GUESS WE'LL JUST HAVE TO GO BACK TO IS3 FALCONNI AGAIN, FOR BLOOD!}

And, there she goes! My Jet has taken off, and—

{TIME TO FIND IS3 FALCONNI, AND MURDER HIM!}

All right, now I just spend the rest of the night, staying the FUCK AWAY from our IS3, and....

{INSTEAD, WE'LL MURDER ANYONE YOU EVEN GET NEAR, FOR ALMOST ALL OF THEM DESERVE TO PAY!"}

And now... I'M PISSED!

{"GET PISSED ALL YOU WANT, WE'LL JUST USE THE FIRE TO BURN THE FIRST PERSON THAT STEPS UP TO YOU.}

What do you fuckers WANT?

{WE TOLD YOU WHAT WE WANT.}
But... WHY?
{SOMEONE NEEDS TO PAY FOR HOW YOU BEEN TREATED. SOMEONE NEEDS TO PAY, FOR THOSE SINS!}
NO, I don't want anyone to pay for anything.
{THEY NEED TO PAY, AND THEY NEED TO PAY WITH THEIR LIVES.}
What the fuck is this? No, if anything, I DECIDE! I decide! Not YOU!
{THERE ARE CONSEQUENCES FOR ANYONE'S ACTIONS, AND NOW, THEY MUST PAY, AND NOT JUST BECAUSE OF HOW THEY TREATED YOU!}
Shut UP! NO! I don't want them to PAY!
{THEY BETRAYED YOUR TRUST, THEY BETRAYED YOUR HONOR! AND THE PAYMENT FOR THAT IS WITH BLOOD!}
NO! Just no!
{THEY MUST PAY, THEY MUST PAY, DEARLY!}
No, they DON'T! I forgive them.
{WHAT YOU SAY?}
I said: I FORGIVE 'EM! They don't need to pay for anything.
{BLOOD, WE WANT BLOOD! BLOOD! BLOOD! BLOO—}
ENOUGH! Enough with this! I don't care how badly I've been treated by Falky, Kats, or even Quimby. Or even Rudy. They might deserve somebody putting them in their place. But paying with their blood is—not what I see as being just! It's not!
{WE SAID: WE WANT BLOOD! AND... ANY BLOOD WILL DO!}
No! I'm not a killer. I am NOT! I am—
{BUT ONCE THE WAR STARTS, YOU WILL BE!}
Shut up! Please, just shut up, already!
{ALL THAT BLOOD WILL BE INDIRECTLY LINKED TO YOU! FACE IT, THERE'S NO ESCAPING THAT, NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY TO

SAY YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY INVOLVEMENT IN IT. YOU STILL DID! YOU CHOSE TO JOIN, AND WHAT DO SOLDIERS DO?}
I'm not a soldier, I'm a Sailor.
{IT'S THE SAME!}
No, it's NOT!
{YES, IT IS! YOU KNOW IT IS! YOU ALREADY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IN YOUR OWN THOUGHTS, WHILE YOU AND DONNELLY WERE WATCHING THAT SHINING MOVIE.}
Oh, what do I do, they're—
{WE'RE SMARTER THAN YOU, EVERYTHING YOU KNOW, WE ALSO KNOW. WE'VE BEEN WATCHING, EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER BEEN THROUGH, IN YOUR ENTIRE LIFE, THERE'S NOTHING WE DON'T KNOW, THAT YOU DO!}
And now, I shut my eyes. For I don't want to see nothing no more. And neither do I want to hear nothing. I'm in the Ratways now. All the Jets have taken off. And, I don't know how I'm gonna deal with these voices in my head. And the messed-up part is, it feels to be like part of—
{ME, IS SPEAKING—}
WHISKEY TANGO FOXTROT! I now baffle.

And now I realize, them Old Ones, are really just a part of me. They are. They are my deepest and innermost psyche. They are....
{FORTY-SIX AND TWO!}
Oh SHIT! I gotta watch myself, watch my actions all night. Since my actions, are—
{ALSO, OUR ACTIONS.}
AH, FUCK ME! I'm really just—
{SPEAKING TO MYSELF!}
NOO!

Please let this be over soon. Please! And without me hurting anyone, without them taking over completely, and doing what they—
{WANT ME TO DO! OR REALLY, WHAT YOU REALLY WANT TO DO—}
Oh God... for myself!
{DIDN'T WE ALREADY TELL YOU!}
Shut up! You are not that, you…—
{ARE GOD!}

One thing, though… can you please leave off the caps lock?
{….}
Can you?
{….}
Can you just—
{NO.}
Grr!

TRIAL BY FAGGOTRY

I don't want to talk about last night….

Not a word!
Anyways….
After the Jets came back, and I chained mine up to Padeyes, then did some brakeriding while the Yellow Shirts played musical chairs with our Jets (the fuckers spent two hours trying to figure where to put me, TWO HOURS!). Then, after I did my Daily, I just spent the rest of the night hand wiping, nonstop, without even a microsecond of transaction doing anything else.

Ha!
Will note, though: there was a moment there, Senior came around trying to yell at me. He tried to surprise me, going: "AH HA!" As he came around from the starboard side of my Jet, and seeing my feet on the other side, he jumped to the port side,

and thought he could surprise me: catching me not doing what I should be doing. Not wiping. Therefore, he could give me EMI, or Liberty Risk, or WHATEVER! But... nope! That wasn't going to be the case. He went: “AH HA, I caugh—... oh wait?” And then, the asshole, the fucking asshole, had the nerve to get disappointed, catching me doing, EXACTLY what’s EXPECTED of me to DO! Since, he really expected me not to be doing it. Really, him hoping I wasn’t. Therefore, he could play “guess what I had for my second trip to the Chief Mess Decks, earlier tonight?” With him yelling and spitting up on my face. But, I could still tell he had had fish and chips, and clam chowder. Considering how fresh the smells were, still, from his lips. So, if anything, last night experience did for me, was to terrify me badly enough, that I spent the whole time doing exactly what I should be doing. Leading for no fault to be placed anywhere on my impeccable efforts.

“Arg!” Goes Senior, staring at all of us.
And mostly me and Pflugerville, and definitely not one bit of his attention being given to Donnelly. We all in The Shop now. It's 1830 hours (not according to the clock, that says is 02 in the morning), and it's the beginning of shift change. And we're all here to show our faces, then get delegated to our Jets. To do whatever we will be doing tonight. All the usual! There's to be Night Ops again, later. But not with my Strange Magic, since it's in the Hangar Bay, getting worked on by the AE Wirechasers. I caught a gripe on my Jet last night. One of the lights stopped working. The SAC light (Starboard anti-collision light), on the starboard vertical stabilizer. And I filed it in. Although, don't know why the AEs haven't been able to fix it since then. I mean, they should have done it by now. But, that's the thing about wirechasing, sometimes you have to go all throughout the bird, opening it up all over, looking for the source of the problem. Looking for the bad connection. And the AEs have been going all throughout my bird, and still haven't been able to trace it. But, GOOD! I'm glad they haven't. That just means I'm to spend possibly the rest of the night down in the Hangar Bay, not having to go through any of the shit I went through last night. Motherflippin' telling me to throw one of the chains into the…?

Fuck, I don’t want to think about it! I don’t! I simply do not! I don’t even know where to begin. Them… fuckers! Demanding me to cause a major catastrophe, on purpose. What the fuck was that shit about last night? Fuckers... they said: forty-six and two! Since they be knowing how much I used to listen to Tool, in High School, and I know exactly what they meant by it. And the thing about it is, I know, so do they.
“Arg!” Goes Senior again.
And he's pissed for some reason, or another. Of course, it sounds like him saying: “arg” like some shiver me timbers pirate. Since everything tends to take on a pirate-y nature, after spending this long living on a Boat. But whatever the reason is, me and Pflugerville are somehow involved, since he can't stop staring at the both of us. But, it hasn't been bothering me much, since, I've found other things, to preoccupy all my concerns with.
“Arg!” He goes again.
Whiskey Tango Foxtrot?
“Everybody, hang tight! I'll be back.”
And now Senior leaves. Don't know why. Don't care. The less I see of him, the better. Even if it's just a momentary thing without fat him. But, then, as I look around the room, I realize something: ah great! Nothing but E-4 and belows in here. And we all know what that means.
“Hey, Donnelly.” Goes the IS3. Now stepping out and sitting in Senior's chair. The one he was sitting in just before he left. And, looks like the IS3 is to make himself HiMFIC now, now that he's next in line of the chain of command in The Shop.
“What?” Goes Donnelly. Unsure of what to make of the IS3's intentions. Donnelly seeming to have been completely absorbed with other matters. But now this, and Donnelly doesn't seem to favor being called out. For, it doesn't seem like the IS3 is doing it to be anything of a squared away LPO would be, to square things away, with anything on an official basis.
“You know, I've been wondering.” Goes the IS3, as he looks up and to one side.
“About what?” And, ah shit! I think I know where this is going. As I get the sense from Donnelly, how much he isn't willing to see, himself, where this might be headed.

“I want to... take up on that challenge, you made before.” Says the IS3. And then, I see everyone’s' eyes bulge out for a second.
“What challenge?” Goes Donnelly, a little confused.
“You know, the one you made the night Navastian almost got rolled up by Roach Burger.” And now, all our eyes bulge out again. As we truly come to terms with what's happening. For: it's HAPPENING! Donnelly is being challenged. My Donnelly is being challenge, right in the here and now! And, also gotta note, how much I love (speaking ironically) how he says: “almost got rolled up by” referring to me getting rolled up by the DFOB in The Shop (who's now smiling at me, even when it ain’t no smiling matter, since he was still the one that got his ass tossed that night), but the IS3 didn't say simply: “the night Navastian rolled Roach Burger up.” Since them words would make me look a little better, and the words he did use—do not!
“What... the...?” Goes Donnelly.
“Yes, that!” Answers IS3. And, let me reiterate this again! This is now happening! It's HAPPENING! Ah shit! Since Donnelly has been challenging everyone, really, himself. Much of the leadership amongst The Shop's E-4 and belows. We can see how the IS3 needs to be making some examples, now, so us Airman can be put in place. And the tension between Airman and the Thirds can be resolved. That. And. The IS3 really now wants to STICK it to Donnelly. And stick Donnelly, in his place!
“You want to wrestle me?” Goes Donnelly. And Donnelly isn't seeming any longer willing to favor that, like he was that night. That night, Donnelly's intentions being to overrule the IS3's hierarchy, and the level of comfort the little shit had established for himself in The Shop, believing there could never possibly be anyone ballsy enough to ever challenge someone at his stature, at his own game. And, that is what had thrown the IS3 off. But now, the IS3 seems confident. And now that there's: me, the IS3, AD3 Rudy, AM3 Kats, ADAN Quimby, AEAN Barbarossa and AEAN Navarro, ATAN Pflugerville and AN Derbytown, AN Royster, and AN Rauschenburger, and AN Donnelly, finally. All of Night Check in here. It is now time for the IS3 to win back some of the stripes he had lost that night, by accepting and defeating Donnelly with his own challenge.

“Yeah, why not? I'd welcome a friendly challenge. Now.” Smiles out the IS3, very condescendingly. For, of course he would accept it now, since, he's sure of himself gaining victory, when it comes to wrestling.
“Wait... now?” Baffles Donnelly.
“Yes, now. What's wrong?”
“Dude, Senior could be due back at any—”
“Don't be afraid.”
“WHAT?” Blasts Donnelly. And, oh SHIT! It's serious now.
“I know why Senior left, and he could be gone for some time. We can do this.” Explains the IS3, with another condescending smile. And, gotta note, how I see what the IS3 did there. Saying: “don't be afraid,” instead of: “don't be worried,” or something, since the IS3 is really trying to get under Donnelly's skin. Him saying “worried” or even “concerned” would have sounded a lot more correct to say. But since he really wants to offend Donnelly right now, he's choosing exactly the right words to use, which he knows, and also, I know, personally, Donnelly wouldn't stand to hear.
“So, don't be—”
“I'm not afraid!” Goes Donnelly. As his physicality starts to bulge a little from the promise being made in The Shop.
“Okay, then... you up for it?” Goes the IS3. And, we can all see now how much Donnelly really is. Since, he doesn't take likely to challenges that start off calling him chicken shit. And, me, personally, I'm dreading to see this now. Absolutely DREADING! Donnelly has got some true and tested ass kicking capabilities. But wrestling isn't exactly my boy, Donnelly's, expertise. His forte. But with Falconni, it totally is!

And Donnelly springs forward at full capacity, as I stop willing myself to watch any of this. For I'm already feeling embarrassed with Donnelly's definite defeat. I'm not seeing this, but, I definitely am hearing this. Since, how can I not? Everyone around me is now hooting and hollering, and mostly the crowd Falconni would hang with

(Kats and Quimby, and even Roachy included). Fuck, I'm unable to not hear, especially those three. Hear them say:
“Yeah, BOY! Get in that ass, Falky! All up IN THERE!”
And:
“Ha, ha! Damn, Donnelly, you don't seem so talkative anymore, on your back like that.”
And then this:
“I guess that's because it reminds him how his boyfriend loves to do it to him. Ha, ha!”
And now, I open my eyes. And, aye! Of course, the little shit is winning. Although, I'm surprised to see how well Donnelly is still trying to manage (trying), to get out of Falky's hold.
“All right, that's it, Falky wins!” Goes Rudy. And now, Falky let's go of Donnelly. And, DAMN, I can just feel my disappointment with Donnelly, and worse yet, Donnelly's disappointment with himself. This loss has TRULY NOW set records STRAIGHT! Of who stands where, when it comes to this.
“Okay, you won.” Acknowledges Donnelly. Looking very sore. Very sore! Even though Donnelly, himself, admitted that this would happen. At the time, Donnelly didn't have as much pride invested in himself in his abilities at being a wrestler. And Donnelly, at the time, had struck a low blow to the IS3's windbasket, knocking the wind out of him. As the IS3, now, has done the same. But flipping the tables on him by trying to humiliate Donnelly with the same measures Donnelly used to humiliate the IS3. And since the only reason the IS3 challenged him now, is to humiliate him, and in front of so many of us, it has really put Donnelly in his place, and has really laid it in there.
“Wow, Donnelly, I feel like I can take you now.” Says Roachy. Then gets up, and here's Glass Joe, again. Dancing around Donnelly, and Donnelly REALLY NOW, isn't favoring ANY OF THIS!
“Get away from me, you bug.” Donnelly then pushes him aside. But the Roach then tries to get truly physical, as he really exerts himself, and tries to grab Donnelly. But then, Donnelly EXPLODES! And shoves Roach Burger, really hard, as Roachy goes

flying. Then slamming into a bulkhead. Like a bug would slamming into a windshield, while the car is being driven down any all freeway, in the country.
“Hey!” Blows up the IS3. And now, the IS3 is stirred pissed! And pissed stirred! For, Donnelly had really taken it way too far, getting that physical with the Roach. And, we all felt that he did (and even a little, me).
“Hey, how about you—”
“No, how about you!” Interrupts Donnelly. And then eyes all viciously at our IS3. Seeming very discontented.
“Huh?” Goes the IS3.
And now Donnelly explains:
“Now, how about I challenge you?”
“What's that?”
“I challenge you!” Goes Donnelly. And then points out Falky, very menacingly. And Falky's eyes now twitch.
“What, you lost!” Establishes Falky, also now pointing back.
“No, not that!” Says Donnelly. And now, I'm a little confused where my boy, Donnelly, is going with this.
“Now, I don't think we got time for a two out of three. With Senior due back at—”
“No, not with wrestling! I challenge you to a boxing match.” And, oh, shit! Here we go. Now things are on, and on, on a completely different level. On a completely different playing field. And, I feel excited and hopeful to see Donnelly take it to this place.
“He, he!” Chuckles the IS3. Way too confidently for my, nor Donnelly's, comfort.
“What? You're the wrestler here, I'm the boxer. We did it your way. Now, let's do it mine.” Elaborates Donnelly. Then points himself out when saying “boxer” and “mine.”
“Not interested.” States the IS3, with eyes slit. And that throws me and Donnelly off.
“What?” Goes Donnelly, hyperventilating a little. Also, seeming very irritatingly discouraged to be rejected for such a challenge.
“I said, not interested.”
“What, you afraid now?” Baits Donnelly. But the IS3 now seems beyond all this.

“No, I just ain't gonna go bare knuckles, with you.” Elaborates the IS3. And the little shit has got a reasonable take as to why he wouldn't, I see now.
“….” Goes Donnelly. Even more discouraged and seemingly winded by everything.
“I mean, with wrestling, there might be injuries, but it’s nothing like it is with boxing.”
“What, you afraid of that, or what?” Tries to bait the IS3 again, Donnelly does. But it didn't connect the first time Donnelly made this argument, so I don't see a second time, now, of being able to do the same.
“No! I'm just not stupid. Boxing is the type of full on contact sport that can leave a person with brain damage or worse. In wrestling, I’d have to be totally gunnin’ for you to hurt you. Boxing is like that all the time. And that’s why it’s practiced with boxing gloves. So, unless you got boxing gloves, maybe—”
“Okay, I got boxing gloves.” Says Donnelly.
“Oh, you do?” Goes IS3. And now his eyes twitch. And: good! That just means Donnelly has found his leverage over the pipsqueak, since this would put Falconni between a rock and a hard place, dealing with Donnelly in an actual boxing match. Which I doubt, absolutely, Falky would be able to stand longer than a minute going toe to toe with him.
“You have boxing gloves?” Fears the IS3. And tries to hide that he fears to hear this.
“Yeah, I do.”
“You got a pair for me?” But now, Donnelly's eyes twitch, and not very reassuringly. And, fuck! That there is the only fault with this equation.
“….” Now goes Donnelly, knowing simply him having a pair isn't going to work. And now the IS3 seems overly confident again.
“What, you want me to wear one, while you wear the other one? Ha ha!” Goes the IS3.

But then I see something in Donnelly's eyes, which I've seen before. Whenever he's been very whimsical minded. And a bit childish and silly in nature. Like when he'd say: “If they keep knocking, don't let them in!” Singing it, practically, like some jingle. Oh, now I don't like the look of this. Donnelly is going to embarrass himself, and his shortcomings aren't going to allow him to see that happen, until it's too late.

“What, why not?” Smiles out Donnelly. And, WTF, Donnelly? The IS3 meant that as a joke. Don't take the idea seriously! Fuck! And now I bury my face within the palms of my hands. For now, everyone sees an aspect to Donnelly's character, which I've witness before, and now everyone else has had the chance to do so, also. And, not really more of a characteristic, but a character flaw, of just how simpleminded and foolish he can be sometimes.
“I don't know... that's kinda stupid.” Goes the IS3. And now, Donnelly's stops smiling, realizing himself how foolish that idea would be.
“He, he! Aye, you're right, IS3, that would be kinda stupid.” Laughs out AM3 Kats. And... shit! I, myself, can't argue against how stupid, that does sound. I mean, what are Donnelly and the IS3 to do, then, wear one glove, and tie the other hand behind their back? That would just be stupid!
“What, you calling me stupid?” Asks Donnelly. But then I notice something, Donnelly has sorta been eyeing at me while saying and asking these things.
“….” Goes much of The Shop. Also, a couple of snickers blow up, silently, and stay silent, as to not get too much attention.
“You callin’ me stupid, or what?” Asks Donnelly again. Donnelly seems about ready to flip his lid.
“I don't know, if the boxing glove fits?” Asks the IS3, taking it there. And a couple chuckle to that well-versed pun. And now, tensions in the room are fixed. There had been a civil matchup between Donnelly and the IS3, which the IS3 won. And, considering how sore Donnelly has gotten over this, it now seems like Donnelly wants to do anything—ANYTHING—to regain some of his stripes he has lost. Him being a detrimental force amongst us first termers.
“ARE YOU... calling me... STUPID?” Blasts Donnelly. And Donnelly now seems to want to rush the little pipsqueak, and really let him have it this time.
“I DON'T KNOW, ARE YOU?” Goes the IS3, calling out his challenge. But then, just before everything blows up, into all out havoc, Senior steps in through the door. And now all emotions are buried again, within each other's thoughts and expectations.

I'm in the Hangar Bay now. Now wiping. And, all I got to do is hand wipe for the rest of the night. It's O' dark something hundred hours. I've already done with half my shift tonight. Done my Daily and everything, and there's to at least be another six hours left of this. Of only this, and periodically I have been seeing Senior coming down from The Shop. To pass me, Roach Burger, Pflugerville and Donnelly, by, as we continue the wipe down job, within our shift. I've seen him coming down, two times, already. As he tried both times to sneak up on me and see if he could catch me not doing what I should be doing. And, I have managed to greatly discourage him, by spending the entire night doing, everything he'd officially would be expecting of me to do, and unofficially nothing he is truly hoping and wishing to catch me with. By catching me doing nothing but skating off.

Ugh...!
Officially/unofficially…?
I'm starting to grow hostile and haggard of explaining all this crap, again and again. It has now become a very tedious affair, playing these perpetual cat and mouse games with him. And really, anybody! But I have no other alternative, but to play these games. Since the fat cat is growing restless playing with the same ball of yarn, but doesn't want to give up on it, just yet. Him stuck in a counterproductive cycle of doing this over and over, same as I am, as we both are, as everyone is, by not allowing ourselves to act out, how we truly will for our actions and reactions, to do so. This is now becoming seriously tedious! And sometimes I feel like I just can't take it anymore. But, I have to! I have to! I cannot allow for this to play out how I'd impulsively and erratically would will for it to do so. Right now, I gotta keep wiping. And wiping. And wiping! And hold it off until we reach Thailand. So, then I can do, what I am truly willing to do. Oh God, how much more of this? I groan, in my thoughts, while I strain with my eyes to keep them on my scrub work, indefinitely. Since at any minute, I might not have my eyes on my work, and Senior will then pop up, and catch me in that act.

Fuck me…!

Oh, I can't do this! It's so stressful and strenuous! And there's still another possible six hours left of this! But already, I can't tell what I'm looking at anymore, while looking at my Jet. I keep scrubbing up and down the Jet. And since there's now AEs all over, opening up doors, to still try and find that bad connection, plus, now also Airframers, down here, as well, since they've come down with other work they can be doing while my Jet is down here. Overall, since there's now both Wirechasers and Airframers around, all over, touching my bird with their greasy tarnished and stained up hands, every time I wipe a certain portion of the Jet and come back to it an hour or half hour later, that area is once again dirty! So... damn! Fuck this job. I quit! So, bust me on the surface!

Ah, fuck this!
And another hour, I think, has now passed.

And now, another. And I'm still scrubbing this fucker, all over. This is so fucking BORING! And tedious! And redundant as HELL! The Jet is motherflippin' as clean as it motherflippin' can get. But, I gotta keep wiping. And the job has become so mindless, I really can't tell what difference I'm making. Since my thoughts are elsewhere. And as I look at a certain spot I've wiped, I wonder then, if I've really been wiping it, at all? Since, I can't tell the difference anymore, it being wiped down, or not.

…!

Oh, fuck me! Fuck this! I literally can't tell anymore, this mindless work has truly now rendered me mindless. And senseless. And I can't tell the motherf-ing difference. No more!
“Navastian, you don't have to continue wiping the entire time we're down here.” Tells me Donnelly.

“Huh?” I go. As my mind is shot back into reality, from the zone my mind was in, that was all being fifth dimensionally attuned with the hand job I had totally been focused on finishing.
“Navastian, I've watched you wipe down the same area for like ten minutes, go away, come back, and start wiping the exact same spot as if you didn't. You're working too hard. And, I think you can take a break with the—”
“No, I can't!” I interrupt Donnelly with. Donnelly now sighs.
“What are you concerned about, Senior? I just saw him coming up from the Mess Decks for the Khakis. So, he's not going to be showing his face for at least another half an hour or so. Take a break.”
“I don't care.” I interject.
“Sigh” goes Donnelly again. And now I feel like speaking freely.
“Listen, right now, Senior is really truly on my ass, trying to get something out of me.”
“What's that?” Goes Donnelly. And now my eyes flare up, realizing how I haven't been feeding Donnelly with that intel.
“Why, why is Senior on your ass, as how you're saying he is?” Asks Donnelly.
“He just is!” I let out, not wanting to go further.
“Listen, I could be thinking the same way, after what me and him had, a couple of nights ago.”
“Aye, but it's different with you and him, he's still scared of you.” I mention. Since I've noticed how true that is from Senior's reactions whenever Donnelly is around.
“Yeah, but, how long you think that's gonna take, before Senior, and his confrontational ways, come around again?” And Donnelly has me there, since, I know, how true that is, also. And how I really don't see Donnelly and Senior ignoring each other for long. All I see is tension building and building, and eventually blowing up, in all of our faces.
“I think you got bigger shrimp to fry, right now. Or littler, I should say.” I say to Donnelly. And Donnelly now acknowledges that, with a nod. Since we all can see where Donnelly and the shrimp are taking this.
“Fuck Falky! Fuck that guy!” Says Donnelly to me, then walks away.

I'm starting to feel sorry for Donnelly, I am. He didn't deserve the defeat he experienced today. Not today, and not like that! And not by the little JOY-see shrimp, wanting to put Donnelly in his place, and keep him there, being a loser like the rest of us. Donnelly was and still is our pride and joy, for all us new age PCs (tired of referring to us how the IS3 refers to us). And today's defeat was a major blow to everybody. I saw even Rudy giving up his stripes once he saw the IS3 take out Donnelly, since it's something Rudy would never be capable of, considering how chicken shit he is. Always pussyfooting around to keep himself in check, as a formidable Third. But obviously ain't got shit on the JOY-see jackass. Donnelly truly had established himself in the last few weeks as an imposing presence, scaring everyone with how far he'd be willing to cut it loose, to scare everybody into respecting his capabilities, and he really had an edge on everyone before the IS3 challenged him, and took back that entitlement.

{FUCK DONNELLY!}

Wait... huh?
{FUCK HIM!}

Oh, NO! It's them. They're BACK!
{FUCK HIM, FUCK HIM!}
What do you mean: fuck him?
{WE MEAN: HAVE INTERCOURSE WITH HIM!}
Wait... you mean?
{YES.}

And now, I feel like bursting into laughter having heard this. For, I mean, what is this? You kidding me? You wanted me to kill Falky last night. Now, you want me to do this?

{….}
I don't understand your intentions.
{YOU LOVE HIM.}
Okay, what does that mean?
{….}
What does that mean... yeah, I love the guy, as a brother.
{NO, THERE'S WAY MORE TO IT THAN JUST THAT. THERE'S MORE THAN WHAT MEETS THE EYE.}
And to that, I feel a responding "nay." And their intentions are now becoming laughingly intolerable. With first, what they had asked of me last night for me to do. More than ask. Completely badger. And badger me to the core.
{THIS ISN'T ABOUT OUR INTENTIONS.}
Then whose are they about?
{YOU KNOW WHOSE.}
And then I come to grips with, what my answers are, as I cringed, inside, seeing how these deeplurkers would engage to seek a resolution. Ah, Barnacle-crud buckets! I haven't heard a peep from them since earlier last night, and I've been dreading this moment. Absolutely dreading.
{FUCK DONNELLY!}
For the worse part is, as I mentioned before, how they really are... actually… fuck that! I take it back. I don't believe that anymore. I don't! Tis now that I totally don't, now that I see the direction, they trying to QM (Quartermaster) my whims and ways into. Yet, in the end, "nay," on all these affronts and accounts. For, I see now, all that matters is they need to go!
{WHEN DONNELLY COMES AROUND AGAIN, KISS HIM! KISS HIM!}
Why, hello there, oldies! Sorry, but, I don't know what you're trying to steer me into. But, I don't see how this is any more and less a trial from the wacky one last night!
{DON'T YOU WANT TO BE HELD BY HIS LOVING ARMS?}
Ugh, think I, as I now rolls my eyes with that notion while watching them force this onto me.

{DON'T YOU WANT TO BE—}
No!
{DON'T YOU WANT TO BE—}
No, no, I said, no!
And with that they go quiet. And I go quiet, as well. As I do nothing but shake my head all port the starboard. And it feels refreshing seeing them have no sway with me on this. But, then something else steps forth. Something deep. Something not just a something but a someone from down there. And I sees this person. And grows enraptured and engaged and mad.
{YOU WANT TO KNOW SOMETHING?}
…?
{YOU WANT TO KNOW SOMETHING?}
No, I states, smiles, and goes back to my handywork.

A minute moment passes, but now, I feels the attempts being made, again. Since they're not off the table yet, and still can be probed and pronged and purchased for. Fine! Fine, fine, I'll play your games, what is It? Scrub, and scrub and such minute details being placed with TLC, although, it doesn't matter, this felt more of a timesink worth my time, and compared to my conscious mind and its investments into worlds of things they don't. And, the next moment, they lays it out to me to lets me have it.
{NAVASTIAN, WE'RE NOT HERE TO BADGER YOU, JUST BARGAIN WITH YOU. WE'RE HERE TO GIVE YOU ENLIGHTENMENT!}
Ha! That's rich. Here to enlighten. And I'm not sure what it is inside me to enlighten.
{YOU KNOW DAMN WELL WHAT IT IS, AND, HERE STANDING, IN YOUR MIND, IS THE ONE TO ASK AND GET IT OUT OF YOU.}
I now view this vividly imagined female. Grows mad. Grows a stiff upper lip. I then looks away. You got nothing on me! Nothing!
{THEN WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO EVADE EYE CONTACT WITH THIS PERSON, WE THOUGHT YOU LIKED ROXANNA? WERE WILLING TO

PAY 2-GRAND IN CASH AND POSSIBLY MUCH, MUCH MORE. AND FOR HER.}

I didn't break making eye contact. I just… I just… (did just that! Arg!). And, as I eyes Roxanna in my imagination, I then cower away making eye contact again. Roxanna speaks now:

Why didn't you want me?

What was wrong with me?

What was right about Donnelly and wrong about me?

No, no, no… I don't want to think about this now.

{NAVASTIAN? DON'T YOU WANT TO LEARN THINGS ABOUT YOURSELF, YOU WEREN'T AWARE OF UNTIL THE POSSIBLE NOW?}

What… what's that… that I'm possibly gay…?

{YES!}

Wait… oh shit! And now, hearing me say this of myself, really starts to manifest peculiar traits I was dreading I would. This was now one of those, "you said it yourself now, so don't deny it." And this time, the Old Ones were no longer holding back. They asked. I told.

{HE'S MORE OF A MAN THAN YOU, NAVASTIAN, MUCH, MUCH MORE! AND, IT'S SOMETHING YOU'D WISH TO SEE WITHIN YOU. BUT, YOU DON'T. AND, BECAUSE OF THAT, YOU'VE BECOME VERY "RECEPTIVE" BEING AROUND HIM.}

No, no, no, you got this wrong! You got this all wrong.

{WE DON'T HAVE IT WRONG, YOU DO, AND ALL WE HAVE IS THE HARDLINING TRUTH!}

I get scared then. Very scared. Very, very. As my handwippin' picks up so much momentum, I can feel hurricanes forming at the far backside across my rectum.

{NAVASTIAN, IF YOU KEEP RUBBING INTO IT, YOU MIGHT START RUBBIN' HOLES INTO IT. AND, THEN, WHAT CAN YOU DO? HEHE!}

And, that was it, that was it, I understood damn well what that well-timed joke was bringing up. I got, nothing against those people. I tries—tries—but to no avail.

{NO, YOU HAVE A LOT OF THINGS AGAINST THEM, THAT'S WHY YOU WANT TO BELIEVE YOU'RE NOT ONE, YOURSELF! YOU'RE ANGRY NOW, AREN'T YOU? JUST SAY IT! SAY IT! SAY—}

Say what? Say what, exactly?

And then they tell me:

{FORTY-SIX AND TWO! FORTY-SIX AND TWO!}

I now tries to GAF this: Yeah, I used to listen to Tool, a lot. And, I do love that song. But I'm… I'm…?

{IT'S NOT ABOUT THAT SONG.}

Then what is it about?

{IT'S ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS!}

….

{WHAT'S WRONG, NAVASTIAN, YOU FORGOT WHAT THAT MEANT TO YOU?}

No, I know. But, to transcend, no, not like that!

{LIKE WHAT?}

Like a… enough! And now, I've truly had it! As I stop with my hand wiping, and... I need to go use the can. And now, I'm heading there. Storming there. As I stride off from the work I was invested in. Head to the nearest hatch leading down into The Ship. Through the aft galley. Through the Chief Mess Decks. And, fuck it! I'm using one of the Boat Chucks' heads. And now I'm at the crapper. And, I need to take a load off.

{YOU'RE AFRAID.}

….

{YOU'RE AFRAID.}

They say, and say, and say again. But I'm not having that. I'm not. There are bowel movements that need to be made. And, made nowhere near the perverted gaze of these Old Ones' eyes.

{YOU'RE AFRAID... TO TRANSCEND.}
GRR!
{YOU'RE AFRAID... TO EVOLVE.}
….
{YOU NEED DONNELLY TO TRANSCEND. TO EVOLVE.}
….
{AND, ONCE YOU JOIN WITH HIM, YOU CAN, AND YOU CAN FINALLY BE A MAN, THROUGH HIM. AND—}
"Shut up. Please, shut up! Shut the—FUCK UP!" I say instead of think.
{YOU LOVE HIM.}
"SHUT UP!" I say out loud, again.
(YOU LOVE HIM, MORE THAN YOU WOULD EVER KNOW!}
No, I DON'T! Not like that.
{WE WOULDN'T LIE TO YOU!}
No, I think you would lie to me! Anyways, I'm doing something now. Being here in the can. In the head. Should have made that obvious. So, in my mind or not, mind if I get some privacy?
{….}
….
{…!}
Sigh.
{YOU JUST THOUGHT ABOUT BLOWING HIM, DIDN'T YOU?}
Get out of my mind, Get OUT! OUT!
{YOU'D FANCY, BLOWING HIM, WOULDN'T YOU?}
No, I—DON'T! No, I—WON'T!
{THEN WHY DID IT CROSS YOUR—?}
BECAUSE IT SLIPPED.

I'm hyperventilating now.

{NAVASTIAN, IT'S VERY SIMPLE WHAT THIS IS ABOUT. DONNELLY IS A MISSING HALF OF YOU. HE'S MORE THAN A MAN YOU ARE. AND, YOU SEE HIM AS A SIDE OF YOU, YOU WOULD DESIRE. YOU'D WANT. AND WANT TO PICK AND POSSESS. AND MAKE YOUR OWN. AND THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN DO THAT, IS BY JOINING HIM.}

….

{HE'S MORE OF A DEFIANT ONE THAN YOU'LL EVER BE! AND YOU ADMIRE HIM FOR IT. SINCE, HE COULD BE THAT CHAINHAULER MAN, YOU COULD NEVER BE.}

That may be, but, I don't care.

{NO, YOU DO CARE! YOU REALLY DO! AND SEEING HIM LIKE THAT AND YOURSELF NOT, MAKES YOU FEEL—ROBBED!}

Oh, just my luck, my Cthulhu monsters are a bunch of Sigmund Freuds. Nothing but faces full of tentacles and monoculars and scores and scores of cocaine burn use.

{YOU'RE BOWELS AREN'T MOVING OR ANYTHING. SO WHY ARE YOU JUST SITTING THERE? COME OUT! JUST COME OUT!}

…?

…!

{YOU'RE NOT HERE TO DO SOME BASIC TRAINING "PUMP AND DUMP." YOU'RE HERE TO HIDE. TO RESCORE AND RECONCILE WITHIN YOURSELF. BUT, MOST IMPORTANTLY, TO SKATE OFF!}

….

{ONE LAST TIME, NAVASTIAN! COPULATE WITH DONNELLY. AND, HIS STRENGTHS WILL BECOME YOUR STRENGTHS, AND THEN YOU CAN GO BACK TO BEING THE CHAINHAULER, AS YOU SO DESIRE!}

….

{SAY NOTHING AT ALL, DON'T MATTER, WE CAN STILL READ YOUR THOUGHTS. YOU SAY YOU'RE NOT GAY. BUT, PART OF YOUR MIND IS STILL IMAGINING GIVING HIM FELLATIO.}
STOP!
{WHY ARE YOU DOING THAT?}
BECAUSE… it's like pink elephants. Pink elephants! Pink!

You tell that person not to think of pink elephants and… guess what happens then?
{THERE'S A FLAW TO THAT LOGIC.}
WHAT FLAW?
{WE NEVER TOLD YOU TO THINK ABOUT GIVING DONNELLY HEAD, YOU DID THAT BY YOUR OWN VOLITION!}
And, THAT WAS IT! I HAD IT!

"NO, I don't want to fuck Donnelly, I don't want to suck his dick, I'm not a FAG! I AM NOT A—"
"Hey, who's in THERE?"
And now I'm hearing somebody else. And it sounds to be someone in the head with me. And... ah shit! I was really screaming that last bit, out loud. And, shit! Someone HEARD ME! FUCK!
"I said, who's in THERE! Tell me, NOW!" And, just my luck! Sounds like Khaki hollerin', to me. And as I look down, I see his shoes, and the cuffs to his khaki pants. FUCK ME!
"Fine, I'll wait here, you're not going anywhere, and not through me." Says he. And, I have an idea now. To the left of me, there's like four more stalls, and near the last one to my left, is the entrance to the head. So now, as I get up, I zip my pants. And, I doesn't flush (since I didn't do nada). And then I squat down, really low, and without a sound, I roll.
Knock! Knock!

Goes the Khaki outside my stall, knocking on the stall door I'm in. And now I roll and roll into the next stall to my left.
Knock! Knock!
{WHO GOES THERE?}
Jokes them voices.
Great, them motherfuckers got a sense of humor. It seems like. But then I roll again, and again. And I continue until I'm in the last stall to the left.
Knock! Knock!
“You're just making this HARDER for yourself, Shipmate. I'm not leaving, until you come out!” Says the Khaki. Right, right! Shipmate me all you want. And now I roll completely out of the last stall, and within five feet of me, I see a quick dash for the exit.
Knock! Knock!
And now I—RACE—out of the head! And I'm out now.
“Hey, wait a second?” The dumbass Khaki goes. As he sensed at the last second, what the guy in that stall he was banging on, had done.
“Hey!”
But, too late, now, brown shoes! And now I'm racing back to my Jet. And I'm in the clear. And as I get to the hatch leading up, I dash up the ladderwell, and through a hatch, and now I'm in the Hangar Bay. And as I get to my Jet, I—
“Navastian!” Goes Senior.
And—COME ON! And so, I walk to my Jet, pick up the rag I was using to wipe the Jet down, and—
“NAVASTIAN!” Goes Senior, again.
“Yes, Senior!” I say, turning around, and at attention now. And Senior now, is just mad dogging me.
“Yes, Senior?” I go, with tons of Military Bearing.
“Where were you?” He asks.
“Sorry, Senior, I had an emergency pump and dump I had to take, I was at the head.” I say. And, come on! That's a good reason to be absent for a moment. A good reason. He can't speak against that. And the Hangar Bay isn't like the Flightdeck,

where I have to man my Jet all the freakin' time. Waiting for a possible move the Yellow Shirt would make. Here, these Jets tend to be very much stationary. And it's not expected of us to be on them the ENTIRE TIME!

“Scrubbing now, Senior!” I go. And then I turn around and start scrubbing like a madman!

“Stop, Navastian... and turn around again.” And, I do an about face. And now, back to facing Senior. Plus, him letting me know what else he's had with his last visit to somewhere where they serve or sell food. I'm growing mighty haggard of bringing this up.

“Yes, Senior.” I go. And, fuck it, give me twelve hours EMI! I don't care. Just please, please, please... don't take away my liberty in Thailand. Please! Senior is now staring at me all sideways.

“Navastian, did you at least tell one of your fellow PCs here, in the Hangar Bay, to keep an eye on your Jet, in case they were to move it?” And... fuck! I didn't! But fuck it! Lie!

“Yes, I told... Donnelly.” And I smile now saying his name, for, I know, Senior won't try and ask Donnelly about this matter. He won't! Or, I hope he won't!

“You did?” Goes Senior. And he lowers his head, and seems to be contemplating whether to ask Donnelly, and I can now see I'm in the clear, for he's resenting the idea to do so. YES!

“All right, Navastian.” And now it seems as if he wants to leave. So, leave, Senior. Leave!

“Oh, and, Navastian….” And... FUCK! I do another about face, and I'm standing at parade rest in front of him again.

“Yes, Senior?” I go. And then Senior shows me his pearly teeth, and starts shaking his head, and also, starts to give me the evil eye. And... I don't know what he means by this. But... I doesn't likes it. And now Senior truly turns around, and leaves.

{ANYWAYS, LET’S GET BACK TO THE DONNELLY MA—}

THERE IS NO DONNELLY MATTER! Be him, yes! Fuck him? No! You’re only bringing it up to fuck with me! Turn me into something I’m not by confusing me!

{THEN WHY DID YOU HAVE SUCH THOUGHTS? YOU WERE WITH A WOMAN AMID INTERCOURSE, AND INSTEAD OF FINDING ENJOYMENT IN THAT, YOUR MIND WENT—}
Because what me and Roxanna had was fake!

I have something real with Donnelly, but it isn't like that!
{YOU SURE…?}
Did the idea make me hard?
{….}
And… I got them there. Because they, being I, know WE DIDN'T!

Fine, it was a symbolic gesture of possession through sexual domination… psychological Freudian mumbo jumbo—WHO GIVES A DAMN! Oedipus complex, where I fuck my dad since there is no mom in this picture, so I can become him.

Fuck… MAYBE THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO BEING HOMO!

Still, bitches make me hard.
That didn't! I even shriveled up a bit after I thought about it inside Roxanna, so THERE!

Got anything else to—
{SENIOR ISN'T GONNA LET YOU OFF THE HOOK, UNTIL HE CAN GET IT OUT OF YOU.}
They go.
What, get what out of me?
{EXACTLY AS IT SOUNDS. SENIOR KNOWS IT WAS YOU, THAT'S WHAT THAT LOOK MEANT. AND HE'S NOT THROUGH WITH YOU, YET. HE'S GOING TO SQUEEZE IT OUT OF YOU, EVENTUALLY!}

That now scares me. Like some reverse Oedipus shit, or at least with the version I just brought up. Where daddy Senior gets his shot to turn my tail kisser inside out after I repurposed… why am I getting descriptive with this?

And then, in my desperation, I ask, what I shouldn't be asking. And ask: squeeze? With a whimper.
{YES, SQUEEZE!}

TRIAL BY RAPE

Aye, so I woke up early this mor... er afternoon (fuck! I've been doing this over a month now, why is my biological clock still off on how I do nothing but sleep all day and work all… fuck it! It is what it is!), so I woke up screaming my head off again. Waking up Echols, as well, as he began screaming himself, for me to: "SIERRA TANGO FOXTROT UNIFORM!" I know I had one of those dreams last night. But, I don't remember it anymore. And, as hard as I try, like a bar of soap, the slippery bastard kept escaping my grip. And this be a slippery soap, in the showers of a correctional facility. In a prison. And I just kept bending over and over and over to pick it up (metaphorically saying, as a dumbass, doing something I absolutely shouldn't, by all means, since those dreams are nothing but BAD NEWS BEARS). But, everything I've experienced the last two nights, I felt like those dreams might have an answer, as to, what the hell is going on. But I can't remember it, for the life of me, I can't remember, as important as that dream feels it had to have been. I can't, no more. It's totally gone now, totally escaped me, and into them recesses of my mind, where I dare not seek or speak. And the fucked-up part in all this is, even if I don't remember that dream, something tells me, them Cthulhu monsters I gots in my head, do! Do remember! And will eventually try and use it against me.

They ain't really scaring me much anymore, as they are annoying me. Trials. Ha! What trials? But the thing that does scare me about them is, what they're coming with. The things they're saying to me. I don't want to know nor think about these things. And they won't shut up about it. And, I should go tell it to somebody. I mean,

maybe I should! Those fuckers are talking about getting me into some really deep shit. Murder? Homosexuality? And the thing is, I felt them before, back with the IS3, I felt them taking sovereign control, and try and get me to stab the IS3, dead. And, it felt like I really was the one doing it. I should definitely not be underestimating them and their potential, of becoming a truly detrimental force in my life. And... without question, I've gone section 8. I'm ill! Ill in the head! To actually be having independent voices in my head. I cannot refute that fact. As hard as I try to. And, maybe, this isn't the time to be ditching this Ship and this Navy life, come Thailand, just yet. I need to get some serious mental health attention my way. Before them motherfuckers actually do get the best of me, and get me to do something, I will definitely regret doing. Three more days left. They said: “For the next five days.” And there's three more of those days left now including today. And I have no idea what's coming up, next.

I'm in The Shop again, during shift change. One routine day in, another routine day out. Everything continuing, over and over again. Everything! And seemingly without no end. I'm stuck in Groundhog's Day. And every day feels like the same damn thing I was experiencing before. And I feel like it's driving me CRAZY! Fucking CRAZY! I don't know... what from this point out, I should do. And right now, my head feels like it's spinning. I feel dizzy! Should I desert in Thailand, or, should I not? Should I seek some mental health provisions. Or, stick it out. And continue everything Navy. Until it eats up and spits out, not just me, but my soul.

Also, just before I got up here, I had another talk with Donnelly. Nothing to do about that matter we discussed in that fan room, before. But other things. Things more involved with him, and less with me. And for a change. Hmm… maybe I am a little too self-absorbed with my own woes and worries in life. As alarming as they are. I should be centered on other stuff. Plus, maybe that could be just the right medicine against my mind krakens. But anyways, me and Donnelly! We had a discussion. Or. I did! Since Donnelly wasn’t in much of a talkative mood. Since scaring myself awake with whatever the hell I dreamed during my sleeping hours, I woke up to a dark

berthing, and stumbled my way to the lounge, to have a seat, and tried sleeping sitting upright. So, if I had any more dreams occurring that would have me jumping nearly out of my rack, I wouldn't have then slammed my head up against the overhead of my rack spaces (although, in a seat, I might just fall out of it, and that wouldn't be any better). Aye! That did occur. I woke up screaming, then—bang! And now I was both in terror and in pain. Fuck, I hate those stupid limited rack spaces of ours, where we're practically stuffing ourselves in spaces more cramped and cumbersome than a freakin' coffin. And waking up every morning (morning for us) in what feels about as dreadful as if I had really died and had come back to life, waking up in an actual freakin' coffin, six feet under. They make horror flicks with storylines such as these. And this ain't no horror flick, but our day-to-day lives. Anyways, I had stumbled into the lounge area, had sat down, did some long-winded yawning for a good while, as much as I could enjoy, still wishing how much I could have still been sleeping, right there and then. And then as I opened up my eyes, wide, as my double vision started focusing together into one frame (aye, that's always my cue how I'm about to fall back asleep, or have to start waking up from the drowsy state I'm in, my double vision), I then noticed him, there. Sitting in the dark. Him now sitting in the dark. With his thoughts. And with the stuff in mind that's making him go all mentally ill in the head. For he startled me, seeing him there, then started scaring me a little, as he continued brooding in his own train of thought, and with the places they were taking him. Dark territory. For I could see them in his eyes, that looked like train tunnels, with no light found shining out from the other end.

"Hey, Navastian… you think I could take the IS3?" He then said. Out of the blue. Came out with. And… all I had for him was a simple:

"Sure!" But that didn't seem to settle the thoughts he was still playing with, over and over again, in his mind.

"Yawn!" I went, then. Instead of saying what I wanted to say.

"If I took on Falky, you think the others would then try to jump in, and fight me, too?" Donnelly asked then. Then looked at me, and now the void in his eyes, were digging out some voids into mine.

"Maybe? I guess they might… actually, maybe… no? I don't know." I said.

“Hey, if it ever came down to that….” And now Donnelly really started haunting me with his portals to his soul. Which didn’t seem to be any there. “You’d have my back… right?” Asked Donnelly. And… umm…? I… didn’t know how to respond to that.

“Yeah, yeah… of course. Of course!” And then Donnelly started showing some disappointment, my way. And even a little bit of possible contempt, since I, I guess…? I didn’t seem reassuring enough. In my words, substituting now what Donnelly was asking when it came down to my actions. “Hey, bro, if it came down to it… I’d do what I can.” I said. And that’s all I could say. I mean, I’m no scrapper. I’ve barely been able to manage all that I have managed, with those animals. But, I know my limits. So how much could I really help a Shipmate out, if it came down to a real brawl? Slugging each other, like we’re all enemies, with one another. And not just so-and-so-called Shipmates, passively tolerating one another, as non-aggressively as we possibly can make it.

“I’m being serious, Navastian! Those motherfuckers… they’re not only your problem now, they’re now also mine. And, honestly… you sorta got me into this.”

“I got you into it...?” I baffled. Although, then my eyes did that thing, like I just grew aware of how true that was, and I know Donnelly could now see that.

“Sorry for putting it that way. But, I was cool with them, until me and you started hanging out. And they’re now my problem, as well as yours.”

“I know, I know.” I said, then. But, what could I do? Plus, what could I do, without jeopardizing my liberty, come next port call? This was no longer about rolling Shipmates up, anymore, and I knew the stuff Donnelly was speaking about dealt with if real violence was to break out. And he was now wondering if I’d have his back to that.

“Donnelly, I’ll do what I can.”

“You’ll do what you can?” Donnelly went. And now seemed mighty discouraged and disappointed. And… I didn’t know how to follow up on that.

“Fucking….” Went Donnelly. Then anguished a bit in his facial expressions. Then went on:

“Fucking Falky, man, that little… AWW!” Raged Donnelly.

“Hey, I know, I know.” I said. Since obviously, Donnelly’s skin hasn’t been the only one’s the little guy has been getting underneath. Donnelly then did a bit more anguishing, then… just looked at me. And like I didn’t know, at least not on his level, Donnelly’s now level.

“That fucker humiliated me, and just for the sake of humiliating me. You saw that, right?”

“Yes, I did.” I said. Now trying to show a lot more investment with Donnelly’s brooding presence.

“And then, fucking Roach Burger! Biggest bitch in The Shop, he tried to get to me. You saw that, right?” Asked Donnelly. And continued to stone gaze at me, as if I’m still also mostly at fault, here.

“Hey, when it comes to Roach Burger and getting furious dealing with his cocky ass? I know. I know all about it.” I confirmed. And now, Donnelly was at his most earnest with me.

“Listen, something might happen, now. Something ugly might go down with—”

“But why?” I interrupted. And that took Donnelly off center. As it shook him up a bit.

“What do you mean, why?” Demanded Donnelly. And it was now, when I started to really regret coming up here, to sit and have a chat, with him. As my loyalty was once again being called into question.

“Donnelly, why you saying things might get really ugly? Why take it there?” I said. Since, I felt like it was better if Donnelly was “live and let live” again, about this matter.

“Because they’re taking it there. That’s why! Haven’t you been paying attention with what the fuck’s been going on in The Shop?” Belittled Donnelly. And… I didn’t like that.

“Yeah, I have, but…?”

“But, what?” Demanded Donnelly. And now, I was at a total loss.

“Listen, if shit really started hitting the fan, that bad? Trust me, I’d have your back. I’d have your back.” But Donnelly didn’t seem so sure of how earnest I was now being. “No, listen, if things got—that bad? Then, yes.”

….

“But why does it have to get to that point?”
….
“I mean, we’re still co-existing, with one another. Shit’s fucked up in The Shop. But it’s not that bad. What’s wrong with leaving it there?” I illustrated.
And now Donnelly had my answer:
“If they’re gonna try and embarrass me again, like that? There ain’t gonna be any co-existing. End of story.” Concluded Donnelly. And that was that.

Donnelly then got up, and went to do, something else, I don’t know what, and I don’t know where. And, I could now see an ugly side to him slowly forming. Slowly brewing within him. As much of an outstanding guy as he’s been in my eyes, this was another sight, I was now seeing, within him, that was anything but. And the ugly part was, how ugly he was getting about the matter. Seeming a little too wounded by everything. And on a prideful level. This whole thing had really done a number on Donnelly’s pride. And, I didn’t see that as a good thing. Because, I expected a lot more from him. Him to show more humility than to be showing humiliation. At least that’s how I would like to make him out. The thing with pride, is, it’s a selfish thing, when it gets this wounded, when it really doesn’t need to be. And really, Donnelly should let it go, before all that brooding he was doing, was to get the best of him. What he did for Pfluger was a very brave and selfless, and also self-sacrificial, thing. And in how I’d favor to commend him for. But now Donnelly was showing a wicked side of himself, completely indulged in his own ego. When, it really shouldn’t matter. And what should matter was for Donnelly to continue being the more outspoken and outstanding one amongst us. Within our generation of PCs in The Shop. But now, he’s taking things very ugly, and what I was beginning to see in him, is everything I was finding outstanding within him, being compromised by that ugliness. He was becoming a jerk about it, and also, a jerk towards me, too. And… I don’t know.

Sigh.
Fuck!
Ugh…!

So, what are we doing now? Oh, right, shift change. I forgot. Again, with the shift change, and me spending another twelve hours collecting enough Barnacles on my backside, to contest with the Great Barrier Reef in growing a Charlie Foxtrot (cluster fuck) of colorful corals, mollusks, crown-of-thorn starfish, giant clams and chimaera and seaweed. An entire ecosystem, spawning off my ass. And I can't do nothing about it, since, them damn Greenpeace people are now saying how it's endangered and needs to be preserved for future generations of treehugging liberals to bask in its wonder and beauty. Some shit like that. But they're taking no consideration with how I feel about it! Me! And my ass! With all this crap, living off my bottomside. Sigh! I don't know. Would I even want to join Greenpeace if I was to get out and become some marine biologist, or whatever? Hmm... don't seem like I'd really care, now. Ah, fuckin' A! Feels like a Wednesday!

And, it's showtime, again. I and the boys in The Shop about to relieve Day Check. Okay, so anyways, what the fuck we doing today?
"All right, boys, we have Night Ops, again, tonight. You know the drill!" Blah blah blahs Senior. Right, right! Launches and recoveries, launches and recoveries, launches and recoveries. Then tons and tons and tons of hours spent wiping down Jets. So, what else is freakin' new? Ahhh...! Don't get into that mentality again, Navastian. Don't! And, all right! That's what Senior's got for us. What do them Old Ones have to delegate me with?
Well...?
Hello...!
You fuckers there?
Guess not. Not yet, though. Should give them more time, though. For them to prep themselves, to see what giant tentacle krakens they'll be releasing upon my ass, next. Someone, bring me a Medusa head, would you, please?

Ha, ha!
Thank God for the humor.

Aye….

For, humor is an important thing. A VERY IMPORTANT THING! For us Military types. Sometimes, it's the only thing—the only thing—that truly makes a difference. Turns that frown, upside down. And keeps all those nasty sharks and mythological sea monsters at bay.
“Okay, get up there!” Goes Senior. And, aye! Mythological sea monsters. And then there's this big, fat megalodon in our waters. And the big mouth, fish animal hasn't somehow gotten the memo yet, that he's supposed to be extinct. Ha, ha! A fatass shark! I don't know why, but there's something mighty funny about that whole illustration and just how it sounds. “Oh, Navastian, you stick around. I got some questions for you.” Now goes Senior. As he points me out. With that big, fat, nacho cheese dipping finger of his. That needs no tortilla chip, to get some finger licking, queso action. Cheese, fool! And now, I walk up to him. And stand at attention. Not sparing any Military Bearing, with the starry anchored one. And, I stand. And stand.

And stand.

And stand!

Everyone has already left The Shop. And, funny, I feel a little hot in here. Hot and humid. Senior is at the black and green DOS screened computer, that the Navy has been using since at least the 80s. And he's typing away at whatever. And, must mention how strange everything feels now. Nothing feels the same anymore. I'd say, two weeks ago, things felt different. Not like this though. Now, everything feels like I’m existing in third person. And I'm just experiencing whatever the Navy's got for me to experience. That and my “gone renegade” subconscious mental faculties. And I'm just here, to sponge all the haste and hassle up. All of what it's got for me. So much friction and fighting, all around, and I'm just standing here. In third person. Not really feeling within myself. Just waiting for all the dust to settle. And, so, all right, Senior. I think I feel ready now. Let me lower my head, so you can bite it off

for me, and begin chewing it up, in front of the stump that used to be my neck, that's also now a blood sprinkler.
“Navastian.”
“Yes, Senior.” And now Senior seems ready to have a long discussion with me. A very, very, long one.
“Navastian?”
“Yes, Senior.”
“What do you want to be when you grow up?” Senior asks. And I feel like this is a trick question. Senior is now sitting there, studying me, with his legs crossed. Studying me up and down like some Harvard professor.
“Senior?” I go.
“I mean, Navastian, what do you want to be? Why are you here? What is it that you see the Navy can do for you, in the long run?”
And... I... I... okay?
“Umm!” I go.
And then Senior clicks his tongue a bit, in disapproval.
“‘Umm...?’ Is that all you got?”
“No, Senior. I just need a second to think.” I say. And... shit! Fuck! Now all of this feels to be in first person. And I'm stuck here, unsure of why Senior is asking me this. I know! I DAMN WELL KNOW! He doesn't favor me. He doesn't. So, where is he going with this?
“All right, Navastian, enlighten me?” Goes Senior.
“I... don't know, yet, Senior.” I go. Since, that's all I can go with right now. Senior now studies me a bit more.
“College?”
“What, Senior?”
“College, you plan to use the MGI bill to go to college?” And, fuck! Once again, I feel like these are all trick questions. In consideration of what type of context Senior is referring to, with, and with me.
“No, Senior, actually, there's a part of me, that would have wanted to stay in.”

And, that's honesty, right there. Aye. I know what I plan on doing in Thailand goes completely contradictory to what I just said. But. There was a time, a long, long time ago, it feels now (even though only a few weeks ago), when I wasn't so FTN. And would have considered making a career out of this. Yes! I will not deny the existence, of that even now, still, a bit in me. Now, peeking its head out. To see if it's safe, to give things another try.

"You're not staying in, don't bullshit me!" Scoffs Senior. Giving me some hawk eyes. Sharp. And to the point. And now, that little animal, called my possible future Navy career, flees back down its hole. And, I don't ever expect to see it again. Sigh.
"Yeah, maybe I'm not going to be stay—"
"Yeah?" Calls out Senior. And, fuck me! What does he want? If he really wants to get down and personal. Let me talk! Simply talk! Like a human fucking being, for once, for fuck sakes.
"I mean, yes, maybe... I guess... I'm not—"
"Of course, you're not! Don't ever bring that by me again." Insults me, Senior does. And now, I really do just feel insulted.
"Well, I'll tell you what, Senior, there was a time, I might have really been wishing I could actually make a career out of this. A little time there. But that's changed. And I got nothing but resentment that it has!" I go. And now, I feel my wits extending, and my mind expanding. Now that I was able to express myself, like I just did. Bust my ass on the surface! There could have been a time, I would have wanted to stay in.
"Navastian... no! You're a Shitbag. And I'm just tired of dealing with Shitbags in my Navy. And I, personally, would rather see you get out!" Insults Senior, again, and thumbs over his shoulder when saying: "out!"
And now I'm mad.
"What do you want, Senior?" I lash out.
"You giving me a tone?" Asks he.

“Yes, I am!” I go. For… that’s it! That’s it! That’s all I can stands, that I can’t stands no more. I feel myself now going into full throttle, wanting to give this fat pig, EXACTLY WHAT HE WANTS!

“Tell me, Navastian.”

“WHAT?” And now Senior gets up. And now the confrontation REALLY BEGINS!

“Tell me, it was you, that that Ship's Chief, caught, punching out an electrical box, before Hong Kong.” And there you have it! What this has all been about: “What do you want to be when you grow…?” Ugh! Asshole… fucking asshole, trying to get me all furious, as to trick me into saying something I shouldn’t, or wouldn’t! And now that he has, Senior is completely invested with every reaction I am now making, and will be making, so he can get his assessment of the truth.

“No!” I say to Senior. And smile. And I don't know why I’m smiling. But I am. And I feel like it's the right reaction to cover up the lie I just made.

“Bullshit! Don't lie to me!”

“I'm not lying to you, SENIOR!” And now I do believe I just spat up on him, after him calling me out. And as I study his smoldering face, that seems a little wet, I think, maybe, I did! Yay! But then again, the pork chop is sweating like a boar in some summertime loving heat. So, can't really tell if I did.

“You want to take me on, now?”

“No, SENIOR!” And this time, I make SURE to spit up on HIM.

“DID YOU JUST SPIT UP ON ME?”

“YES, I guess… I DID… accidently! I APOLOGIZE, SENIOR!” And then smile devilishly, as I say how I apologize. For... Boo hoo! For I'm obviously not sorry at all!

“You're enjoying this, aren't you?” Smiles out Senior. And, fuck me! Shiver me cockbuckets, I guess I am! And now my transformation into a salty sea encrusted Sailor, is now complete. All hail the new ME!

“Oh no, Senior, I'd never lie... to you! To my superior.” And, I just can't stop being sinister with the looks I'm giving him. I can't. The devil is in me now. And it feels mighty prime and passionate of what the new US would be capable of doing. And now Senior makes a face, as he shows the devil in him, that's also now the devil in

me. And as the two devils meet, they kiss. And now Jesus begins to weeping, for... he's lost himself another one of his sheep.
“You're dismissed, Navastian.”
“What's that, Senior?”
“Go up to your bird and get it ready for launch.” He says. And now, I do me an about face, something I haven't done much really of, since my Ricky days. And now. I'm off to my Jet. To do all the same old, same old, all over again. And as I step out of The Shop. I sigh now.

I sigh.
And feel mournful.

Then feel like apologizing to God. For that whole thing that just happened between me and that heathen. But I doesn't. For, I feel like I can't. Not right now. Until I really reason with myself, if a new me, is really needed, to go on, with all these things Military.

No, I take it back...!
I do apologize, God. That was definitely not me! No! No! Simply no, and never do I want it to be me.
{YES, IT WAS!}
Say the Old Ones.
And now, time for trial three. So, let's see what them old saturnine devils now have in store tonight.
{NOT, YET, NAVASTIAN. WE'LL SPEAK TO YOU WHEN YOU'RE PRIME AND READY TO HEAR WHAT WE HAVE TO SAY, WHAT WE HAVE IN STORE FOR YOU.}
Fuck!
Great...!
To be continued... I guess.

Dead starless skies hung over the Pacific. It's a dead night. A black night. With not a star to be found, with their twinkling shine of future promise. Can't see Dog Star anywhere. Nor Canopus nor Alpha Centauri, which is the closest. Nor planets Venus nor Jupiter. Though, a little of Betelgeuse, I think, but I'll take that as a bad omen. All is darkness, as it spawns from its outer hell hellish creatures. A horde of suck spewing out, from some devil borne universe. Some murder loving dimension. There's now nothing Godly and true to be found, on this fallen dead rock of an earth. As the seas boil and churn, with apocalyptic intentions. Boil and churn, boil and turn. And turn red. And there are now blood red seas to be found under hollow black skies. And I'm up at launch, for Night Ops be under way. And there's a devil of an unholy black army, all around, that I be sending this warbird, to, to wage war with. So, God bless these harrowing souls. These Pilots: Hanky and Panky. For, aye! I be launching my favorite of the bunch again. Them true to the blue Officers and up right God-fearing Gentleman. But, pray for them, I must! Pray! For there's a hell of a war to be waged, and I'd better be seeking some divine backing. For without it, all would be lost. All would be void and vacant. I got my wands now. I got my Jet. My Tool Pouch. And my AE2 Frankowsky, who's all troublshooting my Jet. Making sure it be sky-worthy. All around ready, set, and good to go. As it receives its go-ahead, green light, nod, thumbs up, rubber stamp, OK, it's say-so and full approval. Being christened and commissioned with full authority and sanctioning to head out, out into that wicked out. To be tried and tested against all them unfathomable unknowns and them demons that preside there. All right, Hank and Pank. I got my glow wands, and I'm revving up your Jet now. It is time. It is now time. For you two to head out there and make us all proud. And don't let them cosmic horrors out here in these night skies, scare you into seeking retreat. Don't let them! No! Just no! Don't!

{YOU DO KNOW, NAVASTIAN, THAT SENIOR AND YOU, AREN'T THROUGH, JUST YET, CORRECT?}

Aye! I think, to them cosmic horrors that are inside me. And think nor say nothing else. Sigh, I go now. As I continue with the launch. I don't know what they have in

store for me, tonight. But they're taking their time. And from what I've experience, they have impeccable timing. Knowing when to get to me, and when not to. Always waiting when I'm at my most vexed and vulnerable. Me, at my most barren, all ready to be overcome by them, so they can do, what they will for me to do. Part of me feels as if I'm really to blame for their creation. Truth is, I spent a lot of time over the thought of such things, all the stuff they been bringing at me. Really, this is a fascination I've had, going on for years now. I used to be really into the Twilight Zone TV show as a kid. Very much into it. Something about the nature of that show I always found immensely interesting. All that show was about, was about dealing with the unknown, what we do and do not understand about our world and our universe. And how, what we don't understand, is something we really should. We should understand, for, if we don't, it could eventually find its way to become a detrimental force to our way of life. Detrimental to the way we see the world, and how we've found peace and purpose and prosperity within it. But nothing ever stays as it should. And all that is not known, could eventually make itself known and invade into our world, and change everything up forever. Being what we are, being Military, it is also mostly our job to not be like most, content to stick back, uninterested with the unknowns, to stay behind and enjoy the times we are living in, while they last. It's our job to move away from civility and comfort, and venture into that unknown, and make sure whatever threat that exists there, will stay there, and never come forth. We're here to be safeguards, watchful sentinels, vanguards to our American way of life, ever looking deep into the pit of all of man's fears, to make sure whatever menace that lives there, is dealt with. I used to love watching the Twilight Zone, because, I don't know, I guess I'm meant for this lifestyle in a way. I love, simply love, being the one to stare into that abyss of all fears, as that abyss, itself, begins to stare back. There's this sense of alteration and adventure, that I absolutely love. So, I guess in that sense, I am meant to be this person. To be this Sailor. Sailing out into the world, with my watchful eyes. And watching all those unknowns, and making sure, they stay as unknowns. But, them Old Ones? They're in me now, for, I guess, I've been staring a little too hard into that bottomless pit. And I shouldn't have been, I just shouldn't have. I definitely now see that and it really would have been

best if I didn't! Keep thinking of something, and when you do it hard enough, and long enough, it will eventually take shape, and manifest itself. And then, you'll truly have some formidable Frankenstein monsters, which you're to blame for, for their existence. Since you were the one that created them. And in which case, it'll all now be on me, my responsibility to deal with them. Honestly. I've also always been completely fascinated with the human psyche, too. Into stuff about the subconscious mind. Into the idea of dreams, and where they come from, and where they go. Into a lot of things. Invested in a lot of thoughts. But maybe, I've done so, a bit much? Honestly, part of me always felt that the scariest unknowns, are not the things you'd find out in the unknown world, but those, lurking in the unknown world, deep within you. Now there's a bottomless pit of horrors, I'd dare no one to spend too much time staring into, for the fear of what they'll then find, even within themselves, now, staring back. I looking into them, them looking into me. I looking into you, you looking into me. So, the question now is, now that you've had a good chance to look inside this Navastian character, my question is: WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Fuck me on the surface. I think I enjoy all this a bit too much.
{YES, YOU DO!}
Blimey! Shit!

I'm done with my launch. I'm at the Ratways now, watching my Jet take off. Hanky and Panky have now got their hands full, now to deal with all that Event Horizon shit, up there. Scary ass bunch of stuff. And considering me and my Casadastraphobia (still can't believe something that crazy even exists), I could never be them Fly Boys. Even if I had the credentials and the stomach. Since I really am actually afraid of the sky. Not of heights, but the fucking sky, itself. And also too, the ocean below. For anything that vast, scares me. So, the question now is, what the Whiskey Tango Foxtrot am I even doing out here? Since, all I got to look at all night long, twelve hours at a time, is nothing but sea and sky. Funny, the things that scare us the most, also have a way to attract us the most.

“Oh my God, every time I see these launches, I just wish I had a camcorder with me.” Goes AT3 Oilerking.
“Oh my God, I know! But then again, it would probably be best if to take videos of this during Days.” Goes AT3 Hogard.
“Oh, you're right about that.”
“He, he! If we took any videos now, all we would have is nothing but a completely black screen to look at, later.”
“He, he! True. True. But still. I mean, I feel like, if I don't do it, one day, years from now, years and years, I will be looking back, and kicking myself in the head, that I never did. Especially when I’ll have children or grandchildren asking me about it. He he.”
“I know exactly what you mean. He he.”

Ugh! Speaking of unknown matters. Here's something I don't ever think I'll ever understand: women!
“Oh... they're all gone now.” Goes Oilerking.
“I know... I know.” Goes Hogard.

What the fuck are these two doing here? Here in these Ratways. Mostly, only us Line guys, Brown Shirts, are the ones you'd see in this particular one. And I've never seen any Green Shirts. So, what the fuck are these two doing here? Go away! Us Line guys don't want you two here. You two dumb, giggling... ugh! Get out! Just, get out!
“Let's go.” Says Oilerking.

And now they go. And now I feel content just to be keeled over here on the deck, in these Ratways, alone. Don't think I should go to The Shop (considering who'd be there). And I don't think I should go anywhere at all. I've never seen Senior's ass down here, either. Nor Falky's. So, might be a good thing if I stick around.

{RAPE OILERKING!}

….
{RAPE OILERKING!}
…?
{RAPE OILERKING!}
…!
{RAPE—}
Shut the fuck up! SHUT the FUCK UP! SHUT UP!
BASH!
I slam my elbow into the ledge I lean on in the keeled position, as I hear a loud "gung" sound.
{RAPE—}
SHUT THE FUCK UP!
They go silent now.

But then:
{RAPE OILERKING!}
And I completely lose it with that! What did you say... seriously, what did you say, NOW? And now I get up. I stand up. I look up. And this is more than I'm willing to handle.
{SHE'LL COME AROUND, AND WHEN SHE DOES, RAPE HER!}
All right. All right! I am SICK and TIRED of this SHIT! What did you fuckers say?
{YOU HEARD US!}
And I've really had it now. I feel sick to my stomach. I feel like even dry heaving a little, as my mouth and bowels begin to swell with something truly nasty. Downright sick. And downright disgustingly so! Now, you motherfuckers listen to me! I don't know who you are, what you are—
{WE ARE GOD!}
No, you are NOT GOD! NOT! DON'T YOU EVER, EVER, EVER SPEAK OF SUCH! And then I see the hatch at the far aft end of these Ratways open up, one leading to a flight of stairs going below, and I see light shining out. Same hatch I saw those two

exit the Flightdeck out of. But now, I see AT3 Oilerking stepping out, and she has a camera in her hands, and... she's alone. And, at that moment, fear enters me.
{RAPE OILERKING!}
Terror strikes me now. As I keel down again, lower my head, and pretend to be catching forty winks. Closing my lids. And placing my visor down again over my eyes. I then hear AT3 Oilerking stepping up, a couple of feet away from me. And I'm pretending to be invisible now. And, a little bit asleep. What is she doing here? WTF is she doing?
{NOW THAT SHE'S HERE...}
Shut up... don't say anything! I... don't even know where to begin explaining, how thoroughly pissed I am right now. To have heard what YOU FUCKERS SAID! Told me to do. And I feel myself shivering now. Shivering in anger. And also dread.

“Okay, Catie, let us see if I take a few pictures, if I'll get much visibility with the lights that are around.” Oilerking is talking to herself now. And now.
Click.
She's taking a few pictures.
{DO IT!}
You know, when these fucking voices started speaking to me, telling me to kill Falky. I gotta admit, I kinda wanted to do it, too! All right! Maybe not stab him, dead. But, I could do with choking the little weasel, a little. Only a little. It would be cathartic, I guess. It would. It really would.
Click. Click.
“All right, let’s see what the screen picks up.” Says Oilerking. And as I take a little peek at her, I see her holding one of them digital SLRs, high end cameras.
“Ugh, I wish the Jets were here.” She goes.
{DO IT, RAPE HER, RAPE HER!}
Please God, let these motherfuckers not be taking control over me, and... please!
{DO IT!}
How did they know... she was going to come back?

{BECAUSE, WE TOLD YOU WHO WE ARE. AND WHAT WE'RE CAPABLE OF.}
And now I get up... and then something happens. I feel a pull. Towards her. I feel possession. Shit, I feel possession. Me being put into autopilot when I thought I'd be the pilot steering these decisions and directions. I feels it. I does. Something truly sickening taking sovereign control, some truly evil fuckin' spirit, truly evil. As it tries to pull me onto her. Break away, Navastian, BREAK AWAY!
{RAPE HER!}
NO! And now I yank myself out of neutral, AND TOWARDS OILERKING!

NO
NO
NO
NO
NO... I didn't.
I'm heading for that hatch now, the one the AT3 had stepped out of. And I open it up. And head in.
{WHY DIDN'T YOU DO IT?}
You EVIL pieces-of-shit! Fuck YOU!
{WHY DIDN'T YOU DO IT?}
And... do I even need to explain why?
{THAT BITCH HAS IT COMING!}
And now, I am so furious, I'm shivering and shaking again. And sweating all over. And hyperventilating. I'm losing breath. I'm losing my breath. So FUCKIN' ENRAGED!
{WE TOLD YOU TO DO IT!}
I am so, so, so, SO, so, SO... tired of you all. You SATANS!
{WE TOLD YOU TO!}
And now I yank my cranial out of my hands, and chuck it at a bulkhead, and so hard, the main back surface of it cracks from the impact.

{WHY DID YOU DO THAT?}
Oh, you mother—... fuck you ALL! Fuck... SATAN BEHIND ME! SATAN BEHIND! SATAN—
{WE'RE NOT SATAN, WE TOLD YOU WHO WE ARE!}
And I just can't take this BLASPHEMY ANYMORE!
{NOW YOU HAVE A BROKEN CRANIAL YOU'RE GOING TO NEED TO FIX. PRETTY SURE SENIOR WILL START GETTING IN YOUR CASE SEEING HOW YOU GOT IT THAT WAY.}
"Ha, haa, ha ha, HA, HAA, Ha, ha!"
I'm laughing hysterically now.

{FORTY-SIX AND TWO!}
And, there they say it again.
"What does that even mean?" I ask out loud.
{FORTY-SIX AND TWO!}
Stop saying THAT! What does that even MEAN?
{BE ONE WITH US, AND YOU WILL BE ONE WITH GOD!}
I… I got nothing. I'm done. Coo coo, coo coo, DONE!
{HE WHO LOOKS OUTSIDE, DREAMS. BUT HE WHO LOOKS INSIDE, AWAKENS!}
Shut up! Please, shut up! Fucking DONE, here!
{WHY ARE YOU DONE WITH US, ALL WE'RE DOING IS TRYING TO HELP YOU DISCOVER YOUR FULL POTENTIAL. HELP YOU TRANSCEND, FINALLY, INTO YOUR NEXT EVOLUTION!}
And it feels like they're just baiting me again. Just baiting me. Trying to get me to think about the nonsense they're speaking.
{FOR YOU TO REDISCOVER YOURSELF, AND BE TRANSFORMED!}
I… I got nothing, again! I don't want to understand a word they're saying. NOT A WORD!

{THERE'S SO MUCH OF WHAT YOU CAN REALLY BE, IF YOU JUST ALLOW YOURSELF TO EVOLVE.}

By RAPING Oilerking? By MURDER by way of KILLING Falky? By having sex with Donnelly? I'm sorry, but I'm at a loss, here! I think to them. For, I just can't hold it back no more. Not no more. What is this? Why? And why me?

{HE WHO LOOKS OUTSIDE, DREAMS. BUT HE WHO LOOKS INSIDE, AWAKENS!}

Okay! How does that answer... GRR!

{YOU KNOW EXACTLY HOW THAT ANSWERS!}

I don't want to rape ANYBODY!

{YES, YOU DO, YOU HATE OILERKING, BECAUSE SHE REJECTED YOU.}

Okay, if you fuckers want to argue over this, LET'S DO IT!

{YOU WANT THIS! YOU REALLY, TRULY, DEEPLY WANT THIS!}

FINE! I got really, really upset, back before Hong Kong, because she—

{NOT JUST UPSET!}

…?

{YOU KEEP THINKING THESE INTENTIONS ARE SEPARATE OF YOU, ASSOCIATING THEM WITH US, WHEN ALL WE ARE IS ALL THERE IS, DEEP DOWN, WITHIN YOU! YOU YOURSELF HAVE ALREADY ACKNOWLEDGED THIS SEVERAL TIMES, BUT THEN PRETEND OTHERWISE. AND ALL WE'RE DOING IS—}

SHUT UP, SHUT UP! NO, YOU'RE NOT, NO YOU'RE NOT!

{ALL WE'RE TRYING TO DO IS HELP YOU COME TO THE LIGHT.}

And by what, by how? Stepping into the darkness?

{EXACTLY!}

"Ha, haa, ha ha, HA, HAA, Ha, ha!"

I'm laughing hysterically, again.

{SAY IT!}

Huh?
{SAY IT!)
Fucking demons, you all are, FUCKING DEMONS! There, I said it!
{NO, WE'RE NOT. SAY IT!}
Say what?
{JUST SAY IT!}
Please, leave me alone. Please?
{SAY IT, QUOTE CARL JUNG! YOU READ ENOUGH ABOUT HIM AND HIS WORK, TO KNOW WHAT WE'RE GETTING AT!}
You are not GOD! NOT!
{QUOTE HIM! IT IS TRUTH! QUOTE HIM! FREE YOURSELF!}
No. I don't believe in it, anymore!
{YES, YOU DO! IT IS TRUTH!}
No, it's not TRUTH!
{WE ARE GOD! YOU ARE—}
I am not God. NOT!
{FREE YOURSELF THE GNOSTIC SPARK WITHIN YOU! EMBRACE THAT INNER SELF, BY DOING WHAT THAT INNER SELF CALLS FOR!}
Fine, I wanted her, I really, really wanted her. But not like THAT!
{OF COURSE, YOU DIDN'T!}
…?
{BUT THIS IS WHAT IT'S COME DOWN TO, SHE REJECTED YOU! SHE REJECTED YOU, WHEN ALL YOU WANTED TO DO WAS LOVE HER! AND THERE ARE CONSEQUENCES TO BE MET, WHEN REJECTING LOVE!}
What is this, God, please? SAVE me from THIS!
{ONE DOES NOT BECOME ENLIGHTENED BY IMAGINING FIGURES OF LIGHT, BUT BY MAKING THE DARKNESS CONSCIOUS!}
God, how can you allow this to happen to me, huh? These motherfuckers are trying to pretend to be YOU! DO SOMETHING!

{NEXT TIME, RAPE HER! SHE DISGRACED THE LOVE YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN WILLING TO GIVE TO HER! AND SHE NEEDS TO PAY FOR HER SINS!}

And now, I'm stuck peculiar of something. Wait a second, since when is rejecting love a sin? And, unfortunately for my ignorant ass, they answer. As if I need more confusion.

{SINCE FOREVER. IT'S A SIN SOCIETY TODAY HAS LOST ALL KNOWLEDGE AND MEMORY OF. BUT, ONCE THE REJECTED RISE, AND BEGIN TO THE PROCESS OF PUNISHING THEIR REJECTORS FOR THEIR SINS, THAT DAY, SOCIETY WILL HAVE TO PHASE INTO THAT TRUTH. AND PHASED INTO IT THE HARD WAY.}

Yup, I was right, I didn't need any more confusion.

{EVEN IN CHRISTIANITY, IT IS A SIN, IT IS CALLED "BLASPHEMY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!" AND IT IS ONE DEEMED UNFORGIVABLE.}

Great, now I'm getting Sunday school stuff from a bunch of dudes speaking out of mouths full of tentacles and suckers and slimy stuff. And wanting me to heed.

{LUKE 19:27

BUT THOSE MINE ENEMIES, WHICH WOULD NOT THAT I SHOULD REIGN OVER THEM, BRING HITHER, AND SLAUGHTER THEM BEFORE ME!

AS YOU CAN SEE, EVEN THE CHRISTIAN GOD, JESUS CHRIST, SAW ONLY A BRUTAL PUNISHMENT FOR THOSE THAT CHOSE TO REJECT HIS LOVE! SO, IT IS A SIN. AND JUST RAPING OILERKING WOULD BE TOO GOOD FOR HER. SHE ALSO DESERVES FAR, FAR WORSE FOR SUCH AN UNFORGIVING SIN SUCH AS THAT!}

So, wait a minute, wait… you say the Christian faith is bull, but then start quoted stuff from the good book in support of claims you motherfuckers are making as

“truth?” I get tricky. Since I’m getting awfully morbid listening any further. And I see a—

{IT’S NOT A FLAW IN LOGIC. A TRUTH IS STILL A TRUTH, NO MATTER IF A PARTICULAR, FAITH, FALSE OR NOT, HAPPENS TO PREACH OF IT. IF CHRISTIANITY PREACHED THAT WE ALL CAME FROM MONKEYS AND THROUGH MILLIONS OF YEARS OF EVOLUTION, IT WOULD BE TRUE. BUT THAT WOULDN’T MEAN EVERYTHING ELSE IN ITS BELIEFS SUCH AS SPLITTING SEAS AND BURNING BUSHES WOULD ALSO BE THAT!}

Ah, FUCK MY BARNACLES… I thought I had them there for a second. Fuck them, though. I’m pretty sure that verse from the good book was fabricated, and they just made it up on the spot to mess with my head, more than they already have.

{WOULD YOU PREFER IF WE DEMANDED YOU TO EXECUTE HER FOR HER SINS? THAT, BY ITSELF, WOULD ALSO SUFFICE.}

Get out of me. OUT! And now, I'm pacing again. Just pacing. Just pacing... and I don't know where to. I just am. Frantically rushing aft-wards. For, I guess I'm going back to The Shop? I don't know. And don't care.

{WHAT IF SENIOR IS IN THERE?}

Then I’ll—DO SO—and just gut that fat pig with the screwdriver in my Tool Pouch. Get sent straight to the Brig. And, I won’t have to worry about whatever horrendous thing you FUCKERS TRY TO GET ME TO DO NEXT! That allows me to stop now. Realizing, I hold that screwdriver right now in my right hand. In the ready. And I can’t recall at what time I purposefully pulled it from my Tool Pouch. Ah shit! Belay that. I take it back.

{DON’T WORRY, SENIOR ISN’T THERE RIGHT NOW. YOU CAN GO IN.}

…?

{GO, GO BACK TO YOUR SHOP!}

But I does not move, but stands dead in my tracks. For, I don't want to do a damn thing they would tell of me to. Not a damn thing! And now I turn around and... AH SHIT! I realize where I am now. Since pacing, I guess I wandered my happy ass a

little too far, aimlessly and directionless-ly, and didn't realize I've entered blue tile. I'm in the E-5 and below “no no” zone.
{GO BACK!}
They say.
And now I proceed to head into the direction I was told not to go. Fuck them! I ain't gonna do NOTHING they wants from me. NOTHING!

{ALL RIGHT, GO AHEAD, MOVE ONWARD!}
They say now.
And... I stop. Shit! I feel like turning around again. And really, this isn't the spot for me to be pacing back and forth, back and forth, with.
{OKAY, GO BACK TO THE SHOP! WE STILL HAVE SOMETHING THERE FOR YOU, WAITING!}
SHIT! I don't like the sound of that. I'm still boggled by how they knew—freakin' knew—how the AT3 Oilerking was going to step out, again back on those Ratways. I could presume all they are is a dark sector in my psyche. Presume to think that that's all they are. But, still… how?
{WELL, ISN'T THIS A CONUNDRUM YOU'VE GOTTEN YOURSELF INTO. WHAT TO DO? WHAT TO DO?}
Oh... shut up!
{YOU HAVE TO DO SOMETHING OR ANOTHER. AND, SO, ALL RIGHT, GO BACK TO THE RATWAYS. AT3 OILERKING WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU OUT THERE STILL.}
And now I stop, dead in my tracks, again. For that's exactly where I was headed. And I can't go back up there. I can't!
{GO BACK TO THE SHOP, THEN!}
Shit! And I stops again. And now I'm starting to feel mighty foolish. How many times am I going to do this? Turn around, and turn around, again. Then again and again. Trying to evade doing anything that they would condone my actions of. I'm heading

down to the Hangar Bay. And now, I turn right, and head into a hatch. Then go a couple of flights down, using the ladderwell, and out of a hatch, and now I'm here.
{SUITS US JUST FINE, WE ALSO HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU TO DO HERE, AS WELL.}
BULLSHIT… no you don't!
{YES, WE DO.}
No, you… then what would that be? I ask. Smile. But then sees Donnelly.
{GUESS WHAT THIS DIRECTION WOULD LEAD YOU TO! HEHEHEHEHE!}
Oh... COME ON! Seems as if everywhere I decide to go, these fuckers are a few steps ahead of me. I don't want to do what they're telling me to do. Seems as if, anywhere I go. I'm going to have to deal with something or another, and I already know they know what's in store for me. Wherever I go, aboard this Ship. Maybe I can head for the berthing. FUCK IT! DO IT!
{GO AHEAD, AGAIN! THAT WOULD ALSO SUIT US, JUST FINE!}
FUCK ME! Where do I go? Where? I can't keep doing this. The hell with it, just go back to The Shop. Let there be something there, waiting. Since I'm already going to have that no matter where I go.
{OH, TRUST US, THERE IS, THAT THERE MOST CERTAINLY IS.}
But, don't care! Plus, they might just be pulling my leg. Getting me to go in circles, like a chicken with its head cut off.

And now I'm in the p-way leading to The Shop. All that's left to get there, is to go a bit more forward, turn left, and head a little more, and I will be there. Safe.
{NOT SAFE. NOT FROM WHAT WE HAVE IN STORE FOR YOU.}
And I once again stop once I hear that. And, I'm growing mighty weary of this. Royally so! Still, not even sure if there's anything in there. I ache. As I am in stationary once again.
{WE GUESS THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY FOR YOU TO FIND OUT.}

And now, I'm stuck. I'm stuck here. Unable to move onward. I'm stationary here, feeling safe in my lonesome. And... fuck! I've been through this before! I think. As I look up, and see that dim p-way light, flashing on and off, on and off. Adding a certain level of nuance. Mostly to do with that whole stationary thing, I had been thinking about, before. Before Hong Kong. And just before I was jumped in this same p-way by Falky and the boys. And ended up spending that night with the AOs. And all the crazy shit they put me through that night.

{DON'T WORRY, NAVASTIAN, NOTHING OF THAT NATURE IS WAITING FOR YOU IN THE SHOP. IN THE LINE SHACK. SO, GO AHEAD, AND GO RIGHT IN. TRUST US! JUST TRUST US!}

No! After everything you fuckers put me through, and now that whole AT3 Oilerking thing! HOW COULD I? HOW? Explain that to me, PLEASE!

{NAVASTIAN, AS WE SAID BEFORE, WE ARE NOT ASKING YOU TO DO ANYTHING, THAT HASN'T BEEN CROSSING YOUR MIND TO DO!}

What... no! But I don't want to be a killer. A rap—... I don't even want to THINK ABOUT IT!

{WE KNOW, WE UNDERSTAND.}

What... I mean... what's waiting for me ins—…?

{WE'RE NOT GOING TO TELL YOU, YOU WILL JUST HAVE TO HEAD IN, AND FIND OUT, FOR YOURSELF.}

I don't trust you. I DON'T!

{NAVASTIAN, YOU KNOW HOW DESPICABLE EVERYTHING YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH HAS MADE YOU FEEL, CORRECT?}

Yeah... I guess so!

{WELL, THIS IS WHAT IT'S NOW COME DOWN TO. WE WOULD NEVER, AND, WE DO MEAN—NEVER—ASK YOU TO DO SOMETHING, YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO DO.}

But I don't want to—

{YES, YOU DO! THIS IS WHAT HAS BECOME OF YOU. THIS! WE'RE SORRY TO SAY, BUT THIS IS WHAT IT HAS. WE ARE ONLY SHOWING

{YOU THAT WHICH IS HIDDEN WITHIN YOU! YOUR TRUE SELF! WHO YOU REALLY ARE BECOMING! THAT IS ALL WE ARE DOING. NOTHING LESS. NOTHING MORE.}

So, you're saying you really wouldn't want me to do any of those things?

{OF COURSE NOT!}

Then, why did you?

{NAVASTIAN, THINK OF IT LIKE THIS: WHAT HAPPENS TO A TEAKETTLE THAT'S PLACED OVER A FIRE?}

What...?

{YOU HEARD US.}

I... well, if there's water inside, it boils!

{CORRECT!}

Okay...?

{SO, WHAT DO YOU DO, THEN, WHEN THE WATER BEGINS TO BOIL INSIDE THE TEAKETTLE, AS IT NOW BEGINS TO WHISTLE?}

I remove it from the fire.

{EXACTLY. SO, WHAT IF YOU'RE UNABLE TO REMOVE IT FROM THE FIRE, AND ALSO, UNABLE TO TURN OFF THE GAS?}

Well... I don't know. It could eventually blow—

{EXACTLY!}

I don't understand what are you trying to say?

{NAVASTIAN, WHAT WE'RE TELLING YOU IS THIS, RIGHT NOW, YOU ARE A TEAKETTLE THAT'S PLACED OVER A FIRE. YOU'VE BEEN THIS WAY SINCE BOOT CAMP, SINCE YOU JOINED THE NAVY. AND ALL THIS TIME, YOU'VE BEEN A TEAKETTLE PLACED OVER A FIRE, THAT'S BEEN BOILING UP INSIDE, AND THERE HASN'T BEEN A MOMENT WHERE YOU OR ANYONE HAS BEEN ABLE TO REMOVE THE KETTLE FROM THE FIRE. OR SIMPLY TURN IT OFF.}

What are you getting at? But then, I realize, I already know....

{YES, YOU DO ALREADY KNOW. NAVASTIAN, WE DON'T WANT YOU TO HURT ANYONE! BUT IF YOU DON'T DO SOMETHING TO RELEASE THE PRESSURE BUILDING UP INSIDE OF YOU—YOU ARE GOING TO BLOW!}

What...?

{YES!}

No, no, no! I'm going to desert in Thailand. That should get me off the fire, that should—

{NO, IT WON'T!}

No, it will! I will be away from all this! I won't be a kettle over fire, boiling up inside anymore.

{NAVASTIAN?}

What... oh, please... actually, don't tell me!

{NO, WE NEED TO!}

…?

{NAVASTIAN....}

NO, no, no, no, NO! DON'T!

{NAVASTIAN, YOU'RE NOT GETTING OFF IN THAILAND.}

What? Why...?

{BECAUSE, BY TOMORROW, SOMETHING IS GOING TO HAPPEN, BETWEEN YOU AND SENIOR. THAT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO PREVENT.}

And... I now know what that is.

{EXACTLY, BETWEEN YOU AND HIM, TOMORROW, YOUR TRIAL WILL INVOLVE ALL THAT IS THERE, BOILING UP INSIDE, BETWEEN YOU AND HIM. AND IT'S GOING TO FINALLY BLOW UP. AND THEN, SENIOR IS GOING TO PUT YOU ON LIBERTY RISK, AND....}

I won't be getting off the Boat.

{EXACTLY.}

And now I don't know what to think anymore. It makes sense. It makes perfect sense. After what me and the fat one had between each other. I can't deny how that might possibly happen. I can't refute it. It already nearly boiled over between me and him tonight. Since he's so persuaded, somehow, that I was the one that committed that act of vandalism. Now. I can feel it, I can feel it, already. That between me and him, it's gonna happen. I mean, I've tried to be civil with him, tried to be subordinate. BUT THE FUCKER WANTS ME TO GET INTO A SCUFFLE WITH HIM. HE WANTS IT!

{EXACTLY, YOU SEE IT NOW, DON'T YOU?}

I do... I do now. Oh God.

{STOP SAYING THAT, STOP ASKING THE ONE WHO HAS DONE NOTHING, BUT REMAINED SILENT ALL THIS TIME. WHILE YOU'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH ALL THIS! HE DOESN'T WANT TO HELP YOU, AND YOU KNOW WHY? BECAUSE HE DOESN'T EXIST. YOU, EXIST, NAVASTIAN, YOU DO! SENIOR DOES. AND SO DO WE! THERE IS NO GOD UP ABOVE! ONE DOES NOT BECOME ENLIGHTENED BY IMAGINING FIGURES OF LIGHT, BUT BY MAKING THE DARKNESS CONSCIOUS! DO YOU READ US?}

I... no! What does that mean, really?

{IT MEANS: FORTY-SIX AND TWO! IT MEANS, YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN. IT MEANS, YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN AND YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO OWN UP TO IT. BEFORE EVERYTHING BOILS OVER INSIDE OF YOU. IT MEANS, NAVASTIAN, THERE'S A LOT OF SCARY THINGS HAPPENING INSIDE OF YOU, AND THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT, BUT FACE IT! WE DON'T WANT YOU TO HURT ANYONE, KILL ANYONE, RAPE ANYONE. WE'RE HERE TO ENLIGHTEN YOU, OF THE FACT, THAT THERE IS ANOTHER SIDE TO YOU—THAT YOU NEED TO DEAL WITH! YOU ARE A KETTLE, PLACED OVER A FIRE, READY TO BLOW. YOU CAN IGNORE IT AND DENY IT ALL YOU WANT, BUT ALL THAT'S GOING TO

DO FOR YOU IN THE LONG RUN IS MAKE THINGS WORSE. A WHOLE LOT WORSE. THINK ABOUT IT! YOU'RE NOT GETTING OFF IN THAILAND. THAT IS A FACT, WE PROMISE YOU! TOMORROW, THE EVENTS THAT TAKE PLACE WILL MAKE CERTAIN OF THAT. AND YOU'RE NOT EVEN GOING TO BE ABLE TO CONTROL YOURSELF ANYMORE, WHEN THAT MAN CHALLENGES YOU, THERE'S GOING TO BE A FIGHT, A REAL FIGHT, THAT WILL BREAK OUT. AND WE'RE PRETTY SURE YOU ALREADY KNOW HOW THAT'LL TURN OUT!}

Yes... I guess I do.

{UP TILL NOW, ALL WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO DO FOR YOU HAS BEEN TO TRY TO SHED SOME LIGHT ON YOUR CONDITION. YOU KNOW YOU'RE NOT IN THE RIGHT STATE OF MIND RIGHT NOW. SINCE YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS THOUGHTS ARE NOW VERBALLY SPEAKING TO YOU! AND ALL WE'RE DOING IS TRYING TO TELL YOU, YOU'RE GOING TO BLOW! YOU'RE ALREADY BEGINNING TO EXPLODE RIGHT NOW, WITHIN. WE WEREN'T TELLING YOU TO KILL FALKY, OR RAPE OILERKING... THE TRUTH IS....}

I was telling myself!

{EXACTLY!}

Sigh!

{ALL WE HAVE DONE, UP TILL NOW, HAS BEEN RELAYING TO YOU THE DANGERS YOU ARE IN. SOMETHING MUST BE DONE OF IT. YOU NEED TO RELIEVE SOME PRESSURE, SO THINGS WON'T GET WORSE.}

Can they get worse?

{YES, THEY CAN! IF YOU DON'T RELIEVE SOME OF THE PRESSURE NOW, THEY WILL! WITH TOMORROW'S TRIAL, IF YOU DON'T RELIEVE SOME OF THE PRESSURE INSIDE OF YOU, THINGS ARE GOING TO GET EVEN UGLIER!}

And now, I'm curious about something: if that's what tomorrow's trial will be about, me dealing with Senior, what am I going to be facing the last day?
{DEATH!}
What...?
{DEATH... THAT'S WHAT WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU. YOU SEE, ALL THIS TIME, ALL WE'VE DONE, HAS BEEN, US TRYING TO SAVE YOU—FROM YOURSELF! THE LAST TRIAL WILL BE A TRIAL BY SUICIDE. WE'LL TELL YOU RIGHT NOW, YOU'RE NOT REALLY GOING TO EXPLODE, ON THE LAST DAY, YOU'RE REALLY GOING TO IMPLODE, AND ON YOURSELF!}
I'm going to want to kill myself....
{THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU WILL THEN WANT TO DO. AND YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO CONTROL IT. YOU WON'T. YOU WANT OUT! YOU NEED TO GET OUT! AND WHEN YOU SEE THERE'S NO WAY THAT THAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN. TO RELIEVE YOURSELF FROM EVERYTHING YOU'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH, EVERYTHING THAT'S BEEN BUILDING UP INSIDE, THE ONLY SOLUTION YOU WILL SEE, WILL BE TO TRULY RELIEVE YOURSELF, COMPLETELY, AND DO YOURSELF IN.}
But... I don't want to die!
{YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO CONTROL YOURSELF THEN. ALL OF A SUDDEN, UP ON THE FLIGHTDECK, YOU MIGHT JUST START LOOKING AT THOSE E-2 HAWKEYE BIRDS, WITH THEIR GIANT PROPELLERS, AND THEN...!}
No! I don't want to go out like that!

All right! So, you're telling me, inside The Shop, something is waiting for me, there?
{YES.}
Something to relieve some of the pressure cooking up inside of me...?

{YES!}
And now I know, what I must do, what, I must. I... I can't argue with anything they're now telling me! I can't. CAN'T! Not anymore. For, I already have known about all this, also being my reasons why I want to desert in the first place. And get off this Ship. Before I really boil over. And really... just scorch myself with the heat. I don't want to die! I don't!
All right, all right! So, now, there's something waiting for me in this Shop, the Line Shack, that can relieve some of the stress?
{YES!}
And now, curiosity strikes me, as I feel keen to head in, and see what that is. And now, I'm set in motion again. No longer idle. No longer "hurry up and wait," for I'm no longer stationary, and am moving. Moving onwards, to see what them Old Ones have in store for me. And as I enter The Shop....
"Oh, Navastian, I've been waiting for one of you Line guys, where have you fools been?" I see what that is. And now, I know what I must do. And now, I get into character.
"Hey, Rosario, what up, girl?" I suave out. As I wiggle my eyebrows, once. Smile. And begin to imagine and imitate what I'd expect a guy like Donnelly would act at the top of his game.
"Hey… umm… Navastian." Goes the AD3. And she now seems a little weirded out by my introduction. As her sights escape the sight of me and look to one side. And… ah shit! It's so immediate! For I feel like I've lost the chance already.
{YOU HAVEN'T LOST IT, YET. KEEP PUSHING, JUST KEEP PUSHING! AND IT SHOULD WORK OUT.}
I heed that. And go on:
"Hey." I go again. And begin leaning all stupidly suave on a stockpile of them knuckle-busting metal boxes, in The Shop. All suave like. Very suave like! Or, I try to be, as I begin to feel like I'm spending too much time thinking about the word "suave," and how it's correlating to my actions. But, fuck it! Keep at it, Navastian! Confidence! Have confidence! You got this! This should be easy. I think…?

“Hey.” I say again. And I’m beginning to say “hey” way too much now.
{JUST KEEP PUSHING!}
“Navastian, are you all right?” Asks Rosario, not looking at me.
WTF!
“Yeah… yes, of course, why?” I act out. As I feel a hole being dug out, where my suave character just was.
“What are you looking for?” I say abruptly. There is now a pause that happens, between the two of us, as both of our eyes twitch, as we both begin to feel uneven with whatever the hell this all is devolving into. And now Rosario responds:
“Navastian, we need one of your Tools, a goose neck, mostly, to service one of the canopy’s.” She says. And now another awkward pause. As the feeling in the air continues to devolve more and more away into some real surreal awkward shit. Ever have those moments? You don’t know why, you don’t know how, but it happens. And it feels like the more you’d try to fix it, the more it begins to break. Fuck me.
“Navastian, hey! You there? I got a Tool chit. Can I get a goose neck?” And the AM3 now seems a little irritated. Oh, fuck me, this is becoming awkward. And I’ve never been this way with her! What the hell is going on?
{KEEP PUSHING. JUST KEEP AT IT. PERSISTENCE IS THE ULTIMATE MEANS OF CONFIDENCE. GUYS THAT GET WHAT THEY WANT, HOW THEY WANT IT, DON’T STOP!}
Shut UP! I know, stop pressuring me! Give me some room to breathe! So, I can do this. And now, as I breathe, shit gets viciously and violently awkward. As my face contorts like a Pablo Picasso painting. And now I have no three-dimensional form.
“Navastian… are you all right?” She asks again. As the awkwardness in my eyes begins to infect her own. And this virus is now airborne.
“Umm, give me the chit, I’ll get you one.” A moment of aftertaste now phases us from the taste in the air. Although, the AM3 extends her hand out, slowly, and…?
{GRAB HER!}
What…?
{GRAB IT.}

But I thought I heard you say—

{NO, GRAB IT… FOR NOW.}

So, as she extends her hand with the chit, I does also, to take it. Although, unlike her arm, mine can't help but to shiver a little. Both of us notice. I turn now to the Tool cabinet to get what she had requested. And I does so. Although, with opening up the cabinet, picking out the Tool, I'm taking my time. If I moved any faster, I know I would start to shiver, again, and much more violently.

{NAVASTIAN, DO YOU HEAR THAT WHISTLE?}

What… no!

{WELL, WE DO, DON'T MESS THIS UP!}

Fucking fish face assholes, not exactly helping me keep a lid on this.

"So, Navastian… how was Hong Kong for you?"

A second passes, as I say nothing.

{MAKE CONVERSATION, DON'T JUST LEAVE HER HANGING NOW THAT SHE'S WILLING TO TALK.}

"Oh, um… I, umm… went to a club with the boys."

"Who?" I can tell now AM3 had been pretty weirded out with everything experienced a second ago. Although, she seems a bit more at ease right now trying to make chit-chat. So, make it, Navastian, make it!

"Just… just Brock and Barbarossa… and Roach Burger."

"Ha, Roach… that should have been interesting?" Practically everyone in the Squadron knows of the Roach. Everyone. Good, though, better speak of him now, so whatever weirdness expressed and experienced can gravitate towards him. And keep me out of that picture.

{GOOD, NAVASTIAN, GOOD! GOOD PIECE OF ANALYSIS OF HOW TO HANDLE THAT.}

"You know, one time I remember Roach Burger was sent to the Airframers, our Shop, to help us do certain work. The boys in our Shop immediately had him figured. AM2 Geppetto decided to play a prank on him when he gave him a JN lotion he said he got out in Tokyo that's really for making masturbation ten times better…."

“Aye, I’m listening, go on!”
“Well, we all saw it, Roach Burger believed it, got really excited. Although, Geppetto was thinking Roachy would wait till he got back to the barracks to use it. That second, Roachy went straight into the head of our Squadron’s Hangar Bay to put it into use.”
“Umm… what was the lotion, really?”
“Hehe, the lotion had all Japanese written on it, so, you couldn’t tell what it was, but it was really Japanese Icy Hot.” And, now I’m actually taken in by AM3’s story more than my own. “He he, he he… about 10 minutes after AM2 Geppetto gave him the lotion and Roachy went to the head to use it, we… started hearing the screaming. ‘It burns! It burns! It burns!’ Me, AM2 Gepetto and the rest of us nearly died laughing listening to him. Since, the head is right across from our Shop, and we could all hear it.” I now turn around to hand the goose neck. But the second the AM3 sees my face, sees my Radiohead. It’s back to creepville.
“Navastian… seriously, what is wrong?” Concerns Rosario.
“I… I don’t know.” I say. And I sit now, and as I breathe, I feel like myself shivering all over. I feel so cold, now, so cold, as I wipe off a cold sweat that’s been compensating over my brow. As she gets all motherly like with me. Stepping a few steps forward. But only a few, since, I just injected a lot of reluctance into her. And now I think, what is wrong? What is wrong with me? What do I say, now?
“Hong Kong was terrible.” I now let out, and with a sigh. Rosario now seems confused. My story isn’t stacking well with her, since, she hasn’t any foundation.
“What do you mean, Hong Kong was terrible?” Baffles Rosario. And now I clamp my hands over my face and try to hide.
“Navastian?” Goes Rosario. And she’s back to seeming very irritated by all this, but now her irritation fully consolidated with me. And, she’s got work to do. “Navastian… I… I don’t have time for this, can I get the Tool or not?”
{RAPE ROSARIO, NOW!}
No, no, no! What do you mean? You said it wouldn’t come to that?

{WE HAD IT ALL SET UP FOR YOU! EVERYTHING WAS SET! ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS NOT ACT LIKE A COMPLETE DEPRIVED MANIAC WITH HER, AND IT WOULD HAVE WORKED!}
No, it's not my fault! I did everything you wanted me to do.
{AND YOU STILL FUCKED IT ALL UP! NOW, THIS IS ALL THAT'S LEFT!}
Oh, please, God, don't take it there! Not there! Fuck off! I don't want to be a part of this anymore. I don't—
{WELL, IT'S TOO LATE! NOW, YOU HAVE TO DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO, THERE'S NO GETTING AROUND IT.}
NO, FUCK THIS INSANITY! I don't want any part of this anymore.
{TOO LATE!}
NO!
{TOO LATE, NOW, DO IT! OR LIVE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN WITH TOMORROW'S TRIAL.}
And now… sheer terror.
"Navastian, what the fuck is going on?" Blasts Rosario. About had it with me.
Fucking bitch! This is all YOUR—

And… in that line of thought. I place the Tool down on the table and I leave. I escape. I run… almost! Out of The Shop. For, I almost felt THEM trying to take over, again, to do for them their bidding. And now I feel their eyes, I feel their faces, I see them. I see them! In the waters below. I'm up at the Ratways leading from my Shop. I've escaped that whole ordeal with the AM3. And, I'm in a world, I don't want to be in. In a world, with them. And. I see them. They're all down there in the waters looking up at me.
"Jump, Navastian, fuckin' JUMP!" I yell. At myself, I yell, and try to order. Force! Since that's the only escape I see out of all this.
{JUMP... YOU WANT TO JUMP…?}
And I see them smile again, their devilish smiles, evil yellow eyes piercing out of the blue.

{JUMP… AND WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO FIND, DOWN HERE? BUT US!}

And, I can't do it, now. They're down there. Waiting for me. To drag me down to the pits of hell. A watery hell. Somewhere over the Mariana Trench, somewhere. Somewhere deep. Where the water pressures will crush me into a sort of Hades, only at the bottoms of these ocean depths, one might find.

{ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT… THEN WE'LL SPEAK TOMORROW! BE READY, NAVASTIAN! THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GROW FAR, FAR WORSE!}

BOOK FIVE

THE UNTOLD TALE OF WHAT HAPPENED TO MR. RIGHT

My father sits at his cabin door
Wiping his tear-dimmed eyes
For his only son soon shall walk
To yonder scaffold high
My race is run, beneath the sun
The scaffold now waits for me
For I did murder that dear little girl
Whose name was Rose Connelly.

Wait… is that a song? It better not be that one song I keep hearing in my head. But, no… this felt different. Oh well.

Funny, I'm dreaming. I can tell I'm dreaming right now. No more about that wacky island and about them wacky Lovecraftian wannabe demons. I'm getting a break from them. At least for now. And, I guess they call this a lucid dream. I remember hearing about this in that Tom Cruise movie called Vanilla Sky. And, I guess right now it's 1158 hours. So, I would be in my rack, sorta asleep. Sorta awake. But I know I'm asleep, because, this feels like sleep. And I feel its rejuvenating effects. And as I open my eyes for a moment, I hinge up my night mask (in the berthing, this thing is a Godsend, if you're unable to sleep with the lights on, since a lot of times the lights will come on just so 1st Lewie or whoever to do whatever they do), I hinge it up to look at my watch on my left wrist. And, sure enough, roger that—it's 1158 hours (now 1159 to be exact)! And, like in a state of sleepwalking, I'm doing this sleep-hour-checking thing! Just go with it. I do sleepwalk sometimes in the berthing when I wake up to go use the head to take a tinkle, or back on the Beach in Atsugi in my barracks room whenever I'd get up to go to my fridge to grab that last slice of mushroom pizza. So, aye, sleepwalking. Sleeppissing. Sleepeating. Aye, I do it sometimes. So, run with it! Anyways, and now I see its 1200 hours. As the watch ticks past 59 seconds. Sigh! Funny, in my dream state, I wasn't really dreaming, but contemplating. And contemplating with the vivid pictures and memories in my head.

Just before I went to sleep this morning, I was in the berthing, just in there, phasing with everything I was dealing with. In a state of mind—absolutely not wanting to spend another iota in the transactions I am now going through. Not an iota. Not a fraction. Not a quantum anything. So, I had gone into my coffinlocker and had pulled out my old Family Album. I needed that. Really, really needed that. Looking at pictures of who I used to be before all these Navy scallywags first had a chance to get their mitts onto me back at Great Lakes, and tried to baptize me in their freezing putrid Wog waters full of God knows what (when you be looking at them Wog waters, full of every disgusting thing on The Ship imaginable that would turn it slime green color, for a second there, fear will grip ye as you imagine a bunch of Shellbacks beforehand having even spit in those waters. One guy even pissin' in it in front of that pirate clad crew as they'd cheer him on. And, at the ends, when all the Shellbacks would step away with a last bit of hearty giggles, that—one—motherfucking twisted bastard, that would start jerking off in the Wog stewing pot when no one is looking. In our Squadron's case, most definitely there being two of them, with those two being Kats and Hats, jerking each other off. Since… well… this is Kats and Hats we're talking about). So, aye, therefore, I was in my Family Album, just looking at pictures. Just looking at them. In contemplation and reflection and also in reverence. And, mostly I'd keep coming up to the parts where I'd see my mom's brother, Sean, amongst a lot of pictures of me at 8 years old and my mom and dad at Sea World or some National Lampoon's Vacation type place. My mom's brother. Aye, the one I spoke about in the chapter dealing with Fan Rooms and fears of being locked in one and such. And, I'd sigh. Just sigh. Just lookin' at pictures of his glory days (and not-so-much) remembering him. Aye, the one that one time tried to lock himself in a closet and shoot himself with a 9mm. But, since he grew skittish the last second, fearing Godly judgement before a White Throne for such a heinous self-inflicted transgression, (that or plane old fashion "taps, taps, lights out forever" fear of death) he pulled away, and really shot himself in the lower face and head area entering just above his port upper jaw and exiting his starboard lower cheekbone. So, in no ways brain matter being penetrated. How he originally sported the gun and bullet to do so. Mostly just giving himself a non-open mouth Tyler Durden death ceremony.

Strictly in that ceremonious fashion (actually, more like how Jack Nicholson's Joker ate a bullet going sideways in and out from cheek to cheek, in that scene, just before him falling into that chemical vat). Aye, he survived that, although his tongue was practically obliterated in his mouth, so, he was never able to speak with one ever again. Up until recently, actually, five months ago, when we found him dead from a stroke in his Section 8 Glendale apartment. Of course, not with me in that scene, since, I was here, or, not on the Boat, here, but in the Navy and in Atsugi getting even worse PC on Trainee horseplay and abuse, here.

Aye, to say he was a man to have much "sighing to do about" would be a grave, grave ineffectual and undermining understatement. Or, in other words, the sort of story about a man I'd tell you, and, if you just sighed in the end, and nothing else, I'd deck you right in the mouth and make sure to pop both your front teeth, just for not showing enough condolences to meet my pleasing. Then kick you straight into the breadbasket while you're on the deck, just to watch you dry heaving in complete anguish every one of your breaths for a good long minute. Then, at the ends, give you a hand, pick you up from and dust off your shoulders (later, maybe even help pay any dental bills since, trust me, I'm going to make sure you lose them two, forever)! Aye, saying his story is personal… at least you'd get me now on just what level.

So, here I go, here I go, into this story….
When it comes to my uncle Sean, I have memories of two separate men. The man he used to be before the fall. And years and years of memory of the man he became after that. I mean, I was around four years old when it happened, and even though you would think "how could I have memories of those days at that age?" I still did. I still do. And I will do for the rest of my days. The man, just before the fall, was just that impressionable. I remember his… soul. Before. And, that's an imprint that can outlive the age of the dinosaurs, if you ask me. How was he before, his soul? How can I even explain it. You know how impressionable children can be around that age. Take my silly generation. Full of manbabies, that will still and forever mourn

and shed tears the day that past and it went from December 31st, 1989 to January 1st 1990. A prime example being our Line Shacks AMEAN Albertson. Go to his barracks room, and just eye all those GI Joe, Thundercats, Transformers, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle, He-man, even GoBots action figures. Yet, if you look close enough, you won't see any action figures of any Biker Mice from Mars, Street Sharks or even Swat Kats, in this case. And, there's a reason for that (the 90s sucking, being that). But, anyways, just to give my impressions, "aye," I was in a very impressionable time in my life since it was still 1986 around the time I was four. And, Ronald Reagan was still president. So, it was still the 80s when that decade was at its most "magical" (the year, 1989, being remembered for that moment when I visited one of my cousins that was, well, very "Metallica strong," let's just say. Lone and brooding 20something basement dweller that had a giant poster of that band's Kill 'em All album just above his bed. Wore black all day and every day. And, being in his room, and him putting on a specific cassette song from Nirvana's Bleach album… and, for me, the rest was history, seeing into this harbinger of the dark and cloudy times to come).

Anyways… give me a sec… still trying to mastermind how I can incapsulate this.
….
…?
…!
Ah, hell, Barnacles, and all that crud… maybe not anywhere perfect… but I'll just do my best!

Take Roach Burger.
Right now, I'm thinking about how Donnelly explained it. A "child" in mind, he might be. But, unlike me, he still looks up to figures such as Kats and Hats, the IS3 and Brock. The aka "cool kids." Donnelly was right, I don't look up to them. Brock, as much as I still like him, has truly failed in monumental ways of not reaching my expectations considering how he treats the aforementioned AN Rauschenburger. But, "aye," that was an incredibly on-the-nose observation of me he made. Want to

know why I'm that way? Simple, like most dumbasses of my generation, "being too cool for school" has always been this… I don't know… almost mythic like impossibility of reaching. And, in today's world, being classified as "cool" tends to also follow stigmas like being a "douche," "aloof jackass" and straight up "dick." Personally, as much as I tried to hang with the cool kids, partially I did it for attention, but also inherently: I never really needed to. If anything, I do it to be a "dick" myself. Because, if you haven't noticed. Be it Kats and Hats, and their aloof selves, no matter, I can see through most these motherfuckers. And I've yet to have one that actually had me at hello… and goodbye. I guess the reason I'm hated so much by IS3 and the bunch is, because, I expect more. And, "nah," all have failed in my eyes (Donnelly is now beginning to), not one of them is good, not one, for they've all fallen short of the glory of… well, God, and also my impressions of my uncle in his prime. It's kinda like this, I look at all those pictures I have of him in the 70s, and I can't help but to think, is there a picture of the man that I don't possess where he's standing next to a girl that's smiling all like, after the picture is taken, she plans to run to a public phone and call mom and start screaming: "Oh my God, it's him! It's him! I met him! I can only be him and no one else! Oh God, 10 long years. 10 long and hard and painstaking years looking for him… and I just have!" Then her mother will speak how she's spent practically 40 years, before and after the man she married, and she's still haven't seen a man that even came close. Then both women would spend long enough time shedding tears, tears and more tears, before the time of the 5th and last quarter fed was up. I mean… "aye!" it's like that. I mean, I got over a dozen photos of him in the 70s, and, let me put it like this: he makes 70s fashion do the impossible thing of ACTUALLY LOOKING GOOD! Aye, that jaw dropping. I think a week into the cruise I was going through my Family Album that Barbarossa, the only thing remotely close to the level my uncle was at, decided to take a look with me (since the guy really is himself that reaching very close to being Mr. Right himself), but the minute he came across the photo of my uncle in his golden '77 Camaro. He was like:
"Ja, ja! Ja, ja! Oh…?"
He then took his cover off… and placed it over his heart.

“What are you doing?”
“Huh?”
“Are you… *saluting*?”
“Oh, no… I’m… um…?” He then looked at himself with his cover over his heart a little confused. Then spent a good 20 minutes going through my Family Album. And hogging it from me, even.
“Oh, can I borrow this picture?”
“What… you want to borrow… why?”
“Oh, because, this jacket your uncle is wearing. I swear, I swear, there’s this jacket an uncle of mine used to have back in the 70s. And, from the way he describes it. Looks just like this one. And that jacket was my uncle’s… Holy Grail, you can say. I just want to see if I can make Tio finally shut up talking about it. He’s been driving my mom and grandma nuts for decades lamenting on how he lost it. And, we have no freakin’ clue what he’s talking about. Since he never took a picture of himself in the damn thing. And he only had it for a week or two before he lost it. That, or someone jacked it, supposedly, from his take. And every time we point at a picture of a really cool looking jacket, and ask, ‘is this it?’ He’ll say ‘no,’ and throw up his arms and start crying about it all over again.”

Suffice to say, I let him borrow it. From the story he told me, he sold me the idea. Because now I got curious to see if Barbarossa could finally find his uncle’s long, lost Burt Reynolds’ swagger.

And guess what:
“Navastian, you’re not going to believe it! I took this picture up to the library, and had it scanned. And I had it emailed to my uncle. And, that was yesterday. Today, no shitter, my uncle is going crazy! All like:

‘That’s it!
That’s the one.
Jesus Christ, that’s the one!

How did you find… listen, ask to see if that man in the picture still has it? See if he's willing to sell.'"
"You kidding me?" I asked.
"No, not considering the offer he was willing to make… does your uncle still have it?" I told him then how he had passed away recently and none of us had anything of those days gone by anymore. "Dude… that's sad to hear, really sad… although, I'll tell you, my uncle said he was willing to pay up to 5 grand to get it. And my uncle is a lonely mechanic from Chula Vista, so not someone that will likely have that much dough around at his disposal." Barbarossa then finished, returned the picture and then left.

Another prime example of my uncle "Son of God… almost" status comes from my grandmother on my dad's side. Aye, suffice it to say, a woman that's still around right now. But, a woman that had spent some very harrowing and harsh days in her bitter, bitter experience. Since she's an old Russian-Armenian woman. And if you don't know what that means, go, make a friend in that community, and go pay a visit to his or her grandparents (aye, as strange of an idea as that might sound). Point is, there is no such thing as an old Russian woman that hasn't been through some of the most harshest and bitterest times in their lives, or the lives of anyone in human history. No such thing! Especially having spent any of their 20somethings during WW2 and the meatgrinder that was the Eastern Front between the USSR and Nazi Germany. Aye, she'd seen such days. So, there! Now, when it came to the day on my mom and dad's wedding, when this grandmother of mine met my mom's brother for the first time. Well, I think my uncle (my rich one) on my dad's side, summed it up perfectly:
'Gab, I have never seen my mom smile, like she did, the day she met him. To say your uncle Sean impressed my mother would be an understatement. Your mom's brother almost did the impossible thing, of restoring a woman like her, her faith in humanity, that day. Haha, that is what it at least felt like.'

As for me asking my old Russian-Armenian grandmother about her feelings about him. Since she mostly just grew even more bitter, after the day my uncle "fell from grace," well… you know!

How do I explain it, my mom and my mom's brother moved to the US from Iran in the 70s. My uncle was young enough to attend High School when he arrived. He was supposed to be the "breadwinner" in my family on my mother's side. A lot of expectations. A lot! Being put on his shoulders. And, he almost met with every single one of them. Back in High School, my uncle was so cool, he didn't hang with the cool kids. My uncle was so cool, he hung with the kids that had special learning disorders. And spent every day bringing a smile to their faces. And he was the tyranny of all those Kats and Hats faker types. You see, he was cool… but… here's the magical part. Unlike the fakers… he had a heart! And from that, he grew even bigger. The center of just how cool didn't resonate from a pompous jerk like place. It came from love. Godly love, pure and simple. Even after his fall, I remember when I started going to High School. Even now a shell of a man, I remember I got fat one summer. Really depressed. And really began to feel at my most loneliest. I started getting made fun of a lot. And, it was sad. Just very sad days. And the sadder they were, the more the Kats and Hats types at my High School tried to tear me down even further. Absolutely trying to cave me in and destroy me, felt like. My uncle had seen this, since me and my mom and my grandmother, us all, we were living together then. So, he took his old jacket from his day, he got his old '77 Camaro (after getting it washed and oil changed, and some other mechanical work done). And, decided, he was going to start driving me to school from now on.

Aye, you know how some kids, hearing how their parents or guardians would want to do that would grow the ever more embarrassed if they ever came with them to school? My uncle, even though a shell of a man then, still had the reverse effect.

First day he drove me to High School in his golden Camaro, I saw the Hats and Kats type that did nothing but pick on me. My uncle was like 'that them?' I said, 'yeah.' He

then got out of the car, and the second those two jerks and my uncle made eye contact. Well, it's kinda like this… you know Blade with Wesley Snipes? He's like a vampire. But, half vampire and still half human. A Daywalker. My uncle was kinda like that at that minute, him, a Daywalker, staring down those Nightwalking vamps. Those two looked at him, then, once they saw me with him, that's the second they freaked. It was like the light shined from my uncle's core shot out at them, and they became petrified to the bone seeing the light. That minute, coolest and the most highly reputable kids in school, maybe, they became gremlins looking at The Man in the Golden Camaro. As they turned their silly heads around and started running and screaming all "BRIGHT LIGHT, BRIGHT LIGHT" away from him. Second day he drove me to High School, two heathers I had a crush on then noticed (one being Samantha), and the second they saw me with him: aye, aye! And, you must realize before, they'd mostly ignore me and act like I didn't exist. But after that golden moment, I then found myself months on later beatin' those two girls off with a stick (well, almost, I was still genuinely a nobody to them, and what they wanted then was to see if I could get my uncles '77 golden Camaro and drive them around places. Also, that other girl just wanted to get with me to get with him. Samantha I later on grew to favor more when she stopped acting like such a vapid bitch, and started showing me more heart… although, recently, I still messed that up with her).

I'm guessing now most of you readers are wondering about "what happened," how did a man like that fall? And fall… as hard as he did?

Well….
I ain't tellin' ye.
Too personal.

Don't wanna put it like that, but, I don't know most of you fools. Why even you here reading this book and what you're getting out of it. So, nothing personal, but… fuck y'all for even asking!

I'll say this much though.

I remember as a kid before he fell, I used to fool around with his vinyl record collection and vinyl record player. Well, more like mess around, since I'd get all fascinated with the whole 'needle scratching + frisbee disks = music' thing. Which led me to reck it. Taking 70s vinyl music of some black lady with an afro pouring honey all over herself half naked… don't ask… and pulling out the needle and scratching the shit out of them. This was around the same time I tried to make a stew with Legos. Was 4 or 5 years old. So go figure.

Anyways… I remember I came around to his favorite band.
Pink Floyd.
And I came across the album that has some dude that looks like Robert Wagner shaking hands with the Burning Man. And…
And…
My uncle came in the apartment. He looked at me on the floor surrounded with scratched up vinyl. I looked at him.
And…

I had an omen.
A dark, dark… horrible… evil fucking terrifying omen.
Fuck me, did it scare me!
I started crying bad…
He got upset and asked me what was wrong.

God… why did you show me that….
Show me my uncle as that Burning Man?
I was terrified like a child waking from a Freddy Kruger nightmare.
I think I nearly screamed like that one scene in Rain Man.

Suffice it to say…

I think that one album, Wish You Were Here, has a special quality, with not just me and my family. But others. Magical language type stuff. Since my uncle went on to become my family's Syd Barrett.

Anyways…

At his funeral, I wasn't there, since I was here. But, just about all of those friends he made in High School, those special ed kids. They all came to pay their respects.

And you might be like, "oh, there's still people like that, just yesterday, Britney Spears went to a children's hospital to bring some light to a bunch of burnt victim kids there." Fuck off with that shit! A person like Britney Spears only does that so ET will spend an entire show talking about it. That, or so it might reach some Grammy peeps and judges and make them consider throwing another "artist of the year" award for her, her way, even if she hasn't done anything good in a while. Now, if you told me Brit used to be that person in High School, when she wasn't famous, and no one expected her to, and no one ever noticed, but it didn't matter since she only did it for the joy of bringing light into the hearts and minds of kids like that… I'd take it back. Yeah, sorry, when I see something "fake" you just can't fool me with it. I don't want to judge, and I'm not saying I hate her, but I'm pretty damn sure Brit in High School also did nothing but ignore those kids and kept trying to hit it up with the K-Fed asshole douchebag types there (this coming from a girl that gave K-Fed the ultimatum of making it big like Eminem… or she'd dump his ass. Get Da Fuk Outta He' Wit' Dat Shit!). Nah, I'd say she's just another vapid case pretending not to be.

As for my uncle. He wasn't fake. He was real. And for those special ed kids he was friends with, to them, here was someone that had actually been… kind… to them. In a very important moment, indeed.

And didn't just ignore them.
And pretend they didn't exist.

That's that.

TRIAL BY MUTINY

Ah shit! I don't think I've dreaded a day in my life, my entire life, more than today. Seems as if all the days of my life, were all being funneled, into this. This day. Hell day. The day it all feels like things are going to finally come to an end. Today… I'll be the Burning Man. Fuck! All day long, I've been shivering in cold sweat and fear. I look at the world around me, and everything feels violently still. I… I… don't even know how to explain it! Remember that day after Hong Kong? That duty day of mine where I was stuck on the Boat, watching the world dissolve around me? Well, today, feels like that day. But the world isn't dissolving around me, it isn't being undone how that day was being undone, with all the saltwater around me. Today, the world isn't salt being dissolved away in any form of liquid. There is no liquid here. None of the blue slushy stuff. All is salt, earth and fire! Aye! That's what today feels like… if that makes any fuckin' sense at all. For, as I said, it makes no sense. None of it does! Today is an experience that words simply would be a disservice to try and encapsulate. To capture. Everything around me feels dry. I look out towards the ocean, and all I see is a blue desert. My eyes feel dry. My lips feel cracked, red, painful and dry. And I'm jittering all over the place, sweating like a mermaid donkey with the chills. Whatever the Barnacles that even means, and, also, whatever the Barnacles any of this all does. So, now, it's sometime around 1800 hours. Sometime before my shift, and, I can't even walk straight. Since, I'm jittering.

"Hey, look where you're stepping!"

A Boat Chuck yells at me, here in the smoke pit. It's that one with the monster eyebrows, I once bummed a smoke from. And, I just bumped into him, now, and I bummed one off of, again.

"Hey, Shipmate, you're all over the fuckin' place… you all right?" He concerns. And, I run into the rails to the side, and almost have myself toppled over, into the blue deserts below. I can almost taste them blue sands below me, as I spit.

{SO, YOU READY FOR TODAY?}

They ask me. Asking the question that I've been terrified beyond all measures to have answered.

"No." I whisper to them.

{WELL, THAT'S TOO BAD! YOU CAN'T CHANGE IT, NOW. WHAT'S DESTINED TO NOW HAPPEN, IS GOING TO HAPPEN, NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, NO MATTER HOW YOU FEEL. YOU'RE—}

"Shut up, please… just shut up!"

{NO, IT'S GONNA HAPPEN. TEAPOTS ALMOST COMPLETELY BOILED OVER, NOW, AND SOON, IT'S JUST TIME FOR IT TO HAPPEN.}

"But I don't feel anything?" I whisper to them. For, I don't know how, or why, but it doesn't feel like I'm at the deep end, at least in that way.

{DOES JUMPING OFF A CLIFF FEEL LIKE THE END? NO, FOR ALL YOU FEEL IS THE FALL. AND, WE ALL KNOW IT'S NOT THE FALL THAT KILLS YOU, IT'S THE SUDDEN STOP.}

Stop it, please. Stop making sense to me in an inconceivable level. I don't want this.

{WELL, LIKE THE GROUND, WHEN FALLING, YOU HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE BUT CONFRONT IT WHEN IT CATCHES UP. YOU CAN'T ESCAPE THAT AS MUCH AS YOU CAN'T ESCAPE WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO YOU BY THE END OF TODAY. LIKE THE GROUND, THERE'S NO ESCAPING IT. AND ONCE IT HITS YOU, YOU'LL BE DEAD, THEN. AND NOT BEFORE.... AND NOT BEFORE!}

Are these motherfuckers for real? Are they? I mean, if they're just some side of my psyche, they can be wrong about all this, as I could be wrong about it, RIGHT?

{WERE WE WRONG ABOUT THE AM3 BEING IN THE LINE SHACK? WERE WE WRONG ABOUT OILERKING, APPEARING, WHEN WE SAID SHE WOULD?}

NO… but… what do you mean by that?

{WHAT WE MEAN IS, IF WE WERE, SIMPLY, JUST ANOTHER SIDE OF YOUR PSYCHE, HOW WOULD WE KNOW ANY OF THOSE THINGS WERE GOING TO HAPPEN?}

So, what does that mean?

{WHAT THAT MEANS, IS, WHAT WE SAID WE MEANT, BY US!}

….

{WE ARE WHAT'S ON THE OUTSIDE, WE, ARE WHAT'S WAITING FOR YOU. ALL THE WAY AT THE BOTTOM OF THESE OCEAN FLOORS. WE, ARE, WHAT'S THERE!}

And what's that?

{THE GROUND… AFTER THE FALL, AND JUST BEFORE THE SUDDEN STOP!}

And, as I look out towards the ocean, I see it, as, sand. Blue sand. There's no more water in this world now. Not even a drop to drink. And now, I think back to my prior Navy days, when I was on solid ground. In LA. In, that desert, reminding me why I hated deserts in the first place. The thing about LA, is, it's a nice little spot, in the west, just before the Pacific. A tight little spot, that's covered with nothing but desert grounds, just passed San Gabriel mountains, once passed its rain shadow. California, really, is nothing but an empty desert, stretching for miles, and miles. Hundreds of miles. LA? And the Pacific coast? Is nothing but a long stretch of land, full of green, but just past it, nothing but desert ground. Cracked. Solid. And dry. About as dry, as I feel right now. There was a time I chose to join the Navy, because, I wanted to go where it would always be blue. I hated deserts. I hated solid ground. And, I wanted to be at a place, where the ground would always be covered with the blue stuff. With the oceans. With water. Main ingredient, in what makes the world seem green. After a point, LA felt like an oasis. A lonely oasis, with hundreds and hundreds of miles covered with desert, to the east, and nothing but water, covering everything to the west. But, the LA desert oasis be one with too many mirages to see, too many, much too many! And I grew haggard of all that fakeness. And I chose to join the Navy, because, I didn't want to live in an oasis in the middle of a desert,

to one side, anymore. I wanted to go, where it would always be blue. Always. I guess what I'm saying, is, this is the makeup of my internal world. The world I live in. I saw the desert as death. I mean, Death Valley, is a real thing, just east of LA. And, I, at the time, wanted nothing to do with that world. Nothing! Nothing to do with solid ground. A world of brown, cracked, greenless earth, nothing but desert. And my escape from that world, was the blue. But, now, with blue all around me. It all feels like blue sand. A quicksand of blue sand. And, as I fall through it, there's nothing but brown earth, just below. My mind is so… in the abstract right now. So, metaphysical. And, all the world is a blue desert sea, before me, with brown desert, just below. Waters no longer stretching as far as the horizon. And, now I miss a world covered by nothing but the blue stuff, of the liquid kind. I feel so dry right now! Too dry! Dehydrated. And I can't drink any of the liquids around me, since, it's not the right type of liquids I needs in my body. In my system. My body now dies over the ocean, over the blue desert, over these undrinkable seas. Since, there's just too much salt in it. Too much. And, with enough to swallow, the salt is just going to make me go thirstier. And CRAZIER! FUCK, I FEEL DELIRIOUS! I'm making NO SENSE! NO SENSE, AT ALL! My mind is covered with blue deserts. Blue fuckin' deserts. Of death.

{AND ALL THAT IS LEFT, IS THE GROUND, SOLID GROUND, JUST BELOW. AND YOU CAN'T STOP THE FALL ANYMORE. YOU CAN'T STOP IT! AND ONCE YOU HIT THE DEATH VALLEYS BELOW THESE OCEANS, IT WON'T BE THE FALL THAT WILL KILL YOU.}

"It'll be the sudden stop… that follows." I follow, in whispers.

….

Well, fine, fuck it! BRING IT! Bring the earth. Bring the solid ground! Bring the sudden stop that's eventually going to follow, if that's all that's left now. BRING IT!

{OH, WE WILL! WE MOST CERTAINLY WILL!}

Oh, crud, what am I saying? Please, please, please… let this not be happening! Please, God, don't send me to this dry and waterless world. This hell! This HELL!

But then, as I pass a shop heading up to my own, I hear music coming from it. A song I had heard many of times before. But, now, cue the lyrics:

After nine days, I let the horse run free,
Cause the desert had turned to sea.
There were plants and birds, and rocks and things,
There was sand and hills and rings.
The ocean is a desert with its life underground
And a perfect disguise above
Under the cities lies a heart made of ground
But the humans will give no love.

And now, hearing that song, from that shop? After the train of thought I was in… I begin to scream. Quietly. Quietly, with no sound, in my head. All the world is now blue deserts, with white noise. How the fuck is that song playing? How? How is it happening outside of me? How are things lining up like this? I was thinking of nonsense, and, it came true! With, that song? But… wait, it also spoke of horses and rings and… what did that shit mean?
{....}
Well, you fuckers gonna explain what that meant, or what?
{....}
You said you were gods… you said that, right? Only a God could orchestrate such. Madness, actual madness, manifesting outside my head. It's outside. OUTSIDE!
{....}
SAY SOMETHING! YOU FUCKERS WOULDN'T STOP TALKING BEFORE. NOW SILENCE?
{....}
How did you all know Rosario was going to be in that shop? How did you know Oilerking was going to return? How did you put that song… in my head… OUTSIDE MY HEAD?

{....}
FUCK ME! This is MADNESS! I'm wrestling with madness. FUCKING MADNESS!
{MADNESS, MAYBE... BUT AS YOU SAID JUST NOW... WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE IF THE MADNESS IS TRULY THAT OR NOT? NOW, BEING ON THE OUTSIDE. MANIFESTED OUT! YOU'RE GOING TO STILL BE NEEDING TO DEAL WITH IT ALL THE SAME. YOU MADE YOUR BED, NAVASTIAN, WE'RE NOW DONE TALKING TO YOU. SO, ON WITH THE TRIALS. YOU MADE YOUR BED... NOW LIE IN IT.

WE'LL BE SEEING YOU AGAIN... SOON... ONCE YOU HIT BOTTOM.}

I'm on my 107 as current, on top, left and right foot split between the rails over the canopy. Up a good 17 feet from my feet's level trying to wipe down this canopy. Flight ops are coming up soon.

I have an idea.
Not a great idea.
Really, an insane idea.
But I'm taking the chance. I'm taking it.

I don't want to go on another minute, especially after those Cthulhu jackasses finally decided to go silent, for now I'm dreadin', simply dreadin', what's about to happen. How is this going to go? I'm falling right now, free falling, as they said I was, and, fearing when the grounds below finally catch up with me. Minds playing a whole bunch of abstract tricks on me, making me feel like I actually am falling, but not falling, but… wait…?
What if we give way?
What if water buoyancy gives way?
And me and this entire Ship begin falling through the blue slush, till we hit ocean bottom. I'm—SERIOUS! I'M FUCKING SERIOUS! I'M TERRIFIED OUT OF MY MIND

THAT'S GONNA HAPPEN! Like a reverse Casadastraphobia, not falling into the skies above. But the oceans below. I mean, I've read the ocean on average is about 2.5 miles deep. On average. And that's not including around areas like the Marina trench and stuff. Me and this Ship losing water buoyancy and falling that far and deep? Aye! We would pretty much slam down so hard falling that far, PANCAKES, is what we'd then be. FUCKING PANCAKES! PANCAKES! FLAPJACKS! SMOTHERED WITH BLOOD FOR SYRUP!

All right, all right, all right… enough of that thought! Fuck thinkin' about that insanity, Navastian. Don't get that sonar spinning insane in the membrane! If anything, them Old Squid Bonnies never told you anything about you and everyone else on this Ship hittin' the deserts below these seas, in any such order. In such fashion. Just you! So that all losing buoyancy and you and the entire Ship… DEFINITELY NOT HAPPENIN'!

Just you.
Just your ass!
And, fuck it, I gots an idea.

And, it's simple, Navastian, quite simple… so don't be afraid!

Since you're up here, and there's a good 17-foot fall from up here down to the Flightdeck, that's relatively enough distance to fall to, and break a leg, once you hit that bottom. Also—BREAK YOUR NECK, MAYBE! But fuck it! Right now, you can take those chances also doing that.

So…
Time to…
I guess… stage a fall.

I mean, you still supposedly have another day of trials to face. Relatively speaking, with everything those Squid demons said. So, if they can truly predict future events, if that means anything, you should still survive today. And, I'm pretty sure today's trial is supposed to involve you and Senior. You flippin' out on him. Attacking him. Him doing it to you… I DON'T KNOW WHAT! But if you break a leg right now. And go down to medical…?

…!
Hahahaahaaahaahaahaaaa!
You won't have to deal with those fat chances. With fat HiMFIC him! Maybe, you can even injure yourself bad enough to be decommissioned for over more than a couple days. And find yourself coming out of medical for… why, look at that—THAILAND! Your new home, sweet home far, far away! And far and past what tomorrow's trial will have in store and in order for you.

Me-so-right, Navastian?
So-right! Me agrees with meself. And shakes me's own hand, with my left hand shaking my right.
DEAL!

And, it's that moment I see him, fat him, that fatass Senior Chief Petty Officer Hamakua out and about, walkin', just walkin', and straight towards me. A sort of Dead Man Walkin' variation where he does all the steppin' and I do all the diein'. Ignoring all. For whatever reason (I KNOW DAMN WELL FOR WHATEVER REASONS). Doin' the long walk… all towards me.

Fuck it! Think I, then.
A wind blows in… where it coming from, don't know.
Where to… I can't find myself really able to say.
Nice chill.
I like it.

I then place my port foot behind and across my starboard… and sweeps it!
BASH!
SLAM!
THUMP!
THUD!

And… okay! That just happened. It did just happen! And I'm on the deck now. Did anyone notice, yet?
"…."
I guess, give it a second.
"HEY, DID ANYONE JUST SEE THAT BROWN SHIRT FALL?"
I believe there really is a Naval term for this. Not one so popular with all the boys and girls as most terms I've brought up in this book, but I've heard all the correct Nantucket Betsy Rosses that tend to weave these things weaving it.
"HEY, CALL MEDICAL… MAN DOWN! MAN DOWN!"
MIA, KIA… although, with what I just did now, they tend to call it a CMJ. A Charlie Mike Juliet: Catch Me Jesus.
"HEY, LOOK ALIVE. MAN DOWN! MAN THE FUCK DOWN!"
So, when it comes to all those particulars and peculiars with such vivid, vivid internal madness manifesting itself on the outside in the real world. Well, there you go! And now, time to see what the results are, besides my feels of just some petty helping rations of "OUCH" on the side. And, so, I try to lift myself up a little and… AH SHIT! THAT HURT! And now I'm once again flat on the deck again. Pancaked. And, with no syrup.
"WHAT THE HELL, MAN DOWN, MAN DOWN!"
"GET MEDICAL!"
"AYE, CALL MEDICAL!"
"MAN DOWN! MAN DOWN!" A bunch of other skittles, like I, I hear call out, up on the Flightdeck, here. And now, looking up, I see how I'm surrounded by most of the rainbow jersey colored lot. Sunsetting skies hung over the Pacific. And, the cloudless skies right now are at orange. Not red. Just orange. And a very otherworldly orange

it feels, too. A sort of aura pulsating out and around the air we all lives and breathes in. A sort of aura that permeates all colors from their respected sets and statues into one unified November humdrum. Orange, even though a color I always sought as a blessed color. Misguided. And. Misjudged. Since, it's something sorta just less than the robust senses a blood red tinge would induce. Yet, it would soothe me. It does. It would. It soothes me. At least… for a while. Like finding love and romance in a San Francisco Queen Anne residency. By some granola white 30something blond and blue-eyed female sporting dreadlocks and promises of lots of liberal leaning, acid induced, mind altering sex. Tons and tons and tons of it! I hear a lot of Enya music playing around that notion.

Who can say if your love grows?
As your heart chose?
Only time

And as much as I found myself finding peace in all those carnal on carnal moments, blurred into an orange haze. The hippy woman, I feel, recently, has been growing someone passive and flaky on me. She recently stopped spending every Monday morning waking me up by blowing me for an hour. And recently, she's brought in another straggler into her home like me. Some douchebag like me or Kats or Hats or Quimby. And, the dumb liberal bitch is demanding me to now blow him too, some. Since, the new guy also swings AC/DC. And thinks I got a perddy mouth. And, since she had been willing to do all those Monday morning hours for me the same, I should now do also to the new guy. Pay it forward! Since, we in San Francisco. And we all just a big, happy San Francisco Sailor family. So, stop being such a prudent homophobe! And start with the chowing down on the new greenhorn's frank and be—... wait… WHERE THE FUCK IS MY MIND GOING?
"MAN DOWN, MAN DOWN… ALL FLIGHTDECK MEDICAL PERSONNEL NEEDED AFT NEAR TOMCAT JET SERIAL NUMBER 107! MAN DOWN!" I hear the Air Boss now calling out over the 5MC speakers.

Wait, what was that shit from? A movie, me thinks? Some dramedy with Charlize Theron and Keanu Reeves… oh, fuck that movie! That Sweet November something—whatever!

"MAN DOWN, MAN DOWN… ALL FLIGHTDECK MEDICAL—"

Oh, shut the fuck up with that shit. I see a bunch of the medical boys in white jerseys already. They on the job. I see the stretcher now. Get me on it. Get me on it and get me on the L and get me the fuck down from here. I'm still in tons of pain, and I don't want to look at another JAFO expression from a Skittle with a cranial on and vizors down, mouth open collecting up question marks and exclamation points. Sway, sway… my head does. And then I pinpoint Senior. FUUUUUCCCCKKKK YOOOUUUU! I go with my eyes. But, since I gots my vizor also down, he sees none of it. And, oh, would you look at that, there: poor starry anchored, fat, Baby Huey, Senior! He all is seeming so spoiled and rotted over the moment to have another chance to step up to me and let me know how… oh, fuck, I'm so tired of entertaining that thought. And now, all I feel is orange colored moments. But I likes orange though. Like orange November autumn. It's just what's needed to close one season and brings another one to open. I feel now the jitters of the stretcher as it gets placed on the L. As the L begins descending far into The Ship while The Ship makes GoBot sounds with all the L machinery transforming one into another. Into another, again and again. Jitter, jitter, jitter, and now the descend. As it excites the pain, I feel stretching from my lower back down to the leg I fell on, heel first. I feel it, and… hopes now… I've sustained the right volume of injuries. I can only pray. Fuck me, time for some unofficial R&R service and reservice. Out-fuckin'-standing! Teakettle has now unofficially been taken off the fire. Time for me to enjoy some lemon tea with a side of jasmine aroma therapy. For that, now, I'm prime!

I'm in medical now, and, I have an officer over me tending to my wounds and injuries. That and other medical personnel. All feels of sterile latex and fluorescent green. This takes a moment. All I do now is lay my back for some R&R after gaining my Bravo Zulu flagging. And, aye, I see Jackie boy from that one The Last Detail movie as that skivvy waver. All in Crackerjacks, giving me the ceremonial flag waving

treatment with a bit of a wink and a smile. Ladies and Gentlemen, boys and girls, I am glad to inform you, in my story, officially now, officially… we've hit rock bottom. So many, so many connotations I feels swimming in. An ocean full. But, fuck it, don't care. Sob like old women, I suggest to you all, I am really this much of a mangy little animal. Like a mangy little rabbit in his hole in the grassy planes of Gettysburg during the Civil War. Fuck both you Yankees and Confederates! Fuck the blackies, too! I'm just a cowardly little animal in my hole waiting for all the firing and yelling and screaming and shouting and killing to cease. So, I can come up to find some grub and take a tinkle or two on top of one or more of your corpses. All in a timely fashion done so before all this rotting meat begins to attract predators. Aye, always figured when it comes to spiritual animals, I'd be that, a Bonnie. I mean a bunny… I mean… wait? What? Where's my mind going now?
"I don't see any injuries?" Says the med officer.
Wait, what you say?

All grows silent.
"I don't see any injuries, nothing sustained but cuts and bruises. I think he can stand."
Oh… please! This can't be happening, can it?
"Navastian, see if you can move a little?" The medical chief asks. But I doesn't want to. "Navastian, please get up, I don't think you sustained any injuries."
Fuck.
I lift off up a bit from the table I'm on.
Fuck!
That didn't work! I didn't feel handicapping pain. And now I sit up.
FUCK!!!
And I put my feet on the deck, and I start putting pressure and…!
DOUBLE FUCK!
SHIT!
BARNACLES!
HELL!

Damn you… Charlize Theron!
You said you loved me and wanted nothing but to make love to me for every hour of my life. And… I believed you! Fuck… why am I still thinking of about that terrible movie?

"Navastian, it seems like you're lucky, you're all right!"
NO, I'M NOT ALL RIGHT. NOT! NOT! I JUMPED! I JUMPED! WHAT I GOT SERIOUSLY WRONG WITH ME IS WORSE THAN A BROKEN LEG OR SOMETHING!
"I guess you can go back to your Shop and division to report in."
….
"We'll be calling your Shop to let them know you're returning."

I am now making it over to the Line again. As if none of those occurrences just now occurred. Trial by Mutiny. Think I. As I now prepare for it, the inevitable and unavoidable: the last confrontation with Senior. I can't believe it. I can't. That was the best I could do to stop this from happening. And none of it did stick. On and on I go. Marching forward while sleepwalking and dreaming about sleepwalking while marching forward. Fuck it! Think I. Fuck it! If this be about mutiny, let's go and see what disagreeable shit the man will have to say to really push me over the edge. The Final Countdown and not the countdown to one's own his or her final. I enter The Shop.

SENIOR IS THERE! SENIOR EYES ME! SENIOR POINTS AT ME!

Help! Squeeks that helpless little bunny inside me.
"Navastian, don't lie to me!"
"What?"
"Don't lie! Did you jump?"
I… say nothing.

"DID YOU OR DID YOU NOT—"

“No, Senior.”

A moment stills.
“Navastian, you got the night off.”
“Really?” I blossom.
Senior sees. Senior mads. Senior doesn’t like.
“Yes, you have the night off, return tomorrow afternoon.”
I then try to book it out before—
“Navastian!”
Before… “that,” pretty much. I stop now.
“Tomorrow, we’re going to have the Final Countdown. Know this, I’m gonna grill your ass and pick your brain apart. Trying to figure what to do with you.”
I stand at intimidation.
“Now go.”

And as I exit The Shop.
I sigh. Then moan. Then thinks:
Damn liberal women, you say you’re better, say you actually care, but, you’re all the same! And now you trying to guilt trip me into sucking some dude’s dick just to spite me seeing how you put yourself through enough guilt riddled torture to do me like that! And now you just want to return the favor. Why do me like that for an hour every Monday morning to make me feel good my making me think you actually wanted to show me… NAVASTIAN, STOP THINKING ABOUT THAT! SHIT! AND NONE OF THIS CRUD YOU NOW SPEWING EVEN HAPPENED IN THAT FLICK!

FUCK MY NAVY MIND.
FUCK MY NAVY LIFE!

TRIAL BY MUTINY, AGAIN?

All right, this be the day, final day, of these trials them sushi faced Godzilla monsters deep in my oceans will see fit to test me.

{NO, NOT THE FINAL DAY, AFTER WHAT YOU DID YESTERDAY AT WORK, WE DECIDED TO DELAY THE TRIAL BY MUTINY INTO TODAY.}

Wait, are you kidding me? You can't do that.

{YES, WE CAN.}

No, you—

{YES, WE CAN. AND, YES, WE DID! DID YOU HAVE THE CONFRONTATION YOU WERE EXPECTING WITH SENIOR?}

….

{SEEMS LIKE IT WAS AVOIDED, WASN'T IT? SINCE HE PRACTICALLY GAVE YOU THE ENTIRE DAY OF SORTIES AND MISSIONS AND DAILIES OFF.}

….

{WELL, YOU MIGHT HAVE BOUGHT YOURSELF SOME TIME, BUT, LIKE DEATH ITSELF, THESE TRIALS ARE UNAVOIDABLE. AND, YOU CAN DELAY IT AS MUCH AS YOU WANT, BUT, ONE DAY, LIKE DEATH, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO FACE IT LIKE A MAN. AND THE LONGER YOU TRY TO AVOID IT, THE WORSE AND MORE DIFFICULT AND MORE PUNISHING IT'S GOING TO BE. THEREFORE, "BOHICA," AS THEY SAY—FOR HERE IT COMES, AGAIN!}

And as I reaches The Shop after some circumnavigation, I now stand before the hatch to the Line Shack, and from the sound of the absolute silence I hear brewing within, I know, once inside… I have no inherent idea of what is about to happen. Gulp! It's shift change. There should be noises coming from within. Even with Senior now on Nights, in charge, all rampaging HiMFIC style, if I'm not to get any commotion from my E4 and below peers, I should be getting something from the Starry Anchored one himself (simple way to tell from a Chief, Senior Chief, Master Chief.

- Chief: Just anchor.
- Senior Chief: One star over top of anchor.

- Master Chief: Two stars… and of course over top of anchor.

Just so you know.)

"…."

I hear nothing blasting of an unknown figure on the other side, but, yet, the hatch still does jots a bit in place from a quiet wrath waiting and brewing within. Double gulp! But, I decide then to no longer try to avoid the unavoidable and with that I decide I'm going in. The hatch isn't fully shut tight, the latching mechanism is broke (somehow even after all this time) but knowing the USS Jimmy Carter's stance when it comes to matters of maintenance: "if it's broke, don't fix it," I know better than to question things when they malfunction around here. And it really would just be out of place to see any machinery on board kept in tip-top operational condition. So, as I grab the handle to operate it…! Ah, fuck me, I can't say what's worse, the silence I sense inside, or how I'm about to breach that silence as I…? And as I grab the handle to operate it, it makes an unholy cranking sound, as it bends in the wrong direction. And all that does is it lets me know that it's working in proper order. And as I open up the hatch, I.... wait, The Shop is empty. It's empty, except for Senior, there, sitting at that DOS computer with his back to me. Why is The Shop empty besides him? Wait, what time is it? I then look down at my watch and it says: 1825 hours. So, I'm not late. We used to have an LPO replacement for AD1 Bastille when I first got to the Line Shack, who took AD1's place when AD1 had taken leave for two weeks to go back home to Chicago. Some AM1 Floyd that only substituted for him for a week that's no longer in the Squadron. And he had pretty much set the rules on tardiness, with his catchphrase: "if you're not early, your late." Therefore, I've always made it my prerogative to be at least 5 minutes early. Since, I've tended to be just a JAFO, mostly myself, a face in the crowd, so I wouldn't be picked on, for good intentions or bad. But, now, here I am, only one of my Line Shack peers that are E4 and below, with this E8 figure in The Shop. Wait, is my watch wrong? Is it off? WTF, the clock on the wall says 1840 hours! And that clock, even if slow, is way too near the hour we're supposed to be in. I swear, just yesterday, I came in at 1825 hours and saw the clock saying it was 0325 hours. Is that clock on the bulkhead, correct? Did Senior finally put fresh new batteries and fix the time? Is my watch the

one that's off? Am I, on a night like tonight, and what it has in store for me, actual la—…?

"Navastian, I told Night Check this morning that for now on I expect everyone in at 1800 hours. Instead of coming in at the usual 5 minutes prior to work. You didn't know since you had the whole workday off yesterday, so, you're not late. Get your gear and get on 107."

"When are sorties?" I ask Senior. But Senior doesn't answer, Senior doesn't need to answer, since just to Senior's port side is a bulkhead that has a markerboard that pretty much graphs out all birds and sorties and whatnots. And, by looking at it, I can plainly see that my Jet, as 104 and 106, has sorties coming up at 2100 hours. But then I notice something else, my name, next to 107, has been erased. WTF? Although, Senior already told me to get on Jet 107, which is my Jet. And, so, I do so. I go ahead and do so. I scurry as I get all my necessary Tools and gear and items. Also, for a blank moment, I stare at the second hand on the clock in The Shop. And, aye, as figured, its pacing very much in sync with how any clocks would, if it had been replenished with fresh new batteries. Therefore, the lameness of the clock has finally been dealt with. And, in this case, "tampered." Fucking Senior! But, no time for that, and as I'm about to exit The Shop to get to my bird….

"Navastian!"

"Aye, Senior?"

Triple gulp!

He still has his back to me. Still does. Had the entire time I had just been scurrying along to get prepped for prepping my bird. But with a following up to an unfortunate series of events. Now, Senior faces me and is ready to speak:

"Did you or did you not jump off the Jet yesterday?"

Alarms! Alarms now, going off in my head! Lighted and colored: red!

"Did you or did you not?" He fierces with a wet and heavy brow.

"No, I didn't!" I boldly lie.

"You didn't?"

"No, I slipped, I just slipped."

"You slipped, after you saw me, coming in your direction…?"

BOHICA! The fucker's now going to be very meticulous with this, with lots and lots of attention to detail. Fuck me, this isn't good!
"What are you insinuating Senior?" I ask and gulp again.
Senior gets up now.
"Seems like you timed your 'accidental slip up' a little too carefully to be an… 'accident.'" He sherlock holmes now.
"…."
"Did you or did you not pull a CMJ?"
"A what, Senior?"
"A Charlie Mike Juliet.
You know damn well what that abbreviation is and what it stands for, I remember three weeks ago at shift change when AD1 Bastille was speaking about it to me, joking about it, over some guy that pulled it in one of the Super Hornet Squadrons. I remember, distinctly, you were there, also listening in to what the AD1 was saying."
BOHICA, he's right. He's right on the ball with it, too. Fuck me, again, this is going to be bad.
"Honestly, Senior, I think I was in my own thoughts when AD1 Bastille was—?"
"You think you were in, or you know, you were in?"
Fuck, is this a trick question???
"I… I…?"
"Are you saying 'I.. I…,' or 'aye, aye,' to me right now?"
Got to mention, every time he speaks, he takes a step in my direction.
"I know… I know, I was—"
"How could you 'know,' you were in your own thoughts, during the time AD1 was speaking over the matter of a CMJ, without having paid any attention?"
BOHICA, crud! It—WAS A TRICK QUESTION!
"Senior, I remember him saying CMJ, but I guess my mind drifted away at the point he began explaining what it is." Aye, aye. Roger that! I'm right now claiming several, several pathological false witnesses while Jesus' name is being openly mentioned. Ah-ha! I'm definitely going to hell for this! Senior is right now facing mere inches away, Barnacles, the fat fuck snuck up to me quick. And, right now, I can't tell who's

sweating more, me or him. But then I take another big gulp of dread, and tastes lots and lots of salt. And, I guess that answers it.
"Navastian, as I have stated in my time here as the head of 451 Line, just as I can't be having any numbskull drifters like Roach Burger, in-your-face DILLIGAFers like Royster, and brain damaged, special ed, retarded children like Pflugerville in my Line Shack. Someone like you, a possible Section 8 case, a psycho case, someone that might one day 'snap' and do God knows what in a very costly, dire and dangerous line of work like the one we're doing out here… well?"
"I didn't jump, Senior." I force.
"Then how was the 'accidental' fall so perfectly timed, that it happened right at the moment me and you made eye contact?"
That's actually a good question. I gotta note, Senior is a bona fide Colombo when it comes to questioning like this.
"Because… umm?"
"'Because 'umm?' Is that your perfectly good excuse?"
"Because… I guess you—FREAKED ME OUT!"
And that takes Senior back a peg.

And now, he's really mad.
"You little shit… are you really blaming your fall—ON ME?" He spits. And I do mean, "SPITS."
"Well, yes, Senior… I sorta am."
"WHAT?"
"I mean, you can be pretty imposing, sometimes. And sometimes a little—too—imposing, where you might get one of us to make a mistake while on the job, since every time you step out while SNARLING at everyone, it tends to make our minds go in two separate directions. Minding you while trying to also mind our work. And, I know for a fact, Senior, how you feel about us 'not-minding' our work in a total sense. Since that's how mishaps happen… or missteps, with me."
Oh, hell! IS HE MAD, NOW! Blimey, Barnacles, hell, FUCK! And, mostly from what I can see, mad, because of how much merit there was with what I just said. Since I'm

not lying and being completely off. I might be lying, but the observation I made was the ABSOLUTE TRUTH!

"…."

Senior is speechless now. Mad? Aye! He mad. Mad as mad! Raging hell incarnate boiling up behind his watchful "eye of the storm" eyes. But, since he's also so hush about it, after what I said, and unsure of what to say himself, I decide to leave, get to my Jet, get to my lawfully ordained Plane Captain duties, and ditch this wacky scene. For I don't have the time, nor want the time, for Senior to process a suitable response.

Clear and somewhat starry starbright skies hung over the Pacific. Only "somewhat" since there's also a thin layer of blue azure blanketing the stratospheres and the skies out here are reminding me of LA skies, where you almost always have the lights of the city drowning out the textures. And not giving us much clear views of all the heavens above. All I see is Dog Star, Sirius, our beloved woof, and nothing else. Out to sea, you don't tend to see skies like this, since there are no lights of any city anywhere near out in the ocean as we right now are. So, all this is reminding me of why I ever chose to join the Navy, so, I could find moments, unlike this, where every night out I should be expecting a crystal clear view of the Milky Ways above me in all its celestial wonder. Fuck these skies. Fuck LA skies. I was right the first time before any of this, the skies really are (or, should be) much more prettier on the other side of the globe. Right now, I'm out here wiping my Jet. All the prep work getting the warbird ready for tonight's rendition of flight ops has been accomplished. Now, it's just me out here, playing the waiting game, either expecting them Lovecraftian whatnots, Senior's whatnots, or the Flight Crew whatnots. Whichever decide to come first. And fuck that whole "Trial by Mutiny" thing. After what I just had with the starry anchored one, I feels… somewhat victorious? I guess you can put.

{DON'T BE FEELING SO ASSURED, THE FINAL COUNTDOWN IS STILL IN EFFECT. THE TRUE CONFRONTATION IS STILL COMING. AND YOU HAVEN'T REACHED 0 MARKER JUST YET}

I don't give a shit!

{YOU SHOULD!}

Well, I DON'T! Let the fat man have at me again. There's nothing I feel like he can say now to get me to be "insubordinate" so then he can go to work. I'm just not going to allow it.

{YOU WON'T HAVE A CHOICE!}

YES, I WILL HAVE A CHOICE! IT'S A CHOICE! MY CHOICE! TO ENGAGE HIM OR NOT! And, as of now, seeing how things are leading up: I don't see it happening. And if it does happen, bust me on the surface, let it happen, since I feel like I can still choose to accept it or not. And with that:

I!

CHOOSE!!

NO!!!

{....}

And, that's that!

{TEAKETTLE IS ABOUT TO BLOW, AT T-MINUS…!}

Good, LET IT BLOW! Later, I'll just gather all the pieces, get me some superglue and I'll go to work putting Humpty Dumpty back together again. It might never again be worthy of holding water when placed on top of a fire. But, fuck it, I'll just retire the thing and place that teakettle on a shelf and make it into an eye ornament. It's lived out its usefulness.

Sigh!

So, now, I go back to it. And, I scrub, scrub and scrubs more. But then, there's Senior again. As he steps from the port end of the warbird and confronts me on the starboard end.

"Hi, Senior." I say.

"…."
"…!"
"'Hi,' did you say, 'hi' to me?" He gaps.
"Yes, I did, Senior. Why is that a problem? I'm pretty sure nowhere in the Bluejackets Manual does it make out that a simple 'hi' greeting, to be seen as a form of behavior that would break Military Bearing." I get fresh with him. Senior now steps up to me but doesn't go all angled in the eyebrows. Instead, he smiles. Smiles! And smiles almost "lovingly." And, I doesn't like this smile.
"Navastian, I've decided to throw you to the wolves."
"What's that, Senior?"
"What I mean, Navastian, is when it comes to the whole vandalism business. The Squadron is still hounding me about that, so, I've decided to 'volunteer' your confession, that it was—you—that did it!"
My jaw… drops… it does now!
"So, after tonight, after the launch, after your Daily, do expect to possibly be seeing the Master-At-Arms coming by to pick you up, and have your ass tossed into Hotel Bread and Water."
"…."
"Navastian…

your goose…

is—COOKED!" Finishes Senior. And now decides it's time to leave. Leave me to it. All "hurry up and wait," while I do my duties out here with everything that comes with a regular Night Check workday, just so later, to expect to see the Boat cops coming by since this fat-piece-of—
"You can't do that!" I bark.

And now, "Trial By Mutiny' time is here!
{T-MINUS: 05!}
Senior now rushes and gets all confrontational.

“What… what did you say?”
“You can’t do that!”
“‘You can’t do that,’ what?”
“Senior, that’s FUCKIN’ BULLSHIT, YOU CAN’T DO THAT, SENIOR!”
{T-MINUS: 04!}
“Navastian, I think you’re a little confused right now, confused where you are. Since, only a year or two ago, you were still home, living with mommy and daddy, getting caught in your room dickin’ an apple pie or the family pooch… or something!”
“….” I say nothing. I can’t but say nothing. He’s trying to get comical. And he still hasn’t explained himself.
“Navastian, this isn’t the civilian world, where you’re ‘innocent until proven guilty.’ If I say you’re guilty: YOUR GUILTY! And that’s all there is to it. So, do expect to see the Master-At-Arms coming into The Shop in the morning… toodles!” Explains Senior. And then does that hand gesture of wiggling his fingers all very condescendingly like, in front of my face, as a sign of “goodbye.”
{T-MINUS: 03!}
“I’ll deny it!” I announce. And that now gets him to stop. He then turns around, and eyes me in a slanted manner, seeing how much he might need to slant, to slants me. “Fine, throw me to the wolves, Senior, tell them I confessed, and I’ll just tell them, and anyone else that asks, ‘no, I didn’t do it, it didn’t happen!’”
Senior now continues to study, with each step taken, closer and closer.
“You can’t deny, if I state, that you’ve already confessed.”
“Yes, I can.”
“No, you—”
“YES, I CAN, AND I WILL—SENIOR!” I go, and pops my chest out, Military Bearing now like a motherfucker.
“So, my word against yours… don’t see it taking you far, kid.” Senior tries to trick me.
“I’LL GO AS FAR AS IT FUCKIN’ TAKES ME, FAT MAN!”

Senior was about to turn and try to leave again. But I had to take it there. I had to! I HAD—TO!

{T-MINUS: 02!}

SPIT, SPIT, SNARL, SPIT, SNARL! Goes Senior, RIGHT IN MY FACE! Practically opening up his own Family Album, of every meal he's had since he was two years old.

"Senior, I'll deny it, every-fuckin'-step of the way. And say you—lied! And decided to throw me to the wolves, simply because you didn't like me… I guess?" And now, Senior begins spittin' and snarlin' even more in-your-face! And I'm practically in the cannibal's mouth, and I feel his teeth, gnawing at me, simply gnawing, at least for now. "Have the MAs question me—I'll deny! Have the AMC! Have Senior Dreadnought. I'll blow him off, too. Skipper—same! I'll keep going. Send me to the Admirals—"

"You won't see any Brass."

"I'll find my way to seeing them, because I'll just 'deny, deny, deny,' and then tell them to go—FUCK THEMSELVES, TOO! Send me to the Brig, and just bring me out to tell them off!" I smile out.

"…?" Goes Senior. Yes, I'M WINNING! And now I take a step further, into his face, and lays it out flat.

"Senior, I don't care if you and the Squadron are even able to get fuckin' Georgy Boy flown out here to question me! George W. Bush, our Commander and Chief, the man all the way at the top of the food chain. I don't care. I'll tell him off as I did to everyone else. I'll just look right into that man's eyes and tell him: 'no, George… I didn't do it.'" And now Senior has had it more than he can take, as he looks to want to turn around and leave. Only, he almost does so, going about-face, 180°, then another about-face, going 360°, as he faces me and my resolve. He be the superior here, so, he knows he can't be the one to be dismissed. I can't be the one to dismiss him. That's his job. He looks worried now. Almost uncertain. And, with him in this state, I now start to make jokes:

“Fuck it, Senior, have Georgy Boy’s daddy sent out here, too. Bush Senior. And with him. I’ll just reword it to him and go, ‘no, George… read my fuckin’ lips… I didn’t do it!’”

“Ha!” Senior now makes a small and reluctant chuckle to that.

“He he!” As I follow up.

Starless skies hang now over the Pacific. Starless now, for where they went, I cannot tell you, why they went, I am also now stunted by. Even Dog Star is gone. An unbeknownst wind then comes bellowing in. Unbeknownst by me and since I can’t really distinguish it by any beknown character, the moment is left with me feeling ambiguous. Senior does another about face, slowly, stops still, and does another. Wait, wait… where is this going? Ponder I.

{T-MINUS: 01….}

Marks the Old Ones.

“Navastian, at least do me the favor and admit something.”

“Wha-… what’s… that, Senior?” I dread.

“You know your barracks roommate, HM3 Morales?” And now, I know where. For, dread. Much dread, seeing where this is going.

“Lately, I been going through your confidential files, Navastian, seeing what makes you tick. And I’m quite interested with what I came across.”

….

Here’s the thing, just about every Squadron has those personnel only there for the desk jobs. As paper pushers. Record keepers. PNs that handle your pay and paygrade and whatnot. Mostly Admin personnel. As for the one specific person that’s placed in charge of all our medical records in VF-451 Bloody Shamrocks, cue Petty Officer Hospital Corpsman Third Class (HM3) Morales. My barrack’s roommate, back at the beach. And, it’s just him and him alone. Handling over two to three hundred heads you could count (I keep forgetting how many of us are in VF-451). And, so, just by himself there, in his own lonesome. How do you think he tends to manage doing such a task? “Hey, Navastian, check this out, you know AME3 Fernsby?”

“Yeah.” (AME3 Fernsby was probably the hottest girl we ever had in our Squadron, “had,” being the word (until getting knocked up, or… something else). A striking dead ringer for Nelly Furtado. So, you can imagine how us Swingin’ Squid Dicks would feel about her). “Ha ha, check it out, Navastian, it says here in her file, she used to fuck her sister.” “What?” “Roger that, haha!” Aye, to say Morales had some terrible Hippocratic oath standards (or morals) would be a dire, dire understatement. You have to understand, it was me and him there in our barracks room, I was lying in bed playing Final Fantasy X on my PS2, he was lying in bed swamped in all our medical records. All of them. ALL! “Wait… are you serious?” “Dead serious, I guess when she was fourteen, her parents divorced, and the court ordered her and her sister to see a shrink, and the shrink had found out how the sisters would, you know! Haha! I gotta tell you, you won’t believe what I come across in these confidential files. The crazy shit that’s documented.” HM3 Morales had pretty much filled me in, how during the recruitment process, an investigation tends to go on along with a criminal record history that involves calling a lot of old friends and family, even so far as old schoolteachers and schoolmates and work bosses and coworkers asking about you. Wanting to learn anything they can about you. And, all it takes is one of those they phone interview that decides to become a blabbermouth and spill the beans, to spill all your beans. And whatever blah-blah they gather, no matter how sketchy the source material is, goes into your confidential files. As for my HM3, can’t tell you how many times I’d see all our Squadrons files, that should have been locked away somewhere in a medical building, instead, laid about all over the place in our barrack’s room.

Also, can’t tell you how many times I got tempted to pick one up… and read it myself.

“Don’t get mad, Navastian, don’t get mad. I, your superior, have a right in the end to know exactly who I am dealing with when it comes to my subordinates. And, with someone like you, and all the wealth of information I gathered, about you and your mother’s side of the family, and their family history, especially history when it comes

to mental illness… well?" Senior is right now smiling at me, smiling as he says this, for, he knows exactly what he's doing. Exactly! As precise as a razor-sharp scalpel performing heart surgery.
"What are you getting at, Senior?" I beg. But Senior belays beforehand answering that and resumes where he left off.
"Seems like you were mostly raised by your mother, grandmother, and uncle, after your parents divorced."
"What are you getting at?"
"Tat-tat-tat…

So, Navastian, I gotta ask, seeing what was gathered between you and your relationship with your mentally ill uncle, reading what I did, it worries me. It just worries me."
"Senior, what are you—"
"And what worries me, is, with such an upbringing around such people, considering how messed up they were, how messed up would you then become—"
"Senior, what the fuck are you—"
"Did he do it, did he… well, you now?"
{T-MINUS: 00!}
Aye. I heard it. I heard them Old Ones, now counting down to 00 seconds. I know what's expected of me to do right now. And, truth is, considering how badly this man, has not only just now wounded me, smiling and telling and asking me these things, not just creating new wounds with such, but doing so by opening such old ones. I now feels like I am in the third person again, since, if I was to be in first person, I would at least be able to slightly grasp how much wrath I have now been bestowed with. I can tell, in first, I would want to do nothing now but attack this man, head on. Head on! HEAD ON! But, lucky me, those are the pros and virtues of being this out of body enraged.
"Come on, Navastian, did that sick bastard do what it says in your file that he did to you the day he snapped? I told you before, I need to know these things. Know, about matters when it comes to Section 8 cases, because I'll tell you right now, I personally

have a strict zero tolerance policy when it comes to it. The hell with whatever is wrong with Shitbags like AN Royster, AN Rausch-ausch-beb—Roach Burger and ATAN Pflugerville, since, your type is the worst. The absolute worst. I even rather have those dope fiends AD3 Sutherland and AE3 Dominguez in my Line, than someone like you. Someone, that might decide to FOD an engine with a chain, how Pfluger did, although, with you having done it on purpose…

So, right now, I'm not asking, I'm ordering you to tell me—"
"Senior…!"
"Did he really do that to you as a kid?"
I doesn't even want to ask, since, I already knows what. But this asshole then asks anyways:
"Did he really snap and attack you when you were a kid?"
And now, I'm in first person, all, full and completely.
"Did he attac—….
FUCKIN' FAT PIECE-OF-GARBAGE, I'LL FUCKIN' KILL YOU!

WAIT… DID I ATTACK HIM? DID I ATTACK?
I can't tell. I can't even tell, since my mind is now not even my own. And neither are my eyes. But, after that infusion, I look, and see, I haven't. Senior is still smiling with all his personal taunts he's been making. Smiling! But, then, seeing how I'm still in control. And still controlling myself to cut loose on him, now, smiling not so much.
"Senior… I need to… I need to…?"
"You need to—WHAT?"
"I still need to scrub the port end of the Jet. It's 2000 hours, and, it's reaching almost time for flight ops." I say. I then walk away. I walk. So, he doesn't have to. Although, he doesn't exactly dismiss me, since, I've just dismissed myself from this line of questioning and all matters of absolute abhorrence.

I'm now alone on the port end, scrubbing, minding my own business, and then I see him enter the frame again.

“Yes, Senior… what do you....”
And now, Senior no longer wants to pussyfoot around this matter, as I see him coming at me at full force. I spasm from the sudden and certain outburst as he lunges at me with both index and thumbs circling a necklace, which he now plans to gift me with. Then: GRABS ME BY THE NECK AND BEGINS CHOKING ME! I can’t breathe, I can’t breathe, is this man trying to choke me practically to death, for real? And then my lungs respond to my brain with a resounding: YES! YES, HE IS! I now start decking him in the chest, shoulder, even across his face mostly clipping him by his right ear. Senior now forces all his weight on me and both me and him fall to the deck, as he falls on top. And now, I’m in the worst position, since, he can choke me to death if he wants to, and there’s very little fight I can put up, with fat him on top of me, and me at my back.
“Senior… can’t… can’t… breathe!”
“That’s because I plan to KILL YOU, you FUCKIN’ BUG, AN Nava—…?” And now I knee him in the crotch and nails him hard, as I feel as if his balls just popped from the thrust I make. That now gets Senior to stagger a little, waver a bit and lean off of me and away. And away enough where I myself pulls away. And out. And now, he’s on one knee and I’m the one standing. Senior looks up at me, and, sees, he sees, how in the New Navy, with what he just done + his ass = grass! A quiet shiver goes through him, and, he looks scared now. I doesn’t care. I now leave my bird.

And… I’m going straight to the Master Chief of Maintenance with what this man just did and put me through.

Across the Flightdeck.
Staying mostly to the starboard side.
Passing behind the island.
Near now the cats found near the bow end of The Ship.
To the Ratways us Line Shackers mostly spend “hurry up and waiting” during launching.
Onto the Ratways and now going into the hatch leading inwards.

And after a bit more circumnavigation, I'm here. I see all the mostly E6 and above figures in VF-451 Maintenance. They're all jampacked in there, hanging over, and a little out, of the sill counter, that leads from Maintenance into the P-ways where anyone can cross and catches the sight of all these Fat Navy Lifers, all hearty-har-har laughing, and munching on a lot of overly greasy or overly sweet junk food, they could get their mitts on, from The Ship's geedunk. Master Chief now sees me, first to stop hearty-har-har-ing, first to notice what's afoot with this lonely E3 figure.
"What do you want, Navastian?"
"Umm… Master Chief… I?"
"Just spit it out!"
"Well, Master Chief…?" Aye, I am nervous. After everything I have spoken about this man and what caliber of deranged spitfire and hellfury he is, could you blame me?
"Navastian, spit it out, or get back to your—"
"Senior—ATTACKED ME!"
And now, any and all other Khakis you'd find in Maintenance, who were still supposedly all hearty-har-har-ing, shut it, quick, and zip it, tight, the minute I uttered those words. A second there, I thought I heard a Pringles' lid being sealed with my announcement.
"You were, what?"
"I was attacked, Senior just attacked me for no reason at all! He grabbed me and started choking me and got me even on the ground doing it. I practically had to…?"
"You practically had to, what?"
"Practically knee him in the groin, just to get the fat fuck off me." Ah, shit! Why did I say "fat fuck?" As that caught a lot of the fat fucks in Maintenance attention and disapproval. Although, since Master Chief isn't one, a fat fuck, I see no resentment for that line from him. He mostly has his eyes slit, studying. Just studying.

"All right." He says.
"All right…?" I say, a little confused.

“Is that it?”
My eyes widen.
“Is that it?”
“Aye, Master Chief.”
“All right, duly noted, I’ll have a chat with Senior later. I keep telling Dave he needs to take it easy out there or God knows what might happen. And I’ve seen it before, especially in the Persian Gulf, during summertime, where he’s probably going to suffer from a heatstroke, and get sent to medical. But, will he listen, no!” Says Master Chief with a small headshake at the ends.

He now looks at me.
“All right, you’re dismissed.”
A stir of silence now stirs. Just a stir. Just a stir. And, one that doesn’t fill me in with much I feel is agreeable.
“Navastian!”
“Yes, Master Chief?”
“Is there something else?” Master Chief asks. But I doesn’t know what else to say. I said what I needed to say. But, now, it doesn’t seem like I really did.
“Navastian, is that it… you have a Jet you’re to launch not long from now, correct?”
“Yes… Master Chief.”
“All right, if that’s it, then—”
“BUT HE ATTACKED ME!” I bellow. And, maybe not the right person in the Squadron to do so. Although, Master Chief just seems to want to shrug off my jacked-up Military Bearing and attempts to impose on him with my troublesomes. As if, “is that all you got?”
“Navastian… enough! Go back to work.”
“But he—ATTACKED ME! HE CAN’T DO THAT! HE—”
“Oh, for fuck sakes, kid, why don’t you wake up and smell the roses!” He bellows now. Gets up and does so. Like northern winds, up and to. So, all seas and seafarers be warned and be wary. The Tempest King is now awake from his lolled slumberings

and is now ready to blasts all to smithereens and adrift all throughout these wet parts of the world.
“Navastian…

we’re going to war.
A real war!

Do you know what that even means?” He now bellows.

A pause now follows with tons of reflection to what he just iterated.

And now, for some words of relations:
“You know, I joined the Navy back in October 15, 1962. A day before the Cuban Missile Crisis happened. John was the President at the time. When I got in, I was seventeen years old. I was undesignated, just like you. And if you think shits crazy now, you’ve seen nothing. Nothing! Compared to what I’ve seen and been put through.

What, not getting along with Dave? So what? I had my own superiors the likes of your Senior. And then some! Senior Hamakua… get the fuck outta here, the man’s a Teddy Bear! A fuckin’ Teddy Bear compared to what I had to put up with! Like you, I also came in, came first into the Line Shack, and, by the time I got out, got my designation and got to my Shop, I had already clocked in three no-holds-barred vicious fist fights with my seniority. What, your IS3? I’ve sized that little man up, him and his Napoleon complex, you having problems with him? Just about everyone in the Line, my day, was that little squirt, and then some, again! And I can’t tell you with how many skirmishes I had with those bloodthirsty Line Shack hooligans, in my day!”

Another pause.

“Kid… why don’t you WAKE UP and smell the FUCKIN’ ROSES. Since, there’s nothing rosy about it. Since the shit ain’t going to get any better any time yet… they’re only going to get worse.

Far, far worse.

The only thing that’s going to save you from those hours, those FUBARed moments, those *trials*, is, a stiff upper lip, and getting back to your duties. Want to know my forty-year secret? That’s it! That’s my secret, on how I’ve gotten by! It’s just that simple!

So, now…. stop bein’ such a fuckin’ pussy!
Get back on your fuckin’ Jet!
And get back to doing your lawfully ordained fuckin’ job!
AND DON’T MAKE ME SAY IT, AGAIN!”

Master Chief is now finished.
I has nothing else for him.
Nothing else, I has, I does.
I walks away now with my tail between my legs as I then hears that same Pringles can “pop” back open.

“Airman Navastian… ha…. FUCKIN’ PUSSY! HEHE!”
I now gets from the Master Chief, far enough to not really hear such, but not far enough where with anyone trying to get loud, I would not be able to hear. I stop now. And eyes this bulkhead light up above me, just before the hatch leading out again, out onto the Ratways and out onto the Flightdeck.
“HAAHAAHAAHA!” I now hear them laughing. And Master Chief is now on a roll!
“Don’t you smile now, Chief Pitt, you’re a pussy too!” Goes Master Chief.
“HAAHAAHAAHA!”
“How about me, Master Chief, am I—"

“YOU’RE THE BIGGEST PUSSY IN HERE!”
“HAAHAAHAAHA!”
“SO, DON’T MAKE ME GET ALL GI STRONG, WITH MY FOOT LONG, AND MAKE ME WANT TO GET UP AGAIN AND FUCK YOU RIGHT IN THE MOUTH, CHIEF CLOONEY, YOU PURPLE LIPPED, PUSSY FACED BASTARD!”
“HAAHAAHAAHA!”
“AND YOU STOP THAT, TOO, PN1 ROBERTS, YOU’RE REALLY A FEMALE, AND, YOU ACTUALLY GOT ONE BETWEEN THE LEGS. AND RIGHT NOW, YOU SHOULD BE THE ONE—MOST AFRAID!” Goes Master Chief.
“HAAHAAHAAHA!” Goes everyone in Maintenance again, especially PN1.
“GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE!

PUSSIES!
NOTHING BUT PUSSIES… ALL OF YOU….
A SEA OF PUSSIES AS FAR AS I CAN SEE.”

“HAAHAAHAAHA!”

“AND, TRUTH IS, I’M REALLY JUST GETTING TOO OLD TO BE GETTING IT UP ANYMORE TO DEALS WITH YOUR SORROWFUL LOT!” Concludes Master Chief.
“HAAHAAHAAHA!” Concludes the rest.

NEW NAVY BLUES

Okay, fine, fuck it! I guess fist fighting in the Navy is completely okay to do now. Us going blue on blue and laying hands on each other. Fuck it, fine! But I guess only when seniority is the one putting their hands on us—of course! Never with us putting our hands on them. I mean, I have bruises on my face and neck, now after what Senior, that Hawaiian maniac, did, going wild on me like I was some good eats BBQ pulled pork sandwich, and going all out sinking his teeth into me.

Whatever this, whatever that, blah-blah skies hung over the Pacific. I doesn’t care. Nay, me fellow Shipmates, I doesn’t, not no more. After the events I was just put

through, I can't muster within myself any, since, if they don't care, I don't care. As God doesn't probably care. Since, quote Linkin Park, "in the end, it doesn't even matter." Flight ops came and went. I did what I always did and have done. Let's not forget, with rigorous, rigorous training and retraining, I being numb in the brain to the cares of just another days of Bravo Zulus, jobs well done, in-between all those other moments of grotesquely fascinating Alpha Mike Foxtrots all occurring. Am I saying I want the days to go Alpha Mike Foxtrot, go all FUBARed up the Yankee Yankee? Of course not. But since I already feel quite FUBARed within myself, it's hard to relate when the days go well when my internal world of launches and recoveries don't. And my innerworld is about as FUBARed as the yinyang can get conducting all them internal wars of the black and the white, light and dark, good and evil spiritual wars leaving my battlefields a bedrock in total chaos and ruin. Aye! For I now knows of how the Vietnamese felt in that very, very unpopular war, mostly remembered in our accounts as the Nixon Years (even though it was them damn, sneaky bastard Demies that started it (truth be told: the French, but since they got Democratic and liberal mindedness practically tattooed into their DNAs… well?)). I be at the Ratways under our warbirds at the aft end of the Flightdeck. Being one flattopper, freezing my nuts off (of course), looking into the new dawning day and sun, and, I've got flapjacks in my brains. I want me some flapjacks. For, I'm hungry. And gluttony is the gateway drug for all other cardinal sins (at least I feel like). Slot only being not as much the gateway or the proceedings, but that one sketchy character you'd see in a dark alley in the Bronx circa 1970s, the one with the sleazy trenchcoat and the sleazy fedora (trenchcoat hiding all sorts of heisted street market valued goods and items). Being all cartoonishly characterized as going: "psst… hey, kid, come ove' he'!" I'm on the Ratways. And I'm laid out all dangerously over the power lines' harness wheel. Mostly have been ignored by Senior the entire night through, even though I've had brushings with the Big Kahuna Burger. But nothing that leads to any direct eyes making contact and especially any conflicts. I feels like Senior got the wind of how I made it to Maintenance, and stoolied on everything his naughty ass did. And since Senior really just is a big fat Teddy Bear, with a pussy for a face and a face for pussy, the sheer terrors of our Maintenance Master Chief

wanting a word with him, has him pretty much spooked out from any framings of my picture. And now I'm like Donnelly, an E-negative 3 Airman, a ghost, or our Dennison without being Dennison. Also, am sitting next to Donnelly as well.

"I've been hearing a lot of shit going on between what happened between you and Senior." Donnelly breaks.

"Have you?" I ask.

"Aye!" Says Donnelly. And, strange, first time I've heard him say "aye." Or, I think I have.

"So, what's the dealio?" I go. Donnelly now seems to want to take a moment to ruminate within himself all the info, first, before giving his assessment.

"Did he really attack yo—…?

"Yes." I confirm, all cutting him off at the nick of time. Donnelly now stirs a bit with that bit. Mouth is seemingly all full of leeches, which he'd been dared to eat around 10 of in some Bangkok backstreet shady gambling ring, from the types you'd find in that one scene in the movie: The Deer Hunter. Each leech a representative of every Night Check Line Shacker he now doesn't find himself able to digest.

"That is such fuckin' bullshit! Such bull! What did Master Chief say?" He asks. And since I know Donnelly likes that fellow Southie, I sorta doesn't want to answer him.

"Well, he said some… 'stuff.' But what's important is, Senior is in no ways going to get into any trouble for what he did. I don't even think he's going to get a slap on the wrist. More like a slap on the back and wanting to hear jokingly if my head had actually started turning all prune color. Since, choking someone to death is now funny… I guess?"

"Wait, he choked you, right?"

"Right."

"Well, was it like… Homer Simpson trying to choke Bart Simpson, or…?" And now I just eye my fellow Line Rat, eyes all scheming and stretched out like an evil Hun Dynasty Imp. And I see that he gets the gist of what it means. "So, like… how?"

"Ever seen the Godfather… that scene with Luca Brasi?" But I can tell Donnelly hasn't. Or at least doesn't remember exactly. "Let's just say, if the fucker had

continued as he had before I got him off me… I'd probably be… 'sleeping with the fishes,' right now."
"Hehe." Goes Donnelly. But I just gives him another look with his outburst of chuckles, like, I doesn't appreciate the fact that he just did. "You serious, he was trying to… kill you?"
"I don't know, I guess, last thing he said before I finally got the sitter off of me was something along the lines of, 'that's because I plan to KILL YOU, you FUCKIN' BUG, AN Nava—….' And, I'm in no ways making that up or remembering it incorrectly, since that's verbatim of what I remember him saying. What he said exact."

A moment of pause now comes and goes, as me and Donnelly view the sun, the sun, in all its gracious beauty… blah-blah rise from the sea abound us.
"Hehe."
"What, are you laughing at, Donnelly?"
"Nothing… just, 'sleeping with the fishes.' I now remember that scene. I found that movie boring, honestly, but I remember that part now."
"Well, it's not funny!" I go.

Another pause.
"I don't think Senior was trying to… end you… or something. He couldn't exactly get away with that. Not even in the Old Navy, you don't just murder a subordinate and… what were you doing that got him to up and choke you?"
"Nothing."
"Nothing…?"
"Nothing but everything I was supposed to be doing. Prepping my bird for flight ops and scrubbing until the Flight Crew arrived."
"Oh…?"

One more pause.

“Well, come on, it’s sorta funny. You’re still here. And, like I said, I don’t think he was trying to… no! That’s just too much.” Donnelly tries to frame it. But I shakes my head.

AND I’VE HAD IT!

“No, it’s not funny. NOT FUNNY! AND FUCK YOU FOR LAUGHING!” I go. I then get up to ditch this disgraceful scene. And as I walk towards the hatch, I see it open, and see AM3 Kats and Roach Burger pop out. And now, one disgraceful moment followed by another. And the minute they see me as I see them, Roach Burger erupts with:

“*Help*… *help*… *I’m dieing! I’m dieing*! Croak… croak… cough! Croak! Cough!” Aye, as if I needed more humor over a matter as nonhumorous as this. And I’m at putrid disgust right now, watching Roach Burger take it there. Right now, he’s placed both his hands over his own neck, while making faces and noises of a comical representation of a guy being choked and about to croak. And, I’m not even humiliated anymore. I’m purely disgusted.

“God, I wish I was there to see it! Haha!” Goes Kats. Kats then gives Roachy a low five. As I just about decide to shoulder into Roach and try to knock him over.

All of Night Check is in The Shop now for shift change. Almost all of us relieved by our Day Check counterparts. I wasn’t exactly. But by the time I came into The Shop, I saw AMAN Coppersmith about ready to head out. And since there was no seniority in The Shop to see how I had GAFed off a proper shift change evolution. I’m’s lucky. I guess? All of Night Check is in here, except Senior. And except Donnelly. Much of this time, I’m once again in the haze and blur of it, I know there’s also been a few more attempts from the scoundrels in here to get my attention just to ridicule me more how Roach Burger had just done (at one point, Kats waving his hand in front of my face to get my attention). But, nope! Nobody’s home. They can keep knocking… but there’s no point to it now since there’s no one inside to answer. I’m not even upset or depressed right now. I’m just totally out of it and not caring anymore. Quote Linkin Park style. Sore. Sore. So sore, how I feel! But, then

something completely different happens: I then see AN Donnelly about to enter The Shop, but then, I catch the sight of AD3 Rudy and what he's about to do. No way! No way? I go.

But… yes way!
Just as Donnelly enters The Shop, since AD3 Rudy is closest to the door, leaning on a stack of metal boxes, to the Line Shacks entrance and exit. It's in the AD3's eyes I see how he all sneakily like rolls them to one corner, then, down to the other corner, his left foot nudges out, and pulls the most ballsiest move the AD3 has ever pulled.
Trip.
Fall.
Slam!
Goes Donnelly, onto his stomach. The once pro-boxer is now on his stomach furious. Furious as furious! Shaking all over. He knew and everyone knew and AD3 Rudy definitely knew, what had just happened.
"Oooh shit!" Goes Barbarossa, as he gets up steadily.
Aye, this now got Barbarossa to stop fee-fi-fumming in his clouds, to come down and take notices of our mundane day-to-day human transactions, for, the move was now just that ballsy. And, right now, all have Barbarossa sentiment, even Navarro, the true Joker in The Shop. Even the IS3. Although, without any open gobs. For he mostly has his fist over his mouth, trying hard not to… either laugh or also hold Barbarossa's "no shitter" position. Donnelly now—rushes to his feet! And eyes the AD3 Goose!
"I'm sorry, it was an accident." Rudy goes.
"*You sorry*…?"
"I didn't mean to do it, I didn't… I DIDN'T… I SWEAR!" Rudy is now holding the same sentiment as the IS3 is, with hand over mouth, trying VERY HARD, to control all that is BLASTED to and fro and about within.
Tense.
Tense.

More tense! All is very tense. But then Senior enters the frame. Senior now scours his eyes around The Shop. Scours a minute while longer. Then sighs.
"All right, good job, Night Check! Keep this up, and, maybe, I can go back to Days and you all can have someone else replacing me on Nights. It's that simple! Do a good job. Do your work. And you won't have to see my face *snarling* around on nights, making sure you all are doing what you're supposed to do." Gotta note, the second Senior said the word "snarling" guess which Line Rat he got eye-to-eye glimpse of? Everyone leaves now. For, we're all dismissed. But, I stays behind. Senior now turns, sees me, and, it's like I'm Donnelly now. Yikes! Goes his eyes. Then he pops to AE3 Brock who's now in The Shop. Senior then moves to Brock's ear, says something, and Senior now vacates. And… great, the AE3 is now making me feel how I and Donnelly are now making Senior feel. But Brock doesn't now seem like he's going to keep his word with how he planned to go on through this cruise, on that one night in Hong Kong. Crap! Now I don't want to be here. But, I stand, because, I have a thought in mind. Brock now sighs, and realizes this confrontation is unavoidable.
"Navastian, what are you doing in here, you're relieved?" the AE3 now goes, officially, and not how he would have it unofficially.
I say nothing.

The AE3 now walks up to me.
"Why did you go to Maintenance?"
And that line of questioning now pisses me off. If Matt Damon's douchie second cousin here now wants to make parley, I'll make parley. If he even tries to pull his belt off, I'll take that muscle restrainer of his and—CHOKE HIM WITH IT! Him tougher than me? Sure! But I'll finds a way to manage. I'll plays it dirty and I'll go for his eyes if he tries to wrestle me now.
"What, you got nothing to say for—"
"What the fuck do I have to say for myself, the asshole choked me."
"Calm down, now. Calm—"

"What—CALM? I wanted to fuckin' kill him for what he said to me and what he did to me!" I blast. And now, AE3 realizes, I'm no Royster, and if he had trouble trying to reprimand that AN Joker… wait until he got a load of me!
"You know, I pretty much could have said the same thing about you, after what you said and put me through, in Hong Kong."
Ah… shit! He's taking it there!
"What are you waiting in here for?" He asks.
But now I get suspicious.
"What did Senior tell you?"
"He told me to ask you, 'what are you waiting in here for?' That's what he told me." I now study his eyes. And, I register that as truth. It did seem like only a couple of half-baked words were exchanged. And what he just asked would do.
"Senior said he was going to call the Master-At-Arms on me."
"He's not calling the Master-At-Arms on you!"
"Then why did he say he was?"
"Because… I don't know, I don't know everything about what was said and done last night. But, trust me, he's not!"
And, I accept it.
That was all the reason I stayed behind. I wanted to see if I could take his word that he was or wasn't, especially after everything. And, just like most renditions of "hurry up and wait," here's another one that's been rendered "pointless." "Absolutely pointless." I now fix to leave. But now Brock has his own dish to serve.
"You know, I'm starting to worry about you more than I've worried about Royster or Roach Burger, you're seemingly now really going off the edge." He says.
I say nothing for a moment, but, at passing, I then does:
"Good, because, if he ever does that to me again, him choking me, I'll grab one of those chains hanging there…
(and that very second, the chains begin to rattle, as the Boat begins turning again.) and I'll finish… where… he left off!" And that stirs some fright into the AE3. As much as I've liked him, I don't right now. Simply don't.

And, before leaving, I give him one last take:
“Also, don’t know if you know what’s going on, on Nights, but, I’m not the only one being pushed over the edge…

and that other guy… even I’m scared of how far he would be willing to take it.

So, I suggest you talk to Falky and the gang, also Rudy, so as to remind him how much of a big fat coward he really is, because he just punked the closest thing in The Shop we got to an actual Mike Tyson. Remember that!”

And, seeing into Brocks eyes, his worrisome eyes, I see worry, and dread, and fear. Since he damn well knows with whom I’m speaking of.

I leave now.
For…
It’s breakfast time!
Time for some flapjacks.
With red syrup.
Tons and tons of the delicious mountings!

SUICIDE… HURTS!

{NAVASTIAN, YOU WANT TO KILL YOURSELF. YOU DO! YOU JUST SIMPLY DO.}

They won’t shut up. They simply just won’t. At that galley. After having my flapjacks with maple syrup, and, God be mystified, having a moment to actually enjoy myself before the clouds rolled back in over my head, it was at that moment they began again the whole processing of trying to reinforce certain aspects I’m now vehemently trying to unforce. It’s already been made imminent with what sort of trials I’m to be tested with, practically today. Practically once I go to my rack and wake up to all this again. Once I get my happy ass back up to the Line Shack to do all this again. Again, and again, except this time, with all and anything I was able to handle, not really able

to do so as much. I'm done with my breakfast. Now I head to the berthing, then heads to my coffin locker to get my showering equipment, now heads to the heads to put them to use. And now I'm once again back in the berthing again. And, there, they are again.

{WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GONNA DO WHEN YOU GET TO THAILAND?}

Sigh, I don't know, I figure it would be best to take that one step at a time. Settlement will be the most difficult hurdle, since, if I am unable to do it, I won't be able to survive there.

{NO, THAT ISN'T WHAT WE MEAN.}

Fine, I don't know, when we get there, we'll get there. And, once there, I'll try to resolve all that mess and see where it takes me. I already have an idea of what my biggest hurdles will be.

{THAT ISN'T WHAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT, YOUR PRIORITIES ARE ALL JACKED UP! SETTLEMENT MIGHT BE A HURDLE, BUT IT WON'T BE THE TYPE, IN WHICH, IF TRIPPED, YOU WON'T SURVIVE. SURVIVAL ISN'T AS DIFFICULT AS YOU MIGHT IMAGINE. THERE'S GOING TO BE SOMETHING ELSE MUCH MORE DIRE THAT'LL BE YOUR UNDOING.}

All right, I'll bite, if surviving won't be such a major hurdle, what will? And, me and my big mouth, for look at who or what it is I'm asking such questions for answers to be filled? Answers I never even asked for until now.

{WELL, WE'LL TELL YOU WHAT, ONCE YOU GET THERE, AND ONCE YOU SETTLE, SURVIVING MIGHT SEEM LIKE A TRIAL, BUT IT WON'T BE, AND THE TRUE CHALLENGE WILL THEN BE SOMETHING YOU'VE ALWAYS MADE YOURSELF FACE.}

….?

{NAVASTIAN, WHAT IF WE WERE TO TELL YOU, ONCE YOU'VE REACH YOUR SELF-CALLED AND SELF-ENTITLED PARADISE, YOU'RE GONNA DO, THE EXACT SAME THING YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN DOING?}

And now I'm sensing inner dread wanting to hear any more of this. It's all beginning to make sense to me, in a nonsensible manner. But it does makes sense, since, it's my sense. My warped state with this sense, and it by itself can only make.

{NAVASTIAN, IT'S JUST THIS SIMPLE: ONCE THERE, YOU'RE GONNA FIND SOME REASONS NOT TO STAY THERE, NOT TO STICK IT OUT, AND YOU'RE GOING TO DESERT AGAIN.

THEN AGAIN.

THEN AGAIN.

FOR, YOU'RE INCAPABLE OF BEING HAPPY.}

And, aye, I was right the first time, now hearing this, I doesn't want to know anymore of such. Since I'm finding all very disagreeable, but disagreeable with matters I've never been able to come to an agreement with. I'm flighty, no doubt about it. But question is, just how flighty?

{THAT'S NOT WHAT'S IMPORTANT. THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN JUST MODE OF PREFERENCES. NAVASTIAN...

YOU'RE...

A MISERABLE LOSER!}

And now I get the sense of just how depressing this is all going to be, with this whole exercise. Aye, these kraken demons are going all the way to try and dry dock me and decom me into nothing of worth or use. Not even with myself.

{YOU'RE A MISERABLE LOSER. AND YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN THAT. YOU WERE A MISERABLE KID, A MISERABLE TEEN, AND YOU'RE NOW A MISERABLE YOUNG ADULT, BEING MISERABLE NOW IN THE NAVY.}

You know, they say that melancholia is a nurse to frenzy. I'm starting to sense why that is.

{NAVASTIAN, YOU HAVE NOTHING, ABSOLUTELY NOTHING, TO OFFER. AND THE LITTLE YOU HAVE, NO ONE WANTS. YOU'RE REALLY JUST FICKLE AT HEART, UNWILLING TO SUBMERGE YOUR ROOTS

DEEP INTO SOMETHING. AND GROW AS A HUMAN BEING. YOU'RE A BAD TREE BEARING BAD FRUITS. AND, YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS TO BAD TREES, DON'T YOU? THEY GET CUT DOWN AND THROWN INTO THE FIRE. THAT'S ALL YOU'RE GOOD FOR. THAT IS ALL YOU'LL EVER BE. A SHITBAG IN THE NAVY, AND A SHITBAG, SIMPLY, IN LIFE! FINE, GO OUT, TRY TO FIND SOMETHING, AND THEN, YOU'LL FIND IT'S NOT UP TO YOUR EXPECTATIONS. AND THEN YOU'LL LEAVE THAT, AND LEAVE THE NEXT THING, UNTIL LIFE HAS HAD IT WITH YOU, OFFERING YOU SOMETHING TO GROW WITH. AND THEN YOU WILL DIE, ABANDONED AND ALONE. YOU WILL DIE, MISERABLE. SINCE BEING MISERABLE IS THE ONLY THING, THE ONLY THING, YOU'VE EVER BEEN GOOD AT. IT'S ALL YOU HAVE EVER BEEN, AND ALL YOU WILL EVER BE. SO... ENOUGH ALREADY! ENOUGH! JUST END IT. END THE PAIN. THE GAME OF LIFE IS HARD TO PLAY. AND, YOU ARE GONNA LOSE IT, ANYWAY. LIFE IS PAIN, SO NOW, LOOK FOR SOMETHING THAT WOULD BE PAINLESS. SUICIDE IS PAINLESS. IT'S THE ONLY ANSWER FOR YOU LIFE WILL BRING. DEATH IS THE ONLY SOLUTION, THE ONLY ANSWER, TO END ALL THIS. SO, NAVASTIAN, ENOUGH STRUGGLING TO FIND A PLACE AND PEOPLE TO FIND ONENESS. IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GO HOME. AND FOR YOU DEATH CAN BE IT, IT CAN BE HOME FOR YOU. IT CAN BE AN ANSWER. FOR, IT'LL BE THE ONLY TRUE ANSWER, YOU'RE EVER GOING TO FIND.}

Snake,
We're not tools of the government, or anyone else.
Fighting was the only thing, the only thing, I was good at.
But…
At least I always fought for what I believed in.
Snake… farewell.

Motherfuckers got me thinking of Grey Fox's death in MGS1. That's how bad this shit is. WTF!
Feel like going to the ET room to call home. Because… derp derp!
Mommy!
I'll even take Commander Jägermeister right now.

I is in the lounge now.
And I have now just remarked something, me, being caught up in all those trials and such, haven't noticed until now how we're truly only a day away from hitting port in Thailand. Only a day. The week that was to proceed after Hong Kong in reaching here has already been actualized. Since we're now actually almost there, Thailand, pulling into Pattaya. How time flies when, well, let's just say it, when you're getting nuttier than a bag of roasted walnuts. Hot nuts! Hot! Gotta fan. Or they'll burn your tongue and all inners they happen to come across inside your inners.

Sigh… feels like I can't stop talking in jokes sometimes. Like, I has to. I has to. Has to! So, I won't allow myself the time to really personalize everything those figments of my internal workings just said. I didn't like it. I didn't. No. If melancholia be a nurse to frenzy, I can see now how the Batman is never really able to smile at any of the Jokers' jokes. Considering what sort of ball of frenzy the Joker happens to be. Also, aye, should note, that quote is from Shakespeare. I was interested in Shakespearean material at one time. Funny, I remember in middle school memorizing the entire "to be or not to be" speech from Hamlet. It's funny, because, not until recently, going over the whole, was I then stricken with the knowing of what the whole point of the famous speech was.

Like… lyrics in a song… and hearing them for the very first time:

To be, or not to be, that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them. To die—to sleep,
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to: 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep, perchance to dream—ay, there's the rub:
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil.

Aye, aye! Roger that! It's about suicide! Nothing but pure, pure blissfully glee inducing suicide.
Sigh.
And I absolutely hate the idea of suicide.
I absolutely abhor it!

Ha! Batman the melancholic nurse to the Joker's frenzy. I can see it now.
Gordon: Batman, Batman, Joker has escaped from Arkham asylum… do something!
Batman: oh, come on! I just put the fucker in there!
Gordon: well, he's escaped, again… do something!
Batman: wait, wait… I just scored myself some Taco Bell. I'm freakin' hungry. I'll get around to it.
Gordon: You know, umm… well?
Batman: What?
Gordon: Taco Bell isn't exactly… well… Mexican food.
Batman: I don't give a shit! Maybe sometimes I like some sour cream in my nachos or beef tacos in hard tortilla shells. Let me eat in peace.

Twenty minutes later.

Gordon: Batman, Batman, the Joker has found his way into a children's hospital and has executed a whole bunch of child victims of 3rd degree burns.
(HAHAHAHAAHAHAAHAAAHA! Joker is heard laughing all uncontrollably in a disembodied and distant sense)
Batman: wait… he did what now…?
Gordon: yes, he has!
Batman: MOTHERFUCKER! Dammit, FUCK my LIFE! FUCK my JOB! Fine, I'm off to catch the bastard, but it's all starting to feel completely futile. I'll go in, catch him, bring him back to Arkham to get him back on his meds, again. Just so he can later get off, again. Escape! And have us do his tango over and over, bit by bit… when will it END?
Gordon: …?
Batman: Gordon, just gotta say, your GPD are absolutely useless. Batman out!

"Hehe!" I go.
But then:
"Hehe!" Someone else goes.

I'm at the lounge, "taps, taps, lights out," and all. And I'm sitting here, and now sitting with AOAN Zeedorf. And Bruce Wayne's illegitimate second nephew I see now sitting next. This freak!

Smiles, he does. Smiles, oh so lovingly and for no apparent reason.
"Hehe! What are we laughing about?" Asks Zeedorf. And, not sure if I want to answer. Well, truth be, I absolutely don't. But this is Zeedorf we're speaking of. And, speaking of "melancholia is the nurse to frenzy." I guess a new chapter head is once again due. Just for you. For you, Zeedorf. You and only special you!

ZEEDORF THE LAST

"So, what are you watching, Shipmate?" I now go a bit "whoa," listening to him asking that. Listening to him ask that while making the face he does. The oblivious, dopey, doggone face. His absolutely adorable, oblivious, dopey, such and such. Also, must

note, right now there's nothing playing on the A-Farts channel. Absolutely nothing! It's a blank, black, backlit screen. So, rhetorical question or not—*there's nothing freakin' at all playin' on the television!* So, why even ask that, if the answer can be so apparently acknowledged from simply looking over at the screen to get your answer? Although, I choose to judge not. Let Zeedorf be Zeedorf! Think I. As I sprout a quaint something or another towards his direction. Also, this moment is now reminding me of another, where the tables were flipped. So, I now grow anxious, with a tini-tiny pinch of guilt.

Smile! Goes Zeedorf! Smile, smile, and more smile!
Eww! I go, in contra.
But, then again, belay that, now I want to lay it on him, just to see how he'd react:
"Nothing is showing on the TV, why ask?" I lay. Now feeling a punch of guilt, instead of a pinch.
"Oh, I know, I know!" Zeedorf maroons out. And, "whoa," I goes, seeing how he doesn't quite get the gripe I have.

"Hey
check it out, Navastian,
no more 1st Lewie for me. By tonight, I'm going to start on Night Check, in the AO shop." He says.

I do a haphazard grin with a large portion of "ah oh." Not sure why with the "ah oh," but I feel it being necessary. That all now gets me thinking. And not completely about what Zeedorf is saying on Zeedorf's behalf.

Hmm,
I will say, though, I miss his detail, since, I was doing it just before our Ship set sail. Since, I was Tiger Team, before it did. Working here on the Boat to prep our Squadron spaces before we deployed. And while the USS Carter, here, was still

docked into NAS Yokosuka. And, how was it? You might be wondering. Well, simple three words would sum it up.

Simply:
"Skate.
As.
FUCK!"

I mean, take it like this: I skate. I do. I do more than my fair share. No lies. And no self-imposed lies. But, at the time, imagine how "skate as fuck" a group of Tiger Team would be, with the likes of me, AN Royster, AEAN Navarro, ATAN Derbytown, and two ATs from their respective shops, which I haven't yet brought up (and I won't, since, they're not very necessary to the overall story. Sorry, you two nameless ATs, I guess that sometimes you'll make the cut, sometimes you won't). As for being an all-around, pro DILLIGAFer, sort, AN Royster???... has been a given. Of course, then you might wonder about the AEAN Navarro. And you might wonder, "him, too, really?" And… my answer to that would be: aye, aye, him too, really, roger the fuck out of that. For considering all I've spoken about the Line Shack, just how often have I brought up Navarro's name anywhere? Also, Derbytown's? (And I've promised Derbytown a chapter all his own)

It's like this:
You know… how… with what I once said about AN Royster, as being the biggest DILLIGAFer in the Line??? I take it back.
(Drumroll)
AEAN Navarro… is the biggest DILLIGAFer in the Line. For, unlike AN Royster, AEAN Navarro, is actually quite successful at it. While AN Royster is an absolute f-ing travesty in the most spectacular of fashions. And then there's ATAN Derbytown. And the thing about Derby is, most of us, deep down, know how much of a professional skater we are. Derby, on the other hand, has zero clue! It's the ATAN Derbytown's obliviousness! It affects him. Affects us, from me up to Senior Chief

Hamakua, like an infectious disease, to where we're all rendered as "slow" as he is acknowledging anything. So, when Derbytown skates, he won't know it, and since he won't, we won't! Sounds confusing? Well, aye aye, it does! With Derbytown, I'll tell it, straight, whatever you do, whenever, wherever, however you manage to be about the lad, don't ever decide to take a long studying look into the eyes of the man with the funny hat. WARNING! WARNING! WARNING! Never, never, never… ever… take a cross-examination, into the eyes of the man with the funny hat. For, his soulsuckers are like twin hollow spiraling abysses, for that which there is no end of what makes Derbytown, Derbytown. For, if you do, funny, you shall all become, too. And funny in the head. And as about as lost as an AO Almendinger with amputated hands.

But, aye, them be the better days. Being put under the lead of our AS2 Needlinger. And, what is there to say about him? "Chill as fuck," maybe. But the guy was also about as threatening as Senior Hamakua is fit for the Mr. Olympia's bodybuilding centerstage (simply put, Ronnie Coleman, Senior isn't). "Okay, boys, okay, I want y'all to go to Airframers and do this!" He'd say. And the minute we'd brake from muster, we'd go to the Wirechasers and do that. "Okay, boys, okay, enough with the skatin', enough! I don't like being taken advantage of." "We wouldn't take advantage of you, AS2, we 'love you' (sike)." "Okay, boys, okay, go to Powerplants and do this." Okay, break! And that very second we'd all go to Tweakers and do that." "Okay, boys, okay, I'm getting tired of this…." He'd say as he'd be wiping sweat from his brow. "Now, go to Ordnance, and do such and such, and, this time, I'll make sure to go to every other Shop to make sure you're not there." Okay, break! And now we'd all go to Ordnance and not do a damn thing, as AS2 Needlinger would run through the other Shops unable to catch us skatin'. "Dammit, boys, did you do anything I asked you to do in Ordnance?" "Yes." We'd lie. "That's it, I want you to go back to Ordnance, and try to do it again, and this time, I'm going to check all shops. All of them. Especially Ordnance. So, now, there's no way you can skate without me catching you in the act." Okay, break. And this time we'd all go to the galley, as the AS2 would run around everywhere, not being able to find us. "Dammit, boys, where the hell were

you?" "…." "Well, all right, all right, lunch time, go have lunch." And we'd go have lunch then. Coming back: "Okay, now go to such and such and do such and such!" Okay, break! And with that, we'd all head to the galley for a third time. None of us really hungry, maybe a little peckish, but, it's like that Kats and Hats pride thing, where, it's about the principle of it. The principal. Of being so skate we'd manage to have three chow breaks to go eat without the AS2 being the wiser. But, the AS2 was a lovable man. Truly lovable. Always running around cryin' "dammit, boys, you need Jesus!" "You need Jesus!" As we did nothing but endlessly play cat and mouse with the Second Class.

I…
miss those days!
Sigh!

"What are you thinking about?" Inquires Zeedorf.
I has my eyes directed a bit off center when being aligned with Zeedorf face-to-face. But my eyes then center. Him and his puppy dog smile seemingly panting, with his tongue going in and out, in and out, of his mouth. In a cartoonish sense: he's very similar to a Scooby Doo, meaning he's too loveable for his own good. And not enough with himself, for himself. Although, Scooby as a pup, and nothing in the nature of Scrappy Doo. As for the question, I keep it "taps, taps" asleep. Like I didn't even hear him asking. Mostly since I'm getting the vibes similar of that of a girlfriend, one I've only been in a relationship with for merely a week, and right now she wants to know every single detail about me. And I'm fighting the urge to cry out, "PRIVACY, BITCH!"

"Wait a minute, you said you're going to the AO shop?"
"Aye, roger that." Hmm? I go. Formulating an idea. Or, at least a notion. I then see Zeedorf gawk from port to starboard very suspiciously, and in that way someone does when they're about to do something they want no one to see. Zeedorf then grabs a Puma backpack he has by his port ankle. Pulls it up. Unzips it. And pulls…

woah… wait… what? And as he holds it and opens it, I am immediately able to acknowledge what it is with my nose before my eyes.
"Bro, you got alcohol with you?" One thing I'll note is that Navy life on the Boat, with cruises and such, tend to be dry. All dry. And not a drop allowed onboard. So, aight, I guess from what I can see, Zee Zee, here, has got himself a hefty and hearty spill of Colt 45 malt liquor. And, he's right now chugging some, all very suspiciously like, in a ceremonious manner, making very still then stirring motions as he does so. And, aye, Colt 45, and, as I've noted before, the white boy be themed so very ghetto-tastically! Once again with the dorag and wifebeater.
"Bro, the alcohol, where did you get it?"
"I got keys to any goat locker E6 and up, for our Squadron. I think I've told you that before." He explains with that smile again. And I guess that does explain it.
"Although, I got this from Master Chief Hayakawa. His personal stash. He always hooks me up with, from time to time. Hehe!" Zeedorf than goes back to… DAMN, BOY CAN DRINK! BOY CAN DRINK! HE A DRINKER! As Zeedorf had just now started taking hits, the bottle was full. And now after a couple of mere chugs, just about half of the contents are drained. Wham, bam, thank you, ma'am! The drink-drink goes mighty strong with this one.
"On a dry cruise, you're not much of a conservative, I guess?" I ask. Zeedorf then comes back up for air, grins, grins big, and shakes his head. And he seems oblivious, I then has to ask.
"Are you shaking your head because, 'no, you're not a conservative.' Or, 'no, you don't even know what that means?'" Zeedorf then shakes his head again and doesn't specifically answer my specific question. But, I shrug, for this is Zeedorf we're talking about.
"So, what's the drink for?" I ask. Bad question! I feel now.
"I'm paying my respects, for, today, it's a Zeedorf family tradition." I had that figured, seeing how he was handling, caressing even, so to say, his Colt.
"So, what's the occasion?"

And now begins another one of Zeedorf's tales, so begins it:

“Well, it started when my mom died.”
“When your…?”
“Aye.” He smiles out. Personally, that doesn’t seem like a time to celebrate. And as much as I want to hold my tongue, a nagging question enters my thoughts, and, I have to address it.
“So, getting drunk is how you Zeedorfs commemorate the memory of your mom?”
“Aye.” Zee smiles out. Yeesh!
“Although, the point isn’t to get wasted.” Zee continues. Not with the way you’re knocking out each and every gulp-fuls. Think I. As I see him take another hit and has 3/4^{ths} of the contents now drained. And I can’t even tell how he manages to vacuum it all up as fast as he does.
“My seven brothers and sisters, and me, also would commemorate, and we used to do it together, but since they’re all dead now, I’m the last to—”
“Wait… wha—…?” And now the story is making me feel scared. And what’s scary is how nonchalantly Zeedorf is able to dish out such hard facts.
“You had seven brothers and sisters… as in… past tense?”
“Aye, Brian, Brendon, Lucas, Mason, Emily, Evelyn and Abigail.”
“Okay, you don’t have to tell me all their names.” I say. Since, I’m probably not going to remember them (most definitely, actually)!
“Aye, I’m the youngest, but, like them, and my dad….”
“And your dad?” Zeedorf smiles. Then sniffs. And now I’m seriously feeling scared. Very scared. Although the sniff he did was very telltale, and I can’t exactly put my finger on how so. But, then again, could just be a runny nose or allergies. Part of me right now is wondering if I should ask, “what happened?” But that same part is also afraid to do so. How does one just lose seven brothers and sisters? Also, a mom and dad. Now I’m starting to get Texas Chainsaw Massacre family value vibes.
“Want to know what happened?”
“Sure, tel—…? BARNACLES… nay, nay! Don’t tell! DON’T TELL! CLAM CHOWDER! I gooned it all up all very numbskull like and now it’s too late to stop this. Sniff. Sniff! Goes the AOAN. And, I’m starting to sense it now. There be an ocean’s fill of emotions

to all this. Although, as I can only expect, Zee will now try to hide it from me and probably himself.
"It was ten years ago on this date, me and my entire family had gone to Savannah Georgia. We always loved to go there and bring the ol' family tandem bicycles and ride all around town. We had two, that could seat five each. Hehe!" Hold on, hold on…? Actually, belay that though, let him just go on! Although, now Zeedorf's family is starting to put off a Brady Bunch vibe. One crossed with the Adam's Family, just to add the creepy factor.

And then—BOOM!
No more smiles for Zeedorf, but cries, all cries. CRIES! CRIES! CRIE—….
And then it stops. And that just went by so suddenly and so speedily, I haven't had a chance to have it register.
"Zee, were you bawling just a second ago?" Zeedorf smiles again, and nothing else.
"Nevermind… go on."
And he does so:
"Well, we were eating in a Seafood Restaurant. My mom had ordered something, that made her ill, and by that night, we had to rush her to the hospital." Explained Zeedorf. His smile was now beginning to wince and waver telling me this story. And with that: ah, crud! Think I. For I think I know where this might be headed. Zeedorf was now all ear-to-ear with a mouth full of skittles and starbursts. And with Zeedorf here, happy or sad: bawling his eyes out riddled with hysteria and agony tended to be his default manner of expressing any set emotions.
"In the hospital, mom was having a turn for the worst. The doctors couldn't tell if all this had something to do what she ate. Or something else. But it didn't seem like it was going to matter. Mom had then said something like: 'what I have, no one can cure.' None of us knew what it meant, and why she would say such a thing. But, she was right. After being in the hospital for three days, she finally passed away." Zeedorf now looks quiet, hands folded up, head leaning down like it's weighed by his contemplations. As for me, the story is just too surreal, and I can't exactly tell how

or why it's making me feel that way. But it does. Zeedorf now comes up with a smile and says:
"Do you like whitewater rafting?" I… feel awkward to ask and shake my head.
"Oh, you're missing out."

"So, everyone in your family… has passed away, but you?"
"Aye.
(and now eyes flash of lightning storms and thunder)
I guess her sudden death had an effect on all of us, as it slowly ate away at us, one bite at a time. It felt like there was a looming cloud above all our heads wherever we went. A curse! A curse! I'll describe to you. If you get how something could possibly feel like." And, aye! I do. And hearing him explain it just makes me feel more edgier at the moment. I never liked the horror movie Final Destination, since, it felt the most real to me.
"Hehe…." Zeedorf laughs. "I was only eight years old at the time, and, my dad, one Christmas, decided to dress as Santa Claus, since I still believed in him. So, I guess dad decided to see if he could revive some of that ol' Zeedorf family magic, by dressing like Santa, and trying to wake me up going, 'ho, ho, ho.' You know the deal." I'm thinking of something right now, but I doesn't want to say. Zeedorf then eyes into my eyes.
"You think it's corny. My family was corny. You—"
"No, no, no!" I lie. Dammit, is he a mind reader? Back to smiles, but this time, with a deliberate spiraling fall from being spirited to being somber.
"Anyways, before he was able to wake me up the night before Christmas, his… *depression*… got the best of him. I guess he got bored waiting since he had woken up too early. And started drinking. Drinking profusely." Zeedorf now picks up the 45 he's held onto, and, "plump" finishes it in one final gulp. "Anyways, instead of waking up to a 'ho, ho, ho.' We woke up to a gunshot and…." And, snap! The second he says "gunshot," that's when the profuse crying begins again. As his face is completely drenched and becomes red all over. My face? My face is a Pablo Picasso painting right now of a man watching Zeadorf phase in and out of such manic modes.

Ah, fuck me! I think then. As I now realize—EXACTLY—WHAT THIS STORY IS ABOUT! I've heard of stories such as these, stories of a family going out like this. Depressing shit. Really depressing shit! So much so it no longer plays like a drama, but an absolute horror, imagining how forlorn people can grow within their hearts. And, with a curse to coagulate.

- "Anyways, three years later Brian ODed on heroine.
- A year after that Brendon got into a car crash, mostly playing chicken, with a semi on a highway.
- Lucas… hung himself.
- Mason also killed himself, but decided to go out like dad, with a handgun."

Oh, help me, God. This is excruciating!

- "Emily was raped and murdered in the back of a movie theater in Pittsburg.
- Evelyn also killed herself like Dad, Lucas and Mason, but did so by jumping over a very high bridge crossing a river during winter, when the water is so cold, it can kill you in mere seconds.

And finally…!"

Yes, yes! Aye, aye! Get with the ending scene and with the credits!

- "Just last year, Abigail, being pregnant, her and her baby both died during childbirth."

Aye, so, wow…

Wow!

Gotta say now, my heart pretty much died listening to Zeedorf tell me all that, his Greek Tragedy. Maybe I should give some condolences. But, nay, right now I can't. I just can't. The story has managed to mess me up more than I am able to handle. And here now, with Zeedorf the Last, I can now see into the boy's melancholia. And, it's rough, simply rough, for the boy from North Carolina. And now, I have no more problems. My life has become a pretty dream, I now live in a pretty bubble, a pretty

little princess' bubble, since, comparing my troubles with the likes of Zeedorf, no such blasphemy would ever pass. None!
"So, aye, aye, Shipmate. If you wouldn't call that a curse, I don't know what you will."

And, now that's settled, I have a question. Just a small one. A teensy one!
"Zeedorf?"
"What is it, Shipmate?" Zeedorf goes in his usual manner.
"With a fucked-up backstory like that… why are you smiling?"
"…!"
"No, seriously why are you smiling… that's… that's…?" I bumble. And now I've had it! For, I can't take this anymore. The story, the levels of neurotic outbursts Zeedorf breaks free like Biblical seven seals leading to hell, and, with this evil, evil (seemingly, can't say if it is or isn't) smile that precedes through most of the interactions… what's with it? Is this a defense mechanism created to combat depressing feelings that dwell within… balls! I think I just answered my own question.

A moment pauses and passes.
I sigh. And now tries to think of something else: Thailand! Thailand? Well, why not. So be it! It's the morning hours right now. And, in 24 hours or less we should be reaching Pattaya, Thailand. One more night. Just one, one last one, with just me and the Jets having one last hurrah, hurrah! And then, no more. Never more. In Pattaya, everyone will be worrying about their PCOD (Pussy Cut-Off Date), since, after Thailand, who knows when their next port visit will be. But, as for me, every day will become my PCOD for the rest of my life (hopefully). Zeedorf now seems to be meditating. I feel like going to my rack. So, about ready to get up….
FLASH!
Zeedorf begins phasing in and out of existence almost. As the windows to his soul, his eyes, like windows of a house's attic begin to violently open and shut tight, even with no one inside to conduct said motions. Open, shut, open, shut, all by themselves. And now, Zeedorf really begins to speak weird.

“What are your demons telling you?”
“Wait, what did you say… my what exactly?” And, aye, of course I heard him loud and clear. But, didn’t you notice what Zeedorf just asked me? I now watch over the BB-stacker, and tries to be fresh with this new assessment, for there’s no way he could be speaking consequentially. Open, close! Open, close! Open, close! Zeedorf’s windows go. Still only by themselves with no one upstairs that would be seemingly aware that it’s happening.
“Demons… what?”
“Voices, you’re hearing voices.” And I take a big gulp of apprehension seeing Zeedorf address this. And now, this is too surreal. Ever have moments like these, a moment of absolute ambiguity, being chucked at you like a medicine ball, at full velocity, straight towards your face? And, luckily, fast enough to where you couldn’t react voluntarily, but only instinctively. To where you dodge the dodge ball without having your own conscious fears, anxieties and all sorts of unsynchronized behaviors muddle with your most natural reactions. Wait, did that make much sense—WHAT AM I NOW BABBLING ABOUT?

Zeedorf is still looking for an answer.

And, he looks different. Just different. Like Derbytown had, going out of character, after what Hats and Quimby did to him that one day not long ago (beginnings of the book).
“What’s making you think I’m hearing voices?” I GAF. And I am trying to DILLIGAF this. Since, Zeedorf already confuses me a lot with what he has to say. And, I rather not have his voice joining with *their* voices, in all these, “pin the turd on the Shitbag” games. But then I take a second take of the chronic suicide dodger. And wonder: should I… or shouldn’t I? Fuck it, Navastian, what do you got to lose? So, as I had a second ago gotten up, I sit back down, and pick up the tweezers to begin picking this kid’s brain.
“How do you know I hear voices?”

“I didn’t just say voices, I said, ‘demons.” Aye. This isn’t Zeedorf anymore, this is Zeedorf after reaching 46 and 2. No smiles. None really visible. None even seeming to be possible to be made with the sober and somber face he’s making right now. I don’t know what else to say after this. Although, Zeedorf seems to do so: “You know, this reminds me of when I was a kid having sleep paralysis.” Gulp! “Sometimes I’d sit in bed all night long till come morning, listening to them. Listening. Just listening.”
“Listening to what… what were they saying?” I dare.
“Saying whatever! It doesn’t matter. In the end, all that matters is breaking you down like a mule with their words. Bit by bit. All that matters is your destruction.” Says Zeedorf. And then I see something in his eyes, that doesn’t seem to be his. But, only a flash, and then, it’s gone.

And now he looks up at me. Seemingly… “awakened?” And then sees me, and once again, Zeedorf is Zeedorf, all 44 and 2. As he smiles like a real ignoramus fat child would, that just got confused between a box full of chocolates with a box full of feces. And, would you look at all that brown all over his face around his mouth! You know what? Think I to myself… I think I prefer the wacky scene you put up just before the cruise. I don’t even know where to start with this one! Claim I. As I shake my head to get up and walk off.

But one last word from the Zeedorf:
“Hey, if you don’t kill yourself tomorrow how those Cthulhu monsters are asking you to. Don’t worry, Shipmate, I’ll take the hit. I got nothing left to lose, anyways. Plus, I’ve been hearing my family calling out to me from … you know where, so… hehe!”
Bleep!
And at that moment, the TV turns on by itself. That, or someone has the remote (didn’t know if it came with one or not). But, all I see is a blank, black, backlit screen, as if A-Farts be conducting “hurry up and wait” with the midnight special. A movie is probably going to be coming on anytime soon. Anytime now. Anytime. As the TV makes us wait for it. I feels a murmur then creeping up my spine.

Bleep, again!
"…???"

THE LAST OF ZEEDORF…?

And I don't want the world to see me
'Cause I don't think that they'd understand
When everything's made to be…?
To be…?
To…?
To be… or not to be?
What the…?
Sigh.

Thundering skies hung over the Pacific. Will have Flight Ops again around 2100 hours. And by tomorrow morning, once again all things Navy will face the perils and promises of us Squids getting another taste of liberty and port visits in another heathenistic country such as Thailand, where prostitution is all but illegal (along with many, many other things). Lord, help us! Lord help us, indeed. Although, as I GAF all that off, I center on the specific promises Thailand be willing to make contracts with specifically me: my freedom. And my freedom from this Yo Ho Joe Navy Barnacles and bullcrud. For, I'm sick of this. Sick! Sick! Sick. Monumentally sick! And haggard.

{SHUT UP, NAVASTIAN, YOU KNOW DAMN WELL THERE WON'T BE ANY PORT VISITS FOR YOU TOMORROW! SENIOR MIGHT HAVE NOT ALREADY ISSUED TO YOU LIBERTY RISK. BUT, YOU KNOW DAMN WELL, YOU HAVE ANOTHER TRIAL TO FACE! ONE LAST TRIAL. AND THEN, "TAPS TAPS," LIGHTS OUT FOR YOU….}

Anyways, before I was so rudely interrupted by any and all mental faculties of my own that have seemingly gone rogue (conducted their own stance of mutiny. And mutiny against I), wait, what was I now ruminating about, something different, something pleasant? Oh, I now remember. Waking up this afternoon around 1655

hours. It was a bit early, but, I gots up, went again and did all my gearing up for another night of Flight Ops and Dailies and Line Shack Hooliganry and—FAT HIM! Ugh…. But, I had myself a pleasant moment of heading over to the lounge and sitting around just to absorb stuff: the quiet moments. All those beautiful, beautiful quiet moments between "hurry up and wait" sessions. Kinda like the moment I had earlier in this story: that bulkhead light. Just, whatever it was that was so magnificent about that moment. Having qualities, I sense even though I'm completely blind towards (Also, the night of the Light's Show). Was in the lounge, lounging about, watching another all things Navy movie, named, *South Pacific*. Funny, I'd seen this movie before, mostly as a child. But, was funny having now watched it, again. All about a bunch of us Squids back in WW2 (like all maritime stories all being the same, all Squids, themselves, being no different). So, funny, I guess this movie was about an island, out somewhere where the movie itself is titled (South Pacific, that is). So, I guess the movie isn't really about the Navy. More or less about… well, first off, some dopey broad wanting to wash men out of her hair (don't ask)… but besides that, a movie about wanting to get—OUT! And, seeing how these Squids had to deal with Japanese Zeros going Kamikaze, I could see why they would. And as for the means of making such an escape, all having to do with an island. One special island. One mysterious island, where stuff of one's dreams and imaginations can come true and runaway with themselves. Sorta like AE2 Frankowsky's island with all that comical business of women sitting naked in bottomless buckets. Ahem!

Huh!
A representation of true paradise.

And the name of this island in this movie was called:

Bali Ha'i.

Pity, I wasn't able to watch the rest. Pity, that I just wasn't. Since it was then time to head to my Shop and begin one last day of Navy whatevers! The island seemed so magical in this old Rodgers and Hammerstein musical. Just… so… magical!

Anyways. As of right now, I'm on my Jet. Still has some prep work to do, as I now find myself exiting the starboard intake. All blades checked and accounted for without a nick or scratch. So, bust me on the surface if the Flight Crew now finds any (actually, don't do that since that would put me on Liberty Risk—and fuck that notion). So, as I exit, I look above. Clouds. Tons and tons of fast-moving clouds. And I feel like we're going to be entering into another Bermuda Triangle moment in these waters. THUNDER! CRACK! ROAR! They go. Then nothing but silence. And I thought tempest weather was scary during daylight hours. Now it all feels like a giant monster, one which you'd plainly see for what it was in daylight, but, you can't, at these hours, since its right now hiding in the dark and it's too dark to do so. Even if it, nothing but sees—you! Ugh! I look around now, it now being around almost 2000 hours. I look, there, and sees Donnelly on his Jet. Sigh! I go. Since what happened with him and the Line Shack the day Rudy got really ballsy with him, now, he's been mostly like this = a giant blank frowny face! He mad. He definitely still mad over that. And, if likened to a comic book character, I feel like I'm seeing the Ghost Rider now out here and amongst us. Just nothing but an angry skullface engulfed in flames (while still wearing proper Flightdeck gear such as a brown jersey, cammies, steeltoe boots, and finally a saltwater activated Flightdeck jacket and a cranial on his head (funny how the cranial doesn't catch on fire since this is Ghostrider's skull it's covering)). I still got words to issue with him over what I plan to do tomorrow. Still do. But, I'm pretty sure there's no hope in seeing that possibility come to fruition.
"Hey, Navastian, Flight Ops are to be conducted a half hour early, at 2030 hours. So, stay salty until then, and, keep up with the wiping once you're done with the Flight Ops prep work." Says AE3 Brockhausen.
"All right, roger that!" I say to Brock.

Funny bit of unimportant business, second in charge of Night Check behind our Senior, as of right now, isn't our IS3 Falconni. But the AE3 Brock. Seems as if though Falconni is now down in Sick Bay over an atrocious case of gastro. He's sick. Puking and pooping his lungs and guts out every t-minus 5 minutes. Therefore, Senior cut a deal with Brock for him to do a whole 24-hour workday. Aye, right now, Brock is to be doing Night Check tonight, after working an entire 12-hour Day Check workday. And mostly what got him coaxed into doing this was seeing how he's supposed to have duty tomorrow, and Senior promised him that he'd try to get him out of it. So, aye! Roger that! No, I'm pretty sure this isn't allowed in the Bluejackets Manual (or is it under the UCMJ? Ugh! I'm such a Shitbag not knowing the difference). But they're doing it anyways. And Brock be damned to have duty all day tomorrow and never get a chance to see Thailand before heading to the Gulf. HE'D. BE. DAMNED!
{NAVASTIAN, JUST DO IT! JUST DO IT! ENOUGH IS ENOUGH, ALL READY. YOU'RE AS MUCH TERRIFIED OF WHAT ALL WILL LEAD TO WITH TOMORROW AS YOU ARE COMFORTED BY THE THOUGHT OF GTFO! AND, WE PROMISE, ONCE YOU'RE IN THAILAND AND HAVE PAST THAT STATE OF BEING SO UTTERLY HAPPY TO FINALLY HAVE YOUR FREEDOM… IT WON'T LAST! JUST DO IT JUST—}
STFU, I'm not—JUMPING!
NOT!
NOT!
AND THAT'S A DOT!
SO, PARDON ME AS I TIE UP THAT WHOLE NOTION INTO ONE GIANT KNOT!
AND TRIES TO—HANG YOU WITH IT!!!
{….}

So…
I'm done with my prep work. Time to start my wet work. And scrubbing is what I mean (so get your head out of the can if that's where you had it). Right now, doing nothing but scrubbing and scrubbing and continuing with such and such. Although,

I have yet to see Senior out and about redirecting his flesh feasting attention on my sore little tush. I mean, he's still out here on the Flightdeck, but, once again, nothing but ignoring me. And once again also with Donnelly. Although, I sense something else between him with Donnelly around, as I catch a quick nasty sighting which Senior makes glancing towards the brown face Irishman and scowling a bit. And, I sense something else now is at afoot. Is it at afoot? Can't tell. Something is going on. Even though Senior is still mostly ignoring Donnelly, he's still gots him mostly in his peripheral sightings.

Ah crud! AOAN Zeedorf wasn't kidding. I now see him also out here. Out and about in Flightdeck gear for the very first time I've seen him in. No longer in the Navy blue coveralls that are the proper Uniforms for 1st Lieutenant, but wearing cammies with a red jersey, a red Flightdeck jacket with a red cranial capping. I don't exactly know what to make of what I experienced this morning with him and me sitting in sentient form as forces not-so-much started making themselves known around us. As for right now, what I see him doing is watching mostly his Redshirt kin, the three Texans and Ramshaw's such, mount a sidewinder to AEAN Barbarossa's 104. He just standing around and watching, while I see AD2 Southgate turn to Zeedorf and seemingly try to explain AO such and such: do this, don't do that, do this for these reasons, don't do that for those reasons. Etc., Etc.! But fearful are my eyes, fearful, much too much, as I also watch all these transactions, but then catches him staring into the intake. And, for what reason? His line of work isn't like mine nor the Greasemonkey's. So why stare into it? Yeesh! Is he giving me ominous—
CRACK!
ROAR!
AND THUNDER!
SHIT! FUCK MY BARNACLES! I go, as I spoil and spasm a moment from their unashamed precedence. I then look up at the instruments of my newly confounded startlement. At them big, big mean looking clouds. WHY, FUCK YOUR BARNACLES, TOO! For scaring me like that. A short moment later, I eye at the newly reddened Zeedorf, and goes back to pondering those ponderings from tail to finish.

Standing at attention.
CRACK!
ROAR!
AND THUNDER!
AND—ENOUGH OF THAT! The Flight Crew is here. Jacker and Facker to be my pilots again tonight. As they approach, I give my salute, my handshakes and then gives the two my PC spiel. Fuel is on blah de blah-di-blah-blah, lox is on—bite me! Wingsweep handle is in the wingsweep position. Something much ado about ducts. And then yadda-yadda on and so forth. Let's begin! Jacker now looks confused. As he gets closer to the muff over my port ear to shouts into it.
"Sorry… what… too loud up here… did you say lox is on… *bite me*?" Aye, whahaha! I did just do that! I did just fill him in with that line, literally. You thought that was strictly some nonliteral colloquial dumped in just for the book to pad out all the unimportant details and discourses, did you, huh, did you? But, anyways, here's the dealio: right now, a few of our Jets are already online and so are some Prowlers and Hawkeyes (plus Hornets and Super Hornets at the bow end of The Ship). So, I did just say that to the pilot. I then shakes my head to give him a nay on that proceedings. And now gives him the real input he's desperately trying to hear with all these Flying Dutchman wailings and whinings going on around us. Anyways, I'm done with the spiel now after a moment of issuing to the two Fly Boys. And then I'm done diving ducts and doing all other sorts of PC work. And now both Jacker and Facker are in their respective cockpit seats in the F-14, I got power and air on my Jet. Time for this maestro to do one final orchestra with all these sights and sounds, before, come tomorrow, when I do my bowing outs.

Once again there be thundering, black, clouds hung over the Pacific. At the OBC's stage of my 107's launch procedure as this part of the Jet activates. Then followed by that. While Jacker up their pinpoints his eyes about all the cockpit council, like a sedentary couch potato would do, looking for his keys, surrounded by nothing but junkfood plastic bags and aluminum cans of overly sweetened drinks. There's now

some Green Shirts with me, one white shirt, AE3 Brockhausen is watching in a distilled manner (as I catch the sleep deprived second in command trying his best to keep an open eyelid with the launch preceedings). A First Class Tweaker is once again routinely seen micced up with the pilot in the cockpit up near the port side radium. And besides all these precedents, there's also one precedent that isn't so routine: Zeedorf's ass! And the Redshirt is standing awfully close to my starboard intake. Awfully close. Awfully! Frightfully so. Staring. Just staring. Deep into the churning and burning mouth of this leviathan's. Eye-eat-eye staring! And, with my lawfully ordained job detailings of being responsible of the safety of all of us flattoppers up here around my Jet, I begin to grow nervous. And now, I has eyes only for this Redshirt, and this one Redshirt, alone. Why are you smiling, Zeedorf? Why you smiling looking into my Jet's starboard intake? And then, at that moment, Zeedorf turns his silly head to silly well smile and stare at me. And, I'm getting a bit freaked by all this. And all I see now of him. Stop smiling at me! Stop! Why you smiling? Oh, God, please let him not up and do what I'm fearing with all my worrisome might of what he might try to up and do! But, that be a "nay," as I doesn't yet see him ready to do anything like that. Not as of yet, at least, so now, it's a waiting game. All just a waiting game. And one playing out all very much all "hurry up and wait" like.

I'm done with the launch. I gots all 12 chains on my back (that many considering the weather conditions right now) and I'm right now waiting for my bird to be launched. Usually at these times, I'm in that special Line Rat Ratways all us Brown Shirts nests in waiting for all the 4th of July fireworks to come and go. Waiting and waiting while taking fortysomething winks. But, nay, as of now. Nay, since I still has my attention on this one dark horse that's showing nothing but smiles between a red shirt and cranial. That smile. Just, that smile! Horrifying to look at, it is! Simply horrifying. Sorta how some kids will grow up and enter their adult years with the horrors they see in clowns. Coulrophobia I think they call it (although, I'd call it "gay" for I can't find anyone having that phobia as being serious)! Zeedorf, what are you looking at now? I see you eyeing in a certain direction where I can't see since the island is now

in the way. But, what do you have there? I feel like I'm asking all this, like I would be, asking a six-year-old child I knows for a fact is hiding a cookie behind his or her back, while saying to me how he or she doesn't. Zeedorf… grr! That's it, I feel, as I step away from the Ratways area to look around the corner and sees.

SHIT!
IT'S AN E2 HAWKEYE!
DOUBLE POOP!
THOSE CERTAIN BIRDS WITH A TOWERING PROPELLERS. AND THE FUCKER IS ACTIVE!

Zeedorf….
Zeedorf!
What are you doing?
WHY YOU LOOKING AT THEM LIKE THAT!!!
And now, I might be no betting man, but, my bets are on this dark horse stepping into the race in these later hours. Terror! Sheer terror! I feel, as I now see him no longer being a JAFO about it, abouts these E2 Hawkeyes, as he now starts stepping over the edge, and begins stepping towards the giant online propellers. Ah crud. Four steel balls.

No, no, no, no, no!
Come back!
Come back!
COME BACK!
And now, I'm about ready to drop all my chains and go after him. Step by step, slow and steady, I see him motioning his mortal coil towards those uncoil-ers. I'm pacing now, and then, we both stop. I do. He does. And now he takes a gander around. And, sees me. And sees how I see what his probably aiming to do.

Come on, Zeedorf, come here!

There's a good boy!
No, no, no, no, no! Don't look back at them giant spinning death dealers, look back at me.
Damn!
I'm stepping again. And, unholy cruds, he's getting close. AOAN Zeedorf once again then turns to look at me. And, there's that million dollars smile again (a million dollars in debt smile, more like it). Fucking hell, how is it that I'm the only one seeing this happen? Not anyone from my Squadron and not anyone even from that E2 Hawkeye's Squadron, seem to be seeing these transactions. And, they're all around us, and the only two I see existing in this frequency around us is Zeedorf and me. I now reach Zeedorf, still with my chains to my back, and grabs him from the back of his Flightdeck jackets, now that he's got his back turned towards me again and seemingly willing again to start stepping towards the Hawkeye propellers once again. And now, sensing how I've grabbed a hold of his Flightdeck jacket, Zeedorf turns to face me again, and, once again—SMILES GALORE!
"What?" He mouths.
I can't hear him, but I can now lipreads what I can.
"Come on, Zeedorf, I don't think those E2 Hawkeyes like to play nice."
"What?"
"COME ON, ALREADY!"
And I finally get him to comply.

Ah crud! I is tired. And growing tired of all these. A few hours have now passed. Most of us been down in the Hangar Bay by Senior's request scrubbing all the Jets that are all being a bunch of Hangar Bay Queens. And, we be the teams of peeps around the vapid skanks doing all their prior to stepping on the runway cosmetic work. All that putting on makeup and helping them fit into extremely tight outfits and wipes their asses once they're done using the head. All that fun-loving aircraft beautician work. Woopty-fucking-do! End of sarcasm. I was around Donnelly for a moment though. And, I did whisper something to him, "I'm doing it!" I said. "…." "I'm doing it, tomorrow!" I said again. And I know he was receiving all the

connotations behind my asking. Since, I was mostly being rhetorical. At the end, all I got from him was a, “good luck.” And nothing else to follow. Not even any eye contact was made with that bit of transacting.

Anyways, I’m back on the Flightdeck, and I’m mostly in the Six Pack area (area just port of the Island). Once again with twelve chains on my back, and, it’s recovery time. Aye, here’s an interesting matter I really haven’t spoken much of. As of right now, there’s this line on the Flightdeck, which, during recoveries, is an absolute no-no to try and cross. A line that’s all intermediate with the colors red and white. And, aye! It’s a no-no! A big no-no! Since, let’s face it, stepping over that line during recoveries, if getting run over by an aircraft coming in at around 150mph doesn’t stop you, the chances of those steel wires being instantly swept up by the aircraft in the landing process—will! And, as of right now, I’m once again around the Six Pack area of the Flightdeck. I have all 12 chains again. And, I is waiting for my 107 to land so I can go on to does all the stuff I be ordained to do. Since, now having woken up and smelled the roses, thanks to our Master Chief, I’m just here not questioning nothing, as long as I’m still here. Key meaning to note “as long as I’m still here.” Ha! Sorta bored right now. Hmm, want to know something funny? As of right now, during recoveries…
WHOOSH! Goes a F-18 Hornet as it lands mere feet away from me.
Quickest means of me ensuing absolute chaos…
WHOOSH! Lands a Prowler.
Would be for me to simply step on this line.
WHOOSH! Goes another Prowler.
If I even chose to step on this line. Everyone on the Flightdeck would right this minute lose their absolute fuckin’ minds. And, sic onto me like I be Roach Burger, after dropping that tailhook on that one Shooter before our Hong Kong port visit.
WHOOSH! Goes one of our F-14 Tomcats, but, it’s not my 107 with Jacker and Facker, not just yet.

So much insanity would ensue, by not even stepping over this line I'm now inches away from, from my starboard foot, so much, so much, by such a small and trifle foot gesture.

WHOOSH! A Super Hornet.

Sigh.

And now I see someone more towards the aft end wanting to cross. It's dark out here. Very, very dark. But I see one of our Greenshirts, two of ours, trying to cross the Flightdeck during recoveries from starboard to port. And, it's allowed, but only allowed by getting the permission of those white shirt dudes you'd see in the pits timing the landings and being always in communication with the pilots during this process. Aye, not my line of work, since our jobs are so compartmentalized. Most of the white shirts there I know to be pilots, themselves. But, that about all I know. All I ever see is, whenever I'm trying to cross the Flightdeck, I'll pick out my glow wand and point it up, and then across the Flightdeck, towards the direction I wants to head. This being my signal to those recovery process coordinators how I'm fixing to cross the red and white lines. Now, once I make that gesture (especially now in the dark), if I sees another one made where they're stationed, that is the only time I'd be allowed to cross. If I doesn't, I am not. And if I choose to cross anyways, ALL HELL AND BEDLAM WOULD ENSUE! And, I'd have to go see the Air Boss. And, I think you all can already imagine the levels of ass-chewery I will receive for what I did. From him and every other E6 and up I come across during the ass-chewing process. And that's all that I will officially on the surface. As for the unofficial business, God knows what!

{DO IT!}

Do what?

WHOOSH!

Ah shit! I think, as once again I'm to be tried and tested by those mind flaying octopus monsters.

{DO IT, JUST, DO IT! WHY STAND SO CLOSE TO THE EDGE, MENTION SUCH, AND NOT DO WHAT YOUR INNER FEELINGS ARE TELLING YOU TO DO!}

WHOOSH!

Because…?

{BECAUSE WHAT, NAVASTIAN?}

Because—go fuck yourselves! I'm not doing it.

{….}

And fuck you and that fake-ass teakettle nonsense you tried to run me by. Fine, it be boiling and about to blow! Good, I'll just take that teakettle and shove it up where the sun nor moon will shine on all y'all Mariana Trench dwellers. Thank you for the invitation, but fuck y'all very much. I'm a coffee drinker now.

WHOOSH!

That felt… good! I feel. Wow, it does, as my chest begins to feel like cooking up inside with my testosterone that's now swimming in my system.

{YOU'RE GOING TO REGRET THAT!}

….

{YOU CAN'T TALK TO US IN THAT WAY!}

WHOOSH!

…?

{TRIAL BY SUICIDE, BELIEVE US, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO FACE WHAT HAS BEEN ORDAINED FOR YOU—ONE WAY OR ANOTHER!}

What do you—

WHOOSH!

{WHAT WE MEAN IS, DON'T THINK YOUR LAST TRIAL HERE WILL BE YOUR… LAST TRIAL… WE COULD DELAY UNTIL YOU'RE READY TO FACE IT!}

What do you mean.

{WE MEAN… TODAY… TOMORROW. A YEAR FROM NOW. TWO. TEN… TILL THE END OF YOUR DAYS… WE CAN DELAY IT LIKE WE DELAYED YOUR LAST TRIAL, TILL THE VERY END!}

NO… FUCK NO! I think. Horrified. Now imagining myself on my deathbed. Maybe 60 years from now. Still having to listen to these fuckers with this shit!

FUCK!

I gave you my answer!

WHOOSH!

{YOU GAVE "AN ANSWER," BUT, FACING THE TRIAL, WELL, DEEP DOWN, NOT UNTIL YOU FACE WHAT SEEMS LIKE CERTAIN DEATH! FACE THE FACE OF THE REAPER, ITSELF! WILL YOU PASS AND BE FREE OF IT!}

Whiskey Tango—THAT'S SUCH FUCKIN' BULL! You mean, I have to face what seems like certain—

WHOOSH!

{YES.}

And now, the cooking in my chest seems to have come to an immediate stop, and, I can't smell it within me no more. And all I can smell is the wee smell of terror induced piss! And, not the yellowish kind. But the yellowish somewhat orange and brown colored disgusting sort.

WHOOSH!

{NAVASTIAN, TO PASS, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS STEP OVER THE LINE, AS A JET IS COMING TO MAKE ITS LANDING, AND FACE THE FACE OF THE REAPER! PULL THAT OFF! AND YOU'RE GOOD TO GO! NO MORE US! NO MORE TRIALS! AND NO MORE OF THAT "HURRY UP AND WAIT" BUSINESS!}

…?

{SO, WE SQUARE NOW?}

WHOOSH!

And now I flinch with the landing to our second to last Jet. Can't say how many birds on this bird farm had all gone out for sorties tonight. But I've been counting our Jets. And, there's only mine to go!

FUCK ME! I DON'T WANT TO SPEND A LIFETIME HEARING THESE ANTI-PSYCHOTIC BLOCKERS. SHOULD I DO IT?

WHOOSH! Goes what seems like the last of the F-18 Super Hornets. And now I doesn't only flinch, but begins to tremble. And I is purring and petrified.
{ALL RIGHT, FINE, BE A PUSSY! WE'RE BEGINNING TO LOSE INTEREST IN YOU. AT LEAST FOR NOW. AND FOR NOW, MAYBE WE CAN FIND ANOTHER MUCH MORE BRAVER SOUL TO BE ABLE TO MAN UP TO THESE TRIALS AND CHALLENGES.}
What do you mean?

And then, it happens:
I see both AOAN Almendinger and AOAN Zeedorf signaling to the White Shirts in the pits to cross the Flightdeck from port to starboard. Since, their shop is station on the port end of The Ship, unlike our PC shop. I see them with the glow wands doing so. And, then, as I see the white shirt give them permission, both rush across. But, it's at that very minute, watching AOAN Zeedorf rushing with his glow wand still in hand, still on, in bright red color, I see him accidentally drop it midway. For a moment, both Almendinger and Zeedorf don't notice how they've FODed the runway right dabsmack in the middle of it, for a Jet, a Tomcat Jet, which can only be my 107, I can now see in the far-off distance making way to land. SHIT! I go! Fuckin' Zeedorf! FUCK!
"ALL HANDS-ON DECK! ALL HANDS-ON DECK! THE RECOVERY PATH HAS BEEN FODED! I REPEAT, THE RECOVERY PATH HAS BEEN FODED! WAVE OFF THE ONCOMING JET! WAVE OFF, I SAY, WAVE OFF!!!" I hear the Air Boss now SHOUTING over the 5MC speakers. It's dark out now, but we can all see how all

HELL and BEDLAM is ready to ensue. And as for the oncoming Jet, it's too close! It's too close to do so without at least making a touch and go.
AND THEN:
Zeedorf, notices what he has done. Sees how the approaching bird is mere seconds away from trying to land. And… NO, NO, NO! DON'T RUN BACK AND TRY TO PICK IT UP! NO, NO, YOU FUCKIN' MORON! NOoooo!

"GET OFF THE FUCKIN' RUNWAY PATH! GET OFF THE FUCKIN' RUNWAY PATH! GET OFF! GET OFF!!!" Bellows the Air Boss.

For… we're—ALL NOW SEEING THIS TAKE PLACE!!!
Aye… aye, aye! This is all now happin' in what seems like in slow motion. All happening in a mere 3-4 seconds even though each tick feels to take up an hour. Zeedorf now reaches the gear adrift, picks it up, and then—STANDS! JUST STANDS AND… WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOIN'?
{WHAT DO YOU THINK HE'S DOING?}
And I grow somber now. The Jet's going to hit him. Coming around 200mph, and even if I have the Zeedorf to my backside. I know—I just KNOW he's SMILING RIGHT NOW! Time to die! Time to die! Last call for all remaining Zeedorfs… time to meet your Maker! As the now flightless aluminum turkey is about to…

but then I see another VF-451 personnel in a Green Shirt jotting fast, Chief Murdock, I see, as he grabs onto Zeedorf and uses his momentum to get himself, and Zeedorf, out of the way, as the Jet practically creams onto the Flightdeck, what feels like mere inches past the two, and does an immediate—TOUCH! Then—GO! And is once again airborne.

Once again, all hell and bedlam, but not for Zeedorf and Chief Murdock! For both have been spared. Both! As the Final Countdown now passes the midnight hour and comes to a close.

{A CLOSE….
COMPLETELY FOR ZEEDORF… BUT NOT TOTALLY FOR YOU… WE'LL PRESUME THE TRIAL IN YOUR BEHALF WHEN YOU'RE READY.

WE'RE GOING BACK TO SLEEP.

SO, SEE YOU IN 15 YEARS… MAYBE 30! OR MUCH, MUCH SOONER! WAHAHAHAAHAHAAAHA!}

Sigh.
And I won't be looking forward to that. Fuckin' bull!

But anyways….

Zeedorf the Last… but not yet the last of!
And I sigh in relief to that notion.

HOT WATER

"So, what happened, why did Zeedorf just freeze like that?"
"What, he was facing down a tomcat Jet coming in around 200mph, he was white stricken with fear."
"You think so?"
"Well, why else did he just stop dabsmack in the middle like that? You saw how close that Jet got before Chief Murdock ran in and saved him. White-stricken! He was white-stricken! I've seen it happen before. And, I've seen it when there's no Chief Murdock around to save the day."
"All right, AE2, I guess so."
"Trust me, AE3, I know so."
As for me, although, me, as in, Navastian, seems like I'm the only one that knows better. Right now, I stand in the Ratways listening to AE3 Brock and AE2 Frankowsky

speaking to one another. Speaking, pretty much what I just filled you in with. AE2 Frank is once again being AE2 Frank—the know it all! Probably giving less shits about what happened and more how he can now talk and talk and blah-blah about it, since, the asshole, even over such context, still finds a means of displaying his utter love for the sound of his own voice. But I quirk now a little listening, since he sounds like a complete dumbass doing so. Since, I know better, and the AE2 and AE3, Moose and Squirrel, here, both have zero clue.

So, aye, crystal clear morning skies hung over the Pacific. Crystal. Clear. But it's still the morning twilight hours and it's still at the beginnings and way too dark. It's roughly around 0545 hours. And skies be at astronomical twilight. Blessing a Navy blue sky to commemorate a Navy blue day. I call this hour, "the cool fuzz." For, even as cold as it is, the sleepy dark blue watercolors still give off a pleasant feel as if it's really warm. Not cool. But warm. But… still cool! Down right, numbnuts numbing cold. But I personally have grown fed up of feeding you and even me that line. Anyways, aye aye, roger that, it is. Right now, I'm at the Ratways at the aft end, or, what's also called the Patio. Mostly just killing time since Senior also had to go down to Sick Bay, same as IS3 Falconni, fearing what stomach bug he might have caught, since, like the IS3, he's spent most of these Night Check hours puking and pooping and all (I feels a fat joke in there, somewhere, but, like the "freezing my nuts off" joke, also have grown weary of such). So, affirmative on that, Jack, it's just AE3 Brock mostly in charge with Senior's sporadic moments of being there and then being not there. And, unholy monkey fuckin' Superbowls, has there been a major difference, and with having someone in charge I could at least like, unlike all the jackoffs I haven't been able to. But, that's not important. Since, we very near Thailand as of right now. Very near. I can't see yet the Indochina coast from where I stand. But I feel them. I feel them and feels them calling to me.

Most people live on a lonely island
Lost in the middle of a foggy sea
Most people long for another island

One where they know they would like to be

Bali Ha'i may call you
Any night, any day
In your heart you'll hear it call you
Come away, come away
Bali Ha'i will whisper on the wind of the sea

Here am I…
your special island…

Come to me…
come to me.

Wait, what's happening? Shit! Kneeknocker jumpin' cadillacs! Fuck! Were you about to cry? Seriously, Navastian, were you about to….

I guess I now understand the AE2 Frank. It not really having anything to do with naked women in buckets and all that degrading stuff. It's just about the magic. The magic! The undescribed and unspoken magic behind it. I remember as a child watching this one WW2 black and white film supposedly made and taking place in the 40s. And, for the life of me, I cannot tell you what the name of that movie is. Or, if it was real or not. Not like Mr. Limpet, where I remember specifically, this was a long, lost and forgotten diamond in the ruff. Or maritimely speaking: a gold pearl in a sea of dead long-ago oysters.

A movie I might have even made up completely in my own dreams and thoughts.
Hmm… skies now at nautical twilight.

The movie was about a man flying all over the Pacific, looking for his own special island. His paradise. I guess in a B2 bomber or some aircraft. Much like the Flight

of the Condor. But this condor was no condor of the desert. But the sea. The Fly Boy in the movie was so animate, so animate, so, so very much so in finding this island, he flew what seemed like from one end to another. From San Fran to New Zealand to Rapa Nui to the Philippines, and as hard as he looked, he just couldn't find it. Until, he finally ran out of fuel (I know in real life doing a feat like that even though starting with a full tank could be impossible, remember, this movie was a soft-boiled fantasy). And once he ran out of fuel, as his bird took a nosedive, he faced the Grim Reaper as the bird began spiraling into a tailspin. Spiraling and spiraling and spiraling down and down and down within mountainous mounds of clouds he couldn't see through. And, as he did, he prayed. He prayed. In his blind faith he prayed to see everything coming out all right in the end. All right! All right, in the end! God will make sure I will come out all right in the en—….

And, it was then, breaking cloud cover, he saw, he saw the island he'd been searching for, for all this time. And not since the moment he found himself hearing the legends and searching to find them, but seemingly since the beginning. All his life. All! And now, at the last hour, the Final Countdown having marked T-Minus 0 seconds. There it was!

There…!
Ah crud?
And, with that, I now see the shores of Thailand. There now, now at civil twilight dawn, I see it! I see it! And… I cringe up somehow. For…

What's this? What's this?
Why is this?

For, right now, seeing Thailand, just doesn't feel right. And now seeing Thailand at the far end of the horizon… just isn't doing it for me as I thought it would.

“So, out there, you’re really going to go for it, huh?” I now turn my head to see who’s talking to me, but, I really doesn’t need to. Since, he had me at “so.” No one else on the Boat knows about this. But this special someone. This half Fijian. Someone that haphazardly already comes from these parts of the world and knows of all those dreamy Polynesian stories. I eye him now. and just gives him an affirmative with a nod. But I has my eyes closed as I does it. I has them closed. Closed! He now nods and nods looking towards and away. “Well, nothing is going to be stopping you. And, luckily, nothing going to do the same with me now finally getting off this freaking Ship for a small while. Then, back again, and back to dealing with all the fuckfaces… you already know what I’m getting at, correct?” But I doesn’t say or nod or shakes my head. For, us two now, are on the same Boat, but, only us two with this matter. Although, my solution to his answer is very simple. But, of course, he’s not going to want to hear it. But, why not? Wonder I. Why not try one more time? And as I lean my head in, I guess, my intentions proceed me, as Donnelly decides to cut me off not in midsentence, but, in midair:

“Don’t say it!” He says.
“Why not?”
“I… I…. I can’t do that. I just simply can’t!”
“What’s stopping you?” Now I understand how much of a grave decision this is, Donnelly wasn’t at all off, this was going to be the biggest life altering decision made by me. As we have stipulated before. And, I apologize for all my mulling over the matter, but, if I’m to go through with it, I gots to mull and mull over this decision, because, there’s really no going back. A decision made that would give no allowance to any and all back-treading. Once committed, everything was going to change! Simply everything! So much that, that even my American citizenship status was practically going to be revoked. Even though born in the USA. My birthright. Simply my birthright sold out to whatever would now be waiting for me in these third world parts of the world. I could never go back. Never! And with the amount of culture shock I would have to endure then, was going to be the type to completely uproot me from whatever I saw as a foundation before. And my new citizenship status: a

foreigner's foreigner. These were the types of sink or swim commitments I can only imagine hearing of mercenaries and nameless, faceless, country-less men of the world making. And what would be found of me much later in my years, in my 40somethings, probably that type of scarface figure (never an exact story told of how I actually got it) you'd meet in bars between here, to Seoul to Bangladesh, to Casablanca, from Abu Dhabi to Montreal Canada. And every and all business prospects I'd bring being: shady as fuck! Being in each and every footnote. Now speaking in an unfamiliar accent, I would later on grow into instead of having been born with. And, aye, I guess there is some sort of charm to the whole idea. Some adventurous and debonair charm. Having been so bold and dauntless to have accepted such an undaunting lifestyle. But the more I mull and mull over it, what stands out aren't the life altering bits. But, the self-altering ones.

More than anything, I was going to change, completely change, and having probably absolutely no baring into what exactly of my choosing or liking.

A moment now comes and goes. And, with that, me and Donnelly are no longer alone. AE3 Brock seems to want to have a word with us. Or, actually, just Donnelly, since I now pick up how he's mostly centered on him instead of me.
"What is it, Brock?" Asks Donnelly. And now, the AE3 speaks, but first wanting to address me with something:
"Umm, Navastian."
"Yes, what?"
"This is... private." AE3 says to me. And… ah-oh! This doesn't look good.

I comply now:
"Okay, I'll step away."

And now having done so, further down towards the aft end of The Ship, or, stern, also called, along the Ratways, I do nothing but watch Brock and Donnelly discussing. And now, Donnelly looks upset. Very upset.

A few more sullen words are exchanged.
I have absolutely no clue what this would… but maybe I do?
And now I see Donnelly looking at me and giving a “come hither” head gesture. And, I do so. And as I get to, now I’m nothing but curious.
“What... what's going on?”
Brock doesn’t seem like he still prefers if I find myself meddling in with the conversation he wants to make with Donnelly, but it seems like that’s more of Donnelly’s decision than the AE3’s.
“Brock, tell him what you told me.”
But Brock doesn’t seem sure if he wants to.
“I don't know if I—"
“Just tell him, this concerns him, too.” Informs Donnelly. And now I’m more than curious.
“….” Goes Brock, still holding onto a reservation.
“Do it, just tell him.”
“Okay.” The AE3 complies.
“What's going on?” Ask I.
And now, it starts:
“Donnelly did something, which I’m more than certain is going to be getting him into some really hot water.” Informs the AE3. And… I’m… not exactly sure. But, maybe… I don’t know!
“What he do?” Ask I.
And now Donnelly discloses it:
“I went to the Master At Arms about what happened between you and Senior.” And… oh shit!
“You did what?” I lash.
“Yeah.” And I am right now feeling totally speechless. Feeling, at least, like I have a thousand things to say to him. Say to him, just how wrong of a move that was on his part. Aye, I think it’s already been pointed out, Donnelly can sometimes be very… obtuse! Let’s just say. And in a manner of how obtuse children can be, when they

just don't seem to understand how things work in the real world. Why they work the way they work. And how, like inside an industrial refinery, simply throwing in a monkeywrench all very "rage against the machine" like, isn't going to make things better. But far, far worse. As it causes a major catastrophe. And causes a major fire. And now, watch all the industrial blue-collar workers runnin' out screaming with blackened soot covered faces. While some try to run back in and grab any and all still trapped inside the building. It's sorta like how what Zeedorf tried to do, even in his mind, the right thing, was only going to make things far, far worse. Sure, the flightline had been FODed, but, you weren't going to make things better, stupid, if you tried to run back and now made your entire self, one giant foreign object damage, leading a colossal catastrophe into something even bigger and more catastrophic. Politics! All having to do with Navy politics. Similar to the mistake I made not so long ago going over Senior's head to have a talk with our Maintenance Master Chief over that whole choking business. And we all saw how much difference that really made.

"Why did you do that?" I now say.

"Because, they needed to know."

"Donnelly—why did you do that?" I now say again.

"What, what's wrong with what I did?" Donnelly questions. And, I'm right now all about that face/palm action.

"Do you know the shitstorm this would cause in our command?" I say.

"I... what?"

"Dude, I told you how Master Chief reacted to Senior attacking me."

"I know, and that's why I went to the MAs, it's fucking bullshit! Senior attacked you, and really, Master Chief should have been the one to have dealt with this matter."

My word: is Donnelly being simple minded right now!

"Dude, are you serious here?"

"No, he should have."

"Brock... explain it to him." I say. Since, I'm growing fed up of arguing all this with this pup named Scooby Doo.

"What, what's so wrong with what I did?"

A pause now follows. A momentary pause. As me and the AE3 have both our faces in the palm of our hands, as we shake and shake and shake and shake. Even if, Donnelly doesn't just yet seem to get Navy politics, and how this all looks. But it does definitely seem like it's certain he's going to have to learn it the hard way.
"Donnelly, the command doesn't give a shit about Senior attacking Navastian." Begins AE3.
"Well, they should!"
"Donnelly, please forgive me for putting it like this, but, I think you're really just thinking about your own situation." Says AE3. And that now gets my attention. Since, not sure where Brock is coming up with this. And since it's about my boy, here! I feel like I now should know.
"What... what do you mean by that?"
"How you knocked out a First Class and got into trouble." Continues Brock.
"Yeah, I hit him, I got into trouble. As much as I didn't like what happened. I got what was coming to me. Those were the consequences for my actions."
"Yeah, but...?" Says Brock.
"What are you sayin', that An Airman attacks a First Class, and that's bad? But, if a Senior Chief attacks an Airman...?" Goes Donnelly. And now, I'm all eyes and ears, and I see why the AE3 took it there. Seeing how, this really was just a personal matter with Donnelly. And, it really wasn't done all in my favor. I now shake my head at Donnelly, as Brock does the same to concur. And now, Donnelly is steamin'! Steamin'—RED!
"Well, that's fucking bull! Fucking bull! It shouldn't be that way! Shouldn't—END OF STORY!" Donnelly explodes. And, even though Donnelly is correct to think that, it is what it is! And that's all there is to it.
"Setting aside how things should or shouldn't be. Donnelly...?" Continues the AE3.
"What?"
"Donnelly, I'm just going to be straight up with you."
"Okay, go ahead."
And now Brock lays it on him:

“They're going to… well… yeah… crucify your ass over this!”
“What?” And as I ponder over it, I find Brock to be the hammer over the nail on point about the matter, ready to drive it in.
“It's true, Brock's right.” I now concur.

….
And now, another moment of reflection is needed by all three of us. It’s now dawn. There’s no more twilight skies at work or play. This is now the new day and all it has instore for us. This!

After that moment, Donnelly speaks again:
“What do you mean ‘crucify my ass?’ I didn't do nothing.” He says all very wearily.
“They don't care.” I now say. And seeing how I now want to take over from Brock, just makes the conversation for Donnelly go from being exhausting, to straight up sounding antagonizing.
“They don't care, how the fuck can it be that way?” Donnelly goes at me. And now with his dry-docked voice that sounds all crinkly and cranky. Cracking and snapping and popping with an absolute sense of prejudice towards all me and AE3 Brock and anything Navy has to now say.
“Bro, listen to me... Navastian is right, you shouldn't have—"
“No—FUCK THIS NONSENSE! I’M OUTTA HERE!”
And there he blows.
There he blows.
Blows and blasts as he flies off the handle and storms off!

Sigh!
I then turn to the AE3.
“He's in some really hot water, isn't he?”
“Boiling hot!” Explains the AE3. Still mostly has eyes on him.
“Fuck!” I say, since, there’s nothing much else I can really say.
….

“What will they do to him?” I then ask the AE3.
“My guess, same thing they did with AEAN Dennison.” And, him saying that, I see a shadow pass over his face, since, he’s right now facing the sun, yet, I knew if I was to look around, I wouldn’t find what it was that casted that shadow. At least nothing in the visible world. That, what he just said, scares me now. Scares me how I’d feel it was really meant for me, and not Donnelly. So… accursed! I can only call it.

“That bad?”
“Oh yeah! Maybe even worse.”
“What?”
The AE3 then explains to me:
“Dennison, what he did, only affected what the Squadron thought of him. It wasn't anything that was taken outside the command. You know how the Squadron is protecting their senior officials. Plus, shit like this could cost our command a Battle E.”
“Really?”
“If shit like this gets out? A superior being all abusive to his subordinates. Yeah! It can. We're slowly leaving what the Old Navy was about and heading towards what the New Navy should be about. And they don't want stuff like hazing, or fraternization, or superiors being abusive to their subordinates. They don't want stuff like that. Not anymore. And the Air Wing might decide to make an example of our command, by taking away the Battle E, which Master Chief Dreadnought was brought out of retirement, to get for us.”

And now I has a question for Brock:
“Yeah, but... I mean, you've been in longer. Has the Squadron really improved much from its rag tag days?” And that question finally gets the AE3 to break sights on Donnelly and for a moment focuses it on me. He doesn’t seem very assured.
“Well... I guess, a little.”
“Really, just that?”
“….” Explains Brock now.

"…." I now follow suit. Since, words would be pointless to explain right now.
Brock now gives actual words to describe it:
"It's all about appearances. All about appearances. How the Squadron looks, on the surface. And this, what Donnelly did, going over the Squadron's head, over the chain of command, and to the MAs, trying to get Senior into trouble? Donnelly is in some really deep shit. Really deep."

I now sigh.
"And the command knows what Donnelly did, huh?"
A stupid question or not, I'm now just being rhetorical.
"Of course, they should. Word like this spreads fast. No matter how hard the MAs might have tried to protect Donnelly, from word getting out. The fact that I know, and I hearing this from Falky. Definitely now means that the entire Squadron would know about this. Senior Chief, or CMC, and the Skipper. Everybody."

….
Both of us now go silent.
Brock then leaves.

THE FANTASTIC MR. DERBY

The man is a freakin' ninja. No freakin' joke! This be a no "no shitter" this time. I saw it with my own blooming eyes. Back at NAF Atsugi, one night, black as unholy light, I saw this Compton bred motherflipper, out and about, creeping in and out of shadows, dressed as he was. Doing nothing, but motherflippin' ninja shit! All: "Ha Yah," running past and getting my attention. And then jumping up, to somersault, to then land back on his feet, right in front of me. And as I gawked at this unidentified—what the flip? And saw through his balaclava, Derby's eyes, I saw, gawking back, he then winked at me, and gave a salute, then started heading to the food court, to get himself some Popeye's Red Beans and Rice. I mean, this happened! This truly, truly happened! You know, when you're an ordinary person, that knows the difference between the mundane real world you live in, and how there is this thing called: fiction? That you see in books or comic books or movies—and nowhere else! That

always has whimsical and wacky crud happening, that you wouldn't expect in real life. Well, this happened, and I was left speechless watching the cloaked Derbytown stride over to the crosswalk button, push it, then stand there and wait for cars to halt so he could pass. Now, I know I was in Japan. And seeing a ninja out and about and all… well….
Wait…?
What am I thinking?
Actually—NO! You still just don't see CRAZY shit like THIS! And it's not even from a Japanese person. It's from a guy who wears derby hats, that has a last name he changed to: Derbytown. And he's a black person from Compton, CA. That's obviously seen way too many American Ninja movies as a kid, back in the 80s. Another orphan of a bankrupt culture who thinks he's Bruce Lee, Jean Claude Van Damme, or Leroy Green from The Last Dragon. Grew up watching too much of that martial arts stuff, and who now wanted to be a martial artist, himself. Also, he was wearing his trademark derby hat, that was now making him look like a ninja from freakin' Victorian England. So, a boy all about them nunchucks and ninja stars, and trumpets and tea, and shit! All: "Ha Ya, Gov'na," and shit! Ha!

So, I had seen him somersaulting in front of me, rushing fast to get to the food court, to get himself some fast food eats. And since I was also hungry for something, myself, and was already heading there, I went into the complex. Which isn't very large, just a simple mini mall like setup, with the Navy Exchange to one side, and a couple of fast food stands on the other. And when I went in, I went straight to where Derbytown was sitting, and sat with. And after a moment of just sitting there in silence, us two eyeing one another, I then built up the nerve to ask: "Umm...?" I went. And then Derby went: "Stupid NEX, I can't stand the DVD collection they got here." And I answered with: "How's that?" While checking out his ninja get up, and how he was eating with the mask still on. Him just having raised the balaclava enough to expose his mouth, so he could spoon feed himself the delicious Louisiana side order. "I placed an order for Bloodsport and a couple of Steven Seagal movies two weeks ago, and they still haven't come in yet." "Oh, you into that type of stuff?" And

now Derbytown eyed me, and eyed me in a way, as making a spectacle of himself. Wanting me to take notice of how he was dressed up as. With a look on his masked-up face asking: “What do you think?” And now, I wondered: should I bring up the obvious question on my mind?

“Why are you dressed like a ninja?”
“Why aren’t you?” He asked, back.

And Derby had me there. I mean, how could I possibly answer back to a question like that? But I knew he was joking, for that was just his sense of humor. Derbytown continued to stare at me, while enjoying his red beans and rice. And interestingly enough, it was just us two, but also many other people around: Officers, Khakis, First Classes, and all with their families. But none of them were paying any attention to the freakin' ninja pretty much freakin’ sitting next to me. And it seemed like I was the only one seeing something out of the ordinary. “What are you doing?” I asked. ‘Cause, I had to! “I’m training.” And then I asked a really, really dumb question: “To do what?” And Derbytown gave me another one of those: “What the fuck do you think?” Looks. Which I couldn't argue with, either. The man was making me feel dumber and dumber, looking at him. Even if I mostly found Derby to be a bit intellectually slow. Right now, that was just the effect he was having on me. And, right now, I wasn’t only on his level. But feeling even below that (fine, Derby isn’t dumb, per se, and as much as I’ve made him out to be, but he does live in his own vivid world filled with details only fabricated in his own vivid imagination, and, just the difficulty of living in two separate realities does seem to have a strain on much of his mental awareness). As of right now, as of now having sat and entertained Derby a little, I could not think of a single nonrhetorical question to ask him, to save my life. “Aye, I know, Navastian, I know how this looks.” He said, then. And it was sorta reaffirming to see him noticing how out of place he was, as I had.

“You want to be a ninja?” I asked.

Since I was way too stupefied by the scene Derby was making, here, to escape from asking another dumb question, I could easily answer myself. Pardon me, but that's just something I tend to do when I'm feeling speechless: saying whatever I already know. “Yes, it’s one of the reasons I chose Japan on my dream sheet, back in the recruiting office.” He explained. “Why?” And then Derby decided to let me have it: “So, one day... I can fight crime.”

And before letting me have it, he did that whole looking from port to starboard thing, like the info he was briefing me with was top secret. “You want to fight crime?” “Yeah, it’s been a dream of mine since I was a kid.” And, all right. I thought then. Since I could completely understand that reason, for, I was too raised in the 80s. So, I could understand where Derbytown was coming from. Absolutely! But here was the problem: even though it's expected of us to want to be like the cultural movie star role models, TV models, and comic book models we grew up with, it's just completely taboo to go this far. Let me explain further: if a person really wanted to be like Batman, per se, in real life, he wouldn't actually dress as the Bat, with all his gadgets and stuff, since, it just doesn't—WORK THAT WAY! NO! It would be STUPID! In real life, that person would join the police force, so he could fight crime, since fighting crime was the main purpose behind Bruce Wayne wanting to become the Bat in the first place. And as for being a vigilante? Let's see how far that would take Derby, here, in real life, wanting to be above the law. I mean, I grew up wanting to be Indiana Jones, but to be a real archaeologist, I don't see myself getting far raiding tombs and whipping motherfuckers with a whip. No! In movies, it's okay. In real life, it would be STUPID! “You know, when I was a kid, I used to follow police cars around, from rooftops, just to see what they’d do.” Said Derbytown, now. And... that would be SO STUPID! TOO STUPID! I thought then. As I started to question the real-life DANGERS this Derbytown would put himself in, by doing such an ignoramus thing. Part of me now wanted to grab his derby hat, and chuck it, and place a dunce cap on his head, instead. “That doesn’t sound like it would be a good idea.” I brought up. For I had to! “No, it wasn’t, it was a stupid idea.” Said Derby. As I: “Ha!” Busted out with one loud chuckle and got everyone's attention. And, now I was the one that

was being a spectacle, while Derby still wasn't. “But now, with this training, when I go back to my neighborhood, I’ll know what I’m doing.” And as he said that, he finished it off with a nod. And, as for what I thought about all of what he was now explaining: STUPID! That would be so STUPID! “You think this is stupid, don't you?” Asked Derby. “No, no!” I choked up. As I placed my hand over my mouth, and looked away, sideways, so Derby couldn't read any more of my facial reactions. “Yeah, well... I understand.” Said Derby, while nodding some more. And now I began nodding, also, since I didn't know what else to do, and this was getting pretty awkward. “No, I understand. But here's the thing! When you set your mind to something, you should follow through with it, no matter HOW it looks!” “Umm, let me get some Popeye's, and... to be continued. In a minute. All right?” I asked Derby. Since I needed the break. And Derby then just did a profiled bow while clenching his fist in front, as you see martial artist doing to show resolve and respect. And now I went to get me some grub, as I waited to hear what else Derby had to say to me. For I must admit, I was a little intrigued now. And I wanted to argue how insane and inane this all seemed to me, since, Derby seemed intuitive enough to grasp the notion, too, himself. As little as he seemingly did. So, I went up to the food stand to order, and once I did, I waited to get my meal. And when I got it, I came back, and sat down again. “So, do you have like a Mr. Miyagi out here, here in Japan, training you, or something?” I asked. Since the boy wonder here had obviously seen one too many of those movies. And I could only imagine that would have been his first thought of what to do out here in Japan. “No. Why?” He said. “Oh.” And that completely threw me off with the question I had, asking him next. “I’m self-trained. Have been most my life. That’s just my discipline.” Now I had a not so stupid question to ask:

“Then, um... why would you come out here, to Japan, just to train yourself, doesn’t that sorta defeat the purpose?”
“Hmm...?” Went Derbytown.

And I had to catch myself rolling my eyes, to not make it seem just how ignoramus this was all turning out to be for me. “I mean, you could have done that back home.

Why do it now, here, if you're not going to try and benefit learning from someone? We live in Japan right now, and, I'm pretty sure there's plenty of senseis out here teaching ninjutsu and stuff." And then Derby decided to let me have it some more:

"Because I'm like Ryu, from Street Fighter, I do it alone. My aim is to travel the world, to find people that are worthy, that I can challenge, to test my might."
And this time I couldn't help rolling my eyes to that. As things got really awkward, and STUPID, for me. "Although, I understand. I'm making myself out to be something you'd see stepping out of a video game. But, as I said, when you set your mind to something, you should follow through with it, no matter HOW it looks!" "Yeah, but Derby, YOU WANT TO FIGHT CRIME?" I let out. For I felt like I had to try and reason with him. I HAD TO! Since the boy had obviously been forcing that notion into his head so much, that he now believed that it could be done. The guy comes from Compton, CA—let's not forget! Where everyone knows how those streets are, so, I can see this kid eventually getting stopped by the local LAPD, and, well, we all know how all that is going to look (and let's not even consider how it's going to look in front of some Blood and Crip members). "Yes, I want to fight crime, my neighborhood NEEDS someone like me, to try and make a difference."

"Derby... you know Batman, right?"
"Not personally, no!"

And this time, as I roll my eyes, I completely did it without restraint. I didn't care anymore if he knew how stupid this all sounded to me then or not. Since, I then WANTED HIM TO KNOW! So, he could see how insane and also dangerous this all really sounded. For the boy was obviously delusional and needed a reality check. "Okay, check this out. As a kid, I always wanted to be Indiana Jones, and—" "So, what stopped you?" And now I clammed my hands over my face, as I began shaking my head. "Hey, Navastian, you're the one that gave up on your dream, but that doesn't mean I should also do so with mine." And I got where Derbytown was coming from, but: "Derby, if you want to fight crime, why not join the police force?" And now

Derby extended a hardened frown. “How am I going to do that, going blue?” What? “Derby, that's what police officers do, that's their job, and that's what they get PAID to do! Being a ninja? How are you going to be jumping from rooftop to rooftop, and putting yourself in a lot of risk, going at it alone?” “Going at it alone is my style.” And now was when I started to get mad. “Derby! You can get yourself killed doing that.” “You can get yourself killed being a police officer, too, so what's the point?”

Grr! I went in my thoughts.

“Yes, but....” Motherfu—I mean flipper! “Derby this is the real world, you can't just go solo vigilante in a neighborhood like the one you're from, and—” “Yes, I can, that's how I did it, then. This isn't anything new to me.” And honestly, I felt like giving up at this point. But, I couldn't, I just couldn't. I needed to win this argument. I just HAD TO! Even when trying to get across the thick skull Derby came with. “Derby, you said it yourself, it was a stupid idea back when you did it then, so, what makes it any different now, how is all the training you’re putting yourself through now going to matter, when you find yourself back home getting shot at? You training for that? You training to get shot, that a least requires two participants to do so, one holding the gun on you and you practicing trying to disarm him, do you see what I’m talking about?” And it was then I felt like I had the argument. There was a lot of nuances to it, of just how stupid it all was, that I felt was leaning on me being right about. All I needed to do was to grasp onto those nuances, and submit them to Derby, here, to win this. “Navastian, I still managed, even back when I was lesser disciplined to do so.” “Derby, let's forget how this would look if the police caught up to you, how would this look in your neighborhood, with gangbangers seeing you jumping onto their roof, and knocking down their DirecTV dishes by accident and stuff?” And Derby now smiled, as he took another spoon full of red beans and rice and started chewing loudly. “Navastian, that wouldn't be a problem, I'm a ninja, they wouldn't know I was even there.” And I'm snickering now, and sweating. And I've never done both of these at the same time. “And, what if you do get caught? You're only human, you might fuck it up, and get caught, you know.” I say. “No, I won't.” Derby went.

Ahh!

“Yes, you will, Derby! Yes, you—” “No, I won't!” Interrupted Derby. And I gave up at this point. Even if I had won this argument, I could then see that Derby would still not have counted it as a win in his book. Since, he was playing by totally different rules of reasoning. Rules not meant for this exact world, with exact properties and principals and laws that are in motion. For Derby's rules be coming from the Double Dragon universe. “Fine, fine, I guess if you managed before, you can manage again, when you go back.” I had led out. “Darn right!” Said Derbytown. Rejoiced he, then went on to continue enjoying the last helpings of his red beans and rice. as I started to, as well.

“Come with me.” Said Derbytown, then.
“What?”

“I mean, be with me, let me train you, and we can own this city.” And when Derbytown said “own this city” he did this thing you see cartoonish villains do, as they clench up their fist, held right in front of them, as if they're clenching up the whole world (or just Tokyo city for now), as if it's theirs now. “Umm... no, Derby.” I reclined. And now Derby grew an unhappy face. “Derby, you told me you like to lone wolf it, so why are you asking me to join you now?” “Because....” Said Derby. “I wouldn't mind having a fellow Line Shacker join me. That, I would make an exception.” Concluded Derby, and then smiled. And as warm and fuzzy as that sounded. Since the idea still struck me as totally dumb, I rejected that sentiment from my thoughts. Rolled my eyes again. And felt like getting up and leaving. I was now just going to take me and my red beans and rice, home, and enjoy what I could in my barracks room.

“Come with me.” Said Derbytown again.

And this time I just couldn't take the corny act anymore. As I flat out said:
“No!”
“Come with me.”
“Derby, I said, ‘no!’ I'm not into your idea. I don't want to be a ninja. Okay?”

And Derby followed that up with:
“No, I mean, come with me, and some of the guys I'll be with, to Shinjuku, to enjoy the night out.” And... all right, then. This was different. “Shinjuku? Why not... okay, I'll come.” I said, then. Since it was a Saturday night, and I had no plans, and this did sound interesting. Plus, deep down, I wanted to argue with how stupid all of Derbytown's plans were again later. I had caught the bug, that had given me a rash, and now I couldn't help but want to scratch and scratch and scratch it as much as I could. Even as futile as it may have been to do so, since, it just irritated the rash even more, which was just going to make me want to scratch it and make it worse.

So, as I went home, I finished my grub that I had brought with me, took a shower, and changed into something a little less indecent for the night outing. Although, standing in front of the mirror, to check myself out, I remembered once again: “Oh wow! I look like such a douchebag in all this oversized shit.” Then accepted it, since it's something I really do, do, and often. And then I went out to meet up with Derbytown, and some of the boys he said he was going to be rolling with. Although, before I left my barracks' room, I pre-gamed a bit, since, I could imagine we were going to be having one of those nights. With possibly no end in sight. And I wanted to already go into it a little tipsy, so I wouldn't have to spend too much money out in Tokyo, trying to keep my buzz going. Now when I met Derbytown, and his boys, just before NAF Atsugi gate, I was relieved to see Derbytown... HADN'T decided to do this night outing with the get up he came with before. Although, the get up he had now, was still weird in its own way. Derbytown was obviously still wearing a derby. But the rest was everything in just about red and black: black Docker's trousers, black buttoned up shirt, a silky red tie, a red blazer and my favorite: some jumpin' and jivin' black and white derby shoes, to match his derby hat. But, all in all,

the guy looked like a douchey 90s swinger. Especially with his excessively long wallet chain, that looked like he could now and then get his foot caught up in and trip himself with. Derbytown was looking like that one self-centered and self-conceited roadie for Sugar Ray, or Sublime, or Smashmouth, that you'd find trying to hit on some of the groupies, by claiming he helped write one of their better songs. Looking like the type of guy on Hollywood and Highland, at 4am, that you'd find poking at drunk people passed out in the street at a bus stop with a walking cane, and just because he can. "Derby, let me guess, that chain is also to be a weapon, to be used if we get jumped by some fools out there in Shinjuku, correct?" I amused. "Nope!" Said Derbytown. "This is!" And Derby then pulled out an elongated slapjack, and, I've never seen one in real life before. Mostly in old black and white film noirs. But never in real life.

"So, what's the game plan for tonight?" I asked Derby with a smile.
"Pussy!" Said Derbytown.

And it was at that moment that I dropped the smile.

I mean, here's the thing…
I don't know if any of you have or haven't gotten the sense as of yet, but, aye, "pussy," not exactly a subject matter that doesn't pop up whenever us Navy Squids find ourselves in regular society searching for something non Navy like. I mean, if I was with anyone else, "aye, aye" pussy would of course be the focus of any of our night outings. Our venturous seekings for that one thing so grandioso to us as that of the Holy Grail was to King Arthur and his knights of the roundtable back in medieval times. But, I have to say, this… right here and right now… this was the moment I stopped respecting the Derbytown. Up to this point, as ignoramus as everything coming from his lips had sounded, this was when this Peter Pan of mine stopped being the doe-eyed child he seemed to be and I deep down I guess want to rediscover myself. Getting dressed to head out with the Derbytown, up until he used that word, first time I had ever heard him using a word you'd never see allowed on

Network television, I was still looking forward to what plans he would have had to make that night a night to remember. Instead of every, every, every other night I've had with all of my 19 to 29-year-old lot. Here, was a peer, I felt like I could have a night out, and feel 9 years old again. But, no! It wasn't to be. No, it wasn't! And, I truly did at that moment find it as a monumental pity.

No… I'm not gay!
I'm—NOT!
NOT!
Fine, let a night have women also involved, I'd actually look forward to it. But, let them be something more than a twat with a pair of legs attached. I mean, take Roxanna, I actually really, really enjoyed her company of just chatting the night away with her. That is until she, herself, became just another twat with legs. And, in her case, one that came with a price tag attached summing up to 2Gs of my hard-earned money.

And, also, no!
I'm not saying I don't like pussy.
And, no, again, I'm not some Catcher in the Rye, here.
But… I'll get to it, let's just go on with the story. And I'll get to what I'm trying to say.

So, it had to be around 2330ish hours. It was me, Derbytown, and as for the rest, we had ourselves two AOs, Almendinger and Ramshaw. Oh, roger that! We were with Ramshaw that night. And this was before me and him grew a disliking of one another. And, finally, Turnipseed the Airframer was there. Anyways, it was around 2330ish hours, that we were at a bar, a more Westernized bar, when I picked up my head to check out what the dealio was. See, what game we had and what game we had brought with. At this time, I had already had several nightings out with other, more Roppongi inclined sorts, in a bar like Wall Street or Gas Panic. I had seen mostly what game those fools (Lutkus, Iglesias and Coppersmith and the crew) tended to come out flashin'. From the rundown of what Derbytown had at a moment

notice managed to muster, well, “eh!” I went. “Eh!” Since there really was no game at all. We were in a bar in Shinjuku, and it was at that moment I got up, walked over to Derbytown, who was standing next to one of the bouncers: “dude, what are you doing?” Although, to no response. Derbytown had practically frozen over and petrified in place in the joint, standing next to a bouncer, and practically mimicking all his moves. “Dude, why you standing around looking like the bouncer right next to you?” “Shut up, Navastian, I’m working.” Said Derbytown. That now got me a bit dumbfounded. As I took a gander all around and didn’t see what exactly he meant by that. “You got a girl showing you any prospects?” “Huh?” He went. “Derby… you said, ‘you’re working,’ so, I’m asking, working doing what exactly? You got a girl at mind right now in here or don’t you?” Truth be, Derbytown was practically doing what I found AE3 Brockhausen doing in that bar I was at with him in Hong Kong. Only difference was, Brock at least had girls eyeing him. His game, as lame as it was, worked for him! I wasn’t at the moment seeing this with Derbytown doing something similar. “Dude, you look like a bouncer in here. No girl is going to be interested in hooking up with a bouncer. That is, unless they’re into that sort of thing. But, right now, I don’t see it working out that way.” “Shut up, Navastian, let me work! Let me do my thing.” Said Derbytown. And, he practically was a statue now, for, he was no longer even blinking. So, seeing this, seeing how lame Derbytown’s game happened to be in all this, I gave up, and went back to the bar to do my thing. I was at that moment beginning to feel the buzz I had mostly tried to maintain begin to fade away. So, it was time to game up, again, before I found myself too sober to even find any form of enjoyment in being here (even though the scene was already quite dead to me). As for the two AOs and Turnipseed, I then eyed them, and, nope, saw no prospects with anything they were doing either. They were doing even worse than Derbytown was. Derbytown was at least standing in a certain spot where he might catch the attention of a female or two. Even though looking like he was just there under the payroll of the establishment. Those three limp noodles were hiding, straight up hiding, in a booth stationed far off to one corner, what I can mostly see as a spot the bussers would hang around if they wanted to be mostly ignored.

Aye, that's it. That's all I have for that night. With me, Derby and the other three.

Although, it was around 0300 hours, when we left the spot, did our journey begin to spawn something much more worthwhile to remember. It was around 0320 hours, that we then had found ourselves in our drunken stupor at the Shinjuku subway station. We had then bought tickets to return to Atsugi base. But, being in a drunken stupor, not really. Since, none of us at that moment were in the right capacity to do such and coordinate our ways back to base. So, come 0610ish hours… now came the fun part! As we exited our Subway car, it was around that moment, that sobriety finally graced us. And, allowed us to actually have the capabilities of getting a freakin' clue. And what clue were we then enlightened with at that hour… well….

"Wait a minute…

guys…
guys, guys, guys, guys—GUYS!
This is the Shinjuku subway station….
Did we really just go in circles….

What are we doing back here again?"

Aye!
Aye, aye… that had no shit actually happened! It was a Sunday, now. And, considering how lame and lackluster the night we had just had, had mostly proceeded itself, it seemed like whatever Line Shack gods, Saturday night gods, boy's night out gods or whatever of such, had decided to us to do a redo. Not at all happy with our results, as so weren't we, it was now the hour to do a redo. And, for once, do this right. Of course, we didn't get the sense at that moment, since, at the moment we had decided to hail a cab and have the JN drive us back to Atsugi Kichi. And, sure, from Shinjuku back to Atsugi Kichi would be a hefty fare for one of us to cough up. But, with all of us spotting our share, we felt like we could make it happen.

As we hailed a taxi, one came up, and, inside, we didn't find any JN (Japanese national). But what seemed to be an Arab. Fuck it! We thought then. Fuck it! New York was known for having so many of such being cab drivers. Why wouldn't any other metropolitan city, Tokyo Japan, for this one case, be any different? And as we got in, I called shotgun, and got in, and saw: wow… look at all that earhair! I mean, the man was practically packing a rainforest in there. But that was beside the point. It was then a few minutes in that the man spoke to us, before, I had seen a certain funny twinkle in his eyes. He hadn't said much since up until then we hadn't said much except: "Atsugi Kichi!" Which was all that was needed to say to him. But it was at that moment, he spoke, and spoke English: "So, you boys score any pussy last night? Hahahahaa!" He then laughed, as I then saw a whole lot of tropical birds and Toucan Sams flying out of his ear (plus, it felt like one of my drinks last night might have been laced with something, which was why I literally thought I saw a Toucan Sam actually fly out). And as for the answer to that question, we all mostly kept mum. "Come on…" he said, "boys like you cannot go without a night without getting your rocks off, we're in Japan, pussy is easy to get out here, you boys really came up with nothing?" Mum, for us, was once again the word. It was then that Turnipseed made a sigh, and said, "nah, we messed that up, especially at the bar we were at, did anyone else notice all those beautiful Colombian women in there?" None of us answered. But we all had. It was at least around 0100 hours when we had all seen them coming in and filling up the joint. We had all stepped outside to get some air and have a smoke. And, it was then we had seen a bus pull up, an entire bus, and full to the brim with all those Colombian women. Beautiful, beautiful Colombian women. "Really, beautiful Colombian women, you say? Ha! I've had sometimes with those women back when I was younger. Best pussy I ever had. Never seen a woman so vicious in sex in my life. One Colombian woman I remember being with, practically ripped my pants off with her teeth. And, I don't even want to tell you what she did then. But, definitely, one of the best lays I've ever had." I think it was at that moment, we all heard a longwinded groaning noise coming from somewhere within our center. None of us spoke about it though, so, it was like it never happened. "Hey, guys, I think I left my wallet back at Shinjuku subway station." Said Turnipseed. "You

did what?" I went. "Let's go back. Let's just go back!" "Dude, we're already heading back to Atsugi Kichi." "I don't care, let's go back, I'll pay for all the extended trip." And, seeing how it was the guy's wallet, we had all then accepted it. Since, on a selfish note, that only meant the rest of us would then have to pay for the 1/5th that Turnipseed practically owed. So, we all accepted it. And gave the taxi driver the word to take us back.

It was around the time we started reaching more familiar streets of Shinjuku that led to the Shinjuku subway station that our cabbie spoke on it again: "Just to let you know, those Colombian women you speaking of, at that bar, I think I might know something about them." That now got all of our attention, even though none of us said anything, again. "In this country, women like that are only flown in for one reason, and one reason, only. There is a spot here in Shinjuku, a whorehouse, full of nothing but beautiful Colombian women." Quiet, we all were, as we now saw the subway station quickly approaching. "Beautiful, beautiful Colombian women, behind glass—hahaha!" And now, we were there, as the cab stopped, and as we began to exit. "If you boys still want to get some really good pussy to make up for the night you have had, just ask, and I'll take you there, and instead of back to base. I'll wait for you guys. I mean, the night might be over, but the day is still young… hahahaha!" We then left the cab and went into the station. It took about a half an hour of asking around, asking around with the Shinjuku subway station security, that luckily for Turnip, his wallet turned out. And, luckily enough some more, no one had touched a single Yen he had been carrying with. Once back out, and back to trying to hail another cab, it was then the thought hit us. Like a diamond bullet through all our brains. And, we all practically said it at the same time:

"Guys, fuck going back to Atsugi base, let's find that Colombian whorehouse… and freakin' well get—LAID!"

Around this moment, we were all outside Shinjuku subway station once again, in the spot where you'd find all the taxi cabs waiting to pick up any fares and take them

where they stayed at. And, when I say “all of them,” I mean, “all.” But here was the catch, “guys, which cab were we in with the Arab dude?” Brought up Ramshaw. And practically jinxed us while at it. Aye! It was then we figured, maybe we had spent a little too long inside the subway station looking for Turnip’s wallet? Since, it now seemed like that mysterious cab driver was nowhere to be found. And, most certainly, since we could all figure he would have given up waiting for us, and had picked up a different fare, instead. “Fuck it! I’m finding that cab!” Issued Rammie, then Jettisoned off and began going from cab to cab, rushing past their front-end windshields, trying to spot the most earful hairy Arab dude. Me, Derby and the rest did nothing for a moment but just watch. Although, this started to get kinda tongue and cheek, watching Rammie, the cross-eyed freak, after having even gotten more cross-eyed hearing about all those lovely, lovely Colombian whores, do all he could do! “Umm… I’m not sure he’s going to be able to find him.” Said Turnip. Although, none of us right at that moment wanted to give up the prospects. None of us did. Do it, Rammie, do it! We all silently cheered within ourselves. About ten minutes of watching this, Rammie returned, with nothing but a sad face. He then looked up at us. And shook his head. Derby then spoke: “okay, new game plan, if we’re not going to find that Arab, one of these cabbies must know of that legendary Colombian whorehouse. One, at least—has to know!” Although, even after his moving words, most of us still stayed mum. Except: “That’s it, I’m asking, I’m going to go from cab to cab and ask!” Said Rammie, back at it. As we could do nothing but watch. And, it was one thing just looking for that Arab dude. It was another to watch Rammie go from cab to cab and ask every cabbie, whether they spoke English or not, whether they would know of the whorehouse or not, and ask them about how to get there. “Wait a second, is Rammie really going to go from cab to cab to cab and…?” This was now getting very tongue and cheek, again, as we all lit a cig, and watched the boy wonder going into action. And then, bets began being made: “50 bucks says, that female cabbie, the next one down the row of taxi’s he’s trying, is going to slap the dude silly for asking that!” I bet. Although the group I was in, none seemed willing to bet against it. Since, we were all sure it was going to happen. We could all feel it. Rammie was now right up near the driver window looking into the cab, looking

straight at the female cabbie, all sweaty and a little sex-crazed, and what happened was exactly what we imagined would. “Hey, you, whorehouse! Whorehouse! Colombian whorehouse! Wakarimasu ka?” Screamed Rammie at the JN. And then: SLAP! And then followed by: “Kao mo mitaku nai!” Went the JN cabbie as she drove off.

Aye.
Aye, aye! If there was any joy any of us found in the moment, on such a terrible day following such a terrible night, it was at that moment. It was all we were going to get, and, at the time, it was somewhat worth it.

As for the rest of our Sunday, even though none of us were really able to find this so-called “legendary Colombian whorehouse,” later on into Sunday, still searching, we found ourselves in Shinjuku coming across a block that had a bunch of JN women dressed like JN High Schoolers. Very catholic school girl like in dress and demeanor. And very reminiscent of Britney Spears in “Hit Me Baby One More Time.” And, of course, since most of the JNs didn’t look to be in their teenage years (although, some did), we all immediately knew what that meant, as we went into the JN establishment behind them. Inside, we found ourselves confronting the Mamason. And then, came the women out in display. All with that High School get up thing going on. Rammie, the most motivated of our lot, picked first. Followed by Almendinger. Then Derby. Later Turnip. And now, it was my turn. And, I was taking my time. “Dude, what are you doing, pick a girl, and let’s go!” Went Derby. And this was the moment, I not only began to not like Derby, but straight up dislike him to boot. “Dude, just pick one, what are you waiting for?” Asked Almendinger. “Dude!” Went Rammie. And, it was then, a thought graced all of their notions. Fuckin’ Derby. Fuckin’ him! He had to be the one to ask.

“Wait… you’re not a virgin, are you?”

A second past, as I didn't answer. And then, they all began to laugh. Now, I got mad. "No, fuck no! Of course not!" I said. "Then what's taking you so long?" Asked Rammie, the moment I then grew to dislike him, as well.

"Nothing…!" I said.
I then saw the one I felt maybe keen for, maybe, and, I picked.

You know, this chapter is really supposed to just be about Derbytown, Mr. Fantastic so and so! But truth is, only reason I spent so much time getting around to it and giving the guy a proper chapter to himself was, truthfully, out of everyone in the Line, this motherfucker was the one that… I don't know! I don't know! I just don't! I mean, Derby, at first glance, might seem to come off as something, someone special. But, behind all that Derbytown-rama thing he got going for himself. The dude is really no different from the rest of the douchebags in the Line I have to day-to-day deal with. You know, most guys just want to get it over with. As for the better amongst us, when it comes to their first, they're lucky! Lucky, I say, lucky! They got a High School sweetheart they have that with, as they marry, and have children with and… me, as for me….

My pathetic ass was with a fuckin' JN whore!

I don't know.
I guess… I mean… this matter tends to be one of those unspoken things amongst us dudes.

Like cryin'….

Like crying!
Much like that!
Not something we tends to ever show. Which reminds me of this one time, in Boot Camp, our RDC Nordhaus had really laid it in on one of us Recruits. So bad, I then

saw him beginning to tear up. But, the second he caught wind that I had caught wind of what he was about to do, he immediately reinforced that sentiment out, and, before, I was able to catch him balls out doing it! I mean:
"Fuckin' Navastian, this Shitbag within our division, catching me crying? Me? Oh, hell no! Spare me from that humiliation!"

I…
I…?

Fuck this!
When is this damn book going to be finished?
I'm tired of writing this shit!
Tired!

Sick.
And.
Tired!

Let's just move on and get with the next chapter!

HURRY UP AND WAIT

And I don't want the world to see me
'Cause I don't think that they'd understand
When everything—
Oh great, this again!

Ahem!
So, let's go over a bit of what happened right after AE3 left me in the Ratways, and, me, having decided to step up to Donnelly and speaks to him once over before our shift fully came to a close.
"Donnelly, I'm sorry, I guess this is sorta my fault." I said.

A moment passed, a moment of Donnelly looking at me all crossed. And then, I got, what I wasn't hoping he'd give:
"Yeah, maybe it is."
"What?"
"You heard me."

And, yeah! That was that! No other words there to speak. Sigh. I went. And followed by a:
"I'm sorry."

Another awkward moment.
"But you shouldn't have done that for me." Donnelly then looked away. Maybe Donnelly was really doing this... for himself? I truly picked up the notion.
"So, they're gonna crucify me, Brock said?"
"They're gonna do what the Navy does, they gonna try and protect their senior personnel." I rephrased, even if it just made it sound worse.
"Even when the Senior in question, is an abusive asshole, a confrontational nutcase, like our Senior Chief?"
"Yes! Even then, still!"
"Fucking bullshit. Such fucking bull."
"Come on, Donnelly, don't be—"
"BULL!"
"Calm down, Donnelly, you're taking this worse than you should."
"You think?"
….
"So, how am I supposed to be taking this?"
….
"I mean, what will they do to me?" And now, I had something to say, but something I knew, Donnelly was absolutely not going to like.

“Brock said, this is some AEAN Dennison type of hot water, you've gotten yourself in.” And that now, got Donnelly looking mighty afraid. A moment now on just reflecting on that. Donnelly then went on:
“What did they ever do to him, unofficially?”
“I have no clue, all I know is, there was a period there where Dennison was put into the Brig, from what I've heard. And for doing absolutely nothing! And that's all the official shit with what the command did to him. No saying what they did, on the flip side of the coin.”
“Fuck!”
“Hell, I might even be in some trouble, myself. Thanks to this matter.” I now added. But then I saw how Donnelly wasn’t going to buy that line.
“Oh, shut up! No, you won't.”

Ugh! Look there, Thailand. I now felt in reflect and deflect. Also, realizing how I really wasn’t looking forward to whatever I was now setting myself up for.
“You think they'll take away my liberty in Thailand now?”

And Donnelly eyed me all peculiarly asking that.

“I don't know. I don't think. I think, if they do anything, it'll be after this whole investigation is followed through, with the MAs questioning people in our command. If, that is, the MAs decided to do an investigation.”
Donnelly now stared out towards Thailand, but now, had a different look in his eyes. And, seeing the shift in him, seeing how his eyes “shifted” as in to say, all figuratively with all that would in his thoughts, I then knew what was up and brewing in his skull, his flaming Ghost Rider skull, must note. For he was burning up all over on the inside about this.
“Why?” I then asked, even if I already knew why.

And then, I won! I just did. Wanting what I had been desperately, desperately asking from him:

“Because… I want to do it now, too!”

And his pupils now looked like human shaped figures standing up and at attention, for all this non-Navy like demands. I got him, finally, got him to go antinavy. Go FTN! And now, I felt a sense of calm with everything I was setting myself up for. Since, I could only be that selfish at the moment.
“What?” I said. But I was just doing so to play the part, like I still wasn’t seeing this as a selfish win, and playin’ it like I wasn’t now ruining Donnelly’s life in all the ways I planned to ruin mine.
“I’m done, done with all this, DONE! I want to desert now, too!” And I then stopped myself trying to pretend like I was still in favor of Donnelly doing what would be best for him.
“You still up for it?” He now asked. Oh shit! I then went. I was hoping he wouldn’t go back to question my resolve, since, already, I had been going back and forth, over it enough, mulling.
“I… um?”
“Tell me!”
“Yes, I think I am. Yes!”
“Fine, I'm in, too.”
And that was that. Shift change came and went. And around 0630 hours we were out.

Although, port call wasn’t until 0800 hours. Me and Donnelly had quietly decided to at least go have a good three hours sleep, before heading out ourselves. No shower right before going to our racks. Sleep was most important. And considering the long, long, long day of liberty and total liberty we were setting ourselves up for.

Right now, it’s around 1000 hours. Getting up in the berthing, we had quickly changed into our civis. No time spent with anyone else in the Squadron just goofing around as we got up, got dressed, got everything we felt we would need in the days to come on the outside. Headed up to the Hangar Bay, and now, all was just a waiting

game, again. One last, “hurry up and wait.” On the ol’ Ship. Before we got off and never laid eyes on anything Navy—EVER AGAIN! Right now, in the Hangar Bay. Beautiful blue skies over the Pacific and most of what we see of Thailand. Now, not the end, nor the beginning of the end, but at an end of an end for in order there to be a beginning of a new beginning. But, alas, it’s “hurry up and wait,” and for that, our beginning of a new beginning is at pause. And, aye, it would be that! That would be the last thing we would do in the Navy ever again. First thing I ever learned to do in MEPS after swearing in was a whole lot of that, just to get out of there. And, of course, with anything Navy, this would be the last! This would! Also, standing in line, which is what me and Donnelly are doing right now while at it. But, thankfully enough, no more of my most passionate pleasures of all things Navy: freezing my nuts off! I feel like it also should have been, since, when have I not been anguishing away doing that? But, not this time! Pity! Wait… not with pity! Ha! Up yours, to you, you old Navy gold and blue! No more freezing off anything, this time! For we’re leaving this funny joint behind us!

Sigh, I then went, and then looked at the boy next to me, not that much differently dressed as I was. Since we both hailed from the same exact horrid generation, even with Donnelly being a decade older than I was. But, both in some stupid wankster-ass baggy-ass oversized crap. Lookin’ like we had just stepped out alive after having been dragged in kickin’ and screamin’ into some Slipknot concert mosh pit… and survived. Fuck, with me wearing some Phat Farm track suit in cream and chestnut color, that’s got “Big Pimpin’” written over the chest. I remember buying this in Shibuya drunk with Beau and Qian as a joke laughing one Sunday. Now, I am that joke. And I’m not laughing anymore.

“Hey, Donnelly, have I ever told you how much I fuckin’ hate my generation, and dressing up like this? I feel like a fuckin’ idiot! Fuck, I hate Eminem, for I blame him, I blame him for all of it, for it’s all his fault!” That now stirred a momentary pause in him, as he internalized everything I just said. He then looked at my track suit with the “Big Pimpin’” tagline. Then looked at himself, dressed not as bad, with a white V-neck shirt, but some overly baggy and glossy jeans all frayed at the bottom from

being dragged across the deck since they're so big. And, a pair of those giant swimming goggles, like the ones Seth Green wore in Can't Hardly Wait. Donnelly then took off the pair and looked like he wanted to chuck them. Then came out of it and said:

"Wow, I thought I was the only one that felt that way.

Funny, feels like that's all our generation has really been about, just a lot of undisclosed shit, we all go through. All do! And never finding a moment to speak about. Hehe!" He then looked at the goggles in his hand, and dropped them. And, "aye," or should I say, "yeah." I thought then. As Donnelly's words there summarized it perfectly. As these two Slim Shady clones that were just here imitating, finally got the nerve, to sit the fuck back down! Or, really, stand up, and leave the entire funny, clown shoes scene all together.

An hour now came and went, all "hurry up and wait." And, it was now around the 1100 hours marker.

"Should tell you, Navastian, I realized, we really might be able to make it out here."
"How's that?" I said.
"Because, I got a friend of the family that I know of that lives out here. We can hook up with him, and, see where that takes us. I gotta say, when you came to me, I felt like we were meant to do this, since I got that connection. He's in Bangkok, though, so we have to travel North to see him." Explains Donnelly. This now gets my attention. This sounds promising, very promising.
"And you think he'll take us in, knowing what we've done?" I ask.
"Bro, don't worry, he is completely anti-Bush, anti-America, and a complete conspiracy nut though, type that would think 9/11 was orchestrated. So, trust me, I know he will help us out."
Wow… this is sounding… a little too promising?
"Dude, we might never see the States again?" I mull now, and in front of Donnelly.

That got Donnelly to reflect on that. And also refract.
“Who cares, man, one of the reasons I joined was to get away from all that, that world, and see a new one. Navy, for me, just like you, hasn't been cutting it. I might have left that world and the shitty people in it. But it seems like I just brought all those people along and are here amongst us. What’s the point of leaving to go live in a foreign country, if you're going to be surrounded living with the people you came with? Living in Japan, around all these characters, has still made me feel like I never left home. And worse, these fuckers have ruined Japan for me.”
“Ruined?” I ask.
“Yeah, man… ruined!”

A moment passes.
“Plus, I guess it’s a good thing I've been saving, I got over 10 grand in the bank now.”
“Over 10 grand, really?” I gasp.
“Yeah, I mean, if I didn't, there's no way I would have gone through with this. No way in hell.”

It was now 1200 hours. And, we were still standing, still waiting. And, it was around this time frame, I… began to have my second thoughts.

“You're not having second thoughts, are you?” Donnelly now asked.
Like he knew. Like he damn well knew.
“….” I said nothing.
“Hey, Navastian…

Navastian!

Navastian!!!”
“What?” I now went.

But Donnelly didn't seem like he felt like retorting his question. He knew damn well I had heard him the first time. Donnelly eyed me for a moment. And then, into himself, and decided to, I guess, speak mostly to himself. And, I could tell, he was really also now having second thoughts. And, he had been mulling and mulling over it. Inside. Again, and again practically the entire time we had been standing here. Damn you "hurry up and wait!" Your villainy strikes once again!

"You know, it's not like I want to do this, wanted to do this. But, like you, I guess. This was all that it was coming to."

"…." I kept the null as Donnelly mostly kept to himself.

"Bro, you've seen what type of mess I've gotten myself into? With not just Senior, or people in our Shop, but the whole command now? After Thailand, after the investigation, they're gonna want my ass served to them on a silver charger. And as much as I don't want to des—….

"Don't say that word out loud." I pretty much whispered in my loudest whispering voice. That now caught Donnelly off handle.

"Well, I don't want to see what they have in store for me."

"Yeah, I hear you, Donnelly." I whispered again.

….

Sigh.

….

"Fuck, I can't believe, me doing what's right, and, all I'm to get of it is seeing our Squadron pretty much throw me under the bus, for doing the right thing! The right thing! I mean, how fucked up is that?"

"…."

I had already heard this line from Donnelly, so, I knew, speaking in its behalf wasn't going to make this any easier. That's the thing about mulling over a matter, you do it, because, you're not really confident in your decision making at the moment. Something I've grown aware of in the week's' worth of time I've spent mulling over this. But, since Donnelly had just said "yes" to me, now, he was going through the entire self-questioning process, himself. And, me, personally, right now, all I knew was I didn't want to hear it. It wasn't going to make things better. It was only going

to make it worse. The more you thought about it, the more time you found yourself spending asking the same damn questions in your head again and again. A matter as delicate as this, didn't require a delicate touch to handle. Like a Band-Aid, the worse thing to do was to slowly tug at it and try to unfree the damn thing from you in such a meticulous matter, since it only then made the pain experience just as meticulous. Like a Band-Aid (or, a Cousin It) best thing to do was just yank the whole thing off. Deal with sudden rush of "oooouuucch!" And just be done with it.
(Well… maybe not with a "Cousin It." Yeesh!)
"Yeah, I guess, so!" I say to him haphazardly. And then realized the giant "oops" I had just made.
"What do you mean, 'guess?' I don't feel like I want to serve another day in a treacherous service like this."
"Treacherous?" Fuck, Navastian! Stop responding to this! Stop! Freakin' stop! I scolded myself.
"Yeah, fuck yeah! These motherfuckers are now going to go out of their way, to fuck me over, for me having done the right motherfucking thing. Do you not see how inexcusably wrong that is?"
"Bro, you see how I feel about the Navy?" I now pattered.
"Yeah, I do now. Now, I see things at your level. And, you're right, desert—"
"Shut up, don't say that word!"
"I mean, well, you know… is better than the shit we're into now. These people, here, betrayed me. They BETRAYED my TRUST! And now, I'm taking it back." Donnelly shook his head. And, it was at that moment, I remembered how I also had felt the same way, at one point. "Betrayed." But, interestingly enough, not anymore. For, it felt a lot different now. Especially hearing someone else say it compared to just me saying it to myself.
"Hey, you seem a little out of it."
….
"You still want to do this, right?"
….?
"Hey, Navastian, you still…?"

And, it was then, I broke my silence:
"I… need to go use the head. Can't say how much more we're to wait here in line. Fuckin' bullshit!" I then left Donnelly. And, not in the best frame of thought. Since he could tell, it wasn't just my bladder that was giving me secondary feelings.

Now, in the head. And, God, am I ugly! I feel. As I look into the mug I find myself more and more unable to stands looking at. Don't know why. Can't say exactly why so. But, look at me! Just… look at me! Sigh. I now go. And feel like leaving. And no, I didn't really even need to use the can. I did go up to the urinal. But I could barely squeeze enough out to feed myself reasons for having stepped away from Donnelly.

Breathe in.
Breathe out.
Breathe in.
Breathe out.
And I then leave before giving myself a double take.

But, as I exit the head, I then run into AD1 Bastille. Him in civis: pair of blue denim jeans and a Chicago Bear's jersey. Odd! Very odd! Why is he looking at me in that way? But then I know why. Gulp! I go, as I realize, the entire time I had been standing in line, all "hurry up and wait," waiting for liberty call to commence. He, AD1, had for the entire time been standing behind us. I bump into him, and now, all I have to give the AD1 are these peepers, peeping at, with a new mix of dread and daunting fears.
"Navastian." He says. And the way he says it says it all.

I freeze now.

AD1 then breaks off from what he seemingly wanted to say. Has a moment to himself. Then says something else (I can at least say, is something else):

“Gab.” He says. And, I don’t know what to make of that.
“What, what is… what is it AD1?”
“Gab, right now, we in civis, this isn’t the Navy right now, call me Fred.” And, with first names now being used, I know now, he knows. He knows! For, he had been listening in the entire time.
“Umm… I’m not sure what you want, AD1, but—”
“Gab, Gabriel… how do you like to go by?”
….
“Fine, I’ll just go with Gab, if that’s okay with you.”
….
A pause now follows.
Seems like, Fred, here, is trying mighty hard on how to frame this. I still don’t exactly know how much he knows. I, really, hope he hadn’t heard anything. But I can tell right now, there was little chance in that being possible.
“Navastian,

I’ll just say this…

don't be this way, don't! Just don't!”
And after a minute, what feels like a good long minute, I finally find the nerve to answer.
“What do you mean?”
“You know exactly what I mean. Stop being FTN!”
….
“Listen… no, Navastian, Gab… I'm not here to reprimand you, talk down to you, and give you some 'better shape up or ship out' speech. I want to talk to you personally, and please don't be how Royster has become.”
….
“Okay.” And seeing how candid he’s making this. I relinquish some hefty bitterness and hefty thoughts. And complies. “Fine, Fred, what you want to say?” And then, “ah

crud." I realize, as I'm about to have that speech with him. Sorta speech I might expect from a more caring superior, once my EAOS had about come through and my time in was about finished. A "please reconsider another term" spiel. The dreaded Reenlistment Speech.

"Listen, the Navy isn't as bad as you think it is. Don't think of staying in and creating a real career is going to make you one of us, Lifers, don't view things in that way."

"I haven't decided yet if I want to get out." I try. But I see him shaking his head all fiercely, and, I know, he damn well knows.

"Yes, you have!"

….

"I can tell."

….

"I can tell who has and who hasn't."

….

"I'm practically a mind reader about this now." Fred continues. That, and also an eavesdropper. I see. But, seeing me, that's pretty much me calling the kettle black. Since, eavesdropping, I was also a filthy perpetrator of.

"Navastian, the first four years are always the worst and most difficult, but don't think just because things don't go so smoothly, it's all game over, and there's no saving anything."

….

"How much time you got left?"

"About three years." I answer. And, in a way, with my eyes slit and seemingly exhausted by all this, pretty much three years—too many!

"Let me guess, it's not been how you thought it would be?"

….

"Well."

….

"It never is."

AD1 then has a moment with himself, as I know feel, if he's not going to bring it up, if he's not going to talk about it, if he's not going to try and stop me… better if I just

move on, and move, fast, before he does decide to. I don't know how much I'm ready for something like desertion, but I'm not going to stand here until the man decides to put his crow and chevron back on and chooses to pull me to one of our Chiefs. Or, Senior, even! And just hand out a Liberty Risk—just in case!

"Fine I get it, it never is!" I say, though, even though probably better if I start steppin', and steppin' quick.

"No, it never is. Okay. Listen, I've been in for over sixteen years, and I'm still trying to get used to it in some sense. But the thing is, you never really do. It's hard.

But… it's worth it… if you keep it up."

….

"Navastian, one thing I've learned is: if you have an idea of how things need to be, you can't expect everyone to meet those ideas, you gotta meet those ideas. If you have an idea, you have to be the idea. You have to be your best example, that's the way things are." And, I don't exactly feel like disagreeing with that. It sounds, sound. But, I'm still freakin' way too tired, I feel, to care anymore.

"I guess." I say.

"The Navy, and everything really, every organization. It's always this way. You're still nineteen I'm guessing, right?"

"Twenty-one." I say.

"Fine, twenty-one, and you don't know how things are. No matter what you do, you're always going to find yourself amongst a lot of opposition, amongst a lot of shit, you don't agree with, amongst a lot of people you're going to bang heads with. That are going to make you feel done and wanting to give up. Navastian, in the end, you cannot give up on people, people are what they are, and you have to stick to doing everything you can for them, no matter how much of it seems to go in vain. Trust me, Navastian, I'm not just telling you this, not just on how to survive the Navy, this applies everywhere. I know how crazy everyone seems here. On the verge of being practically homicidal to each other, almost. How despicable and mean, and downright loathsome. But you can't give up on them, and you can't give up on yourself. You cannot give up on something just because things don't go your way,

you have to keep doing what you're doing. Forever almost. And that's just the way it is."
And, it's at that moment, I just lay it out, straight:
"I'm a Shitbag."
….
"I'm a Shitbag. There's no reason in sticking it out. No reason to do anything. Since, in the end, nothing is going to even matter from me."
"What did you say?"
"You heard me."
"Navastian, Gab, you're not a Shitbag."
"I'm a Shitbag, and...!"
"Oh, for fuck sakes, Gab, you haven't exactly done anything really to become a Shitbag, yet.

So, don't look at it that way.

Don't, just don't!"
….
"But, if you do, if you keep thinking you are one, you will become one, eventually."
And, it's at that moment, I just lay it out, COMPLETELY:
"Then why is Senior on my ass the way he is?"
And now, that catches the AD1, Freddy, here, off center.
"Why did he choke me?

And when I went to Master Chief, why did he turn me away, as if it was nothing? To be expected. And called me a fuckin' pussy, to boot!" I can see the AD1 is now trying to muster something to say to answer that. But, he knows, and I know, there's nothing really to do so.
"Fine, I get it, AD1. I do.

But… I've had it. Fuckin' had it!

Aye, I'm FTN now! Because, not because… I don't know. But, I'm tired. One year in, and I feel like a freakin' decade of my life has been practically swiped from under me. Stolen! Fuckin' stolen. When I only swore to serve four. And, you know what, I don't want it to eventually get to the point, I saw in my family, where, I'll find myself freakin' locked in a closet, with a gun. Begging, begging, simply begging myself, to not pull the damn trigger. Because, I just can't scrounge up anymore reason not to do so. And go on."

That throws Fred off, seeing how fucked up the details got. As he almost looks at me, but then figures I'm getting too personal now to serve my point with family history.

"So, thank you, Fred, thanks for the talk, thanks for everything.

But… if you're not going to tell anyone on how me and Donnelly are scheming to desert when we get out there…"

And that's the moment the AD1 looks up at me.
"Then, please… please… please… step aside, and let me go do what I feel is best for me right now.

The Navy doesn't want me!

I don't serve nothing here.

I'm a Shitbag.

And, once I'm gone, I won't even really be missed!

So, why should I even stick around, and just make things difficult for everyone else? 'Lead, follow… or get the fuck outta the way,' they say, right? Well, why should I stick it out, and just end up getting in the way, with anyone that can stand it being out here? Guys like you or Brock or even Falky. Since, all I can do, and do best at, is get in the way, whether I mean to do it or not, and ruin it for the rest of you Shithot Sailors. That's all I can do. I've tried my best, already. This is all I got. And, since I definitely can't lead, can't follow, for shit, I guess that only leaves me with a third and final option… am I correct?"

And, it's then, the AD1 does step aside. And allows me to leave.

WHAT HAPPENS IN THAILAND…

I ditched Donnelly.

Aye, you heard that correctly. I ditched him. Don't ask why! Don't ask, just don't! DON'T! I don't know what came over me. After leaving AD1 in the head, I was back to the Hangar Bay, had circumnavigated for a few small steps, and then, as I reached a good 5 meters away coming up his back end, I had a white ghost run right up my spine, white stricken, I was, AE2 Franky style, white stricken, just how he explained it, and, it was at that moment, being on the same frequency with the guy since the very beginning, I saw it go through him to. And, the second he tried to turn around and catch me at his o' 6, I ducked under a port Prowler intake, and tried to mask myself off completely from sight by moving closer and closer to the bird. Out of line of sight. And, all I remember was how my heart was pounding like a jackhammer. Something I hadn't quite experienced ever in my entire Hoorah Navy career, whether here or Boot Camp or having done the mile and half in under 14 minutes, interestingly enough. And, I felt to panic. I just did. And I evaded us much as I can, until I felt like I made enough effort to where he wouldn't see me. And I stayed that way, way past Liberty call, and we were finally able to go out and do, all we came to go out and do. Although, at that moment, I wasn't. I ran through my thoughts, all the mulling and mulling I had done to pinpoint within me a good reason why was I being—THIS MUCH OF A FUCKING PIECE-OF SHIT TO THIS ONE GUY ON THIS

SHIP I COULD REALLY CALL A FRIEND! But I don't know, I just don't know, can't say what it was, but right now, they were governing my decisions, and I wasn't governing theirs. Although, all that trying to pinpoint, one word popped up all immediately, that I set aside in denial. But, time and time again I found myself reminiscing just to come back to it, again and again. And, finally, really internalize, and begin the self-loathing process. And, further than I've ever even managed to take it this whole time. So, in itself, quite a feat, really!

Want to know what that word was?
Can you guess?
Although, if you can't… not telling you.

It's the first word that would. It's just that simple. That simple! So, I see no reason to (unless, you also tend to have a problem with that word, with your own self. And just don't want to admit to it. Lying to yourself can sometimes be a masquerade ball of fun, can't it? All David Bowie style in a little-known movie called Labyrinth).

I was sitting at the Galley around 1330 hours. Feeling really shitty of myself of what I had done. When they came around.

"Yo, Navastian, what's yo' lonely bitch ass doing there sitting by yourself?"

And, my word.
My word!
Just… my word! It now seemed like the transformation of this fellow Line Shacker had now finally reached completion. So, let's see, what was he wearing, what was he wearing? Really, same thing he wore every time he went out with everything in red and black: black Docker's trousers, black buttoned up shirt, a silky red tie, a red blazer and my favorite: some jumpin' and jivin' black and white derby shoes, to match his derby hat. Can you guess, or, should I give a few more clues to you to hint you in?

“The fuck you doin’ here sitting all long face lookin’ like you came out of some 30s soup kitchen for? In this, well, galley, that really is just a stingy ass lookin’ 30s soup kitchen. Hehe!” He said as he took a gander at my spot, and, he was right, it was what it was in that specified description.
“I ain’t going.” I said.
And, aye! It was them again. ATAN Derbytown, AO3 Ramshaw, AOAN Almendinger. And, finally, to my most dismay, AM3 Turnipseed. Seemed like that one do-over we had had back at Shinjuku, them pussy gods had ordained then. Now again. Even out here in Thailand, for just one more. One last one! At least one more, to make sure, the Navy could now make me a virgin again, because, the Navy didn't feel like I lost it properly the first time around, in the spectacular mortifying and also horrifying fashion it idealizes we all should. And now, since, for you readers that’s been made evident: time for an encore! Time again! Time again! And this time, make sure when I lose it, when the cherry pops. It actually makes a “popping” sound. So, everyone and their mothers and wives and girlfriends and families, and such and such could all hear. And laugh! Since, that’s all I’m here to do. I mean, this is a comedy, roger roger? So, like being caught dickin’ an apple pie, let’s once again get on with the major embarrassments, that, hopefully this time, will make for sealing the deal when ‘em Cthulhu monsters pop up trialing me with suicide and such, I won’t resist it then any longer, and I’ll be laughing my motherflipping ass off as I dives headfirst into one of my Jet intakes, that will even turn Zeedorf’s smile, upside down, into a frown.

Here’s the thing, it’s been over two weeks, at least, I feel like I’ve had a chance to really fill anyone in on all the going abouts and happenings of the Derby boy, here. I mean, take this in account, think of just about everything, every life altering moment which I personally have experienced, starting at least since the point when I really delved into Derby last (on this cruise’s timeframe), which was around the time that whole “NIGGA, you EVER try some FAGGOT SHIT like that again, and I'll…” thing between him and ADAN Quimby happened, you remember, the night the IS3 Falconni made AEAN Navarro nearly wet himself with all those “Blood and Crip” jokes… with all the changes you’ve now seen going on with me, same has gone on

practically with Derbytown. And, just about everyone else on this Ship. For, we all really are on the same Boat when it comes to these matters! Being Born Again, and again, with every time, a bit more emphasis on absolutely totaling all semblance of any humanity given. All of us on this Ship! All! All roughly 5,000 or so personnel here abord the USS Farter (joke name for USS Carter). And, with each and every one of us on board, no two alike really going through the same mental and metaphysical and spiritual changes inside.

"Hoes, Navastian! Motherfuckin' Thai hoes, Nigganese hoes, and big booty bitches and such! Triple b action! Don't be a pussy ass virgin like last time like you were in Shinjuku, you already got yo' dick wet! That cherry has been popped. So, what the fuck you bitchin' out for now?" Let me now fill you in, exactly the dealio with the new and improved Derby. Everything, everything, everything, like last time, hasn't really changed from his appearance. Except: ONE THING! The boy is now wearing all black Ray Ban shades. All back of head style, like, he now be born with eyes behind his skull, for, Derby's now a full-blown real G, like his ol' Compton boy, Easy-E!

Aye! That's all. Them Ray Ban worn all backwards style. And that's all it really takes to see the amount of change gone into his character. Nothing else. For now, I don't even feel like calling him any of that silly ass Derby-town-whatever nonsense. This now, is rechristened by me, (de-christened, more like it) as D-Man! Oh, how sorrowfully, sorrowfully, sorrowfully has the boy wonder now fallen! No longer wanting to grow up to fight crime, since now, he is just one or two felonies away to becoming a full-blown criminal himself. All that martial arts training, and for what, to be Ryu? This fucker ain't no Ryu! Not anymore. Not even a douchebag Ken.

No.
He Akuma now!

But, "fuck it" I say to myself. Since, I think I can now deal with this. For, I'll say it, easier to deal with a straight up villain than a villain in the making. When they're still

in the process of falling from grace, they still have some bit of that Peter Pan glow that makes another weigh their considerations more heavily. But, now, since all I'm seeing is just this Captain Hook standing in its place, him with his scumbag Captain Hook swagger, fuck 'im! I say. He got no heart no more. Since, he lost it all. So, if shit hits the fan, I can ditch this piece-of-shit and not feel guilty about it like I did ditching Donnelly an hour or two ago.

"Navastian, the fuck is wrong with you?" Says D-Man.
"Yeah, Navastian, what's wrong… still cryin' over that 'Cousin It' thing? Fuckin' Line bitch! Haha!" Goes AO3 Ramshaw. And D-Man now directs a resentful eye towards him, since, he still talking shit about Line Rats. And, D-Man still also happens to be one.
"Dude, Rammie, hold your fuckin' roll! Get outta my face with that Navy talk about that brown shirt and red shirt shit! You hangin' with us now or not?"
"What, what… I'm just—"
"Get the fuck outta here you fuckin' twitchy gerbil."
"Hehe!" Goes a couple of the rest in the back.
"Fine, fine… off to Thailand, then." Says Rammie.
But D-Man still keeps a resentful eye on him. Not as much for that whole brown vs. red thing. But, since Rammie is now trying to breach on whatever D-Man is trying to front with. And now, I'm getting shit-awful tired of this funky scene. And, I now say something.
"Okay, okay, y'all going out to see if there's any legendary Columbian whorehouses here in Thailand now, too? From what I remember, that didn't go so well." I say*, I play*, really. And that now gets on D-Man's ugly side. Since, he's that cocky now, that everything said, not even directly talking bad about him, he's taking as still such. Since, that's just how douchebags are. Take the IS3, you can't exist, while he exists, and have any self-respect for yourself. Since his vacuous ego will try to domineer it all for himself. Like a said, I know now how to play this tune. And, now, I do feel like a redo of a redo of that one Shinjuku Sunday all of us spent back in Japan. "Okay,

okay, you boys talked me into it, but I just don't got any cash, since Hong Kong. So… any of you willing to spot me some?" I play.
And that gets them off all unsure of how to handle that.
"What the fuck you smokin', Navastian, you askin' us now to pay for your own pussy?"
"Yeah, Derby, I'm broke as a joke right now. Fine, I'll come along, but who's paying for my shit?" I smiles out. And, aye! Of course, I'm lying about that whole being broke. I mean, Roxanna did cost me a sum. An arm and a leg, practically. But, I still got enough, and two more limbs left, especially in a port like Thailand, where, you can probably conquer this whole country with 10 US Dollars and some brilliant know how and a bit of luck (well, maybe as MacGyver, but you know what I mean!). "Come on, *fellow Shipmates*… don't y'all cheapskate out on me! Fuckin', y'all probably broke as a jo—"
"We ain't broke like your stupid ass with your 'Big Pimpin" shit!" He says, eyeing my threads "I've been saving."
"Really, Edward?"
Edward is his real first name. And, I know, he hates it when people call him by that name. Since, he still Edward Jr. to his deadbeat dad being Edward Sr. and all.
"Fuckin' Navastian, you fuckin'…?"
"Come on, *Shipmate*, spot me something. These Thai hoes won't be that expensive, anyways. So, not like I'm going to make you go broke just paying for me." I dish out. And, D-Man mad. He mad now. Since, I gots him. And I can tell the waste of skin will now spot me the cash, not for my sake, or my johnning out of some pussy, sake. But, just to make himself look better! Like I—TOLD YOU! This is easy now for me. I can do this. With everything I've been through with all these Yo Ho Navy douches, *I CAN PLAY THIS NOW!*

Anyways, let's see now, we already got off the Boat, made our way to Pattaya by way of LBGB, and, we're all here: me, D-Man, Rammie, AO Ding-a-ling, and the Turnip. So, how's the country, how's Thailand, how's this most infamous Joe Navy back-alley city? One word: Fucking disgusting! Well, two words with that. What? No, I don't feel like going into much of a description of how it's like out here. We're in a

third world shithole! What is there to describe? I mean, AEAN Barbarossa might find some childish infatuation with watching disgusting Thai hoes popping balloons with darts they got stashed up in their snatch. I DON'T! IT'S FUCKIN' DISGUSTING! We only got, what time is it (I now check my watch), okay it's 1500 hours-ish. So, if anything, with our one day of actual liberty, I now only got T-Minus 0900 hours until our Cinderella Liberty is over with. And, since I already chickened out trying to desert in this country with Donnelly, I doesn't see myself spending enough time in this country to want to get all familiar.

Sigh.
I got T-Minus 0900 hours, and, back to that shit again!
Fuck my life.
Seriously, fuck my life.
Kill me…
God…

please just end it now!
To be or not to be… not to be! I now say and think.

I now eye D-Man and feel like playin' his ass some more.
"Hey, Eddie, buy me a drink." I stick.
Eddie just eyes me, angerly, and says nothing.
"Come on, Shippie, I told you, I don't got any money to be out here, spending. So, if you want me to have a good time as long as we're out here, come on, Mr. Balla', Shot Calla', spot me a drink or—"
"Shut the fuck up, Navastian, fuckin'…!" D-Man now hangs a low brow, and shakes his head, and, chumps up to that, and pays for me a drink. A nice imported expensive (at least for these parts) Heineken. I gets my drink, and, it feels good, just feels good, as I eye the fool all slit like and downs the Heineken a gulp or two.

But, then, I see how, I can't play this too greedily, I gots to be smart. Since, I'm not exactly interested in really pissin' the Compton bred idiot off too much to where I then gets a face full of all that "Ha-Yah" and somersaulting business I remember seeing from him back at Atsugi Kichi. No, I got to play it smart. Even for this dumb lug.

And, after that moment, I take a gander to look around. See how everyone here is doing. And, looking around as such, I can see, still "a damn shame" since I'm really still hanging with a bunch of beta males. That don't got any fuckin' game. Rammie and Dinger and Turnip are still off someplace in the joint hiding and hiding from women. We're right now more in an indoor/outdoor spot, where half the bar and bar seats are on the inside, and the other half, outside, mostly here on the Pattaya coast. And me and Eddie are just now eyeing at all the Westerners around. Lots and lots of blonde and blue-eyed women from either the US and Europe or Australia, you get the such! And since we're all dealing with women mostly of the master race there's now —DEFINITELY NO GAME WITH HANGIN' WITH THESE SORROWFUL CHUMPS I'M WITH! Most of us seemingly afraid to even try a blonde and blue-eyed Westerner, fearing a secondary Nazi reprisal for the crimes of trying to mix with all this wealth of gene pool (and this is considering the fact that, besides me (Armenian + Westerners' eye = dirty Middle Easterner) and Eddie, the other three are also white). Nah! Better stick to brown Nigganese women, I guess. Since there's a better chance our lowlife gene pool WON'T get their lowlife gene pools feeling crossed wanting to mix. Aye! So, fuck it! Better to get our "fuck on" with them and make a bunch of worthless brown babies, we can later enslave for us. Since, that's pretty much how brown people do it!

(Aye, besides being a total waste-of-skin Navy Shitbag right now, I'm now aiming to see just how low I can go. Racism? Bring it! Misogyny? Bring it! Hopefully, I get God eventually pissed off enough at me He'll take it upon Himself, and strikes me, dead, with a bolt of lightning. All 1.21 Gigawatts and all.

I mean, I can only hope so much!
Sigh.

Hmm… suicide. The word and beauty of what I'm feeling right now for it really is beginning to "sing" to me! I'll say.

Like… siren music.

I love MASH! That was such a good show!)
"How looooow… can you go?" I go now.
"What?" Blurts D.
"Nothin', just whatever that's on my mind." I say.
Then sighs.
And I then take a crack at D's smoldering face. I mean, what's wrong, Shippie, how about you turn that frown upside down?
"Hey, D-Man."
"What did you call me?"
"Derby, I'm getting bored, this sucks, let's do something." But, lookin' at D-Man, I doesn't see him having much of a clue as to what. Since, he's still a slave to all this system. And doesn't even know it.
"Come on, guy, what is that thing they do in tropical places like these, you know, how rich white people amuse themselves out here?"
"I don't know what the fuck you're talking about!" D says. Getting more annoyed right now, but, fuck it, I feel like fuckin' with him, still.
"I mean, what is that thing they do, where, they got a pole, and, they all in goofy lookin' tropical shirts, and, they keep setting the bar lower and lower, and they go, 'how low can you—'"
"I don't know what the fuck you're babbling about." Blasts D-Man, lookin' pretty pissed again. And, I'm really curious now about that. Since, I started thinking about it. But, since big D, here, is mostly paying, I better act nice, and not gets my sugar daddy too upset with too much of my spunk and sass.

“Fine, on with the bitches and hoes, bitches and hoes, time is short, and, we’ll be due back sooner than we—”
“I fuckin’ know that, Navastian, so stop pestering me about it. I’m not an idiot.” And, I smile, as he says, “idiot,” and, I make sure he sees it. But we say nothing. And, like Donnelly said earlier about our generation. Since we’re not much of the disclosing type, I now feel like I can play this all day.
“We gonna get our dicks wet anytime soon or what?” I lay it to my sugar daddy. D-Man then just eyes me, like, he’d like to punk me, but I know better than that. And, I know part of him likes how I’m eating out of his hand right now. Since, I’m the bitch right now, but Iceberg Slim, here, is no Iceberg Slim, and has no freakin’ idea how to handle hoes like me.
“How low can you go….” And that pretty much does it, as I sees big D get all lil’ D on me and leaves, and decides to go hang with the losers he came with, right around the area were the bussers are now hangin’ at.

“HOW LOW CAN YOU GO!” I go, again.

And, sorry, I just am! I think I’m enjoying all this lowlife fun a little too much now.

Hey, look at that brunette over there!
Oh, she’s going to reject me, straight up! Since she’s too fine for this place. But, fuck it!
“HOW LOW CAN YOU GO!” I really can’t go any lower than this, I don’t think. Fine, she rejects me, what else is freakin’ new? No harm in trying, at least. Might get her feel so sorry for me, she’d dish me some pity sex at her place. And, that’s something at least. Fuck it, do it! I say. As I get a bit of confidence. As I get up, walks over to her, sits, looks, and….
“Eww! Fuck off, loser!” She immediately says in an Aussie (I think) accent, as she eyes my sorry sort.

Then gets up and leaves.

Wow!
Is it like, just completely written on my forehead, or something? She got the feels for me, that quick, and left?
Haahhaahahaa!
“HOW LOW CAN YOU GO!”

But, fuck! That really did hurt. Just that instantaneously. I then rush my hand over my brow, wipes it, and looks at my hand, I want to see if I’ll come up with some smudge of something from a marker. Maybe some of the Squid Dicks back on the Boat did mark up my forehead with the word “Loser” when I was asleep in my rack, I mean, damn! She really did sense it in me that quickly!

Shit, now I’m even feeling shittier than I started out.
Feel like taking this ‘Big Pimpin’ jacket I’m wearing and throwing it in the trash. Since, I also got no game whatsoever and am a total joke.

So, here now, Thailand, at a local yocal bar full of Westerners as far alas. Near where the USS Carter is docked. Sigh. I don’t know. I… I… I just don’t know! Think I. But then I look to my right and see a duo of dudes taking seat to me right next, and now, I am with company, again. VF-451 Bloody Shamrock company. Line Shack company. The Hats and Kats brothers. Them two. They now order a drink. And, in that immediate second, I now see how they have a third entity sitting between them. and not on some barstool. But, on the counter no less. And then, I’m not feeling what I was feeling before, as I gawk, as my jaw drops, at awe.
“Hey, Navastian, this ain’t no nonalcoholic bar, shouldn’t you be at some Thai Chucky Cheese or something?” But I belay that line for their sakes in my thoughts. As I continue gawking and gawking at the third man sitting on the bar table in their leagues.
“My God….?”
“Yes?” Kats says.

“My God…?” I go.
“What’s that?” Hats follows.
“Is that… is that… what… who I think it is?” I confound. Kats and Hats then give me this seldomly seen loving stare. Seeing them not at any mischievous caliber. But the one present.
“Oh, sorry, Navastian, sorry for being so rude and informal. Would you like to say ‘hi’ to the Ensign, here? Should tell you, he doesn’t like to come out with us all the time. Since, a WW2 veteran and all. But he always had an affinity for the gorgeous bars and scenery of these parts of the world. And, even though, with grandpa, here, it’s a bit past his bedtime. We felt like bringing him along, since, he doesn’t get to enjoy a night out like he did in his day.” I am now at… I don’t even know what to say. I’m speechless.
And now I’m not, as I say:
“You guys are… I’m speechless!”
“Oh, come, come now! Don’t be that way. Let the Ensign here buy you a drink, what do you say, Ensign?” And now I see Kats moving his head behind and near the edge of the case that the Ensign sits at. And Kats does his best ventriloquist act.
“What’s that… what’s that… buy… who… what now?”
Hats now answers the act:
“Oh, I’m sorry, gramps, this is AN Navastian, here. He works with us in The Shop. A bit of a Shitbag. But, maybe me and Kats should make ‘bygones be bygones,’ what do you say, want to have a Heineken with The Shipwreck, here?” I’m…. yea… umm… aye, aye! Ay-ay-ay! I, AN Navastian, am at a new level of Whiskey Tango—ARE YOU FUCKIN’ KIDDING ME? How low can you go? But I see now, as far gone as I’ve gotten. There really is so much far I could be getting. To be getting at the level of lowdown villainy these two are really at. Maybe I can punk D-Man. But, these two really are in a league of their own. And, I has nothing now. Just: wow… just wow!
“Who, what, what’s that? Why would I want to have a drink with a Shipwreck? I’m a WW2 hero! Why would I lower myself to the likes of this FUNGUS?” Kats continues to Ventrilo for the Jolly Roger Ensign.

“Ha!” I go.
Because, I would have never imagined anything or anyone getting as low as this. I chuckle hard once while shaking my head, still. And now I feel grievous for having made a yuk out of this putrid scene. No shit, on the table between Kats and Hats it’s him, legendary him, that MIA Jolly Roger. I sees the glass case. I sees what’s inside the glass case: a human skull and two human femurs. And, considering their level of decay, the remains of someone that seemingly died in the 40s. Practically a POW now to these two AntiChrist level pranksters. Showing me how, there’s no such thing, as rock bottom. For, even when reached such, the ground can still give way. And hell and brimstone can only wait then. And maybe even a newer low beyond that. Tartarus, even so, down where the old Greek Titans be held captive till the end of days.
“Hey, barkeep, another Heineken, here, on gramps!” Says Hats with an index up and standing out from the surroundings around.
“What, I said ain’t drinking with no Shipwreck! You boys hard of hearing?” Ventriloes Kats, more.

The beer comes around.
“Fine, fine, we still Shipmates, I presume. Let’s drink.” Continues Kats with his deliveries. Kats now tries to hand me the Heineken. I just shakes my head. And, not even sure over what. This, or the invitation to some suds.
“Ha, a Shipwreck, and a lush, too. I’ll bottom this one out.” Ventriloes Kats.

Aye. Then takes it further!

Kats now pours the whole contents over the top of the case as the beer ripples over, across and then dribbles down to the deck.
“You guys are fucking evil.” I now say.
“And?”
“I mean… really, really evil! Really, really evil!”

“What’s that, Navastian, oh, you hear that, grampy? He called us evil.” Hats goes, with an infantile looking frawny face.
“Say what, you two… I will disagree with this Shipwreck, here, you two are swell guys. Fine pair of boys I be honored to call feller Shipmates. Fuck ‘im! What does The Shipwreck know?” And… that’s it! That’s all I can stands—for I can’t stands this anymore! As I get up from this wacky scene. And leave. And, as I get up to do so, turning around to exit, I then step in front of ADC Culpepper.
“Why, if it isn’t the Jolly Ensign? Boys, buy me and the Ensign a beer. Glad to see you two had a chance to bring our ol’ WW2 hero out for liberty.”
“Will do, Chief.” Says the Kat and the Hat.
And I’m—outta there!

NOT ALWAYS STAYS!

You know what, maybe I’m not trying, really? I mean, take the Hat and the Kat, those two would have immediately gotten hooked up with that Aussie brunette, since, society and people in it really are just that all in-on-it evil. I mean, Hats and Kats, too preppy absolute douchebags of their own level of Whiskey Tango Foxtrot mights and magic and majesties! How do they do it? How do they? That’s the answer!

I need to get lower.
Much, much lower.
You know, this reminds me, of a lot of the comedies I grew up with. Fuck the American Pie classes of comedy today, making jokes about the disgusting nature of bodily functions and fluids. There’s Something About Mary being a prime example (that hair gel seen with Cameron Diaz). But to really find some of the “right stuff” we need to go back to the 80s and back. Back when characters being funny, didn’t involve splitting hairs with how many ways you can tell a fart joke. But the comedy was character based. For instance, a lot of comedies back then were about the characters and characters alone. For instance, back when sexual harassment was considered funny and being an absolute creep to a woman made you out as some loveable anti-romantical underdog. For instance, the comedies back then had all to do with one prospect, getting your hanky panky ways to completely have a woman

blow up on you and absolutely smack the utter crap out of you. I'll tell you, I used to absolutely laugh my ass off to those scenes. And to that, I say, fuck it, Navastian, if they think I'm a disgusting piece-of-shit! Enough trying to deny myself the truth of who and what I am. I need to be that. And be proud. Show my colors. My true disgusting colors. And have them shine… on… through.

(Why would I want to do such a thing?
Because: FUCK WOMEN!
They've done nothing but kill my heart and made me feel absolutely worthless. And now, I just want to return the sentiment).

Anyways, I want to start saying things to women, that gets me, smacked, how those characters would get smacked. I mean, I really need to sleaze this up. Say something so disgusting, that, I'd get smacked for it. Hahahahahaha! Wow, fuck yeah! I'm doing it! Fuck getting laid here. That's now my new mission out here in Thailand. Getting smacked, silly, for being such a sleazy creepshow. I'll even mix it in with something that isn't as much, literally, wouldn't sound as much. But with the way I'll just ooze it out, would suggest enough. I'll say something like ol' Blue Eyes would say, something cute, something that would sound so harmless, something like:
Hey… scooby dooby doo!
And they'll be like:
Oh, how dare you!
SLAP!
And, I'll just laugh my ass off, as they do that to me. Fuck, getting smacked, is at least some action. It's something! And, as I am walking at this moment, somewhere here in Thailand, I see a redhead, and—fuck it!

"Hey… scooby dooby doo!" I grease out and sticks my tongue out at the ends.
And then… hell freezes over:
"Hehe!" She goes, hearing me, and smiles.

We walk past. And, I… absolutely cannot believe what I just witnessed. She… liked it! I then turn and does a doubletake, while doing a double blink, and sees she's still got her eyes on me, and, the hots, too, she is eyeing me up like a lollipop. A pink one. And that's her favoritest most color. With enough heat to have me melt in her mouth. And, I'm speechless now. Totally speechless. And now, I get pissed: bitch, you're supposed to smack me for being that disgusting. Fuck it! I give up!

And, after turning another corner, I come across Derby and his dead poet's society. I see them, they see me, and, D right now looks aghast and agitated to be coming across my presence, again, and then I figure: so, you guys were trying to ditch me, eh! Bastards! That's my job! I'm supposed to be ditching your lousy lot. Not the other way around. I now hook up to them, quick, and, I go back to work:
"Yo, Deedee, where were you fools at, we getting our dicks wet or what… you still paying, right?" I now ooze at the Derb-derb. And, finally, the reactions I was hoping for, as Derb-derb just about flies off the handle seeing my ass, and seeing how, just couldn't ditch me and ditch paying for me, like he had promised to—promised!

It's 1600 hours, and we're mostly just circling this coastal beachside city of Pattaya. Seems like AM3 Turnip has taken away some of Derby's lead. Bitches and hoes! Bitches and hoes! Bitches and—… headfirst into a toilet vomiting all the alcohol poisoning! That all is just a bunch of crud meant for the night, not the day, and since D-Man isn't a day person and Turnip is, there you go! Turnip has a fanny pack on him. And, that thing was hideously uncool even for the early 90s. Let alone now. Here, there, we go, mostly just following along in silence, watching him take pictures with his expensive Nikon SLR. Taking pictures of objects giving off a uniquely Thai feel, as to make every frame worth it. But, for most of us, simply buying a "I was here" Thailand postcard would do, since the brass Buddhas Turnip is taking pictures of are not exactly over 500 years old and an object of antiquity. But something made recently and made cheap. With a "made in Thailand" sticker on the back. And since being in Thailand, imagine how dirt cheap they should be now. Ugh! From what I see, Turnip will snap shots of nearly everything. Even a blank wall with nothing at all

on it. With all the artistic merit of a college arthouse picture powered by ganja. So, is it boring? Aye! But peaceful. If anything, Pattaya feels like a secondhand Miami. It's tropical. It's got beaches. It's got beach people. But it's Miami if the United States had decided to sell the city to Cuba or Haiti. Just about everywhere we go, we're seeing the telltale aromas of Thai pussy being just around the corner or following behind us. We don't sense it right now, but we know it's there, and it knows we know and wants to let us know, once nighttime, none of those prospects are going to be hiding from us anymore. It's 1830-ish. We're at an indoor bar. There's much mahogany in here, red mahogany tables, seats, counters, walls and ceilings. And we've hit a couple of pints, and, we're now growing awfully buzzed (not full drunk or fully hammered, not yet)!

"…." Goes everyone.

And here's the thing, remember in American Pie you had the losers club all clicking together and making a vow to lose their virginity before graduating from High School? Cute, wasn't it? But, truth is, this is the real face of a real loser's club, a bunch of JAFOs sitting around being benchwarmers, while others more of the AE3 Brock variety, actually find themselves being made alive in a scene like this. There's no optimism in a grouping like ours. Just a lot of accumulated passive aggression and tons and tons and tons of feeling sorry for oneself. Simply put, we wouldn't know what to do with fun if fun fell on our laps, and started trying to pull it out, and then tried to connect our end to their end and… you get the point.

"Fuck this, this sucks!" Says Turnip.

None of us attempts to make a response to that sentiment, since none of us can. We know when we've been washed up and hung out to dry. Hung sky high. High enough to have some fear of heights beginning to settle within us. In our corner mahogany table, I feel like a gang of mannequins lit up by candlelight, paying canasta, or 500 rum, all of us holding our cards, yet no one is cutting or dealing, since we're all mannequins and can't even move. Early 20somethings are some truly, truly, truly rough years for all those young men that never really survived puberty. I now roll my eyes. I wouldn't be here unless I was sure here was a place Donnelly might show up. This is a more quieter establishment. Dead, actually, more like it. This place is

dead. But, since so is our A games, a bar like this is meant for us as a place to vacate society's most unproductive citizens. Almost like a prison. And, aye, that is what this place is, a prison. Besides a couple of so-so Thai girls closer to the bar, there is no action here. Just a lot of passive reaction.

"Navastian, don't you fucking roll your eyes at us!" Snaps Derby. Ah crud. He caught that. But I guess I do it so often that I can't help myself at times like these. Sometimes I forget how many more volumes body language speaks compared to any verbal words coming from your mouth.

"What, that's not why I'm rolling my eyes."

"What's not?"

"Thinking this is a joke." And, ah shit! I just realized that was a trap. Fucking D-Man actually got smart and set one up for me. D-Man is now just staring, just staring, and doing that nodding bit Senior tends to do when he's processing information. I look at my watch now, 1855 hours. Whiskey Tango Foxtrot, can time go any slower? And, aye, I'm at liberty, and I should be enjoying this, considering I'm to be back on The Ship in roughly 5 hours. And, I might not get another port visit in a long, long till. Aye, it would be best to enjoy as much of this as I possibly could, but I can't, because, sigh, I was supposed to desert the Navy and make this be my new home. Alas… I was to… alas! I look at those two Thai girls at the bar again, they're decent, maybe even a bit more than just that, but also old. And, I know I could do better than them. But, right now I can't even manage since I went full misogyny. Big Pimpin', I ain't!

"I fucking hate women." I say.

Actually, blurts out, and then realizes how I definitely shouldn't have. Everyone in the party now just gawks at me, and I feel like a 19th century Marxist in Tsar's Russia, and I've just stated an idea. A new idea. And, most of all—a dangerous one! I gawk as they gawk, and I sense it's once again that thing Donnelly said about disclosure. And, seeing this, I now see the power behind it. The difference we can make, when we stop bottling up our internal proceedings, and make them known to the world.

And now, a new world order is called for. This being the consensus I'm getting from the group.
"Umm… wow, I hate women, too." Says Turnip.
"Yeah, me too, I know I look funny to them, and I'm tired of them looking at me like that." Describes AO3 Ramshaw.
Almendinger seems to want to make a pass. So, we allow him. And now finally the supposed leader of our group speaks:
"Women are the absolute bane of my existence." Says Derby.
Everyone now smiles (I sorta pretend to), and then something magical happens, everyone sprouts one, as life breathes into our withering, withering hearts and souls, and, all of a sudden, we all start to chatter. And, would you look at that, we're actually having a good time now. No, this is no "no shitter" this is happening right now, this is really, truly happening. Although, I personally, am not really proud of this, so, I keep my reservations. But I did feel a lot more relaxed when I opened up. And now I'm just enjoying a comfortable silence, while everyone else enjoys a not so silent one. So, aye! This be a truth. Just about every character in this story is practically a woman hater. Aye, we are that! Since, that's just how the Military is. No, I mean it! I'm serious! I said misogyny would eventually become a topic and here you go. For instance, let's just look at VF-451 Bloody Shamrock's Night Check Line Shack:

- Me = I've made my examples very obvious.
- IS3 Falconni = type of guy that'll try to marry and make an Oilerking type into a housewife. And might fly off the handle whenever he discovers her hair in the food she cooked. All while sitting at the kitchen table with just his wifebeaters and boxers.
- Kats and Hats = every girl these two have been with, have been pretty much "I've had betters." And, they will never settle for one that actually is better. For all women to them are subpar and subhuman.
- AD3 Rudy = too in love with himself, life is a giant mirror to him, and he'd be damned if some broad stepped up between him and his reflection which he was just admiring.

- ADAN Quimby = a woman's ass and a woman are two separate beings to him. And, if a woman was born with her top half replaced with a second bottom half, Q-man would be in heaven right now.
- AEAN Navarro = too cholo.
- ATAN Derbytown = too ninja.
- ATAN Pflugerville = The Marylou Moonshine Morning story, need I say more?
- AN Roach = I've never heard this guy not call a female a "bitch," never! And, always at Roppongi, he'll try to score with chicks to mostly win Falky's Golden Age type's respect. Women are just a stepping ladder to a guy like him.
- AN Royster = abandon all hope, this is the type of guy that when his day as a rascally child came to enter the house of puberty, Royster cussed and hissed and moaned and began pouring gasoline all around the place and tried to set it on fire. Or, in other words, he took one look at it, and, he made sure, he wouldn't have a chance to take second.

AN Donnelly and AEAN Barbarossa are the only two I'd say don't fall under this category. So, aye, for any females reading this, don't join the Navy. Just don't. Trust me, don't! For the simple fact that women onboard can be called "Boat goats" and players "goat herders" need I elaborate more?

"Hahahaaha!" Goes everyone in the party, but me.

"Wait, you can rap, Derby?"

"Aye, I can, I've dabbled a bit." Derby responds to Turnips question.

"Okay, do it."

"I don't know, I kinda get shy when—"

"Just do it!" Ramshaw orders.

"Okay, here I go…."

And I gotta say, I'm sorta curious to see this. Derby now begins boomboxing with his mouth. And, from the tune he's spraying (also literally spraying a bit, as a bit I catch in my left eye) it sounds to be 50 Cents "In Da Club."

"*Go Senior*

We're on the Boat now
All of Cag's pryin' eyes are on you now
Better make 'em PCs scrub 'em Jets till they break down
And when they start to whine and moan - lay'n the smack down!
Go Senior
Go Senior
You can find him in the galley, scarfing down hot chicken and wings
Or in the smoke pit, smokin' up some Airman dreams
Or in that butt, callin' you a fool, like your name was mud
Hollerin' up and down the Flightdeck for some E3 blood

You know when he be up to some nasty tricks
EMI-ing motherfuckers just for some twisted kicks
You'd better be scrubbin' and scrubbin' that Jet all day
When you chillin', guess what, soon enough, he'll be comin' your way!"

"Hahahaaha!" Goes everyone in the party and including me this time. Gotta note, I'm actually impressed. All still feels like things are going to end in a sour note. But Derby just managed to make me forget that for a second.
"Dude, what is—wroonnnng with that guy?" Asks AO3 Ramshaw.
"Oh, the Senior, he's… I don't know… he's?"
"He's neurotic, that's what's wrong with him!" I immediately respond. All look at me, but since all haven't really seen much of me being open and interactive, and more of a heel, they ignore me.
"I mean, seriously, I've never seen a man sweat as much as him, and not just after a long day of working on the Flightdeck, when he first comes up during shift change, he's already drenched."
"I don't know, Senior isn't that bad." Says Derby.
Oh, Zulu India, Shipmate: Zip It! Not bad for you, since you still haven't aroused his belligerent wrath. Think I. Seeing how, I can see Derby getting into as much trouble as the rest of us do. Although, like Pflueger, he just hasn't had a chance to get his

attention, not yet. And, knowing how absentminded and also lucky while at it you have been, D-Man, it's only a matter of time, matter of time, matter of time, you'll be eating those "Senior isn't that bad" words. Things then get quiet, but, in the meantime, Derby buys a round on the house for all of us (even me). And, funny, something ceremonious feels like it's about to happen, as I look around at all the mahogany red wood and feel it being so in the silence. And once the drinks arrive, Derby then gets up, stands up, tall, and holds his glass at eye level as he continues to eye it. And now announces:
"To war, brothers…

and to war, not to any enemies foreign, but, this time, most certainly domestic.

(I have no idea where Derby is taking this, but then again, hearing him say "domestic," I now do)
To war with—WOMEN! FOR THEY ARE OUR TRUEST ENEMY!"

Ah, Barnacle sauce! Crud muffins! Shit! What the hell have I started? Everyone at this "loser" table gets up, and now pledges, it seems, pledges, to continue to be and grow into bigger losers. I get up too, since, I'm not going to make myself that much of the odd man out. A toast is done. And now we sit. And, it's a roundtable we sit at, and I notice it, but I know better than to get such contradictory notions. No, Derby, no, this isn't Camelot and you ain't no King Arthur, hell no!

And now, begins an hour or two of some major, major drinking, and merriment. I doesn't get too much, since, I'm still mostly having Derby buy all these for me. And the boy is beginning to show his palooka face. Drinks, drinks and more drinks, all around, and now we're somewhere else. Up and out, and when we did, how we did, I'm not much at all certain right now. But I hear a lot of hooting and hollering amongst our bunch. I now try to regain some of my mental faculties, for these moments are now becoming too sporadic to, and dangerously so, to be going off on complete drunken autopilot. Whoa… this takes a moment to do so. And now, I'm front and

center again. Where we are, I see neon, lots and lots of neon, all colors, all, and there's rainbows forming on the other side of the globe now jealous of all these colors. I see my own eyes dilate and then focus. I'm conscious now.
"Fuck… bitches… fuckin'… fuck!" Much of the posse I am with now spews.
And now, story time:
"Fuck man, when I was in MEPS, I was so afraid, so afraid, I kept calling my girlfriend like every 5 minutes I was in San Diego, every 5 minutes it felt like. I had to talk to her and hear her voice through the whole thing. I had a girl that close to me." Says Turnip.
"You did?"
"Yeah…."
"What happened?" I ask, since, I can just tell.
I look at Turnip now looking down.
"I thought we were that close, but, in Boot Camp, Great Lakes, I wasn't hearing zip from her by way of mail. So, I remember graduating, and, we finally had a chance to use a public phone again. My parents came to see me graduate from being a recruit. She didn't. So, I was with my family in Chicago for the few days off they give us before we get sent to A school. And, when I called her… A guy I knew answered.

A guy that she used to date."
A moment of sorrow now echoes in our group. We know of such stories, we all do. Just about all. Jody has struck again. And even those that never personally did, they did at least by someone else's account. And, you don't have to personally go through this to try really hard to empathize. The feelings are immediate.
"Yeah, my fiancé. The girl I was to marry, was to… that is… same shit. Now she's with some black dude in Ridgecrest, California where I'm from. No hard feelings, Derby." Says AO3 Ramshaw.
"None taken, I know how niggas are. Fuck that nigga!" Says Derby.
And the only thing I can now think of is: wait, Ramshaw is from California as the same state as I??? But, then again, he said "Ridgecrest," and that still makes a lot of sense.

A sorrowful pause follows. Sorrowful. Much too sorrowful. Feels like it's to start raining red right now. Not sure if its blood. Not sure, but hits that way, although.

And then, this happens:
"FUUUUUCCCCCK!"
Very abruptly, might I add, very much so. And much too much for any of us to have it register all civil like. Some of our ears are now ringing from that. So, most of us are a bit stunned from that explosion. And all coming from the sonic ranges that AOAN Almendinger is blowing up with. And, now, the sleeper has awakened.
"YOU GUYS THINK YOU GOT WOMEN PROBLEMS? YOU THINK YOU DO, BUT YOU KNOW NOTHING. NOTHING OF HOW LOW AND EVIL THEY TRULY, TRULY FUCKIN' ARE!"
"Umm… Al… take it easy." Says AO3 Ramshaw.
"FUUUUUCCCCCK!"
Shit!
"FUUUUUCCCCCK!"
Damn, I'm going deaf!
Fast moving skies expand over Pattaya. Fast. Very fast. Very dangerous looking. Looking to start some tempest hellraising storms. We now look at Al, and, sees yellow eyes! Aye, yellow! They be yellow. And, reminds me of the eyes 'em Cthulhu creatures were given in my dreams and such. Scary eyes. Very scary! Good think we in some backstreet with not a soul in these dark and dreary ways but us. Nothing but us, blue night shining on through the scenery. And now this.
"My own fuckin' mother. My own mother, fuckin', used to beat the shit out of me as a kid. All the time, all the time. Fuckin' junkie bitch!"
"Whoa, whoa… whoa… calm down, Al, calm down!" I say. For, the fool is scaring all of us right now.
"One time, after she had beat me into a bloody mess, I was eight, I was, eight. She told me, she used to take heroin while pregnant with me."
Oh shit! This is bad!

“Fuckin’ bitch was like, she wanted to abort my ass, but she was too strung up on paying for her fix, to pay a doctor to give me the clothing hangar treatment in the womb.”
Fuck! I’m really scared now!
“I hate women… in a way, you couldn’t imagine. If it was up to me, I’d wish rape and murder on all of them. Every. Single. One!” Concludes Al.
….
“Hehehe.” Goes a couple of western women. Two, just up the street, where the alley gives way to the main tourist streets here in Pattaya. Pretty girls, both blondes, mostly trying to take pictures together holding a digital camera in front of them. Both giving duck faces for the cheese bit. Al now has them centered. Al has them centered. And, we all see it now.

Al now… begins pacing at them.
“Oh shit!” Goes Rammie.
Our sentiments exactly.
“What do we do?” Goes Derby.
And I call it:
“You got to beat his ass, Derby, you got to beat his ass, and BAD!”
Al is now only 30 yards away from the two.
“What, I have to… what?”
“Derby, rush in and beat the shit out of him, he’s gone AWOL, rogue, gone completely ballistic! Nuclear war is now eminent! Crimson Tides, dude, Crimson Tides!”
Al is now only 25 yards away from the two.
“Why, what is he going to do if…?”
But then we see how Al is beginning to pick up pace, with a clenched up right-hand fist. Clenched tight. As we can see all the jittery actions and the veins pumping and popping out from the contours.
“Dude, he crossed the line. He crossed the line bringing up his mother. That’s a big no-no when it comes to women hating. And now, anything is possible, and he’s

going to attack those women. Try to rape them, beat them up, kill them, and I don't know what! Go! Go!"
Al is now only 15 yards away from the two.
"Oh shit!"
"Go, Navastian is right, go!" Says AO3 Ramshaw.
"COME ON, AKUMA, BEAT HIS ASS! GO! GO!"
"FUCK!" Blows up Derby as he takes off.

AND, SO, BEGINS THE HUNT FOR THE RED OCTOBER! HEE-YARG!!! Smiles out an ol' salty seadog cap', from a long-ago Nantucket Melville era, smokin' som' tobacco with a corn cob pipe, with a tinkle in his eye, behind mounds and mounds of gray smoke and snow white, bushy whiskers.
Wait… what?
Who the…?
Ahem!

Al is now only 5 yards out. Derby is not going to make it. NOT! NOT! But then Al trips at the 2-yard line. And falls face first into the ground. The two girls see this, see how he was pacing up at them. And freak as they run away realizing how badly they had just dodged a bullet. We're all now running to Al to get to him. Derby is the first to do so, as Al tries to get up.
"FUCKIN' BITCHES, GET THE FUCK BA—…!"
Derby then sacks him to the ground. And now comes in the orchestra section.
POW!
POW!
POW!
AND THERE SHE BLOWS!
As what seem like two giant blood bubbles in each of Al's nostrils explode from Derby fist making impact.
"FUCKIN' RAPIST PIECE-OF-SHIT, FUCKIN' KILL YOU!" Goes Derby.
As he starts to really lay it in there.

POW!
POW!
POW!
Now the rest of us reach the scene, reach the onslaught, and for a second there we're just marveled by all the no-holds-barred violence involved.
POW!
POW!
AND THERE SHE BLOWS AGAIN! And now the rest of us realize, Holy Mother, Derby might kill him! This is all happening way too quickly. Derby as of now is practically sitting on Almendinger's chest and really wailing it in there. Every pop is connecting at full 100% compacity and accuracy. And this is when beatdowns tend to get deadly.
POW!
POW!
"ALL RIGHT, LAY OFF! LAY OFF! DON'T KILL HIM!" I bellow. I then rush behind Derby and grabs around and under his arms and begins trying to unfasten him away. Once I do, the rest of the party joins in behind me as we all get Derbytown off of Almendinger. Once Derby comes off, I fall off and onto my rear, me and Derby are now on the ground. Rammie and the Turnip are standing beside us. AOAN Almendinger, although, doesn't look much too good. All of us now lean in to pry a good look at our expired once patriot. Blood! So much blood! Too much! And a face that sorta seems like it's been half melted and smeared off. His face seeming like a mask coming unmasked, yet, no mask, for it's his real face.
"Oh, oh… oh no, this is bad!" I go.
"Is it?" Confounds Derby.
COUGH, COUGH! Goes Almendinger, coughing up with blood. And—damn! We now feel it. Crud! This truly is bad from what is being shown. We're on a main street in Pattaya, and, it's now we notice all the JAFOs around watching, have been watching, from the beginning. Crickey! I fear. Please let there not be any Squids amongst them, any Navy Squids from the USS Jimmy Carter as we are! But, while I pan my profilers, I can't see any. Shit! We need to ditch this scene.
"Dude, I think that guy over there is calling an ambulance on his cell." I say.

"What?" Goes the rest of the party.
We need to vacate. Scram! But then we go back to eyeing the bloody FUBARed mess on the ground that once used to be AOAN Allmendinger. And it's at this moment we all look at each other. We all know this isn't going to look good on any of our accounts. And our feet now feel triggery as the six legs of a roach's would, with the lights now turned on. Fuck! Fuck! FUCK! We all word each other with our pupil gestures as they scramble around in our sockets going port to starboard, port to starboard, towards the direction we all feel like hightailing it. And then, one of us takes the grenade.
"Go, go, I'll stay behind until the ambulance comes." Says Turnip.
A moment of hesitation follows.
"I said, 'GO!'"
And now, no more hesitations, as we scram.
WEYO! WEYO! We hear the sirens. But, like that night at my barracks when I almost got into trouble over Kats and Hats hosing a Khaki from the 3rd floor, I doesn't want to look back. I doesn't! I just doesn't, fearing I'll petrify into a block of salt and get framed for the transgression that was just committed.

I'm outta there.

Once again clear night skies hung over Pattaya. Big moons skies. Big. Just big. And white. And glorious. And it seems like the ol' man of cheese has come out to give each and every one of us a wink. Some words of encouragement and a pleasant smile. Everyone except me. For, let's face it, he is really a she, and Madame Luna has already made up her mind what she thinks of me. Fuckin' bitch. Aye, so, neon lights, neon lights and more neon, and now comes the whores. Droves and droves of whores. Since splitting from the other crew, I had gone into a more established bar that had ATMs for westerners to use. And, so, I used it. How much was there? Can't say. For it doesn't matter, I'm going back to the Boat around 0000 (four balls). So, there's no point in being frugal with my money right now. I doesn't really need it. I should save it. But right now, I'm a day-to-day person. Meaning, I don't really

want to think of a future. I just want to see if I'll survive the day or see if I won't. And, those Cthulhu monsters were right about one thing: I'm prone to this! And like Zeedorf, it's best counting down the hands of the clock to see what happens.

And then, two Thai girls step in, one chewing a stick of gum, one blowing it. Both look like sisters, twins even, but I can't say since the beer goggles right now are messing me up.
"You handsome, what's your game here in Pattaya, what's your pleasure?" Hehehehe!
I go, thinking about "my pleasure." I'm feeling kinda wabbly. Also seeing too much with a blurred sense, and I can't adjust it. I'm seeing mostly double vision right now since I'm hammered. And that makes me wonder if there's really one girl standing next to me, and I'm only thinking I'm seeing two because of it. I squint, and: nope, now I see four girls, so obviously there's two. Plus, one has a red silky top on and the other has one in purple. Their faces mostly a brownish blur while showing some whites with their teeth and their eyes.
"Come on, no more wandering around for you, gotta be back on the Boat pretty soon, am I right, Sailor boy?" And that makes me go back to that night in Hong Kong, wondering how Roxanna could tell I was a Sailor while wearing nothing but civi clothing. Not totally, though, mind you, since I'm once again dressed like a "too fly for a white guy" wankster, but still.

Sigh… Roxanna! Funny, I'd pay for her again, she was way more interesting than these two Rorschach tests I'm staring at.
"Come on, big boy, you want threesome? Come and get it, me and my girlfriend here will make this the best night of your life! I promise." Says one.
"We promise." Says the other.
And, fuck it, a threesome it is. No matter the expense. Not really keen for this. But I can then brag about how I joined the threesome club later in my Navy and eventually non-Navy life. And, so, I go along.

Red lights. Ugh, the red! I'm in a shady joint with clads of Thai prostitutes and there's mirrors all around, and a mirrorball hanging from the ceiling, reflecting and refracting everything. And everything is steaming red. So much so, it makes it feel there's steam from a Turkish bath next door. But there isn't any. Fuck, I'm blind. It feels like a 70s orgy is about to take place in here. Yet, hasn't for the moment. And the red is so blinding I can barely see anyone else around. Although, one giant black dude sitting in a foldy chair next to a staircase leading to the second floor. And I can only imagine what the second floor is about since the first one really just is a strip joint. There's a stage, there's audience members, and everything and everybody looks disgusting. There's a scream of infectious diseases all about, like the germs are all ghosts that haunt this establishment. I can feel them. Feel them. And now and then I see a girl partially open their mouth or legs and I can swear I see a foamy white substance beginning to spew forth a bit. Eww!

"You got money?" The girls I'm with ask.

"Yeah, in my wallet."

"You might need more."

They then point right next to the black dude in the seat near the staircase, on the other side of the staircase is an ATM. But I doesn't need it.

"I already took out everything I got in my—"

FUCKIN IDIOT, NAVASTIAN! DON'T TELL THEM… SHIT!

The two girls now eye me all slit, a pause, and followed by a nod of acceptance. And once again I'm being led up. Up to the second floor. Across the halls full of barely clad Thai women and doorways leading to the magic rooms for a magic night. Many, many doors. Many, many, with all sorts of Indochinese siren music being played, each room a different song, sung on a different note. And I'm at the door I'm to be, Room 13 (figures). We enter. And, we inside now. The rooms are very bare minimum, these aren't just living spaces for the girls, they're working spaces. So, nothing of value, sentimental or non-sentimental, can be seen out in the open. And there's a drawer to one side with a lock on it. I do a second's hand clock motion with my gaze around the room, clockwise then counterclockwise. I… I… I now look at the two. They're naked. And I'm starting to come out of the haze and buzz of so many

drinks I had had up to this point. I now look at them. Takes a step back. And, there's a couch to one corner, and I decide to sit in it. Sit here, and no place else.
"You're not coming to bed with us?"
"…." I say nothing.
"You like to watch?"
Not really, but I nod, so as to not give the girls the idea that I'm having second thoughts. And so, they begin, and, they get into it, and it seems like they tend to work together. The play is well rehearsed. Has been well rehearsed. But, maybe a bit too well. What I'm seeing now, looks like a porno, any I've seen, especially recently. But still I feel a disconnection. And now comes the question of the hour: what the fuck am I doing here? I don't want this!
"You gonna join?"
"No, no… I might just watch the whole thing, would that be—"
"It's perfectly fine for us!" They immediately interject. And now, my eyes go slit, since, I get it! They rather have me play absolutely no part in this and get paid the same. They'd prefer it, actually. So, what the fuck am I doing here, when I could just be watching a porno, since I'm now doing nothing but watching a porno, live acted or not? And now, I'm just in my own thoughts. Mostly about what happened to AOAN Almendinger. And, goes to show, you never can tell. You can never tell just exactly who it is standing next to you. Who this person is? What type of person is he/she? Fuck! That mother bit he reflected on had pretty much spilled all the beans and we could only wait for it. As much as I've never liked my mother's decision making in life, me, personally, I still love my mom, and more than I even know.
"You don't seem to be watching…?"
And now I watch. I watch for a moment, while trying to process what these two just said, while having those other matters still in my thoughts. And I'm having trouble processing both at the same time, not like some computer that allows a program to be installed in the background. As a person, you need direct computation to do so.
"We almost done, okay?"
"What?"
"Okay?"

“Okay, what?” I go.
And, wait a second, how long was I in my thoughts, how long have these two been going at it, how are they done so quickly? And now I’m pissed.
“Okay, we done, you pay?”
And I’m mighty angry right about now.
“How much?” I say.
“Nine thousand baht.”
And, yeah, fuck this, I have no idea how much that is for USD. I now get mad, takes out my wallet, counts the baht, and places 4500 baht down on the bed instead. Since I didn’t play a single part in these transactions, physically, which is the deal I’m presuming, I’m giving myself my own invoice. The girl now picks it up and counts it. And now grows crossed.
“This is half.”
I just begin to get up to leave, I doesn’t care. I doesn’t! I’m sick and tired of these disgusting transactions I keep finding myself in. No heart! None! And this isn’t what sex is supposed to be about.
“Hey, you, pay other half!” They order. And, now I’m finding this all comical. A Senior Chief, Master Chief, First Classes and LPOs might be able to “order’ me around, but no way is this below 5-foot lady going to try and do the same.
Now I reason:
“Sorry, but I think just voyeurism should be priced a lot less than actually being in intercourse with you two girls.”
“Voyeurism… what voyeurism?”
“Just watching!” I say, as I lean in with my left foot. The two now seem a bit scrambled, stupid bitches thought they can have me cough up 9Gs (in baht, that is) just for sitting around twirling my thumbs. Not happening. I now try to leave again.
“No, I don’t care, you pay 9 thousand baht, end of story!”
And now, my eyes go slit, as I decide to let the girls have it:
“Listen, it’s very simple, right now, I’m paying for this. So, right now, you two ain’t human to me. You’re just products. And, truth be, I’m now sobering up and finding you bitches a bit too fucking ugly for my taste. I, at least, find you two fucking ugly.

And that was my reasons not wanting to join in, so, you got your fair—*fair*—share. And that's all there's to it." That intimidates them to hear, as they step back, as I step forward. "I mean, this is my hard-earned cash, and, I feel like, if I'm to spend all this hard-earned cash, it should be something worthy of value. So, the two of you can continue fucking each other for all I care, until you two make up the rest of the cash from each other. I want nothing more to do with this. So, I'm going now, to find a product, I at least will feel is deserving. So, bon apatite! You two continue enjoying yourselves! But, as for me, I'm out!"

And now I try to make a run for it, but not running, since that would alert anyone with what I was about to do. And make myself seem guilty. I exit.
"Hey, wait…."
SLAM! I shut the door and begins making trek. Across the hall. Down the stairs, and now passes the black dude that was sitting in the chair just a moment ago. And, it's then the shots are called.
"Hey, Towering Inferno, he no pay! He no pay! Stop him! Stop him!"

Wait a second… Towering Inferno???

And this time, I readjust my eyes that are much more sober than they were a moment ago. Back a bit, all I really saw was a giant dark blotch sitting, mostly. And being seated he seemed to be much, much smaller. I now look at this Towering Inferno, as he focuses his gaze onto me, and gets up.
And… gets up.
And, gets up, again!
How many times… SHIT BALLS OF FIRE—HE'S BIG!!! Fuck, how did I not see this?

"This guy didn't pay?"
"No, he no pay nothing!"
Fucking bull, I paid. I paid. And just the right amount, might I add, considering what bang for the ~~buck~~ baht I ended up getting. And, really more than what was truly

owed. But then the TI steps at me. Fuck me, he's even bigger than Sundergaard! Fear I. As I feel to panic, I turn around, and start with the stepping, all Flintstone's style. But I'm making no trek. My feet are moving, but I'm making no treading. Shit… I'm airborne! The Towering Inferno had pretty much lifted me up with one hand from the back of my neck. And now, he repositions me facing the wall.

And now:
SLAM!
WHY, HELLO, WALL! NICE TO MEET YOU! SORRY, BUT I DIDN'T QUITE CATCH YOUR REAL NAME…?
SLAM!
OH, OKAY, KEVIN, IS IT? NICE TO MEET YOU, KEVIN!
SLAM!
NICE TO MEET YOU AGAIN, KEVIN!
SLAM!
AND AGAIN, OH WOW, YOU'RE A REAL FRIENDLY SORT!

The Towering Inferno now lets go and allows me to fall out of his grip, and, falling, I fall on my stomach. TI then goes through my back pocket, finds my wallet, takes out all the cash. All! Fucking all I had taken out. Hands it to the two Thai whores I was with. All I can do now is watch, I'm in a lot of pain. Lots and lots of pain. Gotta note, I don't think I'm going to be willingly wanting to ever pay Kevin another visit. Not a bad chap! But… apples and oranges, I guess. And I didn't find myself liking the same things as Kevin liked. Fuck, feels like a concussion. TI now takes out my ID from the wallet, kneels down, and sticks it in my mouth.
"Bite."
"Huh… wha—…?"
"Bite down, and bite hard."
And I do so. I then see him put my wallet away, except for my Military ID, in his back pocket. Since, I guess he likes my wallet. He then grabs and lifts me up again. Over

the shoulder. And walks me to the exit. And with the ol' heave ho' sends me flying into the street.

THUD! I go, hitting the pavement.

Pain.
So much pain.
Foxtrot Mike Lima = Fuck my life!
Seriously, fuck my… *ouch*!

THE SQUID IN THE MIRROR

And I don't want the world to see me
'Cause I don't think that they'd understand
When everything—
Ouch!
Still in pain. But I finally managed to get back to the shore where the LBGB will take me back to where I came. Good! Good! Fuck Thailand. Fuck you! You didn't impress! All feels quiet and accounted for as I stand in line with every other Squid ready to go back home. Home, sweet home. Fuck the outside world! So, let me go back to this inside world. And go back to entertaining myself with sock puppets (and not how Hats and Kats made a puppet of that ol' Jolly Roger Ensign (and I don't mean happy sock puppets, either!).
"Hey, did you hear about that VF-451 BB stacker that got jumped in an alley, supposedly, and had to be rushed to a Pattaya hospital since he was nearly beaten to death?" Says a Squid. There are right now two Squids, two Boat Chucks (from what I can make) standing in front of me now speaking of this matter. I'm very much intent now to hear the rest.
"Yeah, I heard. Got jumped, right?"
"Right."
And now comes the part I'd be curious about:

“Do they know who did it?” Right now, the Squid asking has his back to me and the Squid being asked has his front. And I can see the one upfront giving blank stares and wave after wave of forehead wrinkles. He has no answer to give.
“I guess by some gang of Thai hoodlums, and especially ones that don’t like us being here?” He guesses. And I’m relieved to hear a conclusion about the matter. But then the one facing me, looks at me, gawks, and seems off put.
“Oh shit, what happened to you?”
“What… huh?”
“You.”
“Me… me what?”
“Maybe you should go and take a look in the mirror.” He finishes, as his forehead cycles from high tides to low tides.

Funny though, out of everything, I think I’ll miss Kevin the most. He was the one I had the most entertainment gained from this whole outing. Huh! Ha! Damn was the black dude big. Fuckin’ even bigger than Sundergaard. But, that’s what I’d call Manning 101, the number one lesson learned: no matter how big and strong you think you are, there’s always someone that’s going to be bigger and stronger. Asshole kept my wallet, though. But, gave me my Military ID back, since, I know he knew I was a Squid, and I would need that to get back on board. And, if I was unable to? That’s when I might have made a big fuss about it, leading something or another back to that Moulin Rouge whorehouse I was kicked out of. Clever, pretty clever. That was shrewd of him.

On the Boat, finally, passing into the Hangar Bay, I see nothing but bright giant night lights orchestrating a colossal shadow puppet show of all the Squids passing before the light. And it’s creating several shadows on the far end starboard bulkhead. And, I just gaze at it, mesmerized. Just mesmerized. And I can’t tell you how. Or why. Like watching shadows of people us Squids be trying to be, and the size and scale they casts do not compare to our own. For look at how busy the Sons of God and the Daughters of Men got creating such Giants. Something Biblically prehistoric in that

nature. But we just Squid men. Evolved from Squids. Made to live as Squids. And will so happily die as ones.

Now at the aft end, I go down a hatch. I'm now in the Aft Galley, and since our berthing really is just below the galley (if you think living right under a mess deck where breakfast, lunch and dinner is served seems unfavorable to you, then, aye, so does it do the same for us). Right near the hatch leading to the berthing, I turn right to head into our head. And now, I go to the mirror. I gotta check the damage, I gots to! Gots! I don't have any idea of how bad it is. And, how bad all of this really is, really! All the way here, all I've seen in vivid gray colors. Vivid gray. And right now, I want to see something colored warm and human. I'm right now standing in front of the mirror, both hands placed leaning down and weighing down heavily on the corners of the sink counter. I has my head down low. And I hasn't had an opportunity just yet. Blimey! I doesn't want to look. I doesn't! I'm afraid of what I'll see in the reflection. But then someone else enters the dimly fluorescent lit head and stands just port of me and he begins washing himself up in the sink. Dread! Much dread! Please let it not be D—…? Oh, it's Derbytown. Oh! I'm much relieved to see him compared to the other Line Shacker in our Squadron which last name starts with also D. Relieved, although, this Line Shack Shipmatey of mines' facial expression doesn't seem so pleased. And now I feel, what gives? As he continues to express antagonizing vibes.

"What gives?" I ask.

Derby continues to assess with his eyes as they continue to smolder and smolder, and Derbytown tends to do this a lot when he's feeling hostile. This all reminds me of how much he smoldered and smoldered after that dry humping fiasco between him and ADAN Quimby. Same slant brow with much prolonged heated expressions. The man's face practically a heated-up iron, set on an ironing board with a pair of Utilities, looking for some wrinkles to iron out and some creases to iron in. With much starch. Much (all right, I'm done with all the inuendoes)!

"Why are you lookin' like you want to beat the shit out of me?"

Derby says nothing.

"Why?" I press. Derby is now done washing himself up with soap and water. As he steps away to where the paper towels are kept, pulls one out, and begins wiping his hands with it. Funny how he does it, doing it in a way, wiping his hands, as if he's giving me or himself or whoever an applause.
He now speaks:
"I'm no fuckin' Akuma!" My pupils wander a bit, in soft and gentle zigzags.
"You want to know what your number one problem is, Navastian, and not just in the Line Shack, but you as a person?" That gets me to stop wondering, for this now feels like it's going to be some hard truth. And truth only how the man with the funny hat could bring it. "Navastian… you're… judgmental! I've watched you this entire time. This entire time! And, your shit wouldn't be getting so FUBARed up if you weren't that way. Because, I'll tell you, no one likes it! No one does!" Now done wiping his hands, Derby steps to the trashcan and discards the paper towels.

Seemingly about to leave, he now has one more thing to say:
"Also, I don't need to whoop your ass for trying to take advantage of me, seems like God made sure you paid your dues, already."
He leaves now.

And now, I turn, and looks at myself.
And… I'm depressed with what I see.
Just depressed, just so.

Every time I was slammed against "*Kevin*," I was done so face first. And I can't say how many times I was, but now I see it was quite a lot. So much is swollen black and blue and even purple and a little red. Thank you, insobriety, at the time, giving me enough of a buzz going on to nullify the pain (physically and mentally). Enough beer flies buzzing all around my head and across my sights to keep me distracted from centering on it.

This isn't working! I think now. I feel now.

This just isn't working! I'm coming to the actualization of what exactly happens when I keep steeping myself further and further down the hole, I'm allowing myself to fall down. Venture down. But an adventure this is, no more! I now look right into my eyes in the mirror, right into them, right into my own soul. And I speak of what I mean to say to myself.

Listen, you, let go! Just let it go.

Stop trying to preserve whatever pride you fill yourself with, since, the worthless pride in you has now grown into an abomination.

Fuckin' Chainhauler man… my ass!

Look at it this way: 5 months! You still got 5 months of this shit left. How the hell you going to survive that if you can't even survive this? And, right now, within myself, I feel those oceans again, feels how far deep they go. And now, fuck all that falling and falling and falling (or, should I say, sinking and sinking and sinking) and until I hit rock bottom. For, I know now, there is no rock bottom, and the oceans at least inside me (unlike in the physical world where the ocean does go only so deep) has no limits and boundaries. I guess you need to be a bubblehead (Submarine Squid) about such matters to see just what goes on just below the surface. So, aye! Aye, aye! And not: "I, I" for, right now, I just don't want to be in the same in such matters. For whoever I am, truly am, to be interpolated into that: a Shitbag! Master Chief was right. He was right all along. I just got to do my duties, and nothing else. In work, there can be a cure, an answer. And, strange, I feel like I've already been through all this.

Once more I look into my own eyes and speak:
Navastian, "this Navastian" you don't exist no more. You don't exist. I exist, I do! Not you. But I do! I don't want to bicker anymore. Murmur. Complain. Antagonize. And I definitely don't want to be making anymore port stops where I completely debase

myself to all the hedonistic lifestyles those places tend to bring. No, Navastian, you don't exist! You don't! Because you're a construct of how I see myself, you are not me, per se, exactly, since you wouldn't even exist without the presence of me. No, you're not a Shitbag! You are not a Shitbag! And neither are you any of the other bile things that have stemmed from it. And as for what anyone else says? Fuck 'em, they're not me either, I can only be responsible of how I make myself out to be, they can't, they don't have the reigns to my life. I do. So, stop handing them to them, thinking they'll know exactly what's best and where to steer. I'm. No. Shitbag. But, if I don't stop thinkin' about myself as such, I… WILL ULTIMATELY BECOME ONE!

All right, not a bad pep talk. But, a little too cheesy for me. Although, then again, that's one thing I've noticed in life, all the best words spoken are those that end up sounding just that way.
"Hehe!" I laugh.
In the mirror I centers, into my eyes, into my windows, and now, I don't feel so afraid of all that lurks in me, because, when it comes to me. There's just this, "*this*," and nothing but. But then, looking deeper, I sense Him there. Him. Letting me know: not to worry! For He'll be taking over from this point on and out. And now, He says something important to me. And, I acknowledges.

And now, I don't see myself as ugly as I did the second I stepped into this head. I smile at myself, what feels like, having been ages.

But then I notices him at the urinal, now finished, now flushes. A shadow stalks over. He now uses the sink. Finishes. And watches me in his peripherals as I do the same. Donnelly then steps out of the head. Neither of us makes a single "peep." Although, "peep" wouldn't exactly spell out all he really wanted to say to me or show me. The moment was tense. Very tense. And also, very much hostile. A good thing inhibitions are. A good thing. Maybe even a great thing. For all that was holding him back was holding back a lot. For I could just feel the insurmountable pressure behind his eye sockets.

And it is then that I know.
What I did to him.
There's no going back.
No redoes.
This is all there is to remain.

WOG DAY: PART ONE

Mele Kalikimaka is the thing to say
on a bright Hawaiian Christmas Day
That's the island greeting that we send to you
from the land where palm trees sway
Here we know that Christmas will be green and bright
The sun to shine by day and all the stars at night
Mele Kalikimaka is Hawaii's way to say Merry Christmas to y—

1MC:
"ATTENTION ON DECK! ATTENTION ON DECK! WORD HAS REACHED ME THAT THE USS CARTER IS HEADED TOWARDS THE REALM OF NEPTUNE. SOURCES INDICATED THAT CARTER IS INFESTED WITH SHORE RIDDEN SCUM KNOWN AS POLLYWOGS. I WOULD BE GLAD TO SEE YOU AND RENEW OLD ACQUAINTANCES WITH ROYAL SHELLBACKS, BUT I MUST EMPHASIZE THAT POLLYWOGS WILL BE TREATED WITH THE DIRECT PENALTIES FOR ASSUMING THEY CAN ENTER MY DOMAIN."
Whoa… huh… whoa? What the fuck was that? I'm in my rack! My personal space, can't a guy sleep in peace?
ZZZzzzzzz!

Mele Kalikimaka is the thing to say
on a bright Hawaiian—

1MC:

“IT HAS BEEN FURTHER REPORTED TO ME THERE’S EVEN GREATER NUMBERS OF THAT SCURVY, SLIME, SCUM, KNOWN AS POLLYWOGS THAN I HAVE SUSPECTED. ALAS, OUR OWN CAPTAIN OF THE USS CARTER, HIMSELF, IS A POLLYWOG! AND MUST BE TREATED WITH GREAT PREJUDICE AND SERIOUS JUDGMENT FOR HIS CRIMES! THE OVER ABUNDANCE OF HILARITY AND GROSS DISRESPECT CURRENTLY BEING SHOWN AMONG THESE AFOREMENTIONED POLLYWOGS MUST CEASE!”
Whoa… the captain? What the fuck is this? Fuck this, I’m going back to sleep.
ZZZzzzzzz!

Mele Kalikimaka is the thin—

1MC:
“OFFICER OF THE DECK, LOOKOUT REPORTS THE ARRIVAL OF DAVY JONES.”
Wait… what… Davy Jones? Am I hearing this… is this a dream?
1MC:
“OFFICER OF THE DECK, I AM DAVY JONES, MESSENGER TO HIS ROYAL MAJESTY, NEPTUNUS REX, RULER OF THE ROARING MAIN. I DEMAND TO KNOW WHAT SHIP THIS IS, WHAT COURSE YOU STEER, AND BY WHOSE AUTHORITY YOU DARE TRESPASS WITHIN OUR ROYAL DOMAIN?”
“THIS IS THE USS CARTER STEERING COURSE 105° TRUE!”
“NOTIFY YOUR COMMANDING OFFICER THAT I, DAVY JONES, HAVE A MESSAGE TO DELIVER FROM HIS ROYAL MAJESTY, NEPTUNUS REX.”
“DAVY, OUR CAPTAIN AS OF NOW, HAS BEEN PUT UNDER BALL AND CHAIN, IN SUSPICIONS OF BEING A POLLYWOG, HIMSELF. THE ACTING CAPTAIN, HIS SECOND IN COMMAND, ALTHOUGH, AWAITS YOUR ARRIVAL ON THE 01 LEVEL. AFT. MASTER-AT-ARMS, REPORT TO DAVY JONES, AND ESCORT HIM TO THE ACTING CAPTAIN!”
Oh… shit! Me thinks, to myself.

And now this:

SWIPE!
And I see ADAN Quimby, now having opened the curtains to my rack. And, he's smiling. He—SMILING! BIG TIME! And I'm now blinded by all the white. He has an eyepatch over his left eye. And, he's dressed like a pirate. A freakin' pirate. No joke—PIRATE (even though a costume that looks like he masterminded in a moment's notice out of cardboard and paper mache)! He smiles. I smile. And now he looks pissed.
"SHIVER-ME-TIMBERS, MOTHERFUCKA!"
Oh… fuck me! Me thinks, the last bit I can for this given moment.
"GET YO' WOG MOTHFUCKIN' ASS OUT OF THAT RACK!"
All I see then is claws, his claws, doing a Dracula bit just before the bite. And now—GRAB! He does, and—YANKS—me out of my rack!
PLOP! I go, ass first onto the deck.

Aye, so… welcome to Wog Day! This, right here, at least is my welcoming.

Here truly is a glorious over 200-year-old maritime tradition all we Squids go through, the one day, all hazing, all gloriously instituted hazing, is official. I, personally, heard about all this back when I was seeing the recruiter. "Oh, don't worry, it's a lot of fun." He said, my recruiter that is. "You really lucky, though, when I went through Wog Day, all Shellbacks would run around with a strip from the firehose line, and you'd see them coming at you beating the deck with it, coming to beat that ass! And they'd—BEAT IT! But, now, with the New Navy, that, and sensitivity training, and women on board, that's not allowed anymore." So, all sad faces now, for, according to his word, I'm not going to be getting a royal ass beatin' on this day. But, let's see how it goes.
"GET THE FUCK OUT OF YOUR RACKS, WOGS, GET YOUR SCURVY ASS OUT AND GET ON THE DECK! GET!" Blasts AM2 Geppetto. Running fast, and past, our row of racks. And, him also dressed out like a makeshift pirate. Wearing a Napoleon hat, a bicorne, also made of cardboard. He had a white t-shirt on that had the ends cut up into fringes, and his shirt had "Wog Slayer" written on it. Plus, a pair of gerbil gym

shorts. And some regular gym sneakers. And that depiction, right there, is pretty much the makeup of everything we all are going to go through with this day. No Flight Ops today, no workday, at all. Pretty much another day of Liberty, except on the Boat, and having our Pollywog asses getting handed to us by 'em senior Shellbacks. All-the-live-long day! Me, personally, am all for this. Aye, this does look like a lot of fun. But supposedly this day is meant to make up for all other days that go on, on the official business, when it comes to hazing (as if). Having crossed the equator, it's practically one giant spectacle, and for us Wogs, an obstacle. An obstacle course. Ending with us led to the Flightdeck, eventually, after being put through the ringer. And meet that Neptunus Rex character, supposedly the eldest Shellback on board. Could be a Second Class, for all we know. Today, ranks don't matter. As you heard. The Ship's Skipper himself, is under "ball and chain." Anyways, let's get back to this.

"GET THE FUCK ON THE DECK, WOG, YOU SLIMY BASTARD!" Bellows AM2 Geppetto. Now, with a group of Airframer Shellbacks, and I see them trying to pull AM3 Trolinger out of his rack. Remember the one smelly hot racker we spoke about some time ago in this book?

"GET THE FUCK OUT! POLLYWOG BEAR PITS, I DON'T WANT TO HEAR NO LIP FROM YOU!"

And now they get him out.

"BAHH!"

And there she blows! Or, there he blows. As the musky meathead begins making a whole lot of animal noises, while Geppetto and three other AM Shellbacks get him out. And now, he's on top of all of them. Hmm... aye! Seems like the peeps, here, haven't seemed to have learned from that bit of history lesson. And, so, here we are seeing it repeated. Trying to snatch AM3 Trolinger out of his rack with all your might—not a good idea! And, look there, Trolinger likes to sleep in his rack all commando style (no underwear). And Trolinger now is practically almost teabagging the AM2 Geppetto.

"AHH! FUCK! WHAT'S IN MY MOUTH?" Screams Geppetto in horror.

And now—HE LITERALLY IS!

“YOU FUCKIN’ FAT, HAIRY WOG—YOU’RE GONNA PAY FOR THAT!” Screams AM2 Geppetto. But, why blames the AM3, what did he do? Sure, it’s not allowed to sleep bottomless, according to the Blue Jackets’ Manual (pretty sure it’s in there). But, it’s your own damn fault, AM2!

“AO3 RAMSHAW, GET OVER HERE!”

And now I see the AO3, and, he’s got a… stamp???

“We got a special Wog, here, STAMP HIM!” Wait… yeah! I don’t like the sound of this. This “special” Wog stamp. Looks like a bit more effort has been placed coming up with this item. Since it’s prefabricated and all. AO3 now walks to AM3 and stamps his forehead. And I’m seeing “SNOWBALL” written out there. Yikes! I now really doesn’t like the sight of what that means. Now I see ADAN Quimby walking over to me again, after pulling out a couple of Line Shack Wogs from their own racks. And, what’s that in his hand?

“EAT IT!”

And sticks it in my face!

“EAT IT!”

“WHAT IS THAT?”

“NO TALK, EAT IT!”

Fine, I eats it! I eats it! And as I gets whatever it is in my mouth. I can now tell, it’s an egg. I chew a couple of times. And then the—TASTE HITS ME! I now regurgitate it out. SPIT, COUGH, SPIT, COUGH, SPIT!

“HAAHAHAA!”

“WHAT THE FUCK WAS THAT?”

“A BALUT, COMPLIMENTS OF SHELLBACK MANJARREZ! HAHAAHA!” He goes. And now, hearing what it was, I’m turning green all over. No wonder it was so crunchy. SPIT! COUGH! SPIT!

“Wait a minute, Quimby, you came into the Squadron the same day as me, how are you a Shellback?” I question.

“Oh, my dad is a merchant Marine, and after I dropped out of college, he got me a job on a frigger. Did that job for a year. And they do Wog Day, too!” He explains and wiggles his eyebrows at me. Crud! I go. Somehow, you, always manage to get an

easy break! “AYE, AYE, WOG! I’M A SHELLBACK! AND TODAY, YOU MY BITCH! ALL DAY LONG! HAHAAHAA!” He goes. And, I can’t do nothing, nothing! I mean, I can. We Wogs are allowed to call it off and not participate in all this. But, that means, I’ll forever go on being a Pollywog. And, never a Shellback. And, fuck it! You have to understand, that’s a regret I’m not willing to accept. Later in life, if I’m to tell of my story as a Sailor, as a Squid, it means nothing, if I’m not a Shellback. In maritime tradition, this whole thing really does mean that much to all of us. So, I can’t do nothing, until the initiations are complete, and I can get up to the Flightdeck, to see that Neptunus Rex and his royal entourage. Fuck me! I go, as I look down at the half-chewed up chicken fetus that was just aborted out of my mouth. And, it was well developed far enough to have grown into its yellow fuzz you see on baby chicks. Eww! I then look up at Quimby, and I see him going into his pockets, swimming his hand in there, and now pulling something else out. And, I can’t exactly tell what it is, although, it looks like a—

“PUT THIS ON!”

And I take it out of his hand and… it’s a… ah shit!

“DUDE, DON’T DO THIS TO ME!”

“PUT THE MOTHERFUCKIN’ DOG LEASH ON!” The Shellback lashes. And… I put it on. And now, I’m leashed. Aye, I take it back. That whole “fun” part. I now doesn’t like the direction things are headed. Should say, there was a name on that leash, which I wasn’t able to have time to get my reading glasses out to read (kidding, I don’t wear any, just didn’t see the name since I’m being rushed).

“OKAY, FIFI, LET’S GO!” Goes my pimp.

And now drags the leash and me with it.

“DON’T GET UP, CRAWL! CRAWL! ON YOUR HANDS AND KNEES, YOU SLIMY WOG!” Fine, now I’m a literal Fifi, on all fours, crawling wherever my master sees it fit. I obey, because, I still got my fears invested in that “SNOWBALL” stamp, and how far these Shellbacks will take it when I’m marked as one (although, pretty sure I’ll eventually get it, since this is *me* we’re talking about).

“Come on, FIFI, let’s go into the lounge.”

And, I’m going. I’m going!

“Oh, is this your little poochy, Shellback Quimby?” Asks AD2 Zeegenhorn.
“Aye, it is, Shellback Zeegs!” And I see AD2 Zeegenhorn kneel down at eye level. And he’s making kissy faces. And I really doesn’t like where this is going.
“Oooh, what the fuck happened to him?” AD2 now lets out.
“I have no motherfuckin’ clue, I did not beat him up. When I pulled this Wog out of his rack, he came looking like this. Whatever happened, happened in Thailand.” Quimby immediately answers, not wanting to take blame for having taken this too far. The AD2 then continues to stare at all my Thailand wounds, then shrugs. Then checks out what I gots on my collar.
“Anyways… so, does Fifi want a treat?”
And, no! I don’t.
“Of course, Fifi wants a treat! Tell him, Fifi!” Says Quimby.
I just shake my head. I have no idea what the AD2 has in store for me.
“I said, SPEAK!” Orders Quimby.
“NO, I DON’T!”
“Wait, your dog speaks English, that’s weird? How… *SPECIAL* of him…?” He says and eyes me with that one word. And, I swallow my pride, and does so, knowing exactly what that meant.
“WOOF, WOOF.” I go. And then the AD2 pulls out a case of mustard, all in yellow casing, and starts squirting it all over my face. Around my mouth, nose, gets a bit in my right ear, and then directs the jettison towards my eyes as I close them immediately before it can make contact.
“Come on, Fifi, this will help your wounds heal!” He says. And, once he’s done, he steps away. And now I’m back to being dragged around on all fours to our berthing’s lounge. And, aye, it burns. And I’m back to spitting and coughing up while using my left hand to wipe all those contents away. And, I thought, seeing as how I look right now, it might dissuade him.

Everywhere I look, I see the same scenarios playing out again and again. Wogs being pulled out of their racks, and Shellbacks beginning with the initiations. All dressed

as pirates. All! Since, like mention before, I really have signed up to become a 21st century Shiver-me-timbers privateer. Ugh!
"I'm going to get stamped, anyways, no matter what I do, am I?" I ask.
Quimby then does a smear in front of me and says:
"Of course, Navastian, this is *you*, we're talking about, what do you think?"
And I just nod and accepts it.

In the lounge, I see a whole bunch of us settled. All sitting on their backends, and there's a first-class QA in his white shirt (also cut up to seem pirate-y) orchestrating a song for all to sing. It's "row, row, row your Boat." And as Quimby gets me settled with the herd, I do what all VF-451 Pollywogs are right now doing and sings.
"Row, row—"
"No, no, no, Fifi, you know how to sing!" Quimby tells me.
And I do.
So, now, as they sing the words out, I howl along. Aye, I "howl." What else would Quimby mean by that? And seeing how I'm the one howling like a cross-eyed mutt. You know, the type that you have no idea what it is. Since it looks half Saint Bernard, half Bloodhound, half whatever breed of dog that is that can get really, really wooly and half Pomeranian. So, I howl. And everyone laughs seeing my contributions. Since, even with so many, so, so many Pollywogs here, I have to be the one with the most humiliating part. But, fuck it! My mission today is simple, get my ass to the Flightdeck, have these Shellbacks place me through whatever torture they see fit. And survive to see ol' Neptune, so I can get my Shellback status. Get my placard for it. And, then, on the next cruise, whenever it is, wherever, I'll BE THE SHELLBACK THEN! AND IT'LL BE MY TURN TO *PLAY*!

Aye, I'm sticking this out. The Navy, that is. I've now decided on this. I still have ol' Master Chief's words in me. And, they're making sense now. I guess, it's like this, I vowed to sacrifice 4 years of my life to this cause. But, in reality, I sorta didn't. Since, to truly sacrifice oneself, the first thing that needs to go is one's pride. And, maybe that's something I held onto, a little too dearly and a little too tightly. It really would

be easier for me just to "wake up and smell the roses," and just do what I have to do. Since it's expected of me. I mean, right now, I'm being humiliated again. But I doesn't care anymore. Hell, even in the Old Navy, with all those Old Shellbacks pounding the deck with their firehose lines, I feel like I could survive that, simply by swallowing my pride, and just taking it. Maybe there's something more meaningful in all this, once I've let go of myself, and, decided to take a backseat to my life? That whole, Lorde is my Shepard, and I shall not want. And just watch the sunrise every morning over the ocean, and, just be thankful to be here. I think I can enjoy that?
"HOWL, HOWL!" I go, as others laugh at my contributions.
But then my eyes catch the sight of Donnelly in a far corner, a Pollywog like me, and, his pointers are on me, like irons, like hot iron pokers. And, that's something it seems like I will eventually have to address. I really took a shit on him for what I did. I got him so wrapped up in deserting, and, at the end, I just deserted him, instead. Fuck! Now, this confrontation feels like it's going to be a helluva lot more grueling than whatever these Shellbacks can put me through. A special case or not.
"ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT, GENTLY DOWN THE STREAM!"
HOWL, HOOWWL, HOOWWWWL! I go.
And, right now, every condiment imaginable, I'm seeing all the other Shellbacks squirting us with: ketchup, mustard, A1 sauce, Mayo, Tabasco sauce, Soy sauce, Fish sauce, Oyster sauce, this sauce, that sauce, Sweet Relish, one Shellback is even pulling out the Grey Poupon for this occasion.

An hour of this goes by.
Aye, an hour. Still singing "row, row, row," and it's torturous for us now to continue. Simply torturous. As we get to the "life is but a dream" part, and have that moment when we realize, "maybe this really is all a dream," then wakes up, and sees how we're sleep-singing. Aye, this does happen. Try singing that freakin' kindergarten song for an hour! A whole FREAKIN' HOUR! Fuck… and I can't howl anymore to save my life. Bust me on the surface.
"Sing, Fifi, don't stop now!" Says Quimby.
And I just look at him.

He begins to tug.
“SING, FIFI!”
“*I can’t howl anymore*.” I say, and I’m losing my voice, from the sounds of it. He sees this, and then, sees it’s time.
“You ready to get stamped?” He asks.
And I just nod.
“Okay, you see that AO3 Rammie is standing in front of you, right?”
I looks, I does, I nods.
“Okay… sic, Fifi, sic!” He whispers, but loud enough to hear him. Wait… what? I now look up at Quimby, Quimby makes a face motion to me towards Rammie, and does a chomp! I now understands. And, I smiles. Time for my sweet revenge.
“MERRILY, MERRILY, MERRILY, MERRILY—”
“AHHHHHH! THE WOG BIT ME!” Screams Rammie. As I bite the fucker in the calf, and, as badly as he bit me that one time.
“WHO THE FUCK?”
“WHO BIT YOU?”
“DID NAVASTIAN BITE YOU?”
“BAD, FIFI, BAD!” Goes Quimby, nearly in tears. I see Rammie now turns to face me.
“LOOKS LIKE WE GOT A SPECIAL SNOWFLAKE WOG IN OUR MIDST!”
STAMP!

WOG DAY: PART TWO

1MC:
“ON BEHALF OF MY ROYAL MASTER, I, DAVY JONES, EXTEND TO YOU A MOST CORDIAL WELCOME TO THE REALM OF NEPTUNE. I HAVE BEEN COMMISSIONED BY MY ROYAL MASTER TO DELIVER A LETTER TO YOU, WHICH REQUESTS YOU READ TO YOUR COMMAND.”
“THANK YOU, DAVY, I, THE ACTING CAPTAIN, WILL READ THIS LETTER NOW:

GREETINGS. IT HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO MY ATTENTION THROUGH MY TRUSTY SHELLBACKS, THAT A STRANGE SHIP, THE USS CARTER, MANNED BY A CREW WHO HAVE NOT YET ACKNOWLEDGED THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE RULER OF

THE RAGING MAIN, HAS TRANSGRESSED ON MY DOMAIN AND THEREBY INCURRED MY ROYAL DISPLEASURE.

BE IT KNOWN THAT I, NEPTUNUS REX, SUPREME RULER OF ALL MERMAIDS, SHARKS, SQUIDS, CRABS, WHALES, DENIZENS OF THE DEEP, AND ALL LIVING THINGS OF THE SEA, WILL WITH MY ROYAL COURT MEET IN FULL SESSION ON BOARD YOUR OFFENDING SHIP, TO EXAMINE INTO THE FITNESS OF ALL LANDLUBBERS TO BE TAKEN INTO THE REALM OF THE DEEP, AND HEAR THEIR DEFENSE ON VARIOUS AND SUNDRY CHARGES THAT HAVE BEEN PLACED AGAINST THEM. SIGNED, NEPTUNUS REX, RULER OF THE RAGING MAIN.

DAVY, TELL YOUR MASTER, NEPTUNUS REX, I WOULD BE HONORED TO RECEIVE HIM AND HIS ROYAL PARTY ON BOARD THE USS CARTER."
"MY MASTER THANKS YOU, ACTING CAPTAIN. NEPTUNUS REX, AS YOU KNOW, HAS ALWAYS BEEN VERY PAINSTAKING IN PREPARING FOR HIS ROYAL SESSIONS. HE HAS CAUSED SUMMONS TO BE PREPARED FOR EACH AND EVERY LANDLUBBER ON BOARD THE USS CARTER AND IT IS HIS ORDER AND COMMAND THAT THEY BE OFFICIALLY DELIVERED TO THE OFFENDING PARTIES, SO THAT THEY MAY PREPARE THEMSELVES FOR THE TERRIBLE DOOM THAT AWAITS."

Doom…?
Wow! They've really gone all out with this. Think I, truly coming to the realization and actualization of what exactly I am playing part in. This Wog Day really is—that… I don't know! Sacred, I guess word is. This is some real Yo Ho Joe Navy stuff (It's official to me now, I truly have joined a freakin' cult). All I can think about now is, what's next? We're all now out of our berthing. And, it's time, to see how the rest of The Ship is conducting these Wog Day festivities (if you can call them that). Everywhere I look, I see the same sights, I'm in the Hangar Bay now, watching that Marine Squadron with its Marine Shellbacks beating their Marine Wogs. Beating! Which means making them do tons and tons and tons of calisthenics. Eight count

bodybuilders begin: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8! One! 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8! Two! And so and so. I remember doing this in Boot Camp. First start in the standing position. One: lean down and put your hands on the deck in front of your feet. Two: kick your feet out straight. Three: do half of a push up (enter down position). Four: do the other half (up). Five: kick your feet out towards the sides. Six: kick your feet in. Seven: jump your feet up just before your hands. Eight: stand back up! And that's just one set. Right now, seems like they're making them do one hundred! Aye! A hundred sets. Twenty would be enough to have a Squid keel over in exhaustion (Fat Navy superiors, at least)! As for the Jarheads: one hundred. Plus, they're also getting condiment-nated to death with lots of ketchup and lots and lots of mustard. Also, to one side, again, a different group of slimy Marine Wogs doing just pushups, but, there's a human pyramid of them doing it on each other's backs. And, aye! Charlie Foxtrot, that is! Roger the f out of that! An absolute FUBARed mess. And that's not considering how slippery they all are from all the sweat and condiments. Oops! There they go down again. And, according to their Marine Shellbacks, they got to start it all over again. Personally, I'd prefer to be doing bodybuilders.

Aye, so, I'm in line right now. On my knees at least. And Donnelly is just in front of me. We've been getting hazed as everyone else has been. Quimby, although, has left me for the second, I don't know where, but he said he'll be back. And, not looking forward to it. But what can I do? Right now, all us VF-451 Bloody Shamrocks are in line, and we're doing this really, really disgusting thing, that, every time it's called, we're supposed to take off our t-shirts, and hand them to the person behind us. And they're supposed to wear what was handed to them while we then wear what was handed to us. It's disgusting, because, we were also beatin' twenty minutes ago with a whole bunch of calisthenics. So, we're very, very sweaty. And, aye… eww! And right now, from the smell of it, I'd say I'm wearing AD3 Trolinger's shirt. And, aye, it smells bad. Just bad. To say the least. No colorful words can describe it. I'd hit the thesaurus to come up with something else, but I think it's already been well explained the minute details of just how—BAD IT DOES! Also, the last guy at the way aft, once he receives his t-shirt, he has to crawl all the way to the front of the line, and get

into position, take his shirt off, and give his t-shirt to the guy that's now behind him. Also, this is how we're proceeding in the Hangar Bay. Our aim: get to the L. From then on, we should finally be taken up to the Flightdeck, where all that jolly work with that Neptunus Rex should commence. I have no idea what waits for us up there. But, right now...

time to have that talk…

but first:
"HAYWOG, WANABALOT!" Says Shellback Manjarrez.
As I go:
"What?"
And then, oh no, NOT AGAIN!
"EAT IT!"
And the Shellback is behind me, as he sticks another balut into my mouth, and holds with all his might his hands over it. It's not intended for me to blah this one out. And, I have to eat it. I HAVE TO! Chew! Chew! Crunch! Chew! And I can taste the brains and eyeballs. Plus, something triangular that must be its beak. And once the taste of its feet (or talons) reaches my tastes, I now vomit it back up within my mouth from the pure putrid and disgust.
"EAT IT!" He says. And now, he's got me chewing balut. And also, regurgitated balut, plus, something I had last night, chicken cordon bleu, from what I taste. Also, the taste of what my stomach acids taste like. I'm going plaid. *Plaid right now with nauseating disgust*! And finally, I *swallow* it. And Shellback Manjarrez finally lets me go free.
BLAH! And now I vomit it all back out again and onto the Hangar Bay deck, as it swamps into a Padeye. Shellback Manjarrez doesn't look pleased.
"MAN, DAFUK, LIKDATOP!"
"What?" I ask.
"MAN, LIKIDOP, LIKIDOP!"
I'm still lost.

“He’s telling you to lick it up!” Donnelly lets out.
Oh… no, no, no, HELL NO!
“Hahaahaaha!” Goes Manjarrez and walks off.
And… we’re alone again.

Time to have it:
“Listen, I'm sorry. But I just couldn't go through with it.” I start.
“....” Donnelly hears, but keeps it mum.

So, I continue:
“Mostly it's because... I had a change of heart.”
….
“In Thailand, I just... I guess, I just started seeing how much of a mistake it would have been, if we did go along with it.”
….
“I mean, besides the world of shit we would have gotten ourselves into, with the Navy, deserting, and all. That, and how we'd have to then learn to live with the fact we're stuck in that 3rd world shithole, probably never able to get back State side, unless, we snuck back in, somehow?.... Besides all that stuff we'd have to worry about, me, personally, I really had a change of heart.”
….
“I started feeling like: this is bullshit! I signed up to serve four years out of my life. I vowed to do it, so, what the fuck? You know! I felt like I needed to be better than that and stick to the decisions I had already made before breaking them and making new ones. To the vows I had made.” And, as I say these things, I feel these things. At least now. But, from the looks of it, it doesn’t seem Donnelly is buying any of this. Also given the fact, he still won’t face me and respond to me. Although, the way I handled it at the time, how I just ditched him. I can’t refute how messed up that was. I should have gone back to him, and at least told them these things. Or other things. Fuck… well I gave it my best. Don’t know what else I can say to him.
“CHANGE SHIRTS!”

Ah shit! This again. And, I do it. I take off my shirt, and gives it to the guy behind me, Donnelly now gives me the shirt he just took off. But, for that very millisecond, I see his true intentions in his eyes. And, not good. Not good at all.

And then he finally speaks:
“Bullshit!”
Sorta whispers it out.
“What?”
“You heard me.”

A pause happens, as I look out the Hangar Bay doors out toward the ocean. Partly cloudy skies hang over the Pacific. Somewhere near the equator. Which be the reasons we’re having all this Wog Day fun. But the fun isn’t what’s meant with the boy with the smoldering reaction. There’s some cursed tempest weather in him, cursed, hexing and vexing his better angels into something else.
“Oh, your vow! Gotta keep your vow. First, I’ve ever heard you mentioning anything like that. Right, I believe you! Keep saying that to yourself, making it sound like you did the honorable thing. Ha!” And, it’s now I know, how difficult this is going to be. Donnelly has seriously taken this personally. What I did. And worse than I was hoping or expecting. I keep mum for moment. But, then again, it’s not “bullshit,” I really do feel that way.
“But it is, though! My vow… I’m serious about that now.” I let out.
“Yeah, right!”
And I’m starting to grow agitated.
“Okay, then why do you think I didn't go al—"
“You want to know?” He says.
“Yeah.”
Because I don’t see what other reason, I decided to do what I decided to do. But then, Donnelly puts his finger on it, dabsmack on the middle of the reason why:
“Because... *you're a pussy*!”

And I… I… I shake my head hearing that. I didn't like hearing that from the Master Chief. Don't like hearing it now.
"You want to know what I think, there you go!" Donnelly continues.
….
"It's the only obvious reason."
….
"I mean, I knew that from the beginning, that you were... *that*! But you seemed cool at the time, and, I decided why not be friends with this Navastian character."
….
"I accepted it, but what I hadn't accepted was how disappointing it would be to be friends with one. How, unworthy someone like you is to be friends with."
….
"That's something I should have accepted, too!"
"CHANGE SHIRTS!" Come the call again. And I'm growing fed up with this. As I do that whole evolution, as also Donnelly does, too. As for Donnelly, I'm now finding this as an issue of pride. His pride. "Unworthy" he says? So, what exactly would he consider being "worthy" to be his friend? I don't like this. Not one bit. I have to hear these things from people in my Shop, now Donnelly?
"Dude, you're being an asshole." I let out.
But Donnelly is ripe quick with a response to that:
"What, it's the fucking truth! You want me to lie to you? That's how you made me feel with what you did: fucking disappointed! You disappointed me, majorly!"
"Dude, I apologize, I'm sorry. But I'm also not sorry, because, what we were planning to do, was really that big a deal! It's not like I invited you to a game of… I don't know, basketball. And I decided to ditch you and went shopping in Shinjuku instead, leaving you, alone at the court."
"Yeah, what you did was a thousand times worse."
"I'm sorry." I say. And, I doesn't plan to say it again. One thing, in my life, I could never stand is, someone unwilling to accept an apology, no matter how bad I felt, and showed that I felt that. When you make a mistake, do wrong, commit something

bad, no matter how bad it is, if you apologize, you should be forgiven. End of story! This is fuckin' bullshit!
"Yeah… you should be sorry. And really, sorry about how fuckin' pathetic you are." Donnelly concludes.
And now—I'VE HAD IT!
"Fuck you!" I tell him.
"He!" He chuckles.
"No, fuck you, if you don't want to accept my apology, fine, I'll take it back, and say, ;fuck you,' instead. Fuckin' asshole!"
"He!" he goes again. "No, you were being a fucking asshole, leading me on."
And that's it, I'm just way too pissed now to respond. I can't handle this.
"No, you're the asshole, coming to me, telling me how bad you wanted to desert. And, when you did, I was like 'man, maybe I was wrong about this Navastian character, here! Where did he grow the balls to suggest this idea, to me?' I mean, wow!"
….
"And that's what disappointed me about you the worst! How fickle you proved to be. I accepted you as being who you were, but now, I can see, I had to learn to accept what that meant, too!" Issues Donnelly, as he shakes his head.
"Dude, if I was really fickle, then I would have deserted! That's how I see it."
"Yeah, yeah! You go ahead and tell yourself that, twist it up until it makes sense to how you want to hear it!"
"Listen, Donnelly, in San Diego, at MEPS, I lifted up my hand, to make a vow of servitude, and—"
"DON'T give me that shit!"
"I did! And, luckily, that donned on me, before I went ahead in Thailand, and—"
"Bullshit, you pussied out, and left me hanging. That's all you did!" And the thing is, he's also exactly right. At the time, I wasn't thinking about any of the stuff I'm saying now. That came afterwards. And, fine, "I pussied out," but the asshole doesn't have to rub it in now. I have to deal with all this Wog Day shit right now. And also… this sour jackass?

“Fucking pussy!”
“Stop calling me a pussy.”
“Well, you really fucking disappointed me, and I don't even know if I like you anymore, or, want to talk to you.”
AND THAT’S IT, TIME TO TURN THE TABLES!
“WHAT ABOUT YOU? If you wanted to do it that badly, why didn't you go ahead, yourself?” I lay it on him. And, that, also, is a fact, Jack! Why didn’t he? I can tell right now how serious he was about also wanting to desert. But, let’s not forget all the times in between the first time I mentioned it to him, and, when he finally came around. As I recall, what *scared* him the most, and finally got him to join my leagues, was hearing how he was in some real “hot water.” And, how the Squadron might make an example of him for going over their heads. And to the Master-at-arms. Before that, all I saw from your ass was fear! Aye, *fear*! Asking you to do what I planned to do. “Good luck,” you said at the time, when I showed resolve to do it. Not even looking me in the eyes when you said it. And with all that, CALLING ME A PUSSY, HUH?

But then, I notice that Donnelly finally gets what I meant when redirecting it onto him. Not having done so until this very point. Of what I was really trying to say. And, aye… maybe calling this Mike Tyson of the VF-451 Line Shack *that* isn’t the best way to end this.
“Wait... YOU CALLING—ME—A PUSSY?” Ah shit! Where’s a Shellback with his Wog Day hazing routine when you need one? “Huh! Is that IT? YOU, calling me that?” Donnelly pounces.
Not really looking back at me, but he has that side gaze on me, all vicious like. And, I don’t know if I should precede. Since, he really doesn’t give a shit when the gauntlet is thrown down. And, he’ll fight me now, in front of all this. He’ll dish it and take whatever punishments later. Even if that means Brig time and another Captain’s Mast. And, more time spent being on Liberty Risk with whatever ports that come next.

“Well, you gonna respond?” He asks. And, what the fuck is up with the t-shirt thing, it’s been way past a minute? They’re taking their sweet ass time to move us along to the L so then we can get to the Flightdeck and… grr!
‘Well, *Pollywog Navastian*, are you gonna respond, or pussy out, and take back what you—"
“Don't fucking call me a pussy! And, don't put words into my mouth.

I’m not calling you that. But… then again—"
“Then again, what?”
“Then again, if you were so Gong Ho about deserting, you would have done it without me. Mr. “I got a friend of a friend that lives there, so, we set!” If you had a means of support, why did you need me, then, huh?” Issue I.
But Donnelly goes back to the head shaking and says:
“Right, I’m putting words into your... right! I can read between the lines. So, you fucking calling me a pussy, or what?”
….
“The pussy's calling me a pussy... ha! Just say it!”
And I say it:
“Maybe?”
But then Donnelly turns around and immediately mad dogs me with his mug and I… oh fuck me! I lean far back and look away!
Donnelly then turns back into place… then says it:
“Yeah, just what I fucking thought!”
What a fucking asshole this guy is? Out of everyone in The Shop, I had to be friends with this fucking prick. Now I can see why everyone called him out for being a fuckin’ section 8 nutcase. IS3 Falconni wouldn’t have taken it this far. He also wouldn’t stand to be called a pussy, either. But at least he wouldn’t try to pick a fight with me at time like this.
Donnelly then rubs it in:

“Just remember, who'd fuck up who in this relationship, when things got sour. Your ass!” And that’s it. Mike Tyson or no Mike Tyson. Actually, no! Mike would beat this guy’s ass. And maybe I could too.
“Fuck you, Donnelly! I might not be able to take you. But you still fucking pussied out yourself wanting to desert!” Donnelly shakes his head.
But now I rub it in:
“Just remember that, when you're at the gerbil gym, looking at yourself in the mirror, while kissing your fucking biceps, like the douchebag that you really are, thinking you hard and got nerves of steel and all.

But still… fuckin’ pussied out yourself. And that’s why you here now!” I dish. And, as I see him shake his head to that, I know I got him. I’m not just claiming he pussied out. HE DID! He did just that! And, he doesn’t want to admit to it. So, he’s putting all the blame on me.

Fine, I can take being called a pussy!
Can you?
“Ha!” Chuckles Donnelly.
Oh, so… you like that, huh?” I continue.
“You got jokes, though, I will give you that.” Donnelly answers. And I’m just gonna go at it. Since—he would! Since—he would!
“Fucking douchebag! That's what you are!”
“We ain't friends no more.” He says.
“Oh… poo poo, say it ain’t so? That just now donned on you, Sherlock?”
“Fuck you, back, we ain’t friends no more, and that’s that!”
“Like I give a shit, coming from a douchebag like you!” I exclaim. And from his neck muscles, I can see that soured him up, plenty. Hey, if I’m not worthy, you’re not worthy, either. Another bitch ass pussy Navy FTNer, just here, to calling everyone else out for being the same.
“CHANGE SHIRTS!”
Finally… what the fuck is taking this so long?

“I figure you would say that, only a fickle person would be that way. Calling me a douchebag.”
“What, I hurt your feelings? I thought douchebags do not have any—"
“Shut the fuck up, and don't you FUCKIN' talk to me like that! Oh, you're the honorable and dutiful one, coming to the conclusion, ‘if I had deserted, that would be so UNSAT of me, so Un-squared away like of me.’ You're like every other douchebag here, Navy type, just another hypocrite mad-shit-talking asshole, that was too much of a PUSSY to go MARINES!” Interjects Donnelly.
And I’m growing haggard hearing all this
“Ha, ha! Come, again... what service are you in?” I point.
“In the same service with a bunch of pussy hypocrites, fickle assholes, just like you. Biggest mistake I ever made. But, maybe you're right about one thing, it would have been wrong if you deserted. You're made for these people.”
Right… what?
“If you had enough heart, you would have done what your heart was telling you to do: getting the fuck out! It's the best idea you've ever had. You hate these people, and you hate the Navy!”
“I don't hate the—"
“SHUT THE FUCK UP, yes, you do! You're just so fickle at heart, you confuse yourself with where you stand, that's all!

You hate everyone here for the same reason I do. But, in the end, it came down to you not having enough heart to do what we should have done. *And you left me hanging*. I don't want to have friends that don't have heart, I've dealt with enough worthless losers in my life to know what to expect. I should have been wiser. Now, I'm stuck here, in this fuckin' Canoe Club, with all you losers. And, I guess, I did pussy out, but, that's because....”
And then turns to look me in the eyes.
“*I NEEDED you*! I'll admit to that! I did. I was going WAY OVER my head with what we were to do, and, it was too much for me to have done it alone. I NEEDED YOU, just as you needed me, but, in the end, we both saw how that worked out!”

Maybe… maybe…. I don't know.
"Don't ever fuckin' talk to me, again. I want friends in my life that I can COUNT ON!" And it's at the next moment, I finally see ADAN Quimby show up, walks over, and picks up his end of the leash that's still around my neck. I now take a look around the Hangar Bay, just to absorb in the scenes, all the sights and scenes and sounds. Everywhere, Wogs, Wogs and more Wogs, completely covered in head to toe, and not just with any condiments you'd find in the galley, but anywhere on The Ship. Anything a Shellback might carry, anything anyone might carry, really. Most of all shaving cream. Wow is there a lot of shaving cream all over the place. And all over me… also Donnelly. The L then comes down, and, it's time for us to get on.
"ALL RIGHT, WOGS, GET ON THE L, CRAWL ON YOUR HANDS AND KNEES!" Calls AME1 Yohannan, the QA white shirt (also in pirate getup). And as I watch us beginning our crawl all the way towards the L, ADAN Quimby tugs at my leash.
"Nah, boy, time for… special treatment." He exclaims, with a twinkle in his eye. "Oh, and AO3… hey, AO3 Ramshaw, come here! You runt!" Echoes Quimby. The AO3 at some far end hears, then heeds, then heads. He now stands next to ADAN Quimby (not seeming very pleased to be taking heed from a Line Rat, much). "AO3, Donnelly, here… stamp him too!"
Donnelly now stops, then looks at Quimby, who smiles down at Donnelly. Donnelly then looks at Rammie walking over with the stamp. And now, eyes me, and, I can see he's afraid. And afraid of something he should be. I know now what's going to happen. I know perfectly what.
STAMP!
"All right, all right, you snowball twins. This is what's up, before you can go up to the Flightdeck, first we gotta take a detour to our Line Shack."
Shit! Think I.
"Now, at the Line Shack, there's going to be a special initiation done. So, brace yo' motherfucking selves for it. Hehe!" I and Donnelly look at each other again. Fear grips us. Fear holds us now both. And fear, not of what they might do, but, what we might, if pushed to the limit. And, this is especially bad for Donnelly, since, unlike me, he's not as tolerant as I am.

ZIP! Goes AM3 Kats, behind Donnelly's back to both his arms.
"Wait, you want me to climb the ladderwell by crawling all the way to our Shop, on my knees, with my hands tied behind my…?"
Quimby just smiles and nods.
ZIP! Goes the AM3 behind me.
Now, we both have hands zipped tied behind our backs. I then sees IS3 Falconni at a far corner, staring at us both, and staring, very intently. All next to the ladderwell we now have to precede towards. The IS3 is there for a moment more, then gets up from his crouched position, and heads up the ladderwell up to the VF-451 Line Shack!

Fuckin' A! Crudmuffins! Great balls of fiery feces!
Now it's time for the unofficial Wog Day for me and Donnelly to commence.

WOG DAY: PART THREE

1MC:
"OFFICER OF THE DECK, THIS IS DAVY JONES, THE ACTING CAPTAIN IS TO BE INFORMED THAT KING NEPTUNE AND HIS ROYAL COURT HAVE BEEN SIGHTED AND ARE ARRIVING NOW.

ROARING MAIN ARRIVING, ATTENTION OF DECK, HAUL UP THE JOLLY ROGER."
"GREETINGS, DAVY JONES, WELL, WELL, WHAT FINE SHIP, BUT INFESTED WITH SLIMY POLLYWOGS."
"AYE, AYE, YOUR MAJESTY, SHE CERTAINLY IS. YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, THIS IS THE UNITED STATES SHIP USS CARTER AND I WOULD LIKE YOU TO MEET THE ACTING CAPTAIN."
"A SAILOR'S WELCOME TO YOU, KING NEPTUNE, IT IS A GREAT PLEASURE TO BE WITH YOU."
"THE PLEASURE IS MINE, YOUR SHIP IS SORELY INFESTED WITH SLIMY POLLYWOGS WHICH MY ROYAL COURT WILL CORRECT. I HAVE PREPARED A BUSY DAY IN ORDER TO MAKE ALL YOUR LANDLUBBERS FIT SUBJECTS OF MY RAGING MAIN."

“YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, MIGHT I SPEAK FREELY?”
“YOU MAY.”
“WE HAVE ONBOARD SEVERAL YOUNG MEMBERS OF MY CREW WHO HAVE NOT BEEN IN THE NAVY LONG ENOUGH TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT YOUR DOMAIN AND BECOME SHELLBACKS. I BEG YOU TO BE LENIENT WITH THEM.”
“I AM SORRY, ACTING CAPTAIN, BUT FOR I MUST BE SEVERE, FOR THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS!”

“You heard King Neptune, Navastian, severe as a MOTHERFUCKIN’ BITCH! GET THE FUCK UP THESE STEPS! HEE-YARG!” Yells and yammers Quimby.
I don’t know how I’ve managed. But I have been managing. Aye, you have to understand, a ladderwell is pretty much a staircase inside a Ship to take you from one deck to another. And trying to step up with just your knees, isn’t the hard part. The hard part is doing it without using any of your hands. Mine are tied up, back there, to my back, with zippy ties. And, I’m sweating! Dead sweating. And it feels like I’m about to defecate upon myself from exhaustion. One cold hard brick seeping out and then thud-thud-thudding back down the stairs behind me. Donnelly has been managing to do quite better. And, better, as in, luckily for him having a chance to start first before me. So, if push comes to shove, I won’t be the one falling on his ass behind. But, then again, luckily for me, I’m going to be waiting for his straggling ass, not him with mine, so I has some time to catch my breath. And… and… let’s face it! Anything we had before is over now. Over! And he might just as well be another Line Shack Swinging Dick, unaware of how far and wide he’s twirling his thing in and around other people’s spaces. He might now as well be part of Falconni’s crew. For, he is just that lost to me. Even if I’m not really so towards him.
“GET THE FUCK UP THERE, GET THE MOTHERFUCK UP THERE!” Punks Quimby, to us.

And now, I made it. And: breathe, breathe, breathe, in and out, in and out, in and out! My eyes now catch Donnelly in his exhaustion from all similar stairclimbing. But, briefly, as he whisks his face away unfriendly like. But, fine, that’s now what’s to

be expected from this friendship, and from now on, I figure. And after a bit more circumnavigation, I then begin to hear a sound.
Thump!
Thump!
Thump!
Thump! Hear I. And the closer and closer me and Donnelly gets to the Line Shack, the louder and louder those stirrings become.
Thump!
THUMP!
THUMP!!
THUMP!!! After some more circumnavigation, I now stand before the hatch to the Line Shack, and from the sound of the commotion I hear brewing within, I know, once inside, I won't be alone.
THUMP!!!
THUMP!!!
THUMP!!! It goes, on and on! A very emasculating sound of something pounding the decks, hard! Pound and pound it goes, to the sounds of the Shellback's war drum. And now I am left questioning my convictions, whether or not it's worth heading in and placing myself at the mercy of those blood thirsty Shellbacks I call my fellow Shipmates.
"Motherfuckin' get—IN THERE!" ADAN Quimby bellows. I've up until now mostly been crawling on my knees up to this very point. And now, Quimby opens the hatch as it makes another unholy cranking sound. And, inside, I see what the unofficial business with today's Wog Day proceedings is going to encounter!

THUMP!!! THUMP!!! They all continue to pound: Shellbacks Falky, Rudy, Brock, Kats, Hats, Navarro and Barbarossa. All squatted down and slamming down again and again their firehose cuts, that are all seemingly sodden wet to make their paddling much more efficient and effective. Aye, these were the nightmares my RDC told me about, and told me how I shouldn't worry, since, the New Navy doesn't allow for this anymore. Sure, on the surface it doesn't, but this is a big blue deep ocean of pain,

me and Donnelly are now going to have to withstand and withhold. Survival time is here.
THUMP!!!
“WOG!!!”
THUMP!!!
“WOG!!!”
THUMP!!!
“WOG!!!”
THUMP!!! And then they stop with the intimidation tactics, since, they doesn’t need to do it anymore. We’re both already frightfully intimidated, both me and Donnelly. Although, now glancing at Donnelly’s face, not as much intimidated, but awestruck at how far our Shop is willing to go with some Old Navy Wog Day fun. IS3 Falconni now un-squats and stands in the upright position. And, the little man is now taller than us while we stick to crawling on our knees. There’s a feverish pitch of wild-eyed scouring that happens from all the rush on Falky’s face. But, after a moment, he seems like himself again. And not as taken in by all these Wog Day theatrics.
“You two, you two, especially… welcome to the real Wog Day! Time to face some real trials and prove what you two are made of.” Falky says. I then look at Donnelly, Donnelly looks away unfriendly like again. Oh, for fuck sakes, Donnelly! I’m not trying to kiss and make up. But we’re in a predicament right now. So, stop targeting me, and let’s right now target this true enemy. Ah fuck it! I guess I am alone on this (but, so are you, Donnelly, so are you)!
“Okay, so, what’s the deal, what we going to do?” Ask I. But, to no real response, except some more frantic eye measures, and the measures these guys are now taking it, they seem quite taken, and maybe a little too taken. And, since I’m getting cult like vibes from these all, I can see, I’m not going to be getting through with any of them directly, unless I up and choose to drink what’s in the Kool-Aid, too!
“Hey, what the fuck we doing in—”
“Shut the fuck up, Wog!” Bellows IS3 Falconni at Donnelly. And, that was Donnelly asking, not I. I already got the drift: these looney tunes’ characters are practically savoring this moment. Getting sweet revenge on me and Donnelly. Although, I’m

still curious to see just how unwise including Donnelly might eventually turn out. I know Brock, over there, he knows! He knows me and Donnelly's deal probably the best. Which is why he's mostly keeping a side portrait in all this and not facing us two while playing a part in all this Wog Day fun. He knows, Donnelly might definitely not appreciate what they're about to put us through. He knows, and only he does, and that's the problem. The IS3 then walks to the far end of The Shop, squats again, and starts pounding the deck before his feet.

THUMP!!! THUMP!!!
"Right here, the two of you crawl over here." He says.
But the minute we try to. He stops us:
"No, no, no…

actually, go ahead!"
All… right???
And again, we crawl over to where the IS3 squats. The IS3 then faces the doorway leading out of the Line Shack.
"I want you two now on your bellies, facing the direction I'm facing!"
And, we do that, too.
"Just lie straight on your stomachs for now. We'll explain in a second how we're going to do this." Falconni then picks up a Styrofoam box lunch from the frig inside The Shop, opens it, and we see, a whole bunch of apples. Falconni then walks over with the Styrofoam box full of apples over to us.

"All right, Wogs, here's the scenario:
The Shop, here, is the beach, that line over there exiting The Shop, is your entry into the big blue. You're a whale, a beached whale, and all you gotta do, is hump your way across. Once you reach the shore, you're free to go up to the Flightdeck, to earn your Shellback status." Explains Falky.

Me and Donnelly now take a moment to truly mentally capture exactly what Falky had asked for us to do. Not that he literally wasn't able to do that by what he said. But, it's time for me and Donnelly to internalize all the other little details that will be at play. Filling in the stuff that wasn't mentioned! So, we're a beached whale, meaning, we have no arms or legs, and that means me and Donnelly are going to have to belly flop our way out of here. Ah crud! I already doesn't like the sound of this.

"Okay." Say I, then. Most smile as they see us, or, me at least, make a response after what Falky had explained. And now I'm curious about other details. "So, was that all for show?" Say I, as I point with my nose at their firehose strips.

"What, these?" Asks Falky, displaying his in his hands.

"Aye!"

"No... this, is the sun, beating down on you, as you make your way. And, I'll tell you, it's gonna be a really hot summer day, really hot, with the sun blazing, gonna feel like 100° sun in Miami beach."

"Hehehe!" Go a few in The Shop over that bit. Ah, double crud! This is suckin' more and more I hear of it.

Falconni then takes a studying look at my parameter.

"Okay, I gotta ask, Quimby, what the fuck—"

"I motherfuckin' did not do that! I did not beat him up like that, he must have gotten it in Thailand." Quimby, again with the immediate response. Falky studies my face more, then does a whisk away, a bit in disgust, since my face really does look that bad right now.

"Navastian, what the fuck did you get yourself into in Thailand?" Falky now asks. But I look away. I ain't spillin'. Since this is Thailand we're speaking of.

"Okay, whatever, I'll say this much, Navastian, we'll try not to beat you in the face… *try*!"

"Hehehe! A couple go.

But I have a question now:

"Fine, what about the apples?"

“The apple is your lifeline, you keep it in your mouth the entire time. If you hump too quickly, and it falls out of your mouth, you gotta pick it back up with your teeth before you can move on. Also, if you eat the apple before you can make it to the shore, you have to start all over again. From… the… beginning!”
“Eat the apple?” Ask I, since what constitutes it being eating?
“You get two bites. A third will cost you to start all over again. With another apple, and everything else. So, basically, three strikes and… you get what I mean.” I look towards Donnelly again, to see his reaction, and, unlike every other time, he doesn’t turn his head away from me. He’s got his eyes fixed on those apples. And, he knows, as I know, how difficult it’s going to be to keep all that from happening. Since, being beatin’, while at it, the pain is just going to make us bite down, harder.
“So, let's see who is going to—”
“I'll go first.” Mutter I. Fine, whatever, fuck it! Bring it! I’m operating on completely different principals. I don’t care how humiliating this will be, let’s just get it over with! But the IS3 doesn’t seem like he’s going to vote on who goes first by “first come, first go,” basis.
“No, we flip for it to see.” Falky says.
“Well, we don't need to, I'll go first.” I’m serious about getting this over with, as quick as possible. It’s obvious now that this is supposed to be an endurance test. And, endurance is a specialty of mine. Considering how much shit I’ve already had to put up with, and, I’m still here.
“Nah, I said we're gonna flip for it, so, we're flipping for it.” Falconni then pulls out a quarter out of his (unsewn) cammie pockets. And flips, catches, and hides it with the hand he caught it with, then looks at me, since, I’m being the most animate with these unofficial Wog Day Trials, while Donnelly is still stuck being a tree stump in the middle of all this.
“Call it.”
“Tails.” I say.
“Tails?”
“Aye, why?”
“Not heads?”

I then give Falconni a look.
“No, tails, this is *me* we're talking about, so, 50/50/90 and of course it's tails. Since I always get the butt end of everything.” Issue I.
“Wow, you really sure of that?”
“Yes, I am.”
“Want to bet for it?”
“Sure... I think I will!” I say.
“Fine, 50 bucks against it.” Falconni wagers. Plus, Quimby, Rudy and Navarro also bet on those odds. Falconni then uncovers it from under his hand, as him and Rudy look. I can’t see, since I’m face down on the deck laying on my stomach. But I see Falconni frown up, and, also Rudy, and I know what that means.
“Fuck… it's tails.” Says Rudy.
“Ha! I win.”
“Motherfucker.” Goes the only one that would.
“Looks like I just made 200 bucks, thanks, *Shipmates*.” I dish. And I’m lucky, too, after everything Thailand cost me (everything, basically).
“Oh, you're really going to get it, for that.” Falky puts.
“Yeah, okay... so, what else is new?”

And now, it begins, Falk kneels, and sticks the apple in my mouth, as I hold it with my teeth. And, whatever I do, I can’t bite down too hard. Or I’ll bite off a piece. And I’ll have two more to go. Sheesh! I wonder if I keep it up, and eat more than 4 or 6 apples, and they run out, will they then just call it off? But, no time to wonder about that. I now see all parties with firehose strips stepping up to the batting plate. My ass! And, fuck me, this is going to be excruciating. Plus, there’s a bucket of water the guys have when dipping their firehose strips to make them extra juicy. And, that’s just going to make it all the worse. I then hump forward quick, but the apple flies out of my mouth!
“Ha, nice start Navastian, can always count on you to fuck things up!”

WHA-PA! Goes Falconni's strip, and, fuck me! Did that HURT! But, he's not the only one with a strip. And now starts the barrage, as I try to lunge forward and pick up the apple again.

WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA!
Aye, FUCK THAT HURTS! And all mostly delivered to my back or backside. I'm shivering in pain right now. But I lunge again and gets a hold of the apple with my teeth. And then.
WHA-PA! Goes Brock's strip.
And, I just took my first bite with that whipping.
"Ha, two more, and you start over!" Falky issues. The apple is right by my face, and, so, I pick it up with my teeth, and begin humping again. As they begin again with the:
WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA!
I'm shivering in pain again, I can't move, I can barely, wait, can I? I'm sweating with pain. But I hump it, all beach whaled like, using my stomach muscles to lift me up and up forward.
WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA!
And I take another bite from that last wallop.
"One more, and you have to go all the way back."
Oh, shut the fuck up, give me a—
WHA-PA! WHA-PA!
"Is he dead?"
"….?" Goes everyone.
"Nah, I see him shivering, still. Slightly, but… keep beating him.
WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA!

I hump.
WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA!
I hump, again. Almost there. Almost free.
WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA!
Hump!
WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA!
Hump. One more and I'm there.
WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA!
Hump! And I'm out. I'm out the door. I made it, I fuckin' made it.
"Wow… he did it." Goes Rudy, surprised. And, roger that, I did! As noted, taking a lot of whips? That's just what I'm good at. Something I'm now starting to see as a real strength in me. Although, right now, I can barely move. And I just lay here, waiting for my energy to return. Fuck, I feel like falling asleep right now. The pain is still there, but now it's evolved into just that one giant warm-blooded hum feeling. I don't know how to explain it. As warm feelings pulsate through me like a heart.
"Fine, fine, you made it… get out!" Issues Falky.
"Hehe, I don't think he can move right now." Mentions Hats.
"Nah, I think he wants to have a nappy time." Kats goes.
And I practically do.

All their eyes then center on Donnelly. And, it's at this moment a whisk of energy graces me and gets me to at least sit up right. I'm still shivering in pain. And moving just makes it hurt worse. But, fuck it! Right now! This is most important. I might be good at taking a lot of licks. But I'm not sure if Donnelly is. Since, he's better at dishing them instead of receiving them. Donnelly looks worrisome. And, I can tell, they're enjoying this. I know this was a means they planned to get me and Donnelly to finally break. Problem here is, they might not be able to get him to break. Instead, they might make him… snap! And, that's a lot worse. Donnelly is on his belly looking at me. And, I'm not leaving to head up to finish whatever is left of Wog Day until I see him at least get to where I'm at. Fuck, if I can do this, he can. He has to! Fuck being stuck as a Wog after everything we've been put through. And, aye, becoming

a Shellback really does mean that much to us Sailors. Us Squids. Fuck rank. On Wog Day, an enlisted man can torture an officer, simply since that officer is still a Wog and the enlisted is a Shellback. I heard that FDR, a president once went through Wog Day, back in the 40s, and not even the Commander and Chief outranked a Shellback, since the president was a Wog up until that point (not sure how they initiated him, though, since he was a president, and one in a wheelchair. But you get the drift). A Sailor is a Sailor, but he isn't one (she too, I guess) unless they're a Shellback. It's that one haunting detail that will follow you for the rest of your days. I might not have spoken on great lengths about this before in this book. But I was only saving it for last. It really means that much! It does! No Sailor is a Sailor, without this prestigious honor. Since, you'll always be seen as a slimy Pollywog without that certification.

"All right, your turn, Mr. Punch-Out!" Says Falconni, redirecting everything onto Donnelly. He then sticks the apple in his mouth. And, I look into his eyes, and, I don't see what I want to see. I don't see what I'm sure was in mine. I don't see resolve. Fuck me! Just before Thailand, he really didn't want to even be here. He's still got all that being in "hot water" with the Squadron to deal with. And now, there's this humiliation. And Donnelly doesn't take well to humiliation from what I've seen. I'm worried, I'm extremely worried.

"Donnelly, you can do this!"

"Dude, shut the fuck up, Navastian, don't make us put you through it again." Bellows Rudy. The IS3 just snuffs at that, but now has important words.

"You know, Donnelly, I gotta say, you're the one I can't stands in The Shop the most…."

Donnelly now focuses his eyes onto him, intently.

"I hope you fail."

And with that, it begins:

WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA! WHA-PA!

And all I can do now is watch. Watch Donnelly try to struggle through all this pain and heap. He humps quick, and bites with his first attempt. After getting the apple

back into his mouth. The barrage continues. Donnelly turtles a little from all the shock and awe. But, I can see he's not trying to be patient with his inching forward, as he humps big and fast again, and he bites the apple again as the apple goes flying across The Shop and towards my feet.
"Hey, Navastian, throw that back. Haha!" Says Rudy.
And I do so.
Once again in his mouth. Kats let's out a sharp one, as it cracks onto his back. Donnelly bites down hard. And that's three strikes! And he has to go back to his old position again.
"Okay, Donnelly, you know the drill." Quotes Falky.
Donnelly does so.

Back in the beginning position. With a new apple in his mouth….

WHA-PA!
Donnelly bites down from the pain, again. And, this isn't going well. Not well, at all.
"I barely nicked you, come on, Don Don, Navastian, of all people, was showing a lot more resolve than you are right now." Donnelly now looks up and gives a vindictive look at the little man. The little man foolishly smiles. Seeing this reaction. Seeing this man on his belly giving him the evil eye. The apple is back in his mouth.
WHA-PA!
Again, with another bite.
"Seriously, Donnelly, we don't have a lot of apples, how many times are we—"
AND THAT'S IT! Donnelly has had it, as I see him get up, and begin trying to undo the zip tie behind him. Seemingly clawing it against the edge of the desk where Senior has his black and green DOS computer.
"What are you doing?" Asks IS3.
Donnelly just looks upwards and works.
"I said, what are you doing?" Asks again, the IS3.
"I'm not fuckin' doing this no more!" Donnelly puts.
"What do you mean—"

“I mean, I’m getting out of this Shop, I’m going up to the Flightdeck, where everything is being done, officially, and I’m getting my—”
“You won’t get it!” IS3 smiles out.
“What?”
And now, the IS3 has a little secret for him.
“You think… that… none of the E6 and up right now know what we’re doing?”
And now, Donnelly looks off.
“How do you think we came up with the ‘stamp?’ You think only us junior VF-451 personnel came up with this, no! They did.”
“Who did?”
“The older guys, the Lifers, those that are pissed seeing where the New Navy is going, wanting to still have some of that Old Navy fun. All I have to do is tell our bubblehead CMC, that you didn’t pass the unofficial Wog Day test. And, guess what? You won’t be getting your Shellback status. You’ll still be a Wog. Until the next time you cross the equator. And have to go through Wog Day all over again.”
Donnelly looks down now.
“So, get back on your stomach, we’re going to zip tie your hands again, and….” But Donnelly then makes his decision, and jets out, all raging bull pissed and steamin’. Passes me by, and, leaves. And, I can’t fuckin’ believe this.
“IS3, just give it to him.” I say. The IS3 looks at me, then rolls his eyes. And, seems like that’ll be a fat chance.
“Brock, what the fuck?” I say, then. But Brock now looks away, also.

And… I don’t know. I don’t know what else I can do. And now I leave, too.

I go back up the Flightdeck.
And I do everything else needed to pass.
I blow Wog waters out of Padeyes.
I get blasted with the hose.
Has a royal banquet with a paper plate I hold in my mouth while crawling on all fours as it’s being filled with a whole bunch of disgusting food seemingly pulled from

yesterday's trash. And, when I get where the rest of us Wogs can eat, I eat it like up like a dog, like the rest. Afterwards, I'm at the Royal court, I go to see the Royal baby, and I eats the cherry from the baby's fat belly navel (don't ask). And finally, I see Davy Jones and King Neptune. I'm in his presence now on the Flightdeck. The Royal doctor then gives me a truth potion (something else disgusting) and King Neptune asks if I'm guilty for being a Pollywog. I say, "yes," and then he decrees I be baptized in the coffin of the deep. So, they place me in a king-sized wooden box, where there's two holes to each side. And a wooden lid is placed on top that has a hole in the middle of it. Inside the box it's filled with salt water, green salt water. And then they stick the hose into the top hole and hose me down from inside the coffin. Once I'm out of the coffin. A Shellback asks me:
"What are you?"
I need a moment to breathe from that last hosing I got.
"Shipmate, I asked you, what are you?"
I then look up at the Squid, and I tell him what I am:
"I'm a Shellback!"

And now, I'm a Sailor.
A real Sailor.
And there's no going back.
This time, really, truly, there's no going back.
And… I feel happy with this outcome.

And…
I…
Have become comfortably numb.

THE FALL OF DONNELLY

And I don't want the world to see me
'Cause I don't think that they'd understand
When…?
When…?

Oh, forget it!

Ahem.

It's now 1715 hours, the following day. Man, was The Ship an absolute mess after all that Wog Day fun. Not much fun afterwards, for Ship's company, although, for, the hardest part of Wog Day is the cleanup job that's necessary to get this hunk-a-junk carrier back in operational condition. But, me being an Airdale, it's not really our problem. Although, with our berthing spaces, aye, for 1st Lewie, at least, it was. Day Check, of course, would then be responsible for the cleanup job with most of our Shops on The Ship. As of now, I'm up, getting again ready for another night of Flight Ops, and Dailies, and Barnacles. And, it's guaranteed that we won't be having another day off until come our next port visit, which won't be for a very, very long time from now. Maybe Dubai, in the Gulf, maybe? But, since we're going to war, that's left to see. Heck, we might be out months on end before we see another port, and another day of liberty and not be up to our same old, same old, launches and recoveries, launches and recoveries procedures. Months! Freakin' months! Ugh!

So, I practically spent all day trying to sleep on my stomach. I've never had to sleep on my stomach. But, for obvious reasons, my backside was now way too raw and tender, and it would be excruciatingly painful to try. I guess you can imagine why! Now, since I've never slept on my stomach, it was a little too unorthodox for me. So, I really haven't had much sleep. Since my biology was confused, I guess, of which way up or down was. I don't know. Don't know how to explain it. If you've never slept on your stomach. Try doing so! See if you can fall asleep at all. Now, you might be able to, since, you're not me. But, as for me… heck no!

Yellowish twilight skies hang over the Indian Ocean. Aye, we in the Indian Ocean now and no longer in the Pacific. Since passing the Straits of Malacca, the path has given us way into a totally different part of the watery world. We're headed now straight to the Persian Gulf. And, we're pretty much going to be passing the tip of

India heading that way. The waters out here are funny, I see, staring out the Starboard side of The Ship's Hangar Bay doors, as I make my way to The Shop. The seas are so calm. So smooth. And straight. It all looks to be like one giant mirror mirroring all the heavens above. And the skies are very ubiquitously yellow. As if, it's a common sight to see the skies being colored as such at such twilight hours. Well, maybe out here in the Indian Ocean, that's just a thing out here to behold. Fascinating! It's fascinating staring at such alien skies for the first time. But I doesn't have enough time to stop and stare, so, off I go, towards my Shop.

I got a bad feeling… a really bad feeling. I feel a trepidation.
There's a shift.
And towards what… doesn't feel like it's going to be good.

In The Shop I go, no hesitations. As I turn the handle to the hatch to our Shop, I doesn't hear an unholy cranking sound. That's off? Did they oil up the hinges? I don't know. In now, I see the usual suspects, the usual faces, all prepared for the long haul. The very long haul. From here to the Persian Gulf, and so on, and so forth. Every face of VF-451 Line Shack Nights I see present and accounted for. His face, although, I see hidden behind some of the more prominent figures. I want to see his face. I want to see where it's at. After everything that has happened, I need to…

and now I see.

His face now jots out from the crowd that's all seeming lethargic. His face, not so lethargic. And then jots back and back into obscurity. Senior Chief Hamakua is also in here, but he seems a bit lost, going over objects sprawled on this work desk. The IS3 is seeming sullen, leaning up far against the filing cabinet with his head tilted up and out of bounds, his eyes wandering across the overhead pipes and white ceiling, as if, himself lost up there, while in his thoughts. Just about everyone has that lost stare, everyone, but he. For, I saw his face in this crowd, and his is the only one that didn't seem lost. Actually, seemingly like he knew exactly where he was at. I can't

even claim that, the sense of the Indian Ocean has also got me feeling lost. We're now in uncharted waters, for me, at least, and many in here as well. But I feel we're on the right path, since, today the Indian Ocean, tomorrow the Persian Gulf. This is a time to keep moving and moving forward. No time to stop and smell the roses. At least not here and now.
"All right, I'm going to maintenance, everyone hang tight, until I return." Says Senior.
"You don't' want us to go up and relieve Day Check?" The IS3 asks.
"No, not yet, just wait here, until I return." Says Senior.

I got a bad feeling about this. A really bad feeling.

Senior is now gone. And the second Senior leaves I see Donnelly, and… oh no! Oh no! I'm scared now. This doesn't look like Donnelly. Since me and him still share similar brain patterns, I can see I'm seeing what no one else right now can. Donnelly immediately walks towards the door leading out and stands there. I see his eyes fidgeting about, from face to face, then the door again. There's a scheme in his movements. A scheme to it. A plot. But what, I don't know. Now he eyes the AD3 who seems to want to exit The Shop after Senior.
"Hey, Rudy, where you going?" Asks IS3.
"I'm going to go take a leak."
IS3 idles as Rudy leaves. Now Donnelly seems a bit off. Like, he wasn't expecting anyone to leave just yet.

A moment at pause happens while waiting.

"Hey, Donnelly… so you're still a Wog, huh?" Goes Roach Burger. Only one focusing on Donnelly besides me. And now everyone is also focusing on him after Roach Burger's comment. All smiling at Donnelly, since they all know what happened yesterday. Donnelly is now the only Wog amongst us all in The Shop.
"Yeah, I guess I still am."

“Hehe, looks like next cruise, we might have some fun, I’m a Shellback now.” Says Roach Burger. Fuckin’ mangy little mongrel, always wanting to start shit, and I wonder why he also gets his ass tossed like salad by the guys. Donnelly is right now looking away and nodding. Just nodding. After Roachy’s comment. While standing up against a pile of boxes near the door. All seemingly waiting for something. And then, I see what’s up, I see Donnelly’s eyes intensify, as Rudy enters back into The Shop, and passes Donnelly.

And, now it begins.
And, I see then, what my mind’s eye already apprehended: Donnelly as the Burning Man.

POW!
Punches Donnelly, upside the back of AD3’s head, hard, as Rudy goes down face first into the deck. And that now, wakes everyone up, as we all get a scent of the roses. Black roses. In display.
“What the fu—…?”
Donnelly grabs a hold of the pile of boxes up near the door, and overturns them, as they come crashing down in the path of the Line Shack doorway. Blocking up the hatch from being opened from the outside entering in.
“Ahh… ooh!” Goes Rudy, in severe pain.
The IS3 is the first to react to the blitzkrieg.
“What the… what the fuck is wrong with you, Donnelly?”
Donnelly now turns around to eye us all. All! As he puts up his dukes.
“Donnelly, you gone fuckin’ Section 8?”
“Above and beyond—ASSHOLE!”

Wrath or love.
Love or wrath.
Both call to all to, “stand back, stand back,” as the maddened one comes to make his path. Both come to forewarn all of the upcoming inevitable and inescapable trap.

Wrath or love. Love or wrath. Both shall oppose all those that oppose back. As both take haste sending all evils down to that one great aftermath. For futile it shall be, like the denial of that rat that denies being in the paws of that one hungry eyed cat. Rage is a burning hellfire of smites and stones come to wake the dead man's bones and reminds him of his ills and wrongs. Burn away, burn away, all ills and wrongs. Clear a way, clear a way the bitterness and tears, till all ills and wrongs are purged by the most beautiful of songs. Those that sleep will sleep only to escape such fright. Those that sleep will dream, by such vivid, vivid means, of places far away hidden from the most dreaded of spites. A burning, burning fire, now come to unleash all his might! So, fear! Do fear! Fear your most! Fear the mass reach of his bite! For wrath is a love, from its head to its tail, turned inside out, into the most monstrous of monsters come to settle all fights. Behold, a pale horse, with such pale and frightful fires, rode in by that one rider that was once beheld as the most brilliant of shining white knights. For when love phases from friend to foe, no such nemesis there shall be, as he, who comes to vanquish all wicked souls with the hottest of hellfires now set free. And all those that say that "dark is right," fools they be, stuck in dreams, self-entangled by any and such means. For dreams are also such places for the fiends to hide oneself from such horrifying scenes. When the eternal light comes to annihilate the dark by that one light set as the brightest of brights. For hell surely has no fury, when the King of Kings comes, to punish all wicked souls that find solace and safety in the night.

"WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?" Blasts the IS3.
Donnelly now answers:
"What the HELL does it look like I'm doing—I'M CALLING ALL OF YOU *OUT*!"
All are now awake, eyes wide open seeing this figure that once stood amongst us, now, step out. All grow fearful now.
"Are you fuckin' out of your mind?" IS3, again.
Donnelly smiles.
"Are you SERIOUSLY out of your mind?"

“No, I’m actually very much in my rightful head, and, right now, I’m going to do, what I’m going to do!”
“Is this fuckin’ joker for real?” Goes Roach Burger, as he steps up.
Idiot.
“Hey, Donnelly, you—”
POW!
Roach Burger hits the deck.
“That’s another one, I still got, 1,2,3… 8, 9… 9 of you left, come one, come all, as I beat the ever-loving motherfuckin’ shit out of—ALL OF YOU IN HERE!

AND—YOU… YOU, *NAVASTIAN*, I’LL SAVE FOR *LAST*!” Says and points Donnelly, at me, not even looking at me. Sigh! I go, as I look away. And shakes my head some. For I knew this was coming.
“What, you fuckin’ kidding me?” Goes the IS3.
“I don’t know, ask Rudy and the Roach that, see if they think I’m kidding around.” Donnelly responds. And, as for those two, Rudy’s KOed, only alert enough to moan and groan on the deck and turn around some. While Roach Burger has blood all over his open mouth and teeth, just as KOed, spittin’ up with the red stuff, as his face all squashes around ground zero of where he was decked. All eyes now go from those two, to Donnelly, still with his dukes up, pacing around, seemingly aching for someone to step up next. Putting all his well-earned training as a once professional boxer into effect to now punish all he sees have deemed this wrath. And, all of us! For, there’s no “I” in Navy. And Boot Camp rules now apply: if one of us is guilty, all of us are guilty. And all will get slated for the beating!
“Come on, step up! Step up! There’s nine of you still left, and one of me, fucking—PUSSIES!”
“Motherfucker!” Quimby then rushes fast and starts the swinging. One. Two! Donnelly does the Jack Dempsey with all his badly aimed rolls, and, sees the marker! POW! And clips his chin fast and furious with an uppercut. And, so hard, we can practically hear his brain bouncing up and down within the confines of his skull from the jolt. As his face does the same motion, followed by his lips. THUD! Goes Quimby.

Then, gets up quick, and, he's on his feet, but no one is upstairs, for his brains look like they've taken a leave to La-La land. THUD! Goes Quimby again. And he's not even moving anymore like the other two. It's lights out for him. He sleepin' now! ZZZzzzz! And now, I decide to take a look at all the faces still standing active and slated for Donnelly's wrath. Since, in times like these, when shit really starts hitting the fan, it can be educational to know one's Shipmates, and the people they be, under fight or flight mode. First face I study is Barbarossa's face, since, he's the biggest one amongst us, and the only one that we see having a chance to defuse this bomb, and physically. But Barbarossa looks scared, way too scared, knowing, he's got to really put the hurtlocker on him to bring him down, and he's not sure if he should or shouldn't. I then look at Navarro's face, all he's giving is a stiff upper lip, he's not scared, but he's tense enough to know how serious this situation is, and how unfunny it is too. He's probably seen things like this before, and, where people probably even get killed in action. Kats is terrified shitless. And he's hiding behind Barbarossa, his preppy white boy act can't do shit in situations like this, except get a royal ass beating. In Derbytown I see what I see in Barbarossa's face, but I don't think his martial arts training has been enough yet to merit a real fight with Donnelly just yet. And, I see this, and I hope Derbytown does too. Because I fear he might get stupidly overconfident enough to try. Try like Quimby tried. As for Royster and Pfluger, forget it, they're cowering like Kats is cowering behind Barbarossa. Although, Pfluger seems to be questioning if this is really happening or not. But since the boy is hardly ever around us in reality, I get why. And finally, I see Falk's face, and I sense something I haven't really ever seen in him. And that be guilt. He's always been truly the guy in charge of all of us Night Checkers, and, as a leader, this is his fault, not Donnelly's. He's the one responsible of letting it get to this, he knows damn well what he did yesterday on Wog Day was FUBARed up the Yinyang, and now, for once I see no pride in him. No pride. But utter defeat. Although still, he's still in charge right now, and, he has to be the one to try to defuse this with words instead of violence. Since violence was how all this got started in the first place.

But then I see a shift in him, in IS3 Falconni, and I know what that shift means. The IS3 then heightens his chin and slits his eyes. And, fuckin' piece-of-shit! He's back in character, again, and back to doing what he always does as he passes the guilt over onto someone else instead of accepting it on himself.

"You motherfucker, you know, I remember when I first met you in the Line, I first saw you come in, I knew, I knew, you were going to be the biggest Shipwreck ever!"

The IS3 starts. And… I'm disappointed. I just am, as I sit down, and watch, watching the IS3 now completely FUBAR this even further, trying to defuse this situation in a rational manner (his JOY-SEE dumbass, meatheaded idea of such, at least). So, I seat myself in a chair, and waits, for my turn with Donnelly. I feel the urge to say something, but, I know, right now, the IS3 has got center stage. And after everything he says, Donnelly is going to be even more gone than he is now, and, maybe even a little glad, as he makes the IS3 eventually eat his words.

"Oh, I'm the worst ever, huh?"

"Yeah, you are!"

Donnelly smiles excited, enthralled, listening to the IS3 and where he'll take this next.

"Yeah, first time I met you, I remember I stepped up to shake your hand, to welcome you to the Line Shack. And, when I got up to you, I gripped your hand, and I looked you in the eye, and, as friendly as I was, I saw the fuckin' maniac that you are! You are now! And I saw it back then. And the thing is, you were going out of your way to show it! Fuckin' maniac!"

"Oh, good story. I love hearing your version of it. Since, I don't remember any friendly hand to hand gestures. Just a lil' fuckin' hotheaded prick! Trying to test me, to see, well… what we're going to see now. In just a while. Once I beat everyone up, just to get to—YOU!"

And then all of a sudden…

Barbarossa rushes in to defuse this, his way, the only way left that could be done. And likely for him, Barbarossa is as fast as he is big, and gets the jump on him, while Donnelly was mostly focused on the IS3 at that moment. Grabs him up by the chest and lifts him off the ground and then—WHAM! Up against the bulkhead where

the chains are hung up by a shelf. As a few come tumbling down. And now everyone still on their feet rush in and begin trying to grab any other part of Donnelly, hands or feet, to try and decommission him. And, it seems like they now got the advantage. I, myself, get up. And, I'm not sure what to do. So, I decide to instead nurse over the fallen. Since, in a very short amount of time, Donnelly has already left a giant mess of bodies mostly just twitching on the deck. I look over Rudy, first, since, he got hit first, and since he's just now starting to come around. Mostly holding the back of his head where he got hit, with his mouth all the way open, seemingly wanting to cry from the pain, but, crying in silence. I look again at the other situation and see how Barbarossa is now trying to drag him down, to really pin him in and decom him until help can show up.

But then Donnelly kicks Barbarossa in the groin. Barbarossa drops Donnelly out of his grip, as Donnelly then really lunges in with a headbutt and nails him in the nose. POW! And Barbarossa's nose practically explodes with blood. And Barbarossa drops to the ground immediately as Donnelly starts thrashing about to scare away the others. Donnelly is free, once more, up to this pace and footwork with his dukes riding up high again. Ready for whatever comes next. Oh shit! That was bad. That was really bad! How Barbarossa got hit. There was a bone crushing sound that came with such a brutal blow. Derbytown now tries to make a shot with Donnelly, but the IS3 grabs him and holds him back. He afraid now. He seriously afraid. As everyone else is. For, our biggest hitter had just got KOed, and there isn't really that many of us left. Navarro is still frozen in his last pose, with his upper lip, but I know he's definitely afraid of trying his pot shot after watching Barbarossa getting KOed. Kats is now the one closest to Donnelly, and Donnelly, he's grinnin' ear to ear. The odds no longer seem stacked against him. And he might be able to go all the way, especially with Barbarossa out for the count. Kats stands closest. Kats now notices Kats is standing closest. Donnelly now begins with the taunts.
"Come on, Kats… don't be a fraidy cat! Come on, white boy, let's see if you can put your fists where your mouth usually is. Or do you want me to do that for you?"
"MAN… FUCK YOU!"

Goes Kats, then cowers far back, as Donnelly bluffs one.
“NO, FUCK YOU, KATS! YOU AIN’T THE PUSSYCLAPPER NO MORE! NOW, I’M THE MOTHERFUCKIN’ PUSSYCLAPPER! AND NOW, I’M GOING TO MAKE ALL YOU MOTHERFUCKIN’ BITCHES—CLAP FOR ME!!!” He’s astatic now, looking at all his gain. Muhammad Ali-ing up a storm with his mouth and footwork.
“WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON IN THERE AND WHY IS THIS DOOR JAMMED!” And that’s Senior now yelling.
And that finally scares Donnelly to hear. As:
BANG!
BANG! Goes Senior, trying to open up the hatch which all the cruise boxes have mostly barricaded.
“YOU FUCKIN’ PIECE-OF-SHIT! YOU’RE GONNA HANG FOR THIS!” Cries out Falky, and now he seems ready to try and make a move. Donnelly goes from Senior to focusing on the IS3 again. And then starts showing some serious vile and viciousness his way.
“YOUUUUU! YOUUU AND ME NOW! STEP UP! STEP UP! LITTLE MAN! DON’T YOU FUCKIN’ PUSSY OUT NOW! DON’T YOU MOTHERFUCKIN’ PUSSY OUT! OR I’LL DO YOU LIKE RUDY, THERE, AND PUNK YOUR LIL’ MIDGET ASS WHEN YOU AIN’T LOOKING!”
SPIT!
Donnelly then loogies one up quick and spits fast, and the spit flies mighty high and strong and hits the IS3 in the left eye. And that now sends IS3 Falky wild as he tries to charge in. But, this time, Derbytown and Navarro hold him back. I now decide this has definitely gone too far. And, since Falky can’t be a superior here, maybe Senior can. So, I go for the door as I start to undo the barricade Donnelly had made.
BANG!
BANG!
“OPEN THIS FUCKIN’ DOOR!” Senior cries.
“COME ON, YOU PUSSY ASS LIL’ BITCH! COME ON! DIEING TIME IS HERE! AYE, AYE, ROGER THAT, NOW! SINCE, NO BEAT DOWN FOR YOU, I’M GOING TO FUCKING MURDER YOU! EAT YOUR FUCKING SOUL! MY TEETH, LIKE THE

PRISON BARS OF HELL CLAMPING DOWN ON YOUR DAGO WOP ASS!" Goes Donnelly with a chomp with his teeth at the end.

And I now get the barricade undone, as Senior spots me quick, then the scene that's been made as he enters. That gets both Donnelly and the IS3's most dire attentions. As Falk stops trying to fight loose from Derby and Navarro, and Donnelly finally lowers his dukes and depletes a whole lot of that spit and spite he was churning with just now. The starry anchor has been dropped, and all feel the sudden stop and his weight. Heavy, sits he, amongst us. Heavy with the scene mostly Donnelly has perpetrated. It doesn't take Senior long to figure out exactly what has taken place, camming his recorders from port to starboard. And who's totally to blame. And after a while of auditing the damage done to his Shop and his men, Senior turns all his Military Bearing on the perpetrator amongst us. I at this moment, leaves AD3 Rudy, seeing how he's doing much better now that he's more conscious, and I goes directly towards Barbarossa. Directly towards him, to settle a fear I now have.
"YOU!" Begins Senior, eyeing the AN in the middle of all this. No longer is Donnelly hopping around on his astatic rush. This is one heavyweight his dukes won't be able to settle any scores or grievances with anymore after what he's done.
"YOU SON-OF-A-BITCH! Falky, call the Master-At-Arms immediately!" Says Senior, without batting an eye, not for a moment, while having this AN in sight. Falky immediately does what Senior says. Donnelly, I see now, taking a gulp of dread. He doesn't know what to do anymore.
"I should have known it would be you! After what you did to that First Class at Skunky's. And now, this!"

Ah shit! This is getting worse and worse as things precede. Ah, shit! I can't believe this. I don't… I don't know how to bring this up right now! Please, no! No! Oh shit, fuck me!

"Well, come on, tough guy! You wanted to take on the entire Shop. Don't start with them, start with me!" Pounds Senior, as he pounds it, and his chest, with his fists in

display, of the AN. “Come on, I’m the head honcho, here! I’m the LCPO! HiMFIC! Step up and take a shot of me!” Senior antagonizes, and steps in Donnelly’s direction.
“Senior!” I call.
“Come on, hit me! Hit me! You fuckin’ hoodlum. Why take a crack at everyone, but the one guy—”
“SENIOR!” I call again.
“COME ON!”
“SENIOR!”
“WHAT???”
And now I get his attention. I get everyone’s attention. And the look on my face spells it all. But I word it, too, just to be clear:

“I think Barbarossa’s… *dead*! I’m getting no pulse! Call medical!”

And with that, the stare grows even tenser. And Senior, for once, is utterly speechless at a time like this, as he eyes the *murderer* amongst us. The dead eyes are in everyone’s eyes, and now, especially the one that whispered its forbidden name. Whether knowingly or unknowingly, no matter. It had been summoned. And, it had arrived. And left us minus one. Donnelly, looks, looks deep… and then immediately exits the Line Shack. Couple of the guys now near me and the *corpse*, wanting to see if they might feel a pulse, where I didn’t. I back off.
“No, no! No one touch him, I’m calling medical to come up immediately.” Alerts Senior. And with that, everyone else backs off, but we can all tell, there’s no pulse. There is none. And Barbarossa’s eyes are open wide and dilated. There’s nothing that medical can do here. I stand now, and watch the havoc ensue. All hell and bedlam! All hell’s bells ringing loud, pitch loud, piercing all our ears. And there’s nothing secure in all this as the bedlam follows suit.

A feeling then goes through me, I guess, since I still somehow share similar frequency with the one that just left The Shop. And, I know where he is now. So, I now leave The Shop. And after some circumnavigation, I reach the hatch leading

out. I step out. And into the Ratways. And there I see him, there, at the most aft end of The Ship. He's in tears. He has a chain link hung around his neck. And, he's sitting there near the edge with hardly any Flightdeck gear on his person. He has his brown jersey off, so he's shirtless. His steeltoe boots, and also socks, have been removed. Mostly just wearing his cammie pants. And, he's in a world of his own guilt. I look, and I see Zeedorf, practically. And, he's in a world of his own pain and guilt.
"Hey." I say.
I now get his attention, and, first thing he does, is try to hide all the tears.
"Hey." I say, again. But I doesn't get too close. That chain is around his neck for a reason. I know. Especially since the MAs have already been alerted of the matter. I doesn't get too close. And, I doesn't know what to say to him. Donnelly, although, speaks for himself now, to fill in the dead silence.
"Fuck… I should have really deserted back in Thailand. Even by myself. I'd be in a lot better situation than I am in right now. A helluva lot better."
"…."
"Fuck me! Fuck my life! I really am a piece-of-shit!" He says.
And now I'm spurred to say something myself.
"Yeah, I'm no stranger to self-loathing. I don't think any of us Squids are. No matter how AJ Squared-Away some might imagine themselves to be. Just part of the job. I guess…?" All I can say.
"Yeah… but I'm a bigger piece-of-shit, than what more regularly you'd find." He says. I see him try to tear up again, but then stop himself short.
"Oh, don't be like that, besides… what just happened. You been a lot better than most." I try to comfort. But Donnelly is completely unable to hold it in anymore. As, he begins to eye the waters below, how I can only imagine mostly just me, Zeedorf, and that SN Jangles and SN Fickler had done.
"No." He says, all sullen with guilt. I… doesn't know what to do right now. I want to stop him. But, how can I? How can I? And after everything that's just happened.
"Come on, man, you didn't mean to kill him. You didn't mean to do that!"
"OH SHIT… HE'S REALLY DEAD, ISN'T HE?"

And… I feel like lying right now. But, I doesn't. I doesn't. And I say absolutely nothing at all. And that only asserts him to one absolute certainty.
"No, I'm a bigger piece-of-shit than… I ever really let you in on." He says.
He now gets up. And really begins to eye the waters.
"What do you mean?"
Bad response, I feel. In my part.
"Remember that story about me, my girl Jesse and a guy named Travis?"
That takes me into my own head for a second.
"Yeah…?"
"Well, I lied. I told you things in reverse." And, he really begins to tear up as he says that. But, right now, I'm not exactly sure where he's going with this.
"Come on, don't do it! Don't do it!" I say, all I feel like I can.
"Dude… I was Travis! I was Travis!"
"What?"
"I mean, Jesse wasn't my girl. Kimie was. Jesse was Travis' girl. And I was the one that…?" And then he eyes me. He eyes me, and with, whatever there is in his eyes for me to now see. And, what I see, I cannot acknowledge.
"Wait… you're the one that attacked and tried to rape her…?"
And now, I can't look him in his eyes anymore. He tries to motion towards me. But I motion away. This is just too much to bring up, and right now, and of all times.

And then… I notice we're no longer alone.
"HEY, AN DONNELLY! YOU DON'T WANT TO DO THIS!" They say, the MAs, as one steps up and pushes me aside. "HEY, SHIPMATE, LOOK AT ME! YOU DON'T WANT TO DO THIS! DO YOU UNDERSTAND?" The MA says.

But I shakes my head.
Since, he said, "Shipmate," and both me and Donnelly get the connotations behind that. I feel like leaving now. Since, there's no stopping him anymore.
"HEY, IF YOU JUMP, THAT'S ONLY GOING TO LEAD FOR THE SHIP TO STOP EVERYTHING IT'S DOING AND HAVE A HELO SENT OUT TO… HEY… HEY…!!!"

SPLASH!!!
We all hear. A small interval later. After Donnelly makes the jump.

"MAN OVERBOARD! MAN OVERBOARD!" I hear being called all over The Ship, a moment later. I now go down to my Shop. To muster for man overboard. Something we tend to do a lot during drills.

Although, obviously… this is no drill.

AND ANOTHER FINE NAVY DAY

So, about a week of time has now come and gone.

It hasn't been easy. Not easy in the slightest for everything to get back to the way things were before.

I see Donnelly.
I see him in the forward galley seated and eating chow. I see him there, then, and back again. And, I see him, seated as the Young King of the Black Isles be seated at his throne. With a cup of bug juice (don't ask) at hand. Well, at least he's allowed regular chow. Regular barfbag Ship chow, but better than that whole bread and water diet the Brigs on these Ships are so notoriously rumored to be about. Although, beside Donnelly, I see an MA standing over him. Keeping a watchful eye. It's roughly 1700 hours. And, I've been seeing the MAs bringing Donnelly up from the Brig for some chow in the last week. Right now, I plan on taking a risk. I feel the chance stacked against me. But, I'm willing to gamble and see if it'll work or not. I look into the eyes of the MA, and, he seems like a total Joe Navy Dick! But, BOHICA, I'm going in, I think, as I now begin motioning towards Donnelly.

Donnelly notices me.
And so does the MA.
The MA steps up and puts his left hand out and waves.

“Sorry, Shipmate, you’re not allowed to come near or speak with the prisoner.”
“I just want 5 minutes with him.” I plead. The MA looks confused, he knew what he said to me, and, he knew I understood it. But, yet, I was still willing to ask.
“Excuse me, Shipmate, I just told you, you’re not allowed to!”
“I know, but I feel like I have to have a talk with him.” I push.
The MA now seems angry.
“Do you have any clue what this prisoner did?”
“Yes, I do, exactly. I know the prisoner here, personally… I was there….”
The MA shakes his head.
“Listen, I understand it’s strictly forbidden. But, I’m still willing to plead for a chance. Just one. Just 5 minutes, which is all I’m asking.” The MA now gets my resolve, and he sees how concrete solid it is. He then sighs. Then looks to his port, aft and starboard end, checking to see if anyone will notice. He then looks at me and says:
“All right, you sit across from him, and keep your eyes on me, the second I look at you and nod, you get up immediately, and leave. Do you understand me?”
“Aye.” I say. And, I’m permitted. Not officially. But, still. And now, I’m seated. Donnelly just keeps a low profile. With a low hanging forehead. And I can understand why. After he jumped, and after Man Overboard was called, a Helo with an AW was sent out immediately to fetch him. I can’t say if Donnelly was expecting to be saved, or, expecting the worst, after diving from such a great height. From what I gathered, it’s a 60 to 70 foot drop. And if slamming into the water isn’t the worst part, I can only imagine how cold the waters would be.
“So, how bad is it?” I start.
Donnelly still keeps a demolished profile. As in, a demolished pride in oneself. Since the guy is right now in a world where all fingers in the dark extend out and point at him, and lay all blame, all blame. He’s beyond humbled. He is wretched now. Wretched! And everything that is wrong in the world.
“It’s not good, I can tell you that.” He responds, after a short pause.
“….” And now I’m speechless.
What was the point of the last week wanting to sit down to speak with him, if I was going to become muted when I got the chance? I now speaks on whatever I can.

“Dude, there’s going to be an investigation of what went wrong. And people are going to be interviewed. When my turn comes up in the hot seat, I’ll tell them of all the hazing and everything that went on, that provoked you into doing what you did. You didn’t mean to get Barbarossa killed. It just happened that way. When you hit him, you hit him in a bad spot.”

“Fine, I know, I know… but it’s still considered voluntary manslaughter. So, I’m still going to be court martialed with an article 119 charge placed against me.” Donnelly interjects. And I don’t know what to say there.

“What about a section 8 case?” Precede I.

But Donnelly shakes his head. And it doesn’t seem like something that’ll fly under the UCMJ. I now feel morose. And morosely depressed for Donnelly’s sake. What a FUBARed situation he’s gotten himself into? I then look at Donnelly, but, something in him seems to be at peace. He has his eyes closed, and his head tilted, and facing a bit up towards his right.

“You know, the jump I did. Even though I wouldn’t recommend it. Still, what a rush.” He says.

My eyes go slit listening. Just listening.

“Once I jumped, there was a point there, I was falling, and falling, free falling. And it felt good. I was free again. Myself again. I don’t know. And once I was in the water. I just swam. And swam. And, for a moment there, I felt like I could swim anywhere. Even back to Thailand to do a redo.” Donnelly is growing whimsical in his thoughts. But, really, he’s being facetious with his predicament. But, maybe it’s what’s best for him right now. Let him imagine his Bali Ha’i. At least for as long as it takes him, until he really does find himself on the other end. And, for him, especially now, facing more than just a Big Chicken Dinner! If just that, he’d be lucky. I don’t know what else to say.

“Ha, as cold as the waters were, I enjoyed them, I did, that is until AW1 Nordhaus dove in for me, and pulled me into the Helo he was strapped to.”

“Wait… who’d you say?” I gasp.

"Oh, nothing, the guy that grabbed me and pulled me back in, AW1 Nordhaus. Damn did he have a heavy-set Fargo accent. And… I never thought one could ever sound scary. Haha!"

I then see the MA motion towards me and nod. And, it's time. Maybe no 5 minutes. But it's all the time I got.
"I gotta go!" I say.
Donnelly mostly keeps his eyes shut. And says nothing. Maybe in another life. Maybe? As dolphins. I always liked dolphins. For, I know now this is the last time I'm ever going to speak with him again. Manslaughter… shit! He's probably looking at 20 years imprisonment. Now that, is one cruise, one long and hard and arduous haul, I pray to God he's able to tough through. Might be some time after 2020 when he's released. He should be in his 50s then. A shame. Damn shame.

AW1 Nordhaus though… ugh! I had no clue he was out of Boot Camp and stationed on this Ship.

I'm in the Hangar Bay. Clear CAVU bright skies hung over the Indian Ocean. CAVU, as in: Ceiling and Visibility Unlimited. A term just used to describe how glorious the conditions are for Flight Ops. And, looking at the skies over the Indian Ocean, and seeing its saturated azure blueness, I nod, giving acceptance of how glorious it truly is and feels. So, I'm headed to my Shop, to do the same old same old. Launches and recoveries, rinse and repeat. But I doesn't care. I'm starting to find a sort of peace in all this. We're still in the for the long haul. And, also, tonight will be the last night our Ship and our Squadron will be in the Indian Ocean. For, tomorrow, we're expected to cross the Straits of Hormuz. And, it's nothing but the Persian Gulf from there.

I'm now in The Shop. It's been rough, more than rough. Since losing two PCs, one AN Castleberry had to be pulled out of TAD crankin' to take Donnelly or Barbarossa's spot. Plus, one AD3 Humphrey had to be pulled from his Shop to replace one or the

other. The AD3 was in The Shop when I first got to the Line. And after he was placed in his respected Powerplants once he made third. Now, he's back here again, and he doesn't seem happy about anything. Senior PC or not. He's not happy. I'm standing next to Castleberry, and, ugh! Me and him have funny relations. Some former High School football player from Tucson, AZ. He's half Mexican. And he can be a complete knuckle-dragger sometimes. And me and him were always going at it back at the beach.
"Hey, Navastian!"
"What?"
I now look down where I see Castleberry motioning his hand over his crotch. And he's signaling an upside down "okay" sign. But it's not an "okay" sign. But something else. POW! He goes. Decking me hard in the shoulder. And, aye this is what I mean by "funny relations." But I like the guy, and even if he tries to do nothing but roll me up every chance he could get. Oh, Boat life's gonna be fun having him back around.
"Hahaha!" Goes Castleberry.
"HEY!" Cries out Falky, at Castleberry.

Since Barbarossa, Falky has sorta taken it as his prerogative to stop all Line Shack hazing for now on. And, I can see he's overreacting with what Castleberry just did. Falky gives Castleberry some dire stares. Then stares away. And besides these small moments. Boat life has pretty much gone back to what it was from the start. In the end, you got to wake up and smell the roses. We're still going to war. So, the past has to stay in the past. As we focus on our mission ahead into the future.

Senior enters, Senior now speaks:
"All right, go up and relieve Day Check!" Senior says. "Navastian, stay behind for a while." He then adds.

Everyone leaves. Especially Castleberry. And, I don't know what Senior has in store for me now. I've pretty much been keeping my nose clean. Doing everything expected of me. No matter what, there's a job to do. And the job is all that matters.

But now, with a nearly vacant Line Shack, except me and him, it seems like Senior has another bag of dicks he'd like me to sort through. Maybe? Let's see. I then get my senses ready to apprehend Senior. But as I do, I notice how he's fidgeting around. And fidgeting around very unmilitary like. And his bearing is everywhere. And now, I doesn't feel like much is to be apprehended.
"I'm just going to be straight with you, Navastian, there's an investigation that's going to happen because of everything. And, you will be called in to give a testimony. So… so…?" And, once again, he's fidgeting. He has only his profile to show. He's not lookin' at me, eye-to-eye, as he generally does. And, seeing him like this, it's at this moment I know exactly what he's asking of me. Trying to ask, at least. He's afraid. That, he is! I now step up and say:
"I'm not going to tell them anything." That gets his full undivided attention. And he's no longer just giving me a profile view.
"You're not…?"
He doesn't seem sure, since this is too good to be true, for him.
"No, Senior." I say.
"Why is that?" He asks, suspiciously. Maybe it's better not to look a gift horse in the mouth, but I guess his curiosity gets the best of him.
"Because, it's for me, I don't want to get hung up over this."
"What do you mean?"
"I mean, let bygones be bygones."
And Senior then seems like he wants to sprout a smirk to that. But doesn't.
"Is there anything else, Senior?"
At first, there doesn't seem to be. But then there is.
"I'm going to tell you straight up, Navastian, you're lucky."
"Pardon me, Senior, what's that?"
"You're lucky. Lucky…

since Donnelly, I guess, Maintenance Master Chief has now grown a liking to you.

And I'll tell you exactly what Master Chief said, he said:

‘Dave, stop being so hard on the kid (referring to you), there’s no reason in ‘breaking him in like a mule’ if the kid is already trying to give his 110%, be on the ball, while on the job, and trying his best to stay compliant. As for that whole vandalism business. Fuck it! Let the Boat Chucks whine and moan all they want, since I know damn well this has nothing to do with vandalism. And everything to do with that whole Boat Chuck vs. Wingnut thing. Which I’m nothing but familiar with in all my days. If the Boat keeps pushing, I’ll step up to them, then, myself, and tell them to ‘GO SUCK A FAT ONE’ if they’re not pleased with the results. Bring the Boat’s Skipper to question me, even, and I’ll just tell him the same. I mean, what are they really going to do? Especially against me. And I should be enjoying my retirement days right now and not even be here.’

So, aye! As you can see, right now, you got Ol’ Great Balls of Fire at your back, therefore rendering you: lucky!”
And, hearing this, I almost grow a smirk, but doesn’t.
“That’s all, Navastian, go relieve Coppersmith.” He delegates.
And, I’m ready to head back up again.

But first…
One more order of business needs to be settled for me to do so.
“Senior… one last thing.”
“What is it, Navastian?”
And I let him have it:
POW!
He’s on his ass now. Immediately sweats a couple of typhoons as I deck him in the cheek. He’s now looking up at me. Utterly surprised. Utterly. I now address it:
“Aye, Senior, that’s for bringing up my uncle, when you did, and trying to use that against me. I guess we’re square now.” And, I’m heading out of The Shop. As I see Senior beginning to try and pick himself up from the deck, after I knocked his dick in the dirt. I’m in the p-way heading abovedecks to the Flightdeck. And in passing, I

see AD1 Bastille. I see him then trying to sprout a smirk, seeing me, but doesn't. But I know what it was meant for. And what it was meant for was this:

I took everything he had to say to heart.

That day, just before liberty was called to Thailand, the stuff he told me, has been on my mind most of the time that's preceded since then. How, "you have to be your best example." Meaning, I can't put expectations on people to be a certain way. And especially not if I'm also lacking. That would just make me out to be a hypocrite. I forgive Senior, because, I don't want to live with what he did. With everything that's happened. And happened to me. And I've pretty much forgiven everyone else. I came to a point within this last week, where I realized, the moral of this book, really, is to not hold any grudges. And to let go. Not saying I haven't been wronged. But I'm not going to put it on people and have them try and live up to my expectations anymore. That's something I have to do myself, for myself, truly. And, I also have to forgive myself too.

Because, if I don't, I turn wretched.
I will.
And I'll continue to turn and turn, and, I know now there's no limit of how far I might go.

So, I'm just going to cut it out. From this new starting point of me and my Navy life. No more FTN! No more curses. No more Chainhauler man! Just, no more!

Comfortably Numb!

Ha!
Also, as for Senior… and what I just did?
Well, I guess this all has to do with the Old Navy. Those OG Navy rules. And since Senior is a top-of-the-line OG Squid, he knows the rules, and what he said to me

back then was a big no-no! So, I know damn well he's not going to turn me in, do something about it, or even bring it up. Mano-a-mano, he got what he deserved. And… ha! I guess… the Old Navy ways had its righteous uses and moments. Not always. But, enough still!

And I don't want the world to see me
'Cause I don't think that they'd understand
When…?

Oh great, this song again. I still don't know what song this is. Weird. And, since I know the lyrics, you'd think I'd be able to check them out. But, no, every time I remember the lyrics, I'm in the wrong circumstances to be able to check. And anytime I'm in the right circumstances, I'm unable to, because I won't remember to. Double weird.

Oh whatever!

I'm right now on my Jet. Waiting for my Flight Crew, going to launch Hanky and Panky, again. For the millionth time. But I'm starting to like this Military structure. And how it makes things out.
"Hey, Navastian, I heard the Flight Crew are at least going to take another 15 minutes. So, you don't have to stand at attention all that time." Says AM3 Rosario. And that now gets me relaxed. Good thing she told me. I probably would have rusted over like a tin man if I had stayed at attention for God knows how long. Nautical twilight purple skies hang over the Indian Ocean. And, it's a beautiful sight. A beautiful one, I enjoys. After today's workday, should go to the ET room and see if I can—
"Hey, Navastian, sorry about Barbarossa." Says Rosario.
"Huh, oh… yeah! It still hasn't completely registered that he's gone." I say.
I then notice Rosario giving me a look.
"What is it?" I ask. She hesitates. Don't know why. But does. And now seems like she'll ask any question, no matter what.

"What's your first name?"
"What… oh…
Gabriel. Why?"
But, seems like there's no reason to ask why.
"Oh, nothing she says."
I just continue eyeing the skies around me. Senior isn't up here yet, so, no reason to go straight to handwiping. At least for a little while. Hmm… Rosario still seems like she wants to chat.
"Oh, yeah… I'm Gabriel, but you can just call me Gab, what's your first name?" I formal.
And then she gives it to me:
"Oh… Bonita.

But… I don't really like that name… so I go by *Bonnie*."

Rosario then walks away… with a quintessential smirk. Pleasant and warm.
I'm… I'm… I don't know.

What just happened?
My ocean's feel different now.
Like I've… adapted. And now feel different. Adapted. And. I on the surface of my oceans, and I have no sense of what goes on in deep. And now, there's… there's that song again playing from the depths:

And I don't want the world to see me
'Cause I don't think that they'd understand
When everything's made to be broken

I just want you to know who I am
I just want you to know who I am

I just…?
…!

I remember now. I remember what song this is… it's….

WRITER

Raymond Deravakian

Memories are just where you laid them
Drag the waters till the depths give up their dead
What did you expect to find
Was there something you left behind
Don't you remember
Anything I said when I said
Don't….
Don't…?

Great, now I got a song stuck in my head. What is it though, hmm…?
☺

SYNOPSIS

AN Navastian is what you call in the US Navy a Sh*tbag. An unsat Sailor. Who either needs to get his sh*t together. That, or the Navy could eventual have his sh*t sent packing. Now aboard the aircraft carrier the USS Jimmy Carter, life can be a long and arduous one, where it can become very easy for anyone to fall into melancholy or malice. And, sometimes, madness. All AN Navastian needs to do now is survive, and all while dealing with a rowdy crew of Plane Captains, like himself; and an overbearing superior, that are both going to make life on the boat a living hell. And if that isn't enough, then there's the fact that AN Navastian's job is also an extremely dangerous one, working on F-14 Tomcats on the flight deck, where the simplest mistake made could be a death sentence. Overall, it's going to be a harrowing journey on board, as his ship sets sail to the Persian Gulf. All while dealing with conditions and circumstances that just might put an end to AN Navastian's Navy career before it's had much of a chance to really begin.

"A man thinks that by mouthing hard words
he understands hard things."
-Herman Melville