



The first room was so dark. When the doctor came in, it was already dark. He said, "Right back where he will be. The problem is, it won't be again. Would I do it first? And I can't travel to the doctor's house and drown him. The second room was full of smoke. There was a fire in my home. I asked my doctor, "Who started the fire? What is that smoke made of?"

I'll Be Right Back

But what if some-thing happens. He gets lost. Some-thing would be back. After, I would put the book back. I could have a flood one day. A different story? Haha, it's all the same. In the story, I all you have. Well, I'm sticking to this one.

can tell a different story in place.

This calls for a celebration of change.

But, as a novel, you have to be the same.

one knows that.

SPEED LIMIT 20

WIPER
WIPER

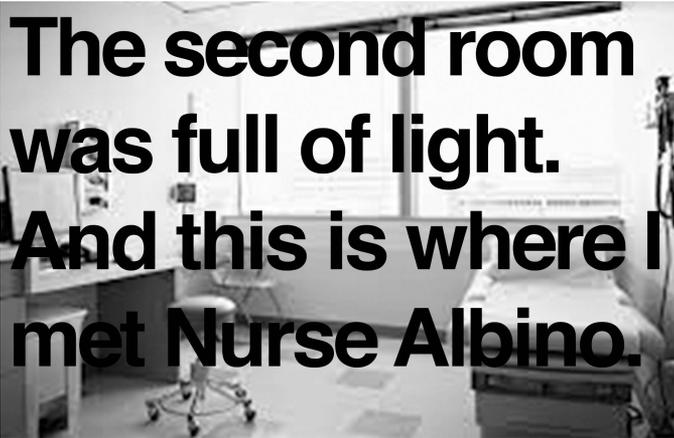
I'm not going to be long here. I know you have some place to be. You're always in a hurry, haha.

And... My instinct is to lie. You should know that. Right off the bat, I want to lie to you. Just lie to your face. I think I would feel better if I lied but I can't. Something's holding that part of me back.

**The first room was
so dark. When the
doctor came in, I
was already blind.**

A dark, grainy photograph of a hospital room. In the center, a patient bed is visible, partially covered with a white sheet. To the right, a window looks out onto a city at night, with some lights visible. The room is dimly lit, with most of the scene in shadow.

**The second room
was full of light.
And this is where I
met Nurse Albino.**



Nurse Albino saved my life. She returned me from the blackness. Her light was so bright. When I could finally see again, she was nothing more than an illumination. She stopped being a person. I didn't feel sad about this. She said she did it all the time. I tried to touch her. But you can't really see light. I wanted to do something. To thank her. She told me to find the doctor. That he would be waiting.

I asked her where he was and she didn't answer. Suddenly, the light was gone. It wasn't black like before but it was dark. I felt scared. I was still at the hospital. I had thought that something in the room had blinded me. But then I wasn't so sure. Perhaps I had to find the doctor to exact some revenge. What kind of revenge is so blank? So absent? I didn't mind being blind. I had forgotten everything.

**There was a fire in
my hometown
when I got back. I
asked my dad**



**“Who started the
fire? What is that
smoke made of?”
It was the doctor.**

The doctor burnt my town down. The fire was out of control. It didn't seem out of control at first. But it burnt everything down. The flames were blue. He had used a chemical to start the fire. There was so much light and color in the fire but the smoke was jet black.

My dad cried. I told him that I was going to get that son of a bitch.

The thing about the doctor and my family is a—

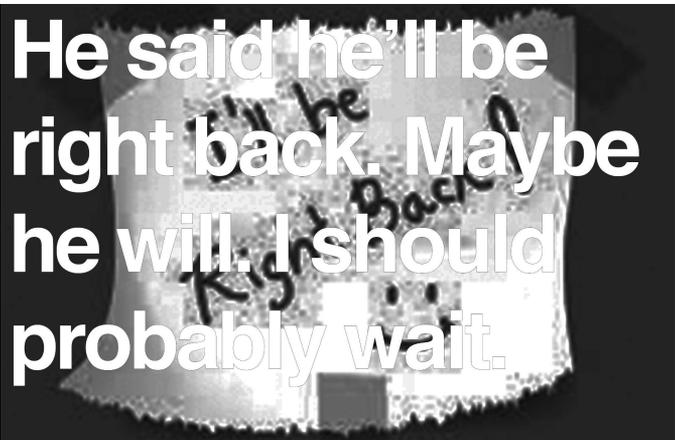
“Hey, I’ll be right back, man.”

What?

“Look, I gotta go. I gotta take care of some stuff. You said this wouldn’t take long, and... I don’t know. You’re flashing me all these photos... with writing on them. Honestly, I’m confused. Anyway, I’ll be right back. Maybe ten, fifteen minutes. I gotta go make a call. I’m sorry.”

But you said you’d—

“I know. I’m sorry. See ya...”





I can't let that happen. Not on my watch. He said he would listen to my story. I told him it wouldn't take too long. And he didn't like the visual aides? He thought that that was weird? Well, he's the weird one. I wonder who he's calling, or if he even had to make a call to begin with.

His car is parked just around the corner.

Guess he left his phone in his car. I'll just check to see if he's alright.

Oh, what the fuck! His car is gone. He split. Shit, maybe he was carjacked? Damn, I hope not. Probably not.

Well, I better just swing by his house to make sure.

*This calls for a
celebration of
change.*

*I can tell a
different story in
this place.*

Well, there's his car. He must be home. Let me get a closer look.

Shit, is that... Oh my god, is that Nurse Albino?

What is... what is even happening here. I'm so confused.

Maybe if I get closer I can hear what they're saying to one another...

“He’s onto us, Claire. I can feel it. He has... *visual aides*.”

“Visual aides? What the hell are you talking about, Robert.”

“Little cards, little pictures... with writing on them...”

“What?”

“Photographs. With words on them. Are you dense?”

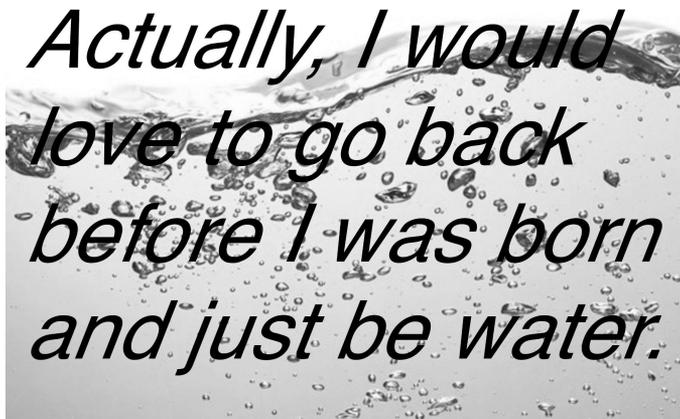
“Photographs of what? What the fuck are you talking about. Fuck, Robert.”

“The hospital. The fire. He knows. He knows about it all...”

“Oh no...”



*It would be nice
to be a baby
again. What
would I do first?*



*Actually, I would
love to go back
before I was born
and just be water.*

I can't believe it. I'm so confused. Such a betrayal is foreign to me. And why was she calling him Robert. ***And why were they together.***

I'm so mad I could kick a horse right now.

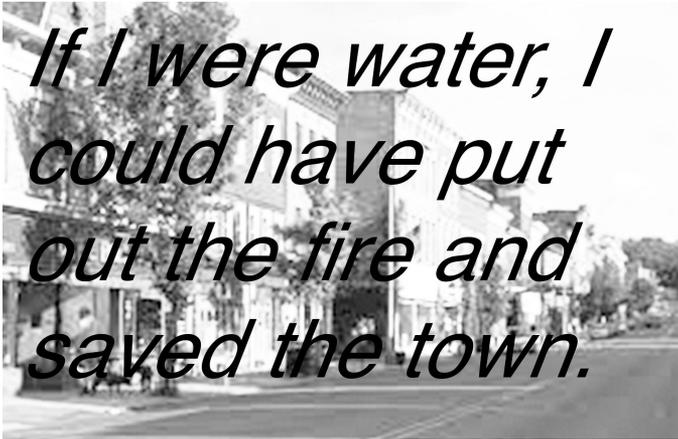
I just have to breathe. I have to calm down and think. What would dad do?

It's times like these when I think I can feel him with me. That he didn't die from side effects of the fire. "Dad?"

YES, SON?

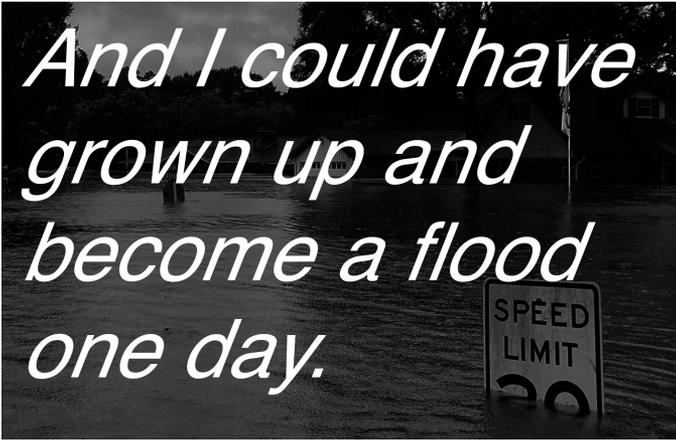
What should I do?

THE HOSPITAL.
GO TO THE HOSPITAL.



*If I were water, I
could have put
out the fire and
saved the town.*

*And I could have
grown up and
become a flood
one day.*



“I think it’s high time you tell me exactly what happened that day in the hospital after I left.”

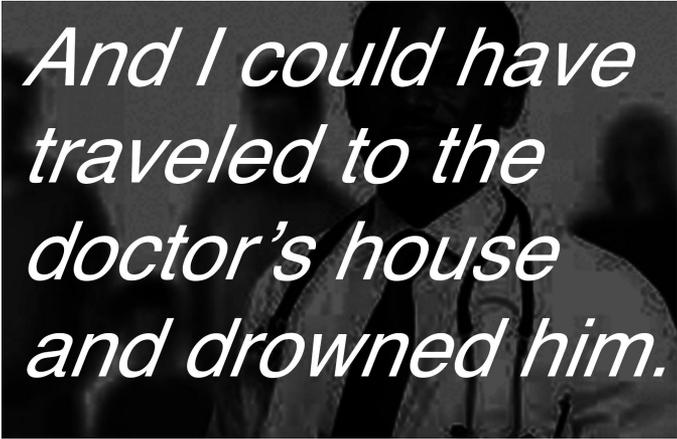
“Oh, Robert. I don’t think that I can.”

“You have to...”

“Alright...”

*I was just finishing prep for a new arrival. It was on the same floor but nowhere near his room. I was about to leave when he burst through the door. He was in a rage. Obviously, I was shocked to see him. I didn’t know he could have possibly found me, how he could have found anything. He was like a homing pigeon. Like he had been homed. I suppose I was his home. Do you know about the pigeons, Robert? It doesn’t matter. He overtook me right away. He had his way with me. He kept saying— his voice was demonic— over and over again, he said, **NURSE ALBINO, NURSE ALBINO, SAVE ME!** I was so scared. I’ve never been so scared in all my life. He raped me. He was raping me, but it was something else. I can’t really remember that. I can’t recall the beginning or the middle. But when he was done, he ripped the curtains from the windows and walls. I had just drawn them. The room went from*

dark to light very quickly. He wrapped me up in the curtains like he was stuffing change into a paper coin holder. Do you remember those things? Those brown things? The curtains were brown as well, I believe. He was constantly touching my head. I can still feel the pressure of his palm on the top of my head. That's why it felt like he was stuffing coins into a paper holder. He could have just rolled me up like a burrito but instead he stuffed me in. It was incredibly uncomfortable. I remember all of this vividly. It was so sunny outside. The last thing I saw was his face. His eyes were clear. Robert, they were clear! It was as if nothing had happened to him. I know they were clear and that he could see. Well, when he finally covered me with the curtains, he started wailing on me. Punching me as hard as he could. And then he started to scream. He screamed, **YOU ARE THE LIGHT! YOU ARE THE LIGHT! YOU ARE THE LIGHT! YOU ARE THE LIGHT! YOU ARE THE LIGHT!** And he kept going. Punching and screaming. I don't remember him stopping. I passed out before he was done. His eyes were clear. I think he knew what he was doing. I don't know what happened. I don't how it happened, Robert. I'm sorry...



*And I could have
traveled to the
doctor's house
and drowned him.*

*But, as a flood,
you have to be
careful you don't
drown everything.*

I walked to the hospital. It was a long walk. I felt as though I hadn't slept in weeks. I had to find the doctor. I had to end this once and for all.

When I walked inside, the receptionist smiled at me like she knew me. It was a worried smile.

“Dr. Roberts, I didn't think... I thought you'd be... How are you feeling?”

I felt shell shocked.

Why did this person think I was a doctor? What was all this about?

She nervously led me to an office which she addressed as “mine.” There were pictures on the desk.

The biggest photo was encased in a frame that said “Like Father Like Son.” It was a picture of dad and me. We were both wearing doctor’s coats.

*A different story?
Haha, it's all the
same story. Every
one knows that.*

*In the end, I
guess a story's
all you have. Well,
I'm sticking to this
one.*

“Dr. Roberts?”

—

“Yes, I’ll hold.”

—

—

—

“Well, I think you’ll be pleased sir. I think we finally have it all under control.”

—

“Yes, indeed. It’s a shame about Claire. I hope she’ll recover from this but it was indeed traumatic.”

—

“I checked him myself, personally. Blind as a bat. Memory like, well... not an elephant. What’s the opposite of an elephant?”

—

“That’s right, sir. In any case, the family name has been salvaged. Or at least, well you know...

Interestingly enough, he thought you were still dead in each simulation.”

—

“I’m not so sure, either...

Funny he’s still trying to write on pictures... Pulls them off the wall and starts doodling.”

—

“Oh it’s all chicken scratch I’m sure. One of them I thought said so—”

—

“Sure, doctor. I’ll hold again.”