

Controls #133: Mental Pushups (I'm Sorry):

(Technique Type: Control and Strength Training)

Prerequisite:

- This doesn't have a prerequisite because it is a prerequisite, to being effective.
- Solving is the battle form of what I'm about to teach you. This is the multipurpose way of training yourself to mastery.

Notes:

- Take your medicine so you can't so easily be beaten up by nonsense.
- May speed up solving times SIGNIFICANTLY, along with control, which is really the main thing.
- You'll notice that my best exercises, meaning the ones that produce the strongest effects, are often full of fluff.
- It feels wrong not to discourage people who are waiting in line for scuba gear, or browsing on their phones at a bus stop, from stumbling idly upon their undoing...conveniently located on one or two helpful pages...you know...Blah, blah, blah, written in purple font, under a recipe for vegan spring rolls...while they miss the important warnings due to worldly time constraints.
- I repeat myself often because teaching matters more to me than being a skilled novelist, and teachers repeat themselves until the lesson is instilled, not just once, concisely, with perfect delivery.
- I want you to remember my LOUD STERN CAPS when you stray from proper technique. The voxes seem to hate this, but many of the Trusteds find it a good idea.

- Ultimately, mental pushups lead to various forms of emotional mastery if used with discipline and courage.
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The Technique:

1. Choose any two opposite or clearly different concepts.

- Cat-dog, fast-slow, dry-wet, pink-green.
- Up-down, hot-cold, and other physical ones are good starters.

My personal workout list is:

- Walking through water / walking on land
- Up elevator / down elevator
- Cold dry climate / hot humid climate
- Cat / Dog
- Happiest person in the world / Saddest person in the world

- Note: I travel from the physical end to the conceptual end. It helps you feel the spectrum in your body better if you don't start with abstract emotional sensations.

Essentially, I taught you solving before this for a few reasons:

- Seeing is believing is one reason. I don't want you to give up before you see something IQ believe in. Giving you nothing but exhausting boring pushups on the first day might deter would-be dojo elites from starting in the first place.
- Secondly, if someone in there bothers you, you can deal with it right off the bat with proper protocol. You know important things now, like not to kill everything, and not to worship the creatures that approach you. Go you! <3
- Thirdly, this is abstract and set aside from the normal game plotline. You don't usually start an RPG in possession of a training pod for working up slow, painful, experience points that don't require hunting.
- Later in some games, you might welcome one, as you may want to be eating beef jerky and watching a movie on your phone, while grinding experience points with the other hand.
- Do try and restrict yourself to no more than one extra activity while you grind points, and choose an extra activity with LOW emotional content, unless you plan on making the emotion part of the activity.
- For your first level, though, you should be fighting forest gelatin and bats or something, shouldn't you? At least until it gets boring, mindless, and repetitive? Explore the area? Find a few caves you can't open?

Note on choosing a party:

- Some of the best guides may be loud, mean, selfish, and offensive, but they never cease to teach you what to do, and what not to do in life. Actually, the scariest thing I've faced often used terms like "oh my," "goodness!", and "inconsequential". Politeness is no gauge, is what I'm saying.
- A good Trusted will teach you to watch and listen closely before acting. It may do so by pranking, or otherwise screwing with you, during the lulls in your quests. This is valuable too.
- Mine taught me how to argue, which is only useful for people who were once devoid of the ability to argue, like I nearly was...

- Trusteds can be worn as copilots later in my method. Don't try it yet.
- This is an amazingly powerful feeling. Learn to feel who is really acting in your best interest early on, or pay the price.
- I am now teaching you subtle feeling skills. Don't encourage the actual wearing of Trusteds for quite a while, until you've mastered this and read my later technique well.
- Don't encourage Outsiders' effects. Again. If you chose to hire me as an exorcist, I'd be like a tied-up lifeguard, shouting helpful swimming tips at you as you drown.
- DON'T enter the deep water before learning to swim.
- I'm no doctor or demon expert, and theoretical exorcism research doesn't exactly qualify me to help spirits out of people, if that's what you believe is in you. I'm open to lots of interpretations of many things. Several years ago, a
- The least human Inners and Invisible Outers have an unusual metaphorical or symbolic slant to most things. I can work with varying beliefs that respect them, but it's hard to make something budge if it feels persecuted itself.

The friendly might-be-a-poltergeist:

- I've turned around with my family members to discover an approximately 2 lb metal vent cover neatly pulled inches out of the shag-carpeted floor, and neatly placed upright beside the hole, revealing my sister's missing eraser.
- At the time, she was amazed, as she said she'd spent a long time searching for it.
- The three of us were each other's alibis. We were all turned away when it happened, standing side-by-side. We all saw the vent after the fact, too. None of us heard it.

- Besides that, these are two people who won't watch a ghost movie unless other people recommend a tame one on Halloween. They are sensible people who only prank people in non-traumatic ways they can handle in return. This isn't something they would gang up and do to me, as I like ghost movies, and they couldn't handle receiving a ghost prank themselves.
- They would also be unable not to come clean shortly after something like that, if it was even within their repertoire to ghost-prank someone, which it isn't.
- The logical explanation was...the dog.
- Somehow, a Cocker Spaniel attached to a metal vent cover seemed as though it should make some kind of noise. Especially under the circumstances.
- Here are the facts: The dog hadn't made a peep, the vent cover was oh-so-lightly embedded in fringes of shag carpet, and, after the fact, the vent cover was neatly placed upright.
- In all seriousness, the conditions would have logically required the dog to catch a nail on an unlikely exposed edge, somehow managing to flip the cover with enough force to successfully turn the 2 lb metal object upside-down AND back over again, all in near-perfect silence.
- At this point, perhaps the most logical conclusion is that some unusual electrical activity happened in the nearby microwave, causing some kind of unknown electromagnetic anomaly that was strong enough to lift a 2 lb vent cover inches out of a shag carpeted floor, and place it neatly to the side, in perfect silence, as the dog slept quietly under the piano bench.
- So the answer is yes, I believe there was another intelligent being in that house that day that we couldn't see.
- That wasn't the only thing that happened in that house that had no scientific basis we could come up with. My family tried very hard to find scientific explanations to alleviate their spirit phobias when these things happened.
- We went over dozens of half-assed scientific theories.

- This wasn't even nearly as scary as the time my neighbour and I heard someone running back and forth, rapidly, without a natural pause, before 6 am, upstairs, in the empty suite above the hall between us.
- We just opened our doors and stared at each other before looking up with our mouths hanging open.
- If science was involved in that one, we should have called the police, but instead, we asked to snoop the amused guy's tiny apartment, and found no sign of another person.
- Yes. I believe. I won't judge your maybe-a-poltergeist, either, until I work out realistic scientific explanations for each illogical component of all the weird shit I've experienced.
- How can I, in good conscience, after what I've been through, claim that you haven't experienced a spirit visitation yourself?
- I'll accept a trick of my own eyes, or a personal error of some kind, but I've shared most of my poltergeist experiences with friends and loved ones.

So, you see, I'm NOT an exorcist:

- "Swim towards the edge! Move your arms more! Don't stop kicking!"
- Don't agree to let anything Outside, Inside, as you wouldn't jump in the deep end if you didn't know how to swim.
- I'm a coach, not a lifeguard.
- Listen early. Do pushups that don't include attempted fucking with the spirit realm.

Advanced Application:

- You can try performing this exercise on actual emotional issues and boss figures later, but then you'll have to multitask as you'll be dealing with a live and unpredictable concept.
- It moves something as you try to move something else, is the gist of the problem.
- Don't learn this way. It'll be slow learning, and bad questing.
- It'll give low experience, prove energy-sapping, and be prone to mistakes.
- It'll burden you with TONS of cleanup later, too, as it will give you bad habits in both skills.
- Excellent advanced skill, but, to be metaphorical about things, to use pushups as a solving attack as a beginner is to cycle for the very first time, hands-free, over homemade jumps, and during a rain storm.
- ...I can think of nowhere else in life where pushups qualify as an attack...

What are the best pushups to do?:

- For now, any two concepts that are not the same will do.
- Leave out emotional things as a beginner, and start with thoughts of physical things, if you want. Your ability to produce certain sensations at will should start to become very good with practice.
- Later, when you learn situps, we will increase the effect a great deal.

- ...I can think of nowhere else in life where learning pushups is required before learning situps...
- However, I'd almost make it a rule..Become half-decent at pushups to pass Level 1. Situps is essentially Level 2.
- To recap, yes, physical senses are the easiest to do pushups with first.
- Next, come emotional or conceptual.
- My favourite simple rep set combines physical and conceptual, so I'm going to interrupt this exercise to give it to you:

Clean Cup / Dirty Cup

- Imagine viewing a cup on the table, but from the side, so its contents are hidden.
- Note how your body feels as you view the cup, of unknown contents.
- Now, look inside and find it clean and empty.
- Note how the sensations in your body change as you discover this.
- Now, do this with another imaginary cup. Note how your body feels as you view it from the side, not knowing its contents.
- Now, look inside and find that it isn't clean yet. Note how the sensations in your body change as you discover this.
- Do a number of reps appropriate to your level. To accomplish this, don't exceed a drop in temperature. Likewise, don't exceed a state of confused drowsiness.

From physical to emotional pushups:

- Mastering physical perception takes a very long time, but is a path of not-so-painful endurance. I'm not nearly finished, but I work at improving it here and there.
- Emotional perception is faster, but more difficult and prone to pain.
- Once you master some emotional control, you can have confidence in even the most intimidating non-physical scenarios, like meeting in-laws or public speaking.
- You'll understand how, soon. For now, just know that accessing something in a controlled manner teaches us to have better control over it later...

2. To develop your Inner senses and mooded languages (the main skills humans are supposedly terrible at), alternate between thinking of your two concepts, in their most basic states.

- By this, I mean by using as few reasoning skills, words, or even SENSES as possible.
- To speak Mood languages fluently, begin by attempting to use only the SENSATIONS concepts create in your body.
- Reduce it all down to tactile focus on abstract feelings.
- Tingles, movement, changes in temperature, and small tensions in the torso and head are all helpful.
- These are going to be used as triggering sensations soon, or focus centres for achieving this state again more quickly, so pay attention.

- "Clean cup" might produce a slackness behind your eyes, while "dirty cup" might make your thumb tingle slightly. Remembering the sensation helps with the concept. "Clean cup" may help you reach "the zone" while washing the dishes more often.
- As you get better at the skill, producing small sensations from memory will enable you to selectively overhaul your current main sensation.
- For those who flinch from emotions, there IS a point in this for you. With some hard work, you may one day be capable of choosing to feel like you're eating expensive chocolate in a sports car while you're browsing the expiry dates of cranberry juice in a grocery store.
- As a "muscle", it should take some serious work for it to become effective and responsive to this degree. The person mentally eating chocolate all the time is an emotional body builder. One who has also been to some dark corners of the psyche.
- I've gotten sick a few times on improper use.
- Trust me. Whatever chemical, or electrical signal, or whatever it is that you're learning to release is finite.
- However, in my personal experience, you can develop a better reservoir if you're patient enough to do daily work within your personal limits, without pulling anything.

A note on mood disorders:

- A special exercise has been adapted later for depressive and anxious states, so don't worry if the emotional component of this one is a bad fit right now.
- Work on the physical concepts only, if the emotional ones make it worse, and we'll get to a few tactics that helped me over my several-year depressive-anxious slump later on.
- Maybe they can help you as well.

- As it usually turns out, the negative component of the emotional exercises I recommend is going to do you more good than the positive component for a while.

Stillness:

3. The main thing is a few seconds of stillness on each concept. This beefs up your fine control.

- Being able to fly a plane up or down well is great, but if you never learn to level it out to a normal angle, you aren't going to succeed as pilot.
- Poor example, granted, but gives you a better idea what I'm talking about. I'm talking about your Inner landings, and keeping the plane level.
- You may increase transition speed later on.
- Not now. Our main focus is to decide when the mind moves, and when it stands still, filtering into our ability to not only encourage certain sensations at will, but to maintain them.
- Simply reaching a sensation doesn't achieve sufficient stillness. We want to be able to keep a desired effect IN FOCUS later.
- This is a dojo. We want mastery.
- We don't want effects like: "Where is it?.....THERE IT IS!...THERE IT IS!...THERE IT IS AGAIN!! Wait...Where'd it—THERE IT IS!!"
- Swirling around in a conceptual chaos that never stands still is not your friend.
- I tried it. To call it unfathomably terrible is overrating it.
- Therefore, in the beginning, alternate about once every 30 seconds to a minute. Do it for longer if the feeling doesn't centre well, or pick another image to work on.

- Stillness before transitioning.
- Remember. Feel the shift in how your body feels as you alternate. Then keep it perfectly still.
- These feelings are your language skills as well as your muscles. If you can remove all senses from the equation but the inner one, keep only that.
- You'll know you're improving when you begin to reach the same sensation more powerfully and more quickly with less fatigue, and can hold it for longer.
- When you're GOOD AT IT, you can work on intensive transitioning, meaning much faster pushups.
- Just keep in mind, no matter how good you get, ALWAYS MAINTAIN A STILL COMPONENT OF AT LEAST A FEW SECONDS, at least occasionally throughout each practice.
- Transitioning alone is no way to live, and practising perpetual transition with no stillness just leads to a lot of suffering and skill cleanup.
- Get a feel for how many reps it takes you to begin to feel tired. It may only be a few at first. Some may want to make a note of it to map later progress.

Overdose Symptoms:

- Tired, then cold, weak, headache, fever, vomiting, is basically the breakdown of it, daredevils. It isn't cute, epic, or fun to go too far.
- Note to the depressed who wish to begin emotional pushups: If no positive feeling comes out, you can optionally continue to work on the positive "muscle" until the dark opposite inevitably comes out swinging. Even if nothing positive happens yet, we're building muscles to use later on.

- I've added a personal technique for mood disorders later on. This note is just basic...

Note to gamers:

- Congratulations! You've reached Level 2!
- Once you've worked up some XP you can really start to level up some skills, but if you can't control them, they can cause negative status effects.
- How do you know when you're ready for a boss? You'll be sent to find it, it will show up, or it will be a trial of circumstances.
- In the Story Game, the correct level boss stage can almost be counted on to find you...You heard me right.
- You're not ultimately the game master here, though you maintain the right to say "no way in HELL I'm going through that door yet" as much as you want, which is vital to remember.
- Correct decision-making is part of levelling up in the game.
- Your brains, heart, and heroic nature may be put to the test, by intelligent Inner beings who don't feel like you. Who they are is irrelevant. They are super-geniuses compared to us.

Defeating a boss stage:

- Negative status effects range from the emotional to the physical, and the temporary to the permanent, so I recommend simply levelling up to the point where you feel you've ruled them out before starting out at high power.
- Depending on who you are, boss stages can range from a snippy librarian to a dinosaur that breathes space ice through its ass.

- Your story, your boss style.
- Important issues may surface and demand sudden obsessive attention during a boss process. To defeat the boss, these must be reincorporated into your life, or reconfigured into a new way of living your life.
- Again, this is a boss stage, meaning each layer of a boss must be passed before you can access the next region of your world.
- If troubling ideas aren't reincorporated, they must die a slow death by grief and acceptance alone, which can, you guessed it, cause some low mood effect. This can cycle for an indeterminate amount of time, blocking you from certain regions and certain abilities. This is a standard human approach to boss stages.
- My techniques ironically lead to "getting over it", while many standard approaches lead to suppressive reconfiguration. The standard human approach sweeps the broken glass under a rug so it looks like it isn't still a problem, leading to never "getting over it".
- "It's okay to sweep it under the rug. I don't have to walk on that rug anymore".
- This makes you more of a suffering hoarder than a pillar of emotional strength. When I was like that, my body got so tense, certain muscles nearly lost feeling.
- Use my techniques with courage and discretion, and support in place early if there's even a chance you think you'll need it.
- Don't agree to a boss phase if you're told you're nearly ready. That's like heading off nearly ready to climb a mountain or fly a plane.
- What if the only thing you forgot to learn was how to come back down safely?
- Your Trusteds will warn you of risks. Don't take risks until you're ready. This may be a game, but it isn't a toy.

- When you overcome an issue, you may produce strange-smelling sweat for a day or two, which is followed by clearer skin and feeling wonderfully alive... At least, I've gotten detox-cleanse-like symptoms during the final stages of a number of my inner adventures.
- Strange, and temporarily annoying, but I'm not complaining about the results.

Building Muscles:

- Our ability not to see a negative emotion as a threat is a "muscle" with a lot of beneficial uses.
- Working through the dark opposite leads back to the desired feeling, as learning the "muscle" for the dark feeling helps us to stop seeing it as a threat.
- Rather, we can see it as a natural function of negative release, like going to the bathroom.
- This nullifies the fight or flight impact, which reduces stress hormones like cortisol, which allows the body to replenish itself instead of fend for itself, which gradually increases health, and reduces depression.
- Not a doctor. Look this shit up.
- It's pretty simple.
- Stress produces cortisol.
- Cortisol is a health risk.
- Ergo, making stressors no longer permanent stressors can therefore improve health by limiting the release of cortisol...

Inner Work:

- Usually, the art of re-integrating stressors into healthy emotions is referred to as being "psychoanalytical".
- Logically, it can't be proven that it works, as some level of universality is required to prove anything.
- Proving that psychoanalytical techniques work is like proving that taking karate makes you better at defending yourself than people who haven't taken karate.
- How you attempt to measure something can skew the results you seek.
- Let's say a scientist only had statistics on karate injuries and mortality rates to work with.
- Taking into account the number of people still alive and uninjured who have taken karate, one may find major discrepancies due to those injured while sparring.
- Paired with data on the survival rates of weapon-owners, and those with security systems, a scientist might conclude that karate's alleged effects on safety and security are false, classifying its use as nothing more than coincidence founded on a superstitious hoax.
- From here, we can conclude that only irrational people would believe in karate.
- When it comes to those who doubt the abilities of psychoanalytical work, these people aren't taking into account that performing it correctly utilizes very difficult skills, the skill level of which can't be assessed visibly.
- The teacher's skill level therefore can't be determined, and the student's can't either. Half the data pool, or more, might be "white belts".
- With no visible method of ascertaining skill level, there is therefore no skill-ranking process for what is entirely a skill-based discipline.

- This means that anyone working on any kind of psychoanalytical discipline can be expected to come with a random level of skill. This level will be based on personal use, not personal study.
- This means that certification means about as much as a black belt gleaned purely from reading about karate.
- This unknown skill level will ultimately determine the person's results.
- We are therefore including large numbers of the terribly unskilled and the improperly trained in our estimation psychoanalytical disciplines.
- In karate, the flaky beginners who find it too hard to go on after the first few months greatly outnumber the skilled students. After all, only a few are disciplined enough to continue for long, but almost everyone thinks it looks cool to begin with.
- As beginners make up the bulk of karate students, we can safely assume that a scientist who wasn't provided with data on health or athletic endurance (just data on survivors and injuries) would come to view the effectiveness of karate as prone to random chance, and the worst kind of superstitious hoax.

Back to health:

- Stress produces cortisol. Fact. Making stressors into non-stressors reduces overall stress. Fact. Reducing stress reduces cortisol. Fact. Reducing cortisol improves health and raises mood. Fact. Not everyone is good at this. Fact.
- Taking lessons in karate produces athletic endurance when done with enough discipline. Based on aptitude, students may be more or less capable of defending themselves. Based on temperament, they may use it to enter more or fewer altercations. Based on the attacker, they may have no advantage, or a big one. Some may be injured during the learning process in ways that couch potatoes won't be.
- Without seeing all this subjective yet vital data, the "truth" will be: "On average, karate is a hoax".

- We need to be *more scientific* about *being* scientific. Dogma occurs in science when *measurement methods fail to make sense, yet results hold sway, based entirely on the likelihood of preconceived expectations, and the resulting blind speculation.*
- Science needs to pay more attention to its own irrationality, and willingness to name something "*scientific*" simply because enough people believe in it, often due to *improper testing procedures* that morph themselves into twisted doctrine.

On the chemical end:

- Yes, I'm a big fan of knowing *why* something is the way it is.
- Is it true? Is it simply convenient? It is profitable, or cheap? Does it interfere with the production of another product?
- I always recommend you do your own research. Science contains error, and it's *ridiculous* to think that test results aren't occasionally *bribed* into error.
- Look up *cortisol* and *serotonin* and what *impacts* them...Despite misconceptions, most medications *don't boost happy chemicals* like serotonin, but *regulate* how your *current levels are doled out.*
- *Again. Look it up. I'm on a personal rant as a not-a-doctor.* There's little to no difference between believing in re-uptake inhibition as a way to give you *fresh serotonin* and believing in magical cookie gnomes spiking your brain with goodness pellets while you sleep.
- The *closest thing* to cookie gnomes is *Tryptophan*, which might be the basis of some *cheese cravings*, and *Vitamins* like *B and C.*
- *Turmeric* is *also* helpful.
- Look stuff up.

- Ooh, and magnesium. Don't forget magnesium.
- I'm an arts nerd, off on an artistic bender right now, not a bibliographer of medicine.
- I'm telling you what I use, not remembering where I learned to use it, the first source often being a long lost personal contact or shop attendant.
- No one can dock 5% from my final mark for poorly cited shop attendant memories resulting in unqualified pharmaceutical advice that is also satirical in many regards.
- I'm a not-a-doctor. Don't trust me with your diet. Research.
- Some of my vitamins I merely suspected based on my diet, and corroborated with research and slow self-testing.
- Argue with me all you want. I'm unqualified. I've already told you to treat this section as unqualified.
- Look up "side effects" before using anything, even deodorant. Look up what makes it work. Look up the unknowns. For the love of fuck, people, I'm encouraging you to learn!

I'm strict about one thing:

- When it comes to improper use of the Story Game, I'm a strict hardass from experience.
- I find you turning away preferential to having you come back to me sensorily crippled and outraged from recklessly ignoring my warnings.
- Daredevils may claim it's because they didn't know WHY they shouldn't do something mind-altering for eighteen hours.

- How could THAT be dangerous...?
- Well, I told you.
- For those who proceed responsibly, slow but gradual improvement should be more than obvious.
- This isn't dwelling on anything, to be clear, but actively exercising the "muscle" at its source until the muscle becomes non-threatening and usable.
- A feeling can be something we do rather than something that happens to us, and it doesn't have to fester and half-hurt forever.
- Another example...
- If positivity is food, negativity is the unpleasant exercise that turns it into muscle.
- You can't expect to feel healthy from taking in food energy alone, even if it's more enjoyable than exercise, and you don't feel sore after doing it.

Some won't succeed:

- Some will find Yogic and Buddhist meditation methods a more natural pace. I teach emotional martial arts, not jogging, and twisted ankles happen more often in my class. Error is more likely on my terrain, and the path is more hazardous.

4. Practice to the point of light fatigue. LIGHT. This is endurance training, not two dollars a play for whack-a-mole. Be respectful when your body or mind says "no".

- Note: Looking back on my old material, this exercise isn't given to Cat for a while yet.

- The old story takes place in 2011. A year or two from now, at the earliest, she'll start to use mental pushups.
- Not having it back then was unfortunate. Consider yourself lucky this didn't take you six years to stumble across yourself, because the unexpected hangovers of invention are also not your friend...

Benefits:

- Better Inner awareness.
- More vivid Inner senses.
- Better connection with emotions.
- Better defence.
- Better everything.

- One step nearer to lovely taste of Samadhi

- Just take your medicine and do your reps. You'll only regret it until it's awesome.

Fun tip:

- Perfect emotionless strength is achieved through journeying into the depths of your own fear, anger, and sadness.
- When you figure out there's nothing to fear, the pain reveals itself as a "muscle" you command.

- I know, logically, you know that spilling orange soda on your coworker won't drive you to drop dead of embarrassment, but your body needs proof. That's part the time-based immersion, leading to emotional levelling.
- If you can stand the sensation of the incident for thirty seconds, it will likely stop bothering you when you stumble across it later by accident. This means all the energy you spent avoiding it is yours again.
- Basic understanding doesn't mean never being sad again. It is merely emotional bowel control in a world full of people who hold in and let loose at random, or use substances as a laxative and just wait somewhere safe for the emotions to clear themselves.
- You can let something be painful for a few extra seconds, then let it go forever. It won't lurk around every corner like an evil jack-in-the-box, waiting to startle you every time you stumble upon a reminder.
- You are now emotionally efficient and clean. Sadness is like muscle stiffness. It comes and passes as you let it.

Emotional Mastery:

- You'll be the level-headed stoic...for the emotions you've mastered, anyways...
- Poorly controlled emotions in progress may have all the subtlety of a children's show puppet losing its shit. Be responsible. It's all on you if you push yourself too far before the muscle is developed.
- Drink water. Eat or sleep it off. Whatever you did for your last hangover should suffice for most things...
- To those who "master" emotions by avoiding them, you have not mastered them.
- Why not? Avoiding lions doesn't make you the world's best lion tamer. Everyone will believe your claims to fearless lion mastery until you meet a lion in front of them. The odds are, you'll find yourself crying or throwing kitchen utensils at it as you bargain with it like you think it can understand you.

- No...Avoiding lions just makes you very skilled at being in places that don't contain lions. Nothing more.
- If you learn to sit in the depths of your own fear of loss or death until it no longer makes you sweat, cry, or shake, what horror of a post-apocalyptic job interview could ever put you on edge again? What burglar could make you lose your cool?
- No one ever said adversity makes you weak. Lack of experience, mastery, and control, under adversity, however...

The day I almost disappeared:

- It was dark and isolated. The physical world, not the Inner one. New Westminster. I was in my twenties, walking late, in an unfamiliar part of the city.
- I think it took me a few minutes to notice.
- A vehicle with a few men in it circled the block more than once, watching me, then driving away.
- They'd watch from twenty feet away, drive off, then return to repeat the process.
- I tried to pass it off as paranoia for a while (so I could manage to not lose my cool until I found a coffee shop or somewhere less isolated to call a ride).
- Just rows of apartments full of sleeping people stretched for about two giant blocks around the nearest corner.
- Back was worse.
- Darker, quieter, and further.

- It was minutes to safety in any direction.
- The SUV got WAY closer the last time it neared me, ten to fifteen feet away, and slowed to a near-idle just behind me out of sight (but not out of earshot).
- I think it was forest green, and I'm pretty sure the back windows were tinted, but tried not to look at the vehicle or anyone inside it too closely. I feared if the men knew I'd noticed them, they'd jump out to get me.
- A panic started to set in, as I was sure now that they were after me. I was sure that I was going to wind up dead if I didn't come up with a plan for escape—
- —Then Lee "snapped on" instead of me.
- After mastering a later technique, I knew generally how to let him, with effort, but this was a sudden, forceful takeover.
- My heart calmed like a safe, warm, afternoon. I felt almost no threat.
- Now they wouldn't know I'd spotted them, he told me.
- He strode us calmly up a path to the nearest apartment building and pretended to dial a number into the intercom.
- We waited, casually, moving like we were mildly impatient to be buzzed up to see our non-existent "friend" ...until the car could be heard pulling away for good.
- Lee receded. I waited for a while out of sight, then I got the hell out of there to a safe public place.

What was THAT technique, and why are you mentioning it during THIS one?:

- Wearing figures is an advanced extension of pushups to be used only with those you have an extremely good reason to trust. The technique will be described in detail later.

- That terrifying brush with an SUVful of suspicious strangers may have been the night I cemented wearing Lee, as a usable skill.
- Pushups will prepare you for later, better skills. I'll save the proper body-sharing exercise for another time, but it's good to know what's ahead a little, is it not? Why pushups are worth it?
- Things could have gone much differently. If those men had found me running, panicking, button-mashing, and banging on doors like I'd really wanted to, I likely would have disappeared into that vehicle forever.
- One of the reasons I, as Danna might call it, "put up with" Lee as my husband is because he saved my flesh-and-blood human life that day, and I'll never forget it.
- He gets more lenience when he lies and screws with me than anyone else in either world.
- I've noticed that coddling him in any way has proven to be a bad mistake, so I usually just give him a reflection of how he treats me these days.
- It's given me some human backbone as well, by proximity, and given him a few limits on his power-mongering.
- We learn some helpful things from each other. We only seem not to care about each other when we bicker.

Note regarding efficiency:

- If you're serious about proceeding, you WILL learn to do emotional reps at some point.
- If meditating on the positive was lying down peacefully, and meditating on the negative was holding yourself up off the floor, you would have the two pushup positions.
- Neither makes you strong quickly on its own.

- Twenty reps is twenty ups and downs, which is mentally back-breaking when you first try it...much easier with physical trigger images early on.
- And remember, half a pushup isn't a pushup. I WANT TO SEE SOME REPS, PEOPLE!!
- You'll strengthen fast...so beware fast effects...
- For example, if you try to stop being too nice, you can bulk up into an ice cold asshole too quickly without pacing and respect.
- Why? You aren't going to grow into that behaviour gracefully overnight, so it's going to freak people out, and then you'll have more things to solve.

Side Effects:

- Intensified Inner experience.
- Cold body, fatigue, or headache in excess.
- You know. The hangover-like thing.
- In rare cases, may enter an unexpected auto-solve. This is to say, you might spontaneously find yourself faced with multiple boss stages at once.
- Auto-solving issues will be related to an image you bring to the surface, so choose somewhat carefully, knowing what triggers you.
- I may make auto-solves sound hazardous, but the unexpected ones are often the most constructive, and should be viewed as a gift.
- I recommend dropping everything aside from, say, a fire, a drop-in visit from your boss, or the urgent cries of your children, and going after the solve if this happens.

- The exercise may deplete your hydration and salt levels. If headache occurs, try water or broth, or use your own hangover remedy.

A note on substances:

- I rarely drink, usually only when coaxed to during a birthday or New Year, making my real hangovers VERY memorable.
- All the same things work.
- Smoking pot and drinking can both make the Inners communicate better, as these substances bring your censors down to a slow and groggy level.
- I don't recommend you add substances to practice, but I also don't recommend that you choose the beginning of your Story Game adventure to quit any substances.
- Yes. Some substances help you to bypass your Inner censorship. So does waking up in the middle of the night, if you're into sobriety, which makes later things simpler as a bonus.
- My main worry is avoiding the problem of mistaking substance effects for meditative ones. To accomplish this, no changes in substance use should occur at the outset of a new technique. Avoid both excess and withdrawal. Do as you see fit beyond that.
- Various mind-altered states teach detachment at varying levels of conscious awareness.
- Detachment skills are as inwardly useful as your ability to put something down after picking it up.
- With practice, that detachment can also be made into a "muscle" with pushups. However, in all reality, learning to focus on not being focused is a big task.

- For this, I recommend using your groggy morning waking state as a guideline for reproducing the effect.
- As for certain fun aspects...Not all chemical effects can be psychologically reproduced, due to physical human limitations, but some can. Be careful. Ensure you can turn off anything you can turn on before you make it powerful.
- Emotional pushups under the influence aren't always going to be of the same quality as sober ones. Just remember...a drunk emotional pushup is basically a knee pushup, and if you're going to give me knee pushups, I'm going to ask for double your normal reps, plus adequate water.
- I'm definitely not encouraging anyone to take up alcoholism or whatever.
- What I am doing is encouraging you not to immediately alter your current routine, as some meditative schools will insist you do from the get-go.
- Ideally, training wheels come off once you've mastered the basics, rendering a substance's effects unnecessary. This isn't a rule for everyone, though.
- If you never find the need to work with substances, so much the better, but changing your current routine WILL be a boss stage, so prepare yourself for the task.
- I'm not a cold turkey dojo. I recognize that suffering people do what works. Just keep it at its current level, or improve it when safe to do so.
- Some levels of consciousness are either closed to, or enhanced by, various substances, nearly all of which I haven't tried due to genetic light-weightedness...and testimony from blood relations that God will bat me into the mountains with a telephone pole if I ever trip on anything serious.
- I can't guide you on substances, as I can't exorcise your house. I've heard of ayahuasca, but don't even know what it looks like. I've always been too scared to try peyote. Find someone else to do that, if that's what you're looking for. You'll get no helpful advice from me.

- I can guide you on some pretty intense natural brain chemical adventures without substance, however...
- ...Mmm...Samadhi...Seven minutes is like five continuous orgasms, yet peaceful like the purest mountain spring water. Like you're eating an endless plate of the most delicious food as you bask in that pleasure. Rare and wonderful. Timeless and endless, if only for a moment. Sweet, sweet, delicious Samadhi.

In Case of Severe Focal Overdose:

- Hahaha...ha...ha...
- If you die attempting this, it's because you can (super-humanly) meditate exceptionally well, while simultaneously blacking out or dry-heaving, and can manage to do so for over (I'm guessing) ten hours or something as you actively dehydrate and die from ignoring it.
- You may as well die of thirst from forgetting to drink liquids, in reality.
- If you want to die in a similar way, but faster, play tennis until you die, preferably in the sun.
- I'm not talking to suicidal people. In fact, the suicidal usually just think about existence more than most people, and haven't thought themselves back out yet, which can make them emotionally indestructible when they succeed. The suicidal are feeling tender in the face of the world's state of pain and depravity. They actually look around themselves and hurt because they give a shit. There is respect in that. No. I'm not talking about them.
- Those I'm really yelling at all the time are those who are incompetent due to carelessness by choice.
- Those who CAN die playing Story Game are likely the same people who once got their tongues stuck to stop signs on dares. The ones who had their friends rip them free of their taste buds, only to do it all AGAIN later, perpetuating the existence of ketchup and things that pose as cheese.

- Even if you feel pumped up and alive as you daredevil through Story Game, I assure you, it won't be an epic enough way to die from an outward perspective.
 - If you want an outwardly epic way to die, ask a professional tennis player how to achieve this, as I'm not qualified to answer this question for you either.
 - Dying by Inner work is the least epic way to die.
 - Special note: If any tennis instructors accurately instruct you on death by tennis, please report them to the general authorities.
-

- {Future Liverish: Do you two nimrods have any clue how many humans we just lost? No one's gonna be able to follow that shit...!!...1.12.17}.
- {Future Arrow: Sadly, you're right. We were better off with them yammering through the whole fucking thing than this...1.12.17}.
- {Future Liverish: Who wrote this...!? That's Danna's font, but acts like Cat...1.12.17}.
- {Future Danna: Magic wrote it guys. Pure magic. <3...1.12.17}.
- {Future Liverish: Great. You did...1.12.17}.
- {Future Danna: Nopesies. Multi-authored. <3...1.12.17}.
- {Future Liverish: Well NO ONE FUCKING TOLD US...!!...1.12.17}.
- {Future Danna: Then no one gets fired for ultimate negligence against humanity. <3...1.12.17}.

- {Future Liverish: There's no such fucking charge, and you're the loose cannon, not me!!...1.12.17}.
 - {Future Arrow: NO FUCKING HELP GUYS...!!...1.12.17}.
 - {Future Liverish: I have had it up to here with you, you loud green aspiring emo. Can you just wait out 2017 without us PLEASE!?...1.12.17}.
 - {Future Danna: Liv-Liv's gotten kind of snippy, no?...1.12.17}.
 - {Future Liverish: Next time I'll just throw tomatoes after you tell people how to meditate. Fuck...1.12.17}.
-

Chapter 3:

Musical Luncheon Chairs

“Don’t mistake a logical analysis for an effective solving or focus. Analysis moves around too much.”

-Doom

8.1.11

{...soon...}

Danna's DSM-V Disorder Criteria of the Day <3:

- {For legal reasons, today's DSM-V Disorder Criteria of the Day has been cancelled. Have the *bestest* day ever! <3. This has been a special message from The Metaphorical Legal Department...8.20.17}.
-
- {Future Cat and Danna will *now* discuss the symptoms included in the missing segment...9.8.17}.
 - {As a consolation prize, I will mention that my *most qualified psychiatrist* thought I might be on the *low end of the autism spectrum*. This makes some sense, as I often find myself drawn to highly-functioning people on the spectrum. *They* usually make sense to me in a way most other people *don't*. However, my symptoms also *fluctuate quite severely*, and don't follow the normal course that can be expected of those with autism. Awakening symptoms are unmistakable, as they come with the weird, fiery back pain river, and give you migraines and vomiting and other standard symptoms, the *order* having a general *foot-to-head pattern*, with the odd aberration. That being *said*, I think that doctor was right about the condition I *started* with. I hear women display the autism spectrum a *lot* differently than men, and I've always found people simple to mimic, but difficult to understand. Emotions always at least *make logical sense* to me. Even if an emotion doesn't *work* for me, the event-driven mechanisms and timing are clear and distinct in others. Each chain of events has a *standard set of emotional outcomes*...9.9.17, 9.10.17}.
 - {Some things I once felt too much until I taught myself emotional control and release techniques. I notice some social cues others *don't* as well. The actors on TV often have purple eyelids when they *display guilt*, for example. Maybe it's simply *attempting to feel guilty* for the camera that makes a person's eyelids purple. Maybe purple eyelids simply

happen when an actor feels self-doubt during a really difficult emotional scene. Maybe the actor just stayed up practising looking guilty, and purple eyelids is what 79 hours without sleep looks like. Maybe purple eyelids is part of the standard guilt makeup toolkit. I'm waiting for clues in real life...9.9.17, 9.10.17}.

- {I'm a bit of a social behaviour nerd. Maybe I'll try writing a book about that one day. I mean, Chapter 1 was pretty much a book, so I think I can manage it...9.10.17}.
- {I think Danna and I are having a discussion about the depressive component of a less-qualified diagnosis...or maybe the anxious component...Something like that...9.9.17}.

-
- {Future Cat: Who doesn't have this these days?...8.17.16}.
 - {Danna: Quiet, Mittens. <3...8.17.16}.
 - {Future Cat: That kind of command doesn't work on you, why should I let it work on me?...8.17.16}.
 - {Danna: [...]...8.17.16}.
 - {Future Cat: Remind me not to trust you until we've had something with sugar in it...8.17.16}.
 - {Danna: Talk orGANically, Mittens. You keep backediting your current text. <3...8.17.16}.
 - {Future Cat: And you make comments on a non-diagnosis...8.17.16}.
 - {Danna: More like an allegedly non-diagnosis, but we'll leave it at the pronounced symptoms aren't the real symptoms, plus you talk to people in your head. <3...8.17.16}.

- {Future Cat: Yes. Well. You're showing symptoms of something. What are we low on?...8.17.16}.
- {Danna: Cashews, Mittens. We're low on cashews.....8.17.16}.
- {Future Cat: ...I'm pretty sure Lee's in control of our cashews. He'll lose his mind if you demand them...8.17.16}.
- {Danna: And so I chose to wait out the madness until the cold-hearted tyrant pulls out the jar himself...8.17.16}.
- {Future Cat: ...It's all so clear now. Your mood...8.17.16}.
- {Danna: Get him driving less, will ya Mittens? <3...8.17.16}.
- {Future Cat: And who should?...8.17.16}.
- {Danna: Get back to looking for that beacon...8.17.16}.
- {Future Cat: Self?...8.17.16}.
- {Danna: You've proven incapable of judging that for yourself. Twice? <3. No...Hmm. Three times? No. Yes. No...8.17.16}.
- {Future Cat: Having some cashews is one thing, but we're almost out. If he doesn't have a VOTE he'll flip...8.17.16}.
- {Danna: And if his vote is "no", it must outweigh all the others?...8.17.16}.
- {Future Cat: Just be happy we curbed the rampages and snap-decisions...8.17.16}.
- {Danna: —On to Arrow...8.17.16}.
- {Future Cat: If he loses the vote, yes, he'll probably kill Arrow for inciting him...8.17.16}.

- {Danna: *There's a reason I fought to give them air-time later on. <3. Now, let's flash to Lee in the past, being a controlling evil dickhead. <3...8.17.16}.*
-

- {Future Cat: *Wasn't he being a controlling evil dickhead later in the chapter? I think the next part was somewhat constructive...1.12.17}.*
 - {Future Cat: As you can see, the trickster shakes things up. It is the eternal dropper of cartoon anvils, but usually picks a target that needs a dose of something less than loving. Be loving to it, and it will stop being fully destructive (and stick with half)...1.12.17}.
 - {Future Cat: The trickster can often be spotted by its quick denial of being the trickster (later even cries of ridiculous slander) when questioned, something it shares in common with EVERYTHING THAT IS NOT THE TRICKSTER. Proceed with caution...1.12.17}.
-

{8.1.11}

No, I Mean It Won't Help

{Current Playlist: Kandyland by Brokencyde}

Cat: *What's your problem?*

Liverish: *Oh, it isn't my problem, Cat.*

Cat: *Well why am I having such a problem, then?*

Liverish: *I thought I explained that all already.*

- *I'm helping out.*

Cat: *It limits me.*

Liverish: *In some ways...*

- *But believe me you needed an escape route from this one.*

Cat: *And the moods?*

Liverish: *Solely your {meds},*

- *I assure you.*

Cat: *Not solely.*

Liverish: *Well maybe I...*

- *helped the process along a little.*

- *{This isn't about a figure causing an emotional reaction, but a conversation reaching to the root of the reaction itself...1.12.15}.*

- {Something *deep inside* is trying to *defend* her, with *not-entirely-clear*-motives, but a *very* clear *body sensation* of life-threatening danger...8.17.16}.
- {This *particular* condition seems *quite* resistant to anxiety medications...8.17.16}.
- {*HORRIBLY* resistant to anxiety medications...9.8.17}.

Cat: *For?*

Liverish: *The purposes of keeping us away from that inevitable emotional train-wreck that was the {luncheon}.*

- {Cat is flustered with frustration...8.17.16}.

Cat: *That's like...*

- *Hey...now,*
- *don't make this difficult...*

- {And she finds her point...8.17.16}

Cat: *Protecting* a person's *health* by avoiding anything *strenuous*.

Liverish: Oh, I *do that too*, of *course*.

Cat: Like you *help* {edited out episode...8.17.16}.

Liverish: *It's all for your good, Cat.*

Cat: *I don't feel so.*

Liverish: *You're just looking at it wrong.*

- In the end you will be...
- *quite pleased.*

Cat: *I don't need to have {figures} slinking around behind my back arranging things for me.*

- *I don't want it.*

- {Avoidant behavioural impulse caused by an unknown complex/belief system evoking an unnamed deeper fear in defence of the belief system...1.20.15}.
- {Wow. 2015 me has a few problems, too, doesn't she? If you can't piece that sentence together, like I can't anymore, it means the false feeling of danger is causing an aggressive defence to come up, and she's trying to coax the defence to stop while the danger feeling is still there...8.17.16}.
- {This is why the earlier exercise, AS WELL AS disciplined control are important before becoming highly sensitive to figures. I took it all in the wrong order and paid for it, overcoming my enslavement to archetypal mood swings the second I developed the control I just showed you how to achieve. Don't lose control. There's no need. Know when you're influenced by emotion, which emotion, and why, by making eye contact with it, and making a strong and informed choice with your strong and informed "muscles").

Liverish: *You don't know what you want.*

Cat: *Then maybe that's what I should be seeking.*

Liverish: *Waste of time.*

Cat: *Not for me.*

Liverish: *No*,

- I mean it won't help.

- {He's right. There's no way I would have accepted the truth about everything back then. What I really wanted...8.17.16}.

- {If you're not in a happy relationship, but under the delusion you are, the Inners will get loud about it. Don't mistake these with Inners who feed off of breakup pain. Know who acts in your interest at all times. If you don't have a {Trusted}, the religious may pray to a deity for a guide, and the psychologists may ask the {archetypal figure} of a trusted scientific genius to help them enlist a well-respected tutor/bodyguard. Programming the right Inner sensation here is the main thing, not the words or characters themselves. It should feel right, even a little invigorating, or the correct archetypal sensation wasn't accessed and proceeding could bring plot twists and betrayal. Clarity. Or end up like I did with...you'll see. Danna's bad enough for spoilers...1.12.17}.



11.1.14

{Current Playlist: Animal Magic by Trash Palace}

Danna: *Hello again,*

- *my beautiful audience,*
- *it is I, your host.*
- *Danna! <3*
- *Today's guest hails from very very deep underground.*
- *Give it up for the beautiful woman,*
- *with the a-little-too-pale complexion,*
- *Doom!*
- *And what is it you do, Doom?*

Doom: *I didn't know you could see me there...Hmm.*

- ...
- ...
- ...
- *I am death.*

Danna: *I understand Cat saved your life.*

- {Believed to be a ruse, as death can't die}.

Doom: *She did.*

- And I stand to protect as much as Cat wants me to protect.

Danna: An undeathlike decision.

Doom: Cat saved me.

- And so I keep her safe from him.

Danna: With what?

Doom: ...

- With fire.

Danna: With fire?

- Want to demonstrate some fire for the audience? <3

Doom: ...

- ...
- No.

Danna: Well, folks,

- you're in luck.
- Today I dressed in fire-proof material. <3
- Doom,
- This energy?

- Danna builds a ball of blue flame.

- {Doom's eyes narrow slightly...1.21.15}.

Danna: This will set a horrible curse on Cat, to—

- Doom's eyes flare red and she erupts into flames.
- {The ends of Danna's hair are singed...1.12.15}.

Danna: Just kidding, Doom. <3

- Isn't she marvellous, folks?

Doom: You will not threaten Cat.

Danna: Sorry, Doomie. <3

- I'll make it up.

Doom: You will not threaten Cat.

- I will teach you not to threaten Cat.

Danna: Not the pizazz I was looking for,

- but I guess it will do.
- You realize my former employer is probably harming Cat as we speak, right?
- {...}
- Insulting and threatening?

Doom: He is the {vox}.

- I would expect no less.
- Not of hers.
- She means well.

- Doom is no longer on fire.

Danna: Explain that...

Doom: The {vox} is the only man that can be *changed* because it *reflects* yourself.

Danna: But Cat's the opposite.

Doom: How opposite...?

Danna: Probably too opposite.

- ...
- Where'd she go?

Drury: Can you please send me home?

Danna:

- Maybe.
- Next time,
- I have no quest,
- because NEXT time,
- I will be retelling the story of Cat,
- beginning with her roughly ten-year-old self.
- Be excited. <3

NOTES

date: 8.2.11

Nonsense suggests a poisoned function. Be careful pointing fingers. Sometimes it's you.



⚠ WARNING

Windy

-Foul language.

LISTENING

-Nonsense

-Shouting

Richard
Thompson:
Tear Stained
Letter

INTRODUCTION

-Think of a poison as a nonsensical or deluded viewpoint that puts stress on the emotions and the body. The antidote is truth and acceptance.

-Think of a difficult archetype as an infected archetype, but remember that you fed it whatever has infected it in the first place.



8.2.11

Can I Talk To Someone Else!?

{Current Playlist: Where Have All the Cowboys Gone by Paula Cole}

Cat: *I'm—*

Liverish: —*Fucked.*

- If you *listened better* I could have *averted* your...
- {**Time limit*} *problem.*

- **{Insert long, complicated, unrelated, student loan bank delay direct deposit mistake-on-my-end story...1.12.17}.*

Cat: *In what way?*

Liverish: *Fuck, Cat.*

- *What do you think?*
- *I tried to prevent you from coming on this trip*
- *but you're {edited out} and did it anyways.*

- {Cat scowls...8.17.16}.
- {I try to keep them away from being excessively inappropriate. They seem to pick things up from cartoons then pass them around. I'm guessing this might be one thing parenthood shares closely with {archetypal figures}...3.15.17}.

Cat: ...

- {*Can I talk to someone else!?*}
- {Sokien arrives, over-excited...8.17.16}.
- {Liverish looks tiredly amused...8.17.16}.

Sokien: *Shut your shit-hole you little fuck!*

Liverish: *Language, language, mucous-brains.*

Sokien: *I'm not standing for this.*

- *May I fight him, Cat?*

Cat: *Violence doesn't work on him Sokien.*

- *I've tried.*

Liverish: *See?*

- *The dog-faced brat's got it.*

- {Cat frowns more...1.12.17}.

Doom: I'm disappointed in you, Liverish.

Liverish: Like that fucking matters.

Doom: Poor use of *powers* results in repercussions.

Liverish: Yes, heh,

- well I must say I'm not even slightly concerned.

Doom: *Idiots rarely are.*

Liverish: Well, then by your tone we're in the same boat.

Cat: What are you talking about, Doom?

- Where has he been using power poorly?
- ...oh...poor-ly...
- Wrong REASON.
- Then...
- you want things to go badly because you want to be right,
- is that so?

Liverish: Not...

- exactly.

Cat: Explain, please.

- I'm asking you nicely because I'm concerned.

Liverish: Fine, I MAY have distracted you in...

- subtle ways...
- but you were the *one* who chose to let it happen.

Cat: Alright, thanks for your *honesty*.

- {Yes. Back then I could tell that he was manipulating me, but didn't have the resources to deal with it. Sokien, barely above my power level, could become a hot-headed liability if the *cause* was worthy enough in her eyes. This was a serious issue at times...8.17.16}.
- {Sokien had a lot to do with upholding a *cause*. The cause of "civility" if you oversimplify her cause into a bland paste. "At all costs" describes the emotional force behind it. Some "causes" become more potent than the will to live, as we see in real-life cases of vengeance, heroism, and parental nurturing. Choose your causes with the utmost care before welcoming them in, and read the fine print. Explore ideas relating to the opposite perspective of your cause to strengthen your perspective. (Warning: Do not be the opposite of a nurturing parent if you're afraid you're overly-protective. Just watch the occasional movie about terrible parents, so every boo-boo can stop feeling like a recreation of the baby scene from {Traindotting}). Make sure your cause is what you think it is from all angles before one angle constricts you into a fine paste. (Maybe your angle is great personal sacrifice in front of your children, for your children, as a sign of great love, not considering that they might choose not to have children later in life because they see adult parents as strong, selfless pillars of self-denial that they can never hope to become more than mockeries of...1.12.17). All angles and perspectives explored should yield a healthy insight into what works and what can go wrong. However, imagination and humility are a must to get anywhere with an unhealthy cause...1.12.17}.
- {Clumsiness and distraction are two archetypal tactics you will always take the blame for. You'll realize some past "mistakes" and "I forgots" were tactical long before you'd heard of {archetypal figures}, usually pushing you to avoid some kind of real or perceived danger, or in less constructive cases, feed an addiction...1.12.17}.

Sokien: So you're just going to let him walk like that!?

Cat: I want this to end without a violent episode or kidnapping, Sokien.

- Be still.

Sokien: I don't like it, Cat.

Cat: *Liverish, please let me be alone with Sokien's thoughts.*

Liverish: ...

- *Fine.*
- *But it'll cost you.*

- {Liverish vanishes, and a few seconds pass uncomfortably}.

Cat: ...

- *Is he gone?*

Sokien: *Close enough.*

- *He's just tracking our movements in case we decide to run for the hills.*
- *He can't hear us.*

Cat: *Doom?...*

- *Doom nods.*

- {In lieu of a trusted, appointed figure, I came to trust those I'd known for years, and knew cared a lot about me. Doom may be a death figure, but we've known each other for over a decade, and been through so much together, I couldn't imagine doubting her promise to wait for very ripe fruit...1.12.17}.

Cat: *No tricks, then.*

- *Good.*

Sokien: *I've got...*

- *bloodlust, Cat.*
- *Even though I know he's too strong for me...*

- *it's a matter of pride!*

Cat: I agree that the *hero-slash-general* image *seems to suit you best...*

Sokien: *But what can I do now?*

- *Suki can infiltrate;*
- *Kai has some crazy hidden martial arts.*
- *What about me?*
- *I do paperwork now...*
- *but I feel someone needs to do {it}.*

- {We found ways of making Sokien safe, you could say, and she was happy to have more detailed control. I don't remember who suggested this originally...8.17.16}.
- {After all, the self-appointed champion of justice was overzealous. She would eradicate the stain of every imperfection, and fix every social grace. My mother was perfect, so I must match her perfection, and in the same areas. My very un-mother-like Inner warrior was convinced she held the only way to perfect gentle grace, through heavy self-censorship and strictly enforced behaviours...So Sokien was a menace in the wrong area...a menace making big decisions for sure, though it seemed safer at the time than setting her loose on the emotional wilderness, to numb away anything un-socially-graceful until it inevitably decayed and geyser-ed back into existence with vigorous poisonous outrage. My mother is an accountant, so I hoped that Sokien, who wanted nothing more than to shape me into my mother, would enjoy taking a similar job, and maybe learn my mother's gentle behaviours and organizational mastery herself. This was a terrible, terrible idea, prompting this very chapter. If there had been no Sokien to carry the burden of the cause, however, I would have, like any normal human being with low self-esteem, accepted the cause as my own, and fulfilled my own destruction as a fake, a fish out of water, attempting to fulfill an impossible destiny as it chokes. I've got rougher emotional edges than my sweet {and optimistic} family and can't pretend otherwise. If you don't believe me, wait until the defecation meditation. I may hesitate a little, but it will pass final edit...1.12.17, 1.21.17}.

Cat: *Doom* sent me an image of Natty.

- {As a replacement, for Sokien's job...1.12.15}.

- {Shy little Natty, figure of loyalty, dressed formally in grey with a pleated skirt and a bowler cap, standing three feet tall, and never saying “no”...8.17.16}.

Sokien: ...

- I want to refute that...
- ...
- *how about her background?*
- *She hasn't got the...*
- Kahonas.

Cat: *She does in the loyalty department.*

- *Why not give her a chance?*
- *You're a little too...*
- ...
- *divisive for it...*
- *For example, you monitor my actions too much,*
- *while, perhaps,*
- *you could be helping me {make} them.*

- {Sokien {as you know} was a stickler for perfection and efficiency. In university, I started to become over-aware of subconscious muscle movements as I became over-aware of everything that was or wasn't efficient in my life. {This meant walking briefly required knowing what my lungs and toes and pulse were doing as auto-pilot began to fail under intensive hours of scrutiny. Too many hours of practice daily can make auto-pilot require a new light bulb. Don't do it. Practice groggy wake-up state daily, alternating with regular meditation (or removal of all meditation for a few weeks) to replace the bulb...1.12.17}. It made sense to put Sokien back in action, and out of deciding...8.17.16}.

Sokien: *Who've you been talking to?*

- You're making a lot of sense...

Cat: {*No one I know of, so probably Doom*}.

Sokien: *Let's see; what can Natty contribute?*

Cat: Her loyalty can help us to engrain constructive behaviours.

- She will stick to things.

Sokien: Con:

- add-IC-tive.

- {Sokien is somewhat right. Causes can be addictive...8.17.16}.

- {Loyalty is always to a cause, be it loyalty to a group effort, or to the sanctity of friendship...1.12.17}.

Cat: ...

- Pro:
- Begin with loyalty to non-addiction to things.
- ...
- Let's bring her into this.

- {Natty arrives...1.12.15}.

Natty: ...

- Certainly...
- ...
- it's so weird to see myself written down
- ...

Sokien: Too shy!

- Snap yourself together!

Cat: ...

- Don't be her drill sergeant, Sokien.

- *Talk* to her as an equal.
- *I give you no power over what she does.*

- {Sokien identifies as a general pretty strongly, but Liverish doesn't take it very seriously...8.17.16}.

Sokien: Damn it, Cat...

- *Let me be an EMPLOYER...*

Cat: *I disagree with your approach.*

- *Condescension and rushing are poor motivators.*
- *Please, Sokien.*
- *I implore you.*

- {*Using formal language as a tactic here?...1.12.15*}.

- {Note to Imaginers: Flattery in the Inner World can only get you somewhere if you have the emotions to back it up, making it a genuine compliment, and therefore not flattery. Complimenting with insincere emotions is like complimenting someone's outfit while you wrinkle your nose, grimace, and try not to look at it. You can't fool an Inner with flattery until you get good enough to mimic emotions, which still amounts to some degree of sincerity...not just outward-style copy-reactions...1.12.17}.

Sokien: Aw, Cat...

- *Yes...*
- *I agree.*

Cat: Natty,

- *please tell me if anyone treats you {condescendingly}.*
- *It's best for everyone involved if you can promise this.*
- *Put out energy to tell them this will be the case if necessary.*

Natty: Yes, Cat...

- *That's fine.*

Cat: *First:*

- *Would you like to perform Sokien's job?*
- *Please give her the mood, Sokien.*

- {Sokien hands over the mood with a disgruntled sigh}.

Natty: *It seems within my pattern,*

- *yes.*

Cat: *Do you feel capable of learning to do it well?*

Natty: *Certainly...*

- *with a little time.*

Cat: *Good.*

- *The job is yours.*
- *Sokien,*
- *the enemies that cause my anxiety are your forte.*

- {Sokien looks perked up}.

- {She did so much better in the field, than back at base camp...8.17.16}.

- {And this gave her a chance to flush out something more useful...1.12.17}.

Sokien: *Yes, Cat.*

- *I won't let you down.*

Cat: I know you won't

- ...
- when put into your proper area of expertise.

Sokien: Thank you, Cat.

- I'll do everything in my power not to let you down.

Cat: Don't concern yourself.

- Just do your job.

- {Imperious tone...a sign of possession?...1.12.15}.

- {Not likely, 2015. Keeping Sokien from getting out of hand by giving her an official task in an official voice I think...8.17.16}.

8.4.11

Not Telling

{Current Playlist: Crush by Pendulum}

Warning <3: So you aren't disappointed when you find out, I now inform you that there is no as-of-yet-known conclusion to the battle at the end of this section.

Regards,

Metaphorical Legal Department <3

- {Future Cat: That was very considerate of you. <3...8.17.16}.
 - {Danna: Wasn't it!? <3...8.17.16}.
-

Liverish: *I don't know why you worry so much.*

- *Shit went fine tonight.*

Cat: *But it's the idea...*

- *Humans are social creatures and I'd like to be better at it—*

- —socializing, I mean...

Liverish: No you wouldn't.

- Others would like you to like to socialize.

Cat: Well,

- let's leave it at
- I'd like to like to for others.

Liverish: Well isn't that fucking TOUCHING...

- it almost brings a tear to my eye—
- —that is, if we had the fucking energy and resources to make it even slightly feasible and not some hollow game of CHARADES.

- {...The paradoxical world of social anxiety...8.17.16}.

- {...And of Sokien...1.12.17}.

Cat: ...

- How about work?
- Address it please!
- I'm not sure how I can live and not socialize if I need to work.

Liverish: Simply,

- it's not for you, Cat.
- You're a social outcast
- ...a pa-ri-ah if you will.

Cat: You seem most inclined to see me that way.

- {This is university summer holidays. It's time to find part-time work, ideally...but Cat is visiting family at the time. Cat is concerned about the impact her emotions may have on her job search, if her anxious state has her bailing on something as simple as a family

luncheon. *This emotional state* seems to think it makes the most sense to avoid all socializing...1.20.15}.

- {...Try to argue less than I did, and pay attention more. Sure the figure might be spouting nonsense. However, you can't move on until you've heard and felt absolutely everything it has to say, and then either made peace with the sensation or shed the figure's current level. Avoiding the creature only makes it more obnoxious...1.20.15}.
- {I eventually cracked under the pressure of my unsustainable life. Too far a bus ride from campus. Too much study, too much denial. Too little fun, too much punishment for the smallest mistakes. I was the worst disaster when I was "well" ...8.17.16}.
- {Future Cat: The polar opposite really was Lee, wasn't it?...1.12.17}.

Liverish: *I see my ultra-special prisoner*

- {in mid-fatal-nose-dive I...}
- feel like...
- speaking up.

Sokien: *That's all shit and YOU KNOW IT.*

- MOST of it is shit you have absolutely NO fucking concept of,
- so please try to think before you talk
- you FUCKED-UP little DWEEB.

- {Cat frowns in surprise...1.20.15}.

Cat: *What's with your mood!?*...

Sokien: *HE'S the source of my mood.*

Liverish: *Cat's idiocy is the source of mine.* <3

Sokien: *Take it back or I'll cut out your tongue!*

Liverish: *Whoaaa...*

- *Easy does it.*
- ...
- *you're gonna make me kill you.*

Sokien: *We'll see...*

Cat: ...

- *Calm down...*

Sokien: *NO, Cat.*

- *He's the ultimate source of anxiety, so I'm taking him down.*

- {Sokien was pretty keen on eliminating dysfunction, even if it meant burying whole emotions. *The task, and my image, was always priority...8.17.16}.*
- {So it seems I miscalculated a bit after all...1.12.17}.

Cat: Easy, easy.

- *I need to get more peaceful with him.*

Sokien: *Then call it vigilante justice...*

- *He's mine!*

Cat: You can't beat—

Liverish: —Yes, Cat.

- {Liverish seems intrigued...1.20.15}.

Liverish: *You're right.*

- *She can't beat me.*
- *But seeing as how this is "vigilante justice",*
- *let's put rewards on our heads to make things interesting.*

Sokien: *You're on.*

Liverish: *{Heh}.*

- *You first.*

Sokien: *Free access to Cat,*

- *no matter where you have her.*
- *Physically**.

- **{Here meaning "in person", but in the future usually referring to the body...1.16.15}.*

Liverish: *Fine.*

- *Then...*

- *{Liverish begins circling Cat}.*

- *{His expression seems calculating and predatory...1.10.15}.*

Cat: *Why are you circling me?*

Liverish: I want a permanent fixture on you.

- *{What is this "permanent fixture" he wants??...1.10.15}.*

Cat: I'm not the one you're fighting.

Liverish: Sure she is,

- but I planned this before,
- and she could do nothing about it if she lost.

Sokien: What is it?

Liverish: Not telling.

- {Sokien blatantly shrugs off the mysterious downside, that sounds like it may make Cat helpless...1.12.15}.

Sokien: Fine.

- Let's fight.

Cat: ...

- Hey...
- Whose side are you ON!?

- {Future Cat: Lee...Is this when you got the ability to find me anywhere?...8.17.16}.
- {Future Liverish: Well, seeing as I would have without-a-doubt beaten her, I think so! But we have a connection that would have become omni-traceable anyways. I'd still be able to find you anywhere, I'm POSitive...8.17.16}.
- {Future Cat: Yeah, yeah. I agree. You're a force of Nature...8.17.16}.

- {2011 Liverish has levelled up!...He now has the ability to locate Cat anywhere in the Inner World at will!!! <3...1.12.17}.
- {Future Liverish: Cute, Danna. Actually cute for once. Do that more, will you?...1.12.17}.
- {Future Arrow: YOU CAN ALL JUST—...1.12.17}.
- {—Future Liverish "shocks" Arrow with high-level green electricity before he can complete his rant...1.12.17, 5.21.17}.
- {Future Liverish: NO!!...1.12.17}.
- {Future Cat gives Lee a discouraging look. He beams at her proudly...1.12.17}.