Images

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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Statement of Purpose

When I was four years old, my father asked me what I wanted for my fifth birthday. I told him that there was nothing I wanted more than to have my own camera. I got my wish: a black Polaroid instant camera. I remember taking pictures of everyone at my party that day. There was a certain magic in this new boxy contraption that could take images and develop them before my eyes, in a matter of seconds. The camera and I have had a love affair ever since. Last year when I studied in France, I traveled to places that I had only dreamed of before. I took pictures of everything I saw, hoping I'd be able to share them with people someday.

I started writing little poems when I was nine years old. My parents would usually post them on the bulletin board in our kitchen. Sometimes I would write little stories and make drawings to go with them. My grandmother usually took those and many are still in her house in Montana.

I have been creating images all my life in the form of photographs, poems, stories and drawings. I feel it is one of the things I do best. This project is a compilation of my original work combining poetry, short stories and photography; therefore, I am calling this project "Images."
The Water and Her Sister

This is how our love will be:

split chicken bones,
eyed branches snapping,
the transparent light of
Paris mornings coming through newspapers
and sweet raw meat.

ii.

There was a man who loved
a train so he threw himself into
a tunnel,
felt her wheels bearing over his body
and his own bones splitting,
the fragrance of blood and the color
upon the tracks
of lingering skin and metal.
Even after 8:00am foot prints
had long returned from work,
the scents came on heavy like shoulders
and decaying lilacs.

iii.
I will shape our love into
an origami swan
floating in a pool of black and
there stars will be—
burning themselves out from within
like the woman who wears a velour evening gown—
swaying like wheat.

iv.

Others eat breakfast while the girls in Venice
watch the men whose eyes are like turquoise
in their hands,
watching the water, and lustfully, the boats.
We will walk and love
while the women are like
the hills of Tuscany, loved by the men
as the sea loves the rocks
sunning themselves upon the shore—
women who taste like red wine,
their backs curving like seahorses—
for civilization has been made
from their feet.

v.

The hippopotamus dreams of rivers
flowing from her mouth and
naked legs which bathe beneath—
the stars dip their tips
in her river and men
wash their necks on the bank
and the hippo dreams of the clean water
washing over her rump—
and the calves she will have,
their eyes looking at her
like crescent moons.

vi.

After old women brush scarves
from their faces and after
the tears for dead husbands
laid out like balmy leather belts,
we will love
and it will be the last thing
we will know
before the stars close.
Solicitude
Un-fire

Your hair is the prairie wind which blows backwards
across the Dakotas
your arms stretching for miles across these
open plains reaching for babies on your back

and what would the white man know
of your tree bark skin brown—
as natural as stones
your polished face
strong reeds and
the sweat that gathers as
hot rain drops on your back
an offering to those gods those white men
tried to un-write, un-fire
poisoning your history with theirs
gasoline on pink salmon waters

the elk in their girlish fright spoke to
you
strong legs bounding across endless
blue sky
each burning wildflower
a crumpled sun
as strong as you
when earth's arms were soft as a cradle

who would know they
would destroy
the buffalo
teepees
build suburbs on your father's back
pay quarters for a blade of grass-
bones, as statues, eventually disappear

no one would remember the Indian beauty, those
who told stories huddled under an inky night
fire cinders in their eyes
while we try to squeeze purity
into an Evian bottle
but mother earth would never
criticize.
along the Seine
Waiting In Line to Die

The train change was in Tours
and our words became heavy
like suitcases
seeing those trunk legs
in green wool,
training off to some destination—
those young men standing in line
for death like government stamped sheep
wearing pulpy uniforms
and chests solid as black iron stoves.

One young man twiddled the silver
can opener attachment on his army knife,
another followed
a woman’s legs with appetite wetted pupils—
another thought about
those woman lips
he was leaving to spoil
like ripe peaches
on the windowsill.

A ginger-headed soldier’s strength
was a woven blanket,
to curl underneath
in darkness,
to protect his tender body
from boogey-men,
hoping to look strong
for women who were wet like the sky,
tears and mascara,
hoping their men would return with 2 legs

and no arms bitten off
by the war or
dead lips painted
with black dirt
and blood hardened up,
realizing the warm lines
of their boy hands
would not have
proper burials and the women,
as the Greeks know
a soul needs a proper burial.

I can hear those women crooning
from dark throats
like some blues song forgotten
wavering, deep and sassy,
as my friend and I watch
knowing if hate is not wiped up with cloths,
we could be those women.
Bearers of the Dead

Patrizia watches the man through the window.
Blackened fingernails fondle a rusty zipper as the man swivels his hips outward. He holds himself and relieves his bladder onto the corner of a white sandstone building.

A small child with carrot hair points. His eyes widen.
"Regard, Maman! Il pisse sur la batiment!"

His mother pulls the sleeve of his navy coat, uses her hands as a shield over his eyes, and finally nudges the boy in the opposite direction toward a carousel with different types of animals to ride.

"Mon cheri, regard pas l'homme. Est-ce que tu veux voir les animaux? Ils sont tellement beaux. J'aime l'elephant."

The child doesn't answer, but instead, twists his head backwards to see the man scratching at his torn blue jeans. The man sits behind a small, bent cardboard box that says, "Pour manger, merci."

The child points to the writing on the box and begs his mother to give the man a few francs so he can buy a bright, red lolly. The mother picks her child up and supporting him on her hip, walks in the opposite direction. The child continues to watch the man over his mother's shoulder as they disappear onto a narrow side street.

Patrizia sits with her lover inside a warm cafe, sipping her coffee, watching the people outside awkwardly navigate around each other and down the narrow alleyways. Soon she puts her hands over the top of her lover's newspaper to feed him an orange segment. She tries to laugh and put on a smile as the wet juice trickles down his chin and onto his gray trousers. He caresses her finely lotioned hand, avoiding those green eyes which have become a warehouse full of unhappiness.

"The coffee here is not as good as the coffee we get in our little cafe down the street. Don't you agree? These French...they just don't..."

His words trail off as he unfolds his newspaper again and starts to read the business section. She takes a burgundy mirror from her purse and probes her face to see what is revealed. Her eyes are more tired than before and the smile lines which were once bright have taken on a dull appearance. Her facial muscles threaten to crack when the faintest smile starts to wash across her face. She folds her image back into her mirror and slides it into her purse.

"Oh the coffee here is just fine, darling. Everything here is quite fine."

Patrizia watches the homeless man searching his pockets and, with his slow eyes, watching women in long coats. His charcoal colored hands find a discarded butt on the sidewalk. He takes a green lighter from his pocket and it sputters into a flame. He smokes the small bit of crumpled tobacco at the end of the cigarette; while the others pass by, never looking down. But Patrizia stares fascinated by this homeless man with his jacket worn out by night spent sleeping on the pavement, its dirt becoming a part of him and his shelter. It stains him just as the look of disease...
stains someone dying of cancer. She wonders how Franz can sit lazily behind his newspaper, disconnecting any emotion from the world.

Francesco smokes a cigarette from behind his newspaper. Patrizia accidentally drops her stirring spoon and splashes some coffee onto the table. A waiter, who watches from across the room, raises his eyebrows and motions to another waiter. Franz sternly looks through her.

“Well, Franz, I have never been quite right since the procedure and all you can do is sit and smoke behind that newspaper.”

She pours some milk into her coffee and avoids his gaze. She watches the liquid circle outwards and thinks of how the blood circled outwards in the toilet for days after the abortion. Francesco’s eyes cut her for a moment. until he shakes at his newspaper, and disappears into the business section again. The only movement at the table is the movement of his smoke, rising and curling, like a stretching cat, into the air.

“In the morning, you’re not the one who sees blood everywhere...blood on the walls, faces in the blood, and I can’t escape it. You don’t have a bloody predator to run from when you sit so calmly behind your newspaper day after day.”

Franz slaps the newspaper onto the table and runs a firm hand through his thick, black hair.

“We’ve had this conversation too many times before. I would like to try and put it behind me, but I can’t when you’re always bringing it up. The past is over, now forget it.”

He plays with his newspaper and stares at her. He motions to the waiter.

“Why don’t you have an anise? It will calm you.”

He chews the skin around the outside of his fingers. When the waiter arrives he says, “Deux anises, s’il vous plait.”

Patrizia mumbles under her breath. “Get me drunk, yes, that will solve everything. Let’s have a toast to a destroyed life, Franz.”

She looks out the window again. The man outside sleeps, using his cardboard box as a pillow. A thin crepe paper jacket covers his back. His arms are clutched together tightly. The used cigarette lays next to his hand and Patrizia imagines that he must be dreaming of his mother. When he came home from school on cold days his mother must have been waiting at the door, ready with small pastries and warm milk. She must have poured him mugs full of milk and wrapped her strong arms around him. Patrizia knows she would have been a mother like that. The man rolls over and wipes his beard. He reaches for some old newspapers to cover his legs. He coughs and settles back into his box pillow. She is sure that he is remembering.

The waiter returns with 2 anises. Franz gives Patrizia ‘drink the damn thing’ eyes. She covers the glass with her delicate hands and doesn’t drink. His eyes travel back behind the paper and his hands bring the tall glass of anise with him. Patrizia doesn’t drink because the licorice taste will bring it all back.

The night before the abortion, she drank 12 glasses of anise mixed with water. They were at their favorite bar. Their friends, the smiling wall posters of svelte, happy women, the taste of the anise in spotted drinking glasses, led her mind slowly
and deliriously away from thoughts of the operation. None of her friends had known and they all laughed around her as she wilted in their midst. Franz's slickly handsome friends eyed different women around the room while their girlfriends were deep in conversation about their office jobs or relationships. It was always the same situation: the girls wanted to be married and the boys hesitated. Always the same game. But they laughed; laughed like plastic faces around her, never noticing anything but the next drink or the next pair of legs in a mini-skirt. She privately clutched the rosary under the table asking to be forgiven. That night, after Franz carried her home, she vomited blood. She remembered the clear liquid coming out of her stomach, the emptiness and finally the blood. Each time she thought of that night, she felt driven to crouch her body over the rim again, sink her head into the water, and never come up for air.

Franz finally folded his newspaper up and put on his large, plaid overcoat. He dropped some change on the table and thanked the waiters. Patrizia wrapped her green, wool scarf around her neck. Franz opened the door and they descended a step into the square.

The homeless man was now stirring from under the newspapers. Patrizia watched him, her eyes like a mother hawk. He started to get up as their footsteps approached. Now she was able to see his face closely. His chin and cheeks were covered by an unkempt, gray beard. His eyes were piercing black ice. Patrizia could see the man's fine breath as he exhaled. Franz walked through the stale air admiring the square. Patrizia watched the man.

"The train doesn't leave until 11:00. Shall we have a bit of a walk?"

Patrizia followed Franz past the man who now seemed to be looking at their finely polished shoes with tortured eyes. Patrizia started to walk toward the man but Franz grabbed her arm.

"What do you think you can do?!"

Patrizia shook his arm off and walked calmly up to the man, smiling. She memorized his bushy brows, lined forehead and thin lips. She reached into her purse and spilled some change into his hands. The man said, "merci," and looked down into the money.

She returned to Franz. He grabbed her hand and said, "Come on. I'm losing my patience with you."

Patrizia stopped.

"Don't look through me. look into my eyes."

Franz continued to pull her along. Patrizia broke away from his grasp and stopped.

"How could you just ignore that human life back there? You ignore everything emotional."

He curled his lip, raised his hand into the air, as if to strike her, but she looked back with a dark stare and didn't move.

"You stupid girl. You're always worrying about things you cannot change. Always worrying about this and that. You only feel sorry for that man because you feel guilty. I don't want to hear another word. Come on."
He continued walking and she started to cry.
"You disgust me."
She wobbled away from him, across the square, gasping for air, shoulders slumped over, mascara forming gritty, grey pools in her hands. People watched her. Children pointed at her. But when Patrizia looked at them, all she saw were mothers holding hands with fetuses who eat candy.
Franz came after her and grabbed her by the shoulder.
"You're causing a scene! Bitch!" he hissed. "People are staring at you."
He grabbed her around the shoulders and pulled her toward the train; her arms, face, shoulders and legs, a marionette's as they crossed the square.
Burial At Sea

After the bodies sunk down cleanly,
After the faces bloated and blue
settled lightly between reefs of green,
the fish slick and shiny
poked at their skin,
nibbled at their cheeks like crackers
under the blue light of the water.
Occasionally flecks of sun passed like S waves
over these faces being unmade.
When the skulls were finally unwrapped
and naked under the water,
after the guts of whales were satisfied
the life of the reef came
to embrace the skulls
and move in between their eyes,
ondo their foreheads
like dim emeralds,
algae found a home
between their teeth,
the smaller fish wove
themselves in and out where
the eyes used to be and
the larger fish circled
the skulls' delicate bases
necklaces of lapis lazuli
so by the time the divers came, the bones had embraced the coral reef.
To You Sister—

In Remembrance of the Women of Bosnia

Her eyes are empty black bowls and her legs which drape across the bed are gray streaks on gov’t sheets.

The face is fine, cracked pottery being excavated by our fat American cameras—
but now only her back, covered by a white nightie flowered with blood provides the barrier and her back stares in shame at our fat, American cameras.

The brown hair that the opposing soldiers mopped the floor with sinks into her neck and

even though her face is turned toward the wall, the shame is delicately carved onto her back—
a beautiful portrait leftover from when those soldiers stabbed her body onto a cold
floor and each one
fucked his honor and pride
into her while sucking
the life out of her

leaving their "ethnically pure" stamp on
her skin
leaving "ethnically pure" babies growing--
tore her and re-assembled her
16 times...
their set of legos

and it makes
the perfect picture for TIME magazine
and our fat, American cameras.
The Range

When I was 12,
mountains seemed to turn
from brown to red to purple
and the rocks burn like a fresh fire
against the dry evening—
the dreams of wolves wounded hung in
the air—
these were the nights
the sun, shot by an ethereal hunter
limped to its resting place
in the west while
Father and I shined
Grandfather’s gun,
took the curling rope of highway
into the desert’s arms and set our cans.

During the shoot he told me of his first love—
Rosetta,
whose hair was the golden dust
that gathers under fingernails,
never leaves,
and she was the sharpest shoot
he’d ever known—– maybe one day
I’d be even better
and even though Mother didn’t approve of
a little girl handling a gun,
I held it steady.
Dad said I had eyes like the eagle--
desert creatures watched
as we lined the cans,
took our shots--
listened to the boom of
the guns shooting off the canyon walls
scattering lizards and disturbing
the sleep of a wise saguaro
to be reborn in our ears.
These were the evenings
we learned solitude together as only
this barren wasteland could teach.
An Ugly Poem

Mozart died
on a day full of wet paper.
No one noticed
just as they don't
notice Daedan the man
with railway teeth and
soggy shoes
who sits alone.

But he always notices,
like looking up from
Samuel Beckett's picture
and seeing the woman caught
in rain
delicate papyrus skin
covering capable breasts,
thick molasses eyes—
her hair a flock of geese
nestling in winter
along a frozen river bank.

And later, when she too
sees Beckett's picture—
she says
He was rather ugly,
Saetan says
not as ugly as I...
    not as ugly as I...
for she has just carried his
heart away without
noticing and
she smiles,
the stars flowing from her
mouth into her eyes

— then he knows
he cannot eat mandolins
with her
and as she goes
like water across smooth tile,
Saetan gives
himself back
to the river below.
Carnival Masks
Formula

Yesterday red suits
and gray ties stood
in this street with
sponge faced women
ears full of war, reaching out
for the milk the government
brought, and they were trying
to gather it in short-brimmed hats
those without containers,
a child looking up with black eyes,
sees all those furious arms gathering
the milk, and the tired bottoms of
faces above

out from the crowd lounges
disaster, picking her teeth, belly
satisfied with the slumping buildings
whose wires she left like entrails, watching
for the children who look for milk.
A Love Poem Revisited

I felt sorry for her most
when she was sleeping
all laid out like a throw-rug
on our 1950's style sofa
felt sorry for this
lipstick girl who drew suns
and kindergarten houses on our
bathroom mirror in pink
and when I'd correct with
supportive hands she'd shortle
"but my shrink says I have a right to be a bitch, ok?"
because she says she remembers:

her grandfather cumming on her face
and the whiteness of her Sunday dress that her mother
applied with wringing hands when she was 3 and
everyone's mouth stayed plugged tightly so no air
could escape,

But she plunged into
those memories with yellow, green, and blue
no red, on paper
And I felt sorry, because her boyfriend
told me, like an explorer,
this blond haired girlfriend
of his was just a barnacle on his coal,
and there are so many other girls out there
but he didn't tell her because he knew
her face would come crashing down,
but she knew, and so she slept
like some abandoned dog
on our plaid couch

sinking.
Train stop in Geneva.
An Ugly Story

Gordon lay reading across a green and beige plaid blanket which covered his bed. Sometimes, at night, he listened to the international time signal on a black short-wave radio which sat in the far corner of his dormitory room. Van Gogh, Lautrec and Dali prints covered the walls. Above his bed were three black and white aviation photographs from the 20's. He admired these women in the photographs with pin-curl hair, small outlined lips, and skinny waists set off by baggy pants. The shape of their mouths vaguely reminded him of the cherries he picked in his grandfather's backyard as a child. Gordon passed his nights in his narrow dorm room reading books by Flaubert, Sartre, and Camus. When he was younger, he was teased because of his teeth, which overlapped in the front, making large gaps at the side of his smile. His parents had always told him they'd "grow into" his mouth. He waited, looking in the mirror each day, to see if his teeth had been magically transformed into a magazine-perfect smile during the night. Instead, he only grew taller, and his jaw wider, which only made the gaps bigger.

Most nights he ate dinner with his sister, both of them crowded around his small writing desk, eating some sort of vegetable puree or casserole accompanied by bread and small pieces of bacon. Sometimes they listened to the short-wave during dinner, grumbling as the world news reports announced a famine, flood, or war. Gordon patiently chewed his meal, always caught in his own little world, as he would clean his plate with the bread and finish off the last bits of bacon. They rarely had visitors, but were happy to receive them when they did come.

When the girl had come the night before, she was the first pretty girl to smile at him and keep a straight face when she caught a glimpse of his teeth. His sister hid behind her mousy hair. They had never had a visitor like that, and the pretty girl had brilliant golden hair, and eyes Gordon thought much like the color of the sunflower stalks in one of his Van Gogh prints. She had pink cheeks and beautiful, large teeth that seemed to ask him to come closer when she smiled at him. She had come with one of his student friends in the dorm who had wanted to introduce her. Gordon smoothed his hair and blushed after he shook her delicate, warm hand. He offered them tea and they stood hand in hand as he boiled a kettle of water on an old hot plate. She looked around the room and inquired about the girls in the photographs. She said her favorite was the painting of a sunset by his window.

Gordon explained, "I wanted an ocean sunset in my room, and since I couldn't have a real one, I asked my friend to paint one."

His sister sat in the far corner of his room watching her like a jealous bird.

The girl walked over to his plywood bookshelf and ran her fingers over the tops of the books. When she came to Sartre she casually said, "He didn't believe in love either."

Gordon poured the tea into blue and white china cups and handed them to her boyfriend. "Don't you think she is the most beautiful girl you have ever seen?" her boyfriend said as he handed her a cup.

"Oh, hush. Gordon, would you mind if I took a look at some of these books?"

"Please, help yourself."
She pulled a book from the shelf and flipped through some of the pages. He watched her fingers press against this book which he had found in the bottom of a dingy box at a used book store. It had been marked down to a quarter and Gordon couldn't leave without this book which displayed a slightly torn, orange cloth cover. It was one of his favorites, as it contained dreary black and whites of various artists and authors from the earlier part of the century. He especially liked the skin of the book, which, apparently from much use, was now visible on one of the corners where some of the orange cloth had been worn away.

"Look at this. Here are some pictures of the existentialists. I adore Camus."

She sat down on the bed with the book. Gordon stood above her while her boyfriend cuddled in close to her and pointed to a picture of Samuel Beckett.

"He was ugly."

"Yes, but not as ugly as I." said Gordon, only half jokingly.

She turned the page and sipped at her tea.

"Have you read Les Mots?"

"No."

"Oh. Well, personally, I adore Sartre's pessimism toward love."

"Yes."

Gordon caught her eye for an instant and then averted his gaze feeling as if her eyes were as piercing as the Medusa's. He began to feel uneasy, but kept a confident facade. He couldn't let his friend in on his secret. She continued sipping at her tea and thumbing the yellowed pages of book. Gordon turned his back for an instant and no sooner did she have her nose up to Van Gogh's "Starry Night."

"He was cool."

"My girl, he simply wasn't cool, he was a genius."

The girl closed the book, finished the last drop of tea, which had become cold, and pulled her boyfriend up from the bed.

"It was nice meeting you. I hope we can meet again soon."

Gordon prepared himself for bed as soon as the couple left. He crawled into the cold, white sheets alone, trying to concentrate on the girl's teeth. It took a while for the bed and Gordon's navy pajamas to warm up. He pretended a brown, square throw pillow was her head, even though it lacked her nose and beautiful teeth. When he dreamt, they were in a field of Van Gogh's sunflowers. She was running ahead of him, her blue cotton dress floating in the air. She moved like a cloud, covering surfaces in her shadow, enveloping everything. Her hair was more bright than the sun, trailing like a comet behind her. She smiled at him as she ran. Then he awoke.

He hit his pillow once and buried his head under the sheets, hoping the dream would return. It was 7:00 a.m. and the cool, morning light was creeping like fingers over his carpet, until finally it reached his bed. He got up, pulled on some jeans and went over to the sink to wash his face. He did not look in the mirror, as he didn't want to be reminded of his face, which would look even more hideous next to the memory of hers. He brushed his teeth and ran wet fingers through his hair. An hour later, he left for his comparative literature course.

When Gordon's sister came for dinner, the pictures had been taken off the wall.

"What did you do that for? I thought you loved those aviation girls..."
"None of your business, is it?"
"Since when did you start keeping secrets from me?"
Gordon stared at the blank portion of wall above his bed where the photos used to be.

"She'd never love you, Gordon."
"Shut up."
"It's true! Just LOOK at yourself!"
"Just shut up and leave, you don't have to make it worse."
His sister slammed the door behind her.

Gordon stood in front of a small mirror above his white porcelain sink. He took a toothbrush out of a box sitting on his shelf, applied green toothpaste, brushed his gappy teeth and spit. He decided to face his image in the mirror. He touched his acne scarred cheeks and ran his index finger over his thick brown bone. He cursed his eyes and put his finger on his nose to make it appear smaller in profile. He straightened his shoulders, sucking his stomach in and tried to put a slight smile on his face without showing his teeth. He wet his hair with water from the long, silver faucet and tried to smooth down its coarse texture, mumbling to himself, "Just my luck having hair like a brillo pad." He stood on his tip toes to make himself appear taller, even if it was just for an instant. He left the mirror feeling completely shattered.

When the girl returned with her boyfriend after a few days, the first thing Gordon said to her was, "Welcome to my lovely room again. I guess my seductive decorating had worked- it lured you back."

"Where did the pictures go?" she asked.
After the dream, he had felt something changed inside of him, so he had torn those pictures off the wall and hidden them inside his closet. The aviator girls didn't smile at him the same way she did.

"Oh those were just on loan from the friend who painted my beautiful sunset," he lied, "he decided to take them back."
Gordon shrugged and became hot with embarrassment.
"That's a shame."
She walked over to his bookshelf and asked if she could see his orange covered book again. She removed it from the shelf and sat down on his bed which had been sloppily made that morning. The two boys joked as she read. The girl looked up from her book, piercing Gordon with her bright green eyes.

"I heard you can recite some poems in old English."
"I'm not good, really."
"Oh please? I'd really love to hear one."
"Well...ok...I'll do just one."
Gordon enthusiastically broke into a poem in German. He waved his hands in the air, softened his voice, gradually became louder, and brought the poem to a crescendo. When he finished, she clapped wildly, and to him, her smile seemed to spill joy into his room. He wished he could keep her.

"You were really wonderful! Can you do some regional dialects?"
"I suppose."
"Oh do some for me!"
"Ok here's a southerner that gets lost in Boston and has to ask for directions:
   'Hey ya'll, I need some dee-recktions ta git back ta the sowth!'
   'Well, huhney, that's yoyr pwoblem- and wheh did you geht those ovoyalls?? The Salvaytion Ahmy?!
She laughed and said, "You're really talented. Where did you learn to do dialects that well?"
   "I just imitate what I see on TV...it's no big deal."
   "You should do something with those."
   "It's a long drive back to your university, so maybe we should be going," said her boyfriend, sharply ending the conversation.
   "I didn't even realize what time it was," she said, looking at her watch.
   They stood up and walked over to the door.
   "It has been really great talking with you, Gordon."
   He smiled, being comfortable for the first time with his teeth, and leaned against one of his gray storage cabinets watching her as she looked around as if to memorize the room. She walked toward the shelf where the box sat and reached out to touch it with white fingers. It was about eight inches high and rectangular, the color of African violets and looked as if it had been made around the turn of the century. It was painted with colorful advertisements for chocolates, milk, India tea and flour.
   Gordon said, "Do you like it?"
   "I love it!"
   He opened the box's lid and dumped toothbrushes, scented yellow soaps, a razor and a blue comb onto the shelf. He wiped the box off with a towel, stood directly in front of her with outreached hands saying, "Here, have it. It would really mean more to me if you took it."
   "I couldn't possibly do that. You were using it..."
   He pressed closer to her and urged her with his eyes.
   "It would mean a lot to me if you would take it."
   She took the box into her small hands and caressed its edges. She opened the lid to find a tin interior which had been polished into a brassy color and mirrored her faint reflection as the box caught the light. Now she smiled and that smile flowed into her eyes and lit up her entire face. Her hair seemed illuminated, and she shone all over. She captured the stars in her pupils and gave them like a gift, to him.
   "Thank you. You don't know how much this means to me."
   Her boyfriend, looking jealous, clamped onto her hand.
   "We really should be going."
   Those words which drifted out his window seemed swallowed on the black horizon. Gordon was alone again. He hadn't eaten dinner with his sister since the first time the girl had come to visit. He sat at the corner of his bed, shoulders hanging, elbows on knees, looking at the combs and razors and toothbrushes he had dumped out of the box the night before. The toothbrushes sulked, while the soaps lay scattered, seeming to search for a direction and by looking at them, unmoved, he felt a link with the girl.
   Finally his sister came.
   "I heard that you gave one of our antiques away."
"So?"

"So she made a complete joke out of you. I'm surprised you're not today's laughing stock around the dorm! You probably sat there like a grinning fool and just handed over the box as if it were some dime store thing."

Gordon turned his back and stared at the blank spot on the wall where the aviation girls used to smile.

"Too ashamed to answer? Beautiful girls only come to exploit people like you."

She walked over to the window, lifted the lower pane, and lit up a cigarette.

"Want one?"

"You know I don't smoke."

"Ahhh so now Mr. Lemon Mouth talks. Just don't forget who your real friends are."

Gordon hit the desk pushing the toothbrushes, the comb, sending the soaps flying, he fell down to the floor and curled into a fetal position, rocking himself back and forth. His sister stared out the window before closing it lightly, and leaving the room. He pulled at the carpet and cursed. After a while, he crawled over to the closet, retrieved the photographs, and tore them to pieces. All of the cherry lips and eyes and delicate noses were all out of order. He opened his window, threw them out, and they all fluttered like confetti at a wedding. Gordon turned from the window and muttered to himself, "some puzzles can never be put back together again."
"Lorsque le monde entier reconnait la beauté comme beauté, ceci est la laideur elle-même." -d'après le Tao Teh Ching

Les Enfants QUICK

"Quand j'étais jeune, les gens pouvaient aller pendant la journée se détendre dans des espaces libres que l'on appelait "parcs" sans s'inquiéter du poison ni d'attraper le cancer de la peau. Oui, il fut un temps où les espaces libres existaient. Il y avait de l'herbe et des arbres à perte de vue. Dans mon jardin, il y avait un vieux peuplier dont les rameaux se dressaient vers le ciel. En été, papa y accrochait une corde à laquelle était attachée une robuste planche et nous nous amusions dehors dans le soleil couchant pendant des heures. A l'époque, nous n'avions pas besoin de porter de masques à gaz, et ils n'étaient pas non plus à la mode. Certes, l'air et l'eau commençaient à être pollués, mais ce n'était que le début. C'était avant que les pays développés ne soient surpeuplés, avant que chaque habitant de la terre n'ait eu une voiture, et avant que la population n'ait triple en seulement 50 ans. Ouais, c'était les jours où...

M. Shortbread se levait les yeux de son bureau et il arrangeait le texte qu'il dictait à son ordinateur.

"Classe ça sous le nom 'le monde' et imprime le tout de suite, ordinateur."

Il jeta un coup d'œil aux tomates et aux melons d'intérieur qui venaient bien sous le nouveau système de lumières artificielles que des chercheurs avaient inventées l'année dernière. Il quitta sa chaise et se promena dans la salle en clôpinant, se parlant à lui-même dans des phrases hachées. Aidé d'une canne de bois synthétique, il faisait des pas prudents.

"Ouais, ces melons ne ressemblent pas à ceux que l'on avait quand j'étais petit. Fichue couche d'ozone! Il a fallu que ces ignorants, hmmm... Qu'est-ce que c'est que ça? Ahhh. Ce n'est qu'une tomate plus rouge et plus grosses que les autres. Les
manipulations génétiques. Ça n'est toujours pas si bon que celle que ma mère avait cultivée dans notre jardin. Ça a le goût de plastique. Il a fallu que cette fichue couche d'ozone disparaisse. Enfin, l'espoir, c'est pas n'importe quoi. C'est un grand sac plein de vide. Espérer, ouais, toujours espérer, j'espérais que mes petits enfants pouvaient aller jouer au dehors un jour."

M. Shortbread alla faire un tour de laboratoire des fruits et légumes en marmonnant, se mettant à son travail quotidien en se rappelant du monde d'autrefois. Mlle V venait justement de lui écrire. Elle avait dit de lui que c'était un vieux fou, tout comme le reste des employés. Cependant, il faisait son travail, il avait même gardé des notes détaillées sur les recherches génétiques.

* * * *

Gurbles faisait un tour de la salle annexe en titubant. Il jeta un coup d'oeil aux nouveaux appareils de croissance.

"Venez ici Mlle V, je vous en prie. Est-ce que ces courbes de croissance vous paraissent normales?"

Mlle V, une femme élancée, portait son uniforme traditionnel vert ce jour-là. Elle s'approcha pour voir à l'intérieur de l'un de ces appareils de croissance.

"Bien, Gurbles, notre client a demandé des cheveux couleur d'or et des yeux violets. Je ne suis pas sûre que l'on obtienne la bonne teinte pour les yeux. Je pense que c'est cette imbécile de Smith #54 qui a composé le caryotype de celui-là. Je croyais leur avoir dit de la licencier. Si nous avons de la chance, les yeux du foetus seront violets."

"Si ce n'est pas le cas, le vendrons-nous à Antonio? Nous devrions en demander un bon prix."
Sally et Bill entrèrent par la porte principale du bâtiment. Ils s'assirent dans une grande salle blanche stérilisée. La réceptionniste retourna à son poste.

"Gurbles et Mlle V vont vous rejoindre dans un instant."

Sally feuilleta des catalogues de couleurs.

"Regarde toutes les nuances dont nous avons le choix... c'est comme si on choisissait de la peinture! Je l'adore!"

Bill s'assit, silencieux, puis il parcourut du regard les magazines. Sally cherchait une couleur qui aurait été un intermédiaire entre celle des cheveux de sa mère et celle de sa tante.

"M. et Mme Jones, Gurbles et Mlle V sont prêts à vous recevoir. Veuillez me suivre."


Mlle V tira des feuilles blanches du tiroir qui se trouvait sur le côté du bureau.

"La première feuille est un contrat qui stipule que vous ne devrez parler à personne des procédures que vous verrez derrière ces portes. La seconde dit que nous ne pourrons être tenus pour responsables, et le troisième que vous devrez respecter ce contrat."

Sally regarda Bill et dit, "Je signe ou tu signes?"

"Et si tu signais la première? Je signerais les deux autres?"

Sally et Bill parcoururent les documents du regard et signèrent.

"Bien, commençons," dit Mlle V.
Gurbles apporta d'autres échantillons de couleurs et les étala sur le bureau métallique.

"Avez-vous décidé de la couleur des cheveux et des yeux, M. et Mme Jones?" demanda Gurbles.

"Eh bien, pas vraiment...nous ne faisions que jeter un coup d'œil. Je pense que vous êtes là pour...nous aider à choisir."

"Si cela ne vous fait rien, Mme Jones, je serais curieuse de savoir pourquoi vous avez décidé de vous adresser à nos services," dit Mlle V. "J'aime poser cette question à tous nos clients, enfin...si je ne m'impose pas..."

"Eh bien, à vrai dire, je suis une de ces femmes qui sont à la mode, Mlle V. Pensez au passé. Autrefois, il n'était pas possible d'avoir un bébé parfait qui ait eu les caractéristiques que nous désirons. J'ai toujours aimé avoir une maison conçue à mon goût, et pourquoi ne pas avoir un bébé conçu de même?"

Bill consentit ça, "Oui, Sal et moi sommes tous deux des gens qui aiment l'esthétique et il ne nous est pas possible d'imaginer que Sal prenne du poids, même si c'est temporaire. Nous préféérions qu'elle conserve son adorable tour de taille !"

Sally sourit, "Et vous savez, ma grand-mère m'a raconté des histoires horribles à propos des vergetures, et franchement, je ne pense pas qu'avoir un ventre rond comme une montgolfière dont ma grand-mère me l'avait dit une fois, me convienne. De plus, je ne supporte pas la douleur. Je me souviens de cette vieille bande dessinée que j'ai lue et où il y avait une femme qui disait qu'avoir un bébé, c'est comme faire passer une orange à travers une narine. Je pense que c'est la raison pour laquelle je suis ici aujourd'hui."

Mlle V prenait des notes et disait, "Je vois."

Gurbles leur montra des couleurs en disant, "Voulez-vous commencer à choisir les couleurs?"
"Bill et moi voulons un enfant blanc. Notre choix c'est porté sur une fille. En ce qui concerne la couleur de la peau, nous aimerions une teinte assez pâle, mais pas jaunâtre, ou maladive."

Gurbles leur montra la couleur de peau numéro 156.

"Un grand nombre de nos clients ont été très satisfaits de cette teinte. Mlle V, apportez donc le système informatique de composition d'images. Nous allons commencer à dresser un portrait."

Une image en trois dimensions vint à l'écran. Mlle V introduisit le code de couleur 156 et la peau apparut sur l'image.

Sally serra le bras de Bill et dit, "N'est-ce pas adorable? C'est exactement ce que je veux!"

"Maintenant, aux yeux. À quelles couleurs avez-vous pensé, M. et Mme Jones?"

Sally leva les yeux au plafond et dit, "Je voudrais quelque chose d'unique qui s'accorde avec les cheveux...une couleur que les autres filles lui envient, et qui lui donne une grande popularité."

"Nous avons une très belle teinte de bleu, Mme Jones. C'est la couleur que prenait la Méditerranée à la fin du printemps, avant que cette mer ne devienne le réservoir de déchets toxiques qu'elle est actuellement aujourd'hui, ah ah, tenez, la voilà, c'est le numéro 203. Comme vous pouvez le constater, c'est une teinte claire et vive, avec une nuance de vert, ce qui ne l'empêche pourtant pas d'être une couleur profonde."

Sally regarda Bill avec adoration.

"Qu'est-ce que tu en penses, chéri?"

"C'est pas mal...ça s'accord presque avec le papier peint qui se trouve derrière ma collection nautique virtuelle."

Gurbles ajouta, "J'ai aussi cet adorable marron...le numéro 560...comme vous pouvez le voir, c'est une couleur riche et claire à laquelle les mouchetures dorées ajoutent de la profondeur...c'est, devrais-je dire, la sorte des yeux marron qui attire la vue."
Bill dit, "Hmmm...ceux-ci ne seraient pas mal non plus."

"Il y a aussi une option complètement différente que Miss V et moi-même sommes en train d'expérimenter...c'est tout nouveau et c'est très plaisant. Tout d'abord, on prend une couleur, essayons par exemple la couleur numéro 203, et on prend deux autres que l'on mélange à la #203 pour créer une structure mosaïque. Le résultat ressemble assez aux vieilles tuiles italiennes qui avaient une forme de mosaïque, et que l'on peut voir dans les livres d'histoire informatiques. Laissez-moi vous la montrer."

Mlle V entra la couleur #203 dans l'ordinateur, la recouvrit avec #340, la couleur d'or, et puis #14, une turquoise; ensuite elle pressa deux touches et les couleurs se fondirent en un motif sur la couleur #203.

"Pour l'instant, ceci reste au niveau expérimental, et il nous est donc impossible de dire comment ces couleurs se fonderont 'dans la matière'...heh heh, un peu d'humour génétique, mais nous pensons que notre ordinateur effectue une simulation assez réaliste," dit Gurbles.

Sally et Bill se regardaient, muets d'admiration.

"Bill, c'est la couleur que j'aimerais. J'aime cette sorte de mosaïque...penses-y: on pourrait même carreler sa chambre de sorte à ce qu'elle s'accorde avec ses yeux. Ça serait amusant, non?"

"C'est vraiment étonnant, j'aimerais bien que mon ordinateur personnel puisse faire ce truc. Allons-y, prenons ça."

"Il y a des millions d'autres combinaisons de couleurs, vous savez. Ne voudriez-vous pas en essayer une autre?"

Sally et Bill se regardèrent l'un l'autre, et ils haussèrent les épaules.

Sally dit, "Non, je pense que je n'aurais pu faire du meilleur travail moi-même. On prend ces couleurs."

Mlle V entra les indications dans l'ordinateur. A présent, l'image avait une tête avec la peau de couleur #156 et les yeux de couleurs combinées.
"Et pour la couleur des cheveux?"

"Eh bien, pour commencer, j'aimerais une couleur de cheveux qui soit 'unie.' J'aimerais que ma petite fille ait des cheveux qui soient de la même couleur de la racine à la pointe. Je veux qu'ils soient abondants."

"Ca n'est sera pas un problème, Mme Jones. Et pour la couleur?"

"Bill et moi voulons une couleur qui se rapproche de celle que les femmes ont de mon côté. Elles ont de très beaux cheveux noirs. Etant donné que Bill est blond, il y a très peu de chances pour que notre fille ait des cheveux noirs."

"Comme vous pouvez le constater, nous avons plus de 2000 nuances de noir."

Sally promena son doigt sur certaines couleurs. Elle les examina jusqu'à ce qu'elle en ait trouvé une qui lui a plu, et elle indique la couleur préférée.

"Celle-la me plaît! Le numéro 1,329... elle est parfaite."

"Mme Jones, je dois admettre que c'est une de mes préférées. Cette couleur a la profondeur de celle d'un ciel nocturne; pourtant, lorsqu'on la regarde de plus près, on peut y voir une nuance de bleu-violet."

Bill lisait un magazine sur la pêche alors que Mlle V entrait dans l'ordinateur la couleur numéro 1,329. Une longue chevelure au volume parfait prit place sur les épaules du personnage qui était à l'écran.

Mlle V dit par réflexe, "C'est une fille saisissante!"

"Oh, mais c'est loin d'être fait, mes chers... à présent, nous devons chercher des traits pour son visage... je pense que vous serez tout à fait satisfaits du choix que nous vous proposons car il est ILLIMITE! Dites-nous le nom de la célébrité du personnage de tableau ou de la statue que vous préférez, et nous pouvons en faire un double pour vous."

Sally tira la magazine des mains de Bill et dit, "Ecoute un peu! Nous avons l'occasion de faire de notre future petite fille LA PLUS BELLE du monde!"

Bill se leva les yeux, étonné.
"Mais chérie, la beauté est une chose si...ce que je trouve beau n'est pas forcément ce que tu trouves joli. Je pense que nous devrions lui donner un visage qui ne soit pas désagréable à regarder et qui ne soit jamais démodé."

Bill commença à caresser le bout des doigts de Sally.

Gurbles dit, "Avez-vous pensé au visage des statues grecques classiques? Ce type de visage ne se démode jamais. Personnellement, je vous conseille de penser à un nez classique, comme celui de la Vénus de Milo."

Sally regarda le nez en question.

"C'est vrai, il est joli et en plus, il est célèbre."

Mlle V rajouta le nez au visage qui était sur l'image.

"Je vous suggère des lèvres dont la couleur rappelle celle des boutons de rose."

Bill et Sally y acquiescèrent. Mlle V rajouta les lèvres à l'image. Elles étaient un peu charnues, sans pour autant l'être trop.

"Et la forme du visage? Nous avons la forme en cœur, la forme carée, ovale, triangulaire, des pommettes hautes, basses et nous pouvons aussi les modifier pour obtenir ce que vous désirez."

Sally dit, "A moins que Bill ne soit pas d'accord avec moi, j'aimerais un beau visage de forme carrée avec une mâchoire plus étroite et des pommettes très hautes, saillantes et bien dessinées."

Bill pressa la main de Sally. "Chérie, tu fais comme il te plaît. De toute façon, j'aimerai notre petit fille peu importe qui qu'elle soit et a quoi elle ressemble."

Mlle V ajouta ces qualités à l'image.

"Maintenant, les sourcils...clairsemés, touffus, arrondis, en pointe, bas, haute..."

Sally interrompit Gurbles.

"Gurbles, je veux des sourcils qui soient clairsemés, hauts sur le visage et qui forment une ravissante courbe, un peu comme ceux des femmes que l'on voit sur les tableaux des années 1920..."
Mlle V installa les sourcils sur l'image. L'image était complète.

"A présent, il lui faut un corps."

Bill se redressa brusquement dans sa chaise.

"C'est maintenant que j'interviens. Je ne veux pas un corps qui ai des attributs trop généreux comme ceux des robots à sexe. Je n'ai pas envie de passer ma vie à chasser des hommes qui lui tournent autour avec mon pistolet laser."

Le visage de Sally se contorsionna de déception.

"Je croyais que tu m'avais dit que je pourrais choisir le corps que je veux, Bill."

Sally et Bill se disputaient pendant que Mlle V et Gurbles visionnaient les différentes possibilités concernant les caractéristiques du corps. Après avoir considéré toutes les options, Mlle V mit sous la tête le corps de la Vénus de Milo et une paire de bras.

Gurbles dit, "M. et Mme Jones, je trouve que le corps de la Vénus va très bien. Regardez: elle est classique, bien proportionnée, elle n'aura pas à être complexée par son corps plus tard dans la vie."

Mlle V tira d'autres feuilles du tiroir. "Ce sont les avantages dont vous bénéficierez lorsque vous aurez votre enfant. Vous remarquez qu'elle sera immunisée contre toutes les maladies, même contre le rhume le plus banal. Il lui sera donc impossible de trouver un prétexte pour rester à la maison au lieu d'aller à l'école ou au travail. Elle aura la masse musculaire maximale qu'une femme puisse avoir. Elle sera grande et il ne lui sera pas possible de prendre du poids. Elle n'aura pas d'acné pendant la puberté. Ses cycles menstruels commenceront le jour de ses 14 ans et elle atteindra sa ménopause à l'âge de 60 ans. Lorsqu'elle mourra, ce sera d'une cause naturelle ou d'un accident. Nous garantissons qu'elle ne pourra décéder des suites d'une maladie stupide comme le cancer. Elle devrait mourir paisiblement lorsqu'elle aura à peu pres 100 ans, lorsque ses organes seront usés. Mlle V tendit les feuilles à Sally. A présent, Sally, nous allons prélever quelques uns de vos ovules afin d'en modifier un selon vos désirs. L'opération ne va
prendre que quelques minutes. Veuillez me suivre. M. Jones, vous pouvez rester avec Gurbles."

Bill suivit des yeux Sally qui sortait de la salle avec Mlle V.
"Je pense a toi, chérie."
Elles disparurent derrière une porte dans un autre secteur du bâtiment. Mlle V conduisit Sally dans des couloirs bleus éclairés par des néons.
"Ce n'est pas très bon pour mon maquillage, Mlle V. Vous devez détester travailler dans cette section.
"Je ne porte jamais de maquillage, donc ça ne me dérange pas. C'est par là." Elles entrèrent dans la salle où M. Shortbread travaillait.
"C'est M. Shortbread et c'est la salle où nous cultivons les fruits que nous avons obtenus par manipulation génétique. J'aimerais dresser votre portrait à M. Shortbread car c'est lui qui va suivre l'évolution génétique du foetus.
"Bonjour, M. Shortbread. Mon nom est Sally. Il me semble que vous faites un travail passionnant dans cette salle."
M. Shortbread était en train d'examiner l'une des plantes. Il se leva les yeux pour voir Sally.
"Ah oui. Ravi de vous connaître m'dame."
"Prenez bien note de ce que je vais vous dire, M. Shortbread."
"Oui."
"Sally a 27 ans. Son mari, Bill, a 32 ans. Elle mesure 1 m. 58 et pèse 43 kilogrammes. Elle vient de s'adresser à nous car elle n'est pas satisfaite de ses dispositions génétiques et elle veut une fille parfaite."
"A mon avis, tout devrait aller pour le mieux avec elle. C'est une gentille petite fille."
"Allons, un peu de professionnalisme, M. Shortbread. Vous vous occuperez du foetus. Vous surveillerez l'incubateur dans lequel il se développera et vous prendrez des
notes détaillées tout au long de sa croissance. Nous allons utiliser des techniques relativement récentes. C'est pourquoi il est important pour Sally et moi que vous nous consacriez toute votre attention."

"Bien sûr, Mlle V. C'est mon travail."

"Très bien. A 21h00, M. Shortbread."

"Au revoir, M. Shortbread. J'ai été ravie de faire votre connaissance!"

Mlle V conduisit Sally dans une autre section du bâtiment. Elles entrèrent dans une petite salle. Elle était tres bien éclairée et contenait d'étranges ustensiles qui étaient posées sur des tables. Une grande table équipée de sangles était au milieu de la pièce. Sur le côté se trouvait une autre salle, plus petite.

"Il faudrait que vous alliez dans cette petite salle et que vous vous déshabilliez. Vous passerez l'un des peignoirs métalliques que vous trouverez à l'intérieur. Lorsque vous aurez fini, revenez ici."

Sally entra dans la petite salle et ferma la porte derrière elle. Pendant ce temps, Mlle V se glissa dans un combinaison métallique. Elle prit des gants et un masque. Elle prépara les ustensiles dont elle aurait besoin. L'une d'elles était longue, étroite et présentait une meche en son extrémité. Une autre ressemblait à une seringue. Sally rentra dans la salle.

"Seigneur! Mlle V, vous paraissez tout à fait différente dans cette combinaison. C'est un déguisement?"

Non, c'est seulement pour des raisons d'hygiène. Il faudrait que vous vous allongiez sur la table."

Sally s'allongea et chercha la position la plus confortable sur la table métallique.

"Eh bien, si vous vendiez des lits, je ne crois pas que je vous en achèterez!"

Mlle V ne sourit pas.

"Cela ne va durer que quelques minutes. Je vais vous donner un anesthésiant; vous vous réveillerez à peu près dans 15 minutes."
Mlle V injecta un produit dans le bras de Sally. Celle-ci s'endormit aussitôt. Mlle V effectua l'opération et mit les ovules dans un appareil de conservation. Un quart d'heure plus tard, Sally se réveilla, un peu désorientée.

"Oh vous l'avez fait? Je ne sens aucune différence."

Ses bras et ses pieds étaient attachés.

"Pouvez-vous me détacher?"

Mlle V ôta les sangles.

"A présent, vous pouvez aller vous habiller."

Après avoir remis ses vêtements, s'être lavé le visage et s'être regardée dans un miroir pour voir si quelque chose avait changé dans son apparence, elle rejoignit Bill. Au moment où elle penetra dans la salle, Gurbles disait, "Vous pouvez retournez chez vous maintenant. Je vous contacterai dans six semaines pour vous donner des nouvelles de la croissance. Je vous conseille de la conduire à la maison. Il est possible que Sally soit encore un peu faible à cause de l'anesthésie."

Lorsque Bill et Sally sortirent, elle fut sur le point de s'évanouir à cause du produit. Bill l'aida à se diriger vers leur voiture électrique.

"Regarde, Sal, il pleut sur la bulle aujourd'hui. Je me demande comment c'est en dehors."

Sally s'évanouit dans ses bras. Il la déposa doucement dans la siège de la voiture. Elle dormait profondément. Il caressa de la main les cheveux noirs de sa femme, ses joues, puis ses lèvres.

"Sally je sais que nous n'avons pas eu un mariage normal. Nous ne voulions pas respecter la tradition, mais je me souviens de certaines paroles que l'on prononçait hors de la cérémonie d'un mariage traditionnel le siècle dernier... pour le meilleur et pour le pire, dans la richesse comme dans la pauvreté, dans la santé comme dans la maladie, jusqu'à ce que la mort nous sépare. C'est ce que je t'ai promis pour toujours. Je te trouve tellement
belle... ça ne me fait rien si tu prends un peu de poids à cause d'un bébé, oui, j'aime vraiment tout de toi."

Bill embrassa tendrement les lèvres de Sally et lui caressa la main. Elle commença à reprendre connaissance. Elle regarda Bill d'un air un peu surpris.

"Bill, pourquoi tu me regardes comme ça? Qu'est-ce qui est arrivé?"

"Je viens de comprendre quel point je t'aime."

"Oh... c'est adorable... mais, qu'est-ce qui t'a fait réfléchir à ça?"

Pour toute réponse, Bill sourit et prit la place du conducteur. Il prit le tunnel qui conduisait au nord vers leur quartier résidentiel, qui était sous la protection de la bulle.

"Repose-toi, chérie. Nous serons bientôt à la maison."