

### 3. THE SCARIEST STORY

This is the scariest novel that you will ever read. This is not a nightmare. A nightmare is a dream and you can always wake up from a dream, here the fear is permanent. You wake up and it is even worse than what you have experienced in your nightmare. It is worse than the night before.

You open your car, and there is a someone inside. You look outside your window at night and there is a face staring back at you. He is on a hill looking down on you. He is watching your every move that you make.

This is the harm that will come to your children. We will upset your legacy. This is the most disastrous event that could ever happen to you. You will be lost in deep space, and no one will be able to rescue you. Fear comes when you pull the mask off the monster, and his face is all too familiar. And when you scream to be set free, you'll agree to any torture just to get you the relief that you crave.

To really know who is behind it all, you would have to change your life. Change it, just to see that you are the ripper that haunts the moors of your mind. But that is too much to admit. So you keep searching for the boogeyman who stirs in your nightmares. It is always someone else, never yourself. You are too comfortable to peel the last veil off your desires to reveal that you are the mad dog at the gates of hell.

There is no hope. Not when you've seen how deeply you are implicated in all the dastardly deeds that you witness second by second. That each turn of the TV remote records every evil intent on your part. And the more that you can satisfy your craving, the faster you engage your options. Pause, zoom in, enjoy. We know who you are and what you are really up to.

You will not be able to dismiss our interference as out of hand. We are the only ones who can save you from yourself. We are defending you against your own aggression. We are not here to haunt you. We are here to protect you. You cannot question our motives. It is not reasonable to think about what we are really doing. Concentrate on your enemies. That is why we are here. We need to distract you.

You always have something to hide. There are all those mischievous thing that you have plotted. You have left clues all around. Give us a chance and we can manufacture a case against you. It's all about your intent. You may put on the face of concern. Strip away the mask and you have a heart of perfidy.

You're a danger to society. You veer outside the lines, you are a risk to the oncoming cars. You are ready to push your neighbors to confrontation. You covet their goods. You feel greedy. You want what you don't have. You have resolved that you will satisfy those desires. It's just a matter of time before you act out your envy. It shows in your face. Shine a light on you and we see the most desperate creature in creation. You cannot evade our gaze. We have your best interests at heart. We will bring you back from your corrupt state and rehabilitate. We will make sure that your reach does not exceed your grasp. If we have to re-engineer your bodies, we will be glad to oblige.

Quit your slouch. Be vigilant. Since you are not with us, you are evidently against us. And that tendency must be rooted out of your soul. It is not what you have done or failed to do.

It is what you have thought about doing. It is what you are planning at this moment. It is the dots that you are connecting with your pen. It is the spark that will awaken you from your slumber and send you into action. You must be stopped before this moment. You must be turned off, before you turn on.

The first step in your demise is when you realize that you have been infected and there is no cure. Your morally upstanding reputation will be under the threat of being forced to admit that you are corrupt through and through. Isn't that your real fear? That is why you try to reconstruct biology so that it effects your moral order. You imagine disease as a system of punishment for the offenses of others. You lock them in a world where they cannot act without feeling the repercussions of your wrath. And you close your eyes if their suffering exceeds your limited capacity for compassion. If the cries are a little louder on the street where you live, double-lock the doors and turn up the stereo. It feels so pleasant inside. And the plague that you have made every effort to lock outside is now trickling in the water that your drink. It is flowing in your blood. What you have sown, you will now reap.

Do you like your education? Can you even learn anything once the illness starts to affect your world? Don't dare peek behind the curtains at what is happening in the street. The theater is now affecting you. It is all around you. It is in everything that you do.

This is hardly enough to scare you. You doubt the effects have really become that close to your protected world. You check the alarm. There is not a peep along the perimeter. The guard dogs are doing their job.

If the monster is already inside, how did it penetrate the reinforced walls? It came in on you. Your paranoia has only made you susceptible to its effects. You take a long shower. You are particularly rough with your disinfectant soap. It will do the job that your moral righteousness cannot. No one will notice the traces of rot on your skin. But you are too late. The germs have already penetrated beneath the skin. They have acted faster than your supposed prevention. Your biology has been so effective at maintaining your desired social order. On the other hand, it has been totally useless to deal with the accelerated and far-reaching effects of this freak of nature. The mutations are the inescapable answer to your diffidence with regards to the evolution around you. The change has been so obvious. You have simply refused to countenance its influence. It does not fit the grand plan that you have unfolded for the world. Your useless hope is to wonder why this is happening to you. You have wished the calamity on others and now it has returned to do its damage to you.

You hate to confess, but this has been part of your essence from the beginning. This parasite has been the force which gave you life. It fed you its venom. And your tongue has lapped up all the sweet juices offered it. Now its thirst-quenching only leaves your parched. It has sucked up your lifeblood. You have not sustained its life so it is taking your life from you.

You can see what is happening. But it does not make any sense to you. It appears to be a total contradiction to the vision that you have tried to impose on the world. You have banished these microbes to a place beyond your realm. And they have snuck back in. You have prepared yourself for every disaster except the one lurking so close to home. And you plop up your pillow and try to prepare for the inevitable.

You have steeled your mind to resist all such impure thoughts. But you have done this only to give free rein to the most ravenous desires in you. You have watched them grow. And

you have fed them at each step along the way. At this moment, they have got out of control. They have emerged from their latency. They now show themselves fully-grown. And their breadth is more expansive than anything around. They have completely overcome all the defenses that have been put in place to stop their flow.

Look in your face. In the glow, your pale demonstrates that they are already in the blood. Your pleasant demeanor has been besmirched by your own appetites. And you still are not afraid.

Once you realize what has happened to you, you want to take action. You want to strike out at someone or something. You scour the streets looking for the least provocation. You will find your victims. These are no ordinary victims. They have made their fate. They are the ones whose profligacy has rendered you vulnerable. Their lustful frolicking have made you susceptible to their affliction. They have all become addicts of their lifestyle. You only dabbled in the delights. And now you have been touched through and through by the same malady. It is in your soul. It is not an occasional erring. It is who you are.

So you rush back to your safe home. Your hunt has not yielded sufficient rewards. And you hug and kiss your loved ones. And you are now infecting them too. But haven't you been doing that all along. Haven't you already planted the seeds of destruction all around you. Your whispers only distill the instability that breeds inside you. Even their rhythm contains the patterns that will break apart the hearty soul.

"Why did you call my brother?"

"You knew that we would call him. You refused to pay. We needed to find someone in your family who would give up payment."

"I'm doing everything that I can."

"That is barely meeting your minimum obligation."

"I have a wife. I have children to take care of."

"You needed to think of that before you put yourself in this position. Maybe your children could help you acquit a portion of your debt. If worse comes to worse, you could consider selling your children. Have you thought about that option?"

"I have. But I really don't want to risk their well being."

"There are place that can take care of them better than you can at this point. Have you thought about that option?"

You have thought about the consequences of your actions. You have tried to prepare for that eventuality.

"I don't think that we should have kids."

She asks you, "Is something wrong? Really, is something wrong with you?"

And you start to think that this might have happened at an earlier point in your life. Something has affected your ability to have children. Maybe it has already affected the both of you.

Haven't you thought about her just in this way? That she would be the perfect mother to your flock. Have you ever given her a second thought. Everything has been part of this same realization.

"Maybe we can't have kids. Maybe I can't have kids."

She turns to you, "You never could have kids in the first place. I would be carrying the

child. It would be in my body. You could claim this biological primogeniture. But it really has little to do with you. I could find someone else to do as much for me.”

And that is your real fear. That she has already found someone else to do as much for her.

“Is there more to it? Do you love him? Do you want him? Or is he just providing a service.” You are shaking.

“What do you want me to say? That it is just sex. What does that possibly mean? What can that mean to me? What can that mean to you? He finds my skin tender. He wants to do it again. So do I just to make sure. And in my child, he will imagine his legacy continuing. And in his gentle kisses, I will feel this spiritual bond blesses the union between us.”

“But he is only doing you a favor.”

She agrees, “This is all temporary.”

Or she might say. “Let’s postpone the child until the appropriate moment. Let’s just practice getting ready for that moment.”

They are doing this for you. She is holding back. And he is hardly enjoying it. Although they are doing everything that they can to make a temple of their sex. The wandering tongue, the longing glances, the sheer excitement of their physical contact. Everything is leading them down that same path. And they ache for more. The passion is now in their heads. It is not just a physical thing. They can imagine the sex. They roll around together in their minds. This is all they think about. And when they get together, they renew that connection. They are not doing it for themselves. They are doing it for you. Doesn’t that make you afraid?

“Are you willing to pay up now?”

“Haven’t you ruined my life enough?”

“We haven’t even started to unleash the ruin.”

What could they possibly be talking about. You think about your meager assets. The thief is wandering around your house. He has found the cereal and milk. They are spread on the pantry for a quick snack before he comes up to your room.

He wants you. He’s done it this way before. He doesn’t get his reward so he takes it in the flesh. You can feel your skin crawl. The little bastard is here. He is squirming around in everything that you do and you say.

The cereal is good. He leaves the remaining milk in the bowl and makes his way up the stairs.

“Honey, do you hear something?”

Tell me now. Do you want to hear something? This is going to be your end. You are done for. Can you hear him creep on your stairs. Squeak, squeak. Not a creature is stirring, not even a mouse. And you tell yourself how this place is a little haunted. Now the ghost has come to life and is rummaging around your place. He hasn’t gotten what he has wanted. Now he wants you.

“Just don’t hurt my wife!”

This only means that you want him to inflict the worst pain on her. You will feign shock and concern. But you will bide your time in the hope that there might be some respite amidst the total chaos that is raining all around. Time for a miracle.

“I can get you money, if you let me go.”

“I want your wife first!”

And you are able to make a bargain?

If it was her story, she'd realize what a weasel you were in the first place. If there was a thief in your place, she would have paid him to do his most delectable carving.

“Are you going to let him live?” she asks her accomplice.

“I didn't come here to make love,” he answers.

“That sounds like the perfect torture. We'll tie him up, and force him to watch us have sex. All the while, he will know that is the last thing that he will ever see. Is there a greater way that we can humiliate him.”

In fact, there is. Your lovely could have been planning this from the moment that she met you. All those words of love were only steps towards a final plan that is now unfolding at this very minute.

“What turned you into the cold heartless bitch that you are?”

She will answer with all the clarity of the moment, “You did.”

“That doesn't make sense. You were like this before you met me.”

“But you drew me this way. You were looking for a woman who could satisfy your least little whims. And I appeared. I am your child. I am your children's children. This is your wish for the world. And here I am.”

She continues, “You never wanted it any different. This is your fascination with violence. It does the work that you cannot. It keep people like me in line. And it makes you feel as if you are powerful. You can't lord over women like me. So you get your jollies by persecuting us. Your whole imagination is built that way. The whole world is one big stripper runway. And we all head down the same assembly line.”

She is teaching you a lesson, but you are only deriving pleasure from the scene. Its enactment is the confessional that you need. It convinces you that you are not without remorse. And it lets you indulge further fantasies of the same nature.

“I like it!”

While you are tied up, it tell you that this is how she has felt all along. And that understanding really kicks it for you. This is more than a simple pleasure. The universe is constructed to get you off. And you are a martyr for that good book that put it all in place.

“Hurt me more!” you scream

If she strips you of your fortune at this point, then her revenge will be short-lived. She'll be able to enjoy all the fruits of your labor. But she won't get the satisfaction that you are suffering over her one-upping you. If she's going to really screw you over, you have to be there for the whole show.

So she has to better plan out your devastation so that she can be around to enjoy all the spoils. Imagination is not enough. She has to see your face-to-face suffering.

If she lets you live, it could come back to haunt her. It gives you time to plot your escape.

You are afraid of me because once I get in your head, you won't be able to get me out. You have always worried about this happening. You have thought about the dark corners where the threat to your life has been hiding. And now it is too real.

You have given me freely what I want. That is the worst part of all. It is not as if you are being haunted by a stranger. I take what I want when you give to me of your own free will. But

it is all taking under false pretense. And now you feel that I have stolen your soul.

That is what you are most afraid of. That ultimately you will not know the one that you love. That he will turn on you in a moment of need. All the dreams that you have offered him will be taken from you when you see the real him.

That is who I am. I am the one who will reveal himself in this moment of stress. That is why you really like it the other way around. You prefer not to know who he is. It is safer if you lock into that distance between you. Just close enough so that you can whistle if there is a problem And just far enough that you can escape when he turns up the heat.

*There's this weird guy who's been following me. He came into my work. He bought this CD. Then he came back and asked me for some recommendations. He wrote them all down. Now he keep coming in and asking me all these questions. He really weirds me out.*

*I think that he's following me.*

If you think that he's following you, he probably is. If you find him weird, you know that he is weird. We will do anything in our power to make sure that we catch him. If we can't catch him, then we can provoke him. Then we will take him away, and you will never hear from him again.

Do you have any qualms over this result? Don't. We have your best interests at heart. And even if we have to encourage him a little just to bring him out., don't worry. This is all for the best.

When the walls close in on you, you will learn to call them by their name. You will love your jailer. He offers you the only hope for survival. That is all that you need. Let them watch you from afar. As long as the thick walls protect you, they can never reach the heart of the matter. The more that your quarters are luxurious, the more that you will embrace the terms of your imprisonment. This is the very reason that you have chosen these thick walls and these iron bars. This is your contact with the outside world. And you want to keep it that way.

Your oppressor is looking down on you. Your jailer is making sure that you have no desire to escape your confinement. Even if you leave briefly, you will need to scurry back to your den of sin. It is the only way that you can insure a restful night. You have traded your freedom for these comforts. This is everything for you.

As long as you remain protected behind that double pane of glass, the air will start to suffocate you by its purity. You won't even notice the change. And you will, at first, welcome its refreshing effects. Once the potency hits you, you will start to feel weak. You will fold over in pain. All your efforts to keep out the predators have ended making you a victim of yourself.

You protest at this dire result. You never meant it to go this far. It's only getting worse. Once you're too weak to do anything, your frustration will only remind you of your helplessness.. You'll be slumped over trying to raise yourself up. It won't do much good. It will only increase your discomfort.

You can imagine someone at the switch. And the villain knows how to turn on the heat. He only gives you more of what you want. You gorge yourself on that treat. Too much too soon. You are fast losing your grip. You want to hang on as long as you can. Just give a good impression even as you're fading. Are we not accommodating.

If you could just be in the open ready to chase your opponent. But it's not that simple. Nothing short of your death will feed the need. There is no ransom that you can pay to bargain

your way out of this dilemma. This is more like revenge.

As the ventilated air wafts through the room, it tells you just how perfect things are. You are barely needed to comment on the effects. What could please you more? You couldn't be lovelier. Not in the least. You won't even scream. This is so delightful. It is like a total massage. Even the twists and tugs are only there to make you feel better. You tell yourself this as your stomach starts to tie itself into a knot.

The perfect environment. If you passed out on a sumptuous couch, you might enjoy such pleasures even more. You won't even break a sweat. The ideal conditions will preserve an elegant corpse. The thirst for eternal return only presages a future resurrection. So you can invite believers, and they will all commit to your legacy.

What is there to fear? Even if you expire, your heirs will continue on your dreams. You are going to a greater place. So turn on the air to full blast, and soak in the poisons.

What has made you so tender of heart? You don't want to think of yourself as such a rare creature. Over the years, your life has been sucked from you. You have lived the illusion that you are still as hardy as the next soul. But even your neighbors are equally subject to the same influences. You have all lived charmed lives. And now the reckoning is due.

I am sure that you thought you could bargain with the grim reaper. Your negotiating skills could make him less grim. After all, you have been used to visiting his talents on others for so many years. Why do you think that you needed to seclude yourself in this bunker. It has been the only way to separate yourself from the masses of human population who actually have to suffer through the perdition of daily existence. For you part, you have always sent the tray back half-full. You have counted on your resources being available unto perpetuity. And they are. It's just that you are no longer hardy enough to enjoy the fruits of your labor. Your cup has run over and so have you. The land of plenty is now plenty too much for you. You have reached a point of saturation. And now your only recourse is to take it like the advanced being that you have become. You are ready for the last thrill that remains for you.

Open your arms to embrace the fate that you so well deserve. We do not give you anything more than you can handle. We are not trying to take away anything from you. This is the last and final legacy in what has remained an illustrious career. You have dodged the bullet time and time again. Are you ready to take your bow? All you have to do is lie there and the throng will gather round. The cheers are deafening!

In all your years, you have never realized that you have a rival. But as you feel your powers fade you realize that someone is ready to take your place. He copies everything that you do only better. And in a world where there is no space for two, you are just going to have to deal with the fact of being second fiddle. Once he robs your identity, you have been rendered totally superfluous. The new you anticipates idea on your part and is there before you are. It's always been that way anyway. You've always anticipated yourself.

*"Sorry, but the last ticket for the performance was sold."*

*"I reserved it. It's under my name!"*

Your cherished place with your loved ones has been filled by a more rugged and lovelier version of yourself. Don't worry. It not as if someone has hacked into your credit card identity. Nothing is going to happen for the moment. As long as you remain on higher ground.

Try to ignore his presence. He's barely there, and there again. You'll work it out if you

stay out of his way. Or he doesn't get in your way. Or you go the same way. Cooperation can be such a plus. Unless there's only place for one.

You've known all along that something strange has been happening. From the moment that you started to misplace important things, it's only gotten worse. You can hardly keep track of yourself. That only seems like par for the course. It's not that your clumsy. You're just not the graceful safe that you think that you are. In a life that requires precision, you're coming in one second over time. Trying to do some careful repairs. Your screwdriver just slides along its target. You're not stripping the screw again. The secret is going to get locked permanently inside the metal. Knock, knock get out!

You seem like the perfect sacrificial lamb. Now that you have a replacement, no one will really miss you. Do you understand? No one will miss you. Even your children, and your children's children. We all have to go sometime, and here are your walking papers. It has been nice having you around. And if you want to share a cup, we're here for you. At least, while you're around.

Your performance has been suffering. There are more adept players. And retirement is always an excellent option if you can't cut it. Sharpen your knives and dive on in. It's time to take the sword.

When you're rival receives accolades for his success, you can at first bask in his glory. There will be time before you have to go under the knife. Enjoy it while you can. You may not be able to run faster or jump higher, but you are more loveable. That is a plus in a complicated world. And when it is finally time to cut corners, your rival can take credit for further accomplishments. And you can take the blame when the shit hits the fan. When the propeller blade comes off the motor due to sub-standard screw. This is not about morality. It is about expediency. And you were first in line. And now you are last. You helped get it done. And now that it is done for, you will have to step up and take your lashings.

As the final blow is about to be delivered, you can share the laurels. The trap door is all ready. And the noose has been proficiently tied. Didn't you do that yourself. They gave you just enough rope to hang yourself. Don't choke up, even if this is your last try. You made such a valiant effort.

Your life has always been based on your individual merits. Now, it is no different. And you were such a perfect model. Your rival learned from you. He learned how to do it with fewer resources and less time. Shake hands with your partner in crime!

So you are given the opportunity to start anew. You welcome the feeling of restoration. You need a plan. And you need resources. From that point everything will be automatic. It is not as if you are actually engaging in a fraud. You are just giving yourself a chance to do what comes naturally. And you want all this to come naturally.

You are good at making money. And you can only make money from money. So you have to start somewhere. No questions asked. You know that somewhere down the line you will have to pay the piper. By that time your ship will have come in, and you will be able to cover all the markers that you have sent out over the years.

I am sorry if we cannot be more specific about things at such a crucial moment as this. We can discuss methods for eliminating our rivals. The poison in the candles being a preferred one over the centuries. As the candle burns down, the atmosphere fills with a noxious poison.

That seems to be the environmental condition over most modern cities. So you can hardly be a suspect for such a slow transaction. Transaction is the perfect word to describe such an occurrence. Anyone who might know the actual terms of your financial transactions would be susceptible to this designation.

You have to be a winner if you are going to escape your state of being a loser. And being a loser qualifies you for plan of sufficient deviancy that you can assume the rightful position that you think that you deserve.

This is only going to get scarier. You think that something is wrong. That you have been an imposter in your own life. Strip away the masks, the possessions, the sycophants, what is there to your life? You're not fucking Isaac Newton. There's not much up there twirling around on those threads. It's coming down and it's coming down quick. Just make sure that you have enough to cover your rent.

Once you get desperate, you are a scary person. It is not as if you've passed your days enriching your character. You are a most soulless lot. And you live by what you can acquire. You have numbered each china doll and each artefact. Your tin cans and your paper trays are all relics of your lifestyle. Gather up your treasures as the museum is about to open, and it is time to put your world on display.

This is not scary enough for you. What do you want? Further flattery for your wonderful skills. That you can create fear by thinking about it in your mind. You can read your favorite mystery novel in your comfortable chair in your quality controlled atmosphere listening to your soothing music and sipping your aperitif and tell me that you know fear. Come off it! Even the assassin waiting under your bed clothes is a simple puzzle for you to undo. You know all the psychologies and evasions and schemes to get one over on the fellow next to you. And you are the first to cry foul when they don't accept *your* convenient excuse.

What's the difference here? Haven't you heard this story before? Hardly. Every other telling eliminates the immediacy of the threat to your soul. You are in dire straits. On your knees, heathen!

"Buddy, you've really done it too me."

"What are you talking about?"

"I thought we were friends."

"I've tried to be up and up with you."

You don't remember what happened with the money. And now he's there to claim his share.

"It's all gone!"

That's what friends are for. To take their cut. Give so that you shall receive.

"I have no idea what is happening to me here."

"That makes two of us."

*Will you be my partner? I fasted for three days before I realized that you were the one. And now I am making this offer to you. I ask that you keep all this in strictest confidence. This is really a life or death matter.*

And when he gives his life to you, it means that he gives you his death to do with what you will. Just make sure that you have all the contracts in order. You will need to have power of attorney over his estate. When they say, no surviving heirs, you know what that means. You are

the heir to a legacy of ill will. You are the demon lover who we have all dreamed about. Your powers are not fading now! You might need a little supplement. As those long nights become colder, you will have to stay in the game. You will have to stake your claim. Then all of it can be yours. And you will find love again.

Any calamity and you have a comeback. You have a back up plan. You are ready to push the panic button and sound the alarm throughout your living quarters.

“You’re not a prisoner. You’re free to come and go as you like. You just can’t take your money with you. Or your possessions. All these things have to remain as part of the estate.”

That is where the fright begins. Your hapless state is due to the snapping of that thread. You have tried to hang on. Even your friends have a price. And that price is paid. What more can you bargain with?

Find all your collectibles. This may be your only way to restore your good name. Everything comes at a price! What is in your pocket? What is in your bag? What have you salvaged from your good time? How well can you perform. Show us what you’ve got.

I meet a man who wants to show me all his hospitality.

“I want you to meet my wife Cindy.”

Before I meet the man, Cindy has been giving the eye. It is only getting worse. Cindy has a big smile.

“Do you want her? Do you want to make love to my wife?”

This all seems too weird. The next thing that I know I am in a hotel room alone with Cindy.

“I’m not used to doing this kind of thing.”

“I often do it. You’ll be fine. Just relax.”

I am not going to fine, and I definitely can’t relax. I keep contemplating what it would mean to sleep with his wife. I travel through the fantasy. She is licking his lips and seems drugged through the whole thing.

Really, how can I turn down such an offer. Easy. Hubby may be hiding behind the door with a gun waiting for my first false move. What am I supposed to do?

This is my great fear. That my desires will get out of control and place me in a dubious situation. What hope have I?

Let’s say that I got my signals crossed. This guy never signaled for me to take his wife. That was his last intention in the world. I believed what I wanted to believe. Now this guy has my number. What am I supposed to do?

I’ll tell you what I should do. What any red-blooded male would do. I’m going to keep sneaking around behind his back. His suspicions have given grounds for my actions. I am the fear that he has dreamt about in nightmares. I am there to give him comfort. I am there to drown him in his bubble bath.

I tell it like it is. If poor Cindy has her problems, I will do everything that I can to be her solution. We can take it back to the beginning. And she can let me know all the details of her story. I will follow along her flesh to write a tale of mischief and woe.

“What is your husband’s name?”

“Wayne.”

“Why did you marry him?”

“He had a house. He offered me the chance to escape my hopeless life. I embraced anything that I could get.”

I want her to embrace me. She has used sex to offer her the promise of a better life. And the offer is still open. I am teaching her that she has nothing to fear except fear itself. That is a hearty lesson for someone so independent.

“Things are going to change,” I tell her.

They already are as she looks up at me.

“This isn’t about love. I just get lonely now and then. Fucking Wayne makes me lonely. I never wanted it to be that way.”

I am wandering around making house calls. I am driving a wedge between you and your loved ones. Don’t let yourself get too comfortable. You are not a god. And disbelief has a way of rolling up on a person and destroying everything that she holds dear. She is closing the book on you.

That is your greatest fear. The more that you love, the farther and farther your love drift from you. And you know that it is a science. That is why I am taking notes. I’m trying to prepare you for the inevitable. Anything that you really want is also desired by a million other people. They have been waiting in line. They want it more than you want it. They are going to get there first.

You can make do with what’s left. Tape together the trash and have a work of art. And in the back of your mind, you are afraid that you’re potent lack of talent will be exposed to the world. When they see you are a fraud, all your friends will desert you. The front of integrity is everything. And you are losing their respect.