

Katurian Because I think, deep down, you're honourable men.

Ariel (*standing, seething*) Deep down?! Deep fucking down . . .?!

Katurian Could you beat me up after I've finished this? I'm just up to the part about murdering my mother and father.

Katurian continues writing. Ariel lights a cigarette.

Thank you.

Ariel (*pause*) You killed your mum and dad?

Katurian nods.

This may seem a ridiculous question, but, er, why?

Katurian Um . . . There's a story in there called 'The Writer and the Writer's Brother'. I don't know if you saw it . . .

Ariel I saw it.

Katurian Well . . . I kind of hate any writing that's even vaguely autobiographical. I think people who only write about what they know only write about what they know because they're too fucking stupid to make anything up, however 'The Writer and the Writer's Brother' is, I suppose, the only story of mine that isn't really fiction.

Ariel Oh. (*Pause.*) How old was he? When they started.

Katurian He was eight. I was seven.

Ariel How long did it go on for?

Katurian Seven years.

Ariel And you heard it all those years?

Katurian I didn't know exactly what it was, till the end, but yes.

Ariel And then you killed them?

Katurian nods, handing the finished confession to Ariel.

Katurian I held a pillow over each of their heads, then I buried them behind the wishing well behind our house. I thought the wishing well was kind of apt. Anyway, it's the same place where the mute girl's buried.

Ariel goes over to the filing cabinet, checks inside.

Ariel Y'know, your childhood could be used as a pretty decent defence in court. Well, it could if we weren't going to by-pass all that court shit and shoot you in an hour.

Katurian I don't want to by-pass anything. I just want you to keep your word. To go ahead and kill me, and to go ahead and keep my stories safe.

Ariel Well, you can certainly half-trust us.

Katurian I can trust you.

Ariel How do you know you can trust me?

Katurian I don't know. There's just something about you. I don't know what it is.

Ariel Oh, really? Well, y'know, I'll tell you what there is about me. There is an overwhelming, and there is an all-pervading, hatred . . . a hatred . . . of people like you. Of people who lay even the littlest finger . . . on children. I wake up with it. It wakes me up. It rides on the bus with me to work. It whispers to me, 'They will not get away with it.' I come in early. I make sure all the bindings are clean and the electrodes are in the right order so we won't . . . waste . . . time. I admit it, sometimes I use excessive force. And sometimes I use excessive force on an entirely innocent individual. But I'll tell you this. If an entirely innocent individual leaves this room for the outside

world, they're not gonna contemplate even raising their *voice* to a little kid again, just in case *I* fucking hear 'em and drag 'em in here for *another* load of excessive fucking force. Now, is this kind of behaviour in an officer of the law in some way questionable morally? Of course it fucking is! But you know what? I don't fucking care! 'Cos, when I'm an old man, you know what? Little kids are gonna follow me around and they're gonna know my name and what I stood for, and they're gonna give me some of their sweets in thanks, and I'm gonna take those sweets and thank them and tell them to get home safe, and I'm gonna be happy. Not because of the sweets, I don't really like sweets, but because I'd know . . . I'd know in my heart, that if I hadn't been there, not all of them would have been there. Because I'm a good policeman. Not necessarily good in the sense of being able to solve lots of stuff, because I'm not, but good in the sense of I stand for something. I stand for something. I stand on the right side. *I* may not always be right, but I stand on the right side. The child's side. The opposite side to you. And so, naturally, when I hear that a child has been killed in a fashion . . . in a fashion such as this 'Little Jesus' thing . . . You know what? I would torture you to death just for *writing* a story like that, let alone acting it out! So, y'know what?

Ariel takes out from the cabinet a large, grim-looking battery with electrodes attached.

. . . Fuck what your mum and dad did to you and your brother. Fuck it. I'd've tortured the fuck out of them if I had them here, just like I'm gonna torture the fuck out of you now too. 'Cos two wrongs do not make a right. Two wrongs do not make a right. So kneel down over here, please, so I can connect you to this battery.

Katurian backs away.

Katurian Come on, not again . . .