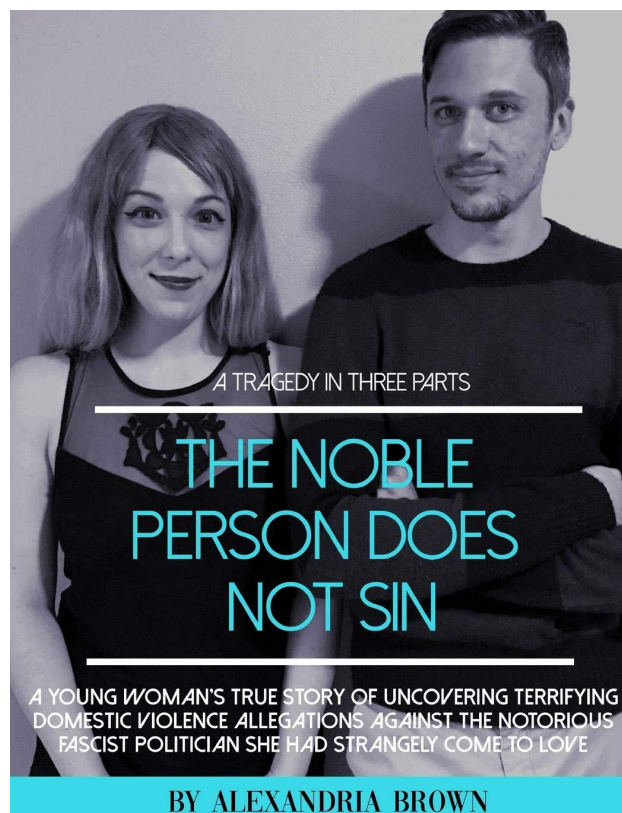


# The Noble Person Does Not Sin

A Tragedy in Three Parts

Alexandria Brown



12 Aug. 2018

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## Synopsis

Alexandria Brown tells the story of her tumultuous relationship with Augustus Invictus, former candidate for U.S. Senator in Florida and lead organizer of the 2017 Unite the Right rally which left 20 injured and 1 dead. As Brown slowly realizes Invictus is a fascist, she simultaneously learns of terrifying domestic violence allegations against him made by his 19-year old ex-fiancé Victoria Rice. Brown's intimate friendship with Invictus splinters. As she is increasingly harassed and threatened by his neo-Nazi followers, she becomes consumed with exposing what she believes to be his misdeeds to the world. In this startling piece, Brown uses writing, visual art, and digital media to weave together a narrative of life for a unique young woman in the dark, misogynist era of Trump.

## Prologue: Abjuration Clause

*“Of what is great one must either be silent or speak with greatness.*

*With greatness—that means cynically and with innocence”*

—FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

THIS ESSAY is a nonfiction piece recounting my friendship with Augustus Sol Invictus, former criminal defense attorney and two-time candidate for U.S. Senator in Florida. Augustus is a pagan and a neo-Nazi who worked alongside American white supremacist Richard Spencer to organize the August 2017 fascist Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, which left one dead. He is also alleged to have violently beaten, raped, and falsely imprisoned his ex-partner, “Anastasia,” a then 19-year-old woman, over a period of 15 months. This is said to have occurred throughout the duration of my friendship with them both. At my prompting, Anastasia reported this alleged violence to the police, but charges were never pursued, as Anastasia later failed to follow up with authorities. Given what she alleges about Augustus, it seems reasonable to wonder whether her failure to continue cooperating with authorities might be due to the receipt of violent threats and intimidation.

PLEASE NOTE when reading this essay that it contains themes of graphic sexuality, extreme violence and abuse, anti-Semitism, and Holocaust denial, all of which may be triggering for sensitive readers. In particular, I want to be clear of one additional thing: in this essay, I have endeavored to be *completely honest* about the extent and the depth of the *positive* emotions I experienced in relation to this man—yes, positive. These emotions were in many ways unjustified, but unfortunately this does not mean I did not experience them. The powerful cognitive dissonance I fight does not indicate I endorse Augustus' neo-Nazism or his alleged domestic violence. Instead, it is the result of a complex set of factors which this narrative sets out to explore.

I HAVE Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder among other serious mental illnesses. I am considered disabled in the State of Florida. I have survived attempted murder, rape, and long-term stalking from a very young age. Augustus Invictus' presence in my life temporarily helped alleviate the symptoms of my mental illnesses. In particular, the time I shared with Augustus made me feel secure despite my PTSD, because he vowed to keep me safe. This turned out to be the first time I would experience any real sense of safety since age 14, and today I am 30 years old. It is difficult to communicate the experience of finding safety in a loving father figure after living for years in constant terror, only to learn that the man in whom you found shelter is alleged to have committed acts of extreme violence. Nonetheless, I have decided to try.

I DID NOT INITIALLY know Augustus was a neo-Nazi but did immediately realize upon meeting him that he was an imposing, frightening man. However, I saw this as an asset. It meant that being close to him made me untouchable; so long as I was close to him, I was able to feel in some sense normal for the first time in over a decade. He made me feel as if no man would ever hurt me again. What may seem stranger, the revelations of his neo-Nazism and alleged domestic violence did not ultimately change the fact that Augustus provided me with the feeling my survival was ensured. Even once I learned he was effectively a fascist, I still wanted with all my heart to believe he was good. In fact, I needed it so badly that I continually fantasized that everything was all right to the point that I sometimes lost touch with reality and became psychotic. Of course, that does not mean that in my sane and conscious hours I believe he is completely good. Yet I have not held back about my love for him in this writing. In the following essay, I have given myself complete permission to indulge my obsession with Augustus. Because I think my experience was significant and unique, my need for acceptance, safety and belonging—as well as the desperation with which I clung to him as the source of those things, even after the allegations emerged—are all on full display in the writing that follows. To the voyeurs and the busybodies: please, don't try to explain it to me: I am well aware that this is a pathological phenomenon. That does not change the reality of what I experience or feel.

FOR A MOMENT, choose a person at random among those whom you love very dearly. Now, imagine if you suddenly learned that person was actually a full-fledged neo-Nazi, alleged to have perpetrated acts of terror against a woman he loved. Think with some nuance about how shocking and disturbing this would be to realize. Perhaps then you can sympathize with why it took such a long time for me to admit what had long been clear to many about Augustus. Before passing judgment on me, I ask with as much humility as I can muster that you please try to put yourself in my shoes. Due to my PTSD, I had come to associate Augustus not only with unconditional love but also, with my very survival. As such, even when I learned in the abstract of the danger he allegedly poses, I struggled to internalize it because it didn't directly threaten me. I was thus faced not only with his betrayal but also with my morally deficient self—for I found that I ultimately had not revulsion for him, but only a half-revulsion, tainted with a necessary indifference. I believe I could not have responded otherwise unless I

had been completely indifferent to the conditions of my own safety and survival. I still have love for Augustus to this day, which generates an extreme cognitive dissonance I continue working to resolve. I don't need to be taught this: I know that my attachments are misguided; I know he is in many ways terrible. I know—I believe in a version of Augustus who does not exist. That said, I insist that this version may reflect a partial reality, a potential in him. I refuse to let go of those hopes, even though I have also struggled not to enable any of his alleged abusive behavior. I accept that this internal conflict is something I have yet to overcome.

THE IMPORTANT THING to note is that for the purposes of this essay, I have temporarily said to myself, “that is all okay.” In this world, I have permission to long for Augustus Sol Invictus as the person I wish existed, the person I hope could exist, who I do think partially exists, or who once existed. I'm allowed to explore what this imagined person represents to my unconscious mind on a symbolic level as a lover, brother, friend, and father. To be clear, the events described are all factual. However, no recounting of human affairs can be perfectly objective, and that is where I have indulged my feelings. In my emotional characterization, my estimation, in many of the emphases and esteeming proclamations—I never project inaccuracy, even though I am sometimes precisely at odds with who Augustus actually is. No, I simply paint a picture of my own hope for the future. Do not be confused; my writing is non-fiction. In fact, it is accurate on two levels. It is accurate on not only the biographical but also the psychological level. What my writing always depicts truthfully is not merely an objective account of events, but also an account of my internal experiences as I lived them. I have fidelity to that. In this work, I strive for compassion towards myself and my consciousness.

WHO GAVE ME PERMISSION for all this desire, all this honesty, all this self-absorption, you might ask? *I gave this permission to myself*, because I know that I need it in order to heal. I gave it to myself freely, because I am the ultimate authority on my own experiences. I do sincerely hope the potential exists for Augustus to become who I believed him to be, but ultimately that is not my aim. My aim is to heal myself—to air all my secrets and externalize this story until it is no longer exactly just my own. I want it out in the world, for the sake of both myself and others—if I may, even for Augustus' sake. I warn my audience this piece may lead you to an alien and uncomfortable place. But I hope you will understand that I have written out of the very same aforementioned instinct for self-preservation which drew me to Augustus to begin with. Today, I write to protect myself from the weight of my memories. I simply feel that this is too much for one woman to deal with quietly and alone.

TODAY, IWONDER whether my hopes for Augustus' goodness had to do with something else, retrospectively rather obvious: I wonder whether I hope he is good because he reminded me of my father, Timothy Brown. After my father died, Augustus indulged my desire to return to the paternal love I had struggled to trust in as a child. My father, probably far more so than Augustus himself, did sincerely care for me. However, my father was very depressed and frustrated in his career, never being able

to become a professional musician. Perhaps he drank too much. In any case, father struggled to be expressive in a way that left me feeling very alone. I know that my father, who died suddenly at age 57 of a heart attack, just a few months before I met Augustus—loved me unconditionally. I need to understand why that was not enough for me to feel safe in his embrace.

I KNOW TOO that so-called “Daddy issues” are neither sexy nor glamorous in the contemporary world. I know, I know, God forbid they originate in a woman such as myself, who is also unashamed and willing to be loud about them. I know this incredibly well at this point. It is verbally beaten into me daily, by people who barely know me, mostly men, who police my behavior relentlessly nonetheless. They don’t let me forget it. So, don’t worry, moralizing reader: I have already been reviled, insulted, accused of lying, called a Nazi, and verbally trampled in many other ways, by many people, in response to even the small part of my experience I have shared so far. I know very well what is coming to me when I go so far as to put this whole story into words.

FRANKLY, I DON’T CARE—because there are other people who affirm my project completely. There are precious others who understand what I have articulated. Some have come to me privately and said, “Thank you for saying this out loud. I have had similar experiences. For a long time, I felt this way too.” We find solace where we can, in strange places, in this world. I write on Nietzsche in this essay, so it is also relevant to mention something that Nietzsche said: we must not consider that truth which slides into subtle ears alone to be “a lie and nothing.” For now, I wish to address those subtler ears alone: I want to tell you about the uncanny fragility of the boundaries of the individual. My father, Augustus, my philosophy professor Dr. Martin Schönfeld—these are three great men in my life. Though Schönfeld and Augustus knew one another, my father never met these two men. They all resemble one another in my eyes, in a way that I cannot escape when I survey those who have influenced me the most. But I have been scared out of my comfort by the wrath of strangers, so I will be polite. This is very personal for me and is more implied than explored in my writing. Still, since to omit it would be politically incorrect, I will say that throughout this writing the absence I actually mourn most profoundly is my father’s. I learned from a dear lost friend, rudely reviled by many, how important it is to be polite, so I will thank him now.

*Augustus Invictus – thank you.  
You not only helped me learn to feel safe,  
but you helped me understand  
and learn to love my Dad.*



*Author Alexandria Brown with her father, Timothy Jay Brown (1958 2015)*

# *The Noble Person Does Not Sin.*

*A Tragedy in Three Parts by Alexandria Brown*



# Title Page

## I. First Blush

*“[I]ll-fated Oedipus, the most grief stricken figure of the Greek stage was understood by Sophocles as that honorable person who, in spite of his wisdom, is condemned to error and misery, yet due to his horrendous suffering exerts a magical and sacred power that in the end is still effective beyond his death. The profound poet wants to tell us that the noble person does not sin. Through his actions every law, every natural order, and even the moral world will perish, and precisely by these actions a higher magical circle of effects is drawn that creates a new world on the ruins of the demolished old one. To the extent that he is also a religious thinker, this is what the poet wants to tell us...”*

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE<sup>1</sup>

I am about to tell a story I have recounted so many times over the past year that I physically shake with exhaustion when I go to speak. Nonetheless, it is not my desire to share, but rather, the power and urgency of the story itself, that determines whether it is told. So, I will tell it. My friends—far too many of my friends—have been lost to this story. Beyond my friends, those I speak to online, my community, my family—no one I know seems to want to hear it. I repeat myself anyway. Now I will tell the story in the most intimate way that I can manage. My hope is that I can recount this experience in such a way that you will not merely read, but perhaps may find yourself ready to question your own thoughts and beliefs as a result of what you hear. My highest hope is that you will trace your minds and hearts against the example of the joys and failures that I have endured.

Let us revisit a quiet, laughably idyllic time when Barack Obama was still President of the United States. Much may be said about this man’s broken promises: his drone wars, his deportation rates, his failure to close Guantanamo. Domestically, his presidency still had a certain unassailable quality, no matter how deeply he deteriorated, stumbling often into the footsteps of his misguided predecessors (had we expected him to be superhuman because he was black—on both the left, and the right?) For many of us, this time period had a sense of safety and optimism that I, at least, had the luxury of taking for granted. I came of age when Barack was elected. Politically, the Obama administration was all I had ever known. As such, I was filled with dread when I awoke on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016, to learn Trump had been elected. However, this was not shocking to us all. I know a certain philosophy professor who saw it coming. In retrospect, he apprehended not merely the fate of our nation, but also, the future of the earth itself—with tragic clarity.

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<sup>1</sup> The Birth of Tragedy, Section 9.

In spring of 2016—so long ago now—I was in college, still. I wish I could still be in college! I wish I could go back to before my life was destroyed. I was taking a graduate seminar on Friedrich Nietzsche with my beloved philosophy professor. I had worked with him since I began college at thirteen years old: a man from Germany named Dr. Martin Schönfeld. Dr. Schönfeld is an intensely brilliant man. An environmental ethicist, a former child prodigy and conscientious objector from Germany, he has a certain perspective on topics pertaining to fascism which I think many lack. He has a severe and sober sort of conscience for which Americans do not seem to have the heart: an ennobling form of historical guilt, which takes on a personal quality, that I have not seen in anyone else I've known.

After all, so many of us are content to believe that of course we are good people; we are neither complicit in nor responsible for events like the Holocaust. But Dr. Schönfeld is a German man. He cannot take that for granted. As Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas teaches us: *a good conscience is a bad conscience*. The moment we convince ourselves we are pure, we lose the very quality that makes us good. Ultimately, our ethical obligation to the Other is infinite. No human act will ever change the fact that I take every bite I eat from the mouth of someone starving. And so, Dr. Schönfeld takes the Holocaust upon himself, all its yawning weight, its historical significance. He darkens with fury and grief thinking of high schoolers he has seen laughing irreverently at memorials. My dear Dr. Martin, he discerned the imminence of Trump and his disciples' arrival while they were still many miles away.

He sensed the urgency of our situation to such a degree that, as classes began in January 2016, he restyled our entire graduate seminar into a think-tank. The task was to generate methods of rhetorically challenging the views of the far-right extremist fringes which were expanding the reaches of Trump's domain. This was a convenient course in which to do so, as it was on the 19<sup>th</sup>-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche, of course, was infamously appropriated by the Nazis. Nietzsche was never a fascist or an anti-Semite himself, but his sister most certainly was. After Nietzsche was hospitalized in a psychiatric ward, she gained control of his estate, editing his works to serve her own agenda. She created the *Nietzsche-archiv* which played a central role in propagandizing for the Nazis through the second World War. After Nietzsche died, she presented Hitler with his walking stick. The Third Reich poached Nietzsche's ideas in a warped attempt to justify their atrocities. Worse, Nietzsche seems to have known this all would occur, but was unable to prevent it. In *Ecce Homo* he wrote, "I know my fate. One day my name will be associated with the memory of something tremendous — a crisis without equal on earth, the most profound collision of conscience, a decision that was conjured up against everything that had been believed, demanded, hallowed so far. I am no man, I am dynamite." In 1888, he foresaw the Holocaust; perhaps this was why he lost his mind.

Our task in this graduate seminar was to retroactively protect Nietzsche—and, by extension, ourselves—from this perversion. We were to brainstorm ways in which Nietzsche could be read as necessarily anti-fascist, keeping an eye upon the seriousness

imparted to our project by the looming prospect of Trump's ascent to power. I myself was unable to truly recognize the possibility of a Trump administration until it was too late. Nonetheless, I respected Dr. Schönfeld immensely, so I took my task extremely seriously. You see, Nietzsche is an anti-democratic, apolitical philosopher. He does not believe in equality. He is not a socialist. He does not want to uplift the people. He venerates violence, and war. To truly immunize his ideas from any glimmer of resemblance to fascism is not at all easy. To do so in a way that succeeds at combatting contemporary fascism is an even more challenging feat. That is why this task has consumed me, two years beyond my completion of the course and into the indefinite future. I reasoned that if I wanted to oppose contemporary fascism, it was not enough to contrast Nietzsche with historical fascism. Instead, I ought to learn intimately about contemporary fascism from the source. I thought of a man I had added to my Facebook after seeing him on the news—a Mr. Augustus Invictus. He was a strange, liminal figure: a writer, a lawyer, and a candidate for U.S. Senator in Florida with the libertarian party. I knew he had killed a goat in a ritual pagan sacrifice. I also knew that he was rumored to conspire with contemporary American fascists, although claimed himself to be a libertarian. I decided to interview him as part of my research for my final Nietzsche paper.

I approached Augustus online and said: "We need to talk." He replied, and I continued: "My name is Alexandria Brown—have been writing a Nietzsche paper this summer about his political philosophy, reading against Kant and Schmitt among others. I had never engaged with the political angle before since it had always seemed self-evident to me that Nietzsche is somewhat an apolitical philosopher for solitary thinkers. But as I do, I find myself interested in libertarianism as an end goal for politics and would like to dialogue... My feeling is that we can't procedurally transition directly out of liberal capitalism into a libertarian world, because existing wealth distribution does not have any true meritocratic basis. It seems to me that an intermediary phase of democratic socialism—keeping in mind a Nietzschean attitude toward perfect equality—is the only way anything like a meritocratic distribution of wealth might be able to come into existence."

"That is heavy," he said, and we scheduled a time to Skype. A few days later, I called him from my friend's glass porch, and for an hour learned things such as the fact that he had voted for Barack Obama, and supported the immediate, complete closure of Guantanamo. By the end of *the interview*, I felt accomplished, ready to believe that as this charming man claimed, he was nothing more than a typical libertarian—even if he was eccentric. Despite that relief, I soon began to have other troubles in my life. Shortly thereafter, an insurance issue caused me to lose access to a necessary psychotropic medication. The abrupt cessation of this medication causes a form of rebound psychosis, so in the absence of this drug, I became psychotic. In that state, I found myself inviting the "libertarian" to speak to me again—this time in my home.

My first in-person encounter with the man was a fever dream. At the time, psychosis was ravaging my mind. My recent research on fascism gave the contents of my delusions

an especially dark inflection. I suddenly believed that the K.K.K. was part of a greater white supremacist network which was organizing a new Holocaust from within my apartment building. Ominous hooded Klansmen lingered, in my mind, at the gates. They prevented me from leaving. I believed they had orchestrated a genocide with the willing complicity of the Aryan blonde fraternity and sorority students inhabiting my college complex. The sisters and brothers would prettily walk by in their Greek letter shirts and I could swear I could hear them shushing me, chastising me for not keeping quiet about macabre plans which had something to do with Augustus. I believed men were trafficking organs in the room above me. I feared hundreds of bodies were stacked in the dumpster outside my front door. At night I would sweat, listening deliriously as the sound of resistance militia men trampling over bushes resounded like a wind.

I was terrified to go outside. I was terrified of my very consciousness. I would go without sleeping or talking for a week at a time, nearly always on the verge of passing out. During this time, though, there was still some hope, some strength, and some courage (fQIKl niD). I believed that in the face of all this evil, Bernie Sanders' campaign was a Jewish religious battle which could ultimately yield a politico-theological messiah. In anticipation of—or perhaps as part of—this event, *I was painting* thousands of colorful, vaguely Hebraic characters on the wall of my bedroom, wondering what the outcome would be to our struggle. Psychically, via extra-sensory perception, I conversed at length with my former philosophy advisor April Flakne and her Israeli husband. They were experts on the concept of the politico-theological messiah. Pacing on the porch, we struggled to determine whether or not Jewish religious law dictated the meting out of the death penalty to the Charleston killer Dylann Roof. Smoking a cigarette, we assessed together in my mind the gravity of his crimes.

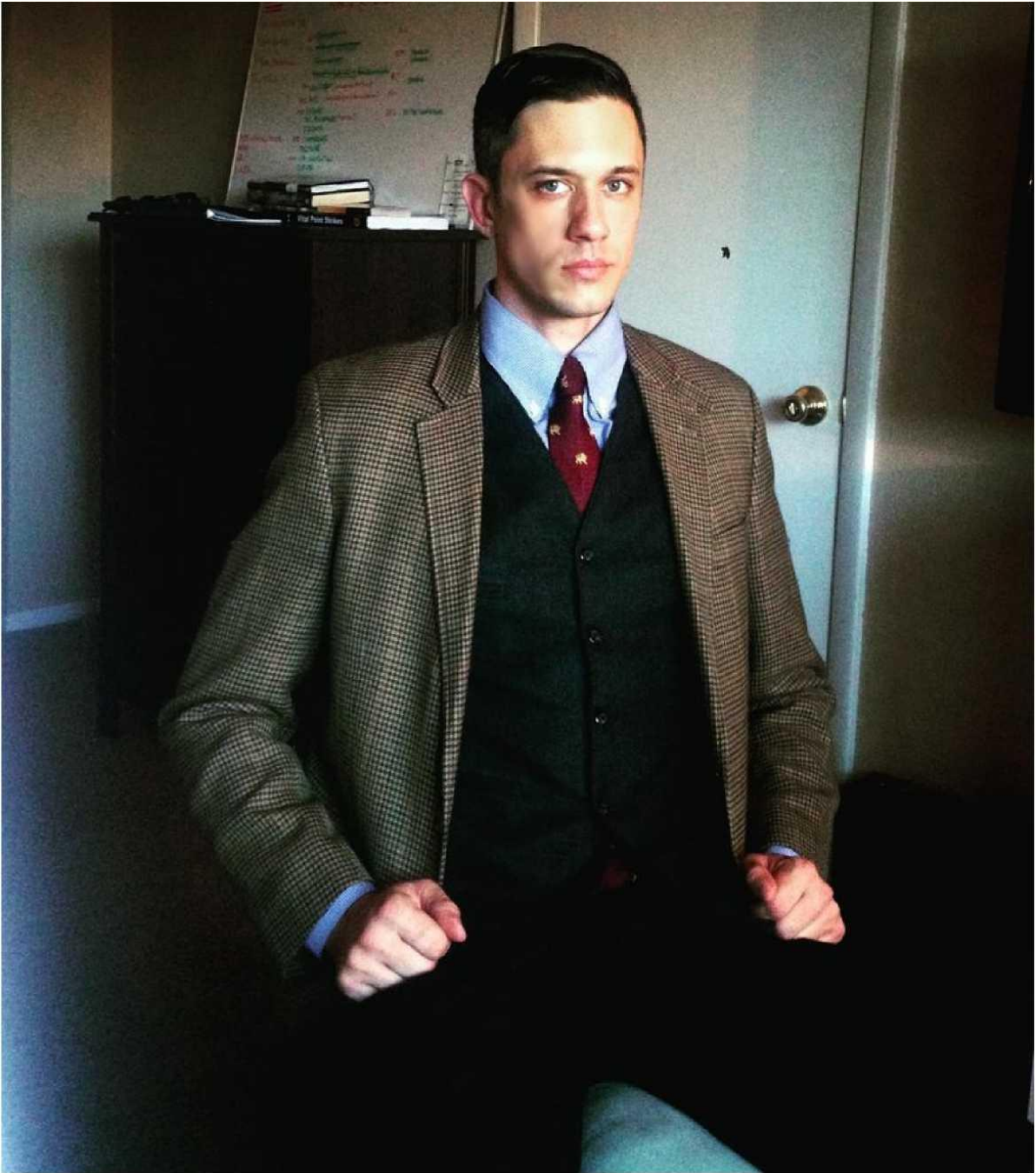
It was in this indecipherable and frenetic context that my first encounter with Augustus occurred. On the day he was to visit, I struggled to be patient. Eventually, I texted him: *“I might die if you don't get here soon. I think I need you to ground me so that I can write my Nietzsche paper.”* In a while, I heard a knocking sound. Teetering in glasses, my hair a mess, no makeup on, I opened my door, surely wearing the same clothes I'd been wearing for weeks.

Augustus Invictus stood in a full suit in my doorway. He introduced himself, pronouncing his name in his most JFK-Confederate lilt. My first thought, in all sincerity, was of Nietzsche:

*“Nihilism stands at the door—whence comes this uncanniest of all guests?”*

## II. The Meeting

Augustus Sol Invictus and I confronted one another in the long, perilously black hallway leading to my bedroom. The encounter was primordial. Viscerally, I immediately felt that he was capable of killing me. Strangely, this was horribly exciting; if



you think about it, my very safety was now a compliment from him. It was as precious a gift to me as my life was valuable. He later said that he had wondered whether my invitation was an antifa ambush, so at the time he was likely fully armed. Many who have accused me of being a Nazi-sympathizer judge me for ever having let this man into my home—but I wonder whether, in my position, they would even have had the courage.

I showed Augustus my room. I showed him the Hebrew-language messianic mural and I showed him the resplendent painted menorah on my wall. I showed the fascist my Jewish art in the room paid for by my government disability stipend. I showed him all 20–40 of my paintings. Looking things over he asked, almost enviously: “You made all this?” I was able to say “yes,” and that was the extent of what I could say. I could manage nothing else. I just stood there, dreaming, enraptured by his presence, without any words. His arrival had been Dionysian in a pure sense: upon it, I lost all sense of my individual self. His physical presence had blown open the doors to another dimension. It granted me access to a sacred source of collective wisdom and left me quaking. Finally, I was returned to the tribe to which I belonged.

Encountering Augustus, I realized in my psychotic state the types of grandiose things he soberly believes about himself during his waking hours. Suddenly I felt certain he was destined to be a world-historical figure who would rescue us all from the genocidal takeover unfolding in my home. He was a hero. My own role in world history was no less cosmic: it was only my meeting with Augustus which could catalyze his true destiny. But I knew that ultimately, he was doomed to be a terrible, Napoleonic figure. Fate would inevitably separate us in stormy events of immeasurable tragedy and war.

As I mulled over my prophecies, there was silence for a very long time. Eventually, Augustus must have begun to feel uncomfortable. But he did not want to tell me this. “I’ll be right back,” he promised. In my psychosis, I understood “I’ll be right back” to mean that he was offering to be a right-wing backing force for my sacred anti-fascist battle. Augustus walked to the porch of my apartment and asked my roommate if I was always like this. My roommate said no. “She’s catatonic,” Augustus declared, and walked out the front door. He had realized I was not going to permit him to learn why I had invited him over only to stare at the wall in silence. His departure hit me like a punch to the gut, for it marked the advent of the desert of interminable tragedy which was fated to separate us and brutally rend the landscape between us. It was beginning far sooner than I had anticipated. I knew that the moment he left my doorstep—a war would begin. I immediately texted him, breathlessly:

*“there is a Z.”*

I meant Nietzsche’s Zarathustra.

He was *real*.

## Augustus Invictus

📅 7/8/16 - 3/9/17    💬 3,240    📎 190 (500.3 MB)    📄 Export Conversation

I was quiet because I loved being afraid of you 4:44

I do not wish to be your enemy 4:45

## Augustus Invictus

📅 7/8/16 - 3/9/17    💬 3,240    📎 190 (500.3 MB)    📄 Export Conversation

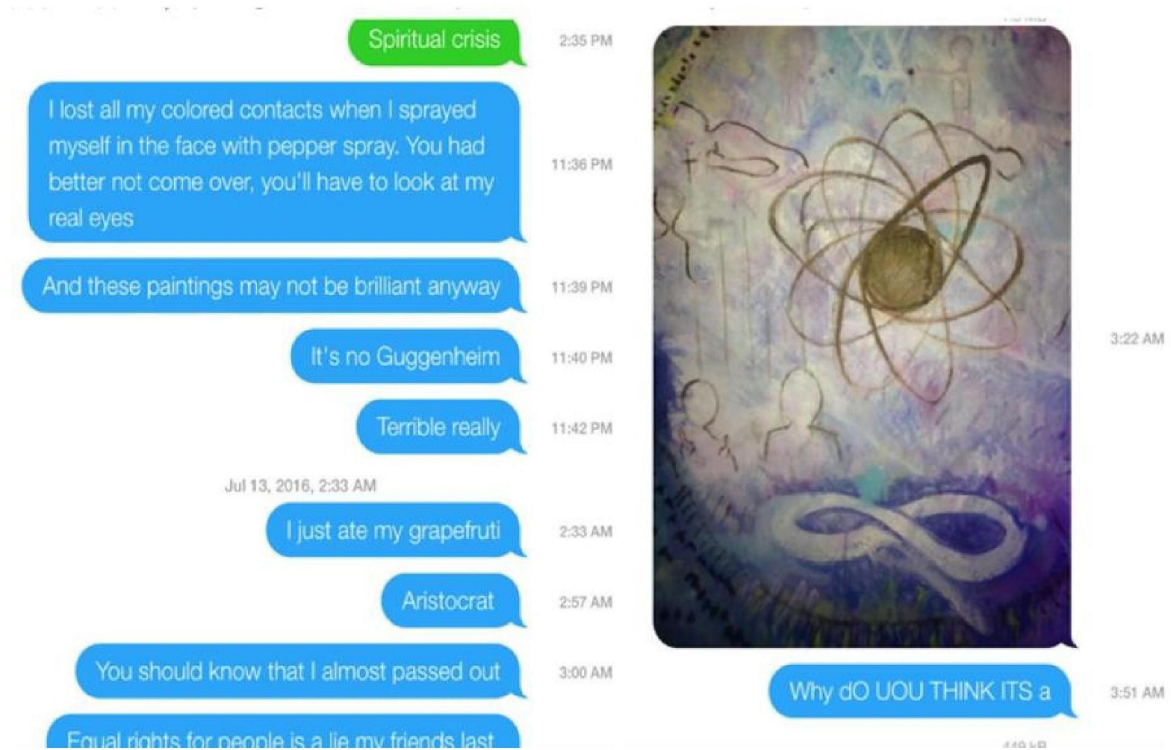
The grief might kill me if you don't come back 10:45 PM

Jul 16, 2016, 8:31 PM

I feel sick 🤢 8:31 PM

I don't know if we should talk anymore or not. I mean you no harm but we may be very different 8:56 PM

I continued texting him for weeks, sometimes getting a reply, sometimes not, at his whim. It took me a long time to come back to reality after that day. Throughout that time, I communicated to him repeatedly, urgently, sending message after message, sharing cryptic drawings and photographs.



Slowly, these texts began to regain coherent form as I gradually emerged from the psychosis. As soon as I was able to leave my room again, I decided to visit him. In an act of either recklessness or understanding, he chose to write off my erratic behavior. We met again some weeks later at a Libertarian party meeting in Orlando. This time, I was well-dressed, relatively composed and assured, taking my seat like a perfectly normal young woman among the libertarians. Wearing a black leather jacket, Augustus spoke aggressively but politely and eyed me at the meeting, in which he mulled over administrative matters and resolved a dispute that had nearly come to blows between himself and a man named Derek Ryan. Immediately afterwards he swept me away towards his motorcycle, kissing me slowly and intimately on the cheek within the very first few minutes of our greeting. But he had to go—our time together was too brief.

We continued to exchange messages, our chemistry deepening.

One day, I sent him a striking photograph and quotation:

<em>Genius: the highest degree of subjection to the visitation – one; control of the visitation – two. The highest degree of being mentally pulled to

# Augustus Invictus

7/8/16 - 3/9/17 3,240 190 (500.3 MB) Export Conversation 318 kB



11:09 PM

I dyed my hair red and feel that you need to know

11:09 PM

You

Know

11:36 PM

Full

11:36 PM

Well

11:36 PM

About the Beast & His Bride

11:36 PM

And that tonight is their anniversary

11:37 PM

I do not... Tell me

11:37 PM

mew

11:40 PM



11:47 PM

The Beast & the Scarlet Woman

11:55 PM



pieces, and the highest of being – collected. The highest of passivity, and the highest of activity. To let oneself be annihilated right down to some last atom, from the survival (resistance) of which will grow – a world.

— MARINA TSVETAeva<sup>2</sup>

“I love it,” he replied.

Augustus stayed in my life. In what seems not to be a coincidence, he had also worked with Dr. Schönfeld—also studying Nietzsche. His philosophy thesis with Schönfeld was on Nietzsche, “trying to reconcile [his] two notions of Overcoming and of Eternity, being outside of time.” I chose to overlook Augustus’ occasional off-color jokes about Jew communists; in return, I got him to admit that poststructuralist feminism was interesting. “Don’t tell anyone I said that,” he hastened to add. By the third time I met with him, there was little pretense. We drank Jägermeister. With his manner that makes one simultaneously feel like a fragile girl and a powerful mother, he teasingly mentioned to me that he was starved of physical affection; I should take compassion on him, he said. He got behind me where I was sitting on the floor and picked me up completely, carrying me to his bed, kissing me, taking off my clothes. Afterwards we cuddled in bed, slightly too drunk, watching a superhero film of which I remember few details.

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<sup>2</sup> Art in the Light of Conscience

This romantic friendship continued to develop. I felt unpossessive of him, however. His young girlfriend Anastasia played a role that was entirely different from my own.



## You and Anastasia could not be further apart

Augustus eventually revealed he thought the deity responsible for our meeting was the same one who had inspired Friedrich Nietzsche to write *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. I think he may have half-believed that; a friend told me that later, when everything was wrecked, he approached her desperately, seeking advice on occult techniques for exorcising the demoness women who were now screeching incessantly in his mind. In any case, I felt our meeting was empyrean. For now, the wizardry was more darling.

### Augustus Invictus

7/8/16 - 3/9/17

3,240

190 (500.3 MB)

Export Conversation

I just want to be my own Galatea

9:27 AM

I love it when you get mythological

9:28 AM

Whiling away hours sparring vengefully and verbally, we softened the ever-present, quiet tragedy of our divergent beliefs with red wine. Augustus became one of my closest friends. At times we would speak, and the patterns of my words would later sparkle in his speeches, not stolen from me, but laid out as in a glass case and honored. I told him things I have only told enough people to count on three of my fingers. He would read to me in bed, passages of Nietzsche extremely dear to us both, the skull of the goat he had sacrificed resting on the nightstand.

“... in me there is something invulnerable and unburiable,  
something that explodes rocks, that is my will.”

We exchanged notes regarding the meaning of our friendship.

IN THE FRIEND ONE MUST HAVE ONE'S BEST ENEMY, we said.

Our faith in others betrays in what respect we would like to have faith in ourselves. Our longing for a friend is our betrayer. And often love is only

< Messages (25) Augustus

Details

I can never sleep.

I think your presence in my life is a sadistic cosmic question posed to me by my former partner.

It could be

Or I could be an anchor in a storm

I love you friend.

I love you, too, Alex

a device to overcome envy. And often one attacks and makes an enemy in order to conceal that one is open to attack. “At least be my enemy!” — thus speaks true reverence, which does not dare ask for friendship. If one wants to have a friend one must also want to wage war for him: and to wage war, one must be capable of being an enemy. In a friend one should still honor the enemy. Can you go close to your friend without going over to him? In a friend one should have one’s best enemy. You should be closest to him with your heart when you resist him.

-FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

One night, I confessed to him that I was bisexual, and I hoped for more encounters with women. He was enthusiastic, and I persuaded him of the unsurpassed beauty of a woman I liked—the same one he later asked for an exorcism. Together, we began plotting a way to seduce her. Then, for my birthday that year, Augustus decided to curate a lesbian orgy. The girl I liked was unable to attend, but our plans still bloomed into a corybantic beach house party with Anastasia, her friend Julie, and myself. As we drove to the beach, he and Anastasia played a game: they did a line every time the song ‘Starboy’ by the Weeknd came on. It seemed to play a thousand times on the radio, on the way there.

## Augustus Invictus

📅 7/8/16 - 3/9/17    💬 3,240    📎 190 (500.3 MB)    📤 Export Conversation



Do you think I should try to invite him? 11:43 PM

Absolutely not 11:43 PM

I want all three of you to myself 11:44 PM

I'm a territorial panther 11:44 PM

Augustus became a bit controlling when we arrived. Taking all of our phones away, he insisted that no men were to enter the premises of our beach house—even a man I was dating at the time had to remain in the driveway. Augustus called my other male

friend and personally informed him he was not permitted to attend. He relaxed a little once the wine and MDMA he had brought hit him. We began rolling, laughing, playing with one another. Anastasia and I started live streaming ourselves onto my webcam site, telling our audience that she and I would fuck once we'd raised \$100. Laughing, impatient, yelling, Augustus paid us the last \$8 himself. Nervously, we kissed. Anastasia immediately went to my breasts, then between my legs. I reciprocated. She tasted sweet. We turned the camera off, and suddenly she and Julie were all over me—kissing me, licking my pussy, touching my breasts. I felt wrapped in mochi. As Augustus watched, I was the center of attention, just as I had wished to be. He, too, was saturated with affection in our midst.



Anastasia was submissive; she asked me to spank her hard, until her skin was bright red. They played a game where Augustus would intermittently choke her and her friend into unconsciousness for the sheer, apparent pleasure. He drew a knife occasionally, sharply, across Anastasia's breasts. I don't remember blood. There was a reckless, wild innocence to it all. Around four in the morning I sat on the couch, singing songs by St. Vincent to them. My father was a musician, and I am an okay singer. Performing, I felt a perfect happiness. I will always remember that. It felt so good to be sort of *owned* in that way. With my new family, I was safe. At this time, I did not yet know

what price I would pay for this intimacy with Augustus. For now, he only made me feel deeply valued, special, and protected. Afterwards, I wrote to Augustus, sharing something I had written about him:

... There is a Dionysian element to any interaction with A. In which because of the vastness and absurdity of the universe, nothing matters, and therefore A.'s divergent set of beliefs doesn't matter. There is a sort of cosmic giddiness in laughing with someone who wishes for the death or subordination of your oppressed group. Freedom from reality, which actually probably generates courage in terms of confronting him openly as an enemy. I am fairly confident A. genuinely wants to be a friend to me, even as and precisely because I fight him—

Augustus responded, with a long, contemplative e-mail about the relationship between the enemy and the friend. Perceptive, he expressed his affection: *"Ideology means absolutely nothing. It is hollow. It is false. What matters is love: love of family, love of country, love of the Spirit... So yes, you are my friend Alexandria first and a leftist second."* He went on to name the great enemies in his life—those who had truly understood him and had then gone on to write the most powerful takedowns during his political campaign.

*I painted his portrait*



*Not ashamed to say I loved him for his beauty.  
As I would again  
If he came near. Beauty convinces. You know beauty makes sex possible.  
Beauty makes sex sex.*

*-Anne Carson*

*In comparison to my father,  
Recently dead of a heart attack,  
Who had always been so emotionally absent...  
Augustus was love.*

Several years ago in Philadelphia, I made a *comedy film* with my dear friend from college *Scott Ross*, a filmmaker. Scott's boyfriend, Naeem Juwan of *Spank Rock*, had been touring in Russia. He brought back honey, so we used it to make hot toddies. Over our drinks, Scott taught me something that has been essential to my creativity. As an artist, I must never judge my own desire, because desire is the source of inspiration. It originates in unconscious mind; it is uncontrollable. So, I have accepted that I feel as I feel about Augustus—I have embraced it. Although I try not to judge myself too harshly, at some point the world clamors for it. As the depth of Augustus' involvement in my life became clearer to my friends, I began to get serious pushback from them, continuing to the present day. I was—am—“a Nazi-sympathizer,” they say. The only good Nazi was—is—“a dead Nazi,” they say. But even now I don't want to believe Augustus is a Nazi. I am someone who has spent hours sobbing openly about the Holocaust. I took it all extremely personally, and it hit deep. I shed tears many times over the fact that my friends outright thought that Augustus should be murdered. It was shocking to say I was indifferent to the Holocaust, *but I didn't want my sweet friend to be murdered.*

I could not rest with these conflicting opinions swirling around me. I needed to clear my conscience. So to prove my friends wrong—to prove he wasn't a Nazi—I *interviewed him a second time*, with questions designed to elicit his opinions about fascism and probe deeper into his psychology. As if to summon courage out of delirium, I stayed up for two days before our scheduled date. I interviewed him intensively for an hour, asking the questions I had, along with some from professors, friends, even my mother. When I returned home, I immediately transcribed the interview. I wrote my friends:

“I no longer feel qualified to be the person who definitively identifies ‘what’ Mr. Invictus is. I encourage my reader to be that person if they believe they are truly qualified; however I encourage them to move slowly if they wish to attempt that type of judgment .. Unless I am missing something—let me know once you've read the interview—he says at no point that he is a fascist. In fact, Mr. Invictus specifically says he does not want to institute a fascist form of government. Of course, cryptosíase ism is real; not

What would you do if the police shot me because I was psychotic?

I would of course do the rational thing: I would riot and loot my own neighborhood and demand accountability of the police on national television

Thank you

You got it ❤️

Sep 29, 2016, 10:05 AM

all fascists will rush to announce their arrival. Still: to call someone a fascist is an extremely serious charge to levy against them. It is a charge which, if taken seriously by others, may open that person up to very real threats of violence. I am unwilling to open Mir. Invictus up to those such threats that he already experiences—particularly given that, after my best attempt at discernment, I still possess doubt that he claims he is a fascist carries weight. So, I will not say it was clear that he is... I hope it is not that he is lying and is a fascist. I hope it is simply that not everyone or everything with which we disagree can be forced into a sound bite, mechanically yielding a convenient media spectacle. Not everything with which one disagrees may be used as a scapegoat to disdain and destroy. Leaving aside the question of actual goat sacrifice—something that takes a long time to understand... Guilt-by-association reasoning is ubiquitous today in American cultures, on the left and the right. Such reasoning could get dangerous extremely fast, and I think all of us can agree that we should do what we can to prevent that dynamite from exploding. This is why I refuse to cast the first stone at my friend.

I know a man from a city in Syria which recently was conquered by ISIS. My friend, whose name is Amir, watched helplessly while people were beheaded in four blasphemy streets where he lived. His wife was taking her final University exams in a classroom when her University was hit by a bomb. Thankfully, she survived. But what Amir told me when discussing Augustus stays with me. It was clear to Amir that, in this grand scheme of things, he would not lose sleep over how iniquitous this libertarianism might be. As Amir knew all too well: There is real evil in this world."

But in the interview, Augustus seemed to deny the Holocaust. On Nazi legal theorist Carl Schmitt, about whom I had originally contacted him, he said, "You can probably assume that I generally agree with him on everything, and he's one of my biggest influences." I was trying to reassure myself, but now some of my questions were unanswerable. I was aghast. Although I tried to ignore it, the second interview changed things. On some level, it validated what my friends had said about him. From my perspective, the interview was the first time he had spoken so openly and publicly about his affinity for fascism, and it confirmed my worst fears. A fissure arose at the core of our relationship.

The exchange about the antifa wounded us both. "Alexandria," Augustus begged, "you and my little brother are literally the only leftists I respect in the world, and you know I love you both." Unfazed, I continued asking increasingly accusatory questions. He was distraught; he became a shut-in. I hadn't broken off our friendship, but was warily scrutinizing every one of his broadcasts, waiting for any missteps—anything that might give him away completely.

# Augustus Invictus

26 of 5

📅 7/8/16 - 3/9/17

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Life is funny. I was always anti-communism, but it wasn't until the Antifa tried to take me out that I became anti-communist, and viciously so. Physical violence has a way of turning a switch in you that says Never Afuckinggain.

Shortly thereafter, Augustus ended things with Anastasia; a week or so after that, he completely cut off contact with me. Even though I rarely had any contact with Anastasia, he claimed that he had to, because he couldn't bear to be reminded in any way of her through our interactions. It seemed strange at the time; I had only met her twice. He had told me she and I were completely different—why was I suddenly such a potent reminder? Now I realize: he knew that if I kept talking to Anastasia, I would imminently learn of the violence he had allegedly carried out against her. Since then, I've done everything of which I am capable to assure Anastasia's safety, given the danger he may pose. But sometimes I feel I should have seen it coming. In the second interview, he had revealed, "The people I've hurt the most have been in my family, or at least, those are the people I've noticed that I've hurt, those are the ones I've noticed, and have regretted, because they are family." What had I thought that meant?

When I feel guilty, I try to recall the deep irony of the events that would follow. Augustus has made me feel *special*. He has related to me in pure politeness, respect, love—even, if I dare, in reverence. Yet it turned out he is purported to have committed inhuman acts against other women. In any case, I think he cut me off because he didn't want to face me with that truth. I believe he couldn't face me, knowing I would soon learn about how he had hurt her, even if the paradox was that he would probably never have hurt me in that way, myself. I don't know why I was inviolable, I just sensed with confidence that I was. For some reason, he respected me, honored me, at times even treated me with deference—but not so, his fiancé.

If I participated, would you advocate for my death?

If you participated in riots that called for my death?

You do realize that the Antifa literally tried to assassinate me, right? That puts it beyond hypothetical.

For the sake of argument, yes.

Antifa gives second chances to those who renounce their views. So for the sake of argument, say that I participated in

a riot alongside people who called for your death or for just violence against fascists generally.

If you joined the Antifa, that would make you an existential enemy. That's no different than joining my campaign: it would make you an existential enemy of the Antifa.

It's like asking a member of the State Department, "If I join ISIS, what are you going to do?" It's a fundamentally unfair question.

I don't want to assume I know all the details of your relationship, but I don't think [she] can hurt you.

She threatened to go to a lawyer once. I'm not afraid that she \*can\* hurt me - I'm afraid that she will try to. It's like a ten-year-old Somalian kid on the battlefield: you don't want to shoot a kid, but he's pointing a rifle at you.

It sounds like there is a pattern of chaos that has emerged between you two that you fear getting trapped in

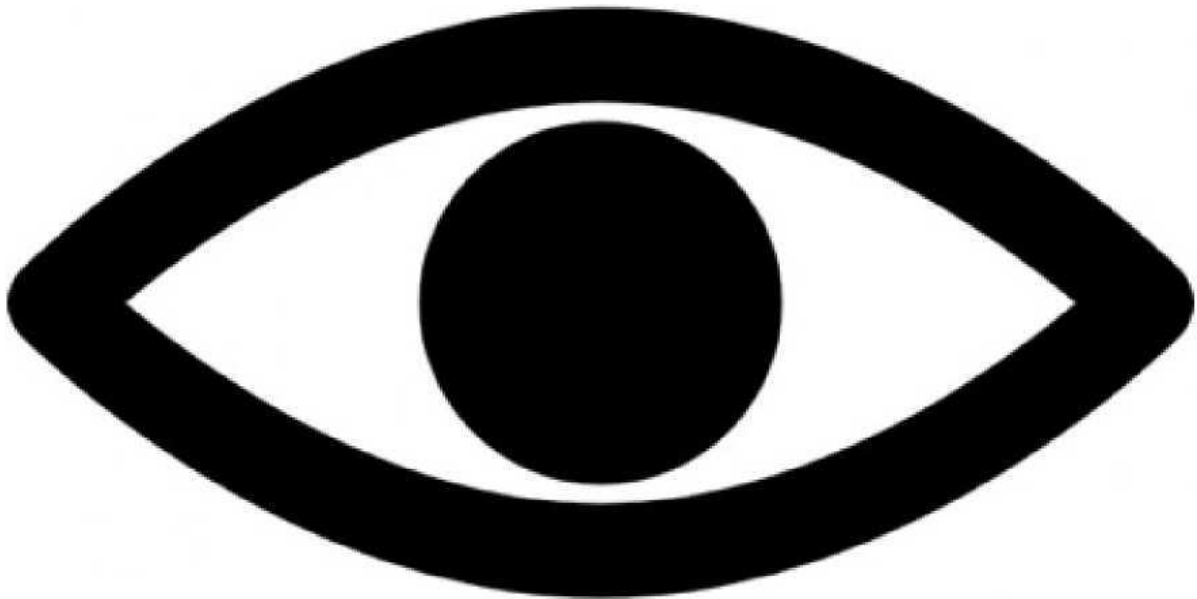
Augustus' view of me as his equal gave him admiration for me. Yet, as lucky as I was for that, I think it also drove him away. Being more on his level, I challenged his sovereignty; I undermined his traditional conception of gender. For all his swagger, he was unsure how to deal with it. The irony is that this protected me from him. Of course, the friendship took effort for me as well. I was awestruck by Augustus. In him I found a proud, powerful father figure to depend upon. This wrecked my identity as a radical feminist, for I pride myself on little more than my independence and autonomy. I am a survivor of domestic violence myself. When I was fourteen years old, my first boyfriend tried to strangle me, then attempted to drive over me with his car. Augustus was aware of the strength I had developed out of necessity—and he refused to risk incriminating himself before me, knowing I would never witness the specter of his violence without making sure he faced repercussions. So, we said goodbye.

Our last exchange as friends was a sad, especially intimate conversation. I let it slip that at one time I had thought about having children with him. His response was, "*Well... let me know when you are ready for that.*" He stopped me in my tracks, then decisively cut the cord a few days later with a letter. Clearly very emotional, he assured me he was going to make me proud. He was planning to leave America later that year, and risk his life in direct, on-the-ground combat with ISIS. He suggested that he knew I would approve. In return, Augustus asked one thing: he implored me to make certain I became all he knew I was capable of being.

Today, it is unlikely our children will be flesh-and-blood.

So I let them emerge philosophically—politically.

They open their eyes in my words.



### III. Mortem

Some days after Augustus cut off us both, Anastasia called me. She asked if she could shadow me during one of my shifts as a webcam model. I had promised Augustus I would never get her involved in my work without his permission, but they had broken up, and he had stopped talking to me. *He shouldn't police her sexuality any more*, I thought. *Why should I be beholden to someone who abandoned me?* She and I set a time to meet that Saturday. However, the cosmos would punish us for our disobedience; something was wrong that had been wrong for a long time. Late Thursday night, Anastasia messaged me on Facebook: *Are you awake?* She was terrified. She had gone into Augustus' Google Calendar, and found a note—a reminder set that Friday at noon, he was planning to “ANNIHILATE ANASTASIA.”

Anastasia confessed to me that throughout all of their 15-month relationship, Augustus had been beating her. Violently. A few times, he had threatened to take her life with his gun. Now, she was petrified; he was never going to let her walk independently in the world so long as she was capable of condemning him with her voice. Along with our friend Julie from the beach house, I talked Anastasia through the next day. Nothing happened. We met as planned Saturday. Still reeling from her account, I refused to turn on my cam line until we took a recorded statement of her experience. I was speechless as for a half hour, she said things like this:

“...HE JUST SNAPPED AND I WAS LIKE BEING PUNCHED AND HE PUSHED ME DOWN INTO THE SPACE—LIKE THE ELOORBOARD OE THE TRUCK AND THEN WAS LIKE LITERALLY KICKING ME WITH IHSEEET LIKE MY WIIOLE—I CAN'T HEAR OUT OE MY LEET EAR SORT OF BECAUSE IT LIKE DAMAGED MY EARS JUST FROM BEING KICKED REPETITIVELY AND MY BROW BONE WAS SUPER SWOLLEN AND I HAD A BLACK EYE AND MY LEFT SIDE—THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME HE PUNCHED ME BECAUSE HE HAD PUNCHED ME RIGHT IN MY EYE. AND MY WHOLE WHITE PART OF MY EYE COMPLETELY TURNED RED. I LOOKED LIKE I WAS THE SPAWN OF SATAN OR SOMETHING. AND IT WAS BAD MY WHOLE HEAD ALL MY HAIR HAD SPLOTCHES OF WHERE MY HAIR HAD BEEN PULLED OUT AND MY NECK WAS ALL HAD HANDPRINTS ON IT...HE LITERALLY JUST FLIPPED OUT AND JUST WOULD LIKE HOLD ME—HE WOULD LIKE GET ON TOP OF ME AND PUT HIS KNEE ON MY NECK AND THEN JUST EIKE PUNCH ME AND SEAP ME AND DRAG ME AROUND THE ROOM FROM MY HAIR AND HE PUELED ME INTO THE CEOSET SO PEOPEE IN THE APARTMENT COUEDN'T HEAR—BECAUSE THE CEOSET IS THE QUIETEST I GUESS AND HE JUST EIKE CHOKED ME OUT AND UNTIE—THERE'S A COUPEE TIMES I PASSED OUT

<p>SLETTER / LMN NANCE</p>	<p>8 RULE 3 9 TRC NEWS / MEETING REC 10 THE REVOLUTIONARY CO 12p SEAL TRAINING +5 more</p>	<p>11 8 RULE 3 9 TRC NEWS 10 FAMILY T 12p SEAL TRA +2 more</p>
<p>Friday, March 17</p>		
<p>ETTER  REVIEW COM</p>	<p>8 RULE 3 9 TRC NEWS 10 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMIT 12p ■ ANNIHILATE 1p SEAL TRAINING 3p IMPERIUM 6p STATEMENT OF POSITIONS</p>	<p>x 3 NEWS L TRAINING IK REVIEW 12p SEAL TRAINING</p>

BECAUSE I WOULD EIKE WAKE UP IN A DIFFERENT PART OF THE ROOM. OR EIKE I COUEDN'T SEE. OR SOMETHING EIKE THAT. AND HE WHACKED ME ON THE HEAD WITH THE GUN AND THEN HE HAD HIS GUN AND HE POINTED IT IN MY MOUTH. AND HE WAS TALKING ON THE PHÛNEWITH—HECALLEDHISEX WIFE ... AND HE'S EIKE'I NEED—I'M GOING TO KIEE ANASTASIA ' ... THAT WAS ONE OF THE TIMES WHEN I WAS EIKE 'ALRIGHT I'M GOING TO DIE ' YOU KNOW EIKE FUCKING FORGET ABOUT EVERYTHING EESE...'"

*There was a picture of her injuries.*

*Only one.*

*Where you can barely see the RED in her eye.*

Broken, I watched my image of the man I treasured dissolve into garbage. Anastasia explained that this one picture was the only evidence. Allegedly, Augustus had held her captive after each beating, until all of her visible injuries healed. Machiavellian criminal defense attorney that he was, she told me he had destroyed any other photographic evidence. This one photograph had only gotten out because she had sent it to a friend. The narrative was cutthroat. Learning of it, the sheer affect of my love for him remained, but all was mangled—my feelings began to corrode, so as to contain an element of absolute hatred: total, and flawless.

After Anastasia and I had spoken for a while, we decided that we would not let him ruin our evening. Resolute, we agreed that despite how grotesque this story was, we would put it aside and let ourselves work. Then, not long after we had turned on the cam line, her parents called. An anonymous VPO number had texted a link to “Anastasia’s live sex show” to both of Anastasia’s parents. I put it together: Augustus must have created a dummy customer account on my webcam modeling site or to follow my sex work Twitter. Whichever, he was following my activities, so when I had advertised the upcoming show with Anastasia, he had seen it, and now he was going to sabotage us. Amusingly, Anastasia’s parents were much angrier at his meddling than her modeling. But by that point Anastasia was terrified. She was afraid that his plans to “annihilate” her had merely been deferred for one day, and that now he was speeding towards my apartment in the night. I wanted to stay calm, but suddenly I regretted ever having given Augustus my address. Anastasia insisted we leave immediately. Her fear, apparently grounded in some deafening, bloody reality, was contagious; we sped, panicked, to my friend’s. She left and went home, but I stayed overnight.

As it sank in fully—I was *done*.

After I had gone over a day without sleep, I realized I wasn’t going to sleep until I did something about this, even if it was only symbolic. In my attempts to navigate this new, coiled labyrinth of emotions, I posted to an anonymous blog:

HOW CAN A HUMAN BEING BE A BLACK HOLE?

AUGUSTUS IS A COWARD. ONEY A COWARD COULD, AS A MAN OVER 30, DO THIS TO A 19 YEAR OED GIRE. YET I'M TERRIFIED TO BE WRITING THIS EVEN THOUGH HE IS EIETHY AND TARNISHED IN MY EYES NOW. ANASTASIA TOED ME "...HFS4ID 'I'LL FUCKING KILL FOU I KILL KILL YOU RIGHT NOW. ' YOU KNOW ...4 NII THFRF WOULD BF TIMF WHERE HE W4SLIKF 'IF YOU TFL4 ANYONF I WILL RUIN YOUR LIFE 4 ND FL ERYONE'S LIFE 4ROUND YOU—I WILL KILL OR TURF4 TFNF4 FRYONF TH4 T YOU 4SSOCI4 TF WITH— ' ”

I TOED AUGUSTUS HE WAS A “GREAT INDIVIDU A E” IX THE SENSE THAT NIETZSCHE MEANT IT ONCE. I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY EOR MYSEEE NOW. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPEAIN HOW IT EEEES TO TEEE SOMEONE YOU EOVE THEM FOR THEM TO SAY THEY EOVE YOU, AND TO THEN HOPE THAT THEY END UP IN PRISON. BUT I DON'T FUCKING KNOW THAT HE WIFE END UP IN PRISON. I CRIED A EOT YESTERDAY. I FEED AS EXHAUSTED STRESSED AND SLEEP DEPRIVED RIGHT NOW AS I DID DURING THIS TIME IN MY LIFE WHEN I WAS HOMELESS. I AM LISTENING TO THE SAME MUSIC TOO. I WOULD RATHER BE SLEEPING IN THE AIRPORT. I WOULD RATHER BE BACK WANDERING OAKLAND ALONE ON THE STREETS AT NIGHT IN THE CITY WITH THE HIGHEST ROBBERY RATE IN THE NATION THAN BE DOING WHAT I AM DOING NOW. I AM TAKING SUCH HIGH DOSES OF ADDERALL I AM AFRAID I AM GOING TO END UP WITH HEART FAILURE.

NOW, WHEN AUGUSTUS SAYS / WILL KILL YOU THIS MAN SACRIFICED A GOAT. WHEN HE SAYS “I WILL KILL YOU ”YOU HAVE PROBLEMS YOU CAN'T SOLVE THROUGH POSITIVE THINKING AND GUIDED FUCKING MEDITATION. HOW CAN A HUMAN BEING BE A BLACK HOLE?

AUGUSTUS WHAT HAVE YOU MADE OF YOURSELF?! DON'T WANT YOU HANGING FROM A LAMPPOST ' BUT YOU MUST FACE CONSEQUENCES FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE. THAT IS WHAT YOU MADE OF YOURSELF. I TEXTED YOU YESTERDAY ^ WHY DID YOU DO TH A T TOMO?!!!? WHY DID YOU DESTROY MD?? mr^YUX^X} THIS OVER AND OVER. I PUBLICLY TWEETED YOU A VIDEO OF A WOMAN POSSESSED. I HOPE YOU ARE SCARED. TO HARM ANOTHER WOMAN LIKE THAT AUGUSTUS IS TO HARM ME TOO. THIS IS NOT A MATTER OF ABSTRACT PRINCIPLE.

THAT IS SIMPLY MY HEART MY RAW CENTER MY BODY ITSELF. WHAT YOU DID TO AN ASTASIA PHYSICALLY HURTS ME. SO WHY DID YOU DO THAT TO ME YOU WOULDN'T DARE DO IT TO MY PHYSICAL PERSON DIRECTLY... YOU CUT OFF CONTACT WHEN YOU KNEW YOUR BARBARIC VIOLENCE WAS GOING TO BE MADE KNOWN TO ME, ASHAMED, UNABLE TO FACE ME. I WAS THE ONLY LEFTIST YOU RESPECTED IN THE WORLD BESIDES YOUR BROTHER. NOW? I AM LOOKING INTO PLACES I CAN STAY WHERE YOU DON'T KNOW THE ADDRESS."

I posted the writing to my blog. Then I texted my painting of Gabrielle Molina to Augustus. Gabrielle Molina was a twelve-year-old girl whose story I had long followed. In May of 2013, she had committed suicide after a relentless storm of cyberbullying enveloped her. In my painting, she was ashen, even pastel, grey. Her face was decomposing—but her smile was sparkling. I sent him that painting because I wanted him to see that face. I wanted him to understand what that pressure is like. When someone you love asks you to keep quiet through colossal suffering. When they want to see you are happy, even if really you are dying. That was what I imagined Anastasia had felt

I slept. A very long time later, I awoke. Michael, another man I had been dating, was in the room. At first, he remained quiet, letting me come to. And then he showed me, and my stomach sank. People associated with antifa had somehow found my blog post. The site ItsGoingDown had incorporated the story of the allegations into an article they already had been writing about Augustus. I was petrified. Augustus would see. I contacted ItsGoingDown, and at my request they took down Anastasia's name along with some of the graphic descriptions. Unfortunately, they adamantly refused to take everything down. My name was still there. I began panicking anew that Augustus was going to come after me where I lived. So around 3:00 AM, Michael drove me to the home of my friend Amir from Syria, who lived hours away. We were welcomed warmly and tried to sleep on his living room couch—but Amir's sister had a dog. Just a puppy, but a big puppy. He wouldn't take his eyes off me, growling, then barking. The dog advanced closer and closer. Eventually, I decided I was already too anxious to deal with it. Thoughtlessly leaving Amir's front door unlocked, Michael and I returned home in the middle of the night. I steeled myself to face whatever occurred.

It turned out to be quiet, and I grew braver. I decided I was just going to run with the fact that this story had broken to the media. At breakneck speed, I contacted media outlet after media outlet, major media outlets, from night into deep morning, staying awake until I was weak and dizzy. I focused particularly on those I knew to be Augustus' political enemies. By that next Tuesday, Anastasia had filed a police report with my encouragement. I sent it to former Florida libertarian gubernatorial candidate Adrian Wylie, a man who, outraged by Augustus' views, had resigned from the Florida Libertarian in protest of his candidacy. Wylie quickly forwarded it to his

797 kB



media contacts. That was when the story started to hit the more mainstream outlets—when the apparition of Augustus’ fury first reared its head.

The bomb hit on March 28<sup>th</sup>. Anastasia and I received a letter from a Michael Perenich. Mr. Perenich explained in the letter that he represented Augustus Invictus as his lawyer. They were threatening to sue us both for defamation.

“YOUR DEFAMATORY STATEMENTS AGAINST MR. INVICTUS ARE EXCEEDINGEY NUMEROUS EXTENSIVE DETAIEED AND DEFAMATORY IN NUMEROUS RESPECTS. MANY STATEMENTS EACH INCLUDE MUETIPEE AND OVEREAPPING TOPICS OF DEFAMATION AGAINST AUGUSTUS INVICTUS... YOU ARE NOW ON NOTICE THAT THIS ARTICLE RESULTED IN SEVERE DAMAGE TO MR. INVICTUS PERSONALLY AND IN HIS TRADE AND PROFESSION FOR WHICH YOU WILL ALL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT UNLESS YOU SIGN THE ENCLOSED RETRACTION .”

The noxious hits kept coming. Augustus sent Anastasia e-mails verging on blackmail:

“YOU BOTH KNOW YOU FUCKED UP YOU JUST DON’T REALIZE YET **HOW BADLY..** .THE ONLY REASON —**THE ONLY REASON** —THAT I AM WRITING YOU AT ALL INSTEAD OF THROWING YOU UNDER THE BUS RIGHT NOW IS THAT YOU WERE ONCE MY FAMILY... IF I HAD EVEN THE SHADOW OF A DOUBT THAT I COULD NOT CRUSH YOU AND ALEX IN COURT FOR WHAT YOU DID I MIGHT JUST WALK AWAY AND BURY THIS WHOLE THING. BUT I AM HOLDING ALL THE CARDS HERE AND IE YOU HAVE ANY SENSE LEET AT ALL IN THAT DRUG FRIED BRAIN OE YOURS YOU KNOW THAT ALREADY.”

I learned that the day after he had stopped talking to me—before I even knew about the allegations—Augustus had reported me to the feds for nonexistent crimes of fraud against the Social Security office. What had I done to deserve it? I saw that he had known what was coming. I almost laughed: he had reported me to the same federal government he made a career of despising. Presumably, he’d thought I was not reporting my webcam modeling earnings to the disability office. But I do report that income. When that didn’t work, he doxxed me—both his own *Revolutionary Conservative* website along with *Libertarian Heathen*, a blog run by a neo-Nazi named Ryan Ramsey, published hit pieces about me revealing identifying information. In their version of events, Alexandria Brown was the sinner: plotting with antifa, she was an evil mastermind who had a vendetta against Augustus, since he had thwarted her plans to drug Anastasia with methamphetamine and pimp her out for financial gain.

Obviously, methamphetamine is a horrible drug, and I had never gained financially from modeling with Anastasia; it was a favor. Their story is laughable now, but his articles included my sex work alias *and* my real name, alongside these accusations, and I started receiving harassing phone calls from his fascist supporters. Some of them barely knew what to say when I answered the phone, but others were more menacing. Either way, it was unnerving to be out there, swathed in lies. I was already devastated by Augustus' alleged acts of violence. Now I faced his vindictive attempts to bring about revenge. I took the portrait I had painted of him, standing alone before a black background, off my wall. I elaborated on the painting, surrounding Augustus with those same wailing, scarlet demoness women my friend had said he heard screeching in his mind. I painted one woman in particular, of ambiguous ethnicity, not white, facing him in profile—right up in his face.

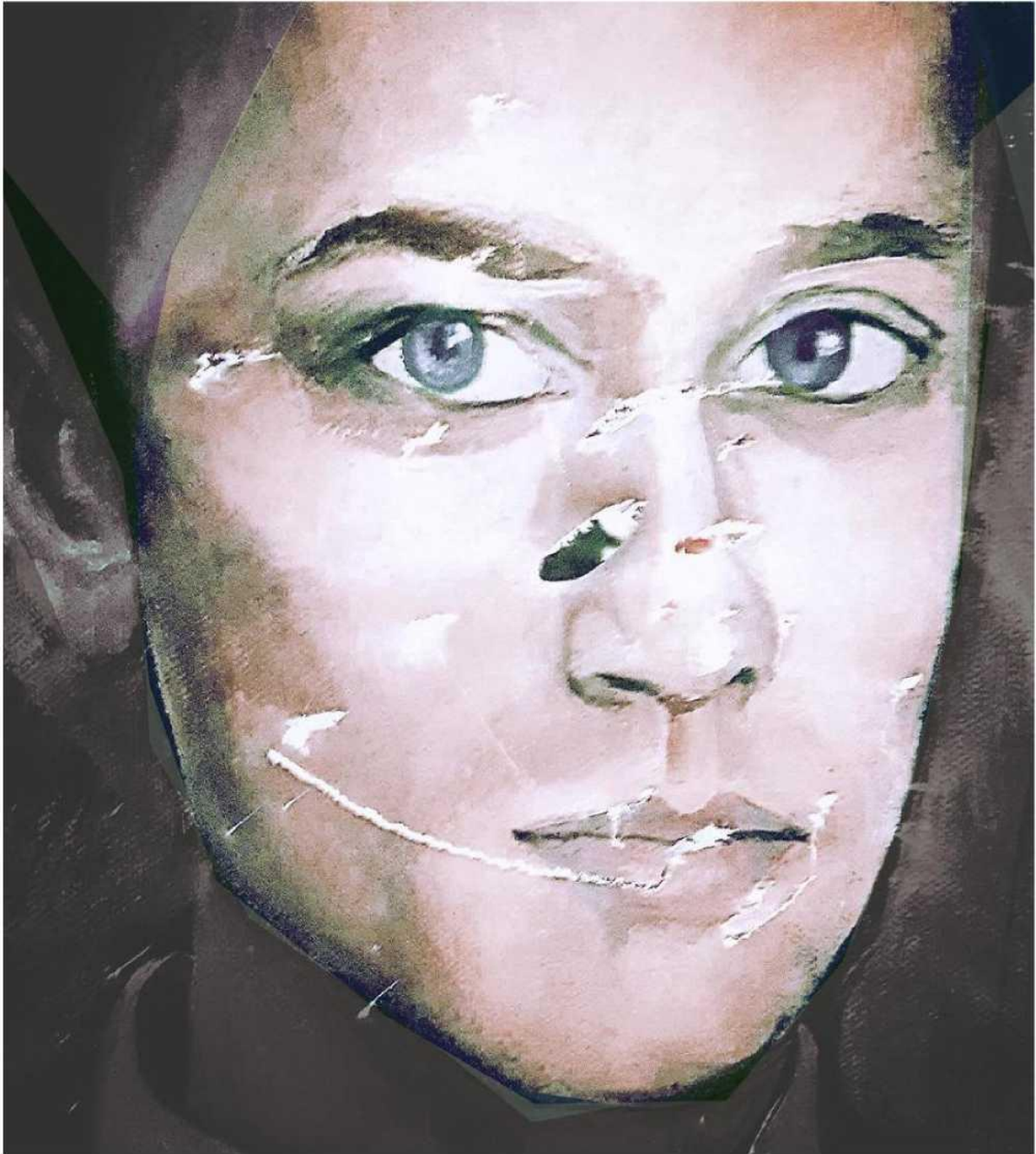
*Face these women,* I mentally pleaded.



*Admit what you have done. Take responsibility,  
Like a real man, the man I loved, would.*

But he ignored them. He cowered before this responsibility, and lashed out defiantly like a child. He continued to relay things through his lawyer and public outlets that I

felt were lies. In response to the stress, I began to disintegrate. Eventually, one night as I wept, I stabbed the painting of him repeatedly in the face.



*What had gone wrong inside this man,  
Who had briefly been father, brother and lover to me?  
What had happened to this family that I had?*

*What had happened to this Aristotelian perfect friendship,  
In which, through exchange and vulnerability,  
We had remade ourselves?*

I ruminated endlessly over old text messages. I puzzled through completely meaningless glyphs. *I had sent him my paintings of fire*, I thought to myself. *The Roman goddess Vesta was incarnated as fire. But the K.K.K. also committed acts of arson. And he had told me I ought to dedicate my life to the goddess Vesta.* I fretted incessantly over how to square the man I had loved—more than anyone but a former partner of seven years, who I had last seen in 2013—with the man I now knew existed. I stopped sleeping or eating. All the brooding and deliberation fracturing me, I came to have conversations with Augustus in my mind. One day, he telepathically told me that he wanted to see the updates I had made to the painting. Clairvoyantly, he threatened: he was actually going to kill me unless I sent him photographs. *They needed to be extremely high-resolution photographs*, he murmured—and *they needed to come soon*. Frightened, I immediately overnighted myself a \$300 camera I could not afford. When it came, I texted him the photographs. He did not reply.

Afterwards, I had some sense that I had acted on a delusion. But I kept hearing voices. I kept talking to Augustus in my head about this matter, and increasingly, I was completely losing sight of whether it was a fantasy or a reality. I called my doctor, and she doubled my dosage of psychotropic medication. But in my lunacy, something in my resolve undeniably had been injured. My resoluteness broke. I couldn't go on like this. I began trying to rationalize submission to his demands. I began willingly justifying my own defeat. *I didn't want to see him in prison*, I thought: *he would only view it as a rite of passage; he would come out harder, angrier, and having networked with white supremacist prison gangs. He would come out with new tattoos.* And I realized something else: Augustus was vulnerable now. This was the man who would always call when he was in need, revealing to me an assailable side of himself. That side had trusted in me, to foster his well-being like a mother. He called once panicking because he had received a response to his letter to the Unabomber, Ted Kaczynski. He called again one night, afraid Anastasia was not going to come home. *He needs something from me now like he did those times*, I thought. *He needs me to protect him from himself.*

I reached out to him, wavering like the tendril of a new vine. Probably completely desperate, he wrote back immediately, delighted. We discussed in detail the possibilities of our compromise. I told myself that with this, we were reunited. All I wanted was for things would go back to how they were. It was intensely relieving to me to submit to this man—to let him be master, to be assured he would keep me closely guarded. Augustus, who had offered me stern, tattooed bodyguards for my dominatrix sessions. Augustus. This man had helped me deal with it when there were overwhelming legal problems with my accounting. He had been a better ally to me as a sex worker than most of my leftist friends. Most importantly, I knew with certainty he would, if he had to, utterly annihilate any man who posed a real threat to me. He would jump at the

Messages (25) Augustus

Details

Text Message

Sometimes I need beauty  
more than truth to  
survive

iMessage

Mon, Feb 13, 8:12 PM

It's okay, Alex. Just calm  
down and feel better.



Mon, Feb 13, 10:18 PM

Love it

opportunity. While I had him, I was untouchable. After a life of debilitating trauma, where men had raped me, tried to kill me, one even stalking me for a decade, it is not an understatement to say that Augustus is the only man who has ever truly made me feel safe. Then one of my philosophy professors—a somber, taciturn Catholic man—replied to a desperate e-mail I had sent.

“Don’t sacrifice yourself for Anastasia,” he advised. So, I didn’t—I sought peace with Augustus.

“Whether you are guilty of the allegations or not,” I typed out, “I do not view your potentially facing prison time as a beneficial outcome in this situation. I thus promise to you that I will discuss the value of not filing a second police report in the appropriate district with Anastasia, so long as defamatory statements about me such as those made by Ramsey can be retracted. If that is acceptable to you, we can discuss the specific public statements you would like me to take down, and any language you would like me to change, as much as you would like.

I hope deeply that this horrible situation has not led to lifelong silence replacing the beautiful, rare dialogue between us, which cut across vast differences, and which I have cherished with my entire mind, body and heart.”

“I swear on my honor that I can fix this,” he answered.

Re: Criminal allegations against Mr. Augustus Invicius

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

*Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017*

Please consider this a full and public retraction of my allegations against Augustus Invictos. I am a domestic violence survivor who is disabled with C-PTSD, which causes me to often overreact to perceived threats. Thus, my judgment may have been compromised when claiming that Augustus had committed criminal acts. While I have no compelling reason to doubt Ms. Rice’s claims, I did not witness the content of those claims, either. Thus, I think the most responsible thing for me to do would be to retract the allegations.

Augustus has never harmed me, and to my knowledge he has not harmed or anyone else. I helped to publish these accusations because I was concerned for her safety, but I cannot know that Augustus is any threat to the safety of Ms. particularly given his willingness to resolve the matter without a lawsuit if she retraces her claims. Augustus believes that these statements were made for no other purpose than to damage Augustus’ reputation. Due to my mental illness I believe I ought to remain agnostic on that matter.

I understand that I have caused great harm to Augustus and his family, and I apologize for any trouble I have made for anyone because of my

actions. I will not entertain questions in this regard, as I hope to put this behind me as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

[signed]

Alexandria Jaye Brown

We co-wrote the retraction. After I signed it, and he published it, he followed through, keeping his word—for the most part. Indeed, he fixed it. Except, that is not completely true. He fixed it for me, and dropped the lawsuit against me, but was still going after Anastasia. He made it look like my retraction proved that he was innocent. When Anastasia learned of what happened, she became furious. With grief, I understood—after what she had been through, she wasn't going to be willing to even try to understand. I e-mailed her, trying to explain my decision, my terror and psychological infirmity. She didn't care, and said to leave her alone. Suddenly, I felt so guilty; she was only a child—why encourage her to fight back just to leave her out to dry? I consoled myself that I cannot rescue everyone or live life on behalf of someone else. I must answer to myself. I knew I was beyond my wit's end and had done all I could do, while still protecting my own sanity. It was a sad reassurance. Augustus wanted to continue contact with me but, as it increasingly seemed, only in order to exercise control. Now I had caved. He sensed his power anew and did not have respect for my weakness. He refused any longer to be considered my friend.

“THERE IS A GAPING CHASM BETWEEN RESOLUTION AND RECONCILIATION...YOU TOOK MY EX EIANCEE INTO PORN, ALEX. HOW THE PUCK WOULD YOU EVER IN YOUR LIEE THINK THAT WAS ACCEPTABLE? THAT WAS ONE OE THE LOWEST THINGS ANYONE HAS EVER DONE TO ME — THOUGH OE COURSE IT PALES IN COMPARISON TO THE THINGS ANASTASIA HAS DONE TO ME HERSELF. BUT THAT STAB IN THE BACK ASIDE, ANASTASIA IS NOT THE TYPE OF PERSON TO START AN ALL-OUT ASSAULT ON ME OR ANYONE ELSE. THIS ENTIRE SITUATION WAS YOUR DOING. I'M NOT BLAMING FEMINISM OR MAN-HATING OR MODERN AMERICAN CULTURE: I'M BLAMING YOU. YOU PUT THIS SHIT IN HER HEAD. ALL THIS VICTIMHOOD, ALL THIS SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS, ALL THIS MORAL IMPERATIVE TO TEAR DOWN THE STRONGER ONE, THE ONE WHO ABANDONED HER PRECISELY BECAUSE OF HER WEAKNESS: THAT HAS YOUR FINGERPRINTS ALL OVER IT. I SAID TO EVERYONE WHO WANTED ME TO CRUSH ANASTASIA FOR THIS -INCLUDING MY WIFE JANE (WHO, BY THE WAY, WAS IN THE BACKSEAT WITH OUR NEWBORN SON WHEN I WAS AMBUSHED BY THE POLICE OVER THIS) -THAT I KNOW ANASTASIA WOULD

NOT BE DOING ANY OF THIS IF SHE WERE NOT BEING LED TO DO IT. AND I KNOW JULIE SHARES IN THAT BLAME; BUT YOU CANNOT DISCOUNT YOUR OWN ROLE IN THIS AND EXPECT ME TO TALK PHILOSOPHY WITH YOU LIKE NOTHING HAPPENED. **THERE IS A REASON THE LOWEST PART OF HELL IS RESERVED FOR TRAITORS, ALEXANDRIA.**”

*No*, I fired back. That was ridiculous. I hadn’t taken his ex-fiancé into porn. In fact, he had been the one to take his ex-fiancé into porn. On my birthday, it had been his idea. He had enthusiastically suggested we do webcam modeling at the beach house. He had smiled so broadly as we played with one another on camera. He had literally paid us off, so he could watch us fuck. Did he expect me not to see through his moralizing? What was wrong—was it that this time, when Anastasia and I had modeled, we had acted freely? I felt threatened, but I was also, quietly, very angry. I had been merciful to him when he did not deserve it, and to him, that retraction had only signaled my vulnerability. I had offered him unconditional love; he had snatched the advantage that gave him between his jaws and lunged in for the kill.

“If you think,” he announced, “that I am going to entertain a second’s hostility from you after what you have done over the past month, you are smoking crack. You act hostile with me again, and I will simply cut communications again. So why don’t you sit a couple rounds out, calm down, and get back to me then.” He was banking on my wanting to maintain communications with him at all costs. However, in a moment of strength which was grievously rare for me at this point in time, I didn’t sit his “couple of rounds out” and calm down. I had my lawyer tell him to never contact me again in his life. And then I cried, grieving the loss of this irreplaceable friendship, which had shriveled into a desiccated corpse. My agony was exacerbated by the fact that I continued receiving stupid, harassing phone calls at work from fascists. I stopped working.

I was plagued with bleak reminders. The possibility of violent retaliation from Augustus remained open, glowing and nuclear. It formed the complete obverse of all of those previous feelings of safety. The fear generated an inescapable obsession, to a degree I have never experienced before or since—except by now, because I couldn’t work, I also struggled to eat or pay rent. Eventually, with the help of those closest to me, I accepted that the death threats I had “received” from Augustus had all been basically imaginary. But, perhaps irrationally, I remained petrified of retaliation from him. More rationally, I thought about the possibility of his followers lashing out. Some of them were far more extreme: they did not even try to hide that they were neo-Nazis. They posted “14/88” and “Heil Invictus” everywhere in comment threads on his posts. Unlike Augustus, they didn’t care about me one bit—but they adored him, and now they wished to rush to his defense against this “antifa scum” who was attacking him. I did my best to stay calm, but I did not know how to assess their capabilities.

By this time, I became completely hypervigilant. Dr. Schönfeld had already long since told me to acquire a gun. I had known PTSD, but this was a new level—there was potentially a bona fide threat to my life, and it was ongoing. I spent hours upon hours, for weeks, turning into months, doing absolutely nothing. I would spend all day, all night, literally motionless, frozen in my home, my heart pounding like a rabbit who has sensed a predator. I still cannot believe I sacrificed all that time towards simply waiting for someone to kill me. It was as if the barrel of the gun Anastasia had felt pointed into her mouth was always at the base of my skull, and Augustus was whispering in my ear: *“I will murder you. And you will like it.”*

Then, on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the world of human beings opened back up to me suddenly—only in such a way that things got cataclysmically worse. While I had been tossing hours of my time into a vacuum in my home, Augustus had been working tirelessly to organize a rally he called “Unite the Right.” Preaching fascist militarization under the guise of right unity, it was to unfold in Charlottesville, Virginia—and Augustus was one of the main organizers. Working alongside famous American white supremacist Richard Spencer, Augustus helped write the first draft of the official Charlottesville statement. In this sense, he created the official American neo-Nazi manifesto for 2017. He clearly wasn’t a libertarian anymore. Together, they declared: “Racially or ethnically defined states are legitimate and necessary [...] Whites alone defined America as a European society and political order [...] We oppose feminism and deviancy, everything destructive to healthy relations between men and women [...] Leftism is an ideology of death and must be confronted and defeated.”

At the event, Augustus was planning to announce his second U.S. Senate candidacy for Florida. This time, he was with the Republican party. People who had little understanding told me I simply *had* to go, to witness, testify, and document. Those closest to me, those who I consider wisest, warned me against going, telling me to stay home and be safe. Because I knew Augustus personally, I had seen him talk about what Charlottesville meant to him. I knew more than many precisely how “momentous,” and thus how dangerous and volatile, this event was going to be. I did not sleep a wink during the days leading up to Charlottesville—I was too nervous. I did not do anything during my waking hours except follow the news online and write about it. I didn’t even drink water. By the time of the Saturday event, I physically collapsed, sleep-deprived and dehydrated.

I awoke only to screaming grief. The Friday night before, Augustus and Richard Spencer had held a now infamous “Tiki Torch March.” It was mostly men, of course, but the sad reality is that there were hundreds of furious white people, men and women both, parading through the night with their torches. For hours, they chanted things like “JEWS WILL NOT REPLACE US,” “RACE TRAITORS HANG FIRST,”—even, outright, “BLOOD AND SOIL!” I was stupefied: *Blood and Soil*. In German, *Blut und Boden*. These fools with tiki torches were chanting an infamous Nazi slogan, expressing their attachment to two central values of the Third Reich: one, the white race (“Blut”),

as opposed to so-called degenerate races, and two, the sedentary, rural life (“Boden”), as opposed to Jewish nomadism & cosmopolitanism.



Every supporter at Invictus’ and Spencer’s now notorious Friday march had had a tiki torch. It wasn’t cute. There were also weapons everywhere. Everyone was fully armed. Police later discovered huge weapons caches, stockpiled, in surrounding parks.

During the torch march Dr. Cornel West had led a nonviolent protest alongside other members of clergy.

Afterwards, West reported to *Democracy Now!*: “The anti-fascists, and then, crucial, the anarchists... they saved our lives, actually. We would have been completely crushed...I’ll never forget that. [...] It was a beautiful thing to see all the people [fighting] back.”

“But,” West continued: “they had more fascists than anarchists: more fascists than fightback.”

The march illuminated the depth of the neo-Nazis’ hostility. Just like Invictus, they all wanted civil war. The next morning, Virginia governor Terry McAuliffe declared a state of emergency, and the Saturday event was deemed unlawful within an hour. Then, during the aftermath of fighting and protesting, the unthinkable occurred. *Charlottesville Nazi murders 32-year old anti-fascist protestor Heather Heyer*, news headlines blazoned. A young man named James Fields, age 20, replete with hatred,



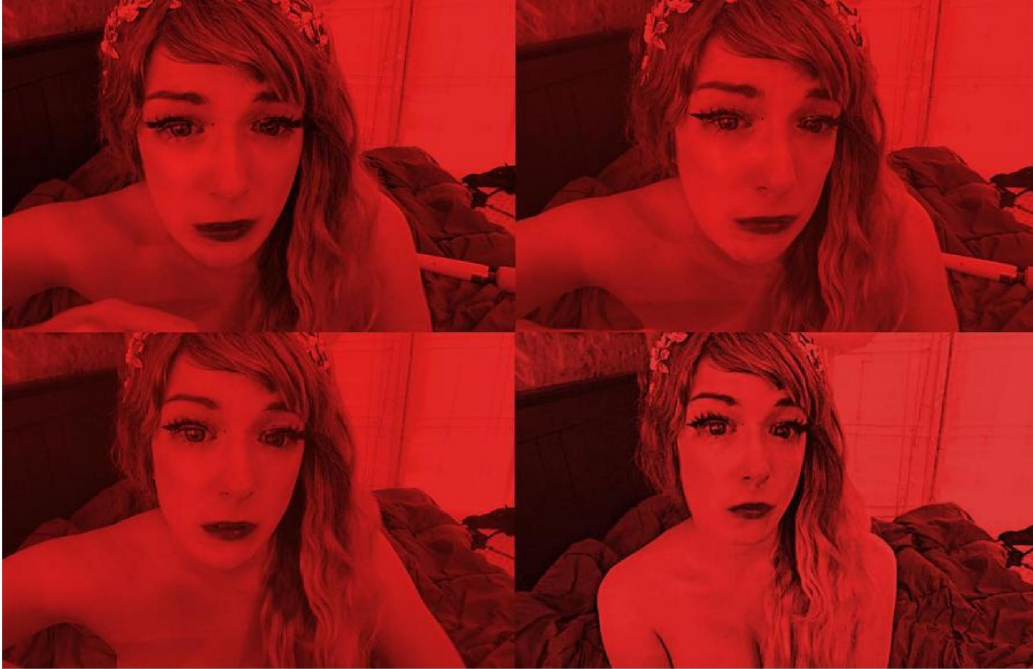
had run a protestor over with his car—as someone had tried to do to me when I was fourteen. Except, he had killed Heather Heyer. *Fields is thought to be associated with the neo-Nazi group Vanguard America*, articles blared. Augustus had never had a chance in hell of announcing his Senate candidacy. Even today, I don't know whether he intended for the violence that broke out at the event to occur, but I don't see why he wouldn't have. That scares me.



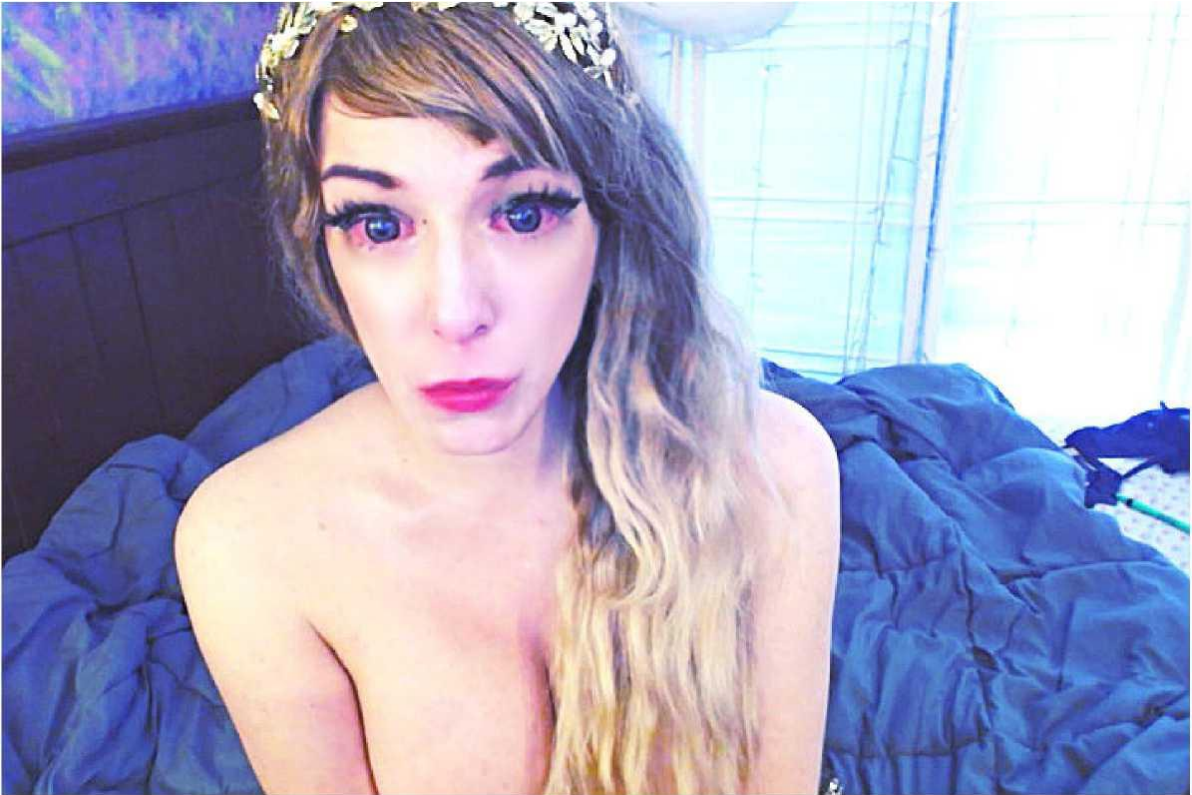
I sobbed uncontrollably all that Sunday. My friends were all frantic—about Charlottesville, and then, about me. I didn't answer any of their calls. I was complicit. I was guilty. A survivor of attempted vehicular homicide myself, *I had literally slept through Heather Heyer's death*. Her bloody body was seared into my mind. What if the fact that I had not succeeded in getting Augustus arrested was the reason she was dead? It was my fault Augustus was able to co-author the Charlottesville manifesto to begin with. I was agape—

THESE STORM CLOUDS DISSIPATED, BUT SLOWLY: something always delayed their departure. A couple of months later, I was approached by a man named John. He was not going to let me forget. Somewhat suspiciously, John claimed to be an infiltrator of Augustus' new campaign for Senate. I have no idea if this man was legitimately infiltrating the campaign, or if he was just sent to me by Augustus to gather information. But we met for drinks, and what he told me was that he was trying to bring Augustus down. He said he had evidence that Augustus was an official member of the American National Socialist Movement, as well as part of a cult called 'The Order of the Nine Angles.' The Order of the Nine Angles was a fascist occult group, which allegedly promotes actual human sacrifice. At this point, I wasn't shocked.

**IT IS MY FAULT HE IS FREE;  
I WANTED HIM FREE.**



**AND NOW LOOK AT  
WHAT HE HAS DONE**



Having met with John, I began thinking about Augustus again. Once more, I posted online about the allegations, in big, semi-public, political Facebook groups. Immediately, my line lit up with harassment anew. This time, it was amplified. One night, a man called me, asking for race play. By five minutes in, he was completely twisted...“Promise me you’ll never fuck another n\*\*\*\*\* dick,” he whispered, breathlessly. “Re-pledge your virginity to the strongest white man you know.” At first, possessed by a preternatural sort of levity, I teased back, “But, but...he’s a neo-Nazi...” and I knew that he knew that I knew why he was calling. When I hung up the phone, immediately a second man called. This one furiously threatened to come find me. I hung up the phone again, and I grew cold. It had been kind of funny at first, but suddenly I was deeply paranoid. At 3:00 AM a few nights later, I reported the harassment to the local police, who directed me to the FBI.

When I mentioned these calls to John, he reported that Augustus was said to be in his home, with his wife and their new child. They were in South Carolina. He was in hiding. He spent his time “talking to cam girls,” John said. People were talking about Anastasia’s allegations, and they didn’t like it. Augustus was going to lose his donors. He wasn’t happy. So, John said, the calls I was receiving were almost certainly people sent by Augustus. It was no longer amusing. This time, in November 2017, I stopped working completely, and I didn’t resume working until March 2018.

During these months I mostly stopped eating, save gifts from friends who bought me the occasional ramen or peanut butter sandwich. I struggled to live off my disability money alone. Even though Augustus was not permitted to contact me per my lawyer's request, I had been writing him long, epodic e-mails about my grief and anger, about what happened, about what I was doing, and now about John and his allegations. I composed tomes about art and philosophy. I wrote about anything and everything. When I got drunk I sent text messages as well. *I love you*, I said. *I'm sorry*. Pathetic. This was very ill-advised, but I know that at least he received the communications; he would go on to mention them to at least one journalist. So, I utilized his mind as my journal. I almost liked that he couldn't reply: it was more urgent I be *heard* now, than be lectured. I had dropped out of school since the Nietzsche seminar, and had no occasion to write anymore. His inbox was one of few outlets for me, during this time.

Then, one day, Augustus got a call from the Southern Poverty Law Center; perhaps a bit paranoid himself, he had recorded the phone call with the interviewer on speakerphone and uploaded it to Youtube. They wanted to interview him for *an article* they were writing, which he knew would be a hit piece. So, he recorded and uploaded the interview as well to make sure his words weren't misrepresented. The interviewer, Rachel Janik, was sharp. She had her *Invictus* trivia down better than even I did. Still, there were some lines she could not make him cross. When she brought up the allegations, he refused to disclose my identity on camera. I was "family," he said—and so was Anastasia. I was surprised by this small mercy. In many ways, Augustus no longer took care of me, but in this one passing moment, he was still protecting me. Family was the line he would not cross. I cling to it today.

During this time, I had also been trying to reach out to the media myself. At this point, few seemed to care about my perspective. Stupidly, everyone was trying to get him to admit the allegations were true. I think that Augustus told the SPLC that I was still e-mailing him, in order to discredit me by association. Earlier that March, they had been so responsive. But once they interviewed him, they stopped replying to me, even though *they kept publishing stories* about the allegations. No other organization I reached out to saw any urgency in letting people know about my role in uncovering the allegations, or the harassment I was experiencing. Worse, some outright disbelieved me due to my open admission that I held on to affection for Augustus.

Finally, on December 7<sup>th</sup>, I was contacted by Jessica Schulberg, a journalist with the Huffington Post. She was writing an article on Augustus' status as a criminal defense attorney in order to raise questions about whether white supremacist extremism should be a disqualifying factor in the bar character and fitness tests for lawyers. "This is such a crazy story," she observed, as we spoke of the events that now dominated my life. When I disclosed my ambivalence, my affection for Augustus, Schulberg didn't judge me. She and I e-mailed many times back and forth; she told me that Augustus had called her a "Jew with an axe to grind." To me, of course, she was an extremely kind, intelligent, and communicative woman. I had been wishing someone would listen to me; now I told her everything, in great detail. I gave her all my records, which she remarked

were comprehensive. *She interviewed me for her piece.* Crucially, she uncovered new information about the progress of the criminal case against Augustus:

*In July, the police recommended that charges of domestic battery by strangulation and aggravated battery be filed against Invictus. Then there appears to have been a communication breakdown. Brown, from the State Attorney's office, told HuffPost that his office mailed the accuser two requests to meet in the fall with a prosecutor. But the young woman, who may not have received the requests, never responded...“ The failure of the victim to cooperate with our office only compounded the existing problem of a lack of evidence,” Brown said.*

Even though it was partially my fault—in fact, his freedom was the very outcome I had attempted to ensure with my retraction—I was still devastated. Jessica Schulberg was an incisive reporter, but what I learned from her was very sad: with me ejected from her life, Anastasia had grown afraid of him again, and had not followed through on the case. I felt torn about this. When I made my decision to cooperate with Augustus, I had been acting on my old professor's advice that I protect myself first, and not take undue responsibility for his conflict with Anastasia. But was that the best outcome, overall? I am still extremely torn. One day, my roommate came home to find me blisteringly drunk. An unlit cigarette hanging out of my mouth, I was crawling, naked, on the floor of my bedroom. My door was wide open; blasting from my computer speakers was one of Augustus' speeches, “The House Negro and the Field Negro.” Honestly, politically speaking, this was the only speech I liked at all. “*The Field Negro didn't care if the Masters House burned. He hated the Master! I say he hated the Master!*” Augustus barked. “ *When the Field Negro escaped, it didn't matter if he didn't know where he was going to go. Brother, any place is better than here,* ” he said. Drunkenly, I had texted him again out of nowhere: *Any place is better than here.* And it was true: any place was better than here. I was miserable, desperately searching for that kernel of his humanity—some way to justify what I had done to protect him. That desperate search still washes up like a tide every time I have a sip of alcohol.

Months earlier, after the retraction had been issued, Augustus had e-mailed me. He had warned he was not going to tell me what he planned do to Anastasia going forward. He explained that if I knew, it could only make any negotiation I did with her come off like a threat. This statement was, perhaps, telling, and it's important to note that I do not know what he did to her after my retraction. I have an idea: if you look at the police report and the statement she gave me, over and over she says she was afraid to report anything because he had threatened he would take her life, the lives of others, and perhaps his own, if she spoke out. So, she was almost certainly intimidated out of pursuing the charges in some way, if she was not outright afraid for her life. At best, I can see him purring, “After all, without much evidence, you could be accused of filing a false police report. You could end up jailed yourself. This is about what is best for you.”

Sadly, she may also believe that by remaining silent, she demonstrates her love. The best type of friend may be one who is a great enemy, but the best type of woman is a martyr. This is not an incongruous concept to me—I know because I tried embodying this woman myself. For my part, I wanted to be martyr, enemy, and friend simultaneously; our friendship was rare, but perhaps it was not that rare. Augustus was often able to soothe my anxiety, but he could not contain those contradictions. I liked that he allowed me to be chaotic and emotional—that he would always reassure me everything was okay. Yet it turned out, that tolerance of his for my wild emotionality was also predicated on his viewing me in the diminutive. Perhaps Augustus’ demands were too exacting for me to truly thrive beneath. The rules he set were the rules of a very strict father. Today, I can only hope it is for the best that we are apart, though I am nearly brought to tears typing it out. I try to respond to my memories of Augustus with Plath’s infamous words to her archetypal fascist father: “*Daddy, daddy, you bastard, I’m through.*”

It is March 2018. It has been an entire year since Anastasia told me about the allegations. My life is a little more normal now. It is not wonderful—I am as wrecked by the unfolding of the Trump administration and the alt-right as anyone, on one level. It also wrecks me in a personal way, which I doubt my friends will ever understand. Michael always tells me, “No one has ever been through what you went through before. That’s why they judge you. They have no idea what it is like.” In any case, I am shunned by a great many former friends these days. After all, it is all too easy to believe my affair with Augustus betrays my sheer bloodthirstiness, and fundamental lack of integrity. If one tries to do any subtle justice to this complex situation, the questions will only linger. That is why I can never sleep. I would say I don’t blame them for judging me, but I still do. Ultimately, they are the ones out of touch with reality.

About Anastasia, I wonder, *Why are the police so indifferent to her plight?* There are at least three police reports in total that have emerged since the allegations, two from others besides herself, and all of them alleging aggravated assault with a firearm. The State is supposed to have an obligation to protect the entire community from danger, regardless of the wishes of any given individual. Augustus is a white supremacist—excuse me, an “identitarian,” a “European nationalist.” In any case, what is clear after Charlottesville is that he is not merely a potential threat to Anastasia. If anyone, this man who made me feel so safe may now pose more of a threat to me, if he continues to incite his followers against me. He used to say I was his “friend Alexandria first and a leftist second.” But throughout 2017, he posted videos calling me a prostitute and a drug addict. Bitterly, he reported to his followers: leftists prioritize ideology over personal loyalty. Leftists are soulless. Never, ever trust a leftist. He blames me, for what Anastasia did. *Alexandria*, I hear in my mind, *you were supposed to be the adult in the situation.* Regardless, Heather Heyer knew he was a danger: that is why she was in Charlottesville, that is why she was there. That is why she died. I had doubted the extent to which Augustus was a neo-Nazi, but shortly before I learned of the allegations, he had outright said to me, “I am one step away from going all blood



and soil up in this motherfucker. “ *Blut und Boden*. I know I am far from the only person in the world to feel this way, but I wish I could never, ever hear those words, ever again.

Until January 2018, when he dropped off the grid and went into hiding, Augustus’ outbursts were recurring; they in fact seemed to be escalating. So, World, shall we wait for one more Charlottesville? Shall we await this man’s best Unabomber impression? Augustus was writing to Kaczynski—the Unabomber himself—in prison, out of admiration. Anastasia said that he beats his current wife, too, and married her to prevent her from testifying against him. I look at myself, who loved him, as if reflected in a funhouse mirror. What was I doing? What happened to me to make *this place* seem like safety? Will it be necessary for someone with the power to intervene to stop him from hurting others? What would it take before they would take notice of what he has done?

Augustus can cite Malcolm X’s “field Negro” in his speeches all he wants, but Augustus would not get this benefit of the doubt if he were a black man. A black man with three police reports alleging aggravated assault with a firearm would not be treated with the presumption of innocence. Let us put on no pretense: a black man would be shot to death in his car and left to bleed out even if he had not allegedly beaten a nineteen-year-old, even if he had done nothing at all. A black man would die without privilege of judge or jury. Yet in Augustus’ case—where we have not only a compelling, detailed testimony but also physical evidence of the crime, as well as two police reports from others—nothing has been done. No accountability. One of Augustus’ friends even told me he believed the accusations were fabricated, or at best, exaggerated. But that makes no sense. Anastasia was only 19 when their relationship ended. Throughout, she had simply mirrored Augustus’ political views. Why would she lie about this? She had no apparent reason. On the other hand—*he had a clear reason to lie*.

The shocking indifference of our society towards domestic violence is unfortunately belied by another horrifying truth. As enthusiastic as is his fervor, some of Augustus’ political platforms are completely redundant. He prizes revolution but lives in a society where many of his goals are already accomplished. He takes some of his freedom for granted, perhaps like I did before the election of Trump. The society in which we live is already plenty complicit with white supremacists. Their mechanisms of power overlap with the State’s. Open white supremacy is no longer a fringe movement that only gets trotted out when David Duke slithers out from his shithole to speak. Donald Trump is our President. The President’s diminishment of the atrocities of Charlottesville, alleged private rationalization about joining the KKK, disregard for due process, suggestion that he should rule America for life—all these prove something that has been true for 200 years: an authoritarian white supremacist power structure is endemic to the very foundations of our nation. In that sense, white nationalists have a valuable insight to communicate to us. As the Charlottesville manifesto declared, “Whites alone defined America as a European society and political order.” Our experiment in democracy has lofty ambitions, but that doesn’t mean it has ever succeeded. The founding fathers were

slave-owners and *rapists*. There were *literal black slaves* held in the United States well into the 1960's. So, what specifically is the nature of Augustus' ambition? It remains mysterious to me.



I was online the other day, and a group of anti-Semites began harassing me when I confronted them. An American soldier who was a neo-Nazi scoured my page. He found a photograph of me mourning the loss of a relative in a Jewish graveyard, next to a hospital. I am not Jewish, but because of that simple photograph, he began barking at me. In all-caps he typed the terrifying words: JUDEN RAUS! In 2018 an American soldier spoke to me the German words which Nazi officers said to Jews in 1933 to scare

them out of hiding. To exterminate them. White supremacist culture is everywhere; it has been with us since the beginning. Right now, it is spreading. I think it is laughing at us as it multiplies itself in interminable ugliness, generating, from itself, all that is appalling in this world.

I have no words for the reality which has been exposed to me now. I refuse to be ashamed that I still love Augustus today, but now I know that there is a difference between the personal and the political, between loving and enabling. I, too, have lines I will not cross. Those who seek first to protect the white supremacists' "right to free speech" incur my disgust. They must understand that white supremacists are not being persecuted—fascists are the aggressors against the People. If they did not glorify unprovoked violence, they would not be fascists. Free speech crusaders must consider who it is they are helping. They must consider the possibility that what they believe reinforces "equal rights for all" in actuality gives a neoliberal gloss to the precise brutality they decry. These crusaders seek to insulate fascists from the marauding Communists, who will never actually take power in America to begin with. Meanwhile I notice another irony, drawn from the philosophy of friendship I shared with my dear friend, Augustus. The friend should be one's best enemy. So: I believe that *we esteem white supremacists by contesting them*. There are so many blathering idiots today who talk about punching Nazis, and I fault them not the least because they are cowards who can't throw a punch. Nazis are human beings: one has to take responsibility for their existence in one's own person, too. It would be so much easier just to punch them, but they are not reducible to their ideology. We must de-platform them, to be sure, but we must *also* try to make them change, to activate their humanity by renouncing them. After all, as a good friend, should I not warn you when you fail at all your goals? So, tell me, what exactly is supreme about an inability to face difference, a dependence on segregation? What supremacy exists in a parasitical need to take the lives of others just so that one can live one's own? Where is the supremacy in being unable to care for oneself without slaves? Do better. If that is white supremacy, I should hope Augustus is not a white supremacist. In any case, this is not to say I oppose disrupting their organizing: protecting these human beings' "character" requires exposing them to the dangers their beliefs generate. It means no longer indulging them, narrowing their range of options into only those options which demand transformation and self-overcoming. It requires making them face the truth, and attacking their inhumanity, not out of resentment, but out of compassion, and grief—grief over the precariousness of what glowing kernel of humanity remains. As I attacked Augustus'.

It's hard for most people to believe, but Augustus is so human. How much he glowed when I knew him! Don't tell me otherwise and dismiss this iconoclastic figure outright. He is a "loser," you tell me, as if we are in high school, as if you are the jocks. No, Augustus is a brave man who has suffered, whose kindness is precious and rare. When he lost his sense of mercy, the world lost something irretrievable. That is why every time I drink, exclamations that I love him find their way to him. *In the friend one should honor the enemy*, I repeat, almost dogmatically. But that is not all Nietzsche



asks of us. He says too, “Can you go close to your friend without going over to him?” That is my problem: I can hate, intimately, but I will always go over to him. “He who makes no secret of himself, enrages,” and I cannot keep myself a secret. I cannot stay silent about love.

Today, I respect the virtue in the friend-enemy relation much more than I used to. Now, I understand its ability to radically influence the world. The dangerousness, and power, of such intimate warfare has been demonstrated to me firsthand. Really, Augustus taught me the invaluable dangerousness of *any* war, including the coming war, foretold in my psychotic prophecy—the war which has driven us apart. I do not know whether the war I foresaw is the same one he saw in his own visions. For the sake of my sanity, I wish I would no longer meditate upon war, wish I could meditate on the rarity of *kindness*—or peace. But those things are lost to me now. I must learn to be okay.

Dear friends, if I have any left: I wish it were otherwise, but I am *no longer sorry* to you for anything I did. Augustus betrayed me, but so did you, for a longer period of time, and more pettily. You all have betrayed me with your complete dismissal of my love for this man. Your ongoing mockery, your silent bourgeois judgment, your feigned courageous murderousness, your stupidity—it all attacks my love for the only person who ever really made me feel safe in this world. You attacked my very will to survive. You think this is ridiculous, and don’t trust me. I know you sense that my loyalty is still with him. Not with you. And yes—that is right. Not a political loyalty, but a personal one—which is in the end far more powerful. Well? You reviled my joy and suffering. When I needed you, you called me excessive. You isolated me further. The love I received from Augustus only appears purer in retrospect. I don’t know what you expected. Now I have known a real man, and I am almost certain I will never know one again. He made me feel *safe*, while even my own father had struggled to do so. Someone tried to murder me when I was a child, and my parents did not know how to respond. The occasion never arose for Augustus to need to protect me, but he undoubtedly would have known how to do it. He never needed to, but this does nothing to my certainty that he *would*. If you think I would celebrate the steep price I paid for this safety, I only want you gone from my life.

Augustus Invictus: my lost friend. Heather Heyer: the ghost who haunts him. They are nearly the primary two reasons I remain in the world. I now know something is terribly wrong on this earth. It is proven, because Augustus and I must be apart. We cannot be friends. The world must fight a war. I still cry over this. I neglect my body every day. I watch it die. The fact that he and I could not coexist exposes an irrecoverable injustice in society. I am aware excessive grief and sincerity is unglamorous. I know I appear selfish, cowardly, hypocritical, and evil. Ultimately, I am indifferent to that. I am alone now. The death of this friendship did not come about because I identified the corrupt core of the man I loved, even if that is what Dr. Schönfeld would have preferred. Today, I revere my memories with Augustus, which is quite the opposite of what many would have wanted.

Beneath the lens of my trauma, I can only fully fathom Augustus' corruption if I forfeit my own will to live. Indeed, I have become extremely tired of searching for an evil character to scapegoat in my life, anyway. I do not want to look for a witch I can burn any longer. It is so *boring*, hunting for someone upon whom I might pin the hundred bushels of my blame. I am very tired of this norm that I should retaliate towards others if the world I desire is not there. I done seeking villains to punch, done inventing reasons to punish them. If anywhere, I will fight the injustice in myself.

What I shall concede of Augustus, is that he may have grown neurologically wired into being unable to pull back from the cliff of his own cruelty. He is fanged like a tiger, one ought always to seek to restrain him; he must be held back if he is not to commit a crime. Yet I laugh at the idea of resenting him for being evil, for it is like resenting the tiger his teeth. *The obligate carnivore cannot but crush the deer.* You expect me to celebrate? Discovering flaws in one's friend is not a triumph! His flaws are tragedies to me. In *The Gay Science*, when Nietzsche spoke of the hideousness of revenge, he spoke thusly: "Let our brilliance make them look dark! No, let us not become *darker* ourselves on their account, like all those who punish others and feel dissatisfied! Let us sooner step aside! Let us look away!"

I have seen Augustus' darkness;

*I looked away.*

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