

# **What's in a Name?**

**By**

**Louie Lozano**

***Freeditorial*** 

## What's in a Name?

A. Siciliano

5529 Crescent St.

Chicago IL, 60609

To:

Coastline Investigators

4582 Horizon Blvd Ste. 15

Seattle WA, 98116

Attention: Peter Orson

Dear Mr. Orson,

The following are the materials you asked for. I hope it will help in your investigation into the disappearance of Dr. Corbray and his family. My hand in the case is summarized in copies of the reports made prior to their disappearance. The rest of the documents I've sent are a transcription of the correspondence that took place between Lawrence J. Corbray, M.D. and the person known in the case only as "A". As you stated in your email and telephone calls, these are hard to get a hold of, even in this age of smartphones and ebooks. My only explanation is that those who have read this exchange (which have mostly been legal experts and fellow cops) all agree that no detail of a reported crime is present. The closest we came to any form of a threat or admission to a crime committed does not come until the last dozen or so pages of this transcript. I will say it surprised me that your federal contacts were unable to turn anything up, seeing as they took over the case once the doctor and his family were reported missing.

Be that as it may, I've included the meat of it all. You'll find the first

page to be the initial report filed. This is followed by the exchange between Lawrence Corbray and A, along with the portion of which I took part in, and what was found when A was tracked down by Detective Lorenzo Molina of the Carlsbad PD in California. I've also had the emails whittled down to the bare essentials, the parties' log in information and dates and time stamps for each email have been listed on a spreadsheet at the end of these copies.

On a personal note, I only ask you keep in touch. Over the past few years I've found myself dwelling on what I knew and what I didn't know. I'm old enough to know that woulda's and coulda's and shoulda's are worth less than a cup of coffee. Still, I also value a good night's sleep, and I've had a lot less of those in recent years. I hope you find them, Orson, I do. If only so I can look at their remains, and tell them it was my fault. That I should've done more.

All the best to you, sir, and Godspeed.

Sincerely,

Andrew Siciliano

Detective, Chicago PD, Ret.

Case No: 9190028 LS65

Date: 05/23/2006

Reporting Officer: Det. Andrew Siciliano by way of referral from Officer Samuel Clay, on duty officer of the Domestic Harassment Office.

Incident:

One Lawrence Corbray, a doctor of psychiatry working out of Northwestern Memorial, has been the recipient of emails of an unknown origin for the past two weeks. His claim is they contain language of a nature that suggests the sender might be involved in some kind of ongoing violent behavior. Dr. Corbray has filed an official injunction to look into the matter with his superiors at the hospital and a local magistrate. Meanwhile, he has been in touch with his current patients and will be reaching out to other he's treated in the past to help identify the sender, who claims to be a former patient of the doctor's.

Actions taken:

We have reviewed the emails sent thus far and can only recommend monitoring the correspondence and keeping regular contact with Dr Corbray. Possible hoax from anonymous attention-seeker.

Summary:

Flag raised by local psychiatric expert based on recent correspondence. Will monitor over the next two weeks.

[The following exchange took place between the dates of May 9<sup>th</sup>, and October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006]

From: MrA001

To: LC\_MD94

Subject: Long time no see. (Received 05/09/2006)

Dear Dr. Corbray,

I'm writing to thank you for your months of service. During our sessions

I truly felt like the world had found some sort of resonance, a balance, if you will, that allowed me to shut out all that troublesome shit. But I need to confess. I had a relapse the other night while away on business. I'm not proud to admit this, but I'd be remiss in saying that I don't feel as if the unfortunate woman didn't provoke it. I mean, really, the carefree dress codes these days are revolting. Anyway, it all hashed out the same.

The girl and I had quite the time those first wonderful days, but then we had a spat, and well, you know. But I'm not writing you because of what happened. I'm convinced, now, at this juncture in life, that it will never turn out otherwise. However, after our separation, I thought about the advice you'd given me. About accepting the past so we can think about the present and how that's how we forge our future. That really hit home with me, though, not in the way you'd probably hoped. But there was something of a **spark**, a breathing, growing ember that struck me with an idea. See, when I think back on your words, about the past and the present being one in the same and whatnot, it struck me, the present and the future can't exist without the past. There's no need to hate myself, to struggle with what and who I am.

That's why I'm turning over a new leaf, doc. I'm dedicating more of my spare time to charities and volunteer work. And you know what? It's fantastic! I can feel the anxiety and regret depart with every minute I spend in service to my fellow man. But, again, I feel like this would be misleading you. You see, while I'm enjoying my time amongst the fragile and the underprivileged, I don't see this work as me, not really. I still need that other half of myself—the part that was causing such turmoil. When I turn my back on it, it won't let me alone. It needs to be appeased as much as my need to feel like I'm contributing

to man's mercy. To spread the ill and woe necessary for maintaining the ever elusive balance of darkness and light in the world as one might spread holiday cheer.

Well, that's all for now. I just wanted to let you know how I was doing, and to let you know that you don't have to worry anymore. I've committed myself to working a miracle for every sin. At least, in doing it this way, I'll be allowed to carry out my calling to the dark without having pile on top of my personal frustrations. And trust me; it's a much more pleasant sight to behold when it's not accompanied by the typical smoldering rage which it fed from. Now I don't need to linger and pine for what I don't have in life. Now I can do what I need to efficiently, and professionally, and carry on leading something like a real life (whatever that is).

Well, that's all, doc. I just wanted to reach out and share my epiphany. With your line of work I figured maybe it would help you with some other head case you're probably seeing. Gotta go, volunteered at the local church for the coming fall festival, then meeting with a lady friend for dinner. Be in touch.

Yours,

A

From: LC\_MD94

To: MrA001

Subject: Long time no see (Sent 05/12/2006).

Dear "A",

I'm not sure who you are. You've given me very little to go off of in your previous correspondence. From what I was able to gather, you're a former patient. I'm sorry to say that I see so many individuals—all with such interesting personalities and traits—that I'm unable to place you. Might I have your name? Something more than the initial A, so that I can place you?

I get the feeling that you're a bit apprehensive in regard to whatever it is that troubles you. And that's just it. What you wrote about, particularly at the beginning of your email, calls for more of an explanation. The language and tone of your account gives me cause to ask if anyone close to you—this young woman you recently “separated” from, for example—have been hurt or suffered any harm as of late. Please respond and I promise to help you get things sorted out. Also, I would like to recommend starting treatment again. I'm glad that helping out your fellow man has alleviated so much of your turmoil, but it sounds like you could still use someone to talk to. If you feel uncomfortable communicating with me, I can certainly make a referral to you for another therapist.

I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Best,

Dr. L.J. Corbray M.D. Psy.D.

From: MrA001

To: LC\_MD94

Subject: Me again (Received 05/14/2006)

Dear Doctor,

Of course I want someone to talk to; hence, my last message. I am disappointed that you can't tell who I am, based on our long and intensive sessions together, but I've learned to accept I am just a cog in the universe. That too, while maybe pessimistic, has been a crucial aspect to my recent enlightenment. But I'm getting off topic. The thing is, doc, I will not and cannot give you my real name for reasons that will become apparent as I write to you.

The thing is, I like you, but I know you don't trust me. Always known. You hide it well—the mark of a true professional—and I respect the hell out of that. So few take pride in their work. They see an ordeal, and reject the calling. That's what I've found, a calling. I know I'm a bad guy. I told you, I've had to make peace with this. Like the girl I told you I had dinner with the other night. Beautiful girl, really. And so well read. But the way she made eyes at our waiter. Thin, scraggly wetback that he was. I read that women are attracted to effeminate looking men these days because of the birth control screwing with their hormones, but that's neither here nor there. The point is, after I was done with them, I was wracked with that cold, crawling mask of guilt once again—it feels like it pulls at my sinuses sometimes. Like a cold you just can't shake. But I was so torn about it that I found a couple of homeless men afterward, bought them a meal, some clothes, and put them up for a couple of nights in a motel until I could get the pastor of one of the churches I volunteer at to find them something in the way of a job.

I gotta tell you, doc. I think this is the other half of the reason I'm here. This is my vocation, a dual consortium of will both good and ill. The bad parts are just my way of getting the bad out of the way of the good. It's why I can't



tell you who I am. See, I don't want to implicate you in anything that the current state of the world would deem "unseemly". I'm also not in the mood to rouse any undue action on your part. You are, after all, not me and therefore not capable of making the same moral connections that I am to the tapestry of existence.

Well that's all I have to say for now. I'd like to end this message by asking you a question. It's not a real one, more of a rhetorical question, but not really one of those either. It goes like this; a man of impeccable breeding, an honorable veteran of the First World War, highly educated and well traveled learns the art of meditative archery by way of studying under a wizened old Zen master. The purpose of said archery is not to take into warfare, or bring down wild game, but a way to quiet the mind and open the soul's eyes to the all-encompassing energy of the universe. The man goes as far as to write a best-selling book on the topic as a celebration of his enlightenment, in the hope others may also learn of the unifying force underlying the universe. And then, years later, this man goes home to his war-torn nation and becomes an ardent fascist. More than a fascist. This man doesn't believe in doing things half way, and so, goes on to become the commandant of one of the most infamous concentration camps constructed. That man's name? Karlfried Graf Dürckheim

So tell me, doc, what's a man to make of this? An educated man, well learned in meditation and the philosophy surrounding it, a war veteran who already knows the horrors of combat and what it can do to people, and still...It keeps me from sleeping at nights, that story, but it comforts me in a way. It reminds me that perfection is a myth. So what do you think of this? The

profound and the profane, thriving equally in the vascular capsule that was a man. I eagerly await your reply.

Yours,

A

PS-

It may interest you to know that Herr Dürckheim was one of your people; a psychotherapist. Life does love her some irony, doesn't she?

From: LC\_MD94

To: MrA001

Subject: Response (Sent 05/16/2006).

A,

Once more, I'm compelled to beg that you share your identity. I have to confess, your language and the tone in describing some of the details of your personal life are, to say the least, unnerving.

If you're hurting people. If you are taking out your anxieties, your anger, and troubles on others, whose only crime was upsetting you, then you are not contributing anything worthwhile to the world. I'm afraid that no amount of charity work is a fitting penance for causing continuous harm to others.

I'm sorry if you feel I am being overly sensitive or judgmental, but I can't support you or help you if you continue to embrace this type of cyclical reasoning. Your example of Karlfried Dürckheim is interesting as you've

mischaracterized him. While the man was a Nazi, he never oversaw a death camp, and, in fact, was transformed spiritually by his time in prison and wrote a great deal on his remorse and his conversion, synthesizing the lessons he'd learned in both Zen Buddhism as well as Christian mysticism.

Now, I have to tell you, if you haven't hurt anyone and I am simply misreading your mention of these people in your life, then you should know that this all sounds like an offensive and irresponsible practical joke. I'm a therapist, A, not a priest. I'm bound to confidentiality in so long as I have no reason to believe you are a threat to yourself or others, especially if your vague descriptions continue to hint at any violence toward women. That being said, should you either continue in this line of communication or sever this correspondence entirely, then in the next forty-eight hours I'll have no choice but to contact the police who can, and will, trace these emails back to your location. Now I'm sure that you, like me, would rather steer clear of some kind of sensational manhunt, especially if you haven't actually committed a crime. This is my final request, to which I'll give you a half day to respond to before I get into contact with them.

I eagerly await your reply.

Sincerely,

Dr. L.J. Corbray

From: MrA001

To: LC\_MD94

Subject: Rebuttal (Received 04/18/2006)

My good Doctor,

It's a lucky thing that I was expecting an email from a prospective employer, otherwise I would've missed your little deadline, huh? Funny how things work out.

Of course I was aware of Herr Dürckheim's "conversion" and his actual titles. If you remembered me you'd know I'm a proud history buff. But was my description really inaccurate? The man was in charge of helping develop and distribute anti-semitical propaganda, and for him to be successful in his undertakings he'd have to know what information he was suppressing in favor of what his masters wanted the world to believe. That he preached tolerance and peace after coming out on the losing side of a vicious struggle, if anything, backs my point of divinity and deviancy inhabiting the same skin. Look at Genghis Khan. Your modern historian and intellectuals the world over speak the man's name as something to be admired, hallowed and beatified by intellectuals the world over. His is an example given as to what a man from humble beginnings might accomplish, and yet, he murdered men by the bushel, and his bloodline persists today only because he personally raped as many women that his cursed old gonads allowed him to.

This is what I meant, doc. So, semantically, you are right on the nose. But only semantically.

I just wanted to express to you the grey state in which a man's soul can exist. Regardless of your own moral standings and what you may think of me, I think this dual nature is wholly what man is, was, and will always be. We are a warlike race, yet, we are also capable of marvelous things. We like to believe

these things are mutually exclusive from one another. But one never seems to deter the other, does it? The wheel keeps turning and charity and good deeds do nothing to quell the storm of violence and hate, but the beautiful and the graceful moments of life never cease or yield in the face of what is really a hopeless state of existence.

I think you've mischaracterized **me**, doc. I don't go out of my way to hurt. But sometimes, just sometimes, the darkness needs to be fed. This isn't to say it is completely mindless and incapable of staying its hand. In fact, it's funny our communication has turned this way, as just last week I kept the dark at bay. I was out late doing some grocery shopping. I tend to do my shopping at night so as to avoid the hustle and bustle of shit bags that dilly dally on their phones and clog the aisles, but I digress. There was a young "couple" in the store with me and a few others. I noticed them only because I couldn't quite gauge their attachment. There seemed to be some bit of flirting and glancing on both their parts, but little else in the way of intimacy. Their manner of dress was also in contrast. The man, a doughy wide-faced goober in glasses looked as though he might be on his way to a job interview, while she had her dark hair tied up and was dressed as though she'd just came from the gym.

As luck would have it her car (they drove separately) was parked close to mine. Now, I wasn't in a great dark mood, but I let my imagination play with the idea of them in the sweet hereafter together. This, it would seem, was enough to get the shadows in my mind talking, and so, I sized the two of them up. He helped his lady friend load her groceries while I lolly-gagged in stowing my purchases. I overheard them speaking, and soon learned that they were just friends. But our pudgy brother was smitten with his platonic

sweetheart, asking her out for a more formal meeting. The girl laughed at the suggestion, adding, “I love what we are right now. I don’t want to ruin that.”

The forlorn gentleman nodded and accepted her rejection at what must have been a long rehearsed attempt at gaining affection. He tried to put on a brave face, but it was plain in his voice. He was so distraught he didn’t even notice me watching him as he watched her drive off and then walk to his own, humble ride where he proceeded to weep for some time. It was then that I decided to stick my dark urge in an icebox and let him leave, reasoning that this was the worst thing I could do to him.

Now, you might say that this is a meager attempt on my part to garner a little leniency from you, but I just wanted to show you how, sometimes, I am in control. Not totally, but often enough. Actually, only a fool believes himself to be capable of controlling everything all the time. Human beings just don’t possess the hyper agency that we like to believe is ours to exercise at will.

Take my friend, who we will call Bertrand for anonymity’s sake—and also because I think it’s a funny name for an alias. But Bertrand is a pretty bright man, the tech savvy sort of young fella—he even taught himself how to read code, and works as the head of IT for a well-known prestigious company. He’s your typical embittered young man, who was taught, as so many young ones are taught, that he could’ve become, literally, anything he wanted in life. Fed that all he had to do was follow a simple plan and the world would lay itself at his feet, offering whatever and whoever he chose, leaving him freedom to toss these away at a whim if it didn’t fit his own narrative. Bertrand seems to think he’s destined to create a new communicative media

service that would dwarf current forums. Not an especially lofty ambition. That is to say, not a laughable goal.

The problem is that Bertrand also believes he is destined to court and wed a particular celebrity whom, he assures me, shares a mutual acquaintance that would allow him to accomplish such a thing. He further believes he would be able to parlay these goals to become something of a new age guru who will then shape the world to his ideals. He's not so arrogant to imagine that the world would simply fall in line with everything he says, but he does believe that enough people will follow to give him something of a cult status, making him a demigod amongst the pantheon of pop culture.

I know, absurd.

But despite the lunacy of this mindset, I like Bertrand. He's snide, cynical, and in possession of a long face and sunken chest that gives me great pleasure to imagine kicking in. Despite this, I haven't, and consider him a good friend for maintaining my abstinence from violence around him. He's also under the impression that I'm a bit of a lady killer, and has asked my advice in obtaining the distant object of his affection. I've accepted his request for two reasons. The first being that I was touched by his observations of me, unaware of the demons I tussle with on a permanent routine. The other reason I chose to help him—and it's very important that you mark this and mark it well—is that Bertrand is a gifted man when it comes to IP encryption, and, for my troubles, put together an amazing personal device that is untraceable by any known technology.

Bertrand seems to think that the NSA is in possession of a few tricks that

would crack his program. So, Sir Headshrinker, unless you can convince the bodies of our nation's clandestine services that our exchange is a detriment to national security then I invite you to call upon your local PD. Hell, maybe even the FBI will want to give it a look. But they know as well as I that without the proof of a wrong committed then I might as well just be your everyday Joe Attention Whore.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to go meet up with my man Bertrand. I think I've untangled his dilemma. Should he agree with my proposal to help him obtain his ends then I'll have less time to write you in the weeks to come. Don't fret, though. I don't intend to let our discussion end here. But before I forget, let me pose another thinking exercise to you. It involves ideas on the afterlife, and it's a philosophy that I've been kicking around in the halls of my own percolating noggin.

It's come to my attention while socializing with one of the other volunteers from one of the various churches I've been donating my time to. It is now en vogue to entertain the idea that "we are all one", introduced to our society by the exaltation of eastern philosophy. My acquaintance suggested that each one of us is an avatar, or demiurge, of the Almighty. This particular person—as well as some within their chosen circle—are under the impression that, when we die our experiences and memories are *downloaded*, for lack of a better term, into God's greater conscience, thus giving all of mankind a sort of collage of what the human experience truly is. Well, it's a very nice sentiment, but I think I've found a flaw in this sort of pseudo enlightenment. At least, I hope it's a flaw. Otherwise, I fear my work will never be done. But I'll share that with you another time.



So, what do you think, doc? Are all lives so important that each and every experience had, by each and every man, woman, and child who ever lived are something of a divine entity in and of itself, creating a life for itself and weaving its way through the torrential chaos of existence, to share the different perspectives that there are to be had so as to arrive later at some great and fantastic conclusion?

I eagerly await your reply.

Yours,

A

From: LC\_MD94

To: MrA001

Subject: Response cont. (Sent 05/19/2006)

A,

I'm glad you got back to me. It's important that we continue this line of communication to help you. That's what I want, after all, to help. I don't like seeing (or, in this case reading) about the suffering of others, especially your own. But what's important is the climb upward, rising above it, not continuing the descent, or staggering along through misery. That's the strong way, that's the brave way.

I have to implore you, and cannot stress this enough, **you need to contact me** as soon as possible. If you choose not to do so, then I can't help you in any regard. Do you understand where I'm leading with this? It will all

be out of my hands, and any repercussions that would develop from any act of abuse visited upon either yourself or others will not be something I can help reconcile.

I hope you reach out soon.

Best,

Dr. Corbray

From: MrA001

To: LC\_MD94

Subject: You've got some balls (Received 05/24/2006)

Dear "Doctor",

I know I'm something of an anomaly, even for a man in your line of work. So I'll forgive the insult of your collaborative efforts with whomever the police officer was that sent your last message. It sounded nothing at all like you, and I'm not sure who to blame for that considering the fact that you can't even tell them who I am. Now you've wasted my time as well as theirs, as I have admitted to no wrong doing, nor can you submit any evidence suggesting that I have.

Doctor, you said so yourself, **I need help**, and these emails are helping.

Without you for an outlet, why, I don't know who I'd share these thoughts with. You'd leave me to my demons and let them chew me alive. I don't know why you'd want this to happen, to have me ripped and sawed away from myself. I thought you had some heart there, doc. I need you. I need

this. I mean, it's bad enough that you can't remember me, and now you're asking the first available flatfoot to stand by you because you're perceiving something that's not really there. How am I to take that?

Are the sinister thoughts in my heart, my empty, hollow heart, not worth the time of a man who has claimed to dedicate himself to the salvation of poor scum like me? I just don't know. It's times like this that I think ending it is the only answer.

However, something happened to me the other day, something I'd like to share with you. I was at a local park, going for a walk. I like to do this just before dinner. Works the digestion up, and I love a good sunset, Anyway, a mother, her three children and their dog, some kind of boxer mix. The mother was on her phone, shouting at her children's father from the sound, and paying little enough mind to notice her daughter had wandered into the street at the last moment. Now I was too far away to reach the girl but I started shouting and sprinting toward them. This must have caught the mother's attention and she too put in all the effort she could to move her rotund frame. I caught sight of a car entering my field of vision with no sign of slowing down, but moving just slow enough for me to see a see a bald tub of lard puffing away at a Black & Mild.

Now I can't explain this. I'm still trying to figure it out myself. But the family's dog, Duke (as I later learned), went charging ahead of his mistress and into the street directly at the car. Poor Duke died on the spot, but the impact had caused the driver to brake short of the little girl. Let me tell you, the head-shaking nature of seeing a dog identify a vehicle as a threat to a

member of his family and reacting to this in such a tactical way was troubling enough; the catharsis that came with it was another thing altogether. I say that because as I watched the loyal pooch, broken and bleeding, breathing his last, I knew I would never see anything more beautiful in my life. It was a sacrifice of pure love, yet, it filled me with dread. Is that what it takes? Is being torn apart what love is? Why do we applaud that and judge other driving forces that give us cause to do harm? Is the state of your heart worth its workings or another's? How can that be the only way?

I offered to watch Duke until Animal Control came to take his body. The family, shaken and blubbering as they were, had neither the means nor the heart to deal with the loss beyond disposal. So I stayed. As I watched him, all of those questions about beauty, love and sacrifice barreled through my mind like a demolition derby. Soon each question had an answer, and each answer had its own voice.

I'd go on, but I'm too terrified to imagine what I have to share falling on the filtering eyes of some sort of cyber gumshoe, whom, I'm sure would rather be hunting down child molesters than a head case like me, who just doesn't know how to deal with the intrusive thoughts that plague us all. So, I propose this; three weeks from the date and time I am sending this to you we'll sign on to the messenger option, and have ourselves a nice chat in real time (I'd suggest sooner, but Bertrand and I are making some great progress on his predicament).

And until the time we "speak" again, I'd like you to really think on that last question I posed to you. What is the biggest flaw behind this new fad

validating the emotions and experiences of every free-thinking being on this great big rock? What problems does this cause that the overly sentimental dunderheads behind it can't seem to get around? Until then, doc.

Yours,

A

(The following online conversation took place on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012) [Transcript obtained by Chicago Police Department])

*LC\_MD94 signed in at 8:40 pm (CST)*

*MrA001 signed in at Midnight (EST)*

MrA001: Hello, doc. Sorry I kept you.

LC\_MD94: Yes, hello...A...

MrA001: Bit dramatic there, aren't we? Were ellipses really necessary?

LC\_MD94: What do you want, A?

MrA001: Doc! Take a breather. I really don't think I've warranted the hostility. I'm just here to unload some of my demons. I keep telling you, this is helping. It's all about focus, and having someone to be open to about this is giving me the center I need.

LC\_MD94: Get on with it, then. Speak your piece.

MrA001: As you wish. But I have to ask. Are the officers with you, or are they just monitoring this thing?

LC\_MD94: They're not a part of this anymore. You chased them off.

MrA001: DON'T FUCKING JERK ME AROUND DOC! I know they're keeping an eye on us to some capacity because, by now, they're fascinated by the fact that they can't trace my emails. Well, they won't trace this either. I told you I was helping my pal Bertrand. Part of my absence the past few weeks was helping him test out this tech. The swine in a suit who's working this case would probably like to know that he's not the only piggy stymied by my inaccessibility. Now, once more, are they looking over your shoulder, or monitoring the conversation.

PDadmin81: Hello, A, we're here. We just want to make sure no one is hurt or getting hurt.

MrA001: Thank you for being upfront with me, officers, but I just needed to know where you are. I will be talking to the doctor now, if you don't mind.

LC\_MD94: I'm here. Now what?

MrA001: Did you take any time to think about what I posed to you?

LC\_MD94: The plurality thing, you mean?

MrA001: In a sense, yes. That is, what problems exist with believing that all of what makes our selves melt away and become another thread in the grand tapestry?

LC-MD94: I suppose the biggest problem would be the self. The notion of letting go of what makes one a unique and cognizant consciousness would be diluted by the eons of human thought and emotions. That can be very scary for some people, to give up the self, especially when we are taught in a society

such as ours that the individual is so vital an asset that all life becomes precious in its sight. Is that what you meant? That your actions against others stand vindicated in light of this way of thinking about things? Because I'm not a philosopher, only a physician. A physician who wishes to preserve life in every capacity that I'm capable of. And I can't justify violence in any regard.

MrA001: Interesting observation. You're somewhat correct in your guessing that the question has been gnawing at me because of how it would apply to my own standard of living. But my problem is a bit more broad. You see, in order for the human family's collective consciousness to come together you not only have to accept the notion of evil, but you must defend its very right to exist. Otherwise this great mural of the human condition is incomplete and becomes nothing more than a child's coloring book, full of hope, playfulness, and joy, but lacking in anything other than fanciful vignettes of fortunate happenstance. Starved for substance!

LC\_MD94: Is that what you believe you are? Evil?

MrA001: Sure, but that doesn't mean I'm useless.

LC\_MD94: How's that?

MrA001: Evil makes the world go 'round, doc. If there is a creator who fashioned everything and put it here, then it was evil that set the globe a-spinning. It creates jobs, stokes the economy, drives people to design and execute great feats. People don't realize that it'd be less futile to stop an earthquake than to eternally burn away the darkness.

LC\_MD94: So all the good, decent people of the world might as well give up

their vocations I suppose? Set down their arms and walk quietly into the night.

MrA001: You weren't paying attention. One cannot exist without the other. Even an unsavory character such as I needs order to be in place to some extent. Why, how else would I get around? But you understand how the whole black and white thing has made things difficult for me, I hope. So many people in this world preaching "positive energy" and "thinking good thoughts", as though it was possible for the human psyche to maintain that pace of energy at all hours of the day. It's borderline fascist, I tell you. We ought to let people be miserable, be cynical, then, maybe we'd begin to figure a few things out. How much can get done if we're all sitting around saying how wonderful things are?

LC\_MD94: You're sort of all over the place with your assertions. I thought we'd only be communicating on your posed problem.

MrA001: Just airing some grievances, doc. I mean the nerve of some people. Enforcing their brand of supposed happiness, judging and condemning those who have built a healthy, understandable resentment toward what is an unjust world.

LC\_MD94: And you're not expressing that same judgment?

MrA001: I'm not ramming it down their throats! Much as I'd like to! But this notion that we can essentially wish the bad away contradicts their sentimentality for the world, which is comprised of as much ugliness and cruelty as it is joy and beauty. To deride the other side of the coin is to lose its value. It's vain, and dismissive to other ideas. It's an attempt to stamp out the much needed criticism this reality requires. Look, I recognize what I am, but



I'm not trying to vanquish the other side. There are a lot of monsters like me in this world, and what people need is a proper balance to that, a side that's understanding and welcoming, not one that outright condemns anything that doesn't sound like it.

LC\_MD94: A, there's always a counter argument to whatever our philosophy might be. You're reaching for martyrdom. Furthermore, you're reaching for it by justifying what you've led me and the authorities to believe are some pretty troubling acts.

MrA001: Honestly never thought of it that way. Ha! Thanks, doc. I knew you could help direct me out of that one. It's been haranguing like a jilted monkey slamming heroin.

LC\_MD94: Their energy will fail those people, as you say. You were right about that. We can't just turn the happy on, or expect it to keep on burning the rest of our lives. Just don't let their idea of what makes people happy with what you need to do to be happy—which should be to seek treatment, if I may say so.

MrA001: Jesus, doc, you're right. I've got much more important things to patch up in my life than some empty idiot's thoughts about fulfillment. See, I told you this was helping!

LC\_MD94: That's because it works. But I can't help you in the ways that I need to as long as we're doing things this way. You need to come in, or at least let me know who you are so I can recommend some medication to help. Please, A, let me in.

MrA001: No, that won't be happening, but this has helped immensely.

LC\_MD94: Don't stop now that we've made some progress.

MrA001: We have, but not to your heart's content. We're not here for you, after all. We're here for me, and I'll be the judge of how much I need and when I need it, thank you. As I'm sure I've made clear, I know who and what I am and I am just that. Would you talk a closeted gay man into just going along with the crowd and leading a life he wasn't meant to live? But, I'm glad we did this tonight, I needed to hear this.

LC\_MD94: Hold on, A, homosexuality and violent behavior are not comparable. I need to talk you down because I know you've hurt others, there's no doubt in my mind.

MrA001: Well that's a matter of perspective, I suppose. But, no. No cheating on this one, doc. You haven't earned my name. I'm afraid you must rely on your memory, or your powers of deduction.

LC\_MD94: I'm in the middle of tracking down all of my past and current patients. I will find out who you are. Why draw it out? Why the long con? You've made it clear that you want help, but you might as well be a stranger. I imagine you're good at using aliases in your personal life. Your location is untraceable through any kind of digital methods. Bring yourself down to my level. Give me your name and we can at least start seeing each other as equals.

MrA001: You're not wrong there, doc, but the game is part of why I'm doing this. I'll freely admit this is great fun for me. And shouldn't that which is therapeutic also be enjoyable? Is it all emotional breakdowns and endless

boxes of tissues over our lost childhoods? Why, rushing to the answer just feels like it cheapens things. Like having the opportunity to make love to your soul mate, your one true love, only to jackhammer your way to a squirt. Let's savor this, doc.

LC\_MD94: Let's not. Tell me who you are, A. Tell me so you don't have to walk that road alone anymore.

MrA001: Touching, but, I'm never alone, not really. Aside from the occasional young woman I direct my attentions to, I've got Bertrand. And speaking of my protégé, I really need to cut this short. Bertrand and I are setting off on an adventure; a couple of young men taking the world by the balls in a trip around this beautiful blue rock of ours. I'm hoping the trip will help clear up some things for poor Bertrand. We ran into a road block on the pursuit of his lady love, and the change of scenery should do him some good. Wish us luck, doc. You'll be hearing from me in about a month's time or so. Don't want to interrupt the trip with our correspondence. By then I'll have a whole new set questions about existence that I'm sure you can help me address. Until then, my flustered physician, I'd like you to dwell on a passage from scripture, Job 2:10, "Shall we receive good from God, and not evil?"

*MrA001 has signed off*

LC\_MD94: A! Damn it!

LC\_MD94: Did you get a fix on his location?

PDadmin81: Negative, doctor. He's got his hands on some ungodly software. Part of me thinks it's this Bertrand fella we should be tracking down. If

Bertrand is real, that is.

LC\_MD94: Something tells me he's not pulling us along on that one. Now what?

PDadmin81: Now nothing, doctor. I'm sorry, but without proof of any wrong doing on his part, or without any evidence of a threat, his only crimes are being in possession of whatever Bertrand cooked up for him which is enabling A to evade us. Other than that, the only thing he's done wrong is behave super, extra creepy. And since we can't find him that doesn't count for much. I'm sorry but we won't be monitoring again without genuine probable cause.

LC\_MD94: And what the hell should I do? Just play pen pals with this guy until I can figure out his identity?

PDadmin81: Sorry, doc. It's just how this things work. Guy could just be starved for attention. Just stay in contact with Detective Siciliano and keep an eye out for any suspicious persons you come across.

LC\_MD94: I'm a psychiatrist. I'm surrounded by suspicious persons.

PDadmin81: Well, those around your neighborhood then. Gotta go now. Good luck!

*PDadmin81 has signed off*

LC\_\_MD94: Great.

From: MrA001

To: LC\_MD94

Subject: Trouble with Bertrand (Received 08/11/2006)

Dear Doctor,

I'm back! Ooooh man, let me tell you something. You haven't lived until you bedded an Argentine woman and fucked each other's brains out while high on MDMA until sun up. But that was the only highlight of my trip, I'm sorry to say. There were some interesting sights to take in, don't get me wrong, but my purpose behind the excursion was a complete waste of time. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

First and foremost, I hope you're well. I'm sure there's a piece of you that hoped to never hear from me again. Praying, most likely, that I was just an especially obsessive prankster who needed some attention and a break from the monotony of my slow, dull life. But I'd wager a sultan's harem that the better part of you, the part that you trust the most, knows I'm genuine in my expressions. And I'm sure that part of you wished the worst on me, hoped that my lack of contact had been due to some untimely end. I'm sure that part of you might have even brought you down to your knees and asked that very thing of the great bearded demiurge on his throne of clouds. I don't begrudge you that, though. I have sometimes found myself hoping against hope that those who step into the crosshairs of my ire would suffer some kind of accident before my darker half mobilizes.

But enough of that. I need to tell you about this trip.

Personally I loved the Latin women I encountered down south, and the Aussies were a fun-loving bunch, and accommodating, as were the Thai. But Bertrand seemed to enjoy the old world. He found a strange peace in the broken-down ramparts and ruins of the continent that all the old empires called

home. He was like an over-eager little boy wanting to hurry to the next landmark where this battle or that battle took place, or whatever spot where this king or that grand duke was assassinated. I wasn't a fan though. Europe was a bore, and I relive enough instances of petty violence and cruel tragedies here at home. Still, I endured it because I thought it would be good for Bertrand. The sparkle in his eye and the new energy breathed into him, I thought, had produced a solution to our enigma.

Shit, I'm getting ahead of myself again. Apologies, doc, but I got back just a few days ago and I've got almost too much to write about. This part about Bertrand, however, is important. So let me get that out of the way.

I mentioned to you months ago that Bertrand was fixated on this one little number—cute thing. A little short for my tastes, but very pretty face, and big plump tits, the kind that make a man wish he wasn't too old to breast feed. She's also somewhat of a public figure. Not a household name, but well known enough that you'd have no trouble looking her up on any entertainment centered websites. I also mentioned before that Bertrand is something of a distant acquaintance—a sister of a friend of his old roommate to hear him tell it. But I can't say whether or not he's ever even met her. He knows a great deal about her interests, yet seems to be lacking when it comes to a substantial memory or moment between the two. So, to get on with it, I decided a while back that rather than enable the poor guy's lofty machinations of somehow courting a woman he's never encountered, I suggested this trip to him as a way of helping him snap out of this delusion of his.

I feel it's pertinent to mention at this time that I've taken Bertrand into

confidence and told him about my shaded half. He asked to observe one of my dark excursions, and (I'm now sorry to admit) I thought it would be great fun to play the exhibitionist. So I let him tag along a couple of times, and, to my chagrin, he got off on it. I mean, he literally started masturbating when he would watch me. But I don't like giving up on people, so I suggested the trip as a way to clear both of our heads. Also, in researching Bertrand's lady love, I discovered she had acquired a new beau—all very bad for Bertrand. Before revealing this to him I thought it'd do him some good to see other lands, absorb some culture, and maybe even hook up with a slow-witted tavern wench who got wet when she heard foreign accents. I also took him to some fine brothels staffed with women that not even God could bed without at least putting down a few c-notes.

All for naught.

Fucking Bertrand couldn't get this lady off of his mind. He believed he was in love, but men like you and me know this is just what happens when a man has too much of himself on his mind. He believes that his emotions are reality, and not just a tide of chemicals slam-dancing their way between his brain and his dick, pissing on the heart as they make their rounds. Bertrand would have none of it. So I told him. I told him this woman he desired was off on her own path, that she'd chose another, and that he was likely never anything more than a shadow to her. Needless to say this did not go over well. Bertrand took a swing at me for my blunt honesty. I'm fine though, he's built like an African refugee—and it was more like a slap than a real punch. He apologized the very next day, but from then on it was like leading a beaten puppy around, he was so defeated. And then his drinking got worse. He's not

the most seasoned drinker to begin with, and trying to dilute his problems just led to some messy nights—very disappointing. Fortunately, this was at the tail end of our trip, so I got in at least a little vacation time.

However, since coming back, Bertrand has been almost too eager to take part in some of my “therapeutic” dealings. He knows a little bit about you, though, I refuse to give him any details, despite his insistence. He’s acted odd since we’ve been back. Changed, I’d say. I know I’m not one to judge on this instance, but my other predilections allow me to get a good read on people, and I think something in him snapped. Granted, he hasn’t done anything heinous that I can speak of, but he asks about my hobbies more often than usual. Guess I’ll just have to pay closer attention to it.

Enough of that, then.

I hope you’re in good health—and your family as well. I hope you’d had some time to think about that biblical quote, the one recorded in that great melancholic fable, Job. But that’s giving you a little too much credit. In fact, I find myself wondering—as I write—how many times you scoured that sufferer’s tome, looking for a clue to my identity by way of hidden psyche suggestions, devising a way to goad me into slipping-up in our next exchange. I do hope you thought about that Job passage, though. See, I think in that line is the secret so many folks have been hounding after and killing each other over for eons. I think in that simple passage, not even uttered by the protagonist of our tale himself, is the answer to the nature of God, the nature of man, the nature of existence. Think about it. “Shall we receive good from God, and not evil?” Are we so vain to believe we’re entitled to love,



happiness, comfort and pleasure? As if we weren't a species thrust into a hostile environment full of monsters, and plagues, and woe. As though reality should become an unshakable utopia, because "we say so". We've crowned ourselves with thorns and wonder why it's prickling us and getting blood in our eyes. And don't you think that's offensive to a deity? To think that because you put me here you owe me everything I want? Add this to the ones who refuse to acknowledge a divine presence because He doesn't let us all live out beautifully self-concocted fairytales, as though a god has to prove anything to any of us.

It makes you wonder doesn't it? What else is out there? What else looks or has looked down at us and decided we weren't worth the attention, that we weren't worthy of anything other than the existence we've been allowed. Refused a glimpse of the presence of something that loves us even for just a blink before it left forever. Because it's either that or nothing. Now that I can accept. That I can understand. That we aren't the masters of our domain like we believe. But nothing? If there's nothing, then nothing about what I do or have done means anything. One cell being absorbed by another.

So, what do you think?

Yours,

A.

From: LC\_MD94

To: MrA001

Subject: Trouble with Bertrand -- response (Received 08/20/2006)

A,

I'd like to keep hating you, and I do. Still, I'll admit you struck a chord. I'm familiar with that verse—quite familiar. I found a merciful comfort in those words when someone was taken from me. It's a hard truth, but one that was given to us long ago. It's an age-old wisdom, a mantra of tough love known in any language, reiterated in many a tale and religious rite, "Life's not fair."

Now, about your friend.

Bertrand is obviously a problem, and while I know you have your own games to play, it might be in his best interest and the interest of other future parties involved to get him to some place where he can't harm himself or others. I expect you'll ignore this advice, but a man can hope, can't he? It sounds like your discretionary policies don't align with his. This is often a dilemma that most people on the process of personal growth will encounter. Old friends and acquaintances start to look more and more like strangers. You interpret their attitudes and actions as something beneath you. This is not your fault, or there's, rather, it's your mind looking at things from an outsider's perspective.

Don't let it coax you into feeding this behavior. I know you have your own dark proclivities, but there's no reason to pile on top of them with Bertrand's descending mentality. In my day I had a collection of friends who I loved—at the time—as family. I still remember my time with them fondly, but, when you want to start your own practice and settle down you can only keep those around you who either want the same or who will actively help you

achieve those ends, even if that means keeping their distance and letting you be you. In other words, we've all been there, A.

I suspect you're much lonelier than you've put forward. You have one friend that you've felt compelled to mention in any capacity. You can't keep a relationship—the implications of which we can save for another time if you prefer—and your proclamations of self-actualization have done nothing to relieve the anxieties of the fact that you have no one to call your own. Whatever connections you maintain are only to fuel your façade, and you have no one you can trust, even just for a ride to the airport. Eventually this isolation will consume you and you'll have to give in to your dark nature, because that part of you that can function like a human being is getting exhausted and will no longer be able to buy the lies you sell to yourself.

You'll find this unfair. You'll find this unjust, and you'll blame a God you've built up in your mind who supports your violent tendencies. Not just supports, but hoisted upon you, a yoke of predestination you only have a vague explanation for. It's why you look for quotes like the one from Job, why you read so much into humanity's hateful face. It makes you feel less broken, it makes you feel like the conformist you claim not to be. The truth is, A, we're all just the cells of a virus on this world.

Most of the folks out there, the smart ones anyway, are always looking out for themselves. Even the compassionate ones; the bleeding hearts, the ones who are deluded into believing that they're making a difference and that it isn't one big, sad comedy. Poor as their efforts might be to you and I, they're the cream of the crop, the right stuff, because they're able to turn off the

impulse that tells us to “hunt”, “kill”, “devour”, “fuck”. It’s something you lack. Hell, even I lack it. I’m not above a little bout of cruelty. The other day I called an Asian man who’d cut me off a gook, and spent the next thirty minutes after that thinking of ways to punish him and all those he loves. I hate that my son is dating a black girl, and I like to jerk off to thoughts of my twenty-four year old teaching assistant’s lips wrapped around my cock.

My point is, all of those people who you despise—and whom I like to despise as well—are the ones fighting the real battles in this whole light versus darkness shit you’ve been coming at me with. You’ve let it in, it would seem. You gave up and are letting it share joint custody with your soul. Gave it up like a drunken sorority girl, and now you’ve allied yourself with another weak mind in your pal Bertrand (if there is a Bertrand), enabling him to give sway to the enemy within.

I imagine thinking about those things pisses you off. Indeed, I think you’re already working out a way to make me pay for my insolence. This is your game, after all, right? But I’m not writing this to corner you into a “Gotcha!” moment, I want you to come back into the fold. Get your hands dirty and fight your way back to becoming a human being again. That’s what I have to say to you. That’s all your questions deserve as far as an answer goes.

I eagerly await your reply.

L.J. Corbray M.D. Psy. D.

From: MrA001

To: LC\_MD94

Subject: Damndest thing (Received 09/03/2006)

Doctor Corbray.

You were right about Bertrand. Something happened the other day, which, for self-evident reasons, I can't jot down for you in any specific way—but things got nasty. He tried to go at things alone, and did about as good a job with the “subjects” as you'd imagine.

Shit-head (read: Bertrand) and I were supposed to just meet up for a drink and a round of pool a few days ago. But what do I find when I get to his house? (His house being almost an hour's drive from me, I might add). I find two young ones tied up in his living room. His living room! He'd fed them some concoction he brewed from his medicine cabinet to keep them docile, only it wasn't really working because the idiot had thrown some Sudafed in with it, so one of them was still awake—though droopy-eyed—and the other was hardly breathing.

I didn't panic. I didn't overreact. I just put the poor lambs down before time and circumstance led to me spreading any more traces of my presence at the scene. He was flabbergasted by this, but one look from me told him not to argue. We cleaned it all in silence, and I offered to make us my Peruvian ceviche, as we'd grown an appetite.

“I didn't mean anything by it,” the dunce kept saying in-between a chain of sorrys and infrequent bites of sea bass.

I didn't respond. I knew this would scare him more than anything else I could do—besides, I was hungry. Afterward, I suggested we watch the replay

of a game that'd been on that night while I thought about any loose ends we might have left throughout the night's activities. I would ask relevant questions of Bertrand as to his doings before I showed up, trying to determine who (if anyone at all) would come asking about his targets. When the debriefing was done I wrote down all he told me and made an assessment of damages. I decided anything your law enforcement friends could find would be circumstantial at best, and we'd done a solid disposal of the leftover meat to avoid garnering formal charges.

After listening to Bertrand blubber out another apology and explain his need to be the leading man and not just a player off the bench, he'd thought to go it alone but lost his nerve and knew that he needed me. I explained to him that we'd be safe from your pit bulls in badges and made him vow to never forget his place again. And you know what, doc? The little shit lied to me. He swore he would remain the voyeur, but a quiver that struck his feminine, pouty lips told me he was still thinking, still devising a way to put what he'd seen from me into practice. And that was when I lost it.

Suffice to say, Bertrand will never be a problem for anyone, anymore.

Well, back to us.

I don't want you to think I forgot about your attempt to stoke a rise out of me. No doubt to get me to slip a detail. Well, I'm sorry to disappoint you're prodding, but I'm just a shambles. I haven't been sleeping right and I've caught myself frequenting the bars and "other" forms of entertainment more often than usual. Not because of what had to happen with my former chum but because of what I experienced while putting him in his long-overdue peace.

I experienced something of a déjà vu, though, that doesn't feel like the right term. Doc, I had an out-of-body experience, and I saw myself helping Bertrand to rest. But rather than pull myself back into the experience I stayed with the vision and I could feel that I had done this before, in other times and in other places, and in different mortal coils. It was troubling, to say the least. I felt trapped, in a physical way. I've always been acutely claustrophobic. I can put up with most tight situations, but right there, right then, I felt like I was eight years old again with my older cousins smothering me with blankets or pulling me under water. And just like I did back then, I wet myself.

It made me think. Is there no escape? Do we just live on and on and on because we have some sort of role to play or some seat to fill?

I know what you're thinking. You're thinking, "Isn't this what you were talking about, A? About knowing who you are and what your place is and embracing and making peace with such?" And you'd be right, except, it never felt like a job before that moment; never like a burden that was both necessary, yet tedious. I was no longer unique, is what I'm saying. I was just a working stiff, a Joe Schmo who turned out corpses instead of coal, or steeples of paperwork.

I need another live conference with you, doc. This whole thing has really brought me down. Just earlier today I ended up sitting on a park bench for four hours unable to move, weighed down by my own anxiety and fears. If you would please, wait for me in a month's time, in the evening. And in the mean time, think about what I said about my vision. Are past lives real? If so, is existence nothing but that? Existence. Is there no fucking end to it?

Until then, doc. And just so you know where we stand. If your buddies with the badges monitor us this time, I may be forced to disclose a naughty little secret I've learned about you, good sir. I don't mean to be hostile, but you'll understand if I'd rather not have the fuzz analyzing my current emotional state. Talk to you soon.

Yours,

A

(The following online conversation took place on Google Messenger on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006. [Transcript obtained by Chicago Police Department])

*LC\_MD94 signed in at 8:27 pm (CST)*

*MrA001 signed in at 11:19 pm (PST)*

MrA001: Doc

LC\_MD94: A, I'm here.

MrA001: Of course you are, and, because we all know what kind of man you are, hello to the officers. Hello, piggies.

PDadmin81: Hello, A. This is Detective Andrew Siciliano. I'm happy to make your acquaintance.

MrA001: Aren't we the polite gentleman? Welcome aboard. You might as well contribute to the conversation. Did you by any chance, detective, read our previous communication?

LC\_MD94: I think you know I showed it to them.



MrA001: That's mighty rude, doc. I was directing my question to the flatfoot. But this is good. I had another experience last night, and it would be good to get a third brain in on this.

PDadmin81: Well, that's why I'm here, to offer up a little grey matter. I was thinking of applying myself toward locating your sick ass, but I love a good conversation.

MrA001: Ahhh, lol. Another alpha is on board. Good. The doc's training and total existence as an over-educated upper middle class suburbanite has robbed him of his gumption. I bet you were in a frat, detective, considering how you like to open the floor the way you do.

PDadmin81: I was, actually. And one thing it taught me was how to read people. When you spend a few years recruiting men you pick up on how to identify types. You learn the difference between a guy who is serious about his studies, or if he's just looking for an outlet to party. You know which guys are just sort of awkward around girls, or if he's the kind of man desperate and immoral enough to take advantage of one. Add that to fourteen years of police work and you start learning how to see through the façade a man gives to the world, and you see the foundation, along with every crack and weakness.

MrA001: Fascinating. But I'm not really here for that, as I've learned of a new frequency of existence.

PDadmin81: Do tell, guru psychopath

MrA001: Oh, right into it, then? Okay. I was out on a walk last night. (Don't worry. I kept to myself.) I was more in a contemplative mood, and the road

was mostly desolate. I could see and hear people in their homes, but there was almost no one out and the world felt emptied of life. I was keenly aware of how alone I was, my only company a full moon with a radiant bow around it that made it resemble a monstrous, judging eye.

PDadmin81: Your conscience, I would hope.

LC\_MD94: Detective, if you wouldn't mind.

MrA001: Aw, thanks, doc. As I was explaining, I believed myself the sole traveler on this street, despite the density of human bodies occupying the homes around me, as though I was part guard dog, part black sheep. In that moment, caught in Luna's gaze, I heard the crunching of leaves and the snapping of sticks telling me someone was coming my way. I started walking forward myself, my head trailing my feet with a last glance at the eye-like moon. When my own eyes came back down to the world my field of vision altered just in time to see who'd joined me on the street.

LC\_MD94: Yes, go on.

MrA001: It was me. I saw myself. I don't mean that I saw someone who looked like me, or the climax of some existential crisis. I saw me, strolling by, wearing the bewildered gawk that I know in my soul hung on my own face at that moment. But I didn't stop. Neither of us did. We passed each other like driftwood on an unstoppable current, and I was afraid that if I looked back I'd find myself staring down the gaping maw of some kind of inconceivable beast; not one who'd come to take me from the confines of life, but one who'd come to drag me back to the beginning, to be all that I've ever been all over again. It's a strange thought but that's all I can do to describe it. I'm not ashamed to

admit nothing has ever terrified me like this. Yet, there was an odd sense of assurance to it. I lost track of time, didn't make it back home until well after sunrise, and I've been bed-ridden ever since.

LC\_MD94: That's it, then?

MrA001: Yes

LC\_MD94: I only have one question for you. Did this other you, did he blink? Or wink, or smile? Anything?

MrA001: No, why?

LC\_MD94: Then it was a delusion. A simple trick your mind played on yourself as a way of dealing with your current dissonance over your loss of a comrade. Others might have seen the person they've lost, but your narcissism is of such a scale that the only "ghost" you can perceive is you. That's all. And it's as I've always said, the chemistry in your brain is imbalanced. These are all just misinterpreted signals you're giving yourself. Like a radio that can't find a stable frequency you're picking up all the chatter and trying to make sense of it. Worst of all, A, the signal is getting weaker. Eventually none of it will be coherent enough for you to carry on in society. So evade us if you have to, but it's just a matter of time before some patrolman finds you running naked in the streets covered in your own filth.

PDadmin81: Or blood...Look, pal, I'm not some crazed vigilante, okay? I don't want to hang you in front of the town folk and make a spectacle of it. If it means keeping you on the right meds and the proper facilities, I'm just happy with you being off my streets. So what do you say? I'll even promise

that you'll get to eat something better than oatmeal and jello, or whatever the hell they force down your throat at psychiatric facilities.

LC\_MD94: Detective, please.

PDadmin81: Excuse me, doc, but you did contact me, and while I didn't see it at first, I think I've pegged this guy. You know what you are, "A"? A con man. You want to be noticed, but real murderers don't paw for attention like this. They like their hobby too much to stick their neck out like you have. Now admit it. You're just a lonesome individual with a lot of time on their hands. It's okay. Got a brother-in-law like that. Found himself a mail-order bride and couldn't be happier.

MrA001: You're a brash one, aren't you? Tossing your accusations around while the doctor and I are trying to unravel the threads of the universe. This may be a bunch of bloviating to you, but you're interrupting a game whose stakes will answer an important question.

LC\_MD94: What question, A?

MrA001: The one you've yet to answer, doc. The truth of who I am, not just what I am.

LC\_MD94: I don't know you, A. I've went over everything. All my patients have been accounted for in some shape or another. Enough for me to verify that I've never treated you before.

MrA001: A lie. Wow. You know, I think the odd dick in this chat should look into why a man such as our doctor here would lie so. Could be he's obstructing justice, eh, officer?

PDadmin81: We've looked over the doctor's files. His story holds. Yours on the other hand, well; it could use a credible source or two. Now look, I've got enough to bring you in. Your last email made it clear you did at least some kind of harm to this associate of yours, to say nothing of your last few anecdotes. It's fuzzy, but it's enough. So it's time to fess up. Turn yourself in, clear some things with this love letter campaign of yours and we'll figure it out from there.

MrA001: You know I'm untouchable, cop. You couldn't trace me the last time. Bertrand's parting gift will make sure of that. Now if you don't mind, the doctor and I have some unfinished business. He needs to understand who I am. Not my given name, but my true self. My birthright.

PDadmin81: That a fact?

LC\_MD94: Detective, just a minute. What do you mean by your true self, A?

MrA001: The real nature of my existence, doc. What my vision of myself proved to me. The true answer to who I am. Are you ready?

LC\_MD94: Ready for what? What do you have planned?

PDadmin81: Doctor, we got it. It's about that time.

LC\_MD94: Wait, no. What do you mean, A?

MrA001: I mean that I'm evolving, becoming what I was meant to become. The devil himself, doc. The Prince of Darkness, the Lord of Lies. That was the meaning of my last vision. Because I wasn't me, doc. But I was. I was looking from the outside in. I was the darkness, admiring my chosen vessel. I am become the Great Deceiver and the Destroyer of Worlds, the **Adversary**. You

once knew me by another name, a name you've forgotten.

LC\_MD94: I don't know what you mean. How have you transformed? I swear on heaven and earth that I don't know you, A.

PDadmin81: It's a go, doc.

LC\_MD94: No, wait! Tell me, A, tell me what you mean.

MrA001: It's too late, doctor. You and the detective thought you were keeping me in the dark, but I am all-knowing now, and I'm aware that you've locked on to my location. Bertrand may have been scum, but he was peerless in his trade. Thinking it through over the past few weeks, it became clear that he's been thinking of ways to fuck me over, but **he didn't know who he was dealing with.** I know who I am, and in knowing this, I know the power I wield. Though you may have forgotten my name, I haven't forgotten yours. Now you have to suffer for your ignorance. You and all you love.

LC\_MD94: A, what have you done?

MrA001: I've evolved! Beyond the laws of this world, and the next! Darkness personified will now walk among the earth, and I've decided to honor you, doctor, by revealing myself to you first, embracing you and yours into my new kingdom.

LC\_MD94: A, dammit!

MrA001: We'll see each other soon, doc. I'll be gone before the detective's brethren get here, and my first stop will be the home of one Dr Leonard James Corbray.

*MrA001 has signed off*

PDadmin81: Don't worry, doctor. The IT dicks pegged him along the west coast. His partner must have set up a failsafe should anything happen to him as a little "fuck you" from the afterlife. Considering his distance and the protection we got around you, everything should be fine.

LC\_MD94: I'm sure I'm in capable hands. But what about the other Dr. Corbray?

PDadmin81: Huh?

LC\_MD84: Read it again. He's going after a Leonard James Corbray. I'm Lawrence Joseph. It's why I couldn't figure out who he was. He thinks he was writing to someone else this whole fucking time.

PDadmin81: Jesus

PDadmin81: Well, we've alerted the local police in his area. They're converging on his location as we speak.

LC\_MD94: Let's hope that turns out to mean something, detective.

Case No.: 456-XJ99

Date: 10/03/2006

Reporting Officer: Detective Sergeant Lorenzo Molina, in cooperation with Detective Andrew Siciliano of the Chicago Police Department

Incident:

No-knock warrant issued and conducted on the residence of unknown perpetrator suspected of violent intentions and possible violent history. According to Det. Siciliano the suspect has been in contact with a doctor in Chicago, previously through an untraceable IP address. Tech officers managed to unscramble the signal, which needed to be reset at certain intervals, and narrowed his location to San Diego County. They pinpointed him to within the city limits, and dispatched our forces to apprehend the individual.

Action:

In the early morning of October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006 at approximately 0300 hours, at the residence of 6792 Errant Dr., myself and a small taskforce served a no-knock warrant in the effort to apprehend the subject under surveillance. I, myself, led the team entering the front while Detective Irwin Kelly took charge of the rear entrance.

Upon entering it was quickly established that no one was present within the three-bedroom home. The only lights on throughout the house were three separate television sets left on, but connected to no type of cable receiver, satellite dish, or even an antenna. They simply displayed a snowy screen, and had been turned to max volume.

Moving upstairs we found only one bedroom that looks to have been in use while the other two rooms were empty, save a lone laptop left operating on the floor of another bedroom inside a circle of what was later identified to be salt, as well as a few candles (one white, one black, one red)—all of which felt and smelled as though they had recently been extinguished. Also present in the room was one six-foot vanity mirror covered in window tint, in fact, the



further we searched the house, the more mirrors we found in this same state (nine in all).

#### Summary:

As stated above no one was found, nor was there any indication as to where the resident may have left to, or in fact, who the person might have been. We were expected to find a male, aged 25-45, possibly Caucasian. No such person was found, nor was there any concrete evidence that such a person had lived there. There were no pictures to be found in the home, personal documents, or even a piece of mail left to give us a name. The house was rented through an agency, but the agency, since being notified by us, have been unable to locate any paperwork belonging to the person it was leased to. (Will investigate further to rule out obstruction, though I am of the opinion that they were sincere in their admissions.)

We will follow up from here as we deem fit. Seeing as no crime has been reported, I doubt more than a week of research will be necessary in concentrating our efforts.

(Personal note: Though irregular, I, and the officers present for the serving of the warrant agreed that something had to be mentioned in the official report. Despite not finding anyone in the residence at the time, it was agreed upon by all officers present that we did not feel this to be the case. It is difficult to explain in writing—or in person for that matter—but every time we were investigating a part of the house each man present felt that the other parts of the house were occupied. I know that may seem a strange thing to say, and, again, it's not easy to put into words, but it “felt” as though the occupant was

*somewhere*, and not a man among us didn't feel like we were being watched. Some of us even heard inexplicable whistling, as though from behind a door. This was all after we'd done a sweep through the house as well as possible hiding places: attic crawl space, under the house, etc. I know this is irrelevant to the case, but I think it needs to be recorded that not one of us—six officers with not a single embellishment on their professional records—believed that house was empty, rather, the man we were there for was simply avoiding us, somehow.)

Case No.: 6967130

Date: 10/16/2006

Reporting Officer: Detective Andrew Siciliano

Incident:

As of October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2006 Dr. Leonard James Corbray, his wife and two children, were officially named as missing persons as per the San Francisco PD. They were last seen by neighbors entering their home in San Francisco after a family dinner. Five days later Dr. Lawrence Joseph Corbray, the recipient of a series of disturbing emails, found a 3x5 index card in his mail box reading, "Sorry about the mix up," and signed with the letter A.

Action:

Dr. Lawrence J. Corbray has moved himself, his wife, and son out of their home. He left word with me that they were leaving out of state immediately

and for good. Furthermore, he has filed a petition with the court to change his name. He can currently be reached through his lawyer, Donald F. Bowman Esq., though he is planning to change his representation once he has secured a new home.

Summary:

The whereabouts of Leonard James Corbray and his family remain unknown.

The location and identity of the person known only as A remains a mystery.

***Freeditorial*** 

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