

SERENA - A NOVEL ABOUT HELL

4 The Meeting with Dominic — aka, Bird

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PCH in Malibu, aka “The Gauntlet”, is incessantly crawling with cops, especially at night - and they are serious. They’ve always got somebody pulled over. ~(The Accident)~ But this little stretch from Chautauqua to the Santa Monica pier is kind of isolated. ~(The Accident)~ I feel safe driving along this section, so after a lazy moment, I begin to open it up. ~(The Accident... ..continues to plague my mind.)~ I feel my torso pressing back into the seat as we propel forward. There goes 50 mph. The wind rushes across the face of the machine then cuts a thin slice into the air of the cockpit through the opening that is the sunroof. ~(The horrible Accident.)~ 70 mph! Faster! Pressure builds in my chest cavity as the Porsche and I knife through the air towards the Santa Monica pier. ~(The horrible permanence of the fatalistic Accident!)~ 90 mph!! I see the tunnel opening up to swallow us as we approach the pier! 115 mph!! And quick, I jump on the brakes just in time to make the banking left into the tube that spits us out on The 10 freeway and rifles us straight towards downtown Los Angeles!

With the beach in the rear view, and the tightly clustered skyline of downtown L.A. rising up in front of me, I begin to shift the focus of my thoughts to “The Program”. We had been playing this game, *The Program*, for quite a while — about a year now — and it was pulling us in, tighter and deeper into this contrived and heinous [activity](#) of [savage benevolence](#). *The Program* was taking over my life and hijacking my fucking sanity. The web we had woven was particularly intricate, and our lives were viciously entangled.

How did it get to this point in time and space? How did I sink into this afterbirth life? “This is fucked up,” I thought. This behavior is starting to feel like something less than surreal. It’s starting to feel less freakish and unearthly every day. Hallucinatory perception gone real world. Perpetual dreamscape. I feel like I’m living in some deranged reality conjured up in the mind of Salvador Dali. If Rio de Janeiro looks like New York threw up on L.A., then where the fuck am I living right now?

This fantastic “game” was now very much an embroiled part of my world; a living, breathing velcro truth of reality syrup; a molten stew of sticky-thick quicksand. And I was the brilliant fuckface who created the beastly *savage Program*.

The Program was our way of redistributing assets amongst the constituency. Fire in the hands of an arsonist will destroy; fire in the hands of a chef will cook your dinner. Petrol in the tank of the robber’s get-away car will provide the criminal with a chance for escape; when a terminally ill law-enforcement officer has no fuel in his tank, and must watch while sitting idle. Except *The Program* isn’t about fuel. It isn’t even about fire. The terminally ill officer is in dire need of a kidney transplant, and the bank robber has two perfectly good ones. However, maybe it’s the neighbor’s daughter who needs the transplant; and maybe it’s some vicious, unremorseful molester that possesses the compatible organs. Do you not recognize the humanity in relocating the monster’s uninfected vitality into the body of the sweet, innocent, dying girl, thereby relieving the world of a cancerous lesion, and at the same time allowing a bit of beauty to survive another day?

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"Ethan," I pondered through the little, German windshield into the symbolic reflection of my mind's eye. "Ethan, Ethan, Ethan. Fucking Alexander!" "God, i fucked up... this is insane... damn, forgive me... i just miss you with forever... i'm so sorry... our Really Life... our forever... i can't take this... this hole in my life my heart, my every-damn-thing!"

The Program has gained so much momentum, entrenching itself into our lives with such regularity that it feels like normal behavior. Like once the acceleration has stopped, even extreme speeds go undetected. This lifestyle, this activity, whatever, has a life of its own. It feels bigger than the sum of its parts. I feel like *The Program* is in control; like it is driving us down the street of life. And we're moving so fast there's no way we could jump off. It's got us by the throat. There is no secret escape; no back door; no way to surrender. Jumping off or out is suicide.

The Program is truly my *Really Life!* That's what Katiana would say. And Kat knows! Miss Katiana is in the middle of all this just like we are. Only, she's not afraid of it. Kat's not afraid of much of anything. She just rolls with the tide; she goes with the flow. She's really cool. She's freaky, but she's fucking cool. And that's *her* Really Life! You'll meet her next.