

## THE INFINITY KID

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By Leon Julian Batchelor

eyes of a serpent from beneath the broken glass, straddling a BMX like a hooker. Chip dives in with the apologies; disturbing the olds on the special day, not calling or sending any form of word for the three dirty as muck years he spent on a four continent tour of the more forgiving parts of the world. Forgiving only in what it will let a man get away with. And then out with the stuff about how he kind of financed it all with his dad's stolen Daimler Majestic and the \$20 000 he baited from his parents superannuation after a well orchestrated series of impersonations for which his parents still have doubt that their infamously dimwitted son acted alone.

Chip had left on a whim and found himself coasting down a big new highway in the stolen car with large, fully erect ideas about freedom and the open road and the infinite wisdom that is gained through the headlong assault of life. Mildly poetic standards that so worn and distant can only sustain a short trajectory in the modern era before ending their inheritors in a lonely wagon talking nonsense to nobodies. The air inside loses its warmth quickly through the open door and everybody goes stiff. Even the Christmas tree looks more inanimate. Within thirty minutes a complex shifting of emotional states has taken place and the aroma of a cheap blend of tea is sitting comfortably among the family of three around the knee high marble table. Chip starts running his hands across the old yellow leather couch, nervously tugging at frayed cigarette burns. Mum and dad have their eyes roaming over their misshapen son who half an hour ago stumbled through the door and introduced himself with no urgency really to speak of as "Chip, the Infinity Kid". Mum finds something aggressive about the crew cut that Chip's sporting these days but dad finds it dimwitted and tells everyone so.

All these observations are peripheral, as the one thing that stands out about Chip, really the only thing that elevates this homecoming above the million others like it is the enormous presence of Chip's mid-section, a huge gut sitting up like a fake tit and stretching out as far as his extended arms. The rest of his body is a run of

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Chip came home finally, three Christmases late with a sour whisky odor and a belly most thought was a comic prop. His father propped the shotgun up against the kitchen door and started to broadcast a wide gamut of abuse across the living room in clipped, tense bellows characteristic of old men not too used to feeling upset. The whole show looks terrible, predictable and familiar to some but still not something you ever wish to see—the jittering rage of an elder bubbling violently on the scorched surface of his face, upsetting the skin that wants to do like the rest of the epidermal layer and just sit there good and paralysed. The rant skips a beat and Chip has to fit his hopeful long-lost-son act into a few words.

"I'm infinitely sorry Dad...Mum." Mum's over by the heater wringing her hands on what by chance she grabbed off the mantle piece as Chip burst through the door. It's the only remaining portrait of Chip left in the old family house and on realizing this she drops it like a snake. 11 year old Chip grins up at her with the

the mill twenty something, a bit colourless and slow looking but totally unremarkable. The gut has been having its own conversation with the parents for the last little while but hasn't managed to make itself all that much more understood.

“Do you need to see a doctor?” Mum's disbelief is cycling through terror and frustration towards disgust, which we can forgive because the thing looks close to exploding underneath that stretched black flannelette. And explosive is an apt description of this remarkable waistline, explosive for the secrets it possesses. Things so charged and primal exist beneath its visible layer in the form of a reckless magic, some bestowed potential that Chip must bare around his middle as a curse. For inside the gut, in the heart of its anatomy beats the crazy and sad force of INFINITY ITSELF, although no great pride is felt by Chip for possessing this within him. He wouldn't make a joke about it, especially not now, wouldn't say how his parents had always said that he never had any potential and, well now he's really got potential! No, Chip is more possessed by it than in possession of it. It is a wicked curse; 376 days before this living room scene, in a hotel bathed in red light and the sweat of human intercourse, Chip manifests the gut in its painful impregnation...

The witch that lured him here called herself Daphne. She screamed like real torture and gripped his back like she was being ripped off it. Chip's muscles started to strain as their fucking elevated in force and rapidity, but soon a feeling of rigid control took over, everything suddenly being played out for him in hydraulic ease. The feelings of pleasure that he knew from his past were shorthand for what now grew in him, and for what grew in her too, Daphne's own cyclonic orgasm rippling up from beneath him like the earth was about to suddenly drop out.

Feeling his cock tense she makes a swift downwards movement with her whole

body so that Chip finds himself spraying semen so hot he swears he can see steam rising off the girls face. Her face, which to his horror is now turning back its eyes into the skull, the pearl undersides of her eyeballs matching the off white of his own cum in an unholy scheme. It precedes her going into a seizure. Small ribbons of smoke ascend in unison from the pools of hot semen, which begins to sink through her skin and leave dark red burns all over her once boyishly pretty face. All Chip can do is stare... stare until his vision blackens, the back of his neck tingles and burns, his head throbs and falls heavy onto the stale pillows, fatigued and used. As he remains unconscious we have the typical transformation scene unfolding on the bed; lights swirling, particles sparkling, wind from an unknown origin, then Chip levitating off the bed, arms and legs falling backwards pronouncing the vertex of his mid section.

A traffic cop looks up at the hotel window from the street. Daphne, that putrid whore, is out the building and making good time for peak hour traffic on the bus across town. She's thinking about game shows of all things, FUCK HER! and she's fingering one of her witch's boils that are now hardening in the cool air, smiling to herself and others who are trying not to look. Chip has ceased his ascension and at this point regains consciousness, not fully awake but definitely enough to feel the awesome sensation of his gut writhing away. He can see the unnatural contortions on the horizon of his waistline. They kick and bubble in ways he thought impossible, threatening he thinks to pierce his naked body open and ooze his red filling over the bed sheets like rich rhubarb pie. For some reason his thoughts have moved desperately to food. In a bleary eyed panic the walls are all marshmallows and the carpet a raw steak. He wishes that Daphne were here so she could help him down from this height and from this dizzying panic and so too that he might eat her. The contortions of his gut shift from knifing ripples to a billowing growth, the whole thing ballooning out with a fiery sting that Chip is sure will finish him. But it settles and Chip is left in the fading turbulence of the

hotel room with a gut the size of a fitness ball and good reason to freak out...

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Weeks from THE IMPREGNATION and after suffering a long trip home with a bed sheet wrapped around his preposterous curve and a humiliating series of encounters with an enlivened public firing off screams, sadly predictable one liners and compact digital cameras, Chip observes his first true moment of solace. The main feature of Chip's waking life since the event has been this immense hunger. It's been slowly eating away - as hunger does - at his entire conscience but this is doing so to a degree that he believes it to be making room for something. And at this very point on Chip's bed, surrounded by a barbecue chicken and three litres of warm coke this thing emerges, THE BIG PICTURE (maybe trite and a bit passed around but accurate nonetheless as to describe what is occurring here). He can feel it coming on, a big guttural rumble, then the world performs a swift movement inside of itself, a sort of INSIDE OUT. Chip finds it all holographic, which is no small point because the entire universe may be nothing more than a huge holographic image.

The room permits a tremendous life, gushing, knee deep in the flow of ideas that run back in a mess of currents to the mayhem of gods and great kingdoms, all laid flat against the walls, a huge breathing porridge of human fixations. And the carpet has a charge to it too, like static but so virile it looks to be a living organ, hissing and rippling from corner to corner in synchronized throws to the wraiths of dust that prick up under the afternoon light. They shift and swarm with the minute flux of breathe, convection and gravity. Chip is all things at once, the gut longing without restraint for the undiluted flow of matter and sense; uncompressed, unbound and unrelenting - so taken by the robust call of the present. From this matrix Chip spies a rich formation of mold gathered behind the

electric heater. He sees the prominent spores, their individual symmetry and tessellation, the prawn shaped curve that it has mapped out of its own resolve. It is a rich dialog of banality fingerprinted perfectly onto a common off-white wall being viewed by a common off-white creature that somehow extracts a great sense of belonging from the entire exchange. Chip is taken by the prawn's averageness, its TRUE INSIGNIFICANCE and partly as a similarly anomaly-based comrade etched awkwardly into the blank (but holographic) canvas of life.

And so it is, Chip sucking down cheap brown fizz as his dark corner of urban inconsequence shimmers with brilliance, the walls in front of him a raging triptych of detail, every atom exposed and trickling off into its many destinies, all things oozing a violent monstrosity of erroneous material and meta-material (and then beyond that) into the pure lusting chaos of Chip's gut.

Towards the end of the day, after several more exceptional and immersive experiences of the banal and the rest of the coke Chip isn't feeling so good, again. We can note here that Chip is operating within polarities. It's a risky business inducing great heights of almost telekinetic sensory excess, but then even greater bouts of anger, depression, fear, loneliness and self hatred verging on the physical and mental genres of suicide. In an ideal world the polarity would be exchanged for a good old fashioned trinity, something by it's grand design quite balanced and therefore more forgiving. But Chip can't find the middle ground these days. It all siphons down the hole or spirits itself into the outer cosmos and most days there builds a rage that could devour an ocean of gorgeous life and feel no pain or pleasure in shitting it out over a host of tight-bummed virgins and white-bobbed laypeople who would bend and toss about for the filth and shock of it, but who in their heart of hearts have that lovely tri-part structure and will rest on that firm cross until the inevitable resurrection or rebirthing of their unshakable peace. But not poor Chip. NO, by the force of the gut, the infinite bowel of his conscience,

there is only one great passage way; up or down, in or out, all or nothing.

Chip dealt first hand with infinity. Not as fragments of a whole or part of any other order but as something human and undignified. It was more an unidentifiable network without end or origin. Distinctions vaporized around him like the built contours of a city made transparent with its people left hanging, suspended and overcome with difference and separation. However Chip's story is one of comedy and the posse of students across the hall had made a clown of him on various occasions, picking on his fast food habit that spilt out into the hallway and the way Chip's voice soared in tuneless cabaret about nonsense on weeknights when he came back from his drinking sessions down at the sports bar amongst the Chinese chainsmokers and the intimidating nineteen year olds that played hard trance from their telephones. Chip's voice was a shabby tenor, laying into the high notes like rusty breaks and belching out the words in an egregious howl. The man next door, Ray, an African migrant who was a doctor but got by on payments he received from a patented lamp-design (The Ray), didn't care much for Chip's uproars or the stench of the place or the potentially offensive sight that he presented; closing in on death so early on in life with that gruesome palette of fatigue that he slung about with him. It was a rare condition, thought Ray, on inspection of the gut. Chip was more than happy to unbutton his shirt for the doc to have a look. The skin stretched and blistered on the underside of the belly, bloodied from chafing, infections and ulcers that stung so much he swore he could sometimes hear their swelling and pulsing. Ray said after listening to it under a stethoscope "Mr Chip, this is not like anything I've encountered in my time." And then he asked to take some pictures to share with his colleagues. Chip obliged in order to get the man out of the apartment because he felt something moving in his bowels. Ray cautioned him to see a doctor about getting an ultrasound but Chip new for certain what was inside of him and no medicine or science could take bite

out of it, although an ultrasound sounded like a cool idea. Ray left Chip a number to call and today's paper. The majority of the pages were missing and Chip found only the personal ads of interest. The personage was mainly in their 30s; busty, lonely, probably disfigured like him and calling out indiscreetly to the confused and horny folk. They had their own aesthetic principles that you could trace through the black margins, and it was a fantastically frank and boisterous idea of sex that stank up the page or so of print, conformable in its debasement and longing. The gut was in close company here. It was all about size and shock-factor but it wasn't show-biz. It rallied against being a source of entertainment, divulging itself in such a way to the world that the insides became like its skin. The impossibility of its form caused a perceptual aneurysm and people saw something ominous unfolding, like happening across Stonehenge whilst walking your dog. The gut held you up and took you for what you were worth (and for all it could get).

Chip went off to take a shit, which was a powerful moment for him. It was a great exodus and it made him rest. The bed bowed as Chip lay back, finding the slight pawing of sunlight from the window a tender sensation, void of all impurity. The bed sheets paled and the stains looked to evaporate. The sun revealed its great palette of intensity and presence, able to fall back from the main stage and offer this casual display of reflectance and heat. Gorgeous, Chip thought. But he was running out of food, so this all stopped. Besides, a cloud had moved in and greyed the scene, stains and all unmasked. He'd been buying wholesale through the lady that ran the Spanish restaurant down the street, a viscous, pragmatic lady with a limp from her enormous weight. Chip was boxed in by chip packets, microwave puddings and cereals, all marked in fading red ink on the tan, brown and beige of the huge cardboard stacks. He felt an inner harmony with the mass produced; these boxes that were like poor industrialised families, made to measure and

packaged ungraciously for the greater purposes of their rulers. The boxes were cut open with half a pair of scissors and their contents ushered into the light, shining forth with an unspoiled gloss, proud and ready. He enjoyed his relationship with this kind of produce, less civilised but more aware of civilisation. Canceling out the point of sale, going straight to the goods like a fabulous hunter in a checkered excess of clothing and a fine rifle after rabbit and moose. He also got out of the graceless circumstance forced upon him when over-ordering or disrupting business by not fitting in with consumer patterns or protocols, like when he asked for four hundred McNuggets and the cook threw in the apron half way through the order, sick of the whole system and all because of Chip's passion for excess. Going wholesale meant there could be an honest tête-à-tête with the consumer and the consumee, and there was that kinship too...Chip felt the community of boxes understood his loneliness and his physical stagnation from an unalterable fate: that at any moment he could pop open like a packet of chips and the world flood violently inside, leaving a sweet smell in the air and his used carcass uncrumpling in the garbage.

Chip's routine for running out of food was to make a call to Lorenza who'd pick him up in her twilight-blue Ford later in the day and they'd peruse the factory floor for as long as their twin immense frames could sustain, ticking boxes and chatting. Her favorite subjects were her nieces and her chickens, which you could never be sure which of the two she was talking about because she elevated chickens to the level she brought down her nieces, who were all cheats and crooks and skinny. When the shopping was done, Chip paid her cash. This was how he did all business to keep a low profile but if his parents or the law did ever catch up with him Chip wasn't in a frame of mind to care, in fact he sometimes thought that being caught would be a luxury. He would be hospitalised and they would perhaps feed him when he requested or even intravenously (!). The money had to run out

eventually and the gut would start eating away at itself or at lost dogs or back-alley bums or Ray from next door or the students or the divine Spanish feast of a woman, Lorenza. Chip's mouth was watering. In the end Chip would be undone by something he never anticipated. He could stomach most things, so to speak. He could stare all day at the broken visage of the city and the rapture of commodities and longing that seemed to sum up the pursuit of all he was outside of; THE GREATER MOVEMENT of the people with their inexorable fates so cleverly disguised by the landscapes they explored with a level of ascetic monotony that was pointless to question. They weren't his problem. Chip was in the end taken down by love. Oh, but what does that mean anymore, let alone to a man who devours existence like an event horizon? out there swallowing the subtleties of life; the gluttonous daemon. What does infinity have to do with human heartache anyway? Plenty, Chip found.

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She went to his head, which felt new to him because most things passed without delay to the infinite gut. She played artfully with the coarse fibers of his grey matter, pricking and sewing the seeds of her character within him, soothing his dumb, lunatic boyhood with her fragrance and her sounds and later in their friendship, her touch. She had a unique magnetism of assemblage and breeding, forcing her eyes, big and wired, through a deep and narrow brow. She was still and strict about the details of her movement. Chip found her refined, masterful, so firm and young and he so much wanted to have her and he felt sick and deranged when his thoughts turned towards this in her presence, overriding what he felt truly special about the girl, complicating things with his erection. Did she realize contractually as a young woman that these thoughts existed within him or would she be be disgraced, hurt and scared? He was certain the latter, that she would see

it in his eyes, some salacious reflection and reduce his longing to something base and vile. Chip had often thought of himself as horny, and not simply in regard to women... Chip's longing spiraled and sprung about among the catalog of earthly forms. He was SHIT HORNY FOR THE WORLD writing these exact words on a toilet cubicle in a museum they had visited recently, overcome with the grand allusions of paint and marble.

When he was around this girl she seemed to absorb all the nightmarish excess that he'd been living with. Chip's fantasies were poured through the needle's eye of her figure (or was it her hymen? He couldn't say where the exact opening was). In her he had found a singularity. It seemed the antidote to the gut, longing without direction and stagnating his movement through life with its stubborn, heavy weight. She was a passageway to somewhere different and Chip would willingly follow her there, through the loose course of her monologues about art and clothes and news items she'd plucked from the internet or free sheets, books and films that her many nameless friends had lead her onto. She had a thing for geomancy and dexamphetamine and would combine the two in ritual. It was a way for her to explore things aesthetically, rearranging the sixteen figures of powder each time, cut and readied then consumed in a swift, practised action off a bronze plate she carted around that she found adequately antiquated and suggestive of THE BEYOND. It would force the insights out of her and raise the sheer brilliance with which she beheld her interpretations, making her crazed for insight, patterns, connections, linkages. Chip, with his mythic proportions offered a Saturn of inspiration, sitting there, gut exposed, silently courting mystery from the boundaries of the universe. She'd be horny soon after striking up a few threads of intuition, drawn to Chip's huge frame as sure and predictable as the Moon to the Earth. But there was, like this cosmic pair, a strange distance between them, observational and calculating. She was looking for something beyond the physical senses, far from a state of pure bodily attraction. When he came it was as if

something large and unspeakable was revealed to her.

In what was for chip a violent turn of events, he opened the door one Tuesday morning to a man in a T-shirt that had C-R-E-E-P in embossed vertical print. The man's beard puppeted back and forth as he said "Where is she? I know she comes here. Where is May?" Chip then realises that he and his lady friend had never really gotten around to the exchanging of names but was at a loss to explain what this meant in the context of their relationship, just as much as he was pressed to explain this man's presence, so too the man who stood 40 degrees to the left of him (though perhaps a brother - deducible from the similar wrinkle pattern but dressed like Kissing Cousins era Elvis with a carefully semi-erect collar). He was holding a large box packed to the brim with small vials of liquor, one of which was paused below the mouth in a violent show of cock-eyed bravado (the darker side of Elvis, no doubt). Chip tries the simple door-in-the-face-say-no-more approach but the brother's liquor arm flings out at an impossible attitude copping the full wallop of the door without losing a beat or a drop. The two saunter in but it's obvious that no one knows what they're doing. They turn over pillows and unstack papers, finding torn wholesale receipts and the odd once hot-chip stuffed here and there (one is actually wrapped carefully in a receipt for 6 x 1L bottles of Hale's Custard, a bit strange but there you go), and then the two have a short conspiratorial discussion. "Well I guess you should just tell us where she is," the two of them turning to Chip. "We're gonna make sure she never gets the idea to come back here. Cheatin' whore." Elvis chokes, his voice false and trying, eyeing that mould behind the electric heater, which is now more serpent than prawn. Chip tries to explain that she lives downstairs but these two seem to take it as an aggressively bad joke, which it isn't (or maybe it is but only if everything has to be read as sexual innuendo [which it perhaps should be but thank God is not]). Chip is thinking something along these lines when he gets called a "FAT CUNT" by

one of the brothers and immediately pictures himself as such; a big, hairy vaginal organ being abused by two men--twins to top it off! The image works as far as his feeling for metaphor can test but there was something uniquely male about this confrontation, which he couldn't put his finger on - there was no point to the battle, no clit, no hole, no V or any other sort of apex, just a curve, a dome, a wank, a wish, a waste of time. Chip then learns that --no-- she doesn't live downstairs at all but, in fact, with Creep (real name and introducing Perry Vader) to which she is the girlfriend of and has been for several years. They crack open the lot of tiny bottles one by one and start to douse the place in them. Chip is sitting down all hot under the collar from the friction of emotions that drag through his gut at this simple tragedy, not really caring much about what the fuck these to guys are up to but having a nightmare of a time over the prospect of never seeing his anonymous lover again -- the best girl he ever knew. Perry pours out the last 50mL of Scottish Gin over a sock and sends a match down with it. Juniper and phosphorus fill the air. Chip is paralysed with heartache, man-fear and apprehension towards the future - partly but not entirely from the repercussions of the growing fire.

Flames gush, swallow and burn like possessed by enraged toddler phoenixes, shifting and cavorting amongst the crevasses and castles of cardboard, lemon halves, tea bags mummifying themselves on tabletops and between dilapidated pillows. Chip computes the ordeal decisively and depressingly, the polaric axis in full swing. No time for picturing some rational way out of this classically token human drama, no taste for the INEDIBLE VICE OF REASON. In a swift guttural event the entire apartment is hit with a sudden pulse of Chip's heartache, something truly physical tied to what are actually WAVES OF EMOTION emitting from the gut. So powerful it has grown that it now asserts full physiological control over heart and mind. The actual information within his sadness seems to be striking back against all the posturing realness of the walls

and bodies that endlessly try to alienate things so abstract as his longing --- negate their presence. The apartment recognises for the first time Chip's true sadness, his true-boo-hoo as he's begun to call it. The true-boo-hoo ends up taking out the whole block - pulverized instantly and devoured within a matter of seconds by that magnificent gut of his; walls, people, DVD collections, flames and all - gone. Its the gut's most impressive performance yet. Chip falls from three stories up, having not even spared the ground beneath him, coming down on a bed of fine dust leaving not a scratch on him. The night sky goes on above, irrelevant and strange through the city's glare. Chip picks himself up off the ground and makes his way down the street as fast as a man who's just eaten an apartment block can, off to find his May...

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Chip shook around town for a few days, living off market trash and stealing from convenience stores. Cannibalism came and went as a fancy but he could never quite find the motivation for the kill. He was still looking for this girl, pathetically orienteering himself from point to point. He turned up a few leads, her face now hard to visualise, blending frustratingly with other women (even that Daphne cumshot nightmare way back in his innocence). He was directed across town to a man's place, Clint Suzuki. He was six stories up an old commission block and had a million dollar view of the city. The building stank like wet cigarettes and bad air conditioning, a great mechanical lung that should have long ago expired.

He was a tidy Japanese guy who appeared too young to be living by himself but he had grace and breeding and seemed capable of great things. Chip hoped it was only an impression. He could picture May's relationship with Clint; comfortable and simple like the man's decor. The apartment had an over-lit feel and the walls were all blue carpet but there was something pure and ascetic about it, reflective

of its habitant. He was shorter, slimmer, prettier, wiser. Chip wanted to eat the little fucker and all he had. Over-consumption was still his only trick.

The boy spoke quick and soft, his eyes drifting out the window. "She has left the city I'm afraid. Perry was really mad about something. She said she needed to get away. I couldn't tell whether it was a big deal or not." He looked at Chip rather officially. "She keeps people in the dark often. I think she likes to have people thinking about her a lot, so she's in many people's heads at once. Makes her feel like she's living multiple lives and being mysterious and feminine, you know. You think about her a lot don't you? I'm sure." Chip didn't respond. Why did he talk so fast? Clint then laughed in his face, a loud splutter that seemed too much coming from the little guy. But it was a perfect flaw, inhabiting the lush grounds between eccentric and weird. What a guy...

They had some icy cold extra-dry beer out of small glasses and ate from small bowls. It felt good to eat someone else's food. He could feel their tenderness and comfort rise upward in the steam, offering itself. Chip had all this time been consuming food out of boxes and packets; ready-to-eat portions of little nutritious value that he downed like water. He never made a real meal. He never learnt the basics of cooking, never even new if there were basics, didn't have a clue. He blamed this on his parents but then often thought that it was his fault, which it was. Clint had this knowledge and it was power. Chip felt its presence in the small portion of chicken and rice beneath his mouth, in the cup, in the saucepan, in the icy cold extra-dry beer and in the spoons. He imagined Clint from a wealthy family who taught him this refinement and showed him how it infected people and objects, showed him how to take this power and apply it in a way that impressed people or simply confounded them in the allure of your presence. It was a sweet form of magic, nothing like the gut.

"You'll just have wait for her to come back or forget about her. It's a cycle with May, she comes and goes. Besides, and I don't mean to offend you Chip, but

you're just one guy." Clint saw how Chip was so many steps behind, worlds away from the Girl. He saw how the vision of her sat there, festering on this sad man's cornea, a dreary film that went on and on obscuring the more serious points of his dilemma.

They had some more beer then Clint got out an ice block for them both. They sucked on them together silently, then something odd happened. Clint had a way of taking it deep into his little mouth, suggestively letting his tongue run up and down the sides, melting the brittle crystalised bits with the warmth of this tongue. Chip started on his and found himself doing the same in an effort to be simpatico - - always his immediate reaction to copy when unsettled. It was a hard slog doing it this way. His jaw began to ache and the effort to resist biting down on a chunk of Clint's cocksickle was straining for him. The cold tip rested on the hard cartilage at the base of his throat and sent shivers down his back. They both licked them down to the stick without speaking a word then Clint got up and disposed of them between two sheets of newspaper. Had they both observed this exchange? He felt nervous and taken advantage of. It was time to go or be further entwined in this man and his apartment. He stood and left, thanking Clint for the food and beer. Clint didn't say a word nor look him in the eye. He just smiled and ran his finger around the rim of Chip's bowl.

There was an omnipotence that Chip felt drop off when he left the apartment, replaced by a jittering cold feeling, everything receding and unwilling. He started to think of home, the origin of his failures, and how he should return there unannounced, gut at the ready, horny for a cataclysm of some sort to truncate this horrendous series of events --- to gut himself and let his insides spoil the scene. He wanted to scare them with his inappropriateness, force his rebel deformity before their eyes. He wanted it to be all too much too fast, as was his style --- always the first to be drunk and talking his head off about inappropriate matters,

making everyone wish they were strangers. But his awkwardness was far more evolved now. It was an atmosphere around him. It made people unable to gather their words or take control of the situation when he was near. Chip would do nothing to help either, just stare or act like he was thinking about some severe thing. He would crush them in this atmosphere, their weaknesses exposed like a gorgeous pair of tits or a nice big half-erect dick and Chip would suck it all in pornographically. But tonight it was he who was crushed. He limped off trying to think where the nearest train station was. It was far and he'd have to walk through a bad neighbourhood then catch a bus but he was set on this reunion idea all of a sudden and it was Christmas tomorrow so he went with it --- went with the gut for what felt like the last time.

The streets were bare. It was quite late and he longed to be done with this curse. He was wondering how it was that he remained among the living. Death pulled at his insides. He felt his life force slowly bleeding out of him. There was now a distinct feeling of a movement outwards from the core, from the nucleus. He felt A SUPREME GROWTH escaping him, tunneling out in cellular and mechanical pathways, but there was no knowing what it was....what it consisted of. It effected his posture. He had more of a backwards lean, head down, gut out, articulating an invisible apex that pointed forward and down in a flaccid diagram of sorts.

He heard a lousy disco tune coming from a red car up ahead. He came closer and the door popped open, a drunk woman sticking her head out. It was Daphne, that putrid whore witch. Chip couldn't believe his luck. He was after all an aspiring cannibal with revenge on his troubled mind. She looked like hell. Chip could feel her eyes on him, sunken and black, the sockets rimmed by the weak red glow of her parking lights. Why did he have to go to bed with her in the first place?

Daphne stepped out of the car, struggling on her big red heels that made the sinew in her calves stick out. She had reached her true witch form; a pot belly, a set of

sagging ape tits and a wash of purple bruises all over her body. Then she says to Chip "You don't look too hot, kid". Her voice cuts through the street like only a drunk woman's voice can. Chip looked down at himself...monstrous. He wished everyone had to carry around their emotional baggage as actual tissue. "You bitch. You fucked me." He lurches up towards her, tears coming to his eyes for a reason he can't figure. "How do I get rid of this thing? I'll kill you if you don't help me. I'll piss in your dead mouth if you don't tell me how to get this fucking thing out". "You can piss in my mouth all night babe. You don't have to kill me." And it happened, oddly enough. Not in the middle of the street but under the blue light of a public toilet. He speared his hot stream between the girl's flaky red lips and she chugged it down like a pro. The flow came first as a modest tinkle but then like something what you get after waking up with a hangover -- highly acidic stuff, and it poured out of him thick and strong. Then it darkened even more and shot out with force, some other state of internal imbalance showing itself, then darker still until it was near black...black ink. His eyes were watering from the ecstasy and from the acidity of his pee. Daphne started to moan and gurgle but never looked phased, not a degree of discomfort expressing itself.

Chip wanted her to be compromised like he had been for the last year or so, to overcome her nastiness with his own burgeoning sense of inner filth. But there was nothing Chip could do! Daphne was equal or better than whatever it was that sprayed out of him in this devastating ejaculation. It was, he now begins to accept as the last few drops dive between her lips, Daphne herself who conjured this gut and therefore by some cosmic lore it is her who is entitled to its final episode. His exhaustion was absolute. He was drained, exorcised. Daphne got up when he was done and ran. He thought he heard her giggle a bit on the way out, then her car clonk into gear and take out a headlight or two as it left the curb. But he was so tired the details fled his grasp. He zipped up, feeling a bit lightheaded and dehydrated but as soon as the button popped through the eye of his jeans a definite

pause occurred. Yes, his eyes focused, the blue light went flicker-flicker. "Much better".

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Chip came home the next evening, the gut still in tow but its RECKLESS MAGIC seemed to have died, been pissed away down Daphne's throat. Jesus fucking Christ thank God. It was now just an empty tomb for his vanquished demon to be remembered by. Walking the streets of his childhood those deeply familiar smells drew nearer; the overcooking of vegetables, the distinct freshness of things, newly cut wood chips thrown around garden beds, fresh leather upholstery, fresh underwear and bed sheets, fresh air. Even the greasy burger shop smelled fresh. He knew people had worked their whole life for the dignity of such smells. It nauseated him. And his nausea was, in turn, nauseating. He was ready to explode from it all.

Mum and Dad took him in, fed him, gave him a place to stay and fussed over his physical state, claiming they'd never seen something so grotesque. He smelt bad too, and they noted that ... repeatedly. But they could forgive their son, young Chip, the Infinity Kid for being taken by the reigns of lust, excess and all other evils because they were good people. Mum even tucked him in to bed that first night, his stomach arching up under the bed sheets, a breathing white mass half the height of the room. Once she was gone Chip felt like beating off. He looked over at the old PC they had in the corner but thought better of it. He did find something though, an old favorite from way back sitting in the lower shelf of the bedside table. The cover had a little house on it surrounded by a watercolour lawn not dissimilar from the house he now lay in. The first line hit like a nail, its sadness nesting deep within him.

"There was once a boy who wanted to eat the whole world. He set out one morning to begin but realised he forgot his lunch..."