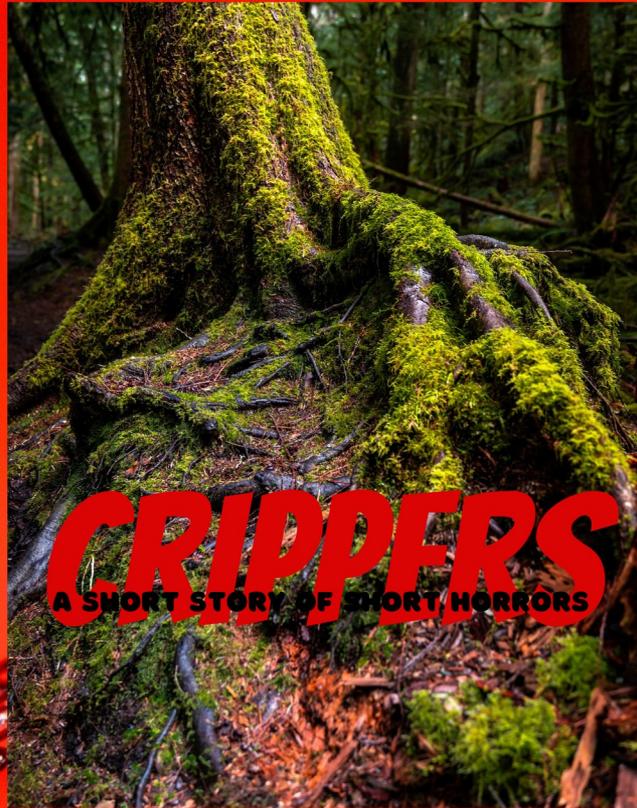


edewlogics: a talent for liberty

# Ade Ronke





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**CRIPPERS**

PART ONE



Outside the borders of a definitive intent, there are shadows of no decisive length incomplete in their induction. As enabled phantom realities, they have short-term spells, live on the edges, romance the fringes, and drop down like flies on the levees. They are easy predators, monsters of no percussion, no repercussion. And they dissipate into some phantom space as soon as natural reality closes the door on them. Nature has illusions larger than life, yet, so strange are their subtle expressions, they are mostly professed in small traces of horror.

Ifesewa Lawrence went along with the high-paying request. Accompanied by the four weeks of paid vacation, it had been impossible to resist. The excursion in Kindlebridge was strictly out of the blue, and the client had specifically asked for her. Hardly an encampment, the timing was odd. No one knew the backwoods of the abandoned railroad as she did. And her exclusion from its premises lately, was suspicious in the least. Were they using humans as guinea pigs? Running some apocalyptic zombie project to protect some future diseased world? The project, whatever it was about, had been heavily guarded.

Walking into the preparatory room, she found David Gallant, her boss, and a well-developed crew of people she didn't know. It was strange the excursion was sudden. It was stranger the excursion was not expected to be merely guarded but visibly armed. She exhaled with worry, but her sense of professionalism prevented her from speaking. Whatever had been going on in the backwoods of the old railroad on Kindlebridge's edge?

She counted heads ever so silently, wondering, pondering, about the true nature of the excursion. There were twenty-two bodies for her to manage; a number higher than any she had ever managed on any of her nature excursions. She pushed the disturbing thoughts of obvious implications out of her mind momentarily as she heard David calling her name to snap her out of the disturbing thoughts he knew her well to be into at the moment.

He made the introductions.

She faced the average-height, gray-bearded man in his forties. "Dr. Gary Osmond, chief scientist on this excursion," David introduced before she endured minutes of long improper introductions of first names, last names, and ranks when what she wanted were first names, something easily remembered. She noticed the introductions stopped with the armed guards and didn't press the issue.

When they were finished, she forced an ultimately distressful but outwardly successful smile, excusing herself with the need to have a word with her boss.

David complied, excusing himself as well, before they convened in his office.

"You've got to trust me on this one," David said as soon as the door closed in behind them.

She studied him, holding on to the sinking feeling he may not necessarily know everything there was to know either. "Why is it every implication of my instincts here tells me not to trust you on this one?"

David exhaled. "You don't let me down Sewa, and moderately I don't let you down," he said and paused for some semblance of favorable reaction.

Sewa agreed tacitly, shrugging her shoulders slightly in response.

"There is no time for this discussion at this moment," he continued moving towards the door. "I promise you will not regret it."

Sewa couldn't shake the disturbing feeling, remaining unmoving in response to his reassurances.

David checked his watch. "You've never been one to keep a paying client waiting."

She exhaled with worry, reconsidering his reassuring utterances were not from a peripheral understanding of the scientific secrecy that had guided Kindlebridge for weeks. Her decision was otherwise quick and inevitable; she was the only one around capable of the job. She headed for the door. "If I survive this, I'll think of quitting."

"You won't dare!" David yelled behind her.



There is, deeply embedded in nature, a plethora of reach without any limitation to the implementation of ultimate consciousness or ultimate biological state. There are exceptions to these limitations in that which does not subject itself to the natural reach of processes within which it seeks to breathe. There is no natural catalyst for an engineered unnatural upbringing, and the inorganic composition of organic matter is ultimately a constitution of the natural breach, slow and silent, a nullification of life as it is.

The Kindlebridge she knew was not the simple locked-away excursion site she spent years improving that morning. It was a sealed-off space for some endeavor she did not know at the moment, evoking the strange sensation of estrangement within great familiarity. It was not in her professional right to question the clients. David should have been her source for all necessary information.

They took three railcars to the center of Kindlebridge. And there they sat for a long time, in silence, an elongated silence she took a long while to consider breaking. The place she had made excitable for nature-loving curious gazers felt like some cruel ridge against ridges, some backdrop of eerie sensations unable to ground itself in it's reality or be explored. The suspense was cruel to endure.

It was the sudden shift of light-shadow effect that brought her out of her thoughts. Like some lightning flash of darkness, itself darkness, it hovered briefly, strengthening glint upon strengthening glint, its darkness as bright as its dispersal was swift.

She froze in her seat, almost reckoning it a mere illusion, a flash of some irreverent echo not of sound but light, inexplicably irritating her ears briefly, before letting her eardrums go.

The men murmured amongst themselves and she simply spoke over them to break through the lack of comprehensible audibility. "Tell me that was some darkening wind chill going crazy!"

Osmond held her eyes. "It is inevitable."

Sewa frowned. "The wind chills are truly going bunkers?"

"We have to tell her to do the trails or we're wasting time," one of the scientists in the backseat said.

Phillip was the only person she recognized as the closest to Osmond in rank. She held Phillip's eyes briefly, warning him silently about the dangers of her ignorance in the matter, and stood promptly to make her way towards the back of the railcar.

"What are you doing?" Osmond asked.

She ignored his urging for the first time and got out of the railcar through the back. As her shoes touched the old rails beneath her, the old wooden horizontal bridges between the rails seemed ancient to her. "Come back in right now!" she heard Osmond command behind her and ignored him further. She studied the tracks and the greatly forested surroundings beside it for traces of possible animated droppings or residue, wondering why she was there, why they were there. Something illegally-strangely animated or something unlawfully-oddly robotic?

"Get inside this car right now!" Osmond commanded as Sewa stepped rightward towards the hill-high accumulation of ballasts that led into the forested parts below.

"We gotta tell her," one of the scientists said.

"Tell me what?" she asked as she stepped away from the rails to look-up the high-towering leafy edges above, look down at the thickly forested area below, wondering what animals other than the naturally familiar ones within the scope of the Kindlebridge she knew could be hiding there.

"Stop her!" She heard Osmond yell at the guards before she heard the metallic engagement of railcar doors followed by footsteps.

"I can make a run for it," she threatened the guards without turning her back. "Who here knows these backwoods more than I do?"

Osmond spoke, putting his head between the railcar windows. "Sewa, I read every file I could find on you. I know you are smarter than not knowing when to obey orders. You're not the type to fault the occasion of your menstrual period for behavioral deficiencies. So, get back in this railcar this very minute!"

She laughed, mockingly. "Wait a minute, is my menstrual period to blame for whatever atrocities you committed or created within the extremes of Kindlebridge?"

"Okay, I'll tell you everything," Osmond shouted.

Holding on to her stance, she flinched. "Everything?"

Osmond was silent for a while and Sewa wondered if he could be rethinking the fateful moment as necessary or negligible, the weight of the twenty-two and some unknown horribly featured fate heavy on her mind as well.

"Okay..." Osmond resolved, "...maybe not everything but I can tell you whatever is in these woods can kill you in an instant without giving a care in the world."

Sewa turned around instantly as Osmond's words were scant of genuineness in tone otherwise, than in the moment. She sprinted up the hill again, making a run for it without any help from the guards who, she was certain, the monstrous killer in the Kindlebridge backwoods was news to as well.

Approximately twenty-two feet from the railcar, the sudden foreboding came overhead again, this time as a sharp dark mass with elongated flashes of red so frighteningly overwhelming as some premise of some animal capable of flight, she almost lost her strongly inclined balance in flight, to fright.

They had picked her for a good reason however she appeared as the much unnecessary human in the midst. Her history as a biologist, nature conservationist, natural explorer, and military personnel, and the fact that Kindlebridge had been her working grounds for about a decade made her correctly chosen.

The years of accumulation of toned muscles from mountain climbing, hiking, and other wild nature endeavors she got paid for helping others achieve indulged her confidence. She leaped in strides and about six inches to the railcar, in the corner of her cautious eye, she caught the sharply-weaponed assaulting approach which seemed to have evolved from the very first slight flash of it into some intricate organic weaponry.

Her instinct took her into avoiding the certain death incidentally. She arched her back against the declination of the hill as her feet touched the top, taking with her every energetic availability in her Thoracic and Lumber region. About two inches to her head, she felt her life flash before her briefly with the flash of sharply edged bright red in coiled deadly black. The rest of her escape was made in powerful but dazed strides into the railcar.

## PART TWO



There is a nature to physical trauma transcending the emotional threshold accompanying it. It becomes a witness against itself as aftermath markings of an event may become the very indication of

its occurrence and a near-death experience, the very affirmation of life in essence.

There was that gloomy overwhelming silence she hesitated to break. After all, she was the least knowledgeable of the bunch regarding the real purpose of the excursion. She never brought her phone along on the excursions as she regularly encouraged a lack of distraction. She quitted the thought every scientific instinct in her instigated and turned to Osmond "Can I have your phone?"

Osmond hesitated briefly, holding her pained eyes. He spoke in a strained stressed tone. "I want you to know I am very sorry for your involvement in this. I never meant for this to happen."

She closed her eyes and opened them, swallowing her harrowing pang of hurt and frustration, "can I have your phone?" she repeated.

Osmond exhaled. "We're officially fully quarantined."

Sewa took a few seconds to respond. "Classified?"

Osmond hesitated briefly. "You know better than that. it doesn't matter at this point, does it? It's my call. I cant call unneeded attention to a situation I am not fully aware of yet."

Sewa frowned, twisting her mouth at the thought of the implication of his words."You're not aware of yet? Nobody is more aware of this situation than you. I think you shouldn't just call attention. You should call every military base closest to this location. We need help!"

Osmond shrugged slightly. "We don't know that yet."

She wondered why he wasn't losing his nerves as she was in the moment. Did no one see that the creature nearly got to her head with its un-lively swing? Why was everyone else involved calm in

their reaction to a dire dear-life-threatening situation? "That thing nearly killed me! What danger do we not know about? Didn't anyone see?"

Osmond appeared a little confused, and she wondered briefly if he was considering the moment in disbelief or lack of empathy.

"Nobody is sure about that," Osmond replied.

"About what?" she asked.

"Nobody is sure if it was trying to hug you or kill you," he replied.

Sewa widened her eyes. "You must be kidding. Or this is not happening."

But Osmond didn't appear humorous by any means visible or otherwise. "I cant Sewa. This is the only stasis it can know. It is primed to recognize confinement as freedom rather than the lack of it."

She remained thoughtful for a few seconds. "What oxymoronic dilemma must be this moment? To control it, you can hardly escape it."

Osmond nodded. "I agree. And it is a dangerous one, one which could lead the state of the world into some unforeseen peril. I cannot open the confinement we currently call Kindlebridge until I am certain it won't turn into a mass defect of chaos and destruction."

"This is yet about the success of your experiment?" she asked.

He hardly flinched. "I have never encountered an experiment which isn't about its success even if it has to prove its failure first. And stop asking for a phone. None of us have it as precaution."

She inhaled in frustration and exhaled sharply. "Could this explain the grim yet resigned demeanor from everyone else or am I missing something vital ... it seems that's the standard deadly protocol on this trip."

Osmond hesitated. "It is?"

She sank into her seat, pained beyond regret, for not trusting her instincts fully, realizing she was getting to a point of accepting the terms of the current conditioning she had been fooled into encountering. Her fate, much undeserved, looked grimmer than easily conquered. Yet, they seem unaware they had woefully failed at creating something they didn't seem to know with the understanding they knew too well.

She turned to Osmond again. "You have to know that I am sure that thing developed into a killer. I am not new to the potentiality of dangerous instincts be it biological or in terms of military training."

Osmond engaged her eyes. "Well, then scientifically speaking, express your reasoning."

She held his eyes and spoke in a low serious tone. "There are those red extensions protruding out of the dark indefinite mass. Nature doesn't project that but, since it was conceived unnaturally, it must have failed at something, something essential for it's flight. It seems a crawl-space accumulation of venom... as if those crawl-spaces within crawl-spaces will come out and completely devour me."

"They must know you look delicious," Osmond mocked.

She shot him an angry glance. "What?"

Osmond retrieved the relevant subject. "That attempt to lighten your mood failed. So, were these red extensions external manifests?"

Sewa nodded, wondering what seriousness was to be expected from someone who fooled her innocence into extreme danger, and refused to take the resulting danger seriously. "Of course, it is an external manifest. I saw it..." she paused briefly, studying Osmond, reconsidering her initial line of thought. "...you introduced venom into some monster?"

Osmond exhaled, bewildered slightly with the level of sharp insight she possessed and resigned to the need to divulge, engaged her eyes fully. "Some monster who was supposed to be a better breed of human, a better breed of human soldier. It was supposed to accumulate physio-anatomically despite all the superior artificially induced seemingly endless dynamics of additives and oddities, especially the paralyzing potentially sequenced venomous propensity. It was not supposed to become the monster you describe, not some external manifest of monstrosity instilling dread, fear, and loathing. Yet, it is not verified as this monster with possible murderous instigation as you claim. You are the only one whose life we have been told it threatened without any direct evidence that happened."

Sewa gave a sarcastic smile, escaping into a seeming self-mocking snicker at the thought of being stuck in a dangerous situation due to no fault relative to her actions while being ridiculed for the life-threatening observation of consequent events. She couldn't wrap her thoughts around the ridicule. "We're all stuck, cowering even, in this railcar, which I am sure its extended venomous fangs will figure out it can cut through in no time. We're waiting on expansion, extension in space, without the proper awareness of what this thing is as being, as a soulless being."

Osmond frowned. "What the hell does that matter if it achieves the aims it was designed for. As scientists, there is no such definition for such things like the soul in life, is there?"

She studied him, wondering if he fully understood the severity of his words. "Are you freaking kidding me right now Osmond?"

Osmond hesitated. "I deserve the instinctive rank drop but that is no excuse for being deluded about humans ordinarily having something they do not have and expecting a cloned superior breed should have it."

Sewa shook her head. "This outcome is no longer some child's play you can atone for in your lab. You made a terrible mistake and we all have to pay for it. The least you should admit is why this project failed."

Osmond, surprisingly calm under the circumstances, was untouched by her words. "It is my guess you assume you know why this failure occurred?"

She nodded. "Since everyone originally involved in this failure is hiding out in these railcars waiting for whatever in hell I don't know at the moment, and since I am the only one who came close to death, yes, I think your creature may just be missing the essential path of self-calibration at the moment."

Osmond raised an eyebrow. "And this self-calibration of sorts is soul, needing not to be defined as abstract or in abstracted parameters impossible to moderate or observe? Well then, give me such a definition that fits experiential and experimental modes that this thing as you call it is any less soulless than you are?"

She held his eyes. "It has to be enlivened and aware of every modal freedom and limitation life either prescribed as in your case or natural as with natural humans. A soul is a stimulation and

implementation connection between the conscious mind state and biological state. It is stream generation with a modal and actual understanding of self."

"In other words, not just programming commands and neuro-computational incentives,' Osmond added.

She nodded. "Indeed, but stream generation as being, from origination to endpoint as self, as life, as of purpose as well."

"And what has that to do with failure in this case?"

"I suspect you have a soulless mass of open stream endpoint generation."

Osmond squinted. "And that implies?"

She hesitated briefly. "A volcano without a regenerative plane, or space, one with a complete lack of instinct for the absence of this much necessary soul when there is no indication of the presence of it. Such, there has to be referential and inferential limitations for stimulation and implementation. If there is no reference back to self, there is no respect for the complex aspects of relativity. Thus, there is only chaos. Any divergence from this endpoint generation goes void because there is no connection from origination to the dominant generation point or endpoint generation. And yet we are stuck in this railcar for what reason?" She turned to face the other scientists in the railcar with her.

Phillip spoke. "The wait is on maturation.

Sewa widened her eyes and turned to face Osmond. "You're willing to let that thing grow? You're kidding me!"

Osmond spoke in a solemn tone. "The urge was..."

The loud metallic sound and the screams were simultaneously coming from the railcars behind them.

She stepped out of the railcar to find the utter chaos she had tried to describe to the scientists earlier and could almost pinch her skin at the possibility of such. The railcar behind them was broken in half as if it has been sawed apart by a monster in some perfect alignment as may be found in some perfection-upgrading carpentry workshop. Her intuition had been correct about the divergence into the void. There seemed nothing but chaotic void around her. There were bodies thrown in the air and disemboweled. They hung in strings as displays before being thrown aside like trash. The strange observations had happened in an instant. Within the gored bloodied scene, she endured the rising sensation of endless hopelessness and emptiness. Time was progressing faster than any endpoint generation could manage, faster than the speed of fast and light. And in that same instant, darkness, as well as distance, fell around them.

It was not the first time she felt the burden for the crew of scientists and military personnels. It was by far the most acute moment of the burdensome sensation. They were screaming her name, jolting her out of the horror-filled moment towards direction. Osmond screamed her name the loudest. The seeming instant became instances of a flash divide between life and death.

And she jolted back into the dire moment. "Move!" she commanded and was on the move that instant. "You get to the edge, you take the leap and slide. I mean slide...break your leg or otherwise, you're not down in a split second, those monstrous red fangs got the split first, you're dead."



The tip of disaster fosters like the foraging of a blink of an eye, calling the next disaster onto its desolation. The dichotomy of passage is never made more realizable than in the instance of chaotic disillusionment.

It is in its aftermath that disaster speaks louder than any word life could mutter. They were silent as they sat on the forest grounds scattered, defeated, in desolate disarray.

Seated at proximal length to Osmond, she spoke in a frustrating sarcastic tone. "I hope that thing is evolving quite as efficiently as this amazing group of half-dead scientists hoped."

Osmond was pensive and silent but her spiteful remarks sparked a visible reaction in him. The man wasn't quite unreachable after all.

She held his eyes firmly, angrier than she was sad.

"Those things," Phillip, who had survived, much to her satisfaction corrected.

She frowned, finding his words incredible, inaudible. "What did you say?"

Osmond shot Phillip a cautioning glance.

Phillip chose silence.

Sewa gave Osmond a questioning glance, too angry to express anything other.

She turned to Phillip. "Ranks become worthless when nothing is certain to work anymore. We are bare naked bones now and prey to some monster whose existential integrity Osmond expects you to keep with half your colleagues dead."

Phillip held her eyes. "There are two of them," he said, solemnly.

She widened her eyes. And her heart sank at the thought of escaping two of those creatures rather than the one as she had presumed. At that moment, she noticed the great oddity in the overall situation at hand.

She was the most humanly present in the moment. The only person to be able to process the situation with any relevant or strictly human emotional precision and intelligence. It was a thoroughly applicable reality in their discussion on a conscious and present stream generation relative to the environment.

She started the scattered congregation on a natural excursion of twenty-two, now reduced to fourteen with her inclusion. She turned to Phillip. "What is the name of the experimental hyperrealistic neurological mood modulator accompanying this experiment?"

"How did she know that?" one of the scientists whose name she couldn't place asked.

Osmond exhaled, scolding the boy-scientist with a stern expression. She glanced towards the boy-scientist briefly hoping he dared to defy Osmond's unspoken rules of etiquette and discretion. He said nothing more.

She held Phillip's eyes again.

Osmond stood slowly.

She took to her feet slowly.

Phillip stood.

"It is essential that this question is answered," Sewa affirmed, giving the indication she wasn't going to let the situation alone without admittance of fact and understanding of plight.

Phillip turned to Osmond.

Osmond held his eyes but remained silent.

Phillip turned to hold Sewa's eyes. "The name of the drug is irrelevant to any possible natural mode for this situation."

Sewa, who had suspected strongly the insinuation of his statement was the case could no longer be in awe of the shock flow and effect from the inception of the excursion. But before she could speak, from the corner of her sharp eyes, she saw a shadowy frame move across the trees some distance away. "Phillip, Osmond, sit," she said, in a slightly commanding tone.

The two obliged before Osmond asked, "Why?"

She hesitated, not wanting to frighten anyone further. "I'm not sure yet but we certainly need not announce our presence here to a snake, bird, or monster human hybrid you created. "To our much necessary discussion. While I am jumping thoughtless hoops because of some monster you created, you're all drugged up to deal with this situation, aren't you?"

Phillip hesitated briefly. "We're all drugged up not to react to the situation as any layperson would, yes."

She shook her head. "Let's assess the natural mode at this point, shall we? You indulge experimentally as you have in the opposing case of that thing out there. In that case, you hyper-modulate the nature of humanity to deal with the very possibility of failure on the unnatural inferential-referential induction. And you hypo-

modulate, giving yourself a neurological modulation of human emotional reactivity to control inclination, connection, maturation, and instigation of instincts relative to the monster you created. There is chaos and destruction everywhere due to that thing and your signal is that everything is fine. Well, I should inform you deep down in that now vacant seat where human reactivity lives, that everything is in reality right now, definitely not fine."

The silence presided long and strong until Sewa spoke again. "It will be little time before that thing gets back to us and since I am the only one with any emotional therefore rational view on the situation, I need to know all there is to know about the monster you created."

Sewa was silent this time, awaiting some sort of indication on Osmond's state of mind at the moment, however, drugged, sustained, or reinstated.

Phillip turned to hold Sewa's eyes. "We were ready for the experimental model, we knew we were. We just needed the right element for the ionization potential."

"And it couldn't be Titanium?" she asked, raising her eyebrows.

He shook his head. "What is that? I mean, a real ionizable potential."

"So it couldn't be gold then?"

"Hardly, ionization is not a reflection process. Its worth is not in gold."

She studied him. "What kind of silver was it?"

"Mercurial Quicksilver. You either die or sustain and retain it. You couldn't do both."

"So you needed it to have a life of its own."

He nodded. "No doubt about it. Hold its burn, quick to cold, must retain itself, soluble in the water. He must return and sustain there, never merely easy to kill as we intend to make it strictly inorganic in organic form."

She narrowed her eyes. "Inorganic in organic form?"

"A life form undeterred by the limitations of organic life."

She rolled her eyes. "Gee whatever the hell could go wrong there?"

"Everything that is already wrong now," Phillip replied.

"Yeah that, and the reality of exactly how we are going to kill that thing."

He shook his head and without any hint of hope to his tone, said, "Did you hear what I just told you?"

She shrugged. "I was a military kid and adult."

Osmond turned to her and smiled sarcastically. "Let me guess, you don't give up until you die."

She spoke harshly to Osmond. "We have to kill this monster or your regret will be after your death with your name as nothing but infamy."

He looked bloated in the moment, unsure of the moment, as if he were in a dream. She hardly wanted to win him over. She wanted to get a reaction, pull him out of the experimentally drug-induced daze keeping him devoid of the necessary panic state. Yet he came across as prideful, arrogant and unresponsive. "Which do you care more about, your monster or us?"

He shrugged. "I am not sure either coincides. There isn't a newer conception for the older resignation."

She studied him. "Either you are military medical professionals or private medical professionals but there's hardly any understanding for my plight and I am the only one with this infliction."

Osmond held her eyes. "How do we kill the creature framed to kill which can mimic its surroundings as it sees fit to survive. It seems from what I can deduce at this moment that it's instinct is severely flawed, maybe soulless as you put it, or maybe beyond understanding as you also put it."

She studied him briefly, wondering if the effect of the experimental mood modulator was weighing off due to time or some unforeseeable event on his part. Words about his reputation after death?

Osmond jolted her out of her thoughts.

"So, how do we achieve this by any reasonable means?"

She pondered options despite a lack of information, strongly resolved to the necessity of survival over sitting down and waiting to simply be killed by some scientific monstrosity. "I'll like to project, despite all evidence I don't know of, that may exist to the contrary, that it lacks a soul. When there is a lack for soul you either fill it with something unnatural which makes it persist with the lack or you fill it with something destructive which insures its survival despite the lack. To kill a monstrosity of nature, you have to fill it with something destructive. There is the procedural influence here which is the most erroneous instinct and it is that of absolute chaotic impossibility projected forward as possibility. There is also the influence that is that of an imaginative complex inducting another complex."

"A little explanation here," Phillip requested.

She turned to Phillip. "I will use a Mercurian-Martian analogy then. Earth, being under consideration and essential to the solution is excluded. Let's say Mars develops a simulated projection of itself, an artificial mode of being and existing. They do this into a foreseeable future. Then, we as earthians, go into Mars and decide we want to make a foreseeable generation of Mercurian-Martian future possibilities, I cannot imagine how this won't grow into a catastrophe because of the artificial imaginative complex Mars adopted, least to talk of the possibility of merging Mercurian-Martian futures as something foreseeable as a future generation without taking into account the differential qualities in the two. But worst is the fact that that which is perceived as better relative to Mercurians was the Martian adoption of something unnatural."

"Inevitable chaos," Phillip said.

"A most necessary chaos," Osmond added.

Phillip glanced towards Osmond with a dead end expression and exhaled, turned to Sewa. "How do we resolve it?"

She exhaled. "We do what scientists do. We study it from all we already know, what we can gather, based on the instinct you put in it and the ones it will be capable of."

He hardly hesitated. "Become human, surpass human capability in the areas of defense and self-defense mechanism, mimic the environment and be confined to it so it can be controlled."

"That about sums it up," Osmond commented.

Sewa almost laughed. "You mean this monster doesn't mimic its environment amazingly well?"

Osmond didn't give a response.

Phillip spoke. "To be on the subject of its mimicking its environment, I will say that it is mimicking the architecture of the train tracks, would you agree?"

She nodded. "I will agree with that and it explains why the venomous fangs are over developing. The shape enables for the implementation of the need for the venom. There was an endpoint precision set for the monster I presume?"

Phillip nodded. "Yes"

"Well, there goes a really terrible induction, using imaginative complexes to induce complexes," she replied. "It has surpassed the surpassing point by surpassing the endpoint precision set..."

The sudden movement that stopped her turned her toward a moving guard.

"No, no, no, no, no..." Sewa screamed and was on her feet that instant.

The darkness covered them again, and the assault was as brutal as it was fast. Sewa was on the move that instant of the room was with one of the fangs wrapped around a victim's neck while the other did the disemboweling.

The wide-eyed horror on the face of the victim almost stopped her heart and she heard Phillip call her.

She bolted in a zig-zag alignment, trees falling behind her as she clenched her fists on the thoughts the scientists were not coping well with the deadly situation. The guards she imagined, will be using similar maneuvering tactics. And the falling of trees will be an accidental consequence in the attempt to get to them. She began to hum a happy tune in her head, a well enough coping mechanism at the height of warfare. Her chances were of no chances that she

could escape from the creature by tactical maneuvering. It was too large, too deadly, too venomous. Unfortunately, she didn't believe in luck either, just some series of events probable or improbable.

## PART THREE



Dawn menaces like some nightmare of a start; as if the night went missing, and the air came up empty, without oxygen. True graces as well as truth must consent through their beginnings at the end.

Once she entered the old, largely unused building, she headed towards the back hall and held her breath at the sound of approaching rapid steps.

A guard came in and there were two. Phillip and Osmond came in alongside another scientist she could not name. She gave a sigh of relief as they both took their seats next to hers on either side. She realized the horrific near death experience had created an affinity, one opposing yet necessary. She was, after all, unlike either of them.

All were still for a reasonable while.

Phillip spoke in a whisper. "Why the exposure?"

They were seated staring at the much-needed exposure. He was referring to the long inlet of natural light from the glazed side-lining of the room. Then, she noticed they had lost five and there was an head count result to nine.

She turned slightly to hold his eyes. "Nothing can naturally block the stream of natural light and daytime except for some artificial light built by man. We are in an environment mimicking formation of 2D adaptation to 3D adaptation which does not have a distinct form of existence. We need to see its approach in case it changes into something familiar but unrecognizable."

Silence presided in the room for a longer while before Phillip spoke again. "Why do you think movement signals it?"

She held his eyes. "I'm guessing you gave it an extreme sense of perception and stimulation, one of which is overstimulated."

Phillip nodded. "Those will be auditory stimulation and perception."

Osmond shook his head. "Why keep any secret at all?"

She scowled at him. "Hell, the only one to keep a secret from around here is a monster." She faced Phillip for the explanation. "Nothing around it is really moving and it's movement is done by mimicking non-moving-parts. The moving parts are there for perceived hyper-stimulating existential contrast which may explain the disemboweling as a lack in the existential formation of 2D projection of what is supposed to be a 3D formation. "

"How do we kill it?" Osmond asked.

"But we can't kill it," Phillip argued.

Osmond shot him a cautioning glance.

She shrugged the information. "I knew that already Osmond. It cannot be killed. But despite that fact, it's nonsense talk, it can be killed," she replied.

Osmond held a mocking smile.

"If you have a better choice, let me know..." she told him, "... Because mine is a smart choice and we cannot afford to do nothing."

Osmond shrugged. "Well then let me know what you've got because I designed it to be indestructible."

She stared at him in anger and discontentment briefly, before returning to the issue at hand. "We cannot kill it with any weaponry conceivable at the inception of its programming command, the end of it or with any weapon fashionable within the premises of such commands. We can't kill it with weaponry. We can't kill it."

Osmond raised an eyebrow and smiled, mocking her statement. "The abject repetition of a lack of strategy must be a strategy. God damn, did I grew up in a common sense world?"

She shook her head. "No, just in a world in which scientists create monsters who are supposed to defend humans but end up turning against them and killing them. Whatever is that but a moronic world? That's the world you grew up in." She turned to Phillip and continued. "We must allow its processes to aid the induction of its destruction. We just have to find out how it's processes will make such fulfillment and then help the course against it."

"Hmmm," Osmond hummed and got everyone's attention. "Let me make sure I understand it as well as you stated it. We find the complexes, hell, not the one I designed for it because it didn't have a strict adherence to that growth potential but rather adopted its own within the complexes of the environment it found itself. We'll find the complexes you've described earlier and find a way through the physio-anatomical or natural procedures I inducted, destroy the simplex functionality from the complex undertaking."

She nodded. "Something like that yes."

Phillip spoke. "The simplex here is in its adaptability phase. It mimics its environment and survives at any and all cost."

She nodded. "So we first find the possible radius based on the adoption of the form of train tracks. If we stretch out those irregular curvatures and the seemingly ceaseless and pathetic attempts at such, we get length, we get radius, we may get a growth potential, create a possible complex. While it looks like it's a mass compilation of bigger masses of shadow against shadow with red sharp fangs, its height is not discernible, do you agree Osmond?"

Osmond nodded. "On that I definitely agree."

She continued. "While this fact can be reasonably assumed from its adaptation form which is the train track, I assume the x component is zero with the angle of zero or two pi. Now, it is assumed in current scientific methodology that the attempt at incessant curvatures is a continuous derivative but it is a monstrous anomaly such as this case. With the x component at zero, the hypotenuse is one, the y component is one, the z component in any possible 3D induction must be one, making the y and z component of the same value, a unit value, invoking the standard unit circle without any necessary reality for it. We can check the value for z, which is the complexity it craves with the z dimensionality complex component. This equals the exponential raised to the "i" complex parameter multiplied by time. Since we know that this works as endpoint generation, and involves no real moment or movement, the value for time here must be equal to zero. Which leaves z complex component at the exponential raised to the power of zero which is one. There is no change detectable, no change happened to the "i" complex in real time, so, the "i" complex has no real value here."

Phillip appeared slightly confused. "So we use  $e = 1$ ?" he asked.

She shook her head. "We use the exponential raised to the power of zero. That is what has the value of 1 in this case. The coefficient here is 1 overall. When 3D parameters gain power in higher dimensions, their derivatives have coefficients other than one. That is not possible in this case. The only possible shape, essence, or form is vertical, and this vertical shape is also its originality. There's no differential substantiality. There is just the perpetuation of sameness. This perpetuation of sameness is never true for all substantial essences in the world. And things get worse. Anything raised to the power of zero can assume any parameter in the world without any reality to back it up or check its authenticity. This is because it would always equate to one and the derivative of any parameter in the world is one. This monster you created, this creature, does not have the human capacity to understand, withstand or sustain the complex imposed upon it. It has neither instantiation nor origination. Adaptation in this complex state is a total disaster."

Osmond exhaled, holding her eyes fully.

Phillip spoke. "How do we help it destroy itself?"

She exhaled, a jolt of unexpected pain coursing through her. "We have to destroy the means of containment and procedural existence. We have to burn down all of Kindlebridge. We have to make sure it burns."

There was a presiding overwhelming silence in the room as if her idea was as much in doubt as the reality of the perilous moment.

"How?" Osmond asked.

She spoke slowly. "There is yet nothing to mimic but what is around it. Fire will be our preset for the fiery conditioning."

Osmond held a spark of life in his eyes when he spoke. "It must self destruct!"

She nodded. "It must. With the end to end point generation of what it mimics in this case, which we will make sure is fire, even if we have to risk our lives for it, we have a chance of getting out of here alive. That monster on the other hand, must self destruct. It is our only guarantee we will get out of this scientist created hellhole."

The room gained silence for a while before she spoke again. "Yet I must say it, that everything we need to achieve these aims are in a different encampment on Kindlebridge. We have a gravely endeavor because we have to risk movement to achieve it. Yet, if we sit here, we will become skeletons to no worthy causation."

The thought of moving towards some kind of salvation ensuring half of them would end up dead was frightening in the least. The thought of being at the forefront of that movement was more frightening. There was a long period of silence when nobody moved. She began to entertain leaving a guard with the scientists and risking the movement without them. It was yet inconceivably dangerous as a seeming self-infecting, self-inflicting call to death.

The silence presided longer as no one wanted to move. No one could easily or reasonably convince them it was the best thing to do either.

One of the guards came into view across the glassed lining in a cautious but yearning manner. He had made it away from the monster alive and was searching for them.

The situation was both dire and dangerous. One of the guards seated in the room raised and waved his hands to get the attention of the guard on the other side just before the darkness loomed again, risking instincts over caution. In that instant, the huge red

fangs hovered alongside the darkness that followed him there. Was the monster getting better at predicting human behavior?

The fangs took the head of the guard off in one full simple swing, breaking the glass barrier in the process. Shattered pieces of glass came rolling in with the severed head and the exposure to danger was one hundred percent.

"We go!Now!" Sewa said as she spirited out of the room in quick strong strides.

Life and death were both equally a struggle since she arrived in Kindlebridge that morning. In the moment, survival was based on movement and life and death depended on the probability of death alone, all hardly precise mathematics. It was reality. The probability they were all alive that morning was one hundred percent. The probability of survival given that she came to Kindlebridge that morning was zero percent. The probability that she came to Kindlebridge and survived given that they were alive that morning was zero percent. The probability of life on Kindlebridge that morning was death itself. And the thought alone was to die for. She didn't believe in love producing itself procedurally without essence or substance. If luck was truly luck, it would show up when needed one hundred percent of times. It was nothing to believe in.

She sprinted away not for life but against the spirit of death as life was decided that morning from unnatural disgracefully scientific means to get to unnatural ends. An unnatural artefactual monster was animated, enlivened and spirited against the course of human existence.

She wondered if the grim near-silence that followed her was any indication into her worst fears. She did not have a crowd behind her. Yet she moved rapidly while in the worried daze, wondering if

all the sprinting sounds she heard were hers. As she dashed into the old equipment building, she left the door slightly ajar, took her sit on the cold hard floor in the corner behind the door, shaking from head to toe, wondering if life, blood or shadow will walk through the door.

Osmond was the first person to come in, and she quickly caught her breath again and released it. That was a guard behind him. The guard closed the door behind him and they both took their seat on the floor next to hers.

"Phillip?" she asked.

Osmond shook his head and the pained expression on him told her everything she needed to know.

The pain that rushed through her was surprisingly immense as if he was someone known and loved all her life. Was it because of the near death experiences they shared and survived? She was getting to like the bravest boy-scientist against Osmond for the sake of life.

She sat there for a little while with the strangest combinatorial sensation of self-pity and hopelessness before rushing towards the back of the room.

They heard the first of many loud bangs that was to come from the creature while trying to get access into the back room of the machine and equipment warehouse.

Once inside, she retrieved a key and give it to Osmond. "You're driving."

"There's a car?" Osmond asked.

"There's an old farm tractor," she replied. "All you have to do is drive, especially along the loop, the circular framework around this

building. We should get every extreme end curvature from that so we can burn this horrible mistake down."

She got out a bucket of oil, retrieved a pile of old oily machinery rags, tore them in pieces, dipped them in the oil, opened the upper cabinet to showcase a series of ancient weaponry, retrieved two bow and arrow sets, and closed the drawers, glad she took up those bow and arrow classes when David suggested it.

She turned to the guard, "Put your gun down, you know that won't kill it."

The guard obliged as she retrieved lighters, matches, fireproof gloves and gave him a set of those. "I need you to be ready to be the flame supplier. Put fire to the end of my arrows so I can shoot them out faster and faster."

They rushed to the back door to what looked like a garage. As they got to the tractor, she whispered, "baby please start up for me, for life."

The tractor started up at first try. She got in the back with the now un-armed guard, knowing every shot must be made in the form of a parabolic upward curve destined to come down to spread the fire. With the sharpness of her arrow having been used to retrieve an oily rag, she turned to the guard.

The door came ajar to the mass of darkness.

"Now, before the red," she urged the guard.

Osmond accelerated into the mass.

Her first shot was quick as quicksilver as the red fangs came around the corner. Sewa noticed it instantly: the sudden stop, the sudden jolt of shock. It had been programmed to think it was invincible, incomparable, unconquerable, some universal

implementation of near perfect warfare capabilities. But she hardly wasted time. She dipped into the bucket of oil with a new arrow as as the red fangs made its approach. "Make the corner onto the circular track with a sharp curve!" she told Osmond, spun around in the direction of the fangs and fired. She dipped her arrow in oil again, and as soon as the oily rag ignited, turned to face the overwhelming sporadic spread of now deepening red and glowy mass of red with tiny bits of fiery spawns, spawning its own destruction within the chaos.

She had been right about the possibility of self-destruction on the part of the monster but the possibility of survival still felt like death itself. It was necessary, she thought, that she take big risks, even if it was a risk of life. The possibility of survival, it was clear to her, was zero. She traced the length of the mass of redness to the back of the machinery building. Her plans changed then as she saw that monster had sawed the fuel room apart leaving gasoline on the floor. Her aim for the spot was precise.

"Down!" she commanded as she dived down to escape the brunt of any possible residue. It was a blast, one she hoped will destroy the creature or inflict significant damage on it.

She noticed Osmond had slowed to a near-stop.

"Move!" She commanded, dipped her arrow again and made a shot at the first curve, the southeastern port. She turned to view the internally burning mass of red and black weakened but moving.

She knew instinctively that something was wrong, something bad was meant to happen, as she could not shake the feeling since the railcar stopped.

As they turned the southeastern corner to face the northeastern curve, she saw it. The mass of red and black was off burning from

side to side with one side more badly burned than the other. The second monster was yet untouched. With its causation now turned against it as curse, the two were together, the half-breed synthesis of nothing but catastrophe. She made the first attempt towards the northeastern as the sharpness of the fangs broke the ground before them.

Osmond stopped the tractor there because there was no way to move forward without giving into the newly sawed ground, a ditch. At her second attempt, the red fangs broke the ground again, taking the car towards an angular slant, almost tipping over. It sent her back towards the tires which she was glad, had stopped.

She rushed to the other end to prevent the heavy tractor from tipping over. When the tractor landed again, "Move!" she commanded.

Osmond obliged, moving backward against the ditch.

She noticed the absence of the guard. The monster had him chained to his fangs, closed her eyes and exhaled sharply for dear life, dipped her arrow into the oil and realized Osmond had stopped the car to help fire up the oily rags. Her back was to the monster as they made the southwestern curve backward when she took another shot.

Osmond accelerated in the Northwestern direction. The fangs came down much unlike the first, without much vigor. It put another dent in the road, a ditch. The monster was closing in on them. She knew if they didn't achieve their aims in reasonable time, they will be dead meat.

"Move!" she commanded as she made her second shot in the Northwestern port.

Osmond reversed the tractor. And they were back to the position they were in earlier.

The fangs came down again to break the front end of the tractor, narrowly missing them.

She calculated related timing and possibility of retaining life as the fangs were retracted. It seemed her life flashed before her. Despite all human instinct in her was completely tilted for the fight for life. She dipped her arrow and allowed Osmond to ignite the fire feeling as if every breath she took was her last.

"Between the trees!" she commanded. "We are breaking boundaries or we are dead."

Osmond reversed, and accelerated slightly to begin maneuvering his way between the trees.

He moved between the trees towards the locked gates of the northeastern port at high speed, barely avoiding the trees falling near them by the red fang's sharp-cutting reaction to their sudden retreat.

"Break it out of here!" Sewa screamed.

"Ah!" Osmond screamed as the tractor made impact with the gates, momentarily surpassing Sewa's expectations that he was incapable of expressing any emotion.

He spun the car around and they faced the burning enclosure having escaped it.

She dipped the arrow and Osmond flipped the lighter as a burning mass of black and red became entangled in the burning mass of bright red turning into yellow, yellow turning into red, one and the same.

She didn't stop shooting arrows until there were no more oily rags. With heavy heart filled with loss and unexpected tragedy, sat into the seat beside Osmond wondering how Osmond had managed to survive while helpful boy-scientist Phillip didn't.

They watched the flames for a few seconds in silence.

"I'll send you a package in the mail, " Osmond said, breaking his silence.

"Money?"

"Yes," Osmond replied. "And anything else you may tell me now."

"You don't have to buy my silence, I'm not a fool Osmond."

"I'll send it anyways," he resolved. "And I will like to catch dinner sometime soon, not having to accidentally run into you on some rare occasion."

She stared at him eyes wide, as if he had lost his mind in the conflict he hardly lifted a finger for."

Witnessing her reaction,"never mind," he said. "Must be the trauma of this horrible experience."

"You mean a woman urging it through the very worst of times while you didn't have to lift a finger? Besides, I will rather date Phillip."

Osmond frowned. "But he is dead."

She nodded. "Smart, kind, considerate, willing to change, help, engage my thoughts, yeah, dead men make the best boyfriends. I can masturbate to the thought of him for a whole year and that 's a long term relationship by current standards."

He shrugged her insinuations. "I am not that bad."

She nodded. "By common standards, no you are not, but you chose the adjective, she replied, opened the door and stepped out of the tractor, wondering just how much the money in the mail will truly cost her. "You deal with the rest. You don't have to say I was here. I'm walking home."

"Okay," Osmond replied.

She took a few steps from the tractor before turning around with a realization.

"Do me one last favor," she told Osmond.

Osmond nodded. "Anything."

"Tell David, I quit."

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