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Trinity's Embrace
By Daniel Rodriguez

Dawn rose from beneath a stagnant horizon. Her head uplifted into a pale sky, suspended in an overwatch of light. Her beauty spread profusely; her vision spewed ethereal rays of decadence. Several entered the skylight of a man's home, blessing his face with warmth and comfort.

His eyelids gracefully opened, revealing deep-brown eyes beneath. He shifted his body smothered by cream white sheets on an empty, queen-sized bed. He lay snuggled in the left corner, half-wrapped in cotton enclosures, the other half of his virile body loosely hung over the other side. After a momentary pause, he arose dressed in nothing but underwear, in decent shape for his age.

He reached for the nightstand immediately to his side, shaved dark-oak, pleasant on the eyes. A gentle right hand lifted a glass of water, and a pill was delicately held with his left. After briefly observing the pill, he consumed the two. Above the nightstand hung a mirror, and in it the man looked at his reflection. An old yet fresh and healthy face, brandishing light facial hair. He looked away without much emotion, eager to get on with the day. Shortly after, he dressed himself in grey khakis and a button-up. After adjusting his collar, he headed to the kitchen with a longing stomach. What greeted him was a cup of freshly brewed coffee. Steam rose from its ceramic container, alluring the man's eager stomach. He promptly grabbed the cup and took a large swig. As he finished and savored the warm brew, a vexatious beeping crept into his left ear from the radio. The man ignored it, and instead moved to grab something. Yet as he took his steps, his foot collided with a container of some kind, rattling its solid contents.

He looked down to find a red plastic bowl, filled compactly with kibble (it read "Curie"). The man continued towards his destination, passing a plate covered with silver foil, a note resting atop of it. He entered his office, messy but still comprehensible. The man approached a large desk, snuggled into the corner of the room. Atop of it laid stacks of written documents, loosely organized across the expansive desk. Above the desk rested his goal, his key. Yet to acquire it, he would first have to move the frame that concealed it. This frame, being large and surprisingly heavy, had a plaque that was attached underneath it.

"Daughter," read the inscription. The man shifted the frame carefully to the side, allowing him to reach the key. While retracting his arm, key in hand, his knuckles grazed the back of the frame which caused it to sway back and forth. As to not let it fall, the man quickly grabbed it with his other hand. He stood there. Staring at the looming picture, in a sort of disbelief, or more so denial. Staring. After a few minutes, he released his grip, and walked back towards the kitchen, where the front door was situated.

It was time to tend to the Cows again, as per usual. As the man donned his astronaut-silver work uniform, he wished for the best. He stepped through the doorway and into his duty. The door shut behind him. The cosmic cycle took way, shifting shadows from east to west, driving the light back with a purple hue, waiting for its return.

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Dawn reared from beneath a sparkling horizon. Risen above a pale sky, suspended in an overwatch of radiance. Her beauty unrivaled in magnitude and reach, her vision spewing irreverent rays of servitude. Several forced their way through the skylight of a man's home, engulfing his face with heat and shock.

His eyelids twitched open, revealing deep amber eyes beneath. The man remained static in his empty bed, a queen size with sheets splotted in dark liquid. He lay stiff in the left corner, half-contained in stained cotton enclosures, the other half of his languid body loosely hung over the other side. After a prolonged pause, the man slowly ascended from his bed. He was clothed in the attire he had worn the previous day. The same stains that afflicted his sheets were present on his clothes. He was in a declining shape of health, nothing to be desired.

He reached for the nightstand immediately to his side, shaved dark-oak, straining on the eyes. A hesitant right hand lifted a glass of water, and a pill was quaveringly cradled with his left. He reluctantly consumed the two. Above the nightstand hung a mirror, and in it the man looked at his reflection. A withered old face marked with dark splotches; he had seen better days. He looked away in atychiphobic reluctance and proceeded to walk towards his kitchen. With each loosely placed step his head pulsated and throbbed. He reached to cradle his head as an attempt to quell the pain. As he placed his palms onto his temples, wrapping his fingers along his head, he felt bare scalp. He shuffled his fingers along his head to confirm this, feeling stray patches of hair along a mostly hairless surface. He grunted in anger and violently removed his hands from his head. He struggled to keep his balance as he approached the kitchen. A cup of unbrewed coffee greeted him, resting atop the tile counter. It was a cold sludge substance, coffee grounds mixed with cold water. Atop of it rested burdock roots, entangled with each other, so that they almost resembled a child. The man promptly removed the entangled burdock roots and neglected them, throwing them to the ground. He proceeded to do the same for the contents inside the ceramic cup. As the ceramic shattered, he

retched, leaning on the counter to sustain himself. As he did, an insufferable beeping wormed its way into his left ear. Ringing, ceasing, ringing, ceasing. The house was filled with bare sine waves, reverberating from wall to wall with brief pauses in-between. The man's head throbbed with each pulsation of sound coming from that broken radio. He began to walk towards his office with lazy steps, dragging his feet along the ground. Yet as he moved forward, his foot collided with a container of some kind, spilling its contents across the ground.

He looked down to find a red plastic bowl, abhorrently overfilled with kibble. Under the heaps of dried dog food, a name could be seen placed on the bowl (it read "Curie"). The man let out an appalled sigh and continued his way towards his destination. As he stumbled across the kitchen, he passed a plate covered in silver foil, a note resting atop of it. The man removed the note and crumbled it in his palm, dropping it to the ground like fodder as he continued onward. The man entered his office, sporadic and indistinguishable from a cesspool. The floor was littered with scattered documents and folders. Among them rested various assortments of radiology apparatuses. The papers crunched and slid from his dragging steps, filling the room with rustles. Yet underneath that wall of sound, a systematic clicking could be heard. The man approached a large desk, backed into the corner of the room. Atop of it rested more scattered documents and folders. The headers on most of the documents read "I-131". Above the ravaged desk rested his goal, his key. Yet to acquire it, he would first have to move the frame that contained it. The frame was large, hanging over the desk and office as it now loomed over the man.

Upon it was a plaque, it read "Daughter". The picture included the Daughter, along with the rest of the family. A family which soon decayed as

she remained. The picture stared into the man as he stared back, imposing itself onto him. He attempted to shift the frame to reach the compartment behind it. It was deceptively heavy, enough that the man could not support it. He put all he could into sustaining it, but to little avail as it eventually fell and shattered into dis-uniformity. The man momentarily stared at the mess he had created; this moment did not last, and he moved on. On the wall the frame had previously occupied was a cube indentation. In it lay the key. The man quickly grabbed it and headed back towards the kitchen, aiming for the front door.

It was time to tend to the Cows again, as per misfortune. As the man dawned his astronaut-silver work uniform, he wished for guidance. He stepped through the doorway and into his fate. The door shut behind him. The cosmic cycle once again took way, shifting shadows from east to west, driving the light back with a purple hue, waiting for its return. Yet within complete darkness, a light remained on the horizon. Small at a distance, grand in closer proximity. A washing of white glare and radiance, it grew throughout the night.

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Dawn lifted her weary head from beneath a shimmering horizon. She hung low over the horizon, grasping for thinly split air. Her glow was overshadowed by another. Above her, a trinity of entropy, a faded giant. Fixed points of light within a formerly pale sky. Glaring in a wash of white hue, suspended above the dying dawn. Its beams of blinding light reigned over the landscape in pure radiance. Several entered the skylight of a man's home, afflicting him with immense heat and discomfort.

His eyelids violently opened, revealing bloodshot emerald eyes underneath. He shifted his body engulfed by bloody sheets on a rotten,

queen-sized bed. The man was clothed in his work uniform, clunky and silver. He lay spread across the majority of the bed, his eyes to the melting ceiling.

The man struggled to sit himself up, but managed. His chest rose and fell like a decaying machine. He attempted to stand but failed miserably as he was struck by a crippling vertigo. The man stumbled and violently crashed into his nightstand. While he managed to catch himself on it, the contents resting atop of it fell as a result. A glass shattered, spilling water, a framed picture of his marriage fell, along with an empty pill container. The man regained his composure and properly stood up. Feeling slightly more balanced, he proceeded to head for the kitchen, stumbling most of the way there. He sustained his balance by propping his hands along the slippery walls. When he arrived, he was greeted by an empty ceramic cup resting atop the kitchen counter. He took a moment and glared at the cup, squirming in the internal pain of contemplation, which soon turned to grief. As he stood there, clutching the cup in his right hand, a voice spoke on the radio being periodically interrupted by static. "Level 7...toxic pile...immediate evacuation—."

The man ignored it and reached for a plate covered in silver foil, resting atop the counter. No note rested atop it this morning. He began to unwrap the multiple layers of foil, and his hands uncontrollably trembled throughout the process. After a moment of struggle, he managed to get the foil off. On the plate rested a heap of lead. The man, at first confused, began to crack a smile. Several tears came down from his eye and graced his cheek; they steamed. He carried the plate with him, for once content.

It was about that time again, to tend to the Cows, or what was left of them. They still appeared to be salvageable the last time the man saw

them, at least that's what he kept telling himself. He opened the front door, revealing a landscape of pure light. A simple beauty of radiance. The man now wished for death. He took a step forward as his house was engulfed in a flash of white light. His uniform melted, his tears evaporated, his body burnt into an imprint of ash. A stain of memory onto his doorstep, of a stubborn man with good intentions.

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Dawn did not raise her head that morning. Instead, the radiant light of the trinity stood lit.