

The sun was setting and the sky, orangey-red, like a huge floating grapefruit peel. I was standing in the middle of some noiseless main street. Tall, dark, shadows sprawled up against the sides of the buildings not lit with orange. I was back Down Town. Not sure what Down Town exactly, just “a” Down Town.

I heard a faint gargling a ways off. Squinting, I could see a dark line in the distance, slightly raised above the bizarrely fresh asphalt of the road, which, I just then noticed, seemed to run off endlessly into the horizon, a grey black tipped triangle.

I had kept still for too long already. Already, the slow, monotonous gargling was clearly audible above the whistling of the wind overhead. I was beginning to here some very human sounding groans as well. I started to run. The gargling quickened. I didn't turn around, but I knew that behind me, a wave of black was coming closer. I could see no end to the road, but I had to get off the street anyways.

Trouble was, I couldn't see any ways off the road. The city on either side of me was a wall, without alleyways or even doors. I turned around. An inky tide of dark was pooling up the street and towards me. I covered my face just before it splashed against me and when it did I was immediately swallowed in a maelstrom of screaming. Long, tortured wails came from every direction, deafeningly loud. I pressed oily black hands against my ears, trying to block out the noise. I felt something slithery move against my leg but I didn't dare open my eyes. I imagined the ink beneath me churning with rotted, inky black hands, all reaching out over me, covering me. I crouched down so it would go quicker. After what felt like several minutes, I opened my eyes. I was lying down. The black, now separated from my skin, was wrapped around me like a soft cocoon. I was covered in sweat. So was my blanket. That explained the wet feeling. As for the thing on my leg... I sighed and pulled myself out of bed. After showering (and changing my pants) I put on some coffee in the kitchen and flicked on the radio. I sat down on the couch with my coffee in front of the TV while Civilization played from the kitchen. The TV didn't work. That was okay. I had chosen this place mainly for the radio. Still, I missed TV. A bit of blue orange light was starting to show through the curtains. I had about half an hour. I was about to sip my coffee when, after considering the rather inky quality of the liquid, I decided that I didn't really feel like coffee this morning anyways. There was a frantic knocking at the door that made jump. I went to open the door when a bedraggled and a wide-eyed Harry burst through. “We got to go now.”

Harry's jeep was on the street out front. I packed my radio and a cooler full of food into the trunk and jumped into my seat. Harry turned on the engine and we started moving. “Did you get anything?”

“There was nobody there, it was just a loop”.

Harry swore just as a deep gurgling groan erupted from behind. Just before we turned a corner I saw my apartment through the rear view mirror, a shimmering obsidian waterfall pouring out over the balcony. Now Down town was gone too. We were running out of space...

It was slow moving, but that's how it got always got people. People stopped, it didn't. It just kept on peeling forward, relentlessly, the tortoise and the hare.