

Coffee Shop

by Ajay Nair

It was when the waitress had served his coffee (black, with three spoons of brown sugar) that he felt the overwhelming crush of everything around him closing in. He gathered the various visual stimuli assiduously - the flash of smooth, brown legs of the waitress, sculpted by a demi-god at least; the ivory warmth of the symmetrical collar-bones of the girl in her early twenties waiting for someone (and these bones pushing against her translucent skin were demanding to be stroked by the tips of his fore-fingers); the mature, tired sexual heat of the business-woman (or was she a lawyer?) waiting in in the take-away line presumably for her morning pick-me-up, much like his coffee but without the sugar; even the fresh scoops of beauty of the recently post-pubescent, twin girls walking in hand in hand, in their short skirts and open collared blouses.

He inhaled all these sensory impulses like they were so much illuminated, fluorescent pollen which jostled for space with the strong aroma of coffee in his nostrils. He felt them lodge in the dark corners of his brain, emitting a faint, intermittent signal - for help, for redemption, for consummation. His hand trembled as he gulped his coffee down, his body burdened by the knowledge of impossibility.

He stood up swiftly, gathered his robes around him, picked up the tiny, holy trinket that passed for his succor from the table, dropped loose change next to it, and exited this shop of his imminent, mortal sin.

