

# Arrivals

*by* Matt Potter

The key scratched in the lock and his travel bag skidded across the floorboards as he threw it inside.

Floating candles glowed on tables.

'His' and 'His' towels hung in the bathroom.

The poppers, the Viagra, the chorizo — all had been ordered and all had arrived.

I hugged his broad shoulders, kissed him long on the lips, and then I saw it — a tattoo.

“Where did you get this?” I asked, fingertips tracing the 666 on his forehead, red and bumpy.

“What?” he said.

I looked into his eyes.

“Oh, that,” he said, hand closing his fringe over the new scar. “It's a lot less offensive when I stand on my head.”

He smiled, walked down the hallway, and closed the toilet door behind him.

My knuckles rapped softly against the wood.

“Who is it?” he said.

“I think we need to talk, Nathan. What's happened?”

He opened the door a crack, fully dressed. "Oh, you know," he sighed. "My endless search for meaning. Sometimes things can take a bit of a wrong turn."

I reached for his forehead through the doorway but he flinched.

"No," he said.

I stood beside the closed door for a full five minutes. Once, perhaps, I heard muffled sobs.

"Can I get you anything?" I asked.

"Some chorizo would be nice," came his voice from the other side. "You can leave it on a plate by the door."

