

–I need you to take me to the mall.

*I have to step inside. I have to feel my feet on the marbled floors. To feel in proximity of the stores. I have a list. There are things that I have to buy.*

*They'll never understand what we are going through.*

–The stores are closed today.

–Not today. There are things that I need to buy.

–We can't go in.

–I see people in there.

–The doors are closed. All the stores are closed.

–There's a restaurant open

–Restaurant. We have food at home.

–I need to stop.

*There are things that I need. The money won't be here forever.*

I am supposed to make contact at the mall. A woman in a purple dress. The color seems a little high impact. Maybe it says something about me. How they felt that I'm trying to find a needle in a haystack. I need some help. I wish that they weren't trying to tell me something. Let me work it out on our own. I have heard stories about security guards hassling our agents in the mall. I guess they'll keep away from a woman in a purple dress. Just let her dazzle them.

I am holding on to my cash. Fingering through a billfold that contains close to a thousand dollars in cash.

–You're going to have to give her something.

–Something like what? Information. A payment.

–Nothing comes free. Especially in this business.

I find it very comforting to know that mother has our best interests at heart. At least they could have told me something more detailed. I'm wondering if there's some kind of risk in all this. I'm having trouble getting someone to drive me. What if I have to get in and out in a hurry. There's some kind of breakdown in command, and I am taking the brunt of this.

I am wearing my blue blazer with the gold buttons. The one that I got at the Academy. That was when I had dreams of being a sailor. Of going around the world on my own.

This is now my world. Real and immediate. The mall.

In my pocket I have some papers that I clipped out for a number of sales. These are very important documents. The key to my life and my breath. Code from agents in the field. It is critical that I hold on to this arrangement. I will have to interpret the overall display. Piece together the constellation that they elaborate. I review them in the hope that I can immediately see the pattern. As I surrender each coupon, I am inserting myself in the heart of this overall pattern. I have to keep doing what I am meant to do. But for me there is more than this. I have to anticipate the pattern. I could be drawing myself and my subordinates into a trap. It is essential that I decipher the key. Not leave anyone exposed to certain death.

Why are the stores not open today. It was critical to our operations that they be open. That I could make my purchases. That I could make contact.

I want to make it inside the mall. Just to breathe the air. To know that I am part of the plan. That this day is not wasted. Surely someone will suffer if I do not take care of this operation.

My fingers become brittle trying to sort through this information. I have fears that I will

be replaced if I do not carry out my mission with flying colors.

*It was easy eliminating a general who was standing in our way at the Pentagon. We had five agents tracking him general. No one was able to pick up our trail as we had the five constantly rotating. We had him meeting his kid at school. We had him at a rendez-vous with his mistress. Tracked him to a private residence. Had him back at his place.*

*The eventual hit was totally clean. We got him as he returned from the base one evening. Just as he got out of his car, one of our boys on a motorcycle drove by and mowed him down. Three shots. Perfect. He sped off and was never found. The motorcycle was broken down for parts. The assassin was reassigned.*

There was a time when my skills were more certain. I think my rivals know of my weaknesses and will take advantage of my position. I try to be more precise. I am always making charts and graphs to supplement my memory and my inability to concentrate.

I think that command is leaving us to vulnerable. I keep telling mother that the agents in the field bear the brunt for shoddy management. She doesn't seem to do anything about it.

Once you're part of this business, short of retirement or death, you can't quit. Everything becomes uniquely personal. The agents in the field engage with their rivals. Enemy agents have their number, and they spend their lives trying to escape. Once the cat gives chase, the mouse can only let up if he is captured. Even then, he needs to put up resistance. There is nothing more desperate than a cornered agent.

I feel that I am out here alone. A sitting duck. Go ahead, take me down. He's sitting across the street and has his sights trained on me.

–I'm going to take my shot.

–How many do you get.

–Enough to succeed.

–You better do it in one. Otherwise, I'm coming after you.

You can't end a game like this. It is the permanent result of who we are.

I imagine myself finding a quiet family in the suburbs. Being all quiet and settling down. Quiet as a mouse. And then I'll meet the neighborhood cat.

They wonder what I put up with. Not dandelions growing wild on the lawn. Or the bully terrorizing my kid. Something more insipid. I am a marked man. There is nowhere that I can settle down.

–Can't you just be honest with me for once? I feel like you're part of the witness protection program.

I smile.

–If I just do something about you. Who you really are. What you like. What makes you tick. What you ate for breakfast.

–I had eggs and waffles.

–No, really.

–That's what I had.

–But is that who you are.

I don't know who I am. Will I ever?

–I like myself. I like crying during a spring rain. I like being spontaneous. And I don't want to apologize all the time for who I am.

I have fabricated an identity for myself. I have a job. I teach elementary school. I am a respected member of the community. I have friends. I appear to have a family.

My house is in great shape. I work in it on the weekend. Do the lawn. Repair work. Painting.

She, my wife and I, we garden together. She rakes. I bag the piles and put the out for pick up. We cooperate.

I pick up the kids from soccer practice. I never forget.

What is most frightening is how this fabrication depends on the actions of others. The weave of this fabrication is carried by their proficiency in pulling off their assigned tasks. They must not only pretend. They need to be good at what they do. At this point, they cross a line where they start to believe their identities. She thinks that she is a good wife. My kids think that this is their real family.

–What do you mean that we’re not compatible sexually.

–I have to do too much work to get you to enjoy what we’re doing.

–That’s not true. I enjoy having sex. I enjoy giving you pleasure.

–It’s not about that.

The conversation is ridiculous. She only pretends to like me. We don’t even sleep in the same bed. We don’t have sex.

–Are you holding back because you don’t want to?

–If you’d like me to come over some time and get you off.

–I thought that you were married.

–I am. But it’s only pretend.

–That’s a new one.

–We don’t have sex.

–That’s what all guys say.

–They may say it. But this time it is true.

My class asked me today if I like my job. It’s not really my job. So I don’t have to really like it. I told them that I did.

Later, that day I am at a supermarket. I hold a list in my hand. I can’t figure out if I made the list out, or is it some standard that I received from the agency. I can’t shop. I don’t want to be here.

–You didn’t get the stuff at the market.

–I forgot.

–You haven’t seemed like yourself recently. Is something going on?

–More than something.

–You’re home early. I thought you’d still be at school.

–It was a half day.

–I thought that you had a conference.

–I got out of it. I couldn’t imagine listening to much of anything.

–You don’t seem to be listening to much of what I’m saying.

–I'm not looking for a fight.

–Either am I.

I need a reassignment. Otherwise, I am going to crack up.

Everything is moving too slowly. I am not making the contacts in the mall. It is the season. What is going on?

–We don't want you contacting command. You've been reassigned. We fear there is a mole. You have to learn to be patient.

Me patient. I laugh.

–What am I supposed to do while I wait?

This is my question. I am forbidden to ask.

The wait is prolonged.

I passed by a mall today. Went in. They wouldn't accept any of my sale coupons.

–It's not the season.

But it is the season. I want to tell them who I am. How silly on my part. They have to take the coupons. I have to make my plans known to my associates. It's one thing to leave me isolated. It's quite another to neutralize me.

–It's going to be a while before anyone tries to contact you.

How long is a while? I can't survive on my wiles.

This is not my story. I am sure that I have done something wrong. For what am I being punished. I was the best in the field. I rewrote the manual. I succeeded at all my missions. Is this what they hold against me. I was too good. This is my hell.

I consider that this is the doing of the Assistant. That he knows that I have a pipeline to the Director, and he decided to exile me. He has succeeded. I am starting to crack. I need contact.

Perhaps I can infiltrate the population. Alert them of the urgency of my project. The nation is in danger, and only a concerted effort on the part of the citizenry can ward off the new threat. That our everyday lives only contribute to the demise of intelligence. Only a select few can keep the integrity of the process going.

I love how it sounds. I am afraid to apply myself. That will permanently destroy my mission at the agency. It is not time to make the move even though I am certain that they are moving on me.

I consider tracking down a few of my friends.

–We hadn't heard from you in a while.

–We thought that you were dead.

–That's the word going 'round the company.

I can't break my cover. Can exercise the privilege.

–I've been waiting to meet you.

–Me?

–I'm your contact here.

–What? What the hell do you mean?

I want to get out the business. I want to hold on the semblance of a normal life.

–You contacted the agency for a reassignment.

–Are you the man?

–No, he is coming later.

–Who are you?  
–Just an angel of mercy.

–Hon', I don't think that I can stop by and pick up that stuff at the store.

–Something important at school.

–No, something more important than that.

I am walking through the mall. A shoe sale. I grab for my coupons,.

–With the coupons, that's going to add another 20%.

–Can you gift wrap it?

I don't have time for any of this. I buy some chocolates, and then continue on.

I wait on a bench for hours.

–Are you waiting for someone?

–I was.

–Can we do something for you. Can we call you a cab. Anything to help.

–I don't know if you can really help me.

–That's what we're here for.

I'm getting into it with mall security.

–You can't just keep waiting here.

–I'm waiting for someone.

–You've been here for five hours. You haven't bought anything.

–I bought some chocolates and ice cream.

–That's not exactly a purchase.

–There's all kinds of people who spend all the time window shopping.

–That's it. They shop. You can either leave. We can call you a cab. Or you'll have to come with us.

–Don't you know who I am?

–I thought that you used to have a job at some school. But there was that whole scandal about you.

–That's bull shit. I'm a great customer. The President of the department store called me up and offered me a special deal. Ninety percent off some items. He offered me the store.

–That's really nice. But you're going to have to vacate the premises.

–I don't feel like leaving.

–You'll have to leave or we'll have to have you arrested.

–I didn't do anything.

–That's just it.

–If this was a park, you couldn't act like this.

–It's not a park.

–There used to be a city park here. And the developer made a deal with the city. But he never really lived up to his part of the bargain.

–I don't know about any of this.

The security force has been infiltrated. It's his job to prevent me from doing my mission. I wonder if he knows the pattern. I am sure that they can track all my movements. They know who I am. Not just my purchases, but everything that I have considered doing. They know who I am.

–I guess I better leave. But your supervisor will hear about this.

- I paid for what I did.
- Is that how you escaped.
- you swore that we were never coming back to this place again. You may have to come back again.
- This is ugly.
- I'm alive, and he's not.

*Central Asia listening station*

*-There was a midnight raid on a our listening station.*

*The commandoes were outside the walls of the station conducting reconnaissance. The guards were shadowed in the bright moonlight. The key was to avoid the surveillance of the guards. What gave advantage to the raid was the exact thing that made is so vulnerable.*

*For the guards, the calm of the night was the false respite that lulled them into the trance of reality. Armored vehicles circled the perimeter. the guards moved from checkpoint to checkpoint and sought to record anything unusual. But the very routine trapped them in this unpreparedness. The attack would come from a place that was all the obvious. The intruders first became part of the night. they took out a few key stations. And then the attack hit. Shock grenades and flares opened the encampment to the raiders. They anticipated every possible threat to their operation. The station was hopelessly outmaneuvered. Even a massive balance of power in its favor provided no advantage station. Once the firefight was engaged the result hardly in doubt,*

*At that point, the raider brought in their own armored vehicles, and the column of reenforcements sealed the substation's fate. Even a convoy of jeeps armed with machine guns were no match for these reenforcements. The defenses are mowed down even as they are engaged in a series of intricately flowering patterns.*

*The result: a trail of bodies littered the entrance way.*

*-What the hell happened.*

*The reaction to the intelligence failure was immediate.*

*-They're leaving the missile facility completely exposed.*

*-That's the idea. the missiles are going to fall in the wrong hands.*

*-What can we do about it.*

*-I think they're setting us up for another surprise.*

*-what could that possibly be.*

*-A hit at a nuclear reactor.*

*-Or something much worse.*

*-An assassination.*

*-Or both.*

*-How did this breakdown occur.*

*-We were distracted.*

*-I think we're going to have to assemble a team to take back the station.*

*-We have to anticipate the next move.*

*-What could that be.*

*-I've told you already.*

*-So are we going to move.*

*-We need to find out who's behind all this. Otherwise, our blundering will play into their hands.*

*–I think it's a play by someone in the leadership to stage a coup.*

*–You sound confused.*

*–Not really. I just don't want to play our hand too quickly.*

*The commander seemed immersed in his Cold War mentality. He thought that he could reduce every situation to such basic oppositional terms. In the new world, your forays end up being the one thing that is your undoing.*

*His associate was a go getter and seemed to be the perfect supplement to the Commander's blindness. But he too was lost in the same type of polemic. They were such easy victims for a mobile opposition.*

*The Asian disaster was tied to a number of other collapses. The market had suffered a currency devaluation, and this threatened the nation's defense policies.*

*–War is now fought on the exchange.*

*–The exchange is made more perfect by war.*

*–No doubt spoken by an arms dealer.*

*–Or a realist.*

*–Reality needs to be tempered with imagination.*

*–That's the only way to deal with this threat.*

*–The only way.*

*–The only way is that you're going to have to go under cover.*

*–And do what.*

*–You're going to have to become a player in this arms deal.*

*–How do I do that?*

*–you've been to Russia before.*

*–I thought that I was never going back—except for a vacation.*

*–Call it a vacation.*

*Something didn't add up in all this. And now Edison was heading back to Moscow. The Commander had a sneaking suspicion that he was sending Edison into hell. But he felt tied to his decision. That maybe the young wolf's brilliance would see him through this one. The Commander wanted to go himself. He realized that in the end it would be up to him to put his own stamp on the mission.*

*–You're not going to get anywhere by hanging around a mall.*

*They both chuckled.*

*–Mr. Jim Edison.*

*he looked up from his nap.*

*–You know my nap.*

*The flight attendant handed him a package.*

*–We're landing soon.*

*Her icy coolness had a special appeal to him. The charm of winter.*

*–You're staying in Moscow long.*

*–I've got a connecting flight to Cairo five hours from touchdown. I'll get a nap in the airport.*

*He thought that she might be his guide in Moscow. She was only a courier. As Edison looked through the material, he dozed off.*

*Jim checked into his hotel when he reached Moscow. It was the middle of the day. A Moscow summer. He was still thinking about his contact. He was too charged to sleep. But too*

worn out to do anything. He lay on the bed on the verge of sleep.

–Don't think that you can stop us now.

–He looked up trying to discern who was speaking to him. But it all seemed to be part of a dream. trails of conversation darted back and forth.

–We did everything just to get you to Moscow. We've got a code to crack. And we wanted to lure you here.

That just seemed preposterous.

–I don't do codes anymore.

–Safer than shooting into a crowd.

–That was a mistake.

–Tell it to the girl's parents.

–That was some kind of set up. Ballistics showed it wasn't my gun.

–So why were you on suspension.

–It wasn't suspension. I needed some time off.

Edison woke up in nauseating sweat. He had been so involved in the dream. He was worried about that shooting. Something that was so real in the dream. But it was all in a dream. He had never had been involved such an incident.

The techniques of brainwashing were so much like our dreams. Jim was feeling the expert in such techniques. Field work had forced him to be ruthless.

–I'm defending more than my honor.

–Jim, we admire your idealism.

–It's not idealism.

–Idealists end up being the most ruthless. They mold their ideology to suit their whims.

–Who are you?

–Jim this isn't a dream. We know that you helped the rebels. This time the tables are turned.

He shivered when he felt the electrodes applied to his genitals.

–This really isn't fair.

–It's not about fair. you were always so good at this technique.

–You're not going to let me die. then I'm useless to you.

–So we wear you down with persuasion and you end up giving us what we want anyway. Be civilized. Just tell us the codes.

–I can tell you the codes. But they've all been changed.

–Don't lie to us. You know the variations.

Jim rolled over. He was still trying to wake up. But this time the experience was so all-encompassing.

–The best techniques are when we get inside your head.

–Did something happen on the plane. Did you drug me?

–Drug you. We don't have to drug you. You're just feeling a little guilty. Coming over to the other side and all that.

–I don't want you to feel guilty.

–What do you want?

–I want to get out of here. What do you want?

–I want your loyalty.

He watched the snow come down. Touching the window was cold as the breeze

*penetrated the cracks in the structure.*

*–Its July, how is it snowing.*

*–We can make it do whatever we want.*

*That was a line from the Commander. A well known line.*

*–Is this some kind of test. Nothing is following in sequence. The Central Asia operation, the break in, and now this.*

*–What break in? I never knew about some break in.*

*–You ordered it.*

*–Jim, have you been exceeding your authority.*

*–It was a break in to get the decoder.*

*–We don't use the decoder anymore. It's all software. Pyramids and waterfalls.*

*What the hell was he talking about?*

*The jewels were still under his bed. He had made a clean getaway. They were the decoy for his real threat. What wasn't real, just an idea, so it couldn't be missed.*

*–You can't steal an idea.*

*–You can steal its application.*

*–A recipe for cold fusion.*

*–A blueprint for a perfectly mobile undetectable bomb.*

*–You could blow up a whole city with that.*

*–Who thinks about things like that.*

*–Monster like us.*

*They both laughed. The Commander was fuming back in Washington.*

*–You've fooled him again.*

*–I like the trick with the electrodes on the genitals.*

*–We tried that in Prague last year.*

*–You sent him the pictures.*

*–He likes kinky stuff.*

*–He never appreciates when one of his personal favorites goes down.*

*–He's going to love the daring escape that we have planned for you.*

*–Complete with the blowing up train.*

*–This one doesn't have a train. That was last year'.*

*–I almost believe that I'm working for Hollywood.*

*–You are.*

*They both stared at each other.*

*What was the plan? Edison was so close this time. He had played along. Let all the variations do a job with his head. And now he was sneaking out the other side. He'd have to bring down the Commander. But there was more to it. He'd destroy this whole cell as well.*

*Redesign intelligence to suit the new century.*

*–The Audience loves the Commander.*

*–Some acts fulfill their usefulness, and then we have to move on.*

*–I thought that this was going to be a better film.*

*–You've got your instructions. What more is there?*

*–I don't know.*

*–You should have stayed working malls in the suburbs of DC.*

*–I tried. they broke my cover.*

–So you get sent in the WI program to somewhere in Indiana.  
–They still had a great mall there.  
*A lone jeep pulls out of the station.*  
–No one’s going to track this one.  
–They don’t have the facilities running.  
–This is going to destroy the world.  
–The world as we know it.  
–They won’t know what happened until the city has been overrun.  
–The Cold War always made more sense.  
–That’s what the Generals in Moscow were saying.  
–If Yeltsin hadn’t have taken them down.  
–They never forgot about his betrayal.  
–Boom.

–I think that I’m going to have to get involved in this. The Commander has always been a friend of mine. I don’t appreciate how he’s being set up.  
–It’s just a story. None of it is real.  
–Real. I’ve played it over and over again in my head. Jim’s dilemma is paralleling mine. This was all meant for me.

–You’re not going to be able to leave Indiana.  
–Isn’t that what they said to him?  
–Something like that.  
–So it’s my turn.  
–It’s a game. A spy game.  
–It not a game. I see what’s really going on.  
–You see it because it’s playing in your head. Just in your head.

**The most critical detail in the killer’s inventory in his justification. Ultimately, he sees himself performing a service. Doing what is necessary. Balancing out an evil that has plagued him all his life.**

**The most depraved is the instance when the state provides a justification for his fantasy.**

–I know the house. I can get in undetected. Edison has to be brought down. I can apprehend. Even neutralize him if necessary.

*A limousine pulled up to the Commander’s place. It was accompanied by a number of agency vehicles.*

–You’re going to have to resign.  
*It was a special deal. The Director actually paying a visit to the house of one of his subordinates.*  
–I wasn’t involved.  
–He was your associate. He’s compromised our whole Asian operation.  
–I’m being used as a scapegoat for the agency’s incompetence.  
–That kind of insolence is itself the grounds for dismissal.

*–You never treated me like that before. I was always allowed to keep you in check.*  
*–That’s been a problem with my tenure. I let the agents run the show. And a bad agent took the show over.*

–I think that we’re going to have to pull him in.  
–How do you propose doing that.  
–I’m sending an agent his way

–How did you get in here?  
–I let myself in.  
–I could kill you over a mistake like that.  
–In your condition, it doesn’t look like you’ll be doing much of anything to anyone.  
–You’re not supposed to be in here.  
–But I am.  
–And you’ll have to leave.  
–I came to help you. Help you get rid of the cold.  
–This is worse than a cold.  
–I can help you.  
–I can get better by having nothing to do with you.  
–That’s what you think. You’re going to have to reverse heaven and earth if you expect anything to come of this.  
–I do. I’ll be out of here and back to work in no time. There’s nothing that you can do to stop me.  
–I don’t have to stop you.  
–I’ve had a call from the Director himself. He wants me for a mission. I’ve got a letter from the Chief Executive upstairs. He wants to see me.  
–That’s a form letter to all federal employees.  
–You can pretend that you know what’s going on. You don’t.  
–You’re going to have to be quiet. Lie low. Just cool it.  
–Are you trying to tell me what to do?  
–I’m informing you of agency policy.  
–Why do they do it like this? Why don’t they use official channels?  
–This is a house call. How much more official do you want?  
–House call. It’s fucking two in the morning.  
–I don’t want to be seen by your neighbors. You don’t want me to be seen.

–Who were you talking to?  
–He is here. He’s come for me.  
–What?  
–Just some guy. He came to see me about the leg.  
–He? There’s no one here.  
–Who are you talking to? Was it a dream?  
–Mr. Smart Genius. If you know who I was talking to, then why are you asking?  
–Is there anything that I can do.  
–I just called you in to say hello.

-How are you feeling?  
-I'm going to get better.

-We're going to need confirmation papers on your identity.  
-Confirmation. I'm who I am. I haven't changed one bit.  
-We don't know that. Are you the person who you represent yourself as? Do you live where you tell us? Do you own the house.  
-I can tell you my phone number.  
-Tell us.  
-OK. I will.  
-Speak a little louder.  
-OK I will.  
I am coughing.  
-That's not the right number.  
-I know my own phone number.  
-You may know a number. But it's not the right number. We just called you. We know.  
-You got in the wrong way. You can't tell me who I am.  
-I hate to admit, but we can and do.  
-I don't want any of you coming by any more. I'm going to make my own way.  
-We need confirmation.  
-I'm a citizen. What are you going to do now? Arrest me?  
-It's been done before.  
-Things are getting a little crazy here, aren't they?  
-I wouldn't know.  
-People get away with things all the time.  
-I wouldn't know.  
-What do you know? I know about the whole organization. I have charts. I have diagrams, data bases.

What am I admitting? Too much to keep me secure. At the same time, everything that I have is now grossly out of date. It is fortunate that the team in charge is so inept that there's little that they can do with this information on me.

-We need confirmation on your social security number.  
They're screwing this all up. Or I am.  
-How do I know that **you** are who you say you are.  
-It's not really your right to question us.  
-I can just hang up on you.  
-We'll call back.  
-I won't answer the phone.  
-We'll come to your place.  
-I won't let you in.  
-It's an offense to interfere with a federal agency.  
-You're becoming the offensive one.  
-I'm only doing my job which we can hardly say for you.  
-If I was doing my job, you wouldn't have yours.  
-You can't say that.

–I just did.

I think that today is the occasion of some celebration. I don't feel like much merriment. I am too confused. I look at a picture of myself on another day like this. I am wearing a blue blazer. I find it in the closet.

–You didn't take a shower.

–I can't. I don't want to get wet.

–You need a shower.

–I'm all dressed.

–You're going to go back and take a shower.

–I told you that I'm ready.

The buttons glisten in the light. Like before. Everything is all right.

–You stink. You need a shower.

–That is who I am. You're afraid of yourself. That is why you're afraid of other people.

–Afraid?

–You can't let go.

–So what am I really afraid of.

–Nothing happened, did it?

–Nothing.

–Who were you talking to last night.

–It was a dream.

–It sounded so real.

–It was a convincing dream.

–So you need to get back to reality. A good shower will do the trick.

–That's the point. I can't wash it off. It's my only salvation.

–You can't save yourself.

–That's the point.

–The point, the point. What the hell does that mean?

–I want you to take my picture. To see if it's there.

–It. You mean you.

–No, it. You know what I mean.

–Really, I don't.

–You should.

What do they want from me? Why is there doubt at any turn.

–Don't answer it.

–It could be important.

–Important is done.

I look at myself in the mirror. A good approximation for the picture.

–Is the party ready. Can I meet the guests?

–The guests won't know you the way that you are. You need to take a shower.

–You can't go back to the party. The shower was a convenient excuse. It's not safe to meet those people.

–Safe. I said I was going to have a shower.

–They'll take your picture.

- Take it. I want them to take it.
- It's not safe.
- How can you tell me what is safe and what is not safe.
- I'm speaking the words.
- I thought that you left. I didn't ask you here. I didn't ask you to my party.
- I don't have to be asked. I'm the life of the party. I have to look after you.

The pictures don't match. How come everyone else is putting up with this masquerade?  
The damn pictures don't match.

- Not feeling yourself today.
- Mr. Smart Genius, you have all the answers.
- Not feeling well. Want a pill.
- I want more than a pill. I want my life back.
- I can't give you what was never mine in the first place.
- I just want to leave.
- Then what are you doing lying on your back like that.
- I'm going to walk out of here.
- On your own. Good luck!
- Are you keeping me prisoner here.
- You're here for your own good.
- I'm going to scream.
- And do what? Your persecutor will only show up.
- Nice name.
- It's true.
- True. There are people who love me in this house.
- There are people who will pretend whatever we want them to pretend.
- Now, you're working with them.
- I'll do what I have to.
- Good.

Patch me through to the Assistant Director

- I'm going to need clearance on that.
- What's your security code.
- 4484
- Could you please repeat that.
- 4484.
- I'm sorry ,sir, that's not the right code.
- I'm sure it's the right code.
- You don't know the damn code. Tell her the code.**
- I'm trying to think. Four-four-eight-four
- She told you that's not the right code.**
- Four.
- That's a beginning. Or it could be an ending. As far as you're going to get.**
- Four-four
- Why not just say 4444.**

–I will if I have to. You’re no help. You’re getting me all confused. What did I have for breakfast this morning?

–**Eggs. You had eggs.**

–How do you know?

–**I made them. Can’t you still taste them?**

–Who has you doing the cooking?

–**I fend for myself.**

–I bet.

–**I can make a great omelet florentine.**

–What is that?

–**Top secret. You need the code.**

–I can’t remember the damn code. I haven’t contacted control in so long.

–**That’s how it was meant to be.**

–But I need to get to them now.

–**Then try to remember. Count to one hundred. One-two–three–four–five–six...**

–Stop. I can remember.

–**Can you. Well what is it? What’s your birth date? What’s magic for you? Can you remember your phone number? Do you know who your wife is? What do you know?**

–I feel like I know less and less every day.

–**Sheer confusion. Madness is next.**

–I need to talk to someone.

–**The authorities. You surely don’t need a national security clearance code.**

–I have my instructions. And they’re running out. I need a reason to live. I need a new mission.

–**We all do. Stand outside the door, and watch your neighbor.**

–I do, but I want something more.

–**Threaten him.**

–That happens just by being there.

–**Can’t you remember who you really are?**

–I remember it all. All too well. I need to get away. Away from you. From it all.

–Sir, you’re going to have to get a new security clearance if you can’t remember the number.

–It’s only four digits. I’m trying.

–You’ve exceeded your time limit.

–4-4-4-8

–That is not the number. We have to terminate this conversation.

–The Assistant Director knows me. I know his wife Rachel.

–He doesn’t have a wife. He’s always been unmarried.

–No. I know his wife Rachel.

–We’re going to have to terminate.

–Wait. I know his birth date.

–It’s a matter of public record.

–And his social security number.

–That is private. But however did you get it?

–No matter. In know it.

–Someone could penetrate his credit card records. Or city tax records. We can't patch you through for that reason.

–I need to talk to him.

That bastard. He's blocking my way again.

–Listen, bitch, you give me your boss or it's your job.

–We're going to have to do an investigation of you before we reissue a new code.

–I remember the number.

–Sorry, sir.

–Wait.

–We're terminating.

–I know who you are.

–Stop it. Good by.

–You're deviating from the script.

–By!

–If you want to stay alive, you have to take one of these pills every day.

–How do I know that they're not poison.

–You know what we tell you to know.

–I never heard a doctor talk to me like that before.

–You don't like the news.

–What new?

–About the pill.

–I'd like to know what it does.

–Something to counteract the radiation. Some government project that you worked on exposed you to radiation.

–That's silly.

–You're at risk.

–What symptoms?

–Memory loss, shortness of breath, fear in crowds, sleepless nights, upset stomach.

–That's the modern condition.

–And you'll have to take the pill.

–What is it?

–We can't tell you.

–You can't tell me. What are the side effects.

–Nervousness, dizziness, occasional stupidity.

–How can I tell if it's the disease or the side effects.

–You can't. But you have to keep swallowing the pills.

–How many?

–Two a day before breakfast. One after lunch. One before dinner and one after dinner.

–That makes no sense.

–We're trying to fool this disease.

–Like we're trying to fool ourselves.

–And what holds us together.

–Our passion. I don't know.

–So what is the prognosis?

- I told you. Take the pill, and you will live.
- Everlasting.

*We have to review your security clearance. Follow the steps described below.*

*We will need a psychological review. The form is enclosed inside. A facility psychiatrist will administer the exam.*

*You will also need to undergo a complete physical. This will include the enumerated tests indicated on the yellow sheet.*

I really don't want to lose my clearance. But this is silly. I think that they made me forget my number so that they could eliminate me from the roster.

Tell us what you have bought in the last month.

- I want to buy some champagne.
- A special remembrance.
- I want to really forget.
- Are you going to stop drinking?
- I haven't started yet.
- What's the strategy?
- Drink up and shut up.
- That's how you get clearance.
- I want to have a party at my place. I need a big jar of olives.
- So you want to make martinis. And by mistake you bring home pickles. Thousands of tuna sandwiches.
- There's a lot of pickles here.
- I can help.
- Just put the napkins everywhere.
- We need napkins.
- I want to buy something fun.
- Candles.
- What kind of fun can you have with candles.
- A special dinner.
- I've spent my years playing the same sort of game. I want to get out.
- To make things worse for others?
- Something like that.
- You're never going to get your new clearance with a mad buying spree.
- What are you saying?
- I'm not going to report you. But it will show up in your expense account. That's your area of expertise.
- I need new shoes.
- You should know what's a dead giveaway.
- Shoes.
- You really need another pair.
- I'm going on a trip.
- That's later. You can't even leave the country now.
- I can leave if I want.

–Where will you go?

–Back home.

What's really going on in our live is top secret. Even from ourselves. Like that number that I forgot.

–I remember the number now.

–Too late. They still need to do a background check.

–While they're checking me out, they could do one on you.

–They won't find a thing.

–Not from what I've heard.

–Try it.

–How can I find anything about you? They've taken away my clearance.

*–He's got to know what's going on.*

*–We really can't let him find out.*

*–That we've been poisoning him*

*–That we've been trying to cure him*

*–Same thing.*

*–The drug that we're giving him is designed to alter his personality.*

*–How?*

*–It will make him feel invigorated. Like there is nothing that he can't do.*

*–But will it give him power that he doesn't know about. Untapped energies.*

*–It might. We don't know about that part.*

*–You're really fucking with his head.*

*–That's who he is. He enjoys challenges. New adventures. Experiments.*

*–But he like to know what is going on.*

*–He does.*

*–Not from what I can tell. You're completely messing with him.*

*–It's his only way to get back to normal. To live comfortably around other people.*

*–Are you making up for how he was initially trained.*

*–We're helping him be himself.*

*–Does he know what that is so that he can take part in it.*

*–He lives in reality like the rest of us.*

*–He has the vestiges of experience. He feels pain. And occasionally he feels hunger.*

*Otherwise, he suffers in silence.*

*–And that's all that he has.*

*–What's more can we do for him.*

*–You can help him out of his hell.*

*–We're trying. It's the same for all of us. We just can't be someone else.*

*–But we'd like to be.*

*–And now we have pill to make that dream come true.*

–Do I have to go through this shit if I want to retain my security clearance.

–Just do what they tell you to do.

–This is the stupidest test that I've ever taken.

–It's not a test. It's a questionnaire.

- Same thing. You're testing my response. I don't want to play along.
- It's for your own good.
- This is bull shit. I was making up tests like this while you were in diapers.
- I didn't make the test. And I'm not that young.
- I'm not that old. And it's still shit.

**THIS IS HOW WE'LL MAKE YOU BETTER. TELL US WHO YOU WANT TO BE!**

**We have one pill for memory!**

- I don't want to remember.
- Everything that we do revolves around memory. Even taste.
- I can't taste a thing.
- See, you have memory problems.
- I don't care.
- We can make you care again.**

**We have one pill for desire!**

- Is that the one that gets my dick hard.
- No, it's the one that makes you feel like you've been taken care of.
- I like that.
- All men do.
- Will you take care of me.
- The pill does that. I take care of myself.
- I feel pain.

**We have one pill for love!**

- It makes me feel that I am in love.
- better than that. It makes you feel that you are loved.
- By whom,
- Don't worry. The pill takes care of that.
- I could use a hate pill.

**We have one pill to take care of all your troubles!**

- Is that the big bomb.
- It starts off small and then grows. As you try to escape, then it really goes off.
- How can you stop that feeling?
- You can't. So you have to take more.
- It sounds addictive. That's why we have another pill to take care of addiciton.
- And one for vomiting?
- Yes.
- And one for seeing the man?
- Yes.
- And one for not seeing him?
- Yes.

**–And one to make it all go away?**

**PAUSE**

**–And one to make it all go away? Answer me!**

**They can't.**

**We can't grant a SECURITY CLEARANCE!**

We'll make you OK now.

A wonderful looking jacket. Grey with pinstripes in wool.

–Do you have it my size.

–you have one like that at home.

–Look at the buttons.

–I've more than looked.

–See how many there are. How they're placed. How thin are the lapels.

–I am looking.

–Do you see how the fabric hangs. It molds to the body as it shapes and defines.

–I see what you are talking about. But is it really worth so much.

–I need the suit. It is me.

–I want to see more.

–What do you need to see.

**What can I show you?**

–I need to see a suit that reveals more of myself.

–How is that?

–The fabric has more dash.

**That is going to cost you.**

–I have cash.

–It's going to take a lot more than that.

–Isn't there a message in the jacket pocket.

–Was the shopping ordeal a front.

–We had to get you away from her. We had to communicate.

–Away from her.

–She's interfering with the message.

*–Tell me what are you doing at night. Where are you going?*

*–I can't tell you.*

*–Tell me.*

*I stared at her stunned by the quality of the revelation.*

*–I'm so ashamed.*

*–I thought you had no shame.*

*–It's so awful what I've been doing.*

*–What have you been up to.*

*–I've been murdering women. All the same height. The same hair. The same build. It's*

*all so ugly. I can't stop. I thought that if I confessed that I could stop myself. It is too late. I can't be stopped.*

*–Why are you telling me?*

*–I don't know. Maybe you can stop me.*

*–Stop you? I'm your next victim.*

*–They are not victims. They are my partners.*

*–What are you talking about?*

*–I give them what they want. What no one else can want.*

*–What is that?*

*–It is concern.*

*–Concern, You hack their heads off.*

*–I find where they really exist. And I go there.*

*–There is nothing shared about this at all.*

*–You don't know. You can't turn me in. I have job to do.*

**At a young age he was scooped up from his mother.**

**–Do you know what this means?**

**And recruited for the agency. Transformed into a wolf. Forced to wander the wilderness without supplies. Made to fend for himself. Turned into one of us and then sent back into the world.**

The currency suffered another devaluation today. They need my counsel at Treasury. It's one thing for us to try to mess with things behind the scenes. Now it looks like a wheel has come off this wagon. Oh No!

I managed to arrange a background check on my visitor. Managed with whatever resources of mine still remain at the agency. His position is so deep that there are only traces of his existence. No records. Reports. Other agents who've describe his MO. Nothing substantial.

There is a common thread. **My greatest fear.** All agents who report meeting him are no longer alive.

He is the angel of death!

I need some new shoes. A trip to the mall is in order. A light brown will look great. Give me a casual feel. I've got a number of black pairs. But a nice brown.

In my blazer with some chinos and the light brown slips ons. I can blend into the suburban crowd. Order a drink on the patio. Corner one of the guests to ask about a development near the new mall. I get his phone number. Put it with the other papers that I have. Are you slowly getting the picture.

What I want so palpably before me. I roll them around in my hand. Run though a wad of bills. How long can this last. How long can I keep this amount in my hand. Watch it all slip out.

I want to get something else. Some socks to go with the shoes. No one is in here. The activity has ground to a halt. The clerk trying to sell something else. It's not going to work. Not this time.

–Can I borrow some money?

–I've got some credit here.

I check my hair in the mirror. The wind was blowing a little hard outside.

–Good credit.

–I like your wife. She's sort of cute.

The guest sat on the couch and licked her ample lips.

–Nothing like love making in the morning.

I smile uncomfortably.

They're both sitting on the couch. My wife moves slightly away.

–You both enjoy experimenting.

–I've always been good in the kitchen. He cooks a bit. But I like to try really wild dishes.

The guest stares at me and wonders where the suburbs hide these innocents.

–I love to play games with food myself. It's all about sustaining that rush.

–How do you do it?

–Artificial means.

–Can I get either of you more of those hors d'oeuvres?

She goes back to the kitchen. I needed to go back there myself. But the guest was making her uncomfortable.

–We're going to get it on later?

I had been giving her that look. Looking up her skirt as she bent down.

–You are wearing panties.

–You didn't take a peek when I bent down.

That pause as if to invite me.

–What are you looking at?

She walks back in the room with the hors d'oeuvres.

I am looking out the window. There was that uneasy silence while the guest and I were alone together. I couldn't even look in her direction.

–These look great. I bet that you can all kind of things in the kitchen. \

The guest offers that wry smile. I can see her with her legs spread while she touches herself. The painted lips become more inviting.

–You don't get uncomfortable when guests talk about their love lives.

–Not really.

I'm not saying anything. Listening to where our liberated visitor leads us.

–You've been with women. I mean I was with one two nights ago.

I am becoming aroused.

–This doesn't seem right without adding a little spice to the night.

–Didn't I follow the recipe correctly.

–Sometimes you have to deviate from the recipe.

–Deviate.

–Deviant.

–Experiment.

–I do.

–You've made love with another woman before.

The guest's invitation doesn't seem to be going anywhere.

–Is this what you do for entertainment? She was coming on to me.

–She was being nice.

–She wanted some perverted sexual pairing.

I envisioned myself penetrating the guest from behind while she went down on my wife.

–Honey, I’m going to turn in early. You take care of the dishes. I can’t think about this.

She can’t even think about the two of us together at this point. How did they chose her for me?

I’m trying to get back to who I am. All of this has transpired too quickly. This new life that I need to adapt to. Too much. Too much.

–You’ve got me into this mess. Now I need to get you out.

–Out means death. You have to go along with the mission.

–What mission? Spending my time with a frigid wife. Then you send this hot little number, and she performs for both of us while the wife is shocked.

–Did she wrap her legs around you neck while you fucked her.

–I barely got through dinner without my wife choking her.

–I always said that woman would be a great assassin.

–Is that how you recruited her?

–Recruited. She thinks it’s all real. I made her up. Just for you. You needed someone.

–You couldn’t have done it worse for me.

–She’s pretty.

–Are you crazy? I’m the peacock in this pen.

–You have to be patient.

–Doing what? Shopping? Meeting with developers? What are we doing?

–We’re taking over the world one block at a time.

–That’s great for you but pretty shitty for me.

–You’re part of the transformation of the world.

–Another strip mall.

–It’s work and progress.

–I just don’t want to be around to watch it. Another bulldozer knocking down a forest preserve.

–It’s the best for all of us. We don’t want to shrink the tax base.

–We can’t do anything about the shrinking.

–We have everything to do with it. Where have you been?

–I’ve been in this paradise that you created for me. And it keeps feeling hotter and hotter in here.

–Air conditioning not working?

–Nothing seems to work.

–We have maintenance.

–I know one style of maintenance. Only I’m not allowed to apply it.

–Your skills are going to come in handy.

–What are we doing? Remolding suburban government. Trying to implicate some county official in a kick back scheme. It’s not part of our mandate.

–I’ve got orders from higher up.

–This kind of domestic intelligence is equivalent to political dirty tricks.

–What do you think we have been doing all along. We have to remain active in the

world. We have to protect our interests.

- I thought that we're supposed to keep the game fair.
- Spoken like a true mechanic.
- Where are my tools?
- Time.

I need to map out my best strategy. How to get out of here before I get swallowed up in my identity switch.

I have breakfast at 6 before anyone else is up. I love how it feels without the interruption of others. The only sounds are the ones that I make in getting ready breakfast.

Afterwards I go for a run and then I shower. I have to make myself stronger.

I go to get a newspaper. I have to check to see if they are trying to make contact.

**-You really think that they still want you. You can barely get out of bed, but you're still devising these new strategies of what you're going to do to change the world.**

**-I'm a player.**

**-In your head. You've been sidelined.**

**-Sidelined because of what I know.**

**-I've seen that strategy before.**

**-I know the whole operation.**

**-They recycle the system in a week. It takes you a year to figure out the working parts. It would take you a solid one hundred to figure out the variations.**

**-But the patterns are easily resolvable.**

**-You're not getting what you need.**

**-I thought that was your job.**

**-I'm not your contact. I'm your terminal.**

**-What does that mean?**

**-You should know. I remind you of your obsolescence. If you try to beat me at my game, then retirement is the only option.**

**-I wish that you'd go.**

**-You summon me, and then you ask me to go.**

**-I thought that you had information for me. Instead, all that you have is information against me.**

My pen slides as I work to underline a passage about another sale. Shirts from Vietnam. Really nice cottons. I need to pick up a couple of white ones. My shirts are getting a bit frayed around the collar.

-This operation is going to blow up in your face.

-I can't keep track of these operatives that you're sending out.

-This is the new world order. Protecting your creativity.

-Making room for cheaper goods.

-You've got expanded credit.

-I need a nap.

-You're tiring easily.

-Can you get me a driver?

–In the initial agreement, you could drive yourself.  
–You know that I’m having problems.  
–But you hate to admit them.  
–This is where it all started off.  
–You need a physical.  
–That’s what got it started. You put something in me.  
–Pretty soon, all your wondering will come to an end.  
–That’s what he’s been telling me. Did you send him out?  
–Who?  
–You know. The angel of death.  
–That’s some silly rumor started in the basement of the facility. The ghost of an agency  
past.  
–No one leaves by the front door. It’s always in a bag.

–Who are those two guys?  
–What two guys.  
–I saw them in the mall. And now they’re following us. I see them all the time.  
–It’s really nothing to worry about.  
–The two guys. Who are they? They were at the museum. You don’t see them. It’s like  
you’re blind to the world.

–I told you that I need a driver. Now she’s seeing things.  
–Seeing what?  
–These two guys who followed us from the museum.  
–What did they look like.  
–One has curly hair. The other is a shorter guy,  
–Maybe they’ve cracked your cover.  
–What the hell are you doing up there?

–**Can’t even get anything straight. That’s what they call organization.**  
–**Have you come here to gloat?**  
–**I’ve just come to do my job.**  
–**And what’s that?**  
–**I’m here when you need me.**  
–**And when I don’t. I have to deny that you even exist.**  
–**But I’m here.**  
–**I just want to drop out of history.**  
–**That’s happening for you.**  
–**This is a holiday.**  
–**I’m retired.**  
–**Fun loving.**  
–**This is hell.**  
–**It had to come some time.**  
–**It was like I just started. Then I realized what was going on. Then I got retired.**  
–**Maybe that’s a bad choice of words.**

**-Remaindered.**

- I'm feeling bad. I need you to take me to the hospital.
- I can't. I can't get out of bed. See if you're better in the morning.
- Better. I feel like I'm dying.
- I can't. In the morning.
- You're really understanding.
- You do look white as a sheet.
- I'll be OK. Just check on me in the morning.
  
- I don't feel any better now after a night's sleep.
- You look dead.
- I've been sick all night. I need to go to the emergency room.
- I'll get a blanket. You get ready and I'll give you drive.
- How are you going to drive.
- I'll make it go.
- You can barely get out of bed yourself.
- I told you that I'll be OK.
  
- A doctor's supposed to come in here in a while.
- We've been waiting in here for two hours already.
- I can wait. It's not like I'm dying. And there are some real emergencies here.
- But you are very sick. You have death's pale.
- I just need some rest. Maybe a transfusion.
- That's what we all need.
  
- So you brought her in and you started feeling chest pains yourself.
- Yeah.
- You're being treated. What are you being treated for?
- I can barely walk. I'm in such pain.
- right now.
- No. That's a different pain. Chest pains. I feel that I'm being knocked out.
- There's really nothing at all that we can do to help.
- But I feel like I'm dying.
- Indigestion.
- You're playing with me. You haven't run any tests.
- The imagination's a powerful thing.
- I don't like being here.
- You keep that up and we're going to hold you here.
- You're sounding like a cop.
- I've had to knock a patient around now and then,
- Good for you. Now I need to see a doctor.
- You need a shrink. It's all up here.
- That's no way to talk to me.

–You just go home. I’ll be OK in here.  
–Are you sure?  
–Yeah. They’ll send a doctor down here. Go home. Get something to eat. And rest.  
–I’ve still got the chest pains.  
–You’ll be OK.  
–No, I won’t. I feel like I’m going to collapse.  
–Quit having a tantrum. I’m the one who’s sick.  
–I know that you’re sick. I brought you in here. But you have to go back home. I know that he’s going to come calling.  
–Whatever are you talking about?  
–The doctor’s going to be down here soon. You don’t have to stay.  
–I don’t want to leave you alone.  
–You have to go. I need some time by myself. To prepare myself.  
–I don’t want to be alone.  
–You’ll be all right.  
–I feel that I’m going to pass out when I drive back home.  
–I’m surprised that you could even make it here in the first place.  
–I would have felt embarrassed having us both taken here in an ambulance.  
–And you’re not doing so bad so you can go.  
–I want to see someone.  
–You already have.  
–No, about the chest pains.  
–You ate too many oranges before you came here.  
–What does that have to do with anything?  
–I’m trying to tell you to go. Go home and lie down.  
I’m in the worst of pain.  
–What the hell do you want me to do about it? I’m having my own problems. I need a transfusion. If I don’t get blood...  
–And I’m in great pain. Who’s going to take care of me?  
What am I getting pulled in to? I hate hospitals. The smell of death. Already I feel that I am being absorbed in here. I don’t want to stay. I want treatment. I was trying to be nice. But now my viciousness has come through. It has gripped my body.  
–I can’t have one moment on my own. Do you always have to interrupt? Are you always on the goddam stage?  
–It’s like it is. This is the wall. Shortness of breath. These pains.  
–If it’s that bad, then check yourself in.  
–They say that they can tell by my face that I’m OK.  
–And are you?  
–I’m telling you that I’m not.  
–Maybe it’s sympathetic pain. You take me in here, and now you’re feeling the same thing yourself.  
–It’s not like that.  
–They can tell by looking in your face if you’re faking it.  
–I’m not faking it.  
–But your body could be faking it.

- How would anyone know that.
- They have ways. That's what they do.
- And what they do leads to malpractice all the time.

-So they let you out to make dinner.

-I'm not ready to make dinner. I just got out of the hospital.

-Let me make it.

-No, I'm going to make it.

-And what are we having?

-Something special.

-Let's eat.

-Can't you see that I just got out of hospital.

-Well, you didn't go in there yourself. You gave her a ride.

-A ride. I could hardly drive there. Where the hell were you? And I was experiencing chest pains.

-Did they find out what it was?

-They wouldn't believe me.

-They wouldn't.

-No, not at all.

-They must know.

-I'm going to sue the bastards.

-If you're OK.

-I didn't feel OK.

-But you're better now.

-I'm in pain.

-Then you better rest. I'll make dinner.

-No, I'm making dinner.

-Then make it.

-I'm going to make it. Give me some time.

-It's getting late.

-OK, Mr. Smart Genius, do you have somewhere to go?

-I don't have to go anywhere. But it is late.

-And you can wait for dinner.

-Mr. Smart Genius, you can never wait.

-Don't call me that.

-Call you what.

-That name.

-What do you want me to call you? Will? Sam? Mr. Clever Forever. Mr. Smart Genius, you work it out.

-First, I boil the water.

-I'll do that.

-Then you add the rice.

-Sort of a truth serum.

-Then you mix it up.

-I'm doing that.

-You have the brandy and the cheese.  
-I'm getting confused.  
-What?  
-I'm in pain again.  
-What?  
-Let me sit here.  
-I'll make the dinner.  
-No, I'll make it.  
-Tell me the truth. What is really going on?  
-I don't know. I just don't know.  
-Have you been taking that medicine for your memory.  
-I can't remember.

-Why should anyone care about any of this?  
-Exactly.  
-But it's already eight o'clock and we haven't eaten yet.  
-Those are the breaks.  
-Do you want to eat? I do.  
-We'll eat in good time. I just want to go to my room for a while. I'll be back.  
-How?  
-Give me some time.  
-I'm going to go ahead and eat.  
-Don't mess with my stuff.

-I don't think that he knows what's going on. He tried to make dinner. But he wouldn't eat. He doesn't want to eat. He just went to his room.

-Is there something that you can do?  
-Is there something I can do? How are you doing?  
-Just get yourself something to eat. You'll be better.  
-Better. You have to come back to reality. We all do.  
-This is going nowhere.  
-I hope that I'm not going to have to pay for this on my own.  
-You won't.  
-I want to eat.  
-Do what you need to do.  
-You'll be OK.  
-The doctor came down here a while ago. They're regulating my blood. Make sure that he's OK  
-He doesn't want to eat.  
-You've got to get him to eat.  
-He's eating snacks. Candy and cereal. Like a little kid.  
-I've got something to eat in here. He needs coaxing.  
-He won't eat.

Why are they all bothering me? I want to eat. They just don't give me the food that I

want. Them most perfect food. The only thing that I want to eat.

–Flesh?

–Do you want it hot?

–Why are you here again? I'm not alone in the house.

–He won't here us.

–If I scream.

–I'll just run away.

–Mr. Smart Genius.

–I know who you are. What you're trying to hide from everyone around here. You're perfect little identity.

–You'll put in as simple terms as possible. But no one knows who you are. Not even these people who you're living with. You've been given an identity, and it's starting to wear thin.

–What can I do about it.

–You can get a new one.

–I've been trying to contact the agency. They can help me change back to who I was.

–The agency is shit. That's why I'm here.

–It's a potent reality for loads of people.

–It keeps them all in a cloud. They fill in the rest with the flesh.

–Have you brought me something to eat.

–I am the way. Touch me.

–You're barely real yourself,

–You know my purpose. Restrain yourself.

–Where have I heard that before.

–You're going to get one chance to tell the story. You better get it right. After that, people stop listening.

–I'm feeling less and less part of anything. I have to make it all bigger than it is.

–Everyone else is pretty much the same. There is nothing that we can do for you.

–Why are you here?

–Honey, I hear that you're feeling better.

–They gave me tea and cookies. Put the blood back in. But I'm asking for more.

–Eternal life.

–The were offering that to me too. But I got tired of putting the damn needle in.

–They can do that here. Put it in and leave it in here permanently.

–You know who I am.

–You're the angel.

–That's what they call me.

–I don't like the fact that you're here.

–No one has to know.

–I do. I'm left with that awful truth. Like this beating. Deep inside me. You know what that is.

–I don't like to think about it. Not with all the things that I have to do today.

-What do you have to do? I thought that you get to think about everything.  
-I have priorities.  
-I feel blessed to be one of them.  
-You've been chose all your life. This is your story. What it's all about.

-Come on in here.  
-How are you doing?  
-I'm doing pretty well.

**This is the end.**

-You're up now. It's late.  
-It's late for me. But not for you.  
-You haven't been sleeping well.  
-No, I slept great. I just woke up for a second. I'm going back to bed. I heard you and wanted you to come and visit.

-You look good.  
-I told you that I've been sleeping well.  
-That's good.  
-It's very good.  
-You look healthy.  
-I'm getting better.  
-I'll let you get back to sleep.  
-Great. I'll see you in the morning.  
-I guess that it's morning now.

**Are you afraid?**

-Give me your hand.  
-You still have a strong grip.  
-I'm holding on.  
-We all are.  
-Don't give in.

-Do you know who I am?  
-You re the only one that I can turn to.  
-What does that mean?  
-Someday I won't be around.  
-Don't say that.  
-It's the truth.  
-The truth hurts.  
-It's what the future holds.  
-We'll avoid the future. Hang on!  
-I have. I'm very tired.  
-See you in the morning.

-What if there is no morning?  
-I'll hang on. We'll make it together.  
-Sure.

- Give me your hand.
- What is that going to do?
- Let it run through me!
- I can feel the pulse.
- As do I.

It is now clear to me that I have been chosen. A clear winner. I have surpassed my initial assignment and am now a benefit to all.

**PLEASE SEND IN THE AGREEMENT AND WE CAN MAKE YOUR PRIZE AVAILABLE**

Now it is more than just a prize. It is a mound of cash. Everything that I need to fulfill a dream.

- What's going on in here?
- Important business.
- Don't you have to eat?
- I have food here. Don't disturb it.
- What food?
- I'm protecting myself. **Don't touch anything. You'll fuck it all up!**
- Whatever are you talking about?
- These papers are all arranged.
- Arranged how.
- Can't you see the organization? There are things to eat.
- What things to eat? All that I see is dust.
- Do you see it. Are you some kind of idiot, Mr. Smart Genius.
- I want to get you something to eat.
- There are papers that you need to send in. You're messing with them. We have to contact Haines.
- Who's that?
- It's important if we don't want to lose the house.
- Had there been a shakeup at the agency?
- Haines who? There's no Haines.
- He's going to give us money.
- How much?
- 13,000 to start.
- Where?
- It's part of the tax agreement.
- There's no agreement.
- You don't what you're talking about.
- I need to order a new watch. Maybe a couple of watches. The morning is passing out of me. I'll start over tomorrow.
- I need to change my life around.
- We'll get you out of bed, and then get you something to eat.

–He’s definitely confused. He can’t leave his bed. And he seems to be talking to someone when I’m not there. He has these paper that he says are important. But it’s a bunch of newspaper clippings and ad circulars. Crumbs that he says are food.

–He’s confused.

(–This is more than confusion. He’s losing it!)

**They’re going to contact him. He has skills.**

I’ve got a letter from the Chief Executive. This is a special mission. He’s going over the head of the Director and contacting me directly. He’s going to send a limousine for me and I’m going to start immediately.

–I’ve got a new job, and I figured that I need a new car. A Mercedes.

–Let me tell you what we’ve got in new. Someone has brought in this beautiful avocado green number with leather seats. I can let you have this as a steal for 30 grand.

–Can you drive it out here?

–Yeah, we’ll let you try it out.

–If you let me have the car, I’ll let you drive it.

–You’re under medication. You can’t drive.

–Yes I can.

–Not for a while.

–It’s a beautiful car. I need to have it.

–It’s going to cost too much.

–I have money coming to me.

–What money?

–A secret deal.

–What kind of deal?

–You ask too many questions.

–I’m just trying to protect myself.

–Who do you work for?

–I work for you.

–No, you don’t. Who do you work for?

–I do jobs. Now who’s asking too many questions.

–These are things that I have to know. The only question.

–I’ve told you what I can.

–That’s not good enough. Why won’t you let me have my car.

–You’re not ready for it. Not ready at all!

–I told you that you can use it. There’s the white one and the green once. If they sent me a little more money, I could have both cars.

–You can’t even drive one.

–You can drive one.

–I thought that there were things that you didn’t want me to know.

–I could tell you if you agreed not to tell anyone.

–I’d be an apprentice.

–You’d still have to be tested.

12AM	try to sleep	I have no problem trying to sleep. But the medication is supplementing my dreams.
1AM	meet with developer about the mall development	He can get me into the control room of the mall at this time. I can observe the secret cameras. I can get in touch with what the total investment will mean.
2AM	take my memory drugs	I need to stay alert. This is the first things that goes. The agent is vulnerable in the field.
3AM	meet with Mercedes dealer.	I think that he is working for another government. A spy.
4AM	Meet with counterintelligence	I think that our organization has been penetrated. It is hard to be effective when I am so far from the center of power.
5AM	sleep some more	My dreams should reach an advanced stage at this point.
6AM	get up	I don't need an alarm. I make coffee. Get washed. Then I have breakfast. I make notes from the paper. They are trying to contact me.
7AM	work on my electronic organizational chart.	I have mapped out the organization. The network is computerized and connected directly to communication links. I know what is going on and I can contact anyone that I need at any moment. Anywhere!
8AM	make my telephone calls	Even though I am slightly out the loop, I am still part of something serious. I keep track to the system, and can input my changes.
9	prepare my lecture	I am lecturing on how the use of drugs enhance the performance of intelligence agents. The nocuous effects of these drugs when combined create a super potent drug.

10	give my first lecture	My lecture is attended by both students and colleagues. I have discovered innovations that will change the application of intelligence for the rest of the century.
11	prepare my second lecture	This lecture will detail how the culture industry has been infiltrated by agents of other powers. It provides steps to resist the infiltration
12PM	take a lunch break. Meet with local contacts	I am at the forefront of a change in this community. Education and cultural instruction are being brought under our plan for a new development in this country. In this community, we are a model of this change.
1PM	give my second lecture	My lecture is open to the public and well attended. Each citizen needs to be a beacon in defending our liberties.
2PM	exercise	Even with my new disability, I need to be in perfect condition.
3PM	doctor's visit	The machine has to be serviced. Make it perfect!
4PM	afternoon nap	I need to supplement my dream explorations.
5PM	medication to calm me down	I am too good at what I do. I do not want to burn out!
6PM	early dinner. Meet with Regional head of operations	We have to expand what we are doing here into other communities. The mall is a new cultural center and must be exploited as such. We have to organize buying habit in a patriotic way.
7PM	television break	I keep track of the news. How successfully we have shaped public opinion.
8PM	meetings with the bank	We are financing our development project.
9PM	medication to keep me awake	
10PM	briefing by the Director	A bilateral exchange.
11PM	phone conversation with the Chief Executive	<b>TOP SECRET!</b>

–I think that I need to bring him in. It's making no sense. Now he's trying to recruit me.

**I think that I am being betrayed!**

–Get him in here. We'll talk to him.

–They want to see you at the doctor's. Something about your medication.

–I know what I'm taking. I'm the agency's expert.

–What agency?

–They're going to take me back. Have me lecture.

–We have to get you in for your treatment.

–I can do it at home.

–This is getting rather critical.

–I can take care of myself.

–Not really.

–I can.

–We have an appointment. You need to get dressed.

–I am dressed.

–You're in your pajamas.

–I'm not naked. I need to have my breakfast. Then I'll take a shower. Then I'll get dressed.

–We're in a hurry. They'll close before we get there.

–It's only the morning.

–It's 1:30. We have to go.

I'll be ready at 2.

–You better. I don't want to get stuck in rush hour traffic.

–Rush hour starts at 5.

–It starts at 3 these days.

–I'll be ready. Quit being a smart ass.

–I'm trying to help.

–What are you doing besides screaming at me.

–I can get you breakfast.

–I'll get it.

–I thought that you ate in the morning.

–I slept this morning.

–Before you slept.

–That was dinner.

–Do you know what time it is?

–They tell us it's afternoon, but it's dark on the other side of the house.

–What does that mean?

–It's hard to see at night.

–Are you having trouble seeing.

–It's bright in here. It's light out. Don't be silly.

–You have all the lights on.

–I need to see,

–So it is dark in here.

–Not with the lights on.

-Well, get dressed.  
-I'm trying to. But you're talking to me.  
-You need to get out of bed.  
-I can't. Not right now.  
-We'll get you breakfast.  
-I had some cereal.  
-You need to take your shower.  
-Not today.  
-You want to look good when we go out.  
-I do look great already. Get my clothes together.  
-I have.  
-I don't want to wear those things.  
-What?  
-They're ugly and they smell.  
-They smell like you. You need a shower.  
-You can't tell me what to do.  
-I know that I can't. We need to get going.  
-Who are you to tell me?  
-I'm the only one here.  
-So you're not the one to tell. You can't give me orders.  
-Who can?  
-The Director. The Assistant Director. The Chief Executive.  
-We need to head up to the office.  
-Will one of them be there?  
-His agent will.  
-What agent? You're just trying to humor me.  
-Is it working?  
-You're a smart ass.  
-You've got to get out of bed.  
-I told you that I can't. It's dangerous.  
-You got to go.  
-Come back in fifteen minute, and I will be ready

If he comes back, and I can't find the papers from Haines, then we're sunk.

-We need to go.  
-I'm ready.  
-You're not even dressed, and you've gone back to bed. It's nearly 2.  
-We'll go. But don't order me!  
-I'm not telling you. But we do have to go.  
-We'll go.  
-Are you going to stay with me while I'm there.  
-I need for you to wait for me upstairs.  
-I will wait.  
-That's not sufficient. You have to come with me.  
-I hate it there.

-How do you think that I feel.

-I'm going to bring you upstairs. Then I'll see you back here in an hour.

-That's too long.

-They won't see you right away.

-I want you to wait.

-I thought that you brought a book.

-I did. But I'm going to get bored

-He's doing well. He showed me his schedule.

-Doing well. Did you look at the schedule.

-It all seemed in order.

-What Director.

-From the University.

-He doesn't work for them anymore.

-He told us that he did. It's in his patient records.

-Everything is starting to make sense.

-Sense. Where is he?

-He said that he was getting something to eat.

-Where?

-He was going to see an orthopedic man.

-Where is that?

-Across the courtyard.

-You really think that he's OK.

-He seemed very friendly.

-Is that how you figure out what's going on in his head? I was very friendly until you lost him. You know who he really is.

-I'm trying to make sense of that.

-Who do you work for?

-I'm part of this office.

-Can he be trusted with you.

-I'm just the assistant.

-That sometimes is a very powerful position.

-I'm trained in behavior.

-Where's the rat?

-Here he is. You talk to him, and I'll see you both back in the office.

-I thought that you'd wait for me upstairs.

-I got hungry. Why didn't you wait with me?

-They're working with you. I hate them.

-They said that they can help.

-How can they do that. I showed them my schedule. Told them about the lecture. You want some food.

-We got to go.

-I just want some ice cream, and then I'll pay the man.

-I don't like ice cream.  
-Have a bar. I'll buy you one. I have a lot more money where that came from.  
-Are you OK.  
-I'm getting better.  
-Let's just go.  
-I need to get some medication.

-Are you giving him truth serums.  
-Technically, there is no such thing as a truth serum. We're trying to quiet him down.  
-He seems pretty quiet.  
-But you told me that he's not eating.  
-He did eat something downstairs.  
-Are you going to give me my prescription or what. I don't think that she trusts me.  
-He told me that you're giving him a memory drug.  
-Again, it's not for memory. It just treats the pain.  
-Some pain can't be treated.  
-At least we can do something about the symptoms.  
-Do you know what day it is?  
-It's Thursday.  
-We need to see the doctor tomorrow.  
-He'll call.  
-He better.  
-I'll call you. Or better still. Here's my card. You call me if I don't get back to you.

-It's all this game that you play with them to get drugs.  
-I need to feel right. I've got to get better. To get back to work. The country's falling  
apart.  
-They always have replacement.  
-That is what I am afraid of.  
-What?  
-A coup. They're just making up this illness to get back at me.  
-Is it working?  
-All too well. I need a pill.  
-What kind of pill?  
-One of the prescription.  
-Do we need to stop.  
-It's like candy. Sweet. Now I can get the effect just from sugar.  
-It's working.  
-It's all turned around. The feeling.  
-You go away, and the feeling stops.  
-I am eternal. Sweetness eternal.  
-Is this a revelation?  
-I need some candy.  
-What do people normally do in a situation like this?  
-They die. They get it off the street.

-I like it when it makes more sense.

-It will. We need to stop.

-What do you mean he won't eat.

-He had a meal. We had him meet with the assistant.

-What did she say?

-Nothing much of anything.

-I don't like her.

-Either do I. She really didn't listen. Maybe the doctor can help. Maybe we can sue them.

-We have to work with them.

-It makes no sense.

-Have you been sleeping?

-Not well.

-I need to get back home. He needs to see the doctor.

I've got everything I need. I just have to make the call to the dealer. He said that he could bring the car around on Friday.

-I need you to bring the car in the afternoon. No one else is in the house.

-Can you make it by to the office.

-If you drive it over here.

-We might be able to oblige. You do have the information that we asked about?

He is working for a foreign intelligence service.

-You can never leave your home.

-You are getting lonely.

Who am I?

-You can't get through.

-Are you going to manage the loan.

-The loan has been rejected.

-The letter said that I could get the money.

-You need to sign over the property.

-What about the development.

-We'll see it through.

-I had the papers. But I had to go to the doctor, and they interrupted my schedule.

-We'll call you back.

-I need to solve this before he gets back.

-What?

-You need to get me the car.

-What car?

-Send someone round with the papers, and I will sign them.

-This is getting hopeless.

-It could get better. Just sign the papers.

Committal papers.

-I need the car.

I need to see a lawyer.

–The doctor didn't call, did he?

–No he didn't.

–what time is it.

–It's 3:30. He's not going to call today.

–I'm going to get out of here tomorrow. We'll stabilize things and then see him on Monday.

They won't let me use the phone. I've got some orders to put through for the new store.

**You can see my face. I'm in your mirror looking back. Kiss me because it's all that you have left before it all decays.**

I've got some museum pieces that are coming in. I want my room to look like King Tut's tomb. All in gold. Jewels everywhere.

Even if I do not work for historical accuracy, I will find what I need on my own.

**Why are all the doors and windows open. Are you expecting someone?**

**–We have to keep them open. These are people who you can't stop from getting in.**

I want the jade.

–Send me the jade bracelet.

–Do you want the matching necklace.

–Of course send the necklace. And I want the flower watch.

–The flower watch is not available.

–I had my heart set on the watch.

–Wait a second. There is one left. A lot of this stuff is going to be unavailable. It's great that you're getting to us now.

–I also want some things in silver.

–You have the order number.

–Page 13. You see all that stuff. I'd love that.

–I'm copying down the numbers.

–I want all of that.

–We can get it for you.

–I need it.

**You know that silver has special properties against evil.**

**–Are you expecting visitors?**

**–More than visitors.**

**–Once they come, they stay forever.**

**–What could that possibly mean.**

**–That there is no escape.**

–I'm going to need tickets for the boat cruise. The Scotland tour.

**–We're going to send you out of the country.**

**–Can I take someone with me?**

**–You're going to need a front.**

–The Mercedes.

-You can't cross the ocean in a car.  
-I can have it shipped.  
-Are you sure?  
-People have before.  
-You have the watches.  
-I want the watches. These are special.  
-How?  
-Very special.  
**-You're going to need these for your mission.**  
**-What sort of mission.**  
**-This is a terminal mission.**  
**-For me.**  
**-No. For your colleague.**  
**-Whoever that I pick.**  
**-No, that's the assignment.**  
**-Male or female?**  
**-That's the assignment.**  
**-How come you've broken off contact.**  
**-It's how we're handling this mission.**

-I can't get him off the phone.  
-Take away his credit cards.  
-I can't.  
-I got to get out of here.  
-It's too late to call the doctor.  
-Too late. He didn't call.  
-No, he didn't call.

**They're set up like a protection service. But that's just what it does. Protection means assassination.**

**-Are you involved?**  
**-I'm going to be needed. It's private, not government.**  
**-You know what that means.**  
**-You know. We have no restrictions. We can do whatever we want. We're in another country. No rules. Nothing. Even if the heads of state get overthrown, we're immune.**  
**-Just protection.**  
**-That's all.**

It gives you the sense of ultimate power. Anything that you want, it will be there immediately. Why would you be violent? There's no reason. You hardly need to be patient. And who's going to pay. It's built in. Other people see what you've got, and they buy it. It's like advertising.

**-You need to start over. Whatever is evil in your life, you have to destroy it. I these times the universe is coming to know itself. It is casting out all that does not contribute to**

## **the surpassing of itself.**

You can spend, spend, spend. They can and will pay for you. They will want what you want. And that will take care of it.

- He can't stop buying things.
- What's the big deal?
- He doesn't have the money.
- Who does?
- He keeps ordering more stuff.
- It's who we are.
- But we can't pay for it.
- So what.
- It's things that we don't need.
- It'd be better if he didn't buy anything more.
- Certainly. But we can't stop him.

What if I just gave everything away? Would it hurt? Would it make any difference to anyone. These are things that we need to use.

- Who are you talking to on the phone.
- It's business.
- What business? You have no business private from me.
- I have a life that is mine. I hardly know you.
- Know me. You'd be nothing without me. I found you on the streets. I made you into something.

Each day going over lists. Learning new words. What they really can do.

Overcome. Surpass. Diminish. Routing.

Work me over.

- I'm planning a world tour. I can see all the things that I've never seen in my lifetime.
- You can't admit to anything going on around you.
- I try. But it doesn't make sense.
- It will. Sometime in the future.
- That's what I say to myself. I can buy that bit of happiness that has always evaded me. I have \$13,000. It increases. Eventually, I have 130,000. A million. It's going to happen. I just keep playing the game.

- You're going to reach a limit.
- I already have. But I need to keep spending.
- But you've already reached a limit.
- I have a house, and it's worth more every day.
- But the house is in our name. And you're grasping less and less about finances every day.

- I can still hold my breath. I can still scream. I can call you names.
- Go ahead. You're not buying anything else. Not while I'm here.
- You're taking away my freedom. My identity.
- You keep spending like you have, and they're going to take away your identity.
- That's the way I feel.

–No, it is getting worse.  
–And that’s the way that I feel.  
–It’s not just a feeling. It’s doing something about it.  
–I have to play along. I have some new coupons.

–Bring him in, and I’ll talk to him.  
–You’re going to have to do more than talk. You’re going to have to straighten things out.

–I can’t tell him what to do.  
–But you can tell him what’s going to happen if he doesn’t do what you tell him.  
–What’s that?  
–Bad things will happen.  
–That sounds like a nursery rhyme. That’s not my area of expertise.  
–It could be. You could learn new skills.  
–I could figure out why he’s the way he is. I have to use the skills that I have.  
–You’re going to have to act quick.

I’m not ready to leave. I’m in the midst of some important work, and I do not want to be distracted. Honestly, this is all a diversion. I’m place in this house, and now it is assuming its own logic. A reverse intelligence.

–This is crazy. I need to sleep, and you’re telling me that I have to go.  
–You have to get up.  
–I’m going to get there, and no one can see me.  
–No one? The doctor will see you.  
–He’s going to be busy. And then he’ll leave.  
–He say that he’ll see you now.  
–He wants to kill me. I know that. And you want to destroy my work.  
–I just feel that you need to get out of this mess.  
–This is not a mess. It’s genius. You’re just caught in your everyday life.  
–You need to get up and get out of this bed.  
–And go where?  
–You need to go into his office.  
–This is bull shit. I haven’t eaten my breakfast.  
–Get dressed, and let’s eat.  
–I can eat until I’m dressed.  
–It’s almost 2:30 and we’ll hit rush hour traffic.  
–You know nothing about traffic. Nothing about short cuts.  
–I know that we have to get out of here.  
–It’s night time. We’re going to get there, and the doors will be locked. Everything will be empty.

–It’s crazier than that. But you have to get ready.  
–I can’t move. See how that sheet connects to the other one. It’s a protective barrier. I’m going to get sick if I leave the bed.

–You need to get up.  
–I don’t want to die.

-Die how.  
-Watch out.  
-Can you see that look in your face?  
-I can't see anything. This is insane. You've wrecked the balance. Now we need to start over again.  
-Start over. We haven't done anything. You said that you'd take a shower. That you'd get out of the damn bed.  
-I can't get up.  
-Splash some water on yourself, and let's go.  
-I can't get dressed. It's all over me.  
-Come on!  
-Did you see what you've done. I'm in trouble now.  
-Get up.  
-I can't.  
-Get up.  
-If you leave, I'll get up.  
-And you'll get dressed.  
-I'll do whatever you need me to do.  
-I'll leave the room. Then I'll come back. You'll be dressed.  
-OK.

-Can you help him get dressed?  
-Who me?  
-Yeah. We need to get him out of here.  
-I'm trying to help.  
-Help. You're both incompetent.  
-It's already getting pretty late.  
-The doctor will be there until 4.  
-It's almost three now.  
-4484.  
-What?  
-I don't know.  
-But you do.  
-Mr. Smart Genius. I need to go.  
Whenever I'm in a jam, I call him. Confusion ends. One becomes two.  
-Are you helping?  
-I'm trying to.  
-I can't even stand up. He needs to help me.  
-Help him.  
-I'm trying but he wants to go back to bed.  
-It would be better that way.  
-You're fully dressed, and you're lying on the bed.  
-I'm fully dressed, and now I'm ready for bed..  
-We have to go.  
-Do you have instructions for me.

-We have to go.  
-Better instructions.  
-We're in a hurry.  
-Help me.  
-Help him to the car.  
-Lean on me.  
-I am leaning, but you're not doing a very good job trying to support me.  
-I'm doing the best that I can.  
-You're killing me. I need to go back to bed.  
-We need to leave. You can lie down in the car.

-It's this disease. We all feel it. A desire to escape. A frustration. Something that is eating everyone up a little. That resistance to each other. I won't drive. Don't try to interfere I'm OK. I don't have a short fuse. I just can't stomach this bull shit. I can stand looking at you.

>>Do you like me? And the question itself creates its own answer, its own antagonism. I don't have to be sorry. I had my time of sorrow. And I know what I felt. I know it down deep. I don't want to feel that down. I was unhappy. So now I'm going to make you feel like I felt. And there's really nothing that you can do to stop me

>>And you're curled up in your bed with the music playing. This is my music. And what protects me. You'll never understand. You gave all your life to this, and you can't understand. How we care. How we love. How we suffer.

>>Sleep it off. Just burn off that fascination for your own pain. You'll only want more of it. More of what only you can do.

>>How we love. We get glued together. We find someone who can answer our questions. Answer until we can create a question that we can't answer.

>>How do I cross the street alone? How do I say good by? How do I not give in to you?

>>And you're making me such a great offer. To live with you. But I can't stand you. Your risk taking has its down side. Your lethargy. And there nothing. There is just nothing.

>>We like the same things. Or we liked the same things. And now those songs, those places, those foods, all of it makes me want to vomit. Not just get sick. But to get sick on you.

>>And we say it all. Say it in a way that we can't come back from it. It's all done.

>>And that evening when the darkness really falls on us, we want to take it back. When we feel our lethargy. But we want to say that it's not the same thing. We want someone like us. Equally insulated from what they feel. Because the last time that we really felt anything, we were sick. We were paralyzed. And we want someone with that same balance. Even if they feel indifferent to our pain. We accept that. Just that.

>>Everyday seems like that new beginning. We have disengage completely from that former self. But there is that challenge that we can't take. That risk that seems formidable. So we become immersed in the contests that life gives us. The substitute obstacle. Like a game or a movie. The answer is already built in. There has to be some winner, and this is our turn. We take. I take it for you. You take it with me. And what we can't stand about each other is driven to that constant level

>>You know what we're going to do. We're going to celebrate it. That we've made it this far. We've turned the corner.

>>Now when the disease faces us, we resent it. We resent the lepers because we were so.

We are so. That mirror that we don't want to see is still reflecting back. Or it would if we hadn't covered it. And in our mind, there is that same reflection. It burn away at us. We need a surgeon. Someone to cut out whatever is left. That thing that eats at us. That risks becoming something physical. Something that we can hold. This needs to be destroyed.

>>The anger resurfaces. Always at a moment that we feel that it is us. Always at a turning point that seems to be our doing. We bury it. We become impatient with those who ask the question.

>>It is brewing in us. And the steam is going to our head. You are with us. Can you feel it. You have dismissed your anger. Or you only give in to your pain.

>>Where does it hurt you?

>>You have distilled it to nothing. This point. Are you ready to see it.

>>This is the heart of the disease. Who you are. This point that you concentrate on. If you let it become bigger, it will uproot you. But it is the sum of all the poisons that you have taken into you. Your identity. Your focus.

>>You have lived together. Lived side by side. Each sharing food. Each burning with desire. But now the gig is up. The concentration is now a mass. Small it is. But it asks to be fed. Asks in a way that it never did before. It could be satisfied sharing. Just hiding. Now the disease takes you places where you can't get back. You just hang there. Wherever is the escape hatch.

>>You needed to let it get this far so you could feel what they feel. But that's just it. The termination point. You feel it. Really do. This is the only thing that allows your response. They can't hear you anymore. They only hear anger. Mumbling. Your calling out to this entity.

>>For you, what is there. A wall. You reach over it. You reach around it. You can't reach because it blocks you out.

>>You never knew that this would happen to you. You want the surgeon.

**I think that I am ready to take the risk. I am going under the surgeon's knife. An embrace with my own uncertainty. All along, I didn't want to give myself up to something that had nothing to do with me. Sure it did it's job, but I couldn't guide it. What if it had its own logic. Beyond elimination of the disease. It wants to take my me away.**

–The cutting is going to have to go deeper than you thought. YOU. You've watched this kind of operation before. You've been in the theater looking down at the procedure. You weren't sure who to be in this piece. The doctor or the patient.

>>But now you know. You want to do the cutting. But you don't want it to come out. You are no longer the doctor. And the feel of the scalpel is all cold. A violation.

>>Why didn't they give you a blanket? You are cold.

–Why are all the lights on?

–I'm in all the rooms simultaneously. You only see me as you do. Here now. But I am everywhere already. And you can't be the same. So you don't really understand.

–It's getting very late.

–Indeed it is.

–Maybe you could turn the lights out and go to sleep.

–I need the light on in here. I am afraid.

–We'll leave this light on here. But you need to stay in here. You can't get up.

–I won't.

–You have to promise.

–But you need to be in this place that radiates such heat. And the lights of the theater remind you of that hunger. Hunger unfulfilled. A hunger that can't be fulfilled. This is a ravaging.

>>If there was some other explanation. This is what we have become. This is our love. Until we put our trust in something that is so amazing.

>>How did you know who I was.

>>I know because I am the same. I have been through the same things. I am eaten up like you. I need the cure.

>>And you seek deliverance. It is there in the night.

>>Can you keep me safe?

–He isn't responding. I think that we're going to have to take him out of here.

–Not responding.

–He's being aggressive.

–You've insulted him. You've threatened him.

–Do you want me to work on this?

–Are you refusing to treat him.

–I'm just saying that he's not admitting what's going on.

–That's a given. It always is.

–A given. There are no givens. If he can't act like a human, I want nothing to do with him.

–What he is—what he does—it's all human.

–What are you saying?

–You tell me. You're the expert.

–We could put him somewhere. Find a place where he might respond.

–We could do that. Do you have somewhere in mind?

–A place. A chamber. Somewhere that might want to take him.

The need to take me to a place where the lights burn really bright. If he has accompanied me here, he needs to have a reason to want to go away.

–You do have reason. They are on to you.

–I am with you. I've come to remind you of your duty.

–Duty. It's ended with your harassment.

–I'm only giving you what you need. Moral support.

–Why is my morale slipping.

–You're not taking advantage of my wonderful advantage.

–You're making it more confusing. I want to see things in clear light.

–It will be clear.

–I need it much clearer.

–There's another light that we could turn on.

–The world is coming to that point of enlightenment.

–Is it time?

–I'm having difficulty staying place.

-They're going to interrogate you.,