

STILLP • INT
A MAGAZINE IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

THE FEAR JESUS MIGHT BE STARTING A CULT

TERRON FERGUSON

[GUS shuts the backdoor of his modest hamlet. And with a gesture, YANCY is invited to survey a beautiful landscape, a meticulously curated garden, and a fleet of futuristic vehicles. He leads YANCY over to a clementine-colored limousine. BLOOP! BLOOP! thrums the atmosphere, and butterfly doors open. GUS and YANCY hop inside. The car begins to exit the circular driveway. The two kids are side by side.]

GUS: You seem wound up.

YANCY: It's this juice recipe. I'm trying to figure it out. It's tricky and I'm growing impatient.

GUS: Tricky? How so? Our people just pass down our traditions. Don't yours?

YANCY: Well, the first sign of it came to me in a dream. I was in heaven. I was fed a line a' baloney about how it all would become clear if I followed Love. Corny, but I obeyed. Next thing you know, you end up deep in the South and, now, at the water's edge.

GUS: Go on...

YANCY: No. Nah. People always tell me this shouldn't be therapy.

GUS: What's wrong with therapy?

YANCY: Nothing. *This just ain't that.*

GUS (opens curtains, rolls window down, coughs, spits arcing loogie onto the sidewalk): You go to therapy?

YANCY: Yeah, all the time.

GUS [rolling the window back up]: What? Church?

YANCY: Kinda... I ride moto.

GUS: Ah. Dirt bikes. You live dangerously I see. But that ain't therapy, either.

YANCY: I'm only playing. Well, kinda... I need the adrenaline. I can't get enough of the soot-y, smoke-y air. *You* go to therapy?

GUS: This tactic is always used as some silly, unsubtle way of deflecting. What difference does it make?

YANCY: Does that seat you're in get hotter if you dare to answer your own damn question?

GUS [disregarding YANCY]: Logically: I can I tell you cigarette smoking is unhealthy while also being a cigarette smoker. My decision to smoke doesn't have any impact on the (un)healthiness of cigarette smoking.

YANCY: So do you smoke cigarettes?

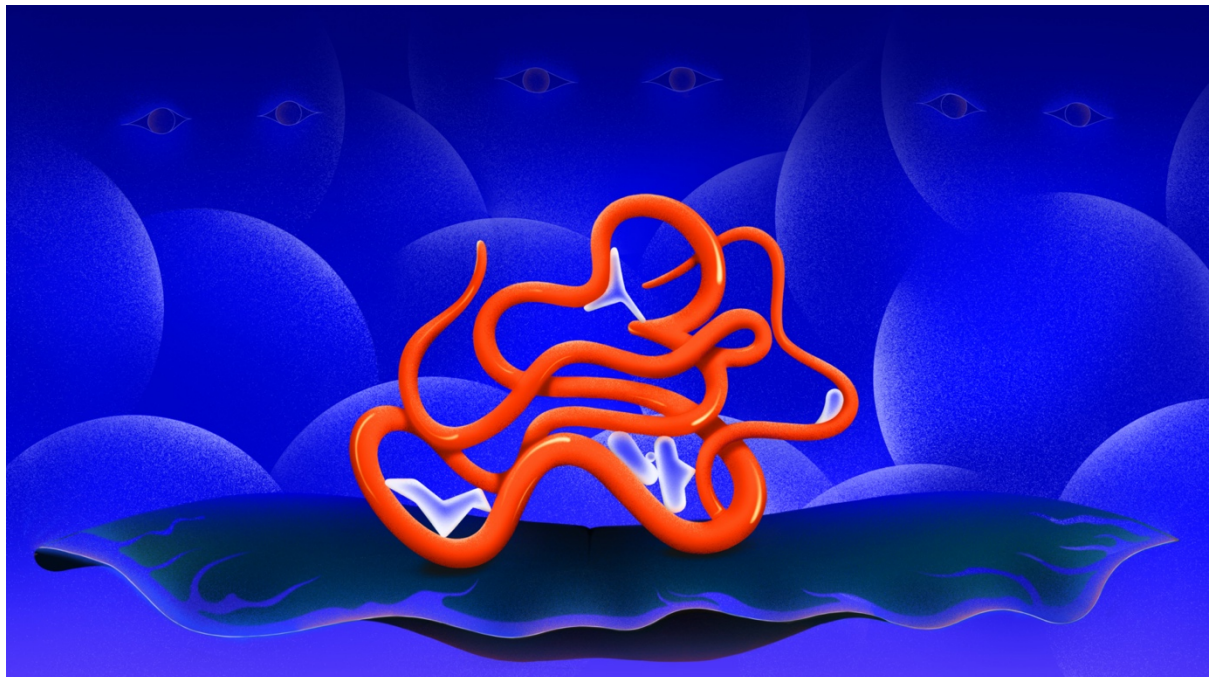
GUS: No, but do you dig what I'm saying?

YANCY: No. Because you wouldn't take relationship advice from a kid who is single or a divorcee, would ya?

GUS: Depends. Are they a professional?

YANCY: Would you take business advice from a person who doesn't build or run businesses?

GUS: These are called consumers. So, yes... And, if you must know, I go to therapy. I am not *your* therapist however. I do not want to be your therapist. I was just commenting on how tense you seem. You came to *my* doorstep, YANCY. You rang *my* doorbell.



Cosmic Ballet ~ Debora Cheyenne Cruchon

[GUS's limousine does a three-point turn, grows from six windows into fifty-six windows, slithers in the opposite direction, then shrinks back to having only six windows. It's a bubbly day outside. It doesn't seem like these two kids are headed anywhere. Surprisingly, that's ok? After being alone for such a long time, YANCY tells himself the voyage requires going through the wilderness. Tolerating the process by popping wheelies and racing the occasional stranger who appears during the journey. You can tell YANCY feels nice about relinquishing control, ignoring the duties of monitoring the speed and the braking. Just riding, he is in another world. Taking a break from managing the treacherous and convoluted urban, rural, and mountain terrains. Navigating routes, checkpoints, fuel stations, and destinations. The caretaking of passengers, carpoolers, pedestrians and onlookers. In this moment, all of the trains are either running perfectly on schedule, or none of them have left the station(s). Outside of the window, YANCY notices the sound of dirty Air Force Ones scuttling along the dusty road. The fields are now billowing in front of a laser-pink sunshine.]

Homeless man: Whether pride or gluttony! Tiger Woods wins first Masters since 2005, first major tournament victory since 2008 and 15th overall. If he wasn't playing golf, what would he be doin'? He'd be playing point guard for UCLA. Tiger Woods was a phenom. What he did was be-yond race! But only an African American could have done it.

YANCY: Aye GUS, pull the car over right quick.

GUS [rolls his eyes]: Certainly.

YANCY [to the Homeless man]: 'Scuse me, mister. Where you going?

Homeless man: Yeah, young fella, you shouldn't.

YANCY: What? Why not?

Homeless man: Ever look into those stories 'bout serial killers?

[YANCY, spooked by the Homeless man's apparent incoherence, turns to get back in the car.]

Homeless man: Ain't no serial killer. Just gon go up here to this course. It's gotta mountain in it. I'mma get up on top of that mountain, get me a green jacket—like Tiger—*Masters*. Then everybody is gonna know my name...

GUS [gets out of other side of car]: What's he saying?

YANCY: I'm not so sure. Can't follow him. He mentioned some course with a mountain. Maybe we can ride some bikes there. I don't know.

Homeless man: Then they gon all come to me. I'mma pick twelve. I'mma ummm... I'mma ummm... I'mma send dem out, let dem talk to the people. They'll have the power. I ain't gon restrain 'em.

YANCY (*Homeless man walking hurriedly*): Slow down brother. What do you mean?

GUS: Mister, do you need some help?

Homeless man: Truthfully, young fella... Don't we all? But you shouldn't—people get fascinated by 'serial killers'. Only because deep down we can relate. We all have some sort of compulsion. Ok, you might not become Andrew Cunanan, but don't lie and say you ain't got ya own celebrity crush. Or, certainly a fatal attraction.

Homeless man [in his best running stance]: Question is, young fellas, wanna race?

YANCY: What? No. No, we saw you walking out here all by your lonely. We wanna make sure you're alright.

Homeless man: Ah! Gentrifiers. Do-gooders. Those who seek to rationalize their plunder through philanthropy. Let me guess, you have a program that'll find me somewhere nice and comfy to sleep tonight?

YANCY: Not exactly. We're much more authentic than that.

Homeless man: Ah, ah! Lemme see, lemme guess... Your operation really serves as a brand to tell the story of what we can accomplish in this here community? Or what we're to aspire towards?

GUS: YANCY, is this dude trying to offend us? Because he's beginning to succeed.

YANCY [snobbish and smug]: We've just got plenty of money though.

Homeless man: Oh, I got plenty money already.

[The Homeless man reaches inside of his long beard and retrieves a locket key. All of a sudden it gets eerily dark. The billowing fields start to flake up, as dust and gravel from the road miss each other in the air and ricochet against spare metal parts. Thunder crackles and researches for lightning. The Homeless man slips his dirty bare foot out of the Air Force One, reaches for the tiniest anklet, and unlocks with the key a diamond pendant. Thousands of flies storm out, accost both YANCY and GUS, whip around in the air, organize themselves, ready to swarm, and—as the Homeless man laughs wickedly—fly back into the locket in single file.]

Homeless man [His eyes protrude into huge tubes of inquisition, making intense eye contact with YANCY]: Seems to me you've got a simple syllogism of choices to make little buddy.

YANCY [unphased]: Don't call me "little buddy".

GUS [turns to YANCY]: Hate to intervene here, but... Dude... don't we wanna avoid triggering this guy more?

Homeless man: Yeah, little buddy... you *shouldn't*.

YANCY [to the man]: Just don't call me that. I'm a man.

YANCY [to GUS]: And you quit it with the victim-blaming...

GUS: How are *you* the victim here? You asked *me* to pull over. You got outta the car.

YANCY: That gives any and everybody license to give me unsolicited advice? To mischaracterize me?

Homeless man [The man approaches GUS for a high five]: Ah. He's of the belief that because you've got yourself a fancy ride and a few flies that that makes you some man, eh? Incorrect. Or, at least, unproven. Ain't that right, Jack? Lil' buddy over here don't know. It's not what they call you: it's what you answer to.

YANCY: Screw him GUS. Let's roll. We can finish what we were talking about.

Homeless man: Seems to me you've got a simple syllogism of choices to make young manly.

YANCY: That's more like it.

Homeless man: You can continue leaning on your own understanding—the status quo. However, in an effort to avoid malpractice, I'd invite you to riddle me this... what do we call a leader without any followers?

[YANCY and GUS look at one another, stumped.]

Homeless man: ...just a nigga taking a walk!

[The Homeless man breaks out into raucous laughter. The deep, belly laugh is both so heavy and so bright that it shakes the pavement below the three of them, vibrates the limousine's tires, and turns the darkness, chaos, and debris into a serene Spring day. The man makes intense eye contact again, though.]

Homeless man: I'm going to say this very clearly young manly. You think on it hard. You can (a) continue the status quo...

[A specter appears in thin air. The visual is of YANCY as an old man, riding again in the limo beside GUS. GUS hasn't aged a bit. This time, GUS has his window rolled down and is waving majestically at an adoring crowd. Must be a parade. Whatever pageantry, pomp and circumstance YANCY is imagining, the occasion is for GUS's well-deserved glorification. YANCY's body double flickers and then abruptly transports from the back seat next to GUS to the driver's seat of the limo. YANCY is now wearing a chauffeur hat.]

Homeless man: Or, there is option (b). Follow me down to this here course as I mentioned. Be my caddy, why don'tcha! I've won the damn thing many-a-time, I tell ya. However, I've just never competed for a green jacket. I could certainly use the youthful eye of a millennial warrior, a world beater, such as yaself. I definitely need the strength and vigor. I can't promise you your own Resurrection story, but I can deliver wisdom, adventure, love, and the pride that comes from painstaking performance.

[Adjacent to the previous apparition, a screen pops up, hovering about the Homeless man's hand. The two visuals overlap. The second one begins with the Homeless man's exposed heels, now clean and gleaming, devoid of any dead skin, resting on the throttle and gears of YANCY's bike. YANCY is trudging as quickly as possible behind. He is struggling, hauling the man's many things, in service. Most noticeably a bundle of packages wrapped in brown paper, each package stamped with a emblem protesting The Middle Passage. A quiver of arrows, each arrow having many locketts with "tsetse flies" engraved on them. Pushing a

handcart loaded with oak barrels, each barrel bound by hoops made of titanium steel and carbon fiber. The duo track the road as the Homeless man hums an old blues song until they arrive at the front desk of a sprawling golf course.]

Homeless man: As an alternative, though, the smart money would recommend you consider (c): trying out some new shoes, such as these.

[James Brown's "Get Up and Drive Your Funky Soul" begins to play as a third, translucent display crops up in a final juxtaposition to the other two looping scenarios. YANCY sees himself wearing a wetsuit, weirdly shaped wet shoes, and running full speed towards a bright purple body of water. He's "liquid mountaineering". A hoax that he remembers vowing never to participate in. All of a sudden, YANCY sees his imaginary self succeed at the impossible. With astonishing speed, he makes it across the purple bank. In triumph, he looks so fucking dope! On the other side, he steps on a bronze hoverboard and is elevated at light speed to another galaxy.]

Homeless man: This is where it gets good, young manly...

[At Galaxy headquarters, YANCY is awarded a platinum medal—it's diamond encrusted. A remarkable crown is placed above his head. Drones and galleries of supporters congregate awaiting YANCY's most substantive and/or trivial requests. He is presented with an oversized, cardboard blank check by Rihanna. Afterwards, she freshens her lipstick to give him a congratulatory kiss.]

Homeless man: So... simple syllogism of choices. Which domino we playing young manly?

GUS [as YANCY hesitates]: I think we should consider getting back in the car.

YANCY: Ah. Come on, dude. You're so risk averse. I've changed my mind now... I ride moto. I wanna play with the trigger. You know I like a little gamble.

YANCY [turns to the Homeless man]: You wanna know, if I had my way, which of these fates would I pick?

Homeless man: But do you really believe your destiny is in your own hands? It's a question of fate or chance, young manly.

YANCY: Aight Goose! Lead me, guide me, order my steps! What we got here? Whatcha thinking?

GUS [begrudgingly]: I've already expressed my opposition to this impious activity...

GUS [rubs his chin, contemplates, and cracks a devilish grin]: ...but, if I had to admit, I'm quite partial to the first scenario.

YANCY: You would be. Our whole hangout session is meant to get your IG followers up. GUS: Don't be 'ironic' or 'different'. Social Media Influencing is the new Madison Avenue. And, I'm going to be Donald Francis Draper!

YANCY [rolls his eyes at GUS, thinks to himself]: Number three seems like a ringer—much too smart for that. Number one is the status quo. And Lauryn Hill said anything that isn't growing is dead. Soooo, I'm going to goooooo wiiiiittthhh...

YANCY [*aloud to the Homeless man*]: Door Number Two!

Homeless man: Duly-noted! One down! Levhum mo ta-go!

[The boys are fast-forwarded from their present place, diagonally across time. As they hurry behind him, the Homeless man intermittently blips the throttle, and, every now and again, takes a break by switching into his freshly-acquired limousine. The kids share the load of carrying the Man's things and are so consumed by the task that they hardly notice his luxury. However, as more parties join them, one-by-one, the weight of the items decreases. Among the twelve are a set of brothers, both brollic and helpful, smelling of catfish and grits. The task ends up not being as bad as advertised. Accordingly, the group begins to harmonize on a sweet song. The Homeless man looks from on high at his followers, and is unable to conceal his smile. He rides in sweet delight until they arrive at the reception desk of the country club.]

Gabriela: Howdy! I'm Gabriela. How may we serve y'all on this fine day?

Homeless man: Howdy! We thirteen wanna set ourselves up an 18-hole game.

Gabriela: Sure. No problem. So you'll be needing thirteen sets of clubs, right?

Homeless man: No ma'am! We'll only be needing one set. We'll be playing as a team, das right!

Gabriela: Ah, ok. That'll be free, then.

Homeless man [*looks over his shoulder, gloating at YANCY*]: Yes, I've researched your website. Can you please show my esteemed colleague [*gestures to YANCY*] where he can park my two fine vehicles?

Gabriela: Yes, of course sir. Here are your entry wristbands, course maps, and golf balls. You can rent clubs by using these tickets over there at the equipment shop. Enjoy the links!

Homeless man: Thank ya kindly!

YANCY [*to GUS as he is walking towards him*]: Great... Just my luck. Had a good thing going, traded it on a gamble, came all this way, and I'm still just a glorified valet.

GUS [*to YANCY*]: Dude... you shouldn't trip. Just park the whips and come join us on the green once you're done. Maybe they'll let us ride moto after.

YANCY: I'm just saying. I ain't trippin...

Homeless man (*eavesdropping, leaning, and towering over the boys*): Yeah, you *shouldn't*.

Gabriela (*comes around the counter toward YANCY with an interested smile and deep eyes*): Yeah, you shouldn't.

[Gabriela points the others toward the equipment shop and motions for YANCY to follow her through a different door. In a moment of useful distraction from his lot, YANCY notices Gabriela. She guides him down a narrow corridor outfitted with motion sensed lights. The

first are turquoise. The next are chartreuse. The last are blush. They're going crazy off of each other. The lighting creates a glorious incandescence beaming back and forth on their bodies. Her skin color is glorious. Somehow, between the size of the hallway, the glimmer games played by the bulbs, YANCY begins to feel a synergistic energy with Gabriela. Perhaps he feels a proximity to his new leader. Her eye contact is self-assured, excited, and heartening, yet altogether mysterious. He already likes her despite knowing nothing about her save for her beauty, profession, and general air of hospitality. They exit the passageway and come to a large carport. The carport is massive, empty, and covered by a pristine parquet floor. Looks more like a ballet studio than a garage. The rich voice of Nat King Cole's daughter belts through a world-class sound system.]

*You may be an ambassador to England or France
You might like to gamble, you might like to dance
You may be the heavyweight champion of the world
You might be a socialite with a long string of pearls*

Gabriela [YANCY listens]: Oooooohh, I love this song! Do you know this song?

*But you're gonna have to serve somebody, serve somebody
Serve somebody, serve somebody
It might be the devil or it might be the Lord
But you're gonna have to serve somebody*

YANCY [sensing an opportunity]: No. Can't put my finger on it, but let me listen for a bit... So, your name is Gabriela, eh? Can I call you Gabby though?

Gabby: You can call me whatever you want. You'll know what works by what I answer to.

YANCY: Ok, cool. Gabby. How long have you been working at this course?

Gabby: Depends on how you look at things. One could say I've been doing this for nearly a year. In another way, you could argue I made a contract with myself before birth that this'd be my project for now.

[The two are now standing in the center of the carport.]

*You might be a rock 'n' roll man, prancing on the stage
Plenty of drugs at your command and women in a cage
You might be a businessman or some high degree thief
They may call you 'Doctor', they may call you 'Chief'*

*But you're gonna have to serve somebody, serve somebody
Oh, serve somebody, yeah, yeah, serve somebody
Oh, it may be the devil or it might be the Lord
But you're gonna have to serve somebody*

YANCY: What was your project before? What's your next project?

Gabby: I don't think of things this way. I stopped living in the past and craving for the future once I realized I'd never eclipse my sister's shadow.

[Gabby removes a small, plastic Nalgene bottle from a belt bag she's wearing. She takes a small sip of some money-green liquid. As she removes the bottle from her lips, YANCY spots a tattoo on the teenager's inner bicep. A small fly pesters her. She ignores it entirely.]

Gabriela: But, to be quite honest with you, I'm sure you're a nice kid and all... I just don't have any interest in sharing an overview of my psychoanalysis with a complete stranger.

YANCY: Let's not be strangers then... I'm *YANCY*.

[Extending his right hand in olive branch.]

Gabriela: Nice to meet ya, *YANCY*.

[Gabriela pauses. Instead of shaking his hand, she turns and signals to their surroundings. YANCY hurries back into her line of sight. His ears wiggle like Alfalfa's. He's flirting in his own way.]

Gabriela: Here is our parking lot. You must bring your vehicles to the reception area where we met, through the corridor that we just exited, and then you can put them anywhere on the lot that you like.

YANCY [judging this system as absurd and this process as futile]: I can get the bike in here, easy, but how in the world am I to get that limousine through this tight hallway?

*Now, you may be a State Trooper, you might be a young Turk
You may even be the head of some great big TV network
You may be rich or poor and you may be blind or chained
You might be living in another country under another name*

*But you're gonna have to serve somebody, serve somebody
Oh, serve somebody, serve somebody
It might be the devil or it might be the Lord
But you're still gonna have to serve somebody*

Gabriela: Oh, be creative. Can-ya dance?

YANCY: I stopped dancing a long time ago.

Gabriela [giggles at the silliness of this answer]: Why?

YANCY: When I was child I did things as a child.

Gabriela: Yeah, but you're still a child. Besides. Being a kid is fun!

YANCY: Right.

Gabriela: You mean to tell me you *really* never dance? Shame.

YANCY: Only when I'm listening to music on the streets, in my headphones, and no one is around to see me.

Gabriela: Why not in private if you don't want folks to watch or join you?

YANCY: Because everyone expects us all to dance.

Gabriela: Ah! There we go. You don't wanna be the sad clown.

YANCY: Exactly. I'd prefer to be taken seriously. Do people take you seriously?

Gabriela: I'm not sure that I want to be "taken seriously". And I'm a Scorpio, so, I dunno if I want to be "taken"...at all.

*Maybe a construction worker working on a home
Might be living in a mansion, you might live in a dome
You may own guns, you may even own tanks
You may be somebody's landlord, you might even own banks*

YANCY [pointing]: Oook. Well, at any rate, our vehicles need to be *taken*... from outside... into this carport. Can you help me figure out how to get that big ole car through that narrow hallway? Seems like I'll need to perform a miracle.

Gabriela: Miracles reinforce our faith, Mister YANCY.

YANCY (smacks his lips): Man this is just like that song.

Gabriela: Which one?

YANCY: The one that goes, "Can you get my friends in the club?"

Gabriela: I'm not following.

YANCY [continues]: "I said, 'Can you get my Benz in the club?'"

Gabriela: Huh? What?

YANCY [continues in rhythm, rapping]: "If not, treat ya friends like my Benz, park they ass outside, until the evening ends..."

*But you're gonna have to serve somebody, serve somebody
Oh yeah, serve somebody, serve somebody
Oh, it might be the devil or it might be the Lord
But you're gonna have to serve somebody*

[Gabriela rolls her eyes because she hates when customers become opportunists, but is used to it. Empty, at first, just as YANCY wonders why. Remembering that the golf course had many groups of players already engaged in games, at several holes. YANCY thinks. Shouldn't this place be full? With many cars? At this anxiety, the parquet floor begins to populate with more and more vehicles. ATVs, Sedans, Hummers, other limousines, even a

few vintage wide-axle chariots. Gabriela is holding a huge ring stocked with car keys, fobs, and alarm remotes. The carport is nearly full.]

YANCY: If I manage to actually get them inside here—which seems utterly impossible—how will I find the whips when we're done golfing? Now that it's getting so crowded.

Gabriela: Just focus on getting them in here, first. My job as the receptionist here is to greet you. To direct your visit on the property. And to answer inquiries, assuming they have clear answers. You don't need me to teach you how to use your imagination. Embrace life, its infinite mysteries, and adventures!

*Now you can call me Terry or you might call me Moore
You may call me David or you might call me Coe
You can call me RJ or you can call me Ray
You can call me anything, I don't care what you say*

*You're gonna have to serve somebody, serve somebody
Oh, serve somebody, serve somebody
It might be the devil or it might be the Lord
But you're gonna have to serve somebody*

Gabriela: Sorry, no offense. You *shouldn't* need me.

YANCY [*looking around the carport*]: None taken. And you clearly don't need us up in here, either.

Gabriela: That's the thing. We want your business. We want you around. If you need me to need you, then I haven't done my job. This ain't the partnership for you.

*You may be a rock 'n' roll star, prancing on the stage
You got plenty of drugs at your command, you got women in a cage
You might be a big businessman or some high degree thief
Now they might call you 'Doctor', they might call you 'Chief'*

*But you're gonna have to serve somebody, serve somebody
Serve somebody, serve somebody
It might be the devil or it might be the Lord
But you're gonna have to serve somebody*

YANCY [*laying it on thick*]: Was just looking for some help is all. And, who better to receive guidance from than an employee of this establishment... and ostensibly the best-looking employee at that? None other than you, Gabby.

Gabby: I understand. Still, as I've said, I'm not here to *guide* anyone. I'm here to collect my coins. I'm here to strengthen myself through my experiences. I'm here for mutual exchange.

[Gabby takes another small sip of the green liquid and discreetly puts the Nalgene back in her fanny pack.]

YANCY: Then, can't we mutually exchange ideas on how to get this car inside? Do you see how scary that Homeless dude we came with is? He's crazy! It's as if I cut a deal with the Devil just on a humbug. So, your help would make me incredibly happy.

*It might be the devil, it might be, it might be the Lord
But you're gonna have to serve somebody, serve somebody
Oh man, you're gonna have to serve somebody, serve somebody
Serve somebody, serve somebody
Serve somebody, serve somebody*

Gabriela: Your happiness is not my responsibility. You should find ways to make yourself happy. Just as I find ways to make myself happy. This way, we're able to share our happiness. Giving someone a responsibility to make you happy when you can't do it yourself is selfish.

*It might be the devil or it might be the Lord
Serve somebody, serve somebody
Serve somebody, serve somebody
Serve somebody, serve somebody
Somebody, somebody
It might be the devil or it might be the Lord*

Gabriela: I've gotta get back to the front desk. Take as much time as you need. They're playing 18 holes as a team. You'll figure it out.

Gabriela *[walking away, she turns]*: We all need boundaries, YANCY. It's just the way it is. Even the Devil. If you believe in God, I'd like to remind you, tradition tells us: Satan doesn't have absolute dominion. Therefore, whatever he does is under God's sovereign authority. Why should you be exempt?

[YANCY stands there, perplexed, watching Gabriela as she leaves the carport through the narrow corridor again. He watches her walk. He studies her eclectic outfit. Monochrome snakeskin print vinyl pants. A distressed white tank top—what ancient history has taught us to call a “wife beater”—that had been cut into a crop top. Big black boots. Plenty scaffolding of hand-crafted, clunky metal jewelry carefully built around her neck, wrists, and fingers. He stares at her belt bag as it wobbles and wavers with the same cadence of her hips. Then, he frowns, smarting from her rejection. Maybe Gabby isn't attracted to him. He's much younger than her. Maybe Gabby already has a partner. Maybe Gabby doesn't find him interesting. After all, he neither comprehended her parables nor has he presented any sermon of his own. Maybe Gabby just wants to keep things professional. Maybe Gabby doesn't want to do long-distance. Perhaps time is a gap that is much harder to fill than space. All of these—and likely more that he's omitted—are risks, reasons, Gabriela, or Gabby, might not have given YANCY a shot. He's already calculated his odds. Slim. Same as the probability of threading the corridor's needle with that limousine. YANCY elects to try his hand at neither caper. Instead, he turns around to go back through the way he came, taps the top of his eyeglasses, and teleports to the tenth hole.]

Homeless man: Cars is parked?

YANCY: Nah, man... we should just leave them where they are. The parking situation requires too much scheming and too many details. It's just not fair that I have to do all of this while y'all get to play.

Homeless man: Fair is where you go to buy candy apples, cotton candy and ride the Ferris wheel.

GUS: No. Fair-ness is justice.

YANCY: No. Justice is fairness.

Homeless man: Fairness is just a less controversial word to define than justice. When, in actuality, you've all-ready been told, if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

YANCY: This has nothing to do with religion. Justice bequeaths dignity to a person.

Homeless man: What kinda kid uses the word bequeath?

YANCY: Doesn't matter. You conned me. And, as if the con weren't enough, convincing me to be self-effacing set me up to be further humiliated!

[The wind begins to rustle once more. The other eleven kids assembled around the Homeless man each take steps backwards. He turns toward the fairway, readies his stance, changes his mind, lowers the swing, and then rests his weight on the golf club. His big beard has grown longer since the last time YANCY's looked, back when YANCY was capitulating and not recalcitrant.]

Homeless man: Technically young manly, you shoulda used your ability to teleport to park my cars. Instead you chose to use those talents to come back over here and complain.

YANCY *[fed up]*: Tuh!

Homeless man *[snaps]*: "No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods! Except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house!"

YANCY: Bruh, I don't really know what you're spazzing about. All I know is that it's hard enough for me to teleport my body from one place to another. You're expecting me to scan my entire body plus a freaking limousine, and then reconstitute both somewhere else. This involves an impossible amount of data, effort, and coordination. The idea is basic race towards nonsense.

Homeless man *[raises the club in the air; a crackle of lightning strikes the iron and reverberates the entire sky; in his deepest voice]*: Race towards nonsense, huh? I see someone is afraid of a little challenge.

YANCY *[un-fearing]*: Because... like... what is this supposed to prove?

Homeless man: It is not meant to be proof, but a sign.

YANCY: Yeah, a sign that I would've had Hell to pay. And, I ain't afraid of no challenge. I ain't afraid of nothing.

Homeless man: Oh yeah? Then, you should race me!

[YANCY looks down at the Homeless man's bare feet. Then, looks at his own: brand spanking new sneakers. He considers. All of a sudden, YANCY notices action over the Homeless man's shoulder. A figure pops up in the sand bunker of the 11th hole.]

Homeless man #2: No, you should race *me!*

Homeless man #3 [behind the kids at the 9th hole]: Nah, race me!

Homeless man #4: RACE ME!

Homeless man #5: RAAAACCCEEEEEEE MEEEEEEE!

Homeless man #17: Race me *little buddy*. I'll dust yo ass!

Homeless man #250: Naw... Hell naw... Let him race me!

Homeless man #3249: "RACE ME YOU BITCH ASS NIGGA! YOU BAD!"

[YANCY surveys the distance that he'd have to run in order to beat the many Homeless men.]

GUS [tugging at YANCY's shirt]: YANCY, you shouldn't.

Homeless man: Yeah, young manly, you *couldn't*.

[Without giving YANCY any look of request or agreement, GUS rewinds time. In a flash, the two kids are again chilling in the backseat of the limousine. YANCY again sees the dirty heels smashed against the backs of the sneakers—scuttling along doggedly. Whirling into a huge dust bowl, golden lamé flecks all about, disintegrating in the air, YANCY hears the Homeless man one more time. 'Race me.' Considering, and just as the space between silences is filled by the whistling, tweeting, and chirping of beautiful unseen birds— making YANCY feel confident that he can sing his own song—GUS slowly rolls up the window. SWOOOOOOSH! The weather is either calm now or no longer a factor inside the coach. The handwoven Coogi-referenced curtains, made from a mixture of velvet, silk, and rare beading, collapse and dim the cabin with green lighting. A lone fly has finessed its way into the coach. YANCY, aggravated, flails away at the bug.]

GUS [swatting at the fly too]: Beelzebub! I'm sorry about that, YANCY. My timing was bad. I shouldn't have pulled over. Should've saved you from yourself.

YANCY: It's all good. That fly is always following me.

GUS: Yeah, I hate them too.

YANCY: No I mean... like *that* fly. Every time dude comes around I only think of what my mother would say about us and flies.

GUS: Fret not. Highly unlikely that a fly has a vendetta against you. They have very short lives. The adult housefly lives only about a month. Why not just outlast 'em?

YANCY: Why do they even need to exist? This is *not* my fantasy.

[The fly levitates and squares up with GUS and YANCY. The fly gyrates its mobile head, spins, and then sets, its pair of large compound eyes is able to distinguish brightness and color between the two kids. Pointed in slightly different directions, and oriented to cover the entire coach, the fly's compound eyes can't appreciate detail, complexity, or nuance through its poor image resolution. However, through these eyes, it is prepared to swarm. In possession of a very large view, angle, and the ability to detect fast movement, as well as, in some cases, the polarization of light, the fly crashes in close to YANCY's ears, nose, and mouth, almost daring him, with the threat of more nuisance and bullying, to react with frustration. It's mocking YANCY in that it doesn't seem to be interested in irritating GUS at all. The fly is ready to pierce, lap into, and suck the blood out of anything YANCY, the young aspirant, has going on.]

GUS: Just relax. It'll leave you alone. Flies are of considerable ecological and human importance. They are important pollinators, second only to the bees.

YANCY: Do I look like I care about flies?

GUS: They have only a single pair of wings to fly, an arrangement which gives them great maneuverability, allowing for the performance of high-speed rotational movement and advanced aerobatics.

YANCY: Or how they fly?

GUS: We need pollinators because the transfer of pollen later enables fertilization and the production of seeds.

YANCY: Again, why would I care about agriculture?

GUS: I'm trying to teach you how to appreciate and deal with the flies, man. Because those proverbial fruits—those results that you care so restlessly about—are dependent on fertilization. Perhaps we bear this relatively small inconvenience in exchange for a greater collective wellbeing. A necessary evil, if you will.

YANCY *[rolls eyes]*: Yeah, whatever. Man, flies are the devil. And *that fly* is the Chief lieutenant of Lucifer.

[YANCY flails his arms in ultimate rejection of the fly.]

GUS: Maybe don't chase and swat at 'em so much. You ever see that interview Obama did back in '09?

YANCY: Which interview? That was ages ago...

GUS: So, there's this fly buzzing around while President Obama is trying to conduct a CBS interview. Obama swats at the fly at first, but to no avail. Instead of getting flustered, however, he maintains composure, makes a platform out of his left hand—his dominant hand. He patiently waits for the fly to land on his hand. The fly pesters around only a little bit because a fly can't help itself, ya know? Once the fly lands on his hand, Obama slowly raises the platform, then, with his right hand—WABAMMM!—swats, catches, and kills the fly!

YANCY: So you want me to *kill* flies?

GUS: Aren't you're the one swatting?

YANCY: Oh, you want me to be Obama?

GUS: That's not the moral of the story.

YANCY: I remember that video on YouTube. One of the comments to the video was like, "Oh, so it's actually not his drone policy that makes uberliberals call Obama a cold-blooded killer."

[YANCY swats at the fly.]

GUS: I'm pretty sure I narrowly escaped a scam the other day.

YANCY: Oh? Nice. What was the hustle?

[Swats]

GUS: I received, or learned about (somehow), an application for a worldwide conference. We were going to work on global peace solutions. Not like the Pope kissing the feet of South Sudanese leaders. But close. Very strong petitions. Things of that nature.

YANCY: Ok...

GUS: Participation requires an application and a small application fee. I completed said application and paid said fee. Later I received an email stating I'd been accepted to the conference as a 'self-funded delegate'. With this designation, I am asked to pay €12,000 on top of travel and accomodations. I appealed my funding status and my appeal was declined.

YANCY: Bummer. So what's the gag?

GUS [pauses]: The itinerary has no confirmed speakers. There has been no established correspondence by a human point of contact at the conference organization or any information exchanged about other participants.

[YANCY swats at the fly again. GUS slightly cracks the window.]

GUS: Look. I am an artist. My work is contemporary. I apply my practice by organizing efforts, initiative building, and entrepreneurship. My practice is performative, conversational, and deadset on producing a movement and monument that contributes to our cultural enrichment. I can't afford to be playing around with charlatans.

YANCY *[laughs]*: Oh, whatchu thought? You was about to get a Guggenheim or a MacArthur?

GUS: Quit it... but, yeah, maybe I did.

YANCY: You can't skip steps, Goose. If you want to get to the castle, you've gotta swim through the moat. You're just having a struggle with perception, creditworthiness, and legitimacy.

GUS: No, this ain't that. This is serious. People are frauds, man.

YANCY: This is simply the proverbial tree-falls-in-the-forest-does-it-ever-make-a-sound artistic, existential crisis.

[Swats]

YANCY: I mean, you've clearly got money. Why do you even care about recognition?

GUS: Because the glory is all that matters. Why do you think in 2019 there were 23 Democrats vying for the party's presidential nomination? What separates a church from a cult? A business from a hustle? A movement from a Ponzi scheme?

YANCY: Your intentions, I suppose.

GUS: Egg-xactly! Which begs the question, Mr. "I'm so obsessed my juice recipe". Why do you even care so much? What are *your* intentions? What are *you* chasing?

YANCY: This fly.

[YANCY swats at the fly again, misses, but this time the pest heads closer to GUS.]

YANCY: Ok... so, what's your point?

[Swats]

GUS: My point is that we care. But nobody gives a fuck.

[The fly exits stage left through the slit in the window after a gust of wind vacuums through the car upon stopping. YANCY and GUS get out of the limo and walk into McDonald's.]

Terron Ferguson is a lawyer and creative entrepreneur from Miami, Florida. He currently lives in Leipzig, Germany where he runs a small studio and network called YANCY, Inc. They support a diverse collection of international creatives as they produce projects on important civic topics. He earned a B.A. in Philosophy from Morehouse College and a J.D. from New York University School of Law. His professional background consists of various public service roles, including but not limited to: a special education teacher, political organizer, and human rights attorney.

Terron came to Leipzig as a German Chancellor Fellow with the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. The award has allowed the organization to research the Holocaust, World War II, denazification, and memory culture. YANCY, Inc.'s forthcoming project is a multimedia exhibition based on the findings of this investigation. The presentation will offer insights on how a country heals and moves past a difficult era in its history. If you're interested or want to connect, reach out to him: terron.i.ferguson@gmail.com.

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The image shown here is a portion of the full accompanying artwork originally featured on stillpointmag.org.