

Snowed In: An Imagining

By Paul Hufker

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Some thoughts on this play:

*This play revolves around notorious American information leaker Edward Snowden, taking place mainly during a small portion of the two weeks he was trapped at Sheremetyevo airport in Russia. Snowden was fleeing America, and though his asylum was ultimately rejected by every country he applied to, he was unaware of that during his initial time in the airport. Russia -- always eager for a chance to piss off the US - agreed to allow him to stay in the airport until the ordeal was settled. Snowden is still in Russia today.

*In the play, we meet Snowden's girlfriend, Lindsay Mills, as well as Snowden's father (Lon) and mother (Wendy), and his lawyer Ben. These are actual people in Snowden's real life (for instance Lindsay has a rather infamous yoga blog, and is a performance artist in her own right) though of course I have fictionalized them to suit my own purposes. In fact, a good many portions of the play are taken from actual events, but this is not an "information play" and therefore we should always be more concerned with how Snowden is reacting to the whirlwind of situations he encounters in the play, and not as concerned with every single piece of scientific jargon being *understood* completely by the audience.

We also meet Angela Merkel, British Secret Services officers who act as circus performers, a drunken Swiss man who was manipulated by the CIA, a talking stapler and a talking cat. Just go with it.

*Any time the play refers to "the sound," we are jumping through spacetime. "The sound" gets us from one potential reality to another, where we encounter visions and versions of what Snowden's life might have been or might still become.

*The *Holographic Principle* is very new science. It essentially asserts that our entire universe maintains a dualistic connection between an entirely two-dimensional

flat plane (the universe itself) and the light source illuminating that flat plane (scientists have no idea what that light source may be). But ultimately, the science says that there are in fact potentially infinite universes layered upon potentially infinite universes. I wrote the play because - if this dualistic/multiverse theory is true - I wondered how on earth we could judge Snowden or indeed anyone who took actions similar to his if the entire fundamental nature of our universe is now up for heated debate. Do the same rules that applied *before* this new science *still* apply?

*In terms of the set, yes it seems as though a lot of flashy things happen here. But if the budget is your concern, this play can be simplified to using only a metal desk, a chair, and white wall where you can project a few static slides, so long as you are attune to the play's sharp changes in place/time, and the characters your actors present are large and clear.

*Finally, if you choose to do this play, you should research and learn about Snowden. Especially if you're playing Snowden. But don't worry about learning every detail of his life, the escape ordeal, or the Holographic Principle. The play knows enough to take you on your journey. Never forget that this is ultimately a love story; a play about how our decisions affect our lives, and those in our lives. Snowden and his needs should be the focus from start to finish.

It's a quick, intense ride.

Good luck and enjoy.

Paul

Character Breakdown

*5 total

1) Snowden (m) *Edward Snowden*

2) Stapler (m/f) *a desk stapler*

3) Cat (m/f) *a cat*

4) 1 additional actor plays all other males

5) 1 additional actor plays all other females

Blackness on stage. A plane lands extra-loudly. The wheels screech as they meet the runway. As the sound fades, it blends with a voice that begins talking. The voice is metered, calm but firm, and has a legit Russian accent. It's talking through an airport intercom.

VOICE:.....caution, the moving walkway is ending.....caution, the moving walkway is ending.....caution, you're not in Elizabeth City, North Carolina anymore.....caution, the universe may be a two-dimensional projection of itself..... Но если это так, то, что свет бьет нас? Какой свет?

Pronounced "No yesli eto tak, to, chto svet b'yet nas? Kakoy svet?" the line reads "But if so, what light is hitting us? What light?" in Russian.

A projection appears sharply on the back wall of the set. It is an image of an empty seat on an airplane. Shoved in the face of the no-one sitting there, are tape recorders, microphones, and cameras.

We hear voices of reporters.

REPORTER #1 *He's not on this flight? Where is he?*

REPORTER #2 *Has the Ecuadorian Embassy granted him asylum?*

REPORTER #3 *Any word from Castro? Will he be allowed access to Cuba?*

The REPORTERS repeat themselves - faster and louder - leaping on each other's words, fiercely overlapping until their words are an indecipherable mess of questions. The swirling questions reach a crescendo and stop abruptly when, above the fray, we hear REPORTER #1 yell:

He's not planning on staying in Russia, is he?

Silence.

Another image replaces the first. A large tree with a mighty brown trunk and healthy green leaves is set against a stark-white background. But it's an image painted with finger paint; thick clumps here and there, colors blurring and slipping well outside the lines, cartoonish, and all in odd proportions. Did a child draw it?

We hear different voices:

VOICE #2: (American accent) About two-thirds of the way up the trunk there's a hole. If you slip in during the day, it's heat relief from the sun. At night, you look out the hole and bed down under a bowl of stars.

VOICE #3: (a different, cartoony Russian accent) Is there much rain?

VOICE #2: Sometimes. Sometimes it floods.

VOICE #3: How would I get in the hole?

VOICE #2: I'd strap you to my back and climb. But the best thing, the very best thing about the hole, is that it faces upward, and the view is never the same. Clouds sweep across the sky, and they don't leave traces of what was, or hints of what's to come.

VOICE #3: (amazed) Clouds like erasers...

VOICE #2: I don't like to go far but I like to pretend. So I climb in the hole, get a good view of the sky, and off I go. 'Swhy I started with the tree.

VOICE #3: It's gone now? You miss it.

VOICE #2: (sadly) I've only ever had two best friends. And that tree was one.

The projection shifts. We are in a utility room at Sheremetyevo Airport. An old, solid-metal desk is revealed as the only set piece onstage, while the image becomes one of a small, dimly-lit room with janitorial supplies (a janitorial-yellow mop bucket, a few large cardboard boxes filled with paper towels, etc.) and little else, save one

window that shows wave after wave of unending blue-white snow drifts, folding out into the deep Russian night.

A CAT and a STAPLER are sitting on the floor of the room, "finger-painting" a tree on a white section of wall. Theirs are the voices we just heard.

STAPLER looks around the utility room.

STAPLER: (the same cartoony Russian accent) I've never had a home to paint. Except this one.

CAT studies the tree.

CAT: More green. It could get so green.

CAT uses his paw to paint.

STAPLER: And the house? What color is the house?

Another area of the stage lights up sharply. This is an even smaller room inside the already small utility room. A young man, skinny, scruffy, unkempt, is looking into a small mirror with a stand, shaving. The lights strobe and give a dangerous effect to this man and this room. The only set piece we can clearly make out is a painting easel which can be the demarcating line between rooms. Or there can be a door. Between flashes, we watch him shave. A few shaving strokes and he's gone.

STAPLER: How much was lost? In the flood?

CAT: Nothing. It hasn't flooded yet.

STAPLER: But it will flood?

CAT: And then things will be very different.

STAPLER: Don't use all the paint on the tree. You still have to do the house.

CAT saddens.

CAT: I don't remember the house.

The door to the smaller room opens and the shaving man enters. He's as wired as he is bedraggled. He's holding the

mirror, a razor in his hand, shaving cream patches on his face, a small white towel over his shoulder. He looks at the ceiling, squints.

SNOWDEN: Better light. In here.

He sets the mirror on the desk and shaves in it. CAT gets up and crosses over to him.

CAT: Eddie, I'm starting to forget things...

SNOWDEN: You wanna talk about *heroes*? Jacob Bekenstein and John Wheeler! I *thought* these guys were cool, but those books I found in there -- they aren't just *cool*, they're *actual heroes*. Know why?

CAT: Like what color is the siding?

SNOWDEN: *These guys...AGH...*

He's cut himself. He checks for blood. Yes. He dabs the blood with a towel.

SNOWDEN: *These guys knew how to shake things up. All the way up to Einstein, eh-h-h-h-h-everybody feels certain, the physical world is made up of matter and energy. But here come these forward-thinkers, these pioneers, and they all play celestial piggyback on each other, trying to build a ladder up to this new science. Christ.*

He's cut himself again. He dabs the blood. He finishes shaving.

SNOWDEN: They say, nono, think 2D, not 3D. Or 4D or 5D for that matter, don't think Einstein, but instead think, 2D. The whole shee-BANG, they say, can be seen as a two-dimensional structure "painted" on the cosmological horizon. They call it the *holographic principle*.

He's holding the towel to his face, stopping blood.

CAT: (*only STAPLER hears*) I don't want to talk anymore about horizons.

STAPLER: (*to SNOWDEN; helping CAT*) Have you heard from Lindsay?

SNOWDEN: (*driving*) Painted on. What do you think about that?

CAT: Have you heard from Lindsay?

SNOWDEN stops, saddens.

SNOWDEN: No.

SNOWDEN opens the towel, looks at all the blood. A smile comes across his face. He asks a question in Lindsay's voice:

SNOWDEN: *Start shaving in the dark?*

He answers it in his own.

SNOWDEN: Maybe it's a map, Linds. Connect the dots and see.
The smile fades.

CAT jumps up on the desk and peers out the window.

CAT: Russian winters. Brutal. How long have we been here? Minutes? Months?

SNOWDEN sees the finger painting on the wall. He crosses to the wall and studies it.

SNOWDEN: Don't worry, buddy. You'll be climbing the tree in the front yard again in no time.

SNOWDEN picks up a tube of paint from the floor near the painting. He puts a glob on his finger. He adds a thick, hearty brown reinforcement to the tree's trunk.

SNOWDEN: Remember when I found you? A puffed up little fur ball out on a limb, crying in the snow? We'll get you back there again. Soon.

SNOWDEN steps back to admire his addition.

CAT: (*astonishment*) It's there again? *The tree grew back??*

SNOWDEN ignores that or doesn't hear it. He wipes his hands on the bloody towel and sets it on the desk. He blows on his hands.

SNOWDEN: Why don't they turn on the *heat*?

He puts on a thin coat, his heaviest. He picks up STAPLER and tries to have fun talking for it.

SNOWDEN: (*his own clumsy, cartoony Russian accent*) I have no intention of hiding who I am because I know I have done nothing wrong.

He suddenly doesn't find it all so amusing.

SNOWDEN: (*as himself*) I have done nothing wrong.

He sets STAPLER down on the desk.

CAT: Eddie, do I like wet or dry food?

SNOWDEN looks at CAT. He seizes what little forward momentum he can, and snatches up the mirror.

SNOWDEN: Right/yes/so, these two lovely little envelope pushers, Wheeler and Bekenstein, they say, for this 2D image to exist, there must also be a reflection.

SNOWDEN moves around the room, studying his face/cuts in the mirror.

SNOWDEN: This mirror doesn't give an exact representation of the thing reflected. Obviously one difference is that it provides an *opposite* reflection. Still, a connection between the image and the "real" thing is established.

STAPLER: Eddie, you remember the color of your house, right? Maybe you could remind him (CAT).

SNOWDEN holds up a single finger as if to say "one sec."

SNOWDEN: If we're all flat, all 2D, then everything that's inside us can be determined from the information that's stored on the *surface* of us. Take a grape, squash it flat. All the information that was inside is still there, it's just spread out on a 2D plane. Get it? And when that flat reflection of us is hit by light, it makes a hologram. Holographic theory.

STAPLER: (*trying harder*) I think our cat friend needs more litter.

A question occurs to SNOWDEN.

SNOWDEN: But can I get at that information? If I needed to. If I lost something...important...

Suddenly deflated, he looks to each of them for a genuine answer.

SNOWDEN: What can I get? If everything that happens...is holo...is a hologram?

They can't provide him one. SNOWDEN's heart gets sick. He sets the mirror face-down on the desk and goes back through the door he came from, closing it. He's gone.

After a moment, STAPLER crosses over and tries the handle.

STAPLER: Why does he lock the door?

CAT: He means Lindsay. What he's lost.

STAPLER: He's choosing a smaller room inside a very small room.

CAT: He's hurting. But so am I.

STAPLER: Come, let's paint. Let's paint the house.

CAT: *I don't remember the house.*

A beat. STAPLER tries something else.

STAPLER: TV was saying some bad things about him.

Strobe lights up on SNOWDEN in the smaller room. The jagged light cuts his movements into pieces.

STAPLER: They asked, *is he a patriot or a traitor?* They took a poll.

He's lifting and studying several different tubes of paint, and referencing something in a thick, open book which rests on the easel.

SNOWDEN: If I took a piece of your hair.

STAPLER: And the poll

SNOWDEN: And put it to my nose.

STAPLER: The poll said

SNOWDEN: If I breathed in deep, Lindsay, your yellow hair

STAPLER: It wasn't good

SNOWDEN: Like a bloodhound

STAPLER: 61-39 for

SNOWDEN: Could I pick you out from a sea of golden heads?

STAPLER: 61-39 for traitor.

The strobes go out and SNOWDEN is gone.

STAPLER: He's scared.

CAT: So am I!

The electricity in the airport browns out.

CAT and STAPLER look up in wonder and fear.

STAPLER: Snow. On the wiring.

A cell phone rings. CAT jumps sky-high. STAPLER darts backward. They both look back to the ringing phone which is on top of the metal desk. It rings again. They hide.

SNOWDEN crosses back into the larger utility room. The melody of the ringing has frozen his blood. He stops and stares at it. It rings. He sets down the armful of tubes of paint he's holding on the desk, and picks it up. He hesitates a moment, then musters up what he needs to and answers it.

SNOWDEN: ...hello...?

The legit Russian VOICE comes through the phone.

VOICE: Edvard, this your sister.

SNOWDEN: Jess! Oh, jesus. Listen, call-

VOICE: Edvard, plane hit Pentagon.

SNOWDEN: *What?*

VOICE: Plane. Hit. Pentagon.

SNOWDEN: A plane? *Another plane?*

Static sounds swell.

SNOWDEN: *Hello?*

She's gone and the static goes with her.

SNOWDEN: *Shit. Jess?*

He checks the phone.

SNOWDEN: Yea, no bars. We would've heard if a plane hit...anything, right? I mean, this is an airport...

He walks around the room, holding the phone at high, awkward angles, trying to get a connection.

SNOWDEN: I was in the Pentagon on 9/11. *That was a scene.* Why would Jess be -- she sounded...little...like when we were kids...

He gives up and sets the phone back on the desk. He sees STAPLER in his hiding place, picks him up, and talks with his cartoony Russian accent.

SNOWDEN: My whole family. My sister ze federal lawyer. My mother ze Chief Deputy of the District Court of Maryland. My father, ze Coast Guard Officer. *(American accent)* Conformity and dissent have long divided my house against itself.

He sets STAPLER down. An idea hits him that drives through the near-delirium and ignites him.

He goes to the desk, sits cross-legged on it in a position that resembles something Eastern, and closes his eyes.

He clears his throat. The projection image shifts to one of an outline of a body. He takes a deep, cleansing breath.

SNOWDEN: Lindsay. Performance artist. Shoulder-length dirty blond hair.

Hair is filled in as shoulder-length and dirty-blond on the outline.

SNOWDEN: Yogic frame.

The body is filled in and shown to be taut, tight, muscle-y.

SNOWDEN: Kind eyes.

Kind eyes fill in.

SNOWDEN: Full mouth.

A full mouth fills in.

SNOWDEN: I miss her hands most.

Her hands do not fill in. SNOWDEN opens his eyes but does not see the image.

SNOWDEN: *(immediately disappointed)* Even in my mind. Looks nothing like her.

The image vanishes and is replaced by that of the utility room.

A knock on the door.

SNOWDEN turns, freezes.

Another knock.

SNOWDEN goes shakily to the door. His hand reaches towards the knob.

It bursts opens before he can touch it. A bright white light blinds the room. CAT peeks out from wherever he's hiding. STAPLER goes stock-still - like a stapler.

Two WORKMEN enter in blue overalls. They wordlessly carry on, then assemble, a large, foam, puzzle-piece map of South America at SNOWDEN'S feet. It's ultimately large enough for him to stand on a single country at a time.

SNOWDEN: Can...I help you...?

A WORKMAN hands a note to SNOWDEN. He reads. They continue assembling.

SNOWDEN: *(it sinks in as he reads)* Austria, no. Brazil, no. China denies getting a request. Cuba, no response. Finland, no, France, no - Germany, Iceland, India, Italy, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Switzerland. All no.

WORKMAN ONE slaps his coworker on the arm and points into the white light of the door. WORKMAN TWO nods his head in agreement, walks back into the light and is swallowed.

SNOWDEN: Who told you to come in here?

WORKMAN ONE stares at SNOWDEN. Silence.

WORKMAN TWO returns with a basket full of fruit. He hands it to SNOWDEN. They go back to assembling.

SNOWDEN sets the basket on the desk and takes a second card from it. As he reads, he holds up each piece of fruit.

SNOWDEN: From Bolivia, the acai berry.

Image of the same outline of a body appears, acai-berry-hair fills in.

SNOWDEN: *(reading)* From Ecuador, the guanabana.

Guanabana eyes fill in.

SNOWDEN: *(reading)* From Nicaragua, the calala.

The pulpy insides of a calala spread out, to fill in a smiling mouth.

SNOWDEN: *(reading)* And from Venezuela, the maracuya.

SNOWDEN looks up at the image. The second he sees it, it fades, as though it was hiding from him.

SNOWDEN: I'm not hungry, thanks. *(re: the notes)* Where did you get these?

The men finish assembling the large South American map. An image of a map of South America appears onscreen. The names of the mentioned countries are the only names written on it.

SNOWDEN: (re: the notes) Look, you think you're telling me something I don't know? I know who said yes and who didn't.

It's obvious SNOWDEN didn't know.

WORKMAN ONE stops and stares at SNOWDEN.

Then, WORKMAN TWO notices the finger painting on the wall. He crosses over to it and glares disapprovingly. He points a single finger towards it, and locks eyes with SNOWDEN.

SNOWDEN: What? The painting? They told me I could use what I found in here...

The workmen share a look.

Then they each take an arm of SNOWDEN, lift him off the ground, and as though they're positioning a piece of lighting equipment, move SNOWDEN onto the country of Bolivia.

SNOWDEN: (as he's being moved) It's washable. I'll wash it.

They set SNOWDEN on Bolivia which then lights up on the image onscreen. SNOWDEN realizes what they're doing.

SNOWDEN: I'm not going to South America.

In unison, they look up to a single point, check something, nod, and move him to Ecuador.

SNOWDEN: (as he's being moved) I know who's doing this. I know this is CIA.

Bolivia's light goes out. They set him down. Ecuador lights up onscreen.

SNOWDEN: They don't want me in South America.

The men look at him with puzzled faces.

SNOWDEN: They cancelled my passport when I left Hong Kong. They wanted me in Russia.

The men look at each other with puzzled faces.

SNOWDEN: The photo op with Putin was on me. That was my fault. But even still, the American people were 50-50 at best on the whole thing.

The men look up in unison again, checking whatever they're checking, then move him to Nicaragua which lights up onscreen as the light on Bolivia goes out.

SNOWDEN: (as he's being moved) They can't even decide which photo op they want for my capture!

The men set him down, look up again, give a thumbs-up to something, and start to pack up.

SNOWDEN: I was CIA. Don't forget that.

They cross to the door. He yells after them, suddenly hoping they might stay and grant him his wish.

SNOWDEN: Tell them I want to testify before Congress. Get me something in writing and we'll talk!

The men are gone. The bright white light goes with them.

CAT reemerges and checks to see the coast is clear.

CAT: Eddie...the water here...my fur is falling out. Please find somewhere nice for us to go...

SNOWDEN: (re: the notes, the foam map) I guess we're going to South America.

It's all too much for SNOWDEN who sits on the edge of the foam map and buries his face in his hands.

CAT: I don't wanna spend my life on the run!

STAPLER unfreezes and crosses to SNOWDEN and rubs his back.

STAPLER: Well, no one is going anywhere with four feet of snow on the ground, so let's just relax.

STAPLER picks up the paint tubes from the desk and offers them to SNOWDEN.

STAPLER: Maybe you could paint where you want to go..

SNOWDEN sees the tubes, rises, takes them and tries to summon that forward momentum from before.

SNOWDEN: Ben Wizner -- my lawyer -- is on it. OK, now, these actual heroes, listen to THIS.

There is a short stack of blank paper on the desk. SNOWDEN squirts paints onto one sheet, and uses his fingers to mix them.

SNOWDEN: Cats aren't the smartest animals in the world - no offense - but this guy'll do. To get at the information stuck to his edges, you don't cut him open and reveal the rings of the trees, but instead you focus on the smell of airplane hangars that comes off the animal even at a distance.

He wipes his hands, picks up CAT and holds him high.

SNOWDEN: The trace amounts of lemon floor cleanser dried at the tips of the fur. Or you stare into the creature's eyes.

He turns CAT to face him, and stares into its eyes.

SNOWDEN: Every piece of information this cat ever ingested builds homes, sewage plants, skyscrapers in its eyes.

He sets CAT back on the desk. CAT cleans itself in disgust.

SNOWDEN starts to finger paint on a blank sheet of paper. As he does, the image shifts to another bright-white blank screen. With each stroke, each streak of paint left by his fingers, a cartoon image of CAT's body begins to form onscreen.

SNOWDEN: Once we have all the information we need to reconstruct the real thing, we get to the part that just knocked the wind out of me. We're all 2D, we're all flat, right? But when we study these flat reflections, we see they're aligned in such a way that *infinities* of this cat

are squashed on top of *infinities* of this cat, this Stapler on this Stapler! If someone disappears beneath the legs of the dining room table in one reality, we can find him reemerging beneath the breakfast table in another! It's all layering. It's all *multiverse*! The point is, basically, when something goes...it might be very difficult, sure, but it's not *impossible*...to get it back.

He holds up the paper and looks at this paint CAT. His smile fades.

SNOWDEN: Looks nothing like him.

He crumples the paper and as he does, the image returns to that of the utility room.

STAPLER: Maybe someone could paint the house. I'd like to see it.

SNOWDEN: So would I.

STAPLER: It hasn't been *that* long. What do you remember?

SNOWDEN goes to the desk, sits in cross-legged fashion again, and closes his eyes.

He takes a deeeeeep breath.

SNOWDEN: Performance artist. Shoulder length hair.

The cell phone rings. It startles SNOWDEN. It's on the desk and he stares at it. His hand trembles as he picks it up. He answers. Before he can speak, the VOICE comes through the phone.

VOICE: (*legit Russian accent*) Eddddd-ddd-vaaarrrrr-dddd...

SNOWDEN: Jess!

VOICE: Can you name countries of South America yet?

SNOWDEN: I-I don't really want to go to South America...

VOICE: Edvard, bad news. You have mono. Kissing disease.

SNOWDEN: (*did I hear that right?*) Mono?

VOICE: You miss nine months of grade eleven. You must get GED.

SNOWDEN: Jess, you're breaking up...

VOICE: Why you kiss pretty girls behind bike racks?

SNOWDEN: I haven't kissed *anyone*.

VOICE: You cannot graduate with class. You have *nine months* homework due!

Static sounds swell. He's losing the connection.

SNOWDEN: Jess, call *Lindsay*!

VOICE: Each dot in wallpaper is seeing eye, Edvard.

SNOWDEN: *Hello?!?*

SNOWDEN checks the phone. He's lost the signal.

SNOWDEN: *DAMN*it.

The sound quality of VOICE changes. It's now coming from the airport speakers.

VOICE: Edvard. You have visitor.

SNOWDEN stops. He's confused, but he talks upward.

SNOWDEN: Oh. Uhh, OK. Who?

Voice: Какое это имеет значение, кто, когда вы не знаете, какой вы есть вы?

(Kakoye eto imeyet znachenije, kto, kogda vy ne znayete, kakoy vy yest' vy?)

(What does it matter who, when you don't know which you is you?)

SNOWDEN: *Please*. In English.

VOICE: (*sharply*) Be patient.

The strobes kick in, cutting the room to pieces. The encroachment of the strobe from the small room to the

larger room is complete, and an extra-terrifying factor for STAPLER and CAT who immediately cling to each other.

SNOWDEN goes to the desk, pulls out a handful of something unseen, and tosses it high into the air. It's confetti and it falls around the strobing world like wonderful, strange snow. As it falls, the WORKMEN return to remove the foam map. SNOWDEN tosses confetti high until they are finished.

When the map is gone, the strobes stop and the door to the outside bursts open. The white light returns, blinding the room.

A very drunk, animated Swiss man in an expensive suit stumbles in and grabs hold of SNOWDEN.

SWISS BANKER: Ich bin nicht aus diesem Land. Ich weiß nicht, wohin sie gehen. (I'm not from this country. I don't know where to go.)

The white light fades. A tall, slender blond woman has entered as well. It's LINDSAY. Her mouth moves, but her voice is the Russian VOICE.

LINDSAY: Your old CIA coworkers were at a bar lubricating this guy pretty good.

SWISS BANKER: (to SNOWDEN) She your wife? BeeYOOOteefulll.

SNOWDEN has been staring at LINDSAY the whole time. He can't quite decide if it's her.

SNOWDEN: I...tried to close my eyes and see your face, Linds.

SWISS BANKER: Taxi? Please taxi.

SNOWDEN: I saw something but it wasn't you.

The banker feels ill and goes hands-on-knees. LINDSAY sees an unopened beer bottle sticking out from the top of his suit pants. She takes it. She inspects the label.

LINDSAY: (first line the VOICE, second line her) They had a funnel in his mouth. Head tilted back like his neck was broken.

SWISS BANKER: Good friends, yah! Come here, beeYOOteefull wife!

SWISS BANKER stumbles again and weakly grabs at LINDSAY. SNOWDEN catches him again and struggles to get him to the desk chair.

SNOWDEN: *(practically dragging him)* You were talking to the CIA?

SNOWDEN drops him in the chair.

LINDSAY: *(her voice)* Heyheyhey, I saw somebody in trouble, and I rushed him on over at lightspeed to Mr. National Traitor, here.

SNOWDEN: *Traitor?*

Static sounds swirl. LINDSAY rewinds.

LINDSAY: Saw somebody in trouble, and I rushed him on over at lightspeed to Mr. National Treasure, here.

Static fades. SNOWDEN is struggling to stay on top of all this. LINDSAY continues.

LINDSAY: "Genius of geniuses." Isn't that your nickname already?

SWISS BANKER: *(starting to panic)* Ich frage mich, ob du mir einen Gefallen tun könnte. *(I wonder if you could do me a favor)*. Please. English? OK. Please, favor.

LINDSAY grabs a piece of fruit from the basket.

SNOWDEN: Lindsay, I've been trying to paint you...

LINSDAY: I'm not Lindsay.

She takes a loud bite, chews. SNOWDEN stares.

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: I'm someone like Lindsay.

SNOWDEN: ...oh...

SNOWDEN is lost. She tries to clarify.

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: Crawl in the hole in the tree in the front yard. At night you see me in the face of an owl. In the morning, I'm what blinds you and makes you squint at the horizon.

He looks at her helplessly.

SNOWDEN: You're the only thing I want to touch. Can I?

He takes a few feeble steps towards her.

SWISS BANKER holds out his hands like a child.

SWISS BANKER: Please. Help me taxi. Help me home.

SNOWDEN looks from him back to SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY.

SNOWDEN: Can I...take your hand...?

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: You don't want to help him?

SNOWDEN: I will if I can touch your hand.

SNOWDEN extends his hand. SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY doesn't take it.

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: You can't help him. They don't let him get a taxi. They stuff him in the driver's seat of his rented car and browbeat him into stepping on the gas. I just came to see how much of the impossible you'd try and rescue.

SNOWDEN doesn't love that.

SWISS BANKER: Fall and try. Stand and try. Fly and try!

SWISS BANKER is trying to smile through how ill he feels. SNOWDEN notices and can't help himself.

SNOWDEN: Maybe we should help him get a taxi?

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: (pissed) And I knew it. And I KNEW it. UN-REAL.

SWISS BANKER begins to cry.

SWISS BANKER: Please, now. Friend? OK? No enemies.

LINDSAY breathes and tries to soften.

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: I'm bendable, Eddie. You know that. But this ain't hot yoga. And you ain't downward dog.

SWISS BANKER digs in his suit pockets and produces car keys.

SWISS BANKER: Ah, yes! With this! I become home with this.

SNOWDEN sees the keys, gets frustrated.

SNOWDEN: *Why bring him, then?* If you don't want me to --

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: Not here, Eddie. Not in this version. Here he naps in the chair and dreams about something. Something far away but flying towards him. But in this room somewhere else? In *that* room, he doesn't sleep. He drives and gets arrested.

With the keys jingling in his hand, SWISS BANKER starts to nod off.

SWISS BANKER: I have. Become home.

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: Question is: how many *somewheres* are you prepared to try and save?

SNOWDEN certainly doesn't love that question, but suddenly something clicks.

SNOWDEN: Is he the...he's the one the CIA tells they can make it go away if he wears a wire.

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: *(nodding)* All to do with banking transparency. His buddies go under, he stays afloat. For three months. Then he gets nine years.

They stare at the helpless SWISS BANKER who slumps and sleeps.

SNOWDEN: But...they were doing something wrong, right?

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: *(she nods, finishing the fruit)* Oh, yea. But this guy... *(she points at SWISS BANKER with her thumb)* ...this Swiss banker? Is the *only* person who does any

actual time for the entire US housing market crash. The only one.

SNOWDEN is confused. Remembers. Is disheartened further.

He leaves the banker to sleep, and turns to this version of his girlfriend.

SNOWDEN: They rejected me. Every place but here.

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: *(blowing on her hands)* It's freezing. I'm frozen.

SNOWDEN: Find a country we can go to! I know we just got the house but my parents'll sell it for us. Let's pack up Paine and leave. Or, wait... Does that happen? What happens?

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: *(shaking her head)* Once you left, Eddie, they put a camera in my lipstick. A tiny camera for close ups on the ridges of my lips. They bugged every corner of our little home. Little lenses in the blades of your razors. Between Paine's blades of fur. They wanted to know if terrorism was in the sewers, and they went down our toilet to find out.

SNOWDEN: I thought it would change. Under Obama. But things change now, right?

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: *(a raised eyebrow)* ...do they...?

SNOWDEN: *Do they?*

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY stands. Maybe she's leaving..

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: Where are your keys?

He comes towards her, soft, exposed.

SNOWDEN: Nonononono, please, let me hold your hands.

He's not touching her but he's so close.

SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY: Eddie. Eddie Spaghetti. How many times have I told you? Keep an eye on your car ke—

Strobes. SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY walks off. SNOWDEN watches her go. When the strobes stop, SNOWDEN is holding the

armful of tubes of paint from the desk, with a helpless look on his face.

SNOWDEN: Our little yoga room...did she paint it...the same color as the dishwater in the sink...or like the sun did it...hurt to look at?

A beat.

SNOWDEN: I can't remember.

Lights out on him. Image onscreen of a lovely garden, an open window, a light breeze. Perhaps the bright paint coloring of the room does in fact hurt to look at.

LINDSAY enters in yoga clothes, unrolls a mat, and goes into downward dog.

LINDSAY: The image and its opposite: bright eyes in eager conversation, belly laughs, and bare shoulders. Versus. One of three button-down plaid shirts, a hairstyle always overdue for a cut, and an almost somber, internal reflection, bordering on an academic exploration of pathos. Imagine us at a party. Then there were fewer parties. Then there were none. Then I started going everywhere alone. Until I was completely alone.

She rises from her pose, takes out her cell phone and types. Within the projection, a box containing a blog called LS JOURNEY appears. As LINDSAY types, her words are typed onscreen.

A sad day for lost love. My love grew wings and flew very far away. Too bad that's all I can--

Strobes. LINDSAY takes her mat and exits. SWISS BANKER rises as though never drunk and, puts on a wig a la Samuel Adams. He takes the beer bottle SOMEONE LIKE LINDSAY left behind and raises it high.

Strobes stop.

The projection abruptly shifts. We see the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place podiums for the Sam Adams Beer Awards. SNOWDEN is

illuminated, standing helplessly where we left him, still holding the tubes of paint.

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR: And the winner of the Sam Adams Brew-a-like Award is.....Eddie Spaghetti!

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR crosses to SNOWDEN, lifts his hand high, and drags him into the scene. The paint tubes fall. The crowd cheers. The projection shows balloons dropping. SAM ADAMS REENACTOR tries to yank SNOWDEN up on the desk. SNOWDEN awkwardly climbs. He's confused and ill-prepared.

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR climbs up on the chair. He suddenly has a mic which he talks into.

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR: *TelltelltelltellTELL us...HOW...did you get your beer to taste so similar to my famous concoction? He thrusts the mic into SNOWDEN's face.*

SNOWDEN: *I...I, uh...*

The mic screeches feedback.

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR: *The secret ingredients. How did you know?*

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR is waiting for SNOWDEN to address the crowd. SNOWDEN is too confused.

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR: *Did you taste the lips of MY brewmaster?*

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR grabs SNOWDEN's face with his hand and squishes it into a 'fish mouth'.

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR: *Did you use the analytical elements of the tongue to break down the remnants from the fibers around his mouth? How, without knowing the ingredients, did you get your beer so identical to mine?*

SNOWDEN is trying to speak but SAM ADAMS REENACTOR has a tight grip on his face. He releases it. SNOWDEN rubs his jaw and again goes to speak but SAM ADAMS REENACTOR grabs SNOWDEN's nose. SNOWDEN lets out an "AGGH."

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR: *TELL TELL TELL!* Did you not place a camera inside my brewmaster's nostril? And when the camera gave him a nosebleed, did he not sneeze out that camera into a vat of barley? And did he not blow on his whistle long and loud because he could see every ounce of his livelihood being encroached upon by dark, dark forces?

SNOWDEN: I never wanted to hurt anyone.

He releases SNOWDEN's nose.

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR: Let's present Mr. Snowden with his first-place trophy!

SNOWDEN: I don't want a trophy.

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR: But you wanted to be first. You wanted people to have something and you wanted to be the first one to give it to them.

A white spot hits just to the side of where SNOWDEN is standing. The outer world sharply pauses, goes black and quiet. SNOWDEN steps into the spot. The following words appear onscreen as SNOWDEN says them. They are written over the image of the podiums.

SNOWDEN: *(actual quote)* No, I realized...every other person sitting around the table had the same capability I had but they didn't do it. So somebody had to be the first.

The spot fades. The words fade. SNOWDEN takes the two steps back to where he was. The world returns.

SAM ADAMS REENACTOR: And who elected you, Mr. Spaghetti, to be the breaker of big silences?