

Session

by Matt Potter

“When are you going to stop dicking around with writing and get a real job again?” she said, magic wand in one hand, cigarette in the other.

I looked at her greying face and wrinkling hair and tried to fathom why my counsellor was suddenly being such a bitch.

“What's a real job?” I said.

She dragged on her cigarette and blew smoke in my face. “You've spent your entire life doing exactly what you've wanted and now you wonder why you're unemployable.”

“I'm not afraid of hard work,” I said. “What I *am* afraid of is leading a mediocre life.”

She waved her wand. “Define mediocre.”

This office, I wanted to say, looking at her peach furnishings. *Much of the world and the people in it. You on a bad day. Hopefully not me on a good day.*

“Are you looking for a dictionary definition?” I asked. “Or do you want me to say something revealing and smart and witty off the top of my head?”

“You need to stop being so impressed with yourself. And you need to stop being so hard on yourself too. You live this dichotomy that everyone — including you — finds too hard to live up to.” She stubbed her cigarette in the overflowing Orrefors ashtray.

That sounds great, I thought to myself: *overflowing Orrefors ashtray*.

“I agree,” I said, taking out my notepad and writing down the words *overflowing Orrefors ashtray*. “But if I changed, what would be left for me to write about?”

