

# THE GLARE

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## CHAPTER 1 – The Glare.

Drummond turned his car onto the lane to relive where it all began. Only recently had he convinced himself he'd changed and was finally able to cast off the shackles of a certain superstition that had kept him from returning to this street of his childhood. With that convincing came conviction. From conviction came forth a claim: an entitlement to one last taste, so he was greedily taking this final drink of a thing so long denied, a quick diversion to what was, a short trip through his place of 'once upons' on his way to nowhere. He had been so certain about this place and what had happened here, but now was certainly a nonbeliever. He was sure there was neither time nor choices remaining, but in fact there was infinity at the end of this road - he'd just talked himself out of it.

Drummond inched his silver sports car along. It was unnatural for such a machine to go so slow, and for this man, it seemed the same, but he just couldn't be accused of even one more thing amongst the others, accused of 'going nowhere...fast'.

The neighborhood now seemed unfamiliar and somehow smaller. Everything was overgrown beyond its original intended bounds. Drummond felt as though he was under an enveloping umbrella, a high canopy woven by far reaching oaks with thousands of little jealous hands reaching skyward, waving and grasping, competing for the sun that strained to touch the living things below, filtering and holding brightness back, so that the sun could only meet the ground in small flickering patches. It made this place and his past seem bathed in a perpetual shaded twilight, as though every growing thing craned for a small taste of the gold glitter falling, and all that was able to thrive there was by necessity that which required less to feed upon. Drummond too was bathed in a certain twilight: the dusk of advancing middle age, covered thickly by the vines of an increasingly pragmatic and troubled maturity, one which led him now to a certain showdown that would not end well.

A man would perish once this road was run.

He placed his wrists atop the steering wheel letting his 48 year old palms droop easily over. Patches of light and dark from the oak canopy above traveled up the hood and windscreen, and through the open sunroof of his sleek silver machine, up his hands and blue cuffs, glittering off gold cuff links, up onto his arms and across his beige suit jacket, punctuating him like a leopard. This was Drummond's swan song, a solo slow dance; he was endlessly alone under some deserted nightclub's barely spinning mirrored ball that cast on him both shimmering, and sullen splotches. Changing spots are after all upon the veneer. Deeper, under jealous hands, his heart however had remained where it had begun - in static repose.

Then he saw the two boys on bikes pulled to the side of the road.

The road was too narrow for all of them. The boys paused just short of the worn path that Drummond knew led behind the homes to a field someone named 'Purgatory'.

“Get off the damn road,” He said quietly to himself.

He said it plaintively, without anger, uttered as a sad hopeful plea. Drummond wanted to see the boys recede and continue as he once had with his brother – Georgie, but instead they waited for him to pass. It added to his already steeped annoyance.

The child in the rear position, the younger of the two, animatedly talked to the older one ahead, who was turned around atop his bike looking back over his shoulder at Drummond’s car. The older boy’s face was hidden by carefree shocks of longer hair. Approaching, Drummond’s attention from the road was diverted as he marveled at their vintage bikes, and when abreast them, he noticed the watch on the younger boy – the red-banded Superman watch of 1972 – he knew it, and at that moment, Drummond raised his hand in a wave, leaning across the small interior of the car, almost reaching out the passenger window, almost able to touch the child, but when the boy turned his wrist as if to check the time on the watch, a precious falling gold swath of sun fell upon its crystal sending a sunburst glare blinding Drummond, who momentarily closed his eyes as he saw the boy touching his car.

The car continued forward.

He opened his eyes after only an instant to the ghostly imprint upon them from the bright blaze – he saw the rear of his own car continuing on, and he, now stationary upon the bike, was the one in wide striped shorts; it was now him wearing the red banded watch, a watch given to him by his brother Georgie, and Georgie, now at hand, was only inches away on the other bike. Drummond, suddenly a child of eight years, watched the car recede, confused, in some sordid insane swapping sure he had just been in it. He looked through the back window into the rearview mirror to see familiar eyes looking back.

An adult receded away in a shining sports car.

But that shock was superseded by the eyes of his brother on the bike looking back at him, in the flesh, beautiful and young. His brother, who later would not be with them, was now alive and well atop an orange Schwinn, his face full of life and close, under long sweeping hair falling unto tanned exposed shoulders, again wearing that silly sleeveless brown mock turtleneck. Drummond let his own bike fall to the ground as he jumped from it to grab and embrace his brother.

Horrified, Georgie pushed his brother away exclaiming, “What are you doing?! Get away from me freak!”

“Georgie, Georgie! Good God it’s great to see you!”

“Good God then, old chap,” Georgie said playing along in an mock adult voice, then continued, “What in the heck’s gotten into you ‘dumb-ond’? ‘Good God’...who talks like that? Why are you always so darn weird!?”

“Georgie! It’s me – Drummond!”

“Get on your bike. Games over. I’m getting out of here you freak. If you’re playing some weird act to mess with me, it worked,” Georgie said, and then riding off in front of Drummond, called back over his shoulder, “Don’t ever kiss me like that again or I’ll bust your lip.”

Drummond marveled at the brother who would take his own life at a young age. He was alive again. How did he know his brother was to pass? What did he know? Already the surety of being in the car moments ago seemed almost foreign. Had he just daydreamed and come to? Could a boy dream on a bike? All of a sudden he was less sure. It all immediately seemed absurd.

He knew one thing: Georgie often talked tough, like about busting a lip and all, but never hurt anyone, was gentle: a boy who concerns himself with impending manhood and toughness often displays airs contrary to the smooth streams within. Drummond smiled at the baseless bravado, and then for some unknown reason, it almost made him cry. But if he knew all that about his brother, felt that, then why not remember the circumstances of his loss?

He felt the watch was once Georgie’s and had been given to him, and a bright glare had come off the crystal of the watch blinding him. It was as if it were a flashbulb, and the ghost images of his life as an adult, immediately intact and accessible, were decaying with an extraordinary half life of milliseconds, and like a flashes impressions, were fading quickly and soon they’d be gone.

He reached in vain into his mind searching for Georgie’s particulars, but as a person waking from a vivid dream tries to hold on to what had just been certainly real, what just was quickly fades to nothingness and is soon forgotten, the impressions like those from the flashing glare momentarily on the inner lids of his eyes were swiftly dissipating. Drummond couldn’t access Georgie’s circumstances already – yet the impression was still upon his eyes so to speak. He was certain Georgie was to perish young by his own hand. How he was so certain he did not know. He became aware of Georgie staring at him with genuine fear.

Drummond had lost all but the outlines so quickly – if it had really happened – he’d already lost the surety of that occurrence and realized he could never explain it, so he didn’t try. He couldn’t help smile at Georgie. He had missed him for so many years and now they were about to take the same path to purgatory behind the homes, so Drummond simply mounted his bike and declared in a lie, “I was just kidding – did I scare you?”

“Uh – yeah... You are the weirdest kid. Can you maybe strive to be cool? Anybody can be weird. Cool is hard.”

As his adult life faded to near nothingness now his blank slated past was filling in rapidly: he knew also that they were to meet the girls on the path in the fields of the purgatory. He marveled at his own pristine skin and hairless arms as they rode behind the

Jantzen's mansion to the field, but that novelty seemed to be dissipating also, and he was getting used to seeing his own limbs this way, gaining comfort in his own skin, so that by the time they reached the field he couldn't remember what his adult hands really looked like anymore.

## **CHAPTER 2 – PURGATORY.**

The field behind the upscale homes had been called purgatory before the boys were old enough to discover it. Taking the trail behind the Jantzen Mansion through a short stand of heavy woods would lead to 10 acres of wide open expanse bordered by towering old oaks on all sides.

Georgie always let Drummond enter the path behind the Jantzen's first so his younger brother would reach the expanse before him. It was standard. Georgie would even purposefully slow and let the distance between them increase. Drummond would accelerate, determined to be lost amongst the weeds when Georgie would arrive, and then each time try to get a little further around its great oval track before Georgie would pass him. He wondered if there would ever be a day Georgie would still be at his heels upon completion of the loop. Georgie emerged from the Jantzen path this day to find Drummond dismounted from his bike; today would be no challenge at all.

“Drummond! Go!” The older brother challenged.

“I can't – I threw my chain. Please fix it again.”

“When are you goanna learn to fix it yourself? It's easy.” The older brother said, dismounting and turning Drummond's bike inverted to begin the repair.

Drummond walked behind Georgie and looked off over the field as if seeing it again for the first time. The expanse was a blank area of tall grasses, milkweeds, and Black-Eyed Susans. Long ago, someone had worn a path around the perimeter, but no shortcut had been cut through the center. Once a person started riding, sight of them was quickly lost and obscured by the height of the overgrown middle; there was no way to tell were a rider was once they began. Georgie, always the faster, would inevitably pass and loose Drummond and end up waiting by the entrance for him to complete his loop.

The field was not level. It sloped gradually towards its highest point directly across from the entrance, the furthest point away. The forest rose along the grade so that the outline backdrop of the trees was shaped as if one stood at home plate looking out at a great stadium, where the highest point was opposite the entrance: a place of focus for all, where the scoreboard would rise to account for the battle below. It beckoned anyone who came to enter, and it challenged one to make the climb. Drummond had been to old Wrigley Field in Chicago. He'd watched the old style baseball score board where an unseen mans hands became visible while manually turning around the vintage number

signs. He associated it with the high trees on the crest of purgatory – he felt an unseen man was in those trees accounting.

“Are you getting this? Do you see how I’m working it back on?” his brother called over his shoulder.

But Drummond looked off to the trees on the crest, they seemed so fresh – the board full of zeros. “It’s easy for you Georgie. What isn’t? You’re faster, taller, smarter and \_\_\_”

“Hold on, older, that’s all,” Georgie interrupted and turned to look at his brother who was looking at Purgatory. “Hey watch me. Watch me do this so you see how. Come on. Watch so you can do this for yourself.”

“I’ve tried. I can’t get it.”

“Well what will you do when I’m not here someday?”

Drummond turned and looked at his brother in solo repair. He hugged him from behind.

“Get off of me!” Georgie said almost pushing him into the milkweeds. “What in the heck is wrong with you today?”

“Don’t ever go Georgie. Why do you have to go?”

“What? We’re waiting on you. I’ll give you a good lead.”

“No, I mean later.”

Before his brother could answer, the two girls they were to meet, Janice and Diana, emerged from the Jantzen path. Diana, the older sister, was about Georgie’s age, already beautiful and extroverted. Her quiet plain sister shared not only Drummond’s age, but his grand eclipse behind a superior sibling.

“Gorgeous George!” Diana exclaimed dismounting and hugging him.

“Cut it out- both of you. Both of you – Stop it!” Gosh what does a guy got to do to get a little space?” Georgie mock complained with a wide smile enjoying the young attractive girl’s body pressed against his. It was her new toy in a way and she loved playing with it. Drummond looked on wondering what that felt like, that softness and curve pressed against him, and if he could even take it.

“Both of you?” Diana asked laughing, “Is my sister coming around without me and pressing herself on you? Janice, are you pressing yourself on this boy?”

Janice blushed and lowered her head so her hair would cover her face.

Looking away sensing her discomfort, and finally setting the chain on the sprocket, Georgie said “No I mean Dumb-ond. He’s weird today - touchy feely like.”

“Is that so?” Diana said, turning towards Drummond. She moved towards him slowly, arching her back and pressing her new budding breasts forward into her thin soft sweater, taking one hand to her forehead and brushing her hair back so her elbow pointed skywards. Quietly, towards the younger boy she said suggestively, “You are touchy-feely today?”

Drummond turned the fixed bike over and jumped upon it so no one could see his face – using distance and milkweed in the absence of hair. Janice followed.

Calling off after them Diana said “We’ll see you back here after you loop around. Gorgeous George and I are goanna stay here and – talk...talk of something old and something new...something borrowed.”

Drummond never did let Janice catch up.

### **CHAPTER 3 – NIGHT TALKS.**

Their beds had been placed back to back. That night, Georgie turned off the lamp on the shared opposing headboards. The boys laid with their eyes only a few inches apart in actuality, but in the darkness, they almost seemed in different rooms.

“Does she want to kiss you?” Drummond asked.

“No, because she wants to kiss you.” His brother countered as if returning one of his elegant tennis back-hands.

“Shut up... Did...you ever...kiss her?”

“Nah.”

“Would you?”

“Sure – she’s alright.”

“Alright!” Drummond said, and then added quietly, “She’s amazing.”

“You kiss her then.”

“No!”

Georgie laughed at Drummonds on the fence mixture of boyish ‘*girls are gross!*’ tone, and the questioning quiet declarations of wonder, so he just answered in a kind voice, “Well, I guess Janice is more your speed.”

Drummond said, “Yeah –dull and dreary,” and with certain deflation added, “we all can’t be beautiful Georgie – you and Diana – you’re the lucky ones – me and Janice are the, well, like everyone else – there’s hundreds of us in school and only a couple of your kind...you didn’t kiss her?”

Georgie didn’t answer. As Drummond had grown and slowly become aware of his older brothers superiority, the older brother became aware also – of Drummonds increasing eclipse. The bigger brother was blessed and would kiss plenty of girls. He knew Drummond was right. It wasn’t as challenging or exciting for him as it was for the others who may never really have ample chances. That eclipsing, that once was relegated to the other concerns, smarts and height, speed and athleticism, differences that almost made them opposites, now had reached into a new realm – the opposite sex, and it was here that the grandest blocking of the sun by the moon could occur.

In Georgie’s silence of not answering was harbored a genuine pathos, one which, if allowed to last too long might lead to more questioning, and so turn from a good thing to an accelerant upon a new slightly smoldering jealousy that he smelled, so he added words like cutting a path in a stand of thicket.

“Why don’t you talk to Janice? You guys could be friends you know. You don’t have to think about kissing and that stuff. Think about it like this: if her name was Phil, and she was a boy. You’d be paling around out of boredom, become friends, not think twice about calling each other and riding bikes. It shouldn’t be any different Drummond. Make friends with her. That’s how it all starts \_\_\_\_”

“Georgie” Drummond said interrupting.

“Yeah?”

“Are you happy?”

“What?”

“Do you like life? I mean, could you ever be like – ‘I could take it or leave it’ you know?”

“What kind of stupid question is that?”

”Will you not get mad at me and make fun?”

“Stop being a tool and I wont.”

“I had something happen today. I need to tell you about it...it’s really gross.”

“You mean a boner?”

“No!” Drummond chirped with the same childish yucky-girl voice from before, and then in genuine anger added, “Forget it!”

“Alright, sorry, I’ll listen.”

“Today, that car, remember, the silver sports car, it came onto the drive and I saw it. I had a very strong feeling I knew it was coming before it did – I can’t remember if I felt that and turned, or saw it and kind of felt it at the same time.”

“That’s really screwed up.” Georgie said.

Drummond, obviously affected, asked “Am I crazy or something?”

“Something...something else”. Georgie quipped. “Something old – something new – something borrowed.”

“Something blue?” Drummond asked, completing the couplet not knowing why, or how, and then asked, “What does that mean? Where is it from? I think I’ve heard it before.”

Georgie couldn’t answer not knowing if Drummond meant Diana’s words earlier that day, or the song itself.

Drummond after waiting in vain said, “What’s wrong with me? I felt like I knew that car was coming- and it did.”

“That’s called deja-vu Drum. Most people get it.”

“What is it?”

“It’s a French word. It means ‘already seen’”.

“How do you know other people get it?”

“Simple – because there’s a word for it, a word everyone knows – except you it seems. That means it has significance.”

“Did you ever get it?”

Georgie didn’t answer. He began to stir in bed uneasily.

“Georgie....did you ever get deja-vu?”

Georgie didn’t answer. This time his silence was not born of sympathy, nor was this breaking of the stillness born of compassion, but of avoidance, “Wait...I’m getting it right now! I’m goanna turn the light on!” Georgie turned on the lamp. “And I just know I’m goanna get out of bed,” Georgie rose and walked opposite Drummond. He grabbed a

bit of the skin on Drummonds arm with his thumb and forefinger. Drummond shrieked. Georgie continued in a mystic's voice as he began to twist the skin held captive, "And I knew I would twist it just like this and you'd scream 'stop it'."

"Stop it!" Drummond screamed.

Then Georgie added an instant before Drummond spoke, knowing it was coming, so that their words came out concurrently:

"I'm goanna tell mom!" Both boys cried out in unison, one mocking, and one upset on predicted cue.

Georgie let the skin go. "You see – deja-vu – I knew it all would happen."

"You're a jerk!" Drummond said on the verge of tears.

"And now I feel it again! I'm goanna turn the light off and go to bed."  
His actions matched his words and he climbed into bed in the darkness.

The boys laid in silence for a moment.

"George?" Drummond said.

"You never call me that." The older brother replied.

"I'm serious I guess. I can't sleep."

"And I guess that means I can't sleep."

"My arm hurts but that's not \_\_\_"

Interrupting Georgie said, "Well you deserved it....well...okay you didn't. I was just playing. I'm sorry...Can you sleep now?"

Drummond left his bed. He walked to their desk in front of the window, got onto it, opened the window and climbed onto the roof. Georgie got up and sat at the desk.

After a minute Georgie started, "Hey man, I'm sorry. A real man can apologize. I guess I'm a real man now. And you, you're a real man too. Come in off the roof. I won't squeeze your arm or punch or any of that."

From the darkness outside, Drummond's voice entered through the window. He could be heard but not seen. "Georgie. I had really strong 'deja-vu' today. It was so strong that it scared me. I'm too scared to sleep."

“I’ll listen drummer boy, go on.” The older brother said off through the window into the darkness not seeing the boy, giving him space to talk, space to be afraid.

“The car approached us and I knew that something was about to happen. It got close. I looked at my watch because I knew I was supposed to...not because I cared about the time. The car slowed right by us. I looked away from the watch because the sun hit its glass at that instant and caused a huge glare in my eyes. I struggled to see the driver cause I felt like I knew him...or had known him, or he knew me. I saw his eyes just as the sun bounced off the watch face – it glared both of us I’m pretty sure – and in that instant I knew who he was...it was me...I touched the car...and...and in that moment, just for a second or two – I knew everything that was to be - facts and figures – adult numbers and adult harshness. I knew the future – I knew our future - you and me.”

“What was it – tell me.” Georgie said completely enthralled.

“You know how when someone takes a picture and the glare gets in your eyes?”

“Yes.”

“And you see a halo – like you’re blinded for a second – like reverse images.”

“Yes – and they fade away quickly though.”

“Like they were never there.”

“Yes.” Georgie confirmed.

“That’s how it was. Every second that went by the future faded. Everything went away by the time we went to Purgatory....”

“Everything?”

“Almost...I knew...Georgie...Georgie are you really happy?”

“Kind of creeped out – so no.”

“I mean usually – could you ever be like ‘I could take it or leave it’?”

“You just said that – or I’m having deja-vu?”

“Because you never answered. I...saw that I...that we...”

“What Drummond? You saw what?”

“You killed yourself.”

Georgie got up from the desk.

“Watch what you say little brother.”

Drummond was staring off into the dark tree line behind the house.

“George, you watch - what you...do. You took your life George – I knew it. That’s why I hugged you, because I could see you again.”

“Shut up!”

“I really felt it as if it was so true and now it’s fading like a flash bulb. I don’t remember how anymore.”

“Shut up! Shut up!!” Georgie yelled and reached through the window into the darkness to grab Drummond and make him stop.

Drummond spoke to him from the darkness. Georgie heard Drummond’s voice coming in through the window as if it was part of the hollow wind. “Georgie...I love you. Please don’t ever go...” Drummond said, and reached for the hand sticking out through the window and grabbed it tightly to connect, to force a bond, to forge a link in a chain.

Georgie was terrified. He loved life, was privileged, could play any sport, have any girl. He was happy. Drummond was the troubled one. Taking his life was the furthest thing from his mind and that was the source of the terror. For idle words of a madman, or younger dreaming brother, held no force, and could not cause pain nor fury, but these words were not those...these were words draped in a dark cloth, a heavy velvety imposing importance of truth to be told. Georgie couldn’t for some time to come tell the truth to Drummond. The truth was that as the car rounded the corner and approached them, he had been overtaken by a powerful foreboding, a heavy enveloping significance – called *deja-vu*. The brothers shared something not meant to be shared and that was troubling. There is no word for ‘group’ *deja-vu*, because it just doesn’t happen. Drummond was afraid of the ‘already seen’ part while his brother was afraid of something much more incredible. So when Drummond spoke of the future Georgie heeded it as perhaps a forgone conclusion. He left the window and got into bed. Drummond was lost in the darkness either staring into the tree line or his head two inches away. Georgie put the pillow over his head in case Drummond turned on the light or said another thing.

His load lightened a little, the younger might find now slumber; that night, it became the carefree one who now feared shutting his eyes.

#### **CHAPTER 4 – NEW PREMONITION.**

A few weeks went by and the boys were distanced from the strange events. Their worlds returned to sports, and bike chains, school, and girls. Diana spent more time with Georgie

and Janice, well Drummond was just too shy to take Georgie's advice and pal around with her.

Luck would have it though, luck, or fate, that she'd be only a few desks over from him now in the same classroom for the recently begun new school year. Janice sat in the front row by choice; he sat there also, but by a design not his, but the insightful teacher Ms. Cray, who, to hopefully shorten the distance of his particular troubled conduit, as if a wire too long looses some of its import, she'd pulled him from the back – where he'd chosen to be. She saw he was not paying attention there and her current had not the amperage to the back row for a boy like him. It was not a question of her amps, more like one of voltage: Drummond was beginning to have thoughts of kissing and touching, and when they came to him it was Diana who played the part in his unfathomable stirrings, not the attentive girl who was dutifully applying herself to what was being taught on the board. Drummond drifted. He was doing it again now, but this was neither rooted in bosom, nor boredom. He focused on the sound of the chalk dragging instead of the important spoken words of the teacher.

He watched the teacher make slow cursive loops in white. He noticed something with the sound. It was beneath. As the letters formed and turned, small bits of the chalk would be eroded away, so that a steady dusting was the result of her strokes. He listened to the sound and watched the chalk flakes dropping down gracefully beneath her long cursive. The dust dropped down and fell...fell softly and slowly, fell like snow.

Then he saw the future.

It was the first time for what was to become a recurring premonition – a waking dream – one that would visit him not only that entire season, but long after it stopped occurring, it haunted him for most of his years in an acquired superstition. It was the first and only time he glimpsed forward. It was as if he watched a movie, magically clear and real, with depth of field, and depth of feel. The dropping white dust transformed into falling snow.

Now he saw it outside a window, falling in some future. It fell in large clumps, straight down in the absence of wind, illuminated by the spotlights that must be shining up the façade of the upper-class manor he was inside of.

Trying to leave, he'd grabbed at the first door. He saw an older mans hand, his hand, reaching for the knob, a hand emerging from a blue shirt with gold cuff links and beige suit. The opening door led to this large marble room, a library, into which he'd stumbled. Loosing strength, he fell into the first chair as if the music had just stopped in a childhood game. The song was so surely over. He was cold. The great stone fireplace was clean and empty without a fire. Lit up by the garden lights, great gobs of snow fell like the gentle erosion of angels.

Before him in a pewter frame on the desk was the picture of a beautiful woman, and although black and white, it was obvious that she was blonde, and her dress was black satin neatly clinging to an elegant form long and poised with a certain sensuality.

“I’m dying,” he said aloud.

Feeling colder, and as if about to fall asleep, he struggled to keep his eyes open knowing that when he yielded to their call it would be over. He reached up for the picture frame wanting it above all else to be what he could see with his last glance. He meditated upon it.

His left hand had been below his heart where much pain was. Reaching for the picture with it now, he could see his blue oxford shirt, beneath his beige suit jacket, carried with it a great deal of the fresh bright red blood from his opened stomach - beige and blue: like he wore the shore of sand and sea – the seemingly endless ocean that a gentle bending of the earth made seem go on forever.

Clutching the frame and pulling it closer to his eyes, whose vision began to blur, he looked into her perfect face and then noticed movement: blood from his hand had begun to slowly seep down the ornamental crevices of the frame. His eyes follow the slow stream, lower, till a large drop fell to his lap. Watching it fall, his lids were pulled too low. His winter world of white went dark as he yielded to the velvety curtain of his lids - like curtains closing on a stupid scene.....His last moment felt like a chain slipping from its sprocket. A scream, not his own, rang clearly, then muffled, and it too faded and was gone....

“Mr. Collander...Drummond?”

Drummond was becoming aware of words.

“Mr. Collander!”

His eyes opened upon his hand clutching a piece of paper with penciled cursive letters in lower and uppercase, mostly ill formed, all unrestrained by the paper’s ruling. The hand holding it was his. It was the smooth hand of an 8 year old.

“Mr. Collander. When you hold your paper upward to hide your face that’s an act of deceit, but you’re not deceiving me, just yourself. It’s a shame that you need to hold it such to hide your eyes, which appear to have closed again. Everyone who is awake must stop their learning as we awaken you from your slumber. It’s entirely unacceptable.”

“I’m sorry Ms. Cray,” Drummond said, “but I wasn’t sleeping.”

A roar of laughter rose in the class and Drummond tried to smile amid the heat he felt in his cheeks. He tried to laugh with them, but instead realized all eyes were on him. He wasn’t sleeping after all, but without the words or even understanding to explain, he lowered his head and said, “I’m sorry Ms. Cray. Sorry everybody,” just hoping it would be enough for her to continue on, and their eyes to fall on her where they belonged.

Drummond was afraid that it would happen again.

“Drummond wait up!” Janice called ahead while running after Drummond as he headed for the bus after school, “You were a riot today – ‘I wasn’t sleeping’! You got some guts going up against old crabapple Cray”.

“Did you see me sleeping?” Drummond asked.

“You were out for a while. We all noticed. Bobby and Gracie poked me and pointed at you. A bunch of us made a little stir I guess and old Cray noticed. Sorry I guess”.

Drummond didn’t know what had happened, so he grinned, hiding behind the appearance of intent, hoping the bewildered look he had would be chased away with a smile.

“Gracie giggled when you picked up the paper in your sleep and pretended to read – *with your eyes closed!*”

“Yeah, I had to do something because I was fading!” Drummond laughed, but inside he was sickened, frightened, thinking he was acting out the grabbing of the picture in the scene, and was unaware of doing so – it truly scared him. It was easiest to play it off. So he did.

For a while he saw the scene in bed before sleep, lived it inches from his brother. It didn’t happen again in public and then ceased with the season itself. Drummond was sure he was cured.

## **CHAPTER 5 – DAY TALKS.**

Later that same day, Georgie had been waiting for some time at the entrance of Purgatory for the slower Drummond to catch back up after his loop. He had decided to take it extra easy so his younger half wouldn’t fall too far behind, but Drummond was slower than usual, apparently because of the handicap imposed by the first living of the winter scene premonition in school. Drummond finally appeared through the milkweed and stopped by the older brother.

“You went too fast today,” Drummond said.

“I guess I did – sorry.”

“I got to catch my breath. Wait a minute,” Drummond complained, dismounting his bike and looking off over the fields. He continued, “Purgatory...what a stupid name...sounds like a stray cat purring and an ugly human made noise – ga – tory. Not too sweet like Windham hills or Winnetka, Oakmont, sounds more like the stuff of ugliness, than that of nature, you know – purrrr – gat – ory – kind of ugly, like... a tar pit... or junk yard.”

“How’s your chain?” Georgie asked.

“How come yours doesn’t fall off?” Drummond asked back.

“Better bike I guess.”

“Yeah – older gets the better – by the time they get to me we’re at rock bottom.”

“Not true...seems like you get more attention. I get things, you get more attention.”

“Well I want more things.”

“And maybe you’ll get em when you grow up,”

“I’ll see to it.....Georgie?”

“Yeah?”

“Do you think we can ever go back? I mean, we ride around this lot and end up where we started. What’s different? Do you think we can ever go back in life?” The young boy asked.

“I hope not. If going around made no difference – it seems like a lot of work was wasted.”

“What if we do go back and live it again?”

“Round and round a loop like this forever...seems like hell to me.”

“What if I was going around and around, changing places with a man in a car forever – is that hell?”

“Sounds like it brother – but its some fantasy of a little man having a waking nightmare – eating too much sugar or something – it’s not real.”

“What if it’s real and we had this conversation now for the billionth time and my legs are tired again for nothing?”

“Well it can’t be true.”

“Why cant it? Do I ride forever around behind you – tired? And then do it again?”

“Cant be true Drum.”

“Why? How are you so sure?”

“What did you ever do so bad to deserve that? You’re weird and annoying – but that’s not enough to be in some nightmare forever is it?”

“Maybe if you punch me I’ll feel better.”

“How so?”

“I’ll think of that and not of this.”

“Funny – meanness to erase hell,” the older brother.

“Georgie, you’re joking, and I’m not.”

“Drummond you’re weird, and I’m not”.

“Georgie....I’m....scared.”

## **CHAPTER 6 – MARRIED LIFE.**

A boy once jumped into the future in a moment, while others climbed there day by day. Seasons stacked until 40 years had accumulated. Drummond had made good on his promise to acquire more things. Georgie had followed his own simpler rules and contented himself with the same things he’d liked in earlier years. These things left him devoid of certain status – something which never concerned him. With age most people prized that status though, or the opportunity it brought, or maybe it was the power, and the comfort it bought. There was a growing gap between Georgie and those types over the years. Some thought that status equated to adulthood. Some thought it was freedom. Georgie found freedom in being free - of all that, of the chase, the race, the grind for more.

Drummond never did let Janice catch up with him. There are many possible paths, and he followed not, nor favored her slowly formed elegant cursive, appreciating other curves instead.

Well into an evening, Diana sat on the couch reading a magazine content with the low lit room, and the green glow of the light strands wrapped around a fake ornamental tree, her elbowed reading lamp illuminating the glossy pages of dresses, perfumes, and shiny things to be adored first, and later acquired.

The front door flung open.

“Good God turn on some lights!” Drummond said in place of typical couples more standard, ‘Honey I’m home, sorry I’m late’, as he burst through the front door. His head was dusted in a layer of large clumps of snowflakes which also collected upon his shoulders, and in the folds of his scarf.

“Well certainly darling. Running late? How was your day?” Diana said, attempting an air of unaffected detachment from the substantial anger welling inside. A ruined dinner and no call, a entrance of bombastic exclamations and an unrequited asking of how her day had been, and it had not gone well: this was a return to the nuisance of an ill shaped afternoon and an attempt at resettling, reading a neglected book by comfortable light in a soft familiar chair – bliss short lived - interrupted by a complaining man, her husband.

She turned on some lamps and then forced a look towards the illuminated bitter man with snow upon him.

“Oh my look at that – snow – the first snow!” she said with genuine excitement.

“Oh...look at that,” he said in a mocking of her tone, “Yes, must be pretty from inside. Try driving in it with a bunch of fools who forgot how, doing 15 mph as if the damn car might fly into a spin going straight – for god’s sakes its only ½ an inch out there!”

Diana turned on the landscaping lights that shot up into the birches, and so turned her view from an ugly demeanor to a beautiful lawn now illuminated.

“It’s so beautiful when it comes down in clumps, straight down softly, without any wind.”

Drummond looked away from the coat rack towards the fireplace.

“God dammit Diana there’s no fire lit! What the hell have you been doing in here?”

“Cooking your dinner for one thing...waiting - waiting for another thing - then resigning for another – there’s three.”

“How about making four with a fire – if four isn’t enough to break the camels back. You know I want a fire lit as it snows – you know that – we’ve bee through\_\_\_”

“Yes been through it Drummond. It’s actually a little warm in here though.”

“I don’t care about the heat – it’s not about the heat!”

“No, its not, it’s not about a lot of things anymore. Who would have thought?”

“You should have thought! I give you all this – everything – so you can lie around all day, and I ask for a few things – like a fire and that’s just some Herculean challenge for you?”

“No! I didn’t notice it was snowing.”

“Well notice it!

“How about you notice that dinners been cooked for you, and ruined, and that you’re running late, and might call and let me know. How about noticing that?”

“You’re talking dinner,” Then quietly and in control added, “I’m talking death.”

“Oh Drummond – really. What a silly thing it is. Its not death, its snow for Pete’s sake! You and your superstitions - they are ruining you – and ruining our marriage – fire logs, cuffs and collars, my hair cut and color – you are impossible! It’s a crime to want to color or cut your hair?”

“Yes if it beckons destiny and demise.”

“Oh my god you’re crazy, listen to you. Is there another man in America who forbids his wife from a hair cut or color because it beckons death to the door? What a croc of nonsense. The only beckoning of death here is your worry crying out for a coronary.”

“These things are important to me – they should be important to you – not impossible. I don’t really give a damn about dinner. I want my fire!” Gaining a little composure looking at the beautiful woman Drummond added, “And your hair looks great like that – that’s who I married so keep it that way.”

“Yes the same you married. And I’ve the same man.”

Drummond, angered anew, snapped back, “The colors I ask of you...you won’t give though – a glowing orange and yellow what I asked for!”

“Well light it then – because it’s important to you – and other things – like this woman here – aren’t. You know other men love their women to change it up a little. And women like to change it up too. Its part of what makes me happy.”

“Well how bout making me happy instead of telling me how other men want you to wear your hair to please them.”

“I’m not saying that at all. You just contorted my whole idea.”

“Really? Or you just let it slip how some other men have been coaxing you into a change. Maybe that’s why you want to – maybe that’s why my fire isn’t important – maybe it’s theirs you’re really settled on stoking.”

“You are crazy.”

“Yeah I suppose. How does Georgie tell you to wear it? What suits him?”

“I wouldn’t know.”

“Sure. I have seen how you look at each other. You were lovers in the days of purgatory and I see it.”

“You are an idiot to talk about your wife and your brother that way – it’s a real sickness Drummond and irreprehensible. If I were a man I’d hit you square in the jaw over it.”

“Or a little passive aggressivity instead, like laying out the beige suit with the blue oxford. I told you I never wear that combination. For God’s sake I don’t ask much. What you planning for Christmas – cufflinks?”

Drummond had vowed early on to avoid these things and never explained the reasons to roommates, girlfriends, and now his wife of 25 years. The truth was, with each passing year he believed less and less in the whole premonition affair, but he’d become a product of the manners they ignited, a man stuck in the loop of his habits, and something else too: a once smoldering smell of some inferiority that had become a reeking from a thing nearly blazing.

“Good God Drummond. Married life is best suited to fewer slanders and superstitions, not to mention the ugly suppositions. I’m going for a walk in the snow. Light your own fire.”

Diana grabbed her jacket from the rack and closed the door quietly behind her.

Drummond frantically lit the fire and only then was able to settle into the room. He turned the lights all off, except for the green glowing fake trees. He watched the snow slowly fall.

## **CHAPTER 7 – GEORGIE AND THE PROFESSOR.**

Georgie walked towards the office of his meeting across the campus of the university. He felt old. The college girls, who once seemed like women when he was in high school, and considering coming here or staying at home to work for a while, now seemed like little girls, children, and he, some old crow whose chest hair had begun to come in white. The decision to stay at home and work had caused a certain break in his life’s future course, as so often happens, one small choice closes so many doors to the future and opens some leading far from the others. Drummond had gone on to the university and excelled. A big offer right after graduation had opened a path leading to a neighborhood well beyond his youth where Georgie’s life as a mechanic led to a studio apartment in a yellow bricked building in the industrial part of town. It was as though his education started after Drummonds ceased. Drummond, a man who had to climb in a race with able others had not much time to spare when his maze had been traversed daily – his timed trials were the noose upon his neck, whereby Georgie, often idle, had amassed an entire wall of books, all read over a lifetime, one subject leading into others – time enough to consider, time enough to postulate. He had time enough to think. He had the luxury of research.

Researching the various questions gnawing at him regarding Drummond's afflictions, he'd settled on Professor William C. Magnus of Auburn University as the man he needed to see. Now, reaching the ivy covered red bricked colonial building with egg shell colored trims and dark green shutters, he made his way upstairs to the office and waited for the door to open. It did promptly at 3pm.

"Punctuality is a virtue, you must me George Collander?" Magnus said extending his hand towards Georgie who sat up and grabbed for it.

"Professor, I can't thank-you enough for you even answering my email let alone extending willingness to meet."

"Mr. Collander, I must tell you it is an intriguing proposition you proffered. Where is Mr. Drummond?"

"He couldn't make it."

"Oh, I would have preferred to ask him directly. To see what his responses might be."

"Truth is sir, he wouldn't come, and I knew, and would not give up the chance to speak with you with the proper warning you deserved. Please forgive me. I need to help him Professor. He doesn't believe it anymore. I didn't and now do. Your responses led me to feel you and I agree on a great deal. Please let's talk, don't cancel."

"Come in Mr. Collander"

"My friends call me George – please."

"Please come in George, I am William then."

Professor Magnus found the case most interesting, as evidenced in the generosity of time, which extended easily past the first hour as he questioned Georgie. The professor found him a well read grounded man and their educations, though separated by a chasm, were bridged by many accessible bridges of Georgie's intuition and synthesis.

"So George," Magnus said, "time is linear and although alterable according to relativity as we've just discussed, our experience of it is usually non-quantum so to speak: ours is a one directional experience – usually."

"Usually?"

"Yes. How do we account for past life experiences and extrasensory perceptions, intuitions, sympathetic experiences, divination, these are real things, documented, and our science is not yet able to quantify them. We've begun with wormholes and the

understanding of warping and paradoxes, but there is much more to this human experience than we scientists can grasp.”

“But that is why I chose you. You are seen as a multidiscipline man versed in the esoteric and spiritual as well as the numeric.”

“George, there was a time in our not so distant past that these disciplines were one and the same, numbers were esoteric symbols as well as counters.”

“I’ve read a little about it.”

“That is evident.”

“We know each other a little now. I should like to tell you my take on this.”

“Please.”

“I’m particularly interested in your reporting of ‘deja-vu’ around a significant event. It is why I invited you here. It has to do with my ‘take’ on all this: I see the world as more complex and wonderful than we could imagine. The structure is so intricate and excellent – the cohesion and purpose – all evident of a maker whose language, one of his many, is mathematics. Have you ever heard of Boolean Algebra, or more importantly, the Mobius Strip?”

“Yes, a Mobius Strip, one that curls upon itself, and leads one tracing a finger along onto the other side of the strip after looping.”

“Extraordinary George. You have no degree but understand much more than some walking the paths below gaining such esteemed title.” Magnus smiled and sat back and lit his pipe.

“I believe our maker gives us free will AND something else...another chance.”

“How could we know?”

“We can’t directly but we have to assume we are all fractals of the greater structure and smaller versions of the maker, his children, it says so in the religious texts even - our father – as us, we know a little more of his mind when we have children. We want them to prosper. We want them to excel. We want to discipline them and give them another chance to get it right. I think it is a huge leap of faith to think the universe doesn’t follow this flow on the macro scale if it builds that into us on the micro. I believe we are given chances to go back and re-do at important junctures that effect many others lives. If we choose not to perhaps we live in a loop that comes back upon itself and we get the chance again – as if in a holding pattern until we get it right – perhaps in a hell until we can find our makers way - the right way once and extricate ourselves.”

“It feels right doesn’t it?”

“It does. It resonates, another physical manifestation of higher order sympathetic vibrations, I’m sure of it. Perhaps Drummond is in a holding pattern round and around till he gets it right.”

“Gets what right?”

“That is not for me – that is for the doctors or theologians to discern. I am a physicist, not a physician, nor psychiatrist.”

“Its all fine Professor but I can’t get one thing: if we get a loop, a chance to set it right – and if Drummond doesn’t undo something, we’ll just go around again forever. How do you know where these looping points are, where we could jump on to the other section of times strip, take the train onto another track?”

“Deja-Vu.”

“Deja-Vu?”

“Yes,” Magnus said and drew a large quantity of smoke in and then let it out into the sunlight – its eddies twisting and curling blue in the glare, “Think about it: what does the layman describe deja-vu as?”

“The feeling of...” Georgie said, and understanding the significance continued, “of having been there before.”

“Precisely! That is my take George. That when we experience deja-vu we are at the crossroads – the universe holds its breath again like it has for the ten or ten million times before – when you were there before. Will the person finally do something different and break the loop? A father – our father must watch with the ultimate interest.”

“You mean you can only change your life at points of deja-vu? I don’t believe it.”

“Don’t because that is not correct. You can change your life in any given instant. Remember the saying in the 1970’s started by the founder of a treatment center: that ‘Today is the first day in the rest of your life’? I like to think of it as a quantum in a shorter physicist time frame, that “Every instant is the first instant in the rest of your life – you have as many opportunities to change, as milliseconds - trillions in a lifetime.”

“Than why the deja-vu crossroads idea?”

“Perhaps when our life - what we are ultimately responsible- is about to impact many others within this delicate intricate system, and a change is needed to undo the infection of so many others free will. That point is where we get the deja- vu and the universe hopes we will change course and spare many others from the calamity of our lessons

needing to be learned. They are our lessons, not for the others, maybe that's how you think of it: like trains, when we need to get off a track before disrupting others traffic or well being, but the universe is structure upon free will so it is we who must change."

"Can't others make a change that affects the course of history?" Georgie asked.

"Obviously, but I'm not sure that one can bear the burdens of others in that way. There is empathy and compassion in our god, but there is a need for the individual to evolve also. I'm just not sure how that all related George. Well it's been an interesting use of our afternoon and I'm so pleased we got a chance to talk through it."

"No! I'm not settled on this Professor. You have to tell me. Can a man leave a marker somehow? Something like a sign to help them to choose the right path, to know the significance of the moment. Can we point the direction somehow? Please tell me. How could I ever know the car is coming down the street and Drummond need to not touch it? How could I ever know to not give him the superman watch? Tell me."

"I don't know Georgie. Truly I don't. Life isn't that easy.

"I need to help him out of this looping. Help me help him! I need to leave a marker. I need to have him not do something. What if I go and throw a pair of sneakers unto a tree branch in the old neighborhood, so I'll see them the next time round – when the car comes – I'll see the sneakers and remember to hold Drummonds hand or something so the watch doesn't glare."

"Sneakers?"

"I don't know. I thought of sneakers, like the gang members would throw them onto the phone wires above an alley to commemorate a fallen member."

"Sneakers, really?" Magnus said with genuine interest.

Georgie continued "I don't know. What if I put something there in the neighborhood that might remind me when the car comes?"

"But you'd be putting sneakers after the car came years ago. Don't you see? I don't know how you could leave a so called 'marker' in the future that would be seen in the past. Its nature's way I guess, of protecting integrity, proof in accounting so to speak."

"There must be something a smart man like you can think of. How do we leave a marker, a breadcrumb, a signpost – how?!"

"George...I don't know...all I can think of is...something needs to change and that change isn't happening while we are in character. Its like we have to do something...out of character...at the point of deja-vu. Choose the opposite from what we usually do, step boldly aside...maybe it's a matter of doing something different. Maybe through

meditation we could imprint that much – the need to do something out of character – that is the key.”

“Meditation?”

“George, I know you are frustrated and that means you love him very much. God bless you. Meditate on it. I just don’t know anymore.”

Georgie got up and hugged the man.

Magnus said “Is that in or out of character for you, that display?”

“Out of character.”

“Did you just feel the deja-vu?”

“No. Just gratitude. You are an old soul Sir. Good day.”

## **CHAPTER 8 – BILLIARD BALLS.**

Drummond burst into the game room of his home. It was a space often used in the older days, but since the recent erection of the bar in a room that was once Diana’s sanctuary, the game room was infrequently used now. It had become a kind of ground floor attic: a place for memories and things that once were.

“What in the hell you guys! I have been looking all over the damn house for you. Even been back out to the shed.” Drummond said.

“The shed? Good God what would we be doing in the shed?” Diana spoke with poise: as a woman might walk with a straight back, trying to hold back her impatience, purposely not coloring her words with the feeling of disgusting implication.

Drummond looked at her as if he knew something. He looked as if he knew something – because the truth was he knew nothing.

Diana took her hands from the triangle of pool balls she’d just racked to embark upon diversion with Georgie. Drummond had walked away from them while they all sat on the patio. He’d been in one of those moods again, once in frequent and now increasingly regular. It was a matter of time till they were constant Diana knew. TV was too passive and would let thoughts ring in. Diana had asked Georgie to play a game of billiards thinking the participation would mask some of her thoughts of frustration that were also becoming a more regular occurrence. The other less obvious component of her choice of diversions was now also lost in frustration. She wanted to let go a little of that pent up misery on the innocent white ball and let it reek its havoc upon the others. Good clean

fun. Good clean release. Now she'd have to turn a batter rather aggressively instead, perhaps a good moment for wire whisking some hard peaks.

"Here Drummond," she said, sliding the rack back and forth positioning the balls and them lifting the form away carefully, adding in sweet tones, "I got it all set up for you, for you and Georgie." She left the room deferring a white cue for egg whites.

"Only because I opened the door before you had a chance at his balls." Drummond said. She purposely closed the door without the faintest impression of a slam.

"Watch it old man." Georgie said, raising his cue towards Drummond's face. "You're liable to get a stick in the eye with talk like that. She closes the door lovingly – that eye offends me, and you know what they say about plucking the offensive. I'm not as gentle."

"Oh the things often hidden behind the mask of bravado, *old man*".

"You watch it Drummond. You watch what you say and more importantly what you think. Your wife is yours alone."

"Someone's dipping into that till – the accounts don't balance. Auditing is such sweet sorrow."

"The trouble with the audit may be a corrupted calculator. You are out of line. Thinking I have anything to do with your wife shows how corrupted your calculations are."

"There's this rich guy see. Serge. Serge Villeneuve. Serge – god I hate that name. She used to do work for him, or do work...to him, back when she worked, you know – handsome, exciting, rich – got a god damn castle in the high rent district. He's got her all mixed up. I looked him up on the internet...after seeing his number in her phone."

"You looked through her phone?"

"Yes, what's hers is mine."

"It appears so – including her privacy."

"What's to keep private? What's to hide?"

"Nothing Drummond. I assure you. There is nothing with this Serge Villeneuve guy, except maybe some business."

"Business is an interesting word, and if not him then someone else. I'm sure of it."

"You so sure? As sure...as you are its me? You're a damn mess boy. You need to see a doctor."

“You go see one.” Drummond said.

“Well funny you should say that. I did. I saw Dr. Magnus today. He’s at Auburn U – heard of him?”

“Your prostate acting up with its over-usage?”

“No – my brother with his newfound lack of usage.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“Drummond, I saw him about the premonitions. You having them now?”

“No, I never did have premonitions. It was all a lie for attention.”

“You had them\_\_\_”

“Well stay out of my marriage and my lies then!” Drummond said interrupting, smashing his stick into the white ball causing a violent careen with much movement, but not one ball found its respite hole. “I don’t have em anymore. They were the product of a child’s hapless mind. I’ve worked hard in life, and harder to forget those stupid dreams. I can’t even remember any of it really –its al blocked out and never revisited - that’s the same as never having them dammit. Drummond the adult is burdened with other things to occupy bandwidth now, like mortgages and re-qualification exams. Since you got all this time on your hands you can devote yours to childish concerns. I don’t have the luxury. Shoot the dam ball it’s your turn!”

Georgie gently stroked the cue to drop a ball and then another, He spoke while methodically helping balls towards their resting places, one after another.

“Magnus believes it is real, your premonitions are a future that is accessible by points of re-entry and do-overs – those points are when we feel deja-vu.”

“Did he serve you tea?”

“No.”

“Turkish coffee?”

“No. Why?”

“Just wondering what he saw reading your tea leaves. I heard some rather large women in bazaars make a nice living interpreting the smears of residue down an expensive cup of Turkish coffee, you know, for the tourists trying to gain a cheap glimpse into tomorrow.”

“Well you better take notice in case you’re wrong. You been wrong... a lot Drummond. I don’t mean that in a harsh way, but you’re so sure about your wife and you’re dead wrong. You’re wrong about this too.” Georgie said.

The problem is I don’t buy any of this crap anymore. I grew up. I evolved. Georgie, you didn’t grow up. You grew down. No job. You’re devolving, spending time with soothsayers while I was at work. No you’re wrong. Nobody,” Drummond began to scream, “Nobody is goanna tell me what my future is. Nobody but me! In this reality I call the shots!!”

His yelling caused Georgie to miss a easy bank of the eight ball to win.

Drummond took aim while speaking in a menacing tone.

“I call the God damn shots! Not some soothsayer at Auburn, or fat lady in a bazaar – it’s not over till the fat lady sings. I’ll make her sing the song I want to hear god dammit!” Drummond yelled again while forcefully slamming the eight ball to fall into the corner pocket, hitting the cue ball with such force that after imparting its blow, it stood stationary, except for a rather weird rare occurrence – it spun rapidly in place, slowly dying off to motionless.

Both men watched it.

“As the world turns my brother...so above, so below” Georgie said. The instant it stopped, Drummond poked it into the hole after the eight ball. There was the sound of a scream in the distance. Both men looked towards the window.

“Stupid assed crow or something,” Drummond said, adding, “You ever notice how gull’s cries sounds just like a baby?”

## **CHAPTER 9 – THE BAR ROOM.**

Drummond stood with his back to his brother. He gathered glasses and a bottle at the home bar he recently had installed. Part of it was an antique from a church rectory that he’d had fabricated for his purposes. He never considered it blasphemous or sordid. Drummond said it brought him closer to God: the paneling, and the booze.

“What do you know about guns?” Drummond asked over his shoulder, while the crisp retort of cubes falling into crystal rang like some hollow bells signaling his church session had begun.

“Nothing”, Georgie said.

Drummond opened a humidor by the bar. He turned around, abruptly flinging a handgun through the air towards Georgie, who instinctively caught it, only because in the moment he thought it might be loaded, and he best stop its move towards the marble floors.

“Never held one,” Georgie said walking towards Drummond, “Now I have. You can take it back.”

“No. I thought you’d like to see one up close, on the end of your choosing.”

“I choose the handled end.”

“Not the open end Georgie, sure?”

“Yeah, I’m sure,” he said wanting to get it out of his hands, unconcerned over which end he held. They were the same to him.

“Didn’t know you were into guns D.”

“Do we never know what each other is into?”

“What?”

“Into... as kids we say we’re *into* someone, and then we learn what that means. I mean someone’s been getting to my wife, into my wife you know? Someone’s been inside my wife Georgie. I’m goanna kill him.”

Georgie walked calmly towards his brother. He put the gun on the bar, then shook his head and slapped him with good force.

“You straighten up little brother. No one here in this rooms been ‘into’ your wife but you. The problem is something’s gotten into your mind, or has always been there, and now its crawling out like a slithering crappy thing. Throw that thing way if you know what’s good for you. I’ve touched that gun for the last time. You should swear that stuff off too.” Georgie said motioning towards the liquor.

Drummond placed his drink on the bar exchanging it for the gun. “Oh Georgie porgy, whose goanna keep little D company then?” He said, then looked at the glass, picked it up and gulped the drink down while moving towards the bottles to replenish it.

“Drummond, you’re wife will.”

“Bullshit, she checked out a long time ago.”

“Then I will...I’ll always be here. Always.”

Drummond downed a double drink, poured another, and downed it too without fanfare. A small dribble remained on his cheek, as if a bottled tear, which he wiped with a fine pressed white cuff. The gold cufflink brushed cold against his lips. Drummond smiled full of liquid aspirin and laughed.

“Drum, I told you about Dr. Magnus. He says you are to be given another chance, and I say to take it for god’s sake,” then said, moving towards him and grabbing his arm, out of character, forcefully, “Good God man! Take it!”

”Oh look at my passionate friend...love for a man has gotten to you!”

“Yes, love for you big fool. Look, you bought a gun. Didn’t you prophesize your own death? Isn’t this part of it all: you going after a man, seeing a picture on a desk...dying?”

“No. I don’t remember a lot of it Georgie, just that I’ve taken precautions, my wife...my...wife...is brunette.”

“Maybe she’s wearing a wig?”

What?”

“Maybe she’s wearing a wig in the picture, or maybe in this permutation she’s brunette in the picture, don’t you see? Its happening Drummond. We are ramping up for a replay – you got to stop it. “

“We?”

“Yes Drummond. You are about to affect many lives. It’s a chance to stop it.”

“And its all hogwash that a kid bought into then grew up. But now look at you. Are you growing...down? Are you turning back into a child?”

“No D. I believe it. Think about it. If you are gong to kill someone you might be given a chance to work your way out of it.”

“You been smoking weed with a professor friend?”

“No. Been thinking about you and life...and deja-vu.”

“Oh that explains it – deja-vu!?”

“Yes brother, you said you got it as a child \_\_\_”

“I don’t remember it anymore!” Drummond snapped.

Georgie continued, “The professor is convinced that these moments of deja-vu are loops where we can choose to alter our history, so we are not trapped in a purgatory forever.”

“You mean riding bikes around a field called purgatory?”

“You’re joking, but that’s exactly what I mean. I think were locked in a loop going round and around Drummond. It all fits. Please listen to me and change it. Throw the gun away for starters.”

“So if it’s a loop – round and round – I’ll throw the gun away, and it will be a knife then.”

“You’re right. Blue shirt, white shirt, I’m convinced it doesn’t matter: those are the props on a stage. It’s the action and dialog that’s got to change.”

“Well if ...someone wasn’t fucking my wife we wouldn’t be here! Change that!”

“Maybe no one is – maybe someone is. It doesn’t matter. What matters is you had those premonitions. Me and the professor think they are real and something is wrong here Drummond. You need to change. I am your brother by god and you think I’m sleeping with your wife! It’s wrong, so wrong! That has to change. You’re wrong about this.”

“Or you are in love with her, because you always wanted her, and I got her, and you’re throwing me off the trail with some psycho babble.”

“Yea maybe...or more likely its you who’s throwing yourself off your own life with your own brand of psycho babble.”

“Interesting”.

“More than that Drummond, probable. No one can help you except you, and I guess God, because god is giving you another chance.”

Drummond sounded the bells of his church again with more ice.

“God? God is doing this?”

“Drummond, who are we to say? The biggest fools believe it’s all an accident. It just can’t be. What if the loop idea is right? Do you know what is scarier than the horror movies we watched as kids together – what’s the scariest thing I can think of?”

“What?”

“If this is true. That’s what. What if it is? There had to be a first life where you killed a man and were given a second chance. The redo would be the first time around the loop. What if that’s where we are now – the first time round...but what if the first time round

didn't change things and we went again- and again? Maybe right now it's the millionth time I've said these words Drummond. Its so sad: trapped in a living hell, a living loop...purgatory – perpetual purgatory.”

“Bullshit...all of it. Someone's taking my wife away! Someone's gotten to her!”

“Drummond! You got to listen – if we are right you are dragging this whole reality around and around trapping everyone – killing a man over and over – loosing a brother over and over...please!”

Georgie sat in the green wingback chair by the window.

“There is something I've been keeping from you brother.”

Drummond, suddenly so sure of himself, put the rear end of the cue stick onto the ground and leaned upon it as a crutch and said, “Go. I can take it. I know its coming.”

“Yeah – knowing its coming – that's deja-vu kind of stuff right? Dr. Magnus kind of stuff.” His older brother said quietly as if about to enter confessional.

Drummond opened the window next to the chair. He sat on the window sill, his brother was now not visible enveloped by the large wingback, as if hidden behind a screen. The younger one waited and offered anonymity.

“I didn't tell you all these years Drum...when the car approached... I had it too...so strong. So real. I felt the deja-vu to. Its something not experienced in groups you know. We both shared it brother, something always experienced alone. It scares me to death. I didn't see the future or the drivers face. I felt the deja-vu. I didn't realize the significance till today. I've become a believer.” Georgie said quietly.

The sad truth was that Drummond had buried away the memories of that experience. What remained were incoherent outines, and anything that spoke to the esoteric no longer even made a sound for him to hear. Not receiving the expected words that would have interested him, validated him, he sprung up from the sill and declared, “And I a doubter. Doubting Drummond. Show me. Show me I say. Maybe I'll move to Missouri. Maybe I'll put my hand in the hole of my own head. You see? You're a fool Georgie, a foolish kid. You never died! You're here! I felt you took your life early on. Well here we are! Late on! You're just a fool...you're...Something old.” Drummond said, putting his hand on the window.

“Something new.” Georgie retorted and then added. “Something borrowed.”

Drummond closed the window with a sudden unknown wave of sadness upon him and a hint of a tear in his eye, whispered, “Something blue”.

He had the overwhelming compulsion to reach out and hug Georgie. It would have been out of character and so he did not, instead he asked “Are you out of money again?”

“No I’m good.”

“I know you aren’t. Listen. My brakes are squeaking on the Aston. You practically built the damn thing. I need a brake job, Got time? Yeah you got time. \$500 to do it now.”

“I don’t need your charity.”

“You don’t? You love me with your stories of fanciful sci-fi bullshit and I love you with a brake job. I need it. Do it. I’ll be back in about four hours. Here,” He said, reaching for his billfold and peeling off more than \$1000, and folding it tightly so the amount would not be obvious, he slipped it into his brothers pocket, “prepayment – that’s how much I love you.”

## **CHAPTER 10 – GARAGE SCENE.**

Georgie caressed the fine machine with a new chamois to erase any fingerprints, traces of dirt and oil, and finally even any newly settled dust from its gleaming high gloss silver body. Drummond’s prized possession, the 56’ Aston Martin with red interior, was constantly worked into a state of perfection by the able hands of Georgie, and the just as able pocketbook of Drummond. It was not his by ownership title, but certainly Georgie felt as though it was his labor of love. He seldom drove it and more infrequently Drummond concerned himself with its inner workings. They both however loved it, each in their own particular way.

Georgie stood away from its passenger door in admiration, not of his handiwork, but that of some unseen designer who somehow got all the perfect bends, and all its lines just right.

The door from the house to the garage opened and Drummond stood against the frame admiring the same lines, he facing the driver’s side, the car between the brothers.

“Did you finish it?” Drummond asked with the distinct phrasing of several cocktails.

“Yes. The brakes are as good as new. Rotors are beautiful. No need to change em. That’s the beauty of maintaining things: a little work well placed keeps the major changes at bay.”

“Good. I feel like going fast.”

“You know Drummond, a little liquor goes a long way also. A little too fast and we’ll need major changes...may not be able to even get it back if the damage goes deep\_\_”

“Well big brother, that’s what money’s for, isn’t it? No worries. I’ll buy another.”

Why D? This is a beautiful machine. All you need is one.”

“Unless you crash it – then you need another.”

Georgie spotted a small smear and dusted the paint speaking into his reflection rather than looking at his brother, “Where you speeding off to?”

“You know where. It’s time.”

“Is it? You sure?” He asked, still wiping redundant circles over his visage, “Maybe morning is better, when there’s less drink to get in the way.”

Drummond crossed his arms and shifted his balance to the other side of the doorway, “Funny, when things get clear big brother, nothing can really cloud em. That’s how I see it. That’s where I’m at. Clear like crystal. Sure as rain.”

“Rain comes from clouds.” Georgie answered quietly.

“Yeah – don’t rain on my parade any more.”

“Parades are celebrations Drummond – like what cocktails are supposed to be for.”

”Look at me” Drummond said.

Georgie looked up from the glossy hood without answering.

“Okay, just needed to check.” Drummond said, “Thought I missed it, you all bent over my car like that. No. I guess not – for a second I thought I see a little white horizontal stripe around your neck tucked into a black collar. Brother, or ‘*Father*’, which is it right now?”

“Brother.”

“Really? Brother? Father?...Wife?. Diana stands like that in the kitchen preaching, except that she’s wiping an already clean counter, so clean she can see herself in it. A kitchen’s got a hood too....hah...I mean... what’s cooking Georgie? No, you’re no woman. Women...they love you. If you were my wife you’d be having an affair. You can’t have an affair with yourself – I think...” Drummond laughed.

“You’re drunk. Give me the keys. That’s the brother talking.” Georgie said.

“Yeah and here’s the other brother replying: stop raining on my parade! You ever goanna stop Georgie? You ever goanna stop getting in between the sun and me? It’s always you a little taller; a little better, a little closer to what should be warming me – shining on me!

You...you steal my mornings, noon, and maybe even my nights damn it. You steal my thunder...Stop raining on my parade.”

“You’re not clear. It is a parade D, and you’re the band leader, just march man, its sunny and you don’t know it. Throw me the keys.”

“Throw em? Why? In a little while you’ll just take em. Everything flows to you –or maybe you just take everything and it seems like some kind of flow. Parade? Bandleader? You play too damn loud. You drown every one else out.”

“I’m pretty soft spoken Drummond. With no money, no real job: a pretty weak crescendo. I’m a little fog in a valley and you mistake me for a towering cloud blotting out your Parade of tomorrows.”

“You play a sad song Georgie – My Parade of tomorrows? Its... it’s a parade of sorrows. Hah! That’s what it is, a god damned parade of sorrows.”

“You got a beautiful wife, a beautiful car...and a beautiful day. The music’s pretty sweet drummer boy. Cocktails are clouds old man, not me.”

“Someone’s fucking my wife Georgie, someone close. That’s a fucking parade of sorrows you jerk. I thought it was you – I’m sure its Serge... ‘*Serge*’, ‘*surge*’ – what a stupid name – no wonder women love him – ‘surge’ – so entendre – wonder what his middle name is – probably something equally annoying like... ‘Strontium’. Strontium sounds extra strong and refined in some elegant French accent, oui? *Serge Strontium Villeneaux*. No wonder. I’m Drummond Collander. No match. He’s got a castle, did I tell you?.”

“You got a small castle too.” Georgie said as he ran his polishing cloth along the chrome of the passenger rearview mirror, adding with great clarity in his voice, “And you got her.... Give me the keys D. She’s inside waiting again. I’ll come in and help you find something you need to find.”

“No. I’ll go in myself and find something I forgot. Something I need to bring.”

“Don’t touch it Drummond.”

“Liquor kills you’ll say, and then add some ‘Georginian’ quip about guns. Its time big brother. Its time for you to leave. Take your goddamn polishing rag, and prophecy, and pious preaching... and your f’ing towering billowing cloud away from my parade.” Drummond said, slamming the door.

Georgie, alone, dusted the car, gently buffing it like a freshly bathed babe’s hair being smoothed on tender skin. He then adjusted his own hair noticing it astray in the sheen of the hood.

“How many times have I been here?” He reflected aloud. “Is this how it happens every time, over and over? Drummond goes and gets a gun and drives a way. He’ll get killed. It’s not like other peoples fates – we know what’s coming – I think. I believe it. What if I grab him and stop him? Lock him in a room? Isn’t that just how the story goes then? He does it when he gets out. It would be part of the story though – I just don’t know the turns, just the ending. It’s like the ending is written and the intermediate scenes adjustable. Maybe that silly superstition was a waste of time. Blue shirt...white shirt. It doesn’t matter. It was just one wardrobe that can change. The outcome can’t change by something like a shirt. The man must change. He has to change – he has to do it.”

The door to the garage opened again. “I changed.” Drummond declared, posing in the doorway dressed in a tan suit with blue shirt and gold cuff links.

“No!” Georgie yelled.

“George...I don’t believe in any of it. I don’t believe in you. I can change the course of the future by killing him before he does me. I may leave and decide not to kill him also. I’m changed. A whole life in fear of destiny and fireplaces, tan and blue – see? I changed. You said do something different. I am! I’m reclaiming my destiny – not being a slave to cuffs and colors, and some witch doctor you smoke dope with on campus. That’s how this plays out. That’s the change...get out.”

“Drummond. No. This is how it plays out, exactly like this. You doubting and tempting fate. You’re not even tempting, you’re succumbing.” Georgie moved around from the passenger side to the driver’s door and stood between the car and Drummond and said with an honest and true tone, “Drummond...I love you. I can’t loose you again...I can’t loose you brother...Please stop it this time. This time let it be different somehow. Go change...Don’t ever go Drummond. Why do you have to go...why do you have to go?”

“Weird – is that a ‘seen already’ thing, or a ‘heard already’ loop. I said that to you, once – didn’t I? I was misguided then, now you are. I’m the only one doing something different here.”

“Then give me the keys. Do something really different. I can’t help you break this loop. Don’t you see we’re in purgatory? Endlessly going a round and around. Having done nothing with your opportunity to do it over, you’ll loop back as a boy and live this whole damn hell, dragging us all along, each time we end here, holding our breath, hoping that it will be different. How many times have we done this? Is it the first time round, or the billionth? It doesn’t matter. Loosing you once is enough.”

“No. I don’t buy into it anymore. I lived my whole life afraid of something that wasn’t. This is the change. I’m not afraid anymore. That’s different. I’ll kill him and it will be the end of the story.”

“No! How will that end anything? You’ll go to jail in that permutation and somehow those lonely wasted years will all loop backwards, and you’ll do your time, again.

Drummond what's worse than a life sentence? Back to back life sentences forever!  
Dammit give me the gun!"

"Oh gosh big boy...I remembered to hit the bottle on the way upstairs, to dress, to hit it on the way down, but forgot the gun. What a fool. Excuse moi." Drummond said while bowing low and exiting.

Georgie walked around the car back to the passenger side.

"The passenger side: another in a million long lines of failures to convince him. I can't drive. I'm back on the passenger side as he drives us on into a loop."

Standing helpless by the passenger door, the Garage looked as if the lights turned just a bit more fluorescent and the scenes edges, all of them became more defined, it was as if a familiarity with every drop of paint, every tool, and piece of dust, was upon Georgie. Deja-Vu hit him then strong and heavy handed like a drug.

"Déjà vu! My god I'm having deja-vu!"

Georgie recognized the moment for what it was always, had been always.

"I'm at a loop! It has to be. A moment of choice. Dammit! What can I do!! I can't change his life for him!!!"

The memory of Professor Magnus flooded back upon him. He could hear the wise man recount:

"Time is linear, but it runs in strands that form loops though that come back to earlier points. At these points of deja-vu, not knowing the future, we must strive to do something – extraordinary, out of character..."

"Ah!!!" Georgie exclaimed aloud in frustration. The kind of frustration of not just a repeated failed attempt, one that we all know, but of one so deeply felt, perhaps it was his millionth failed attempt. The anger swelled in the usually measured man. Georgie's frustration reached a fevered pitch unfamiliar to his typical measure. As if given an unsolvable problem, his computer looped upon its own programming and spewed forth massive printouts of binary numbers not interpretable to him.

"Do what!! Do what!! Dammit!!!" and not knowing the solution, but carried by the momentum of the emotions of searching and desire, of love for him, and futility, he knew not how to manifest this required moment of epiphany, and sensing a familiar failure at an important point, let his muscles take over where the dominion of intellect should follow – he impulsively lashed out into the world with a frustration of unrequited love – of loss in a non cerebral way but that of the primordial man – or more aptly in this case, the beast of burden: his leg lifted not of will, but of failed desire to change, of in vain actions, uselessness, all took hold and he thrust the leg backwards as a stuck mule, or

frightened mare, and heeled backwards into the beautiful body of the car behind the passenger door, bucking with the might and fury of a man going around again, and not wanting the door to shut upon another sentence of loneliness.

“STOP IT!!!” was the ineloquence that accompanied the mule kick that made a man’s heel make metal pliable, bending the rear quarter panel into an undersigned ugliness of anger, changing it from one of intentional design and fluidity. Georgie stood erect, quiet, yet incomplete, as if a storm had suddenly found the eye.

In the calm of that eye, Georgie saw only his deeded work. His epitaph upon destiny was not some purposeful change, or meaningful mentoring, not some well reasoned words, or patented philanthropy, just a horrible dent in the car they both loved, a dent in the car he’d chosen to make near perfect and cherish as if his own design. It now stood before him horribly marred, a grotesque bending and folding of its once smooth panel. Georgie was sickened. In anger he’d changed nothing, only destroyed a beautiful pristine thing, a thing that was not his after all.

The sight of the damage crushed him. The once custodian and curator had turned assailant and denigrator. He was a damager and destroyer, not a fixer and fetterer. In his fear he ran from the garage through the side door never able to face its owner.

Upon his exit, immediately the door from the house opened and Drummond stood brandishing the gun to taunt his straight arrow brother, but he was already gone. And so Drummond tucked it quietly to his belt and stoically opened the drivers door, and sat within, unaware of the damage out of sight on the other side.

## **CHAPTER 11 – NEIGHBORHOOD.**

Drummond turned his car onto the lane to relive where it all began. Only recently had he convinced himself he’d changed and was finally able to cast off the shackles of a certain superstition that had kept him from returning to this street of his childhood. With that convincing came conviction. From conviction came forth a claim: an entitlement to one last taste, so he was greedily taking this final drink of a thing so long denied, a quick diversion to what was, a short trip through his place of ‘once upons’ on his way to nowhere. He had been so certain about this place and what had happened here, but now was certainly a nonbeliever. He was sure there was neither time nor choices remaining, but in fact there was infinity at the end of this road - he’d just talked himself out of it.

Drummond inched his silver sports car along.

The neighborhood now seemed unfamiliar and somehow smaller. Everything was overgrown beyond its original intended bounds. Drummond felt as though he was under an enveloping umbrella, a high canopy woven by far reaching oaks with thousands of little jealous hands reaching skyward, waving and grasping, competing for the sun that strained to touch the living things below, filtering and holding brightness back, so that the

sun could only meet the ground in small flickering patches. It made this place and his past seem bathed in a perpetual shaded twilight, as though every growing thing craned for a small taste of the gold glitter falling, and all that was able to thrive there was by necessity that which required less to feed upon. Drummond too was bathed in a certain twilight: the dusk of advancing middle age, covered thickly by the vines of an increasingly pragmatic and troubled maturity, one which led him now to a certain showdown that would not end well.

A man would perish once this road was run.

Patches of light and dark from the oak canopy above traveled up the hood and windscreen, and through the open sunroof of his sleek silver machine, up his hands and blue cuffs, glittering off gold cuff links, up onto his arms and across his beige suit jacket, punctuating him like a leopard. This was Drummond's swan song, a solo slow dance; he was endlessly alone under some deserted nightclub's barely spinning mirrored ball that cast on him both shimmering, and sullen splotches. Changing spots are after all upon the veneer. Deeper, under jealous hands, his heart however had remained where it had begun - in static repose.

Then he saw the two boys on bikes pulled to the side of the road.

The road was too narrow for all of them. The boys paused just short of the worn path that Drummond knew led behind the homes to a field someone named 'Purgatory'.

"Get off the damn road," He said quietly to himself.

He said it plaintively, without anger, uttered as a sad hopeful plea. Drummond wanted to see the boys recede and continue as he once had with his brother – Georgie, but instead they waited for him to pass. It added to his already steeped annoyance.

The child in the rear position animatedly talked to the older one ahead, who was turned around atop his bike looking back over his shoulder at Drummond's car. The older boy's face was hidden by carefree shocks of longer hair. Approaching, Drummond's attention from the road was diverted as he marveled at their vintage bikes, and when abeam them, he noticed the watch on the younger boy – the red-banded Superman watch of 1972 – he knew it, and at that moment, Drummond raised his hand in a wave, leaning across the small interior of the car, almost reaching out the passenger window, almost able to touch the child, but when the boy turned his wrist as if to check the time on the watch, a precious falling gold swatch of sun fell upon...

...The dent Georgie had kicked in another life, the same life, flashed forward or backward, where he chose something out of character in desperation to change things. In a moment before the sun would catch Drummond's Superman crystal, it found the dent first, and glared up into Georgie's eyes who, overtaken with deja-vu, had the strangest inkling of significance that of course a young boy knew not its import, just the intuition. He felt as though he had some purpose blinded by the light of the rare sun falling upon a dented gorgeous vehicle. In just the same light speed instance he saw the dent, the glare,

and the poor sorry face of a trapped Drummond, trapped in his inferior body, and circumstance, Georgie with a sympathy so grand, a sympathy symphony swelled in the moment unmeasured and timeless, a love so great, a feeling of not knowing why, a rush towards healing and releasing, all without consciously knowing. In that glare, Georgie reached out, reached for the hand sticking out through the window and grabbed it tightly: to connect, to force a bond, to forge a link in a chain, before Drummond had his moment of glare – therefore stealing away his thunder as always – stealing from his brother his purgatory of forever, his parade of sorrows, and in the instant of touching the man in the Aston, for the first time he felt adulthood, saw his hand as a man's draped over an expensive steering wheel, cuffed in fine cotton blue and sheathed in a tan Armani suit. Georgie looked into the rear view mirror to see a bewildered boy on a bike – one boy – one bike, alone, a river diverted - he was not there. He suddenly never was, gone as yesterdays noon, over as last years rain, evaporated, gone. He smiled. He drove the car as his own towards the castle of a man he was supposed to kill.

## **CHAPTER 12 – END SCENE.**

Georgie saw snow outside a window. It fell in large clumps, straight down in the absence of wind, illuminated by the spotlights that must be shining up the façade of the upper-class manor he was inside of.

Trying to leave, he'd grabbed at the first door. He saw an older mans hand, his hand, reaching for the knob, a hand emerging from a blue shirt with gold cuff links and beige suit. The opening door led to this large marble room inside the Villeneaux home, a library. He stumbled in. Loosing strength, he fell into the first chair as if the music had just stopped in a childhood game. The song was so surely over. He was cold. The great stone fireplace was clean and empty without a fire. Lit up by the garden lights, great gobs of snow fell like the gentle erosion of angels.

Before him in a pewter frame on the desk was the picture of a beautiful woman, and although black and white, it was obvious that she was blonde, and her dress was black satin neatly clinging to an elegant form long and poised with a certain sensuality.

“I'm dying,” he said aloud.

Feeling colder, and as if about to fall asleep, he struggled to keep his eyes open knowing that when he yielded to their call it would be over. He reached up for the picture frame wanting it above all else to be what he could see with his last glance. Georgie meditated upon it.

His left hand had been below his heart where much pain was. Reaching for the picture with it now, he could see his blue oxford shirt, beneath his beige suit jacket, carried with it a great deal of the fresh bright red blood from his opened stomach - beige and blue: like he wore the shore of sand and sea – the seemingly endless ocean that a gentle bending of the earth made seem go on forever.

Clutching the frame and pulling it closer to his eyes, whose vision began to blur, he looked into her perfect face and then noticed movement: blood from his hand had begun to slowly seep down the ornamental crevices of the frame. His eyes follow the slow stream, lower, till a large drop fell to his lap. Watching it fall, his lids were pulled too low. His winter world of white went dark as he yielded to the velvety curtain of his lids - like curtains closing on a stupid scene.....His last moment felt like a chain slipping from its sprocket. A scream, not his own, rang clearly, then muffled, and it too faded and was gone....

The scream was Drummonds in an esoteric realization of going a round again, his brother's sacrifice for him in vain. Georgie had given his own life at a young age. The age of a boy on a bike - a better bike at that. Georgie was so able to do many things, but unable to stop the loop, not able to fix nor fetter – for that burden always fell upon his brother Drummond, who this time, be it the first or trillionth, was not ready to change.