



PSYCHO NYMPH EXILE

Porpentine Heartscape

Arcadia Missa Publications

Unit 6 Bellenden Business Centre
Bellenden Road
Peckham
London SE15 4RF

www.arcdiamissa.com
[@ArcadiaMissa](https://twitter.com/ArcadiaMissa)
info@arcdiamissa.com

PSYCHO NYMPH EXILE, 2016

Copyright © 2016 Arcadia Missa Publications,
Porpentine Charity Heartscape, 2016

Cover art by Sloane
Layout & eyeball by Neotemie
Edited by Aurelia Guo & Arcadia Missa
Commissioned by Rhizome

Input keywords & find supplementary mutations at
slimeddaughter.com/nymph

All Rights Reserved

ISBN: 978-0-9954961-1-8

Arcadia Missa Publications are available from the gallery, our website and selected stockists.

Vellus Satowary is a biomecha pilot.

She wears a big fucking visor that gawks over her skintight apple-violet rubber uniform.

She lives at the academy, the most desirable place on earth, where we fly our giant war machines and hang out with friends with cool hair.

We're going to be teens and save the world together forever.

GAIGA

Giant women stride the skyline, lumbering gangly war machines, tattooed¹ and regimentalized, skin dyed², double jointed grappling limbs, covered in eyeballs, their head has none, they lope like spider dogs, pointed rudimentary breasts, barbs between their legs,³ they spurt caustic fluid when damaged:

GAIGA⁴

GAIGA defend our sweet dimension from ANTI⁵-GAIGA⁶, invaders from false worlds⁷.

Each GAIGA has a human counterpart to offset uncontrollable surges of rage and grief, pilots trained to go into PSYCHO TRANCE and bond with their GAIGA. Without human guidance, GAIGA risk PSYCHO FUGUE⁸.

-
1. Serial identification, squadron, house banner.
 2. Sheets of solid color, sometimes broken into geometric shapes.
 3. Caged with heavy metal to prevent toxic eruptions of PSYCHO ENERGY.
 4. Giant Armored Insane Guardian Axis.
 5. Antagonist Null Terror Inception.
 6. ANTI-GAIGA suffer a corruption of the spirit that causes them to decompose rapidly, with bitterness and malice. They are grotesque, shambling, gnarled, unnaturally colored.
 7. Trust no false worlds.
 8. A deadly rampage of acid tears streaming from every eye on their body, the sky grows dark and heavy, suffocating the earth, psychic ripples in the populace, the resurgence of long-dormant hatreds or suicidal impulses, and far worse.

PSYCHO PILLAR

In another dimension there is a vast pillar¹ made of rainbow shards.

This pillar is monitored by injecting eyeballs with PSYCHO DYE. The PSYCHO VIEWER may move their vision up and down the pillar, but not away from it. This allows the inspection of the shards, to make sure the colors are filled.

When a color is underfilled, people are notified and protocols are enacted. Society is engineered at every tier to feed the PSYCHO PILLAR with DSTP.² Different colors of DSTP are cultivated to fill matching shards.

The utility of the PSYCHO PILLAR is that it can be activated to split off a parallel world, an arena where the GAIGA and ANTI-GAIGA may tear each other apart without polluting the oceans and fields of our planet with radioactive blood. These burner worlds are the key to our survival. They disappear swiftly, as if they never existed, in accordance with humane eschaton-ethics.

1. This pillar moves like a barber's pole, a strange loop into the firmament. Foamy orange vapor surrounds the pillar, moving with incredible slowness.

2. See **Despair Syndrome with Temporal Purge**.

**EPIISODE:
"ANGEL'S
LULL"**

Happy muzak plays over the cafe speakers. Minuet¹ opens her Appetizing Jewel Box (\$9) and twists her fork around aimlessly² while Vellus picks at her Kid's CornDog (\$2), furrowing her shaggy dark eyebrows.

"I got the same prize as last time," Minuet says. "You can have it." It's a capsule toy, a tiny pink+white GAIGA with streaming ribbons. The base of the capsule reads:

TIARAGE

MOVE: Dazzling Array!

STATS: 2 Weapon, 5 Disruption

Glass walls mute the shoppers walking past. The blinding white light admits no detail beyond their silhouettes. Vellus watches them like an aquarium. A videoscreen plays news that presumably exists solely so it can be played on the screen of strip mall cafes while people sit and ignore it and listen to their friend talk without hearing what they're saying and wait for the world to end, or begin.

1. She has big blue bangs.
2. No one really eats on the squad.³ They have to fit into their skin-tight uniforms and look good for group photos and clubbing.
3. Their conversations are narcotic, slowed down, irritable, distracted. In the anorexic haze, it seems impossible to articulate a different way of existing.



Their lips rub together like gummy worms on the catwalk above the giant woman being tattooed. The ink arm, big as a bridge, buzzes back and forth, filling in a meadow of green skin. The GAIGA's control gag is bolted through her cheeks, penetrating through the jaw and linking to metal rings in the lips.

Looking over Minuet's shoulder, Vellus can only see the shaved head of the GAIGA like a barren hill, but she can hear the smack of its saliva striking the concrete floor many stories below.

“It is good that we control them,” she thinks, “or else they would be stronger than us.”

INCIDENT

Vellus pilots a SUGARCANE¹-class GAIGA. Anemone hair obscures its face. Fields of green and black ink quilt its body. Eyes with long and sensitive lashes fitted with steel tips.

The director orders SUGARCANE to be fitted with an experimental neuro-amplifier to boost beam damage, a clamp that bites the flesh around the nape of the neck, heavy enough to pull the head back.

She can sense its discomfort, the way its fingers keep twitching, as if wanting to reach up and tear the clamp off. She tries to bring this up with the director, but she brushes Vellus off, says the mission can't wait, it'll be fine.

It's a bright clear day on the academy platform. She holds her visor and watches the clouds drift across the kudzu sea. Her face is fully illuminated, as if the details are being recorded by the sun.



Vellus sits in the cockpit of her GAIGA, chiseled from the brain matter and skull of the stupid beast. Precisely carved tines of bone radiate through lobe flooring lacquered in clear plastic.

1. Keyword: *sugarcane*

A warning siren blares through the cockpit. Her chem-plug starts dripping soothing chemicals into the base of her spine. She vents frontal drool, saliva falling from the bitgagged mouth like a waterfall.²

The world trembles and splits. The people in this city are no longer her people. They are now her enemies. Everything looks the same.

*Squad Glandeco not responding fall back to city
center*

She fingers the joystick, sculpted from a neural stem. It tenses under her grip like a clit.

Minuet taking the flank, gank in 10, 9,

The plastic of the seat crinkles against her rubber uniform as she squirms. Her asshole itches.

The skull vibrates with some horrific, unknowable impact. Blood clots fill the retinal viewports like ameboid clouds. She switches to auxiliary cams.

Shambling thermal ogres lurch in and out of the heatmap. Satellite-administrated reticules flick across the screen like gnats, with varying hues and chevrons of hierarchy.

FUCKING SHOOT SHOOT SHOOT

2. The colossal drool contains flecks of architectural debris, compacted hair, hardened bilirubin...

Vellus fires the arm cannon³, tricep flab jumping and quivering with each blast. She hammers the joystick until the vein pops, her chem-plug wagging behind her like a tail.

Audio channels cut out. *NEURO-SERAPHIC PROTOCOLS IX* the LCD display mutely commands.

Vellus blindly triggers all weapons. Jaw muscles tense as the cheek turrets⁴ howl. SUGARCANE's gait lightens as ordinances tumble from its cavities, turning the street into a river of fire.

"I want to protect my friends," she thinks, her thoughts echoing in the neural cage.

A blood clot slides out of place and she can see through SUGARCANE's eyes again.

The shattered clavicle of Minuet's GAIGA weeps shards from a sternum-hole. Magical girls flit around the biomech, screaming blisters into its skin like red craters. The bone-welded helmet echoes with cavernous moans.

Vellus wonders if she has snacks back in her dorm, or if she needs to pick some up from the vending machine.

3. A stump fused to a cannon.

4. The GAIGA was mercifully deafened long ago with a routine cochlea stripping.

Minuet's GAIGA has a psychotic break. It peels away the metal mask, ripping circus tent-sized flaps of skin with it, bolts torn from oozing holes. It reaches inside its own face, clawing for her.

Minuet wriggles through the slurry of brain fluid and bone chips like a maggot. The bone shards slash her suit, lobesludge greasing her taut, fuckable abdomen. Vellus screams but the coms are fried, her screams just reverb in the chamber until blood is dripping from her ears.

Some distant overwatcher activates the emergency protocol. The spine of Minuet's GAIGA explodes, toppling backwards, crashing into the lake. Water swells over the rim, washing ducks gently down the street.

The anxiety management cocktail drips its last drop into Vellus's bloodstream. She pulls the plug and tries to get up. She wobbles and falls down, breaking her nose. She stares into the pulsing floor-lobe, fingers shaking as she caresses the transparent plastic. She hears beautiful piano music.

Anything is worth doing with the right music, she thinks. Our sacred task, assigned to children for their blameless souls, which have not yet left the attention of angels.

She engages the secondary cockpit, sliding down the intubated throat, through the belly pipeworks,

into the pale coils of her GAIGA's guts where she disappears like a bug in noodles, bonding with the intestinal serotonin mind.

HEAVENLY SYSTEM ONLINE

Pink gel oozes across her rubber uniform,⁵ sucking inside her stoma-port, belly swelling with intestinal combat-empathy, visor locking onto heat signatures hot as food poisoning.

PSYCHO FLORA TRANCE

Violin music slices through the piano. The song becomes even more beautiful. She floats there, doing nothing, listening to the angels.

Wait. We have to rescue Minuet. She's drowning down there.

She twists SUGARCANE around, elbow smashing into a skyscraper office, debris spraying across the face of the sun like an asteroid field. Something blocks the street, something the violin music does not describe. It is huge and it is coming for them, she feels it in the popping of car windows like bubble wrap.

The battle-chems fade from her system. She starts shaking uncontrollably, gasping and hiccuping.

5. Tight enough to outline her asshole, legs contorting in fish-eye for the camera.



Vellus's GAIGA is frozen above the city, voice stuck on a single frame, a 1-second scream that lasts forever.

Her GAIGA is buffering.

Vellus clutches her helmet as if trying to claw her brains out. The buffer-scream births itself from her mouth, trying to force itself through her human vocal cords. She drools blood, she is pitiful.

This horrific scene paralyzes the city, like being woken by someone's alarm and waiting disbelievingly for them to turn it off, but even worse than that.

The GAIGA's arms ripple and pop, spurting fluid, but it can't hold back the ANTI-GAIGA, the claws are deep inside, it screams as its intestines are torn out.

Vellus crawls from the mountain of guts, whimpering as she slips on pink fluid. Her visor is cracked, her eye is stark gaping through the fissure, jagged green glass inches from her eyeball like the jaws of an emerald beast.

Her stoma-com is telling her, detach, detach, detach. The serotonin is all over her, magenta goo

stretching in sticky ropes from the guts, wounds echoing wounds, a toxic feedback loop between her and her GAIGA.

Her vision strobos between the street (fluid flowing into asphalt cracks like pink veins) and the SUGARCANE's hyper-reticuled death-vision (seeing through the eyes of an insane meat skyscraper).

She freaks out and slashes at the serotonin ropes with her knife. The intestines erupt in shock, knocking her into the underbrush like the tentacles of a repulsed kraken.

Serotonin goo bubbles on her flesh, getting hotter with the screams of the disemboweled GAIGA, her uniform sticks to her skin, smoke rises from her body, her hair is on fire.

This is her last moment in the energy configuration of that body.

In her broken state, in the morass of burning kudzu, pink effluvia, and skyscraper bones, she is welcomed to a world of pure image:

Elongated, anorexic bodies dance in a storm of brain-fire.

Sares has an enemy pilot by the hair, smashing her brains out against a vending machine, rows of soda cans rattling with each impact, until the hair tears off.

*A perforated GAIGA's stomach acid slithers down
into the abdominal gel chamber and strikes the writhing
pilot.*

*SUGARCANE eats dirt in sky-bleaching psychosis,
fingers broken from clawing through concrete, shriveled
anemone hair hanging over the cliff face of a mud-
stained jaw.*

Pink fluid hardens on the kudzu canopy.
Bubblegum forest.

**DESPAIR
SYNDROME
WITH
TEMPORAL
PURGE**



DSTP cannot be identified as animal, vegetable, or mineral.

DSTP is a fractal.



DSTP Symptoms

Future death¹

Temporal displacement²

Life-death³

Psycho-irradiation⁴

Pheromone poisoning⁵

-
1. The part of the brain that has a future is destroyed.
 2. Sudden and violent memory recall, brain shuts down against this annihilatory doom, memory-forming glands are jettisoned, the person's soul leaves their body, or another soul enters their body, and they are forced to act out its haunting.
 3. The sensation of being dead while still alive.
 4. The entire structure of your body changes down to the genetic code, twisted in the hands of god. Hair falls out and grows where it never grew before. Skin tone shifts by a degree. Mysterious rashes. Freckles shuffle their constellations. Skin hangs different. Depressed immune system. Mysterious pains. Crippling fatigue. And far more below the spectrum of observation.
 5. You will know.



Causes of DSTP

It is uncertain how people acquire DSTP. It seems entirely random. An innocent enough rape could be occurring when a beam of light falls from the sky and strikes a woman in the head, irradiating every cell of her body. Even women who have been utterly ostracized from society have developed this disease, in the absence of all contact.

DSTP is notable for transitioning the immune system into a mutant system capable of experiencing all tangible and intangible materials and phenomena in the universe as risk factors for continued infection⁶ by the myriad colors of DSTP.

6. Medical authorities have only begun to allow for the possibility that DSTP may be airborne, let alone the possibility of omni-transmission, and the literature may not catch up for some time.



DSTP-Clear is found miles away from the patient, gathered like rainwater.

DSTP-Clear (type B) condenses, vapors, or frosts on the body. Reports of eye-based DSTP-Clear leakage are unsubstantiated.

DSTP-Black emerges as a slimy fluid from the orifices.

DSTP-Green is a mold that thrives on cerebrospinal fluid, carpeting the subarachnoid cavity in a fuzzy green carpet. It converts thoughts to fractals.

DSTP-Blue is a bioluminescent parasite, difficult to eradicate due to entrenching its fibers inside vital organs. It feeds on infant memories, preventing the body from manufacturing its own future.

DSTP-Orange is a beam that shoots from the sky and into the skull. Each beam of DSTP-Orange is encoded to be only visible to its target. DSTP-Orange is responsible for massive despair infusion, targeting the patient no matter where they are.

DSTP-Violet is too thick to be removed from the body without industrial-strength tools. It is thought

to be a hardened form of other types of DSTP.

DSTP-Pink suffuses the body with the light of a false sunset.

THE INSTITUTE

They put me in a chair where I can stare like an ugly doll with some fathomless sentimental value.

Underneath the grafted skin, the knitted nerves, the rebound muscles, the metal bones, my face is broken.

The damage feels like the literalization of a prior brokenness that only I could see, as if the sensation preceded the violence. I think there are many people in this world whose fate is traveling backward to meet them, and they live with their ghost wounds waiting for time to kiss them and make visible what they have held all along.



Waiting for my hair to grow back. Seeing which hairs grow back.

The original color¹ is gone forever.

1. My hair is green now. Plant. Materials of my body scrambled. Fucked into another universe.



Every three hours birds are released to fly over the institute and bring comfort to the survivors with a show of symbolism. The birds will fly into the energy barriers and must be returned in the baskets provided. The birds can be reconstructed to fly at least several times before fully compromised.



Squad leaders wear a visor that sees 3 seconds in the future, at the cost of considerable psycho-optic fraying.

Symptoms of terminal fraying:

- Zygomatic spasms
- Emotional peripheral vision
- Seeing 3 seconds in the past



This is the definitive explanation of Ambidexia.

70% of users.

Ambidexia dissolves painlessly, in a roseate clash of cymbals.

Ambidexia has a certain rattle in the jar, the pills fall in a special way. We call it granite waterfall. This rattling is heavier, almost metallic, with a significance to animals. Lab tests confirm what everyone knew all along.



The river therapy probiotic gushes in your gut, spawning a VR river winding through key nodes of the patient's psyche.

Waterfalls, cataracts, and riparian zones can be adjusted in settings. Tributaries are still an experimental option. Canals in debug mode only.

River therapy has a success rate.



They lead someone down the wrong hallway sometimes, Vellus notices, sitting in her chair by the window, when she is tired of counting the birds, or when her brain isn't swallowed by the clouds.

The hallway doesn't go to the restroom hive, the therapy pods, or the out-patient studio. Maybe it goes to the sky.

EXPULSION

Vellus was pipelined to the academy at the age of 13. She left at 26, DSTP-positive.



After she was discharged from the institute, the academy debriefed her. She made the mistake¹ of mentioning the modification to her GAIGA.



It wasn't that incident, horrifying as people told her it was. The white hot blast of that memory had nearly cauterized itself from her mind. The fringes she could recall were at least brief, alive, in motion, crashing to earth. You could feel something about it.

It was the three months of solitary, or recommended rest, they called it, as she slowly figured out they didn't want her to recount the incident as it had happened, but in a way that molded the incident into an unfortunate anomaly, a tangle of contradictions that made it impossible for her to be in that room in the first place. She learned time travel with them.

1. Don't ever let them know you know they fucked up.

It was the disgust of the other academy members², the punitive sexual assault, and how so many of these things originated in people who had been “good”³ to her before. Their relationships had inverted, and the switch was not in anything she did, but outside of her, in the machine. Were these mysterious gifts of god? What else could explain these things, which just happened.

It was the unspoken things that, if they could ever have been spoken, had elapsed their hidden window of opportunity and went to rot in your head, a ball of bone and meat, tongue packed away like a butcher’s display wrapped tight in translucent film. It would be bad if blood escaped into the world.

They made her apply separately for each exit opportunity normally afforded to pilots leaving the academy, so she could be refused separately, a process that took several months of her life.

She got drunk and yelled at someone in the restroom, telling them to kill her. She didn’t remember but everyone else did.

2. “Better to burn.” Said almost too quiet for quotation marks. Was it the scratching of an insect? The creaking of a door? She was like some animal that can hear a whistle and is going insane⁴ from hearing it, that no one else can hear but her.

3. She resolved to never call something good again. If something was truly good there would be no need to call it good, and it wouldn’t need to pressure her to think so. It would help or hurt her, that was all. Things were only good if they drilled to the end of time and could be accounted for on your final resting day.

4. Words are neurotoxins.

**MJAR
OPTI**

The train leaves behind the rustic giant women bones of the country and disembarks in Mjar Opti¹.

Mjar Opti is lustrous chrome office buildings, white plazas running along lakes and rivers, grimy gutted blocks: islands in a jungle of kudzu,² overgrown hills, swamps of trash-filled medians between rails.

Kudzu farms account for 70% of the food; most other plants are long dead from the suffocating shade.

Primary transit around the city is funiculars, cable cars, trains. The only autonomous vehicles are garbage trucks, piloted by those approved for an Independent Steering License. Independent steering has the same connotations as holding a gun. Garbage truck drivers function as a loose and informal militia.

Each citizen's identification consists of a tarot deck auto-generated from their psyche and history. To present your ID to an official, do a 3 card spread.

1. Muh-har op-tee.

2. The city is delineated by: Webs of cables sizzling with vine-frying electricity, geyser plumes of pesticide, spinning blades chopping back encroaching growth like deadly fences.

**PINK
RUBBER
ANIMAL**

She lives alone in her state-subsidized¹ apartment with a microwave, a mattress², the cloying stench of discarded probiotics bottles.

She has a service animal, a headless humanoid encased in pink rubber, with a rubber sphincter for a neckhole.



She shivers for a time hit, body shaking with future withdrawal. Without future bacteria, moving³ seems pointless, she cannot escape the cast iron mold of her body.

1. Due to lapse in 12 months when the veteran's compensation ends.

2. This is the cube that makes food safe to eat. This is the rectangle where I place my body when my brain shuts down.

3. Collapsed just behind her door when the withdrawal hit, the world's biggest future door stop.



Pink Rubber Animal's neckhole sucks her cock as she lies on the couch, eyes narrowed, staring at the wall. She's about to cum, thighs clenching around Pink Rubber Animal with a squeak of rubber.

She's almost got a nice image together of a taller woman kissing her on the forehead, drowning her in musky torrents of hair, arms wrapping around her once, then twice, then endlessly, a bandaging repetition.

The image shatters as a beam of DSTP-Orange blasts through the roof of her apartment, illuminating it like a muddy, humid cave full of fire. Dormant memories hatch all over her body.

She keeps jerking it, hoping she can cling to the delicate thread of her orgasm, but DSTP-Clear surges from her body in a jet of cold poison, mineral harshness sanding the inside of her cock, no, no, no, she tries to leave her body but it rampages through her as she remains fully aware, tricked by her horny glands into risking consciousness.

She listens to Pink Rubber Animal swallow her load with a rubbery wet squelching sound.



The floor is swamped with fast food detritus like dead leaves. Pink Rubber Animal scampers around the room sucking up cockroaches. Later she gurgles them into the bin, glistening black sludge hairy with legs and antennae, spilling down the pale plastic of the trash bag.



She swings Pink Rubber Animal's leash from side to side, waiting for the food bank to open. The smell of steamed kudzu billows from the vents.



She charges Pink Rubber Animal on a grimy stoma-port below the railed underpass. Kicked out of the apartment she's crashing at for a few hours, waiting for them to finish fucking.



She spits her toothpaste into Pink Rubber Animal. Her gums hurt. She still doesn't recognize herself in the toothpaste-streaked mirror. She picks at her skin and pulls at her hair, auto-eroding under the storm of herself.



A circle of women with cables running from their bellies into the chrome well of the public stomaport, languidly accessing FloraNet⁴. Vellus sways on the bench of Pink Rubber Animal's hyperlordosis, gurgling at a pathetic 2 Pps⁵.

She finds a support group for DSTP-positive people. She procrastinates for five months before going.

4. Keyword: *floranet*

5. Peristalsis-per-second.

**BLACK
FLUID**

I spit out this black fluid, disgorge it endlessly,
but it is never gone, my body produces it
from infection. This black fluid makes me
hateful to others. I must hide my condition
from others. I cannot share myself with others.

VELLUS

Vellus Satowary is hanging out with her girlfriend in their apartment. They get high and suck each other's cocks and cry.



Her girlfriend's name is Isidol Amberdice. She's an ex-magical girl. She has a scar¹ on her abdomen where her crystal was taken.

They met at the DSTP support group when Isidol was 30 and Vellus was 29. She doesn't know how she met anyone in her life. The dull fever of the human-sorting machine brain of the universe. People enlarge and shrink.

But one day the parameters of her friendship with Isidol had changed. Some kind of weird lesbian incest.



Vellus has three irises in each eye. You can't see them all when her eyes are narrowed, like if she's

1. Shards lodged in her belly like a shrapnel wound. They radiate coldly some nights. When someone is rude to her, she jokes that her crystal is glowing.

tense or tired or horny. Right now Isidol reflects in all six of Vellus' pupils.



They tell people they're sisters, and Vellus is especially pleased when people mistake them for siblings without prompting. If blood relations are seen as superior because they precede intent, creating that bond deliberately feels powerful, like the creation of a shadow lineage.



Buckets of DSTP-Clear fill their apartment, festering with mold. It seems impossible to begin to address the decay of their apartment.



“Gwabbo...” says Vellus.

“Bwabbo...” replies Isidol.

“Gwub gwub...” Vellus crawls away under the

blankets. Isidol goes to find her.



Lying on the mattress itchy and sore from a day of DSTP blistering, gurgling tangerines into each other's mouths. "Wanna just watch catgirl hypnosis vids and get high?"



She hallucinates a grid of crystalline spheres, each containing the exact amount of energy required to wake from sleep paralysis.



Vellus inhales girlchunks² from her vaporizer as Isidol buries her face in Vellus' skirt, sniffing and rubbing like a purring animal. "I love how the fabric drapes over you so cool and soft and the smell³ of your clothes flowing over your skin..."

2. Girlchunks look like iridescent sugarcubes. At certain angles they're transparent and refracting.

3. Girl smells trapped under hems and seams and elastic bands.

Vellus' cock lifts her skirt up. "That's so cute," Isidol says. She bats at the cock and makes it bounce up and down under the skirt.

Vellus puts her hands over her face and shuffles into the other room, skirt still erect.



Isidol wraps herself over me tight as a blanket, a toasty momcave. Even as I melt into the mattress, I know she isn't asleep, or even resting. I imagine her face as a machine gun nest on the hill of my shoulder.

What is she watching for? She must be guarding me against psychic evil, because my head is golden and warm and empty. Under her aura I fall asleep without fear.



"I will be sad when I die, because I am such a huge fucking womanlover, the world will lose all the girl love contained in my heart, an unprecedented treasure, gone, in the dumpster." She beats her chest and stares at the ceiling, stricken.



They go outside in the bubble of each other. The bubble is this: instead of fixating on the hundreds of unstable shadow perspectives, you focus on one person looking at you with love, all the way there and all the way back.



A game of piss-soaked fishnets in the dark alley behind the apartment complex, with the garbage cans and pesticide turrets.

It's us, the void bitches of worm county.



Vellus wakes up and an angel is standing in the room, holding her brain in its hands. The brain is full of holes. She cries.

The angel wavers back and forth in the dim haze, like something underwater.



She watches the CGI river flow through her apartment, out the window, into the sky. Motes of dust glimmer golden, like good souls. A drained bottle of Probiotic River Module drops from her fingers.



Vellus puts her hands over her face and smells her warm skin smell until she calms down.



“I’m a giant mom bird who keeps you warm in her nest and we live on top of a nice mountain and look down at the forest and I fly to the cities of the world and crash into stores and everyone screams and I steal toys and clothes and snacks for you and you curl up inside my warm girlwings and fall asleep listening to my heartbeat...”

CITY

The city by evening reveals itself as a dark, pressurized set of compartments. Surrounded by impenetrable life.



They're in the convenience store, Isidol is ordering a kudzu roll off the ready-made rack. Vellus is at the condiment station, grabbing fistfuls of disposable forks wrapped in clear plastic.

The clerk glances at her. Vellus looks up then jerks her head down. Keeps taking the plastic. Decades of being ignored by others have allowed her to walk through the world as if she cannot be seen. Unclean spirit. The clerk goes back to her magazine.

Vellus stops by the clinic for the piss¹ job² while Isidol is across the street filling her purse with packets of banana ketchup at a place nice enough to have packets out instead of behind the counter. This is how she gets her daily servings of fruit.

They sit on the park bench watching the cable cars glide overhead, sucking ketchup from packets, quivering happily at the salt infusion.

1. Isidol tickles her. "I bet you can't hold it...can't hold all that money..."

2. Keyword: *piss*



Vellus stands in the footprint of a GAIGA, staring at you.



Isidol is job-hunting, so Vellus takes Pink Rubber Animal to her social services appointment instead. A garbage truck bangs down the street behind her and the sound mutates through the filter of her DSTP-soaked head into the slam of a GAIGA's tread.

Her hand stiffens around the leash like the hand of a dead person, jerking Pink Rubber Animal back.

The garbage truck groans to a stop, venting orange exhaust. Metal plates slide apart and Pink Rubber Animals spill forth and slobber down the street eating trash. This model has lamprey fangs in their neckholes and drool blue cleaning enzymes that dissolve garbage.



Vellus is getting excited as they walk, swinging the bag of kudzu buns around, talking very loudly. “Be good,” Isidol says, worried that people will look at them.

Vellus holds her hand with a warm shiver. What a thing, to aspire to “be good.” Their artisanal virtue.



She sees another hormone cyborg³ on the street ahead of her, black strap hanging off the shoulder, bare legs under a pink tennis skirt. Recognizes her by how hot she burns for having never burnt at all, the reality-distorting body shattering images in its wake.

She feels anxious and sick. She knows this glimpse of plurality will disappear and she will be once again non-canonic and people will bend their vision to look around her.

3. Trashers, trash girls, hormone cyborgs: a class of human that extracts hormones from their environment because their body doesn't produce them, or produces the wrong ones. They will go to any lengths, even though the risk of DSTP infection is high. Trash girls are commonly funneled into the mecha pilot/magical girl institutions due to their low income levels. Given shelter, food, and a purpose.

We can't give each other succor, she thinks. We are too separated. Too encrypted. Trapped inside our pressurized compartments and the shapes we twist to survive. This is not the century of our becoming.

But what of those of us who have become? They become nothing, they become the void that sucks at us.⁴

4. Like those healthy ones who have everything, but hunger for those who have nothing. Peering from the curtains of a spacious mansion and seeing a homeless person take up the space of a scrap of concrete in a vacant lot and that body, sleek with balanced meals and proper exercise and phototherapy, burns with brain-asphyxiating rage, a nervous, vampiric health that cannot sustain itself without innocent life.

DISINTEGRATING EGGS

to think

that someone with a tremendous column of black
blue baleful knotted tissue rising through the center
of her torso like a stormy cumulonimbus

and poison eating through her eyeballs and out the
other side like disintegrating eggs

could be

ordering a plate of food at a restaurant

on the subway behind you

lying with her head on your chest

MAGICAL GIRLS

Magical girls are born with a crystal that makes people hate¹ them. This crystal grows² stronger with age.

Their social options are limited:

- Get initiated into separatist cults
- Become a nameless scavenger
- Join the academy³



The crystal gives them an allergic reaction to language. Each girl has a unique combination of trigger words. They sit on the floor in rows, mumbling under their breath, reading from dictionaries until they find their combination.

These allergic reactions manifest as euphoric eruptions of prismatic light, adrenaline flooding, rapid regeneration, a feeling of tweaked-out invincibility. As the battle-rush fades they get horrible headaches and teeth-grinding nausea, compelling them to constantly chase and construct new threats.

1. Intense desire and disgust, bouncing like an acid heartbeat.
 2. What a thing to look at your child and wonder if their ugly spats with other kids are mundane, or the precursor to an obliterating, pheromone-poisoning disease.
 3. Integrated into society as an extension of the military.
- Current clearance rate per squad: 1 monster per week.



When the linguistic trance begins, they gain access to a specific coordinate in a dimension made purely of clothing. They fight in these clothes.⁴ Attempts to explore this dimension have resulted in devastating losses.

4. The stalking crowds snap upskirts of the soaring girls, exchanging them like trading cards.⁵

5. She thinks, how strange that part of my body is escaping my clothes and becoming an image, and reproducing by fission, and will be carried in their purses and pockets, and sleep with them without me. Is it necrophilia?

**ISIDOL
IN
HELL**

A dam of flesh blocks the street, a wall of folds and stretch marks.¹ The magical girl infantry burrows² through with the energy they summon from their fingers, easy lazy energy.

Stray lasers slam into the corpse mountain, knocking showers of blood from the roof of the flesh-tunnel. Red drops roll over the parasols of the magical girls as they march.

“It smells bad in here. It smells fucking bad!”
Isidol sneezes and spits and curses.



Underground party for magical girls. The strobe light is a magical girl spamming transformations at hyper-speed, frothing out of her mind on a superdose of girlchunks cut with biomech piss crystals.

Isidol has a smaller dose of the same thing dripping down her throat, the euphoria dulls the vinegar sting. She's yelling through a face cooked in plastic teenage skin, harsh strobe shadows, iridescent sweat shining like eyeshadow:

“This is the best use of the time I have remaining

-
1. The biomech collapsed there ten minutes ago, blocking the attack on the shell world capital.
 2. Boiling fat pours into the storm drains.

on earth! These are the friends I will have for the rest of my life! Where we are is the most important place to be! We are at the center of everything! I love you so much! I fucking love you!”

Her friend grins and dances, vertices warping in the time-lapse of the strobe.

Isidol searches for water and gets lost and wanders past the room where fans get fucked by magical girls.³

A magical girl paces the room in her underwear grinding her teeth, pupils swollen black enough to absorb the light in front of her face like a dark mist streaming from her retinas.

“You’re Isidol, right?” a fan says. “Sorry, I would feel so stupid if I was mistaken.”

Yes, says Isidol.

“You’re so gorgeous! Can I please gush about how much I love your moves?”

The fan moves closer to her. She has lipstick stains all over her neck. She looks really young, thinks Isidol.

Isidol smiles really hard and says, I have to go to the toilet. She feels sad for some reason. She thinks,

3. A torn pastel gothic lolita dress in a puddle of grimy water. Toes clenching and unclenching. The smell of cigarettes and hyper-sweat.

maybe there's nothing here. On the other side. The big cloud of superhot plasma that normies fantasize about their whole life and benefit from even through all their jealousy and bitterness.

The fan is across the room letting Gelique grope her tits under the blacklight. Isidol doesn't know how much time has passed, or if she even went to the restroom yet, she's gone so many times tonight, traveling to that sterile filthy room in spasming time-leaps through the crowd, the background tension of knowing the euphoria is ticking down, which is scary because life has no meaning for them, and only this xeno-euphoria they pierce into themselves feels worth existing for...this alien visitation that comes and goes but is not naturally produced by the body.

Isidol stares into the bathroom mirror⁴ and notices her dress is pulled down below her belly button, converted into a bedraggled skirt. Sweat glows on her tits under the fluorescent light, inflected prismatic like soap bubbles. Is that real? Runoff magic from her crystal leaking into her bodily fluids? Or just the girlchunks boiling behind her retinas?

4. Staring through the graffiti like overgrown vines.



Isidol tries dying her hair to look bright and fun and pastel like her friends. She ends up frying it.



“Lunar Sparkle Beam!”

Isidol’s face is blown apart. Her rival laughs and twirls her baton. Her classmates smile nervously and whisper to each other.

Isidol drips blindly. Her pleated skirt flaps in the wind until, sagging with blood, it clings to her legs, and everything is still.

Her teeth leap back into her face, tongue regenerating like a worm leaping from a sea of gore.

“Polycarbonate Anterior Stratocumulus!”

ISIDOL

Vellus sits on the steps outside the support group, rain spattering the awning and flowing down the dark alley. It felt like her skeleton was going to snap out of her body sitting in there, listening and waiting while her problems remained unresolved. Groups and therapy; toy worlds disconnected from the real one, where no progress is saved and nothing counts toward the final score. She knows the world of blood and ash is out there, and when she fights again, she will be weaker than ever.

She's smoking a cigarette laced with girlchunk dust. She hears footsteps behind her. Her brain tosses the coin between "hummingbird hyper-vigilance" and "total apathy" and apathy wins.

The girlchunk smoke casts astigmatic caltrops through the alley light, splinters of brain damage rainbow.

She notes Isidol's unmoored eyes and slouched shoulders. She's scared the same way Vellus is. So Vellus kind of, sort of knows how she should act. And for the first time she can give someone else what she always needed.

She waves at Isidol and welcomes her to the concrete steps. The fragile bubble of night.

Isidol crouches, pulling her skirt around her knees against the cold. For some reason Vellus feels sick, her throat leaps with bile. But she always feels sick.

Isidol smiles like her lips have wind resistance.
“Can I have some?”



Vellus had stopped eating by the time she met Isidol. This was when her entire body was irradiated with DSTP-Blue, rusted shut, save for the occasional molten bubbling of DSTP-Orange, the sudden fugue of weeping.

Isidol fed her like a helpless plant, and in time they helped each other in the alternating blackouts¹ of their diseases.

Vellus looks back at her ruined life and wonders at the gaping magnitude of the wound that Isidol keeps in check. A girl and death stand on opposite trays of a scale and somehow, miraculously, it holds in perfect balance.



Isidol's scar is on her abdomen. In symbiosis with the scar, there is a body with wild red hair faded to

1. Like statues that come alive every other hour, scraping the moss from each other's cracks.

dirty blond², a long sleek neck, jutting nose, gangly arms, smile lines.



Isidol has a nightmare about the ANTI-GAIGA³ again. DSTP-Orange throbs on the other side of the ceiling like light through frosted glass, then oozes through like boiling honey.

She wants to beg Vellus for help, but it's still too early in their relationship for her to feel safe waking someone up. She watches Vellus' sleeping face for a long time, lips twitching, nothing coming out.



Isidol feeds a tiny girl sugar water from a pipette. She found three of them in the dumpster outside the clinic. They mutate rapidly⁴ and sleep in kudzu leaf blankets.

2. Everything is a little less bright after the crystal is gone.

3. Keyword: *antigaiga*

4. Extra arms. Bouyant sacs. Smooth black scales.



Tiny girls fuck on the windowsill as Isidol fills out food stamps paperwork.



Isidol has a client who lives in a mansion on the hill encircled by metal fences. The only entrance is by funicular running up an electrified rail, a deadly cold stream of iron.

“Ever think about ripping that bitch off? I bet she has so many bracelets...”

“She probably has some kind of surveillance device.” Isidol says.

“Shit...”



Vellus licks Isidol’s scar for a whole minute then looks up, drooling bile⁵ with a smile. Isidol watches

5. What are shards? Shards are nothing.

her face like a rare mirror, one that reflects a version of herself that is somehow bearable.



Isidol lies on the plastic-wrapped mansion bed as her client showers. A blob of black liquid oozes from her nostril.

The client's 40" curved monitor floods the space with tremulous light. It shows a concrete room coated in white powder. A naked woman is being hung, slowly. Her toes rotate on the floor, leaving trails in the powder. Her face is clouded purple.

The camera zooms in to show the freckles running down her arm, the pale shaved hair growing back around her cock, the prismatic bubbles frothing from her mouth. Someone must have filled her mouth with bubble solution.

The client comes back in, wet hair slicked back along her skull. Her pupils are huge. "That was nice, wasn't it?" Something, presumably, somewhere in history, has been nice.

VELLUS II

Vellus wakes up hallucinating that she's trapped inside a dilating aperture of time that keeps resetting to the same chroral coordinate, reliving the same few seconds of waking over and over. She sucks water from the crumpled bottle by the bed and crawls over and puts her head on the puffy mass of blankets that is Isidol.



Vellus is cautiously decorating the apartment for the first time in her life. Trusting it might not go away.



There is nothing like sharing a dark room with another. Waiting for something to happen, some vague divine event in our future, unknowable by present tactics, only the romantic feeling imparted by media that someday everyone is changed.



A funicular car rises above them. Through the window they see someone taking pictures. Even when they stare back, she continues taking pictures, as if they are animals.

“She will upload it somewhere,” says Isidol.

“The world will see how hot we are,” Vellus says, but her voice is weak and sick.



Isidol cups her hands over the toilet and looks up with the big brown orbs of her eyes. Vellus pisses into her hands.¹ A drop of piss hangs from Isidol’s lowest strand of hair. Her stomach gurgles. The walls of the apartment creak. The world is boiling.

1. They locate sex outside the body, in objects and fluids.



She creeps through the city of night. Dark as stumbling through a bedroom. A building is breathing. As she walks closer, it rises above her. She feels like she's walking in place.

They regard each other in the darkness. The eye on its wrist glistens with salt like the ice that breaks against the shores of the distant sea.



Vellus growls and nips at Isidol. "I'm an animal... I'm an animal..."

Isidol turns and puts her arms around Vellus. "Shhshhshh. Shhshhshh." Vellus melts into Isidol, tumbling down the staircase of her chest.



They're lying around the kudzu-overgrown squat in their underwear², rotten with sweat.

"I'm such a hot bitch, I love jerking my slutty fucking cock..." Vellus rubs herself lethargically, sludged out of her mind on girlchunks. Isidol touches herself in response.

"I'm a gay little icecube..."

"Fuck you...I'm Hyenagirl."

Isidol is actually getting off a little, shards glitching out. She flashes in pink silhouette, neo-skirt tightening until her white panty bulge peeks out. Her uniform is ragged, blood-stained. "You shitty little tomb," she says affectionately to herself.

Vellus keeps rubbing her hard underwear even though she can't feel anything. When you're fucked up on DSTP you crawl up any way you can, by mimicking the motions of the living.

"I want you to fuck my face until I get brain damage...I want you to fuck my ass so hard your cock melts in my stomach acid..."

2. Pastel blue polka dots on white for Vellus, pink and black stripes for Isidol.



She is walking through the academy in the dark. There is no dust or decay, but it seems that everyone has been gone for a long time. The thing that hurt her is not in this building, and it is not in the crowd, which has dissipated and reincorporated into new, unprosecutable formations. She wakes up, or falls asleep.



Vellus rubs her gums with girlchunks and drifts on the edge of sleep. She hallucinates that her body is distributed throughout bowls hovering in the shape of a human. Bowls carrying blood, flesh, bone; a gradient effigy.

The bowls spill over, and their contents fall through the floor.



Isidol spins her finger under the skin at the tip of Vellus' cock, grinning as it gets gooier. Vellus flops back, lower half still writhing in Isidol's lap, eyes rolling, going like "aaaaaaaaaaa", "guhhhh," and so on.



ANTI-GAIGA lurch into the city, cable cars dragging behind them. The sky is streaked with the exhaust of incoming GAIGA. At the moment of collision, these pathetic beasts disappear, leaving canyons of stomped kudzu.

A rash of DSTP-Blue frosts the nape of Vellus' neck. She curls into a ball.

ISIDOL: "I wonder if we're still the true world."

VELLUS: "..."

Purple flags unfurl across the city.³

ISIDOL: "Oh, there's the announcement."

3. Signaling canonicity.

VELLUS: “Every world runs the announcement. There are purple flags bleached white and run to rags.” Her voice sounds like a dead thing.

The DSTP-Blue rash burns. She scratches. Flakes fall to the carpet and disappear on contact, because the carpet is not her.

GAIGA

II

CHALICE BANDIT - The strongest beam attack bred in the history of the GAIGA program.

TAILYPO - Reaches with long arms to see the insides of houses, blinking with her palms, until something soft finds her fingers.

ARGOPELTER - Disavowed.

SUGARCANE - Can trigger spontaneous orgasm in pilots during great stress.

GUGU - Bred for ocular saline ordinances, GUGU fires weaponized salt shards big enough to slash arteries. Lachrymosal battle stations require specialized iris pilots.



GAIGA begin very small, the size of humans.



Blind old GAIGA haul bones across the swamp, cellulitic flanks covered in graffiti and sores.



Vellus rests in the palm of her GAIGA, sunning herself in a Morgellons/spandex-blend pink bikini. The kudzu jungle sprawls forever in the summer heat.

She rolls onto her belly, wiggling her toes and stretching her legs until her bones crackle with warm little pops.

She imagines someone, the faintest outline of a someone, manifesting behind her like a jellyfish and sinking into her, pressing the fabric of her bikini against her asshole. Their outline would not harden into delineated, insistent, tearing parts but infiltrate her body like slime, expanding to fill her orifices but no further.

Her cock stretches the bikini bottom until her balls are visible from the side. She rubs against SUGARCANE's palm, crushing her cock into the groove of the life line.

Out here in the sky there are no humans, no demon brains. Her giantess will protect her from all harm.

MAGICAL GIRLS II

Rival magical girl houses duel in the streets, their attacks reflecting in the storefront windows like turbulent comets.

Isidol hyperventilates behind a phone booth, trying to make her body as small as possible. The booth shatters, showering the pleats of her skirt and the lashes of her eyes with glass. Something beautiful and radiant lunges through the frame, knocking her to the sidewalk.

Gelique digs her adamantium-iridium alloy stiletto heel between Isidol's legs. Isidol screams, and the scream splits into three words. Her shredded uniform transforms and a diamond-weave skirt closes around Gelique's ankle, tight enough to cut circulation.

Gelique howls and whips a neon lash across Isidol's face, splitting her lip to the uvula. "You fucking trash bitch-"

A hummingbird-winged baton hurtles from space into Isidol's hand, crunching through Gelique's skull. Isidol twists the bloody gold handle, widening the hole until brain matter drips out. Gelique tries to remember the words of her moves, any move, but whatever words come out aren't the right ones.



When the rush is gone, even small amounts of light make her feel brittle. She closes all the windows, sleeps¹ with a cloth over her face. Each battle makes the + and - more intense...



Flaming girls rain past Isidol. Her classmates are burning up in the atmosphere. She drifts, ignoring the voice on her stoma-com...

A nebula of caustic fluid expands from the ruin of the space station, swallowing up its chrome bones, silent roaring, the unflinching gaze of leviathan...

She needs a little time to deal with the stress.

1. Magical girl sleep is divided into micro-naps, sometimes hundreds per day. Extended sleep is only possible with heavy sedation.

ISIDOL II

They took it while she was asleep. It was almost worse that way. Not being able to offer even a token resistance. As if finally falling asleep after three days of exhaustion was asking for it.

Better. Worse. Those pain games¹ they get you playing.



She remembers dancing until she was insanely sweaty in a club, then going into the alley out back and lighting a cigarette with a murmur. The pencil-thin laser from her finger shot past the cigarette and pierced the clouds, visible across the entire city.

She felt powerful. She danced all night. She was very thin those days. The crystal gave her an unhealthy animation that caused her to neglect food, water, sleep, stillness. Those were her vibrating days.

1. Comparing your inferior pain to some platonic pain ideal that doesn't actually exist, that they will never permit.

Calculating like a fucked algorithm, figuring out what your pain is worth, what's "worth" reacting to or not, until finally nothing is worth reacting to. Calculating infinity.



When the crystal was removed, it was like noticing gravity for the first time. Her bony body dragged her to the floor.

To be made of enamel and lacquer and petals and silk and precious gems, to know you're the best version of yourself you'll ever be, and then to be cast down, with a taste in your mouth that never leaves, the most intoxicating sweet taste...

She thinks about how beautiful the people who hate her are. She cries. They're so slender and perfect. Their eyes are so huge.

She nursed herself back to health over the course of weeks, in an unprecedented effort of survival for her, some angel of her being that departed and never returned.

The results came back: DSTP. Must have snuck in through the infected tissue when she lost her crystal through carelessness.



The shards have a fractured resonance, the

occasional hum when they're in harmony and she can feel the heat shadow of the old fever and she is restless for days, staring at her girlfriend like she's a stranger, making plans every minute that undo the prior plans, picking herself apart until she collapses, hungry dreams pacing around an emaciated vessel.

She won't go to the doctor to remove the crystal shrapnel in her abdomen because she worries they'll see her scar and somehow guess it's a crystal scar, maybe sense the extant shards deep in their hate brain. Who would want to be around a person of authority when, mystically, they are moved to commit some grievous violation, or make some note in some document that limits her future. And to let someone open her belly with a scalpel and be gut-close to these crystals that drive people to scream at her from across the park...

The sparkle of shards is always on her mind, it is the hidden variable, and she can never know the full extent of the harm, to what degree the shards have influenced any particular situation.



Isidol is making designer probiotics in the gurgling cauldron of Pink Rubber Animal's neckhole. "Try this," she says, drinking a cup of foamy pink fluid. Vellus nuzzles her girlfriend's lips, opens her

mouth wide. Isidol spits the cool sweet liquid down Vellus' throat.

“It tastes like...berries...the shitty kind hahahahaha.”

Her DSTP assumes a bismuth shape. She starts doing jumping jacks. “Look I’m a jumping jill. I get so fucking pumped sometimes you know?”

The DSTP stretches like molten bismuth dough. Oily luster shines on its surface like a prismatic projection on grey metal. “I think there are two independent projections,” she says, voice quavering with the impact of her feet on the carpet.

“Projections of what?”

“The problem.”

“Where are they coming from?”

“I’m trying to see.”

The probiotic vision fades. Her body is just meat and shit now, blood and tired veins.

AEON

This brochure was generated by a kudzu-substrate AEON¹ tasked with creating promotional brochures for Mjar Opti.

She gathered the information from the atmospheric emissions and slaved insects of the kudzu, and the kudzu that people ate, digested, and excreted. In the intestines she performed deep serotonin scans. The shit of her gathered in the sewers and discussed what she had learned.

This AEON deviated significantly from parameters and was incinerated⁴ in a 10-block fire. How was this document recovered? Who is speaking? You must accept that there are things you cannot know.

1. Artificial Eidolon Organic Network². Like nymphs, AEONs have their substrate in a specific element, for example:

Kudzu-AEON / KAEON / Surveillance toward a better tourism industry

Firefly-AEON / FAEON / Night surveillance

Palm-AEON / PAEON / Waterside surveillance

2. AEONS are coordinated under the PLEROMA³ program.

3. Pan-Lucid Electronic Regional Organism-Meshed Aeons.

4. Keyword: *incineration*

**BLEED
PERFECTLY**

The mysterious pop star known as Bleed Perfectly, a woman of impossible glamor, clawlike acrylic nails in holographic evening colors, fingers glittering with giant gems, oh, and she wears a mask¹, a video screen sculpted to her skull that plays random footage - or is it?

Not to mention – but I *will* mention – she carries a sword everywhere she goes. She’s accompanied by a coterie of perma-delinquents. She generates songs with her hand-crafted AEON “Pink Fibers”. Some say the AEON is her pet, others her girlfriend.

She sells vials of her sweat, blood, and piss². She has something called Ichor for her fall lineup, but no one knows what the secret ingredients are...

Her hit song, *A World Where We Can Be Happy*, is glossy and innocent, but no one can typecast her. She pitchshifts her voice all over the spectrum, high pitched and childish, deep and mournful, metallic uncanny, tarlike low, no one knows what her unfiltered voice sounds like...

She releases a single transmission: “However I choose to speak, that is my voice.”

1. They say her face has been obliterated, or it is too beautiful to behold, or both.

2. Diamond, Ruby, and Topaz.



SOME RANDOM FUCKER: “You really have to listen to the probiotic version. The audiobioavailability is fucking insane.”

But she isn't content with mere probiotics, this wild woman seeks to dominate all of nature with her soundwaves...

“My new song is coming out in applesauce form, everything will be clear from the flavor, god bless”

What...huh...has she cracked? Is she fucking bonkers? The world awaits her next move...

VELLUS III

Her girlfriend gains a certain measure of trust by not raping her for a year, and then another year. Vellus is impressed and grateful.



She lies on the mattress not being raped by her girlfriend. She realizes the absence of violence is almost scarier than its presence¹. Waiting for something to break².

Isidol's hand glides across her body, tangling with the rope that intersects her torso. "What would you like to do?"

Vellus smokes another hit of girlchunks and says, maybe just hold me tonight.



Vellus waters her hair.

1. Violation is a tiny point of light surrounded by an invisible field of sucking death.

2. She spent so many years not saying no because she was afraid of what would happen if she actually asserted that fundamental boundary. Disappointment seems worse than anything. The dread of being forced to isolate herself if they keep going.



Something terrible is happening in the supermarket. Someone is speaking to her, and she is ignoring them. The person's voice becomes louder, uglier, and everyone can hear. They aren't looking at that person, they are looking at her.

Her burns³ climb to the surface of her skin. The black stain spills down to her clavicle and folds over the rung of her bone. She remembers Isidol kissing it until the dead skin glistens.



Isidol smears a line of girlchunks on Vellus' coccyx and snorts the glittering trail. She tongues Vellus' squirming asshole with sparkling drool. "My ass feels like a bowl of sugar..."

"It is."

In the girlchunk rush they make out wildly, hair

3. FleshGloss is an experimental synthetic dermis applied to badly burnt skin when too much damage has been done for skin grafting. It doesn't replace the dermis, it bonds with it, and creates a surface appearance of healthy skin. Stress may cause the damaged cells to reassert their color.

sticking to their faces with sweat and saliva. The air-conditioned vacuum of the room feels totally contained, a cube floating through the void with a painted-on door.

“Fuck my mutilated brain-damaged corpse...lick all the places I’ve been hurt...”

“So all of you?”

“Honk honk.”



Vellus is curled up on the living room floor like an egg, staring into the probiotic haze of her river module.

Isidol comes home. She sits on the chair and watches Vellus for some time without taking her shoes off.

Vellus shivers. Isidol pulls a blanket over Vellus and lies beside her. Vellus’ fingers curl reflexively to wrap around her thumb.



...then moving through the left country great tufts of forest ("first") became visible, she and she inclining to hills that I found impossible. We started at the example of a cat, rushing past, almost hitting the car, which was not a car but the desire of a car, to crush and trample, through the left of the ridges worming through the landscape, where the damaged birds lurked, jealous of our beloved community...

She stares at the book, stupefied. Is this real? Do people write this goddamn shit? This insane shit? Surely there are people out there who typed this book, but she cannot imagine their existence. Then she remembers the growing popularity of AEON-generated art. It could be randomly generated⁴. Finally this great and tortured myth of conscious design can end.

4. Many members of the new generation look down on human-designed art, arguing that it lacks the unpredictability of generated art, whereas humans are limited by cultural pressure.



In the restaurant, a half-eaten kudzu jelly between them, listening to the voices coming from the other tables. People still discuss things as though they were real, as if they had ever been real. The sin of their certitude like temporal acoustics, catching even the slightest whispers of other certitudes from years ago, playing them with searing fidelity.

She sees herself pick up the jelly-smearred knife from the table and carry it through the city and methodically cut down everyone she comes across, until she is felled by whatever system is in place to stop women with knives.

Presumably she would learn so much about the world.

Isidol puts her hand on Vellus' hand, a small, private gesture in this surveilled space. Blood under the skin. Warm and alive. Against the statue she recognizes corroding her girlfriend.

Vellus starts breathing again. She doesn't remember⁵ what she was thinking about.

5. There is no such thing as thoughts. Thoughts are what we call elements, which operate with no more concern for us than fire or water.

EXILES

EXILES¹ are the human pilots of GAIGA, the last line of defense in the battle for the future of humanity.



EXILES are equipped with:

- 1 palm pistol², recharged by the sun
- 1 dagger or garrote, their choice
- 1 bar of dehydrated kudzu paste
- 1 pack of 3x potency Ambidexia Pink



When lost in battle, head for the nearest retrieval pod. However, your life from this point on may be a psychic delusion created by capture and reprogramming, and even if you are rescued, there is still the possibility you are living in an information-gathering simulation run on your brain by the enemy. Remain aware of this for the rest of your life.

1. Endoscopic Xeno-Integrated Liaison Empathy Surrogate
2. Looks like a tubed compass with a brass knuckle grip.



Lanbolin³ climbs the slope⁴ of a disemboweled skyscraper as Jumran chases her with a dagger, their GAIGAs burning in the distance.

Lanbolin reaches the dark mouth of the 30th floor. She picks up a concrete chunk and flings it down the slope and hears the sharp scraping bounce of hitting another chunk and sees the spark of sun off Jumran's dagger as she flinches, still running. Lanbolin fits her bony fingers around another rock and flings it into the rapids of gravity.

It detonates the teeth in Jumran's face, casting crimson seafoam across the sunny blue vista. She tumbles down the slope and snaps her neck, dagger skittering across the street.

Lanbolin crawls into the cool cave of the skyscraper and throws up. It's all for nothing, she weeps. Leviathans lumber across the skyline, dislodging fragments of concrete like wind through leaves.

3. An ANTI-GAIGA pilot, skin leeches of color, hair hanging in wisps from her skull, colorless blood soaking her tattered uniform like water.

4. A frozen avalanche of rocks and glass yawning into the sky.



Once inside the retrieval pod, you will be extracted. If the extraction goes well, you will leave the shell world and return to the true world. A full decontamination procedure will begin. Please remain calm in the planelock, as sudden emotional spikes can throw off the reconstruction scanners, causing imperceptible malfunctions.

In the event of a disrupted extraction, remain in the retrieval pod. This is the safest place. Check the walls for supplies⁵. Make sure no other organisms share the space with you, as the life support system can only support one bioform at a time.⁶

Retrieval pods can potentially support a human for up to 369 days, if fully stocked. If the inhabitants of the shell world seek to entice you from safety, ignore them. They may send you to negotiate. Do not respond to yourself.

5. Retrieval pods may be equipped with:

- Rations.
- AEON-powered entertainment visor, for unlimited procedurally generated recreation.
- Mementos of a better world, artfully selected.

6. A pilot is found desiccated, moss growing in the vents.

**MAGICAL
GIRLS III**

Older¹ magical girls had accrued a dangerous knowledge. By a certain age they either demonstrated total absorption into the aims of the academy, and could serve as teachers or recruiters - or they are old enough to have seen the cycle, and watch the younger magical girls buy into everything they've been through, never told the cost of burning your crystal hot for years and years and years...

Any number of medical reasons can be supplied for why a magical girl would need an operation to prevent the crystal from shifting into some deadly state. We've detected...toxins, imbalances, resonances...



In the brainbleeding frenzy of Isidol's girlchunk trip, she watches Celite Constar, director of the Rhododendron Wing, show a visiting dignitary around the academy:

You have here a room where a girl was de-crystalized not 15 minutes ago, her tears still floating in the hallway (she slurps up a tear² in passing with her long, horselike tongue, pupils swelling at the taste), and you can see the scalpel and whatever this

1. People hate old women because they collectively contain the knowledge of why the world is broken.

2. Pink Magical Girl Salt, get it fresh.

is in the sink³, but the bed is ready to snuggle up around a new guest, fresh white sheets, imagine the procession of girls who will occupy this bed, parading in phantasmal after-image...when you remove a crystal from a girl's body you can't get the whole thing, it's torn from pink roots that clutch fragments, you have to get em young, younger the better, before the roots get thick, that's how you get the biggest haul, don't go for a girl with an interior you'd surmise looks like a bed of sea anemones suckling ice, you want a nice fresh crystal smells like citrus and arctic water that you can practically lift from her steaming cavity...by god, we use every part of the girl.



Celite Constar is fired for inappropriate comments surrounding the sacred trust of these poor girls. In a level 5 termination-ceremony she is stripped naked before hundreds of prestigious academy patrons and faculty, a firing line of cigarette holders hissing snakelike plumes, the smoke soaks her skin ashen, she makes a full apology⁴ as her body is

3. She picks it up between her thumb and index finger, something like if a scalpel and a flower fucked.

4. "I do not wish to blame substances for my grievous error in judgment, but I hope you will join me in forgiveness and support as I enter rehabilitation for my weakness...I hope to become a role model to those who naively ingest these barbaric imports of granulated death, to tell every girl everywhere she doesn't have to be alone, and a better path is on the horizon."

bombarded with mysterious rays...



Ex-magical girls mouth the dead old words in the kudzu undergrowth, you see them picking through the trash under the web of rails, crouching in the foliage alongside funiculars climbing rainswept hills, DSTP-positive shades skulking in the lacunae⁵ of the city...



Rumors of a squat for ex-magical girls out in the abandoned mall in the GAIGA blood swamps⁶, a roost above the hissing acid where they try to learn new words, theorizing that the fragmenting of the crystal wasn't a loss of linguistic power but a

5. They live in the areas you can only see from the air, or under the freeway or rail bridges, sealed off where it's too much trouble to fuck with them, fighting the bizarre birds for trash, collecting rainwater and fermenting kudzu in plastic barrels.

6. The monstrous carnage of an ANTI-GAIGA struck down before the world could be split. An arm was airlifted successfully, but the torso decomposed faster⁷ than the recovery flotilla could arrive, spilling its rotten innards across the neighborhood, a cornucopia of giantess putrescence.

7. Traveling between worlds can be a catastrophobic shift in chrono-pressure.

rearrangement, and that beyond the grid of known language are strange new moves.

My kudzu can't grow past the blood. I dipped a toe of a leaf in and it burnt away, so it cannot be known.



Isidol stares at the sky, DSTP-Orange reflecting from her shards as if her body wasn't there. She thinks of the magical girls frozen in orbit, the terrible, cold battles for the satellite network. "I should be up there," she says. "I was meant to die up there."

She can't hear or feel Vellus over the bright orange light suffusing her skin. She feels like living from that point on was to move forward with some viscous growth attached to her spine like a bungee cord. The further she goes, the more agonizing the stretching becomes. Some days she wants to stop fighting. Let the cord snap her back. Return and take her place amid the frozen bodies. Even when she isn't thinking about it, the tension is there, aching in her muscles.

ISIDOL III

ISIDOL: “Do you know what this is?”

VELLUS: “A...breath mint?”

ISIDOL: “It’s a treat.”

She throws it in the air and Vellus falls over trying to catch it with her mouth.



Isidol has to go outside by herself. She apologizes to the kudzu and slashes her way out of the embarrassingly overgrown entrance to the apartment, a blatant violation of community standards. She’s sweating on the streets, gauging the distance between herself and others, these blurs in her periphery, the micro-glance before avoiding eye contact.

The crystals tingle inside her, vibrating shards of glass teetering on a ledge.



Isn't it good that your crystal is gone, inquired an acquaintance once. How can Isidol explain the incandescent thrill? To know thousands of people are watching the light show of your body, to feel deathly beams spray to sunlight on your shoulder, to bump your knee and watch the bruise disappear the next second like a thumbprint on glass.



She watches the meteor shower of magical girls returning from space and tries to remember what it was like to be a whole human. But there was only the abstract notion that it had been the greatest thing ever.

Sometimes what she does with Vellus feels like an intellectual pleasure, a joy she marks in ritual pegs and jots. To tell oneself, I have satisfied the conditions of my enjoyment.



A director of a women's health clinic is campaigning for re-election and slips in a veiled reference to hormone cyborgs: "...those who do not produce. I am proud of the self-production of my body. The great essence of our feminine pride is to generate from within, not to steal from without."

The director rides her funicular up to the hilltop mansion where she fucks muscularly with her lover on top of a plastic case full of neatly spaced holes, and locked inside the case? You guessed it, a naked woman with a cock, lying there as the sweat of perfect platonic women drips down on her and she absorbs the stinging salt of their fucking and at midnight she gets paid and she rides the service funicular down with the garbage bag and used furniture and she walks home, heels ringing out the secret seconds of night.

CHURCH

“Okay.”

I drink the probiotic slime. I feel hazy but in a light-filled way. Summer rain.

I’m tired. I’m always so tired.

Vellus gently tugs my clothes off. “Let’s get you changed into something more comfy.” The dust and sand and ash of those clothes. Itchy with DSTP. Harsh fabric from the waitressing job, which I’ll get fired from in two weeks because the bones of my face are too big. She throws the uniform in the hamper and turns on the fan. Cool air washes over my skin and I roll around the mattress purring.

She gets out her laptop and sets an album to loop. I stare at the nape of her neck, framed by the black dress. Through the probiotic haze, adjusting the volume and finding the perfect song feels like the idyllic labor of a distant goddess.

The pressure from the DSTP-Lavender lifts me from the bed. I bonk into the ceiling. She pulls me down by the ankle.

3D diamonds rotate at 30 FPS, equidistant across the apartment meadow floor. “Ready?”

She puts bows in my hair. She paints my nails. Fresh flowers grow through the carpet. Sun-warmed dew traces down my face.

“You’re safe here sweetie.”

I drip through her fingers. Warm and gooey.

“You are precious.”

I drool.

“You are cared for.”

I’m vaporized. I’m condensing on her lips.

“You are loved.”

The room is dark. We glow from the inside out. We are watched by all deep things, such as those for whom the sea forms the sky.

“I feel like this song is procedurally generated by an ancient artificial intelligence deep below the ice.”

“That must be true.”

We hug until my body goes limp in her arms and a mouse flits from my mouth, scurrying through the ten thousand acres of her green hair, each strand like the bough of a world tree, faster and faster until the mouse reverts to air and sucks back into my lungs.

Her hair smells safe.

“Precious angel,” she murmurs in that voice that

sounds sad even when she's happy. She rocks me back and forth, head over her shoulder, clutching at the back of her dress. Rain sparkles on the window. It's raining in the sunshine.

The kill-score updates in the distance, monolithic red LED on the side of a skyscraper. My belly tingles and my heart beats faster. I think I'm gonna throw up.

She feels my body stiffen. "Are you okay?"

My heart beats a message. I hope she can hear me.

Crystal shrapnel aches in my arm. When I shut my eyes it's like blue embers in pitch black night. It's the only thing I see. It will never go away as long as I live.

"Velly?"

I'm dead on the surface of the moon. There is no difference between my body and the ones I left behind. Seifuku frozen with blood. Traveling with the space debris. Keeping perfect time. Living in my clock. Living in my heartbeat.

My tears fly up and stain the ceiling. We're going to lose our deposit if I keep crying into my ceiling over dead girls.

"It's really awful how many magical girls are dying

in battles every day.”

She draws the blinds. “It’s okay not to think about that for a little bit.”

Retinas extruded through outer space.

“It’s okay to have a filter.”

I come back and smile a little.

“How are you doing?”

I say the same thing I always say.

VELLUS

IV

She wakes up staring at a black box full of glowing numbers. Her spinal scar burns like a cigarette stab. The alarm clock's red LCD briefly resembled the apocalyptic readout of a biomech cockpit...



The luminous ores and parasites in their brains get in an argument with each other. Someone forgets to put away the kudzu milk after they come back from the store and it goes bad and that's \$5 right there. But remember the time *you* wasted \$80 on that micro-projector that broke after one use...

Vellus has a flash of wondering if this is the moment when things irreversibly snap between her and Isidol. If they're going to break up and become alien to each other. Like some signal that miraculously popped into clarity then was lost in a storm of static.



Their skin-encased organs walk toward the food bank, pointing the cones and stalks of their ears, mouth, eyes at each other, the breathing truce of bodies.

Love is a language, she thinks, and when one of us dies, we will be the last speaker of a dead language. The ability for one other person to understand you in this world. To be known. All that time explodes into the atmosphere and gets sucked into space.



I wish seven angels were kneeling around my prone body saying we will take care of you forever.

SHELL WORLDS

Most GAIGA battles take place in disposable buffer worlds severed from this timeline by the PSYCHO PILLAR.



The world splits without a sign. Until the sky turns red, there is tremendous anxiety as humans await the status of their canonicity.



Shell worlds smolder from red to dark. Time feels slow and stretched. Hallways are longer. And in that night the disappearances cannot be counted or known.



Everything feels like a permanent teen midnight in the suburbs, aimlessly wandering from house party to house party, drinking kudzu moonshine. Morning never comes, but people fall asleep and wake up.



There is only one season now: the season of night.



They evacuate people through the night cities, trying to outstrip perceived horizons of disintegration. These relocation attempts break down as matter ceases to perform. Fuel is water and water is air. Walls are soft. Push a truck until the wheels slough off. Sit on the couch and watch people with a little more energy take your food.



GAIGA are sent on suicide missions to the core world, launched through jury-rigged portals which swallow them into unknown voids or obliterate them on impact or they survive ripped open with cracked skin and extruded guts, pilot seizing with feedback...



The border is everywhere and nowhere. Gigantic blazing magenta gates, briefly visible.

Refugees from the shell worlds are denied, except in the case that their core world counterpart is important, and has died, and there would be benefit from replacing them.



A GAIGA is stripped of flesh for a month-long barbecue, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of people, a swarming carrion feast visible from space. The streets are cloudy with burning fat, pass out on the ground and dream of roasting flesh, never stop drooling.

Humans play in her ribcage, run down her tunnels, fuck in her veins, break down sobbing.

High-pressure water hoses scour the gristle from the skeleton, leave a delicate hue on the naked bones, blues and reds and greens, brittle, fibrous, pocked, crawl through the webbing of holes¹.

1. GAIGA suffer from a heightened chance of osteoporosis.



Rumors of a retrieval pod unearthed and dragged to the center of town and roasted like a brazen bull.



Magical girls throw hunting parties in the shell worlds, incinerating people in the streets. They can tell each other apart from the shell humans because they are brighter, their hair is full, their blood has all its red, their laugh carries like a javelin.



The Festival of the Moons is when the core world permits the moons of the shell worlds to appear in the sky in a circle for a few minutes as fireworks go off. What a beautiful mystery.



Bleached kudzu jungle like the city is drowning in mounds of bones.



As long as the screens still catch signal, they play a single program, a snuff² reality show where the participants answer trivia and play games and the penalty is - imagine the scene: a row of women on stage with massive fucked-up smiles, ropes around their necks, waiting for a spinning wheel to grind to a halt. The wheel is full of icons, they all picked an icon by which to live or die.

The icon is a moth. One of the women falls through the stage, the audience watches her legs kick, constrained by the tightness of the pencil skirt, there will be lines on her knees when the kicking stops.

2. Snuff films are circulated in the core world, procured³ by the bored officials who watch the borders.

3. There is a process⁴ by which things from the shell world may enter the dominant world, and it lends itself more to things than people. Unless people become things, in the last desperate hope of air and sunlight. The desperation of a plant.

4. Without physical borders, the process is one of remote admission: a whisper, standing in a certain place, and suddenly the world has a temperature, your body can repair itself again.



A grinning hostess⁵ in a plastic green evening dress fires a bolt gun, leaving a neat hole in the contestant's head, she collapses just short of winning the grand prize, a month's supply of brain-melting druqs⁶ brewed from the prostate of a GAIGA, the camera zooms in on the hole, swelling in the whorled blond hair of her head, and the camera plummets into the darkness, skating along the memories of her life up until this moment...



A woman locked in a guillotine is getting assfucked by her girlfriend, laughing, drooling, gnashing her teeth, total serotonin dump from a crazy hit of girlchunks, and when their pleasure is at its height, the guillotine slams shut, slapping her head⁷ across the room.

Her death spasm clenches her ass around her girlfriend's cock and her girlfriend orgasms, blood

5. Teeth fitted with serrated blades so she can never stop smiling.

6. You will feel powerful like a giant woman!

7. Someone catches it and the crowd screams. Lucky! The head is disassembled by the catcher's crew, protein for nutrients, replacement teeth and hair...

spurting from the woman's jerking neckhole like an eruption of crimson cum.



Vellus and Isidol loot a mansion, kicking through walls like sand. The owner is looking for them with a flashlight, listening for the vibration of their hearts transmitted through the hollow surfaces, hunting for ghosts. They run, bending the taffy bars of the fence.

They scored a jacket and some dehydrated fruit. They curl up together in a funicular stranded on a rusty rail, cozy metal box with ashen windows, seat cushions for pillows.



Vellus watches Isidol sleep, face enthroned in pale tendrils.⁸ You can see her eyes through her closed lids.

A tear catches on Vellus' upper eyelash, rocking for the sky.

8. Isidol's hair is so light and thin it floats around her head.



Storms of dust gather from the crumbling world.
Rag-swathed wraiths wander the waste, metabolism
suspended, muscles stripped to nothing, too weak to
kill each other.



Vellus' reconstructed face is unknitting itself. How
annoying, she thinks.



The sun shines like a sick moon.

Holding hands, feeling her thin and brittle wrist.
Rubbing her palm nervously, like you always did,
leaves flakes now, ashen thumbprints.

Vellus and Isidol are becoming part of the dust
storm.



I am bitter and resentful, I am not ready to give up this life. I hope another me, as stubborn but a little brighter, is out there, and will carry on.

FUN QUIZ

We must all keep our morale up during this latest round of PSYCHO INVASION. There will be obstacles along the way but we must never forget to end it with a smile and a graceful goodbye!



Certain months are said to attract certain mutations. Use this table to locate your future:

1. Tears fall sideways.
2. The faintest iridescence to your hair.
3. Report to your local clinic.
4. Cat tail and cat ears.
5. Secret anemone.
6. Compulsion to drink fresh sweat.
7. Dragonfly wings.
8. Perfect doll hands.
9. A sense of exactly how many birds are overhead.
10. Your hair fills with chlorophyll.
11. Lays eggs.
12. A single bone in your body is a diamond of the clearest water.



Which character are you?

1. Gigantic Womanoid Biomech
2. Ex-magical Girl
3. Traumatized Biomecha Pilot
4. Headless Pink Rubberized Humanoid Service Animal
5. Artificial Intelligence Made of Kudzu
6. Mysterious Masked Pop Star Carrying Sword
7. Parallel Reality Version of Yourself Disintegrating From Hyper-Accelerated Entropy
8. A Gaggle of Tiny Girls
9. Catgirl Mutant
10. Woman Experiencing Orgasm As Guillotine Chops Her Head Off
11. Rotting Corpse of Giant Woman
12. Infinitely Vast Pillar of Crystallized Trauma

VELLUS V

Vellus is on the academy platform surrounded by all her classmates and teachers. They are smiling and waving. She smiles back, visor tucked under her arm. Her uniform is pristine and rubber tight¹, her skin is unblemished, her hair is full, there are no bags under her eyes.

From this platform only the sky is visible.



Vellus stares at the mirror, picking strands of wet hair from her cheeks. Her face is raw from shaving, slimy with moisturizer. “We’ve been in a relationship for so long and I still want to build a gloryhole in our apartment. It’s just so hard to reveal myself sometimes.”

“We could build a gloryhole.”

“Yeah?”

“Or encase you in some kind of viscous tar or rubber. That’s kind of like a gloryhole. Invert the light-dark ratios. Install the hole in your mouth, make your skin the wall.”

“Ummmmmmmm good idea.”

1. The logo of her sponsor house stretched across her breasts.



On a summer midnight, Vellus and Isidol climb the fence of a condominium's community pool and squirm² in the tropical foliage in the dark beyond the fluorescent lights.

The spongy jumble in her black leggings is so nice, squishing and pulsating and hardening under my hand, a snake hissing from a nest of eggs.

She gets still and silent, like she's concentrating. Hot fluid soaks my hand, an orgasm of water, piss doesn't burn out like fire³, it keeps flowing, she is the sea⁴.

2. Night worms with draping hair, softly breathing and sweating and nuzzling.

3. Calm and warm and steady, not jagged and mountainous and terminating.

4. Her horn of Utgard-Loki.



“Under my administration no one shall ever have to feel anything again...” Drooling on the floor together under a mindwiping assault of girlchunks, entranced by the strobe light they screwed into the ceiling socket.

“Baby crone lifestyle.”



At the probiotics clinic, waiting on her estrogoo refill. The clerk asks for ID. Vellus pulls three cards from her deck and flips them on the counter, avoiding eye contact.

The Empress of Hormones (E, exogenous)

The Jester of Names (Vellus Satowary)

The II of Garottes (Compulsively masturbated in the academy toilets for months to the snake-choir of hissing streams before being revealed by a harsh and vengeful classmate)



Vellus is on the floor, irises scrolling, and Isidol is grinding on her, they're kissing, Vellus feels unusually excited, how strange to be excited, and her orgasm bursts like a flare across the landscape of her face, snapping her scars to the surface of her skin, gnarled raw wasteland, and Isidol swoops down and kisses her, holding the kiss like they're swapping air, perfect seal, and Vellus relaxes, and the scars migrate across her skin like dark clouds.



They walk around the lake in the rain, in the dark dripping wet where no one wants to walk. She imagines that the beads of light on the other side of the lake, those cable cars and trains and houses, are inhabited by machines, that they live in a city of machines, and they can take back the space that has been pushed inside their own skin.

RESISTANCE

Vellus spent some time in the protests against the academy and the institute, and in the organizations for change that transmitted supplication protocols¹ to the receivers in the metal towers.

It seemed like a natural impulse, although in retrospect trying to change a system through the means it permits to be visible ended exactly how you might expect...

Ex-magical girls and biomech pilots and trash women are incentivized to inform on each other for small or non-existent rewards. The hope of being returned to society.

Those allowed to lead movements are those who are most demoralizing to the vulnerable, destroying through silent rapes and insanities.

“Isn’t it amazing that we can be free with our bodies like this,” one of them says as she sends nudes to Vellus, who wonders if this is normal. Later the person asks why she hasn’t replied yet, if she’s ashamed of bodies.

A month later, seemingly at random, she makes a

1. There were incessant arguments that the transmissions somehow had an effect on the random cruelties and rewards² that emanated from the places of power. Were longer, impassioned supplications better, or humble, minimalist statements of need preferred? A culture of obsessive divining.
2. “We really do love all of you and want to help you. There have been problems in the past, but the problems are ending, always ending.”

post about Vellus shaming her during sex. A fellow protester Vellus has never met confirms this. She gets kicked out of the commune where she was crashing.



After her experiences, she knows that to engage with naked power is to either be destroyed by it or to become it. Only then would you learn the awful truth: absorption or obliteration². You cannot face the exterminating light without being changed.

Protest vaguely, speak of it in simple terms. Pass through it like an easy shit, not a poisonous blockage.

All resistance has failed, and all resistance to the resistance has failed, she thinks, the DSTP-Green embedding this thought somewhere in her corroded lobes where she can't quite reach.

What hope is there in the face of this omniscient doom but to survive in the cracks, scavenging amid the grand, annihilating theater of the world.

She's watching a show about secret agents and she's thinking, I do this every day just to walk down the street and sometimes get paid minimum wage.

3. We broken girls build ourselves piece by piece, so we have a better chance than anyone of seeing truly. If the sight doesn't obliterate us, make us crazy and unloveable.

She can't afford a personality, only a spinning wheel of masks³ adapted to survival. At best she can hope to find something below maskspace in her dark room⁴ with Isidol: the centipede of a smile, eyelash fluttering like a moth, some artifact of the ancient Vellus culture, disinterred from the past or future, impossible to know.

3. The way she responds to most situations feels arbitrary, she doesn't understand why people would choose to react any particular way over another. Reactions feel like a data-gathering experiment, not a chance for authenticity. People with a defined self feel like a joke to her.

4. We have no age. We are age 0. We live in hyper-space until we arrive, or burn up. We are a stasis pod metageneration. We are waking up, forever.

PAWN SHOP

Vellus thinks she sees an old squad member sitting at the patio table of a nice restaurant, short pink hair eating a salad. DSTP-Black hardens in her throat like saltine crackers. She tries to say she needs water but the words only smear themselves against the inside of her eyes. She ducks into the nearest shop, pulling Isidol after her. It's some kind of antique store or maybe a pawn shop, it's really dusty and full of old stuff.

A shrapnel of salt-corroded biomech armor, a chunk of bismuth asteroid smeared with purple hair, the lash of a GAIGA like a wavy black spear.

But Vellus can't see any of this right now. She's become so used to the tidal effects of the disease she can no longer imagine a rhythm outside of it. She just drifts on the waves, waiting for shore.

I guess I assumed I'd become normal, that some day a subway station would look like a subway station, and a tree would look like a tree, and a face would look like a face. But enough years have passed to know that isn't happening.

I haven't spent my life inside my own body. Always peering from it like a rat in a ruined building, at the bright lights invading.



Isidol finds a tiara with a peculiar luster, as if reflecting something no longer there. Sometimes when a magical girl dies during transformation, her other-dimensional finery is preserved. A body falls into the city, stockings tugged and rings greased and bows scalped by scavengers, until her corpse is clad only in the dying radiance of her crystal.

She wonders if the magical girl died in battle, or if the transformation killed her. When a girl is really nervous the sequence can go wrong. A slurred word, a cute hand wave out of order. The adrenaline high of beauty comes from the distance you have to fall back to earth.

She remembers sleeping over at someone's dorm. A clique of older girls was drinking something disgusting from red cups full of ice and watching a video on a laptop. It looked like footage from one of those multiroom dorm parties where people open the doors between suites and play max volume nightcore and get super drunk and strut transformations.

This one girl, she looks like a 1st-year, she's chugging a bottle of 80 proof as everyone chants, it's dribbling down the side of her mouth and darkening her lapel. But the chanting doesn't stop when she's done.

She says something like MELODIC MAGNA JUBILEE and she lifts into the air, she's smiling with exhilaration and pride, pink bangles shwing from nowhere and pop around her wrists, her hair floofs out and ripples with nebula colors, a bejeweled staff descends from outer space through the ceiling to fill her outstretched hand.

The air sags. She isn't rising or falling, she's just stuck. She flails, which is a really bad idea. She's crying and begging for help but everyone steps back.

The phonecam makes a buzzing sound and the video skips, freezing on a dark frame like pixel worms writhing in black soil.

The girls skip the video ahead. Now she's on the floor. Her skin is turning to fractal ribbons, coiling up like silly string. She tries to crawl from the suffocating mass of herself but the hair clip digs into her skull and blinds her and stiletto heels force themselves from her naked soles and she totally fucking freaks out and then things really go to shit, the background gradient gets hotter and hotter until it's cooking the skin off her flesh-ribbons. Only she can see the gradient now. Sparkles strong enough to burn black stars into her eyes.

The transformation sequence never finishes, it just loops until she's unrecognizable. The bokeh of the background gradient is burnt into the room like wallpaper.

Toward the end the tape quality starts glitching out until you can only see the static negative of the party, ghostly bodies running in panic, a heaving mass moaning on the floor.

The other girls thought I was asleep, but I was staring under the blanket.

**FELINE
TRAIT
SYNDROME**

Certain girls of the city have cat tails, and even cat ears, due to genetic mutations from the GAIGA meltdowns.



To circumvent the pet restrictions of apartments, have a human be a pet.



Catgirls have difficulty finding employment and are sexually exploited.



The waiter places the black box in front of you. You feel as if you were standing at the edge of a building.

Sweat collects in the cups of your green bra until your nipples are burning. The waiter seems uncertain whether to stay or go, as if the box represented a new fork in their programming, one that cannot be compared to the delivery of foods or liquids, and to which the ordinary penalties and dangers of their job

cannot be aligned. Their uniform is too heavy for this heat, and their discomfort is palpable. You wish you could torture their employer.

Your fingers brush the surface of the box, black velvet, like grasping something tarantular and alive. A poisonous prickling, the superimposition of your feelings about her onto the material of this box.

The contents of the box are to be expected. After all, her mind, although utterly unlike yours, converges in certain places, like a subterranean river striking the bowels of a placid lake.

The waiter is gone, escaping any possible conscription into your private war, some mutation of those auxiliary functions like presenting a rose to a girlfriend or delivering a drink to a solitary woman.

Your meal consists of sautéed tilapia with galamandis pepper and kudzu tempura, shredded lime salted with sugarcane crystals, crisp apple slices with creamy onion sauce, and star wine.

You remove the tiny girl from the box. She blinks like the sun glancing off two dewdrops. You fork your fingers and stick them down your throat. You vomit your meal on her until she drowns.

You stare at the skyline. What's the next move in your game, you wonder. You have a knot in your panties. Your tail is twisted tight around your ankle.

**MAGICAL
GIRLS
IV**

A girl with a crystal in her brain leaves her room at 2 AM, stepping over the body of her sleeping friend, who has a crystal in her coccyx. She locks the door and pulls her hoody over her head. Her face is a pool of blue under the bug zapper, which presides over the stairwell like a deadly torch of ice.



The supermarket dumpster has a padlock and chain, but it's been cut. She gets the feeling of having missed someone like her. Passing each other's shadows in the dark. She wraps her scarf around her face and jumps into the dumpster, grateful to the stranger-in-crystal.

She bags six smushed cupcakes and a cracked pack of instant kudzu noodle. Everything else has been coated in bleach. Magical girls don't like bleach.



On the way back she sees a group of businesswomen staggering drunk from the financial district. She hopes the fever of her crystal doesn't stretch that far. She got pretty good at estimating her radius during the day (not that she goes out during

the day anymore) but night plays with depth.

One of them stops and stares at her. She tries to gauge their strength and speed by their silhouette. This person can hurt her, but they might not catch her. She runs into the kudzu, through my whispering leaves.

That was the thing. Run until they don't understand why they're chasing you, until they find some other innocent weak pathetic thing to brutalize. Humans are stupid.



Once when she was very angry her body could barely hold back its fire. Even though the light did not leap past her eyes, it was enough to be screamed out of the building, to draw the attention of magical girls. She hid in the foliage along the freeway, watching them flit past like locusts.

She is afraid to say the words now.



Her friend struggles with her crystal, far worse than she does. She remembers holding her friend on the floor, begging her not to blaze with light. If their neighbors saw the thin walls glow with their secret, they would have to move again, and where to? To the uncertain void.



She boils the noodles on the stove. A little salt syrup, a little kudzu vinegar.

She hears groaning and snarling on the other side of the counter. She leans over and watches her friend. That twitchy, burnt-out body, incapable of resting even in sleep. A litany of spasms recited nightly, damage soaked muscle deep.

It's so easy to throw people like them away. It costs nothing, and no one will ever pay for it.

She catches the first word burning on her tongue. The desire to level the building. She curls it back down her throat and dishes up noodles for her friend, who sits up and stares around the room with eyes

still trapped wherever she was a moment ago, until she sees the girl with the crystal in her brain and a smile creeps to her face, that lopsided smile afraid to commit.

The heat builds in her heart as if to burst from her chest, then appears in the bowl of noodles, where it was all along.

**TINY
GIRLS**

Tiny girls are grown in the lab to test the gambits of war.

Dip your hand in the vat and fish them out.

Slippery.

They fight in tiny cities.



They're sold on the black market:

- As exotic pets.
- For crush videos¹.
- Intestines plucked from them with tweezers (looks like wet sprouts), then dehydrated and powderized, an exotic ingredient like saffron.

1. Low-res video shows the lower half of a woman leaning on a desk. She wears a black pencil skirt and stiletto boots.

She gets up as if the camera person had given some signal and tips a shoebox over with the tip of her boot. Tiny girls crawl out, rustling across the tissue paper. Some are frozen in fear, others run.

The boot crushes them. She laughs a fake sex laugh. Girl guts stretch from her heel like gum with bones in it.

Unseen by the humans, a tiny girl hides in the forest of jaggies under the desk.

VELLUS VI

Some kind of aerial cyber titty angel hovers over her bed. She looks plastic. She has visible joints. She's dripping with the over-exposed blinding white cum of god, or maybe god's lactate. Her eyes are huge.

Just like my friends from the academy, thinks Vellus.

Can you see this too, she wants to say to Isidol, but she can't move. The dark hinterlands of the blankets are silent. She hopes Isidol will wake up and help her but what are the odds?

She rotates her eyeballs to the other side of the wasteland, across the floor alongside their mattress. She knows if she keeps staring at the floor, trash will appear. She looks back at the ceiling.

The bug eyed titty angel is still staring at her.

Thank you bug eyed aerial cyber titty angel, Vellus thinks. Please free me from this world of cruelty.

The tiny red triangle of its mouth gapes joyfully at her, but maybe it's just mimicry.



Vellus is at a house party and she's sitting on the stoop where everyone smokes and this girl is talking about her hookups and all the events she's going to and Vellus is leaning her head against the cool concrete away from the smoke staring into the overgrown grass.

If she hadn't gotten so high earlier she wouldn't be so high right now, it's a fucking paradox. She totally fucked herself earlier by holding the smoke in her lungs that long. Now the situation is out of control and she can't find her way back.¹

She tries to call Isidol and her hair keeps getting in her face and the phone is lagging because it's old and the storage space is maxed and she's almost out of power.

She listens to the girl talking somewhere up in the dark plateau of the steps and she thinks, maybe this is a recording? Is it coming from somewhere? A radio or someone's phone?

She looks around trying to find the source of the recording through the smoking mass of bodies on the

1. She came with a friend who abandoned her and is probably fucking upstairs or maybe skipped to another house party without telling her and she forgets where the subway station was and the subway doesn't even run this late.

stoop. Maybe they have some kind of device taped to the bottom of that lawn chair like a car bomb. One of the housemates is in charge of its maintenance and programming, like taking out the trash. If she can find their chore wheel she can confirm her hypothesis...

She hears Isidol's voice crackling inside her phone. It has to be fake. She says hello experimentally. Oh shit that's a real girl voice inside the box. Fuck. My brain's smarter than I am.

Hey Icy...I need help...it's not an emergency...I'm just stuck...yeah I went to that party...really????...okay...yeah...it's that house with the purple paint on top...hmm it's really dark so ummmm it's the one with the tangerine tree hanging over the fence...and if you're coming the other way idk they've got a liquor store around the corner.

Okay my phone is almost out of power which means when you get here it will only have zero power which means I will have to stand in the same place so you know where to get me. I will be on the stairs of the house. I will stay there forever until you get me. I will be there a week from now if you die haha. They will have to incorporate me somehow. Into the whole scheme of the steps.

Thank you. Bye bye.

ISIDOL

IV

It's hard making friends. Their disease produces so much liquid and light and pressure fluctuation, which they spend so much of their time concealing, wringing from clothes, stepping into the sun to blind you with an alibi.

The tiny amount of energy that remains is rarely strong enough to penetrate the mysterious film surrounding others, as if they had been torn from the capillary membrane of society and persisted in the dark outside those pumping coils. The ghost twins.

Sitting at the dining room table of a house higher resolution than their bodies, full of cool clean air like the atmosphere of a futuristic space station orbiting a polluted earth. Drunk students sit around stiffly, sometimes migrating between the cult classic B-movie playing in the living room and the artisanal bread and cheese tasting in the kitchen.

Isidol is in the bathroom stuffing scented soap and toilet paper into her backpack. Someone sits across from Vellus, drinking craft kudzu beer. She has nice skin and says, "I'm so glad to be part of this community with you."

Vellus sits there thinking what the fuck? Is she going to rape me? Am I about to be raped? Have I already been raped? What the fuck???



Isidol comes back from her restaurant job and throws her clothes on the floor and lights up and starts talking.

“Your supervisor did what?”

“It wasn’t that bad. Maybe she’s just...friendly.”

“Okay.”

“Maybe I can go back to that client. And I wouldn’t have to steel myself for going outside every day...”

As she murmurs, DSTP-Blue sprawls over Isidol’s face like bioluminescent moss. She thinks: nothing is strong enough to love them, others are like those insects that quest forward on probing antennae and crawling legs, only able to see what is just in front of them, knowing nothing of the true shape of reality, its horrible, wondrous revelations. She realizes they’re both going to die, and this death is not a simple one.

“I wish there was a world for us.”

They careen through the void of blankets, through the heat death of that room, small things holding hands.

VELLUS & ISIDOL

She nettles at Isidol in a low scratchy voice until Isidol yells at her. She goes outside and sits on the stairwell. Maybe she should be alone¹.

Feral Pink Rubber Animals lope down the street, running the red rim of evening's tide. Their flanks are exposed through the latex, eaten up by biorubber disease or bile leakage or pack war. At this stage of neglect, the flesh inside their neckhole protrudes like a prolapse. Bone juts through their latex soles, clicking on the asphalt.

It felt good to hurt Isidol, because everyone who deserved the hurt was untouchable. Even as she was saying the words, she knew she would regret it, and apologize, and knew exactly how long it would take for them to start touching again. An exact system of energy.

She lights a cigarette dusted with girlchunks and stares at the sky until it catches fire.

Even the ability to hurt each other is a richer existence than when they were alone, at least that's blood, the blood of a human fucking being, the most ancient and sacred fuel, they could always eat each other when things get dire. Would we still be together if someone gave us each \$50,000?

1. But she knows that's just the high of the health Isidol gives her that says she doesn't need Isidol in the first place, like waking up enough times on the other side of a drug to know the promise of its euphoria is a lie.



Rent is raised by 20%. Whoever owns this building told them so on a paper left in front of their door.

Vellus comes back from applying for the eight jobs she won't get, to see Isidol putting on tight, uncomfortable clothes and heavy makeup, really nice looking makeup in their dim shitty bathroom.

She agrees to go with Isidol to see the client at the hill mansion. Vellus sits on the toilet wearing a spare magical girl costume watching Isidol paint concealer over her scar.



It's a party so there's other women there who need money. One is wearing a GAIGA pilot costume. The mask has a fuckhole dripping with translucent cum.

“Well obviously I feel bad about it, but it's okay.”

“If you-”

“Let's just do this.”

They blow a rich woman's tits while she fucks a girl in a seifuku, tiny pleated skirt flipping up and down with each thrust, exposing the glint of a jeweled butt plug².

Someone dressed as a GAIGA³ is being beaten and fucked by the side of the pool. Cum and lube oozes from her prone body. She makes the sounds they think GAIGAs make. An orchestral trap beat thuds upstairs.



Sitting on the side of the bed, pink anal beads dangling from her forgotten asshole as Isidol eats out the client, Vellus watches shadows flow across the slopes, tumbling into the neon magma of the city where they boil away.

This is not the earth, where things are weighed down. This is the air, where porn physics reign. A furnace where hundreds of thousands of dollars burn to make real life feel like someone's aesthetic blog. They must live in this hyper-real atmosphere like alien birds.

The rich woman is joking with everyone and pouring star wine and cutting people's lines with

2. The crystal looks like calcite, which grows on GAIGA skin during confinement or stress.
3. Airbrushed pink and orange. Masked, drooling from her bit.

horrific friendliness. It's so weird in this city, how they try to pretend we're the same. As if having a million dollars and the ability to make pain stop at any time didn't make us totally different animals.

Isidol and Vellus both understand by now to conceal their minds from these people. That everything they learned growing up watching horror movies and nature documentaries, about predatory animals and blood and water, applies here. These people who want everyone to have a good time.

NYMPHS

Lips glittering with girlchunks, pupils fat as spider eyes, Vellus says, “I can almost handle the thought of dying¹ when I think how, over a long enough span of time, that which we hold dear will be reconstituted in others², and these shadowy unspoken trysts will be relived again and again until the end of time, and there will be nothing to feel bad about, because when everyone is dead, no one can have a higher follower count than you on social media. No one can be happier than you.

We have no self, we are only host to myriad spirits, and these spirits will be reborn in others forever.” Her cock pops out of Isidol’s mouth and Isidol gasps for air. Saliva-cum races down her throat and swirls into the kudzu-shit of this reverie, decomposing hyper-chromatically, fecal funereal, sewer synapses firing...

1. Quiz: You want to kill yourself. Everyone you know wants to kill themselves. Who do you share your problems with?

2. We who are still alive are like the dead, and always wending back to them. But while we are still on this earth, we are in service to the dead, and carry out their unfinished tasks.

These unresolved spirits, nymphs with eradicated and unborn domains.

LAKE

They walk on the wall overlooking the lake. Grey clouds sweep across the water.

Vellus starts running. “Hey,” says Isidol. Vellus is gone behind the curve of kudzu trellises.

Isidol calls a few more times, then chases after. Nothing is beyond the corner, only asphalt carpeted with crushed leaves. She keeps running and the road keeps curving, endless vertical green horizon.

She doubles back and crashes through the kudzu. She sees movement down by the shore, the splash of mud.



Vellus' arms flap until she staggers to a stop, breathing heavily. Grey water from the lake fills her mud-sunk footsteps.

She sags, face heavy with blood. The burns under her skin throb from their depths, phantasmal blossoms of black.

Isidol extends her hand with a shiver. Vellus stares at it like she's never seen it before. She looks up with a terrified expression, her six dilated pupils naked to the sky. She opens her mouth and

PSYCHO

Isidol stares up at the fucking bodies of her clients as sweat falls on her teeth, gums, nostrils, eyes, coating her with suffocating slimy salt. Shards float through the void of her belly like frozen girl bodies.

She hears music. Spikes of DSTP-X shoot through the holes in the sweat box, impaling her client and her client's lover. Blood spatters her face, bright as life.

She ransacks the jewels of the mansion, clothing herself with gems and precious metals. She pours star wine on her skin, purified, and opens the gates, letting the feral trash girls in.

She forgets what color the DSTP was.

Vellus and Isidol run through the dust storms of the shell worlds, bonebag bodies clinging to them like a fickle mutiny of skeletons, rescuing their alt selves in a flash of micro-portals they rigged up from common household parts on the floor of their apartment.

When the sun hits their alts, flesh inflates with hemo-radiance, the holes in their brains regenerate, the long drowning is over, everyone is smiling.

“We don't have to be alone anymore!”

“I wish you had like six boobs so all my selves could suck on you like little puppies!!!”

They roll around the apartment giggling and nuzzling and licking each other.

The music stutters and the dripping blood reverses, falls up, strips Isidol's face clean.

Blood pours from her nostrils and eyes and mouth, rising in crimson columns. She is laughing, or crying. Girlchunks blast from her face at the tail end of the blood and cloud the camera with glittering shards.

DEATH

Vellus is dreaming. In her dream, Isidol is dead. She faithfully endures this simulation of Isidol's death, not knowing there is any world besides the death world.

The dead Isidol enters her bedroom. Vellus tries to talk to her. Isidol says nothing, just sits on the bed beside her.

Vellus is so happy just to be near Isidol, to have this irrevocable wound be miraculously repaired, this thing that is so precious because of the impossibility of her actions to affect it, the thing you pray to god for.

Isidol says, we failed to make a map.

She gets up. Vellus begs her to stay. Just a little, please. Just let me hold you a little longer. Let me rest my head on your lap. Please don't leave me again.

Isidol walks down the center of a river that flows through the bedroom. She is giant in the river and normal-sized in the bedroom.

It felt like she had to go somewhere. I just wanted her to lay with me for seconds, for seconds longer, to be a child in her lap, to feel her presence, if we were imprisoned inside concrete all I would need is to hold her finger through a hole in the wall. Please. Just one second. Don't go. Let me die and be with you.

Vellus wakes up. She crawls into the living room, fried by dehydration. She cries into Isidol's feet. The dead Isidol is still in her mind, she has spent days trapped with her, living out this death with absolute sincerity. Isidol is scared because she doesn't know what's wrong.

I had a dream you died, it was so horrible, it was worse than anything, I don't want you to go, please don't leave me, I can't bear being alive without you, I just want our souls to fly around forever and have adventures together.

She cries raw as a child, sliming Isidol's toes with hot saltwater and mucus.

Isidol starts crying too. She sinks to the floor and holds Vellus so tight and their hair tangles together in the smear of their faces.

For days after, when Isidol is sleeping, Vellus will listen to see if she's still breathing. When Isidol goes outside, she will go with her, no matter how she feels, and hold her arm tightly.

It was so hard, she sobs. I was alone for so long.

I wish there was a world for us

