

Kracton Commons

by Gabriel Orgrease

Without light it is black.

Ceiling fluorescents brilliant in the white space opened to exterior of the shop through narrow glass front and shown out to empty brick paved commons of High Street, a commons where story is not a story unless explicated with rabid arm motions and loud laughing caw caws. There were no comfortable words in the masonry oasis, a dry heat sink but there were signs to inform public to curb their toy dogs (black dogs, shadow dogs that prowled in psychedelic packets), to avoid profanity, never loiter, no alcoholic beverages permitted and do not litter. Commerce, a place to walk and a place to shop, being at night a desolate flat area channeled between old brick buildings, sheet metal cornices above, many of them with large plate glass windows at grade that let one in on a further depth of dream vision - - a field of vertical masonry that glowed with sickly pink light. Locked down, the front glass doors of the small sandwich shop closed Martin would then prop open the back fire-door of the Hog n' Bluster and make of it a life open to the rear alley.

He threw a rock. It could have been an elbow rocket. Glass shattered. They all ran into shadows.

There is always a devilish curiosity to life as it occurs at the rear entry. It is either that the box is opened and the contents let loose on the world, like a cracker jack with the trots, or the box sucks in the world -- a technoid machine -- compacts all down like a Faraday compression of absolute skrunch no larger than a chicken bouillon cube if not an outright chip of a teeny weenie humanoid coprolite. Or is it beef? Or turkey? A sesame seed stuck between her teeth. Push it around with your index finger, tumble it over, lick it, fiddle it with your tongue, no larger than the grain of a sugar cube the scene melts in water -- in hot water it provides a dull broth or overly sweet nectar to feed mutated humming birds. A dazzle or sequins, string beads and/or simply fireworks that burst increasingly louder and louder as we lean forward with our arms desperate to shelter our

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heads from the spray of burning paper fragments. Shout on the commons.

Or the insides of the box are no larger than the perimeter at first indicates. A miniature hat box with miniature green plastic crucifixes... several dozen sacrifices, mass produced molded reproductions as plentiful as lakeside pebbles. Salvation one toke at a time.

On the nights Martin worked, from midweek into Saturday, his crew gathered towards midnight in the seclusion of the rear alley. They would wait tucked behind the dumpster down outside the rear door to the shop. Hunched on their knees some of them sucked cigs or others that set on cardboard boxes they slowly squashed flat like wet rubber pool-whales slowly to go flat beneath them.

