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Apparent Transparency

by Chris Kingham

I am a camera, with its shutter open. I see everything.

My walk to work is both lonely and crowded. Music drowns out the rest of everything. But not him. He thinks I cannot see him. I always see him.

Coffee. Pastry. God isn't always in the detail. It is just coffee. Just pastry. As usual David tells his terrible jokes, and shamelessly looks me up and down with lustful eyes. I always see him.

I hate the park. Too many people. The waft of baking pizza is intoxicating. As ever the queue is too long, life is too short. Sushi it is. Again. I always see him.

The walk home is always better than the walk to work. Still lonely and crowded, but home beats that shitty office anyday. One day he will approach me. I almost want that. Be careful what you wish for I guess.

I love to cook. If only there were more hours in the day. Awful leftovers once again. He watches from a bench across the road from my bay window. He is a constant in a life full of unreliable variants.

Shower. I prefer baths, but who has the time?

Now for the complicated part. Yes I cash the cheques. Yes I am fairly certain that he sends them, and yes I am fairly certain that this is morally ambiguous. I shouldn't cash the cheques. I shouldn't cash the cheques.

Hatchet men do not come cheap. Eleven cheques it turns out.

My walk to work is still lonely and crowded. But music drowns out the mayhem, the maelstrom.

Coffee is still coffee, and pastry still pastry. David tells the same shit jokes, and I laugh in the same shit way.

Pizza tastes and smells amazing. Everyone knows this. Life is short; it isn't that short. I have become OK with queuing.

I get cabs home from work now.

I cook. I make the time.

I prefer baths to showers. I now have baths. Makes sense.

I sleep soundly.