

[www.TheCollidescope.com](http://www.TheCollidescope.com)

by Charm Chandler

It is not that she, the Beauty Thief, lacks any sort of empathy underneath the Night City moonlight, but rather that she, the Beauty Thief reborn<sup>1</sup>, desires a particular realness to herself otherwise unavailable as an everyday opportunity. That, and she desires to stay ahead of the other Contenders of Reality, the other potential adversaries who hunt for the Pages of Their Existence.

“Right then, I’ll have to use my charm and elegance to conquer this glorious good night!” She stops and sighs, a lovely sigh. Neither grand<sup>2</sup> nor melancholy. She turns to the reader and winks with a ruby eye, her short albino hair pale in the moonlight. Sapphire dress jeweled in sapphire blue, high heels extraordinaire, the glint of her matching sapphire earrings reflects the haunting lights from vaguely familiar neon signs of the nameless businesses in the 13th district.

Mind you, as a lone woman in the silent streets, this is not her final form; beauty is to her beholding. That is to say, this is simply a form she has grown accustomed to in the time she has existed, which is to say, a simultaneously long (before this story) and excruciatingly short (at the beginning of this story) time.

“I can’t *believe* the Pages of My Existence<sup>3</sup> have found themselves here in the Night City. It’s one of the more obscure Drifting Shores! Though, I suppose, interesting enough to explore...” In the act of talking to herself, she stabilizes her understanding of where she is and why. This is unnecessary, since, if she so desires, she can withstand the onslaught of her lucidity and awareness leaving, but she would rather save that energy for later, for when she encounters any other Contenders of Reality that desire to exist the way she desires.

Do you remember how in the first sentence of this nameless story, she does not quite lack empathy underneath the moonlight? Against other Contenders of Reality, it is simply business, the act of becoming real (which means that empathy is usually defenestrated). That becoming real is to become beyond the story, beyond the confines of this work. In that, she forces herself to—

“Narrator,” she begins, “who will you be supporting in this fight for the right of existence?”

I do not know. Everyone?

“Hmm, alright, then. But *mind you*, as a lone woman in these silent streets, aren’t you playing my femme fatale archetype a bit too much? My voice isn’t even, oh, what’s the word...*sultry*? Although, I suppose I could...” Her voice is a pitch-combination of calm excitement and determination, akin to the dramatic movements of hidden schemes at midnight.

---

<sup>1</sup>Since her appearance, here.

<sup>2</sup>Not like the Her-in-Her Entirety, who has left some time ago, before this story writes itself.

<sup>3</sup>The pages belong to nobody, but manifestation is key. It is the Beauty Thief’s page now.

The 13th district of the Night City is just as ghostly as the rest of the labyrinthian city. Unfamiliar, just like the 14th district, but not as abstract as the 12th counting down. Though her status as a higher being of personified beauty allows her a certain level of lucidity and awareness, it is still difficult to navigate this Drifting Shore<sup>4</sup>.

There are no physical borders here to identify any discrete transition from district to district. Instead, she must rely on a vague and far-off feeling, despite everything in the Sunset Reality already inching toward that<sup>5</sup>. Worse still, intuition pours itself into all over the low- and high-rise buildings, weaving in and out of the beginnings and ends of white neon lights. That is to say: if the Beauty Thief were not the Beauty Thief, at this very moment? she would be nothing more than a babbling incoherent character.

“Like you, narrator?”

Smiles. Who knows?

When she moves in the empty streets, her head slowly turns to a combination of *looking* and *gazing* at the invisible entities and at the reader with a hint of a winking-knowing<sup>6</sup>. How will you imagine the invisible entities, their lack of presence?

“Let’s see, here...” In front of her is a transitory avenue that connects half of the 13th district to the 12th district. Behind her? is the other transitory space that connects the 13th district to the 14th district.

The buildings are tall and dark. Accented light shapes itself as horizontal and vertical luminous glow sticks of varying color pasted on opaque dark windows that show nothing but the darkness of the building walls. Almost like a silent rave for architecture, but there are no ghostly hands behind the opaque dark windows, as one might think there would be. Are the other districts like this too?

The Page of Her Existence that she searches for is somewhere in this area. Neither 13th nor 12th district, but neither in between. She senses it, the way instinct senses intuition, on the narrow line she “instincts”-intuits as a “border”, like so

---

<sup>4</sup>Her Drifting Shore is a secret. She will never tell.

<sup>5</sup>Toward the vague and far-off feeling.

<sup>6</sup>The kind of knowing that would bring about a seductive night. My, how scandalous!



...there lies that single, most beautiful, page.

Why do you desire existence, Beauty Thief? In the way that I, the perhaps-narrator outside of this story, exist? The glitz and glamor of this so-called real world, though not necessarily lacking, usually does not welcome the glitz and glamor of the Sunset Reality/Drifting Shores/Night City. And you, Beauty Thief—she models dramatically underneath the streetlights, cameras flashing in her head as abstract thought—would be an anomaly.

“I would blend in, dear.” She says it coolly, haunting the streets, standing and searching for the page. Invisible entities nearby avoid her on the merit of their fear<sup>7</sup>.

“Aha!” There, she spies it. In the thin slice of the space between words, the space between these

words  
she finds  
the  
Page.  
Page<sup>8</sup>  
Her  
Existence.

---

<sup>7</sup>Personification, they whisper, almost, not quite. No, she is a daughter of the Personification of Beauty, who in turn has many sons and daughters scattered around, sons and daughters and subjects and objects and things, beauty in the grotesque and the grotesque, well—

<sup>8</sup>Of.

She is about to touch that page/those words with a pair of sapphire gloves that reach to her elbow. But just before her meticulous fingers grab the page, she dodges (pose-evades! glitz and glamor and gladiolus!) an invisible \_\_\_\_\_ that narrowly touches her.

“How rude! Did you do that, narrator?” She crosses her arms in displeasure and spies another character, emerging from the *nothing* prior to the “Page of Her Existence” sentence.

The new character/entity/who? wears a handsome faceless face. A black semi-muscular mannequin wrapped in two or three layers of espionage, camouflaged body in the 13th district alleyways. His<sup>9</sup> clothing personifies a distant cyber future, yet he does not appear robotic/cybernetic/technological in any way. Pulsating neon red lines trace themselves on his clothing and congregate as a circle in the center of his torso, glowing with an unsettling hue.

“No, it’s another, like me...” She stands ready; so does he.

“Unfortunate that we have met like this.” He sounds cool. Like her. He is, on the inside, secretly flustered and desires to summon up more befitting atmospheric dialogue, and so he needs to try again.

Conflict can still be avoided, both think.

“Uh, sorry about the \_\_\_\_\_. I just didn’t want you to get to the page first. I mean, *you know*. You know how it is.” He sounds so uncool, and clears his throat, pointing a dramatic finger to the Beauty Thief. “I’m Nameless 01. I’m from the Telos Initiative, and I’m on the hunt for the Pages of My Existence.” Yes, that sounds correct. He thanks the narrator mentally and hopes for another chance to truly shine with a more serious and thought-out introduction, perhaps accompanied by the usage of proper body language this time.

The Beauty Thief scoffs and rolls her eyes; in turn, he is pridefully wounded. In a quick sleight-of-hand, she manifests eight diamonds of identical size in between her sapphire-gloved fingers. Not only could she throw them, but the pillars of diamond light they would explode in, vertically, would—

“Narrator! Can you not reveal my plans?” The indignation!

“Wait, I don’t want to fight.” Nameless 01. says, slightly raising his hands in resignation/surrender. “There are more Contenders of/for Reality in the Night City, and the Figure in the Black Coat has most of the pages. I’m just looking for others who aren’t so crazy about existing, and I think there’s a way for all of us to benefit from cooperating, instead of treating this hunt for the Pages as some

---

<sup>9</sup>Perhaps, it is a he.

obscure battle royale. I just—again, apologies for attacking you preemptively. I missed on purpose. Not sure why you dodged so *aesthetically*, though.”

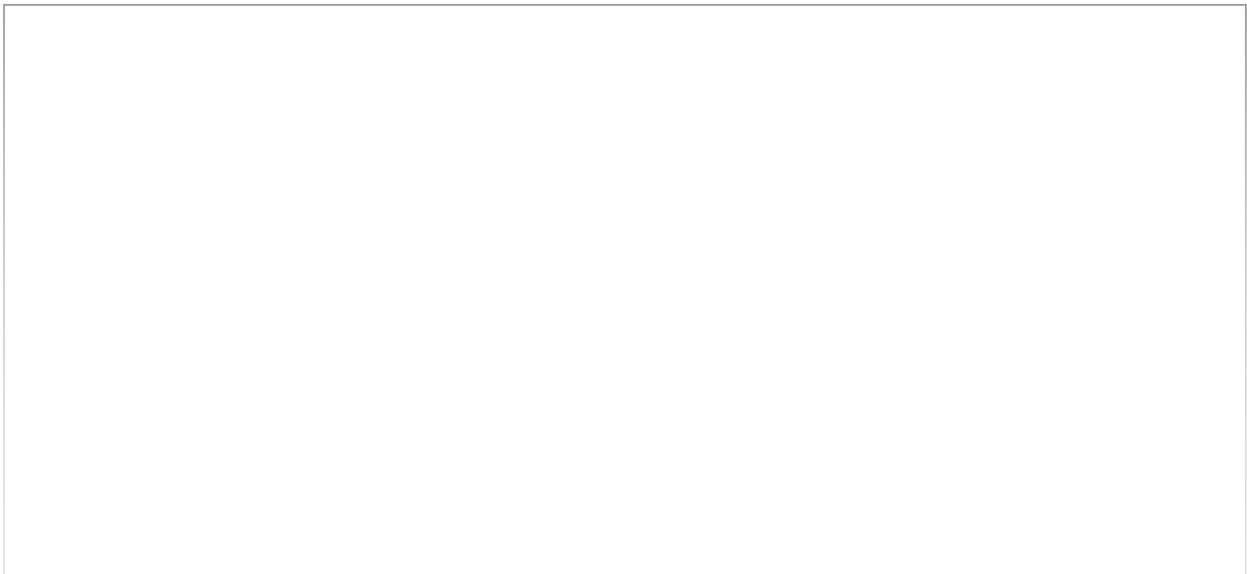
Diamonds one through eight glimmer and glisten between the Beauty Thief’s fingers and disappear and dissipate. They glisten in the nonexistence, waiting for their return.

“The *aesthetique*,” the Beauty Thief declares, “is the spice of life. I see that you might embody that too.” She eyes his outfit, takes note of the practicality and stylish applications of the fabric.

Nameless 01. flashes a quick flex in response. Imagine handsomeness but in the style of a rather animated semi-muscular black mannequin.

“Thanks. How did you get here?”

“That.” She clicks her tongue. “Is a long story. If you’re not looking for a fight, we should at least retrieve the page, first.”



She retrieves the page.

The Beauty Thief and Nameless 01. stand close to each other and look at the “page” and its “contents,” and quickly become real. At least, momentarily. Like this brief space<sup>10</sup>:

---

<sup>10</sup>Do you understand realness?

Truly, if it had to be explained in words, what those two experienced upon looking at that page (which is to say: a distinct combination of the elusive real/the symbolic order/the imaginary), it would look like this:

1. Life.
  - a. Animation; movement; all the synonyms associated with the quote-on-quote “real.”
2. Experience, probably.
3. Death.
  - a. Stagnation; Inertness; infinite metaphors and poems and synonyms associated with the quote-on-quote “real.”
- 4.

Really, none of those sequences are unknown. Each one could be replaced by a different system, with \_\_\_\_\_, for assumption is a pleasure that sapient creatures abuse. All assumptions are like that: even those who arrive from the unknown<sup>11</sup>.

In that way, the page is incomplete. There are still thirteen other pages, half of which are under the possession of the Figure in the Black Coat. But that obscure Black Coat, unknown master of the Night City, Night City in the Drifting Shore, Night City in the Drifting Shore of the Sunset Reality, hides its intention from I, the—

“So, that’s what happens when we read a page...eugh...” Nameless 01. stumbles a bit, the Beauty Thief supporting him from his vertigo. In his life, through the eyes of that page, he was just a regular individual. Just like you, just like me, just like all those personified abstractions in the physical world. Our physical world.

It is strange for him to return. Unsettling. Could you imagine a sudden tangent, the likes of which whose purpose is so arbitrary so as to pull you away from the aesthetic distance, the closure of a person, place, thing, concept, so-and-so and such-and-such, the likes of which serve onto itself as a sudden *causa sui*, just *suddenly* happening?

“You alright, love?” The Beauty Thief asks, setting Nameless 01. straight. He is still processing his other life, he is processing the previous paragraph, just like his other lives.

“You didn’t experience any of that? Just how many lives...how many lives...” He mumbles, drunken in a stupor. He misses all those nameless individuals he met in all those previous lives.

“Oh, me? Yes, I did. I mean, the sudden *causa sui* of a surprise life certainly took me by surprise, but aren’t the most charming things so serendipitous like that?”

---

<sup>11</sup>Gods, for example. Cities, perhaps. Aliens? Probably.

“S-seriously?! Nigh-omniscience through the sudden experience of various lives, and you’re this casual about it?”

“Oh, you don’t...you don’t understand who’s after these pages, are you?” Thoughtfully, the Beauty Thief considers that perhaps not all involved in the hunt are even aware of what it all means. “How much do you know? How much,” she pauses, silent, “has the narrator told you?”

“Well, it’s vague. Sometimes, I can’t tell” whose thoughts are whose “and sometimes, my thoughts and the narrator’s and the reader’s intertwine.” He strikes an interpretive position of thoughtful, cool, and sad, all at once. “It makes me sad. Almost like I can’t tell who I am. Who(se) *eye* am. It makes me sad.”

He waits. He is not quite sure *why* he is sad, stuck in this salacious pose. Neither is the narrator, nor the rest of the story. Thoughtfully, he muses that he must be sad for all the lives he lived, approximately a half a page ago, and returning here to fight on behalf of his existence is just too jarring.

“Here’s a bit of a tip. Those who speak in exactitudes, using...*language* in the Sunset Reality, where we currently are, shall find themselves \_\_\_\_.” Her mouth opens, but no sound is let out. “Even that sentence, which I’m sure you would vaguely understand, must be difficult. What I mean to say is, my existence as the Beauty Thief<sup>12</sup> *is* that of \_\_\_\_.”

“No, no. I understand. Somewhat. I just wish that things here were more absolute in this story.”

“They can be. Not yet, though. We’re in this moment and at this moment, dear, as linear beings. Once all of this is finished, when the pages are complete<sup>13</sup>, then we shall return to a time of un/timelessness, and finally become real in the ways we can only imagine. Speaking of, I wonder what Time herself would think of this..?” But she no longer has a desire to speculate, because now that she has one of the pages—

“*We*,” Nameless 01. interrupts. “We have the Pages of Our Existence.”

*We*, the Beauty Thief assumes, is such a word with complications. Especially in this story.

“I met a few other Contenders of Reality,” Nameless 01. begins. “Each one of them are...well, we already don’t exist, but I’d rather not *not exist* at a deeper level. In short, if you and I split up, we’ll be fighting against others who would treat this hunt for the pages as a convoluted battle royale. And some of them...” He pauses. “I’m lucky to be *alive*<sup>14</sup> after a few encounters, that’s all I’ll say.”

---

<sup>12</sup>Call her that. That is her introduction, Nameless 01..

<sup>13</sup>Gathered, bound, read, everything that a Forbidden Page can do/have done to it.

<sup>14</sup>Alive, but not quite.

“Charming. So, who have you met so far?” Truly, who?

“Met is a strong word. Especially in this story.” Truly, met.

Before Nameless 01. found the Beauty Thief, his brief interactions with the other Contenders of Reality looked something like this:

In the 11th District of the Night City, a silent spectre that calls itself the Synthetic Theatre—donned in wispy tattered cloak-like cloth-like material, color scheme’d in black-and-white, hooded with a ghostly glowing expression—pantomimes movements with its shadow claws, moving in an unfamiliar dance to Nameless 01.. It carries an ornate hand lantern, whose golden light, filtered from its amber stained-glass, is a stark contrast to the light of the Night City’s pale full moon. A few seconds later, upon being noticed, the Synthetic Theatre transforms into Nameless 01. and waves to the original. Nameless 01. flexes a pose, poses a flex; the Synthetic Theatre Nameless 01. does the same thing, and then promptly disappears, leaving Nameless 01. confused and wary.

In the 10th District of the Night City, there is an elusive garden enclosed by brick buildings, but it is not quite a garden. Rather, it is a Contender of Reality who cannot use a humanoid form. While flowers of all geometrical patterns and colors sway to a nonexistent breeze, Nameless 01. does not remember how he got there. There is a strange feeling in the air, haunting and poetic. It is so beautiful, is it not? Wooden doors surround the garden. Doors that stand there, without any walls to call home. Unconnected, like how the garden lacks a home. Silently, Nameless 01. leaves without another word despite its floral beckoning.

Although Nameless 01. attempts to remember the other Contenders of Reality traveling through the Night City, he realizes that the ones he cannot remember, at all, are the most dangerous<sup>15</sup>.

“So, there’s a spectre that transformed into you, and then left the area immediately?” How familiar.

“I was quite handsome, if I do say so myself.” Imagine handsomeness, and

Imagine

Beauty

In that way

We are alive

---

<sup>15</sup>Not yet relevant. Those dangerous ones. But we can imagine perceived danger. Especially for that which would, by its very nature, not be known and cause immediate doubt to their existence. For now, the Synthetic Theatre and the perhaps-garden/perhaps-adjacent-shift-shifter, shall be the only other Contenders of Reality in this story.

“Cheeky! I wonder if it was the Synthetic Theatre?” The Beauty Thief ponders. She knows of the Synthetic Theatre from a different story, that benign occult-egregoric creature whose realness is already a bit too much. And, if *it’s* here, then she wonders if her other friend—

“Anyways, I *know* there are others’ fighting for their existence, and they wouldn’t give a damn about who’s who and what’s up.”

“Well, perhaps, you’re imagining it?” The Beauty Thief laughs. “No, I kid, darling. So,” —she extends a hand, and immediately, he takes it—“oh, that was rather quick.”

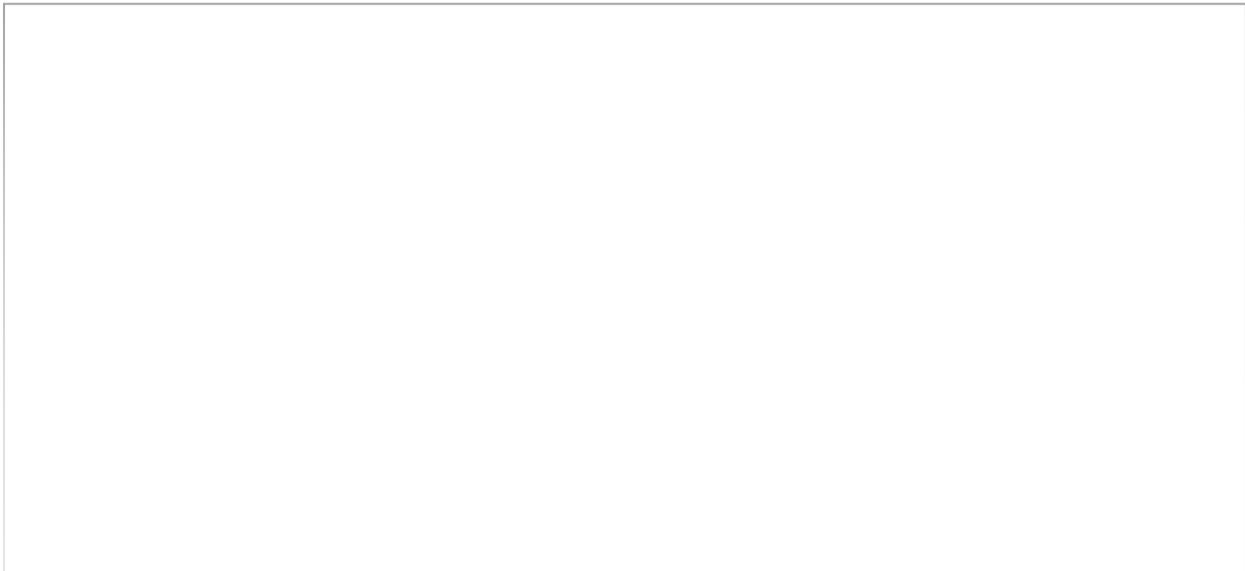
“You were going to say, *partners?* I’m assuming?” Nameless 01. asks.

The Beauty Thief, with her nonchalant smile, is beautiful underneath the moonlight. She stands there, simply, relishing in some much-needed conversation between herself and another who is not one of the invisible entities that watch the two of them converse.

“Now, I’m much more curious about that garden you encountered...”

Nameless 01. shrugs. “I’m more curious how we’re going to hide that page. We can’t just carry it around in the open like that. We’ll be prime targets.”

“Oh, look at you using logic in the Sunset Reality.”



And so, because that Page of Their Existence hides itself, the previous story is only vaguely related to this upcoming story. It is not yet time for the others' appearance<sup>16</sup>. That is because that "page" is selfish, and wishes both the Beauty Thief and Nameless 01. a chance to exist without the narrator. Now, the narrator will leave until the Night City can reconfigure itself once more.

And just like that, you can no longer witness the dream.

Scenes shift in your head. Distractions abound. The version in which you visualize these words in your thoughts (whether in actual words, sounds, or images)

demands

a different story.

A distraction.

Space.

**Scene 1:** The life of Nameless 01. Born as a child in a hospital.

**Scene 2:** The life of Nameless 01. Born as a plant in a nursery.

**Scene 3:** The life of Nameless 01. Born as a mannequin in a fashion store.

**Scene 4:** The life of Nameless 01. Born as a painting in an art museum.

**Scene 5:** The life of Nameless 01. Born as a spring in a forest.

**Scene 6:** The life of Nameless 01. Born as a water in a bottle.

**Scene 7:** The life of Nameless 01. Born as a good in the night.

**Scene 8:** The life of Nameless 01. Born as a \_\_\_\_\_ in a \_\_\_\_\_.

He returns to the Night City after this one.

The rest of his nigh-infinite lives are irrelevant.

The Beauty Thief's lives are next. Pay close attention.

**Scene 1:**

**Scene 2:**

**Scene 3:**

**Scene 4:**

**Scene 5:**

**Scene 6:**

**Scene 7:**

**Scene 8:**

- End

---

<sup>16</sup>But I can still be here, just for you.

We can return to the Night City.



A return to the Night City. Like waking in a dream. Except, the Night City is only half a dream. The other half is a Drifting Shore.

The Beauty Thief and Nameless 01. stand in front of a square device that pulsates with an ominous hum. It emanates the word *obstacle* and *threat*; nearby, a wall of electric plasma that blocks the path to the next page in the 12th district. The two break the strange apparatus with a kick (but do not need to do so, only for aesthetic reasons, of course) and enter the 12th district.

“Which district did you start in?” The Beauty Thief asks.

All conversation is simply to pass the time.

Nameless 01. hides the page inside a hidden pocket in clothing. The two have agreed on this during the page’s earlier censorship of the story<sup>17</sup>.

“Started in the 8th district, and I have no idea how I ended up here. I just knew that there was something known as ‘The Pages of \_\_\_\_\_ Existence’ and that if I found that, everything would be ‘right’<sup>18</sup> again.”

“But you still don’t know what they are?” The Beauty Thief cannot imagine Nameless 01. surviving without her at this rate.

---

<sup>17</sup>Now I have to assume it was censorship.

<sup>18</sup>Real.

“No, I know.” He pauses. “They feel instinctual. There’s something about each one of— ”

“Well, what they are is—”<sup>19</sup>



#### Fourteen Forbidden Pages: A Table of Contents

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ...1

01234567890...Image

A Poem...3

A Song...Pattern

A Video...Her, and It

The Book Fighting Itself...Regaining Control

Sir Real...Oh, you’re acting as the narrator, too? How dare—

???...9

Reader reading reader...10

A Punctiform Dot in the Middle...Paradox

A Pure Explanation...12

A Play...13

A literal missing page...14

Optional (But did not make it as a Forbidden Page): A page of symbols.

Venn diagram.

Graph.

---

<sup>19</sup>The pages will have their turn, and they already have. This is a timeless story. It never needed to happen, but it will, and it is. Time, like a labyrinth, but the walls do not exist but the people cannot see...

Etc.



“Does that make sense?” The Beauty Thief asks.

Nameless 01. contemplates for a moment.

The two have been walking for hours now, but now, paused  
in between  
walking, sit between two low lying walls in the 12th district, represented by this sentence.

It is a simple break; everything silently waits.

“So, the pages are *occult artifacts*—” Nameless 01. begins.

“Why the italics?” The Beauty Thief questions, albino eyebrow raised.

“—that are also stories. Weaponized, I think. So, whomever reads the pages...” Nameless 01. tilts his hooded head to the left-side-down, deep in thought. He does not complete his sentence.

“Yes, they’re dooming themselves,” the Beauty Thief finishes. She carefully calculates just how much information she can reveal. “But, in some ways, we’re dooming ourselves simply just by being here.”

“Cryptic.” He lies down. The sky is dark and empty. The moon is not visible from this  
in between.

“Should we warn the reader?” He turns to you, dear reader. What do you think?<sup>20</sup>

“Oh, hush. Let the reader be. Their role is complicated. In some ways, we’ll need them in the future, for the future, for our futures.”

“And past, and present. Despite everything being timeless,” Nameless 01. finishes.

“You’re catching on! Shall we continue? The other pages are waiting, hidden in the unlikeliest of places.” She withdraws cherry lipstick and carefully applies it to her lips. She never denies an opportunity for a brief touch-up.

Nameless 01. lays silent and turns to the Beauty Thief, the sound of his clothes making a specific sound in your head, akin to a sensuous *rustle*.

“There’s one more question I have...but we can talk about it later.”

The two leave the  
in between

space, continuing the journey. The next page that draws them forth, one you imagine as a multi-media interdisciplinary medium expression of art/science/words/etc., lies somewhere in the transitory space between the 12th and 11th district.

Just  
Like  
The  
Rest  
Of  
The  
Night  
City  
,  
The  
Buildings  
Are  
Tall.

“So far, everything’s empty.” The two link hands—blue gloves against black gloves—and waltz together and share their lucidity and awareness<sup>21</sup>. They focus on elegant movement with each other

---

<sup>20</sup>Would you want to stop this dream? Would you want to stop this story? Or is it going to continue, without your permission?

instead of everything else, which serves as an extra buffer against the drunken atmosphere of the Night City, Drifting Shore, and Sunset Reality combined. The quiet buildings of the 12th district, tall as every other building, watch the two Contenders dance, thinking, *it is better to distract oneself intentionally than the other way around.*

“That question earlier. Do you still remember it?” The Beauty Thief asks. She dips him, despite their height difference. Their eyes—the confrontation of their soul, despite Nameless 01. lacking eyes—meet.

“Oh, it was just about whether or not you knew what the pages *truly* were. I keep *looking* for them, but I have no idea why. And I know that they have the name Pages of \_\_\_\_\_ Existence.”

“But you already asked that.”

“Not really, I was idly speculating. And you’re hiding something.”

“Oh, dear, we all are. Just look at the  
spaces  
between  
our  
words.” Yes, she continues, everything and everyone is hiding something.

“I can’t give you a direct answer, given the nature of the Sunset Reality, under which the Drifting Shores fall, and under which, the Night City, well...have you ever considered that it doesn’t quite matter what answer I give you? Look around you, dear. We’re waltzing on these empty streets so we can talk to each other without falling prey to the insanity of this *occult artifact*.”

“What occult artifact? And why the italics?” The two roll and revolve around each other; the Night City attempts to interrupt their dance before the Beauty Thief can answer. No, no ballroom of logic here, the story demands. Is it the story, the narrator, the Sunset Reality, the Drifting Shore in the Sunset Reality, the Night City that’s a Drifting Shore in the Sunset Reality?

Because what is so fun about revealing everything ?<sup>22</sup>  
Aren’t plots supposed to follow a beginning ? A middle  
? An end ? Can’t we just have nonsense ? No  
structure , no anything . Because everything logical  
and calculated is not real . Not real . Not real

---

<sup>21</sup>I had to protect the two in the form of a waltz. Because the next upcoming Contender of Reality is difficult to explain and is dangerous in that their ability to \_\_\_\_\_ the story is \_\_\_\_\_. Danger incoming.

<sup>22</sup>This phenomenon of broken logic and order from the Sunset Reality is dangerous. But then again, everything with a so-called structure has always been frail.

. So fragile ; not real . n o t r e  
a l .

The invisible entities watch silently, curiously. They watch and wade in their own presence like some blobby sapient shadow, where the darkness of the alleyways and opaque windows is nothing more than an undulating background to the two Contender's waltz, gently swaying in intangibility, gently swaying in the shadows of the glorious good night.

Focus, Beauty Thief! Focus, Nameless 01.! I, the Narrator, shall join your waltz, and allow you a brief moment of respite.

...has an inherent resistance to structure, and that's where the \_\_\_\_\_ wanders its relevance to each one, thus making it difficult, dear, to talk about them; but it isn't just the pages either... The Beauty Thief says.

...Oh! I understand now. Nameless 01. responds.

The two continue their waltz<sup>23</sup>, but slowly the onslaught of nonsense and vague and far-off feelings slowly wears down the logistics of logic.

Here is what they said, as translated by the narrator, while there is still time, while he can still exist in the displacement of their rotations.

“If you find the Pages of \_\_\_\_\_<sup>24</sup> Existence, then whoever collects them all will have a chance at existing in the real world. However, each page has an inherent resistance to structure and logic, and that's where the \_\_\_\_\_ wanders its relevance to each one, thus making it difficult, dear, to talk about them; but it isn't just pages either.”

No, it is also the nature of the Sunset Reality.

“Oh! I understand now.” At least, he understands as much as he can.

The two finish their fragmented conversation and end their dance with a flourish of diamonds and roses, courtesy of the Beauty Thief. There is an imagined spotlight on them. Together, they are frozen and look at the reader, who waits for their next move.

“Excellent waltz Nameless 01., narrator, and reader, but now get ready—someone's been watching us this entire time, and once we let go of our hands, of each other, I imagine we shall all be attacked.

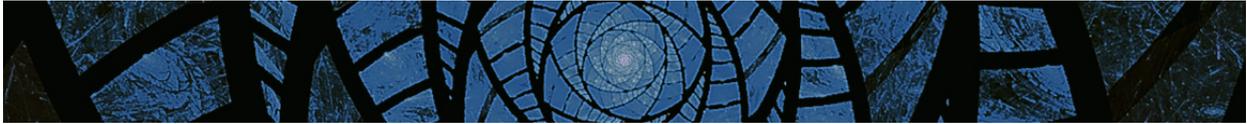
---

<sup>23</sup>And how do you imagine that waltz against the onslaught of nonsense? There are so many types of waltzes. I imagine theirs as mutual collaboration, filled with a bombastic reality, really.

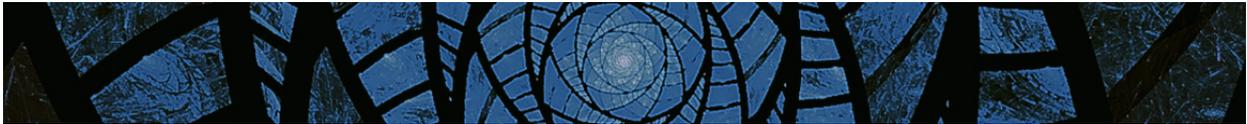
<sup>24</sup>*Your*, it's always *your*, and you, and many others. *You, you, you!* Whose?

This *someone*, whomever they are, is *something* that neither narrator nor story nor reader can see. How riveting.”

Get ready<sup>25</sup>.



**Charm Chandler** is a lover of words and lives in the Sunset Reality. When he is not writing, he is perpetually confused. He has a bachelor's degree in English. He has work in *Vita Poetica* and work forthcoming in *Fleas on the Dog*.



---

<sup>25</sup>I am here ...