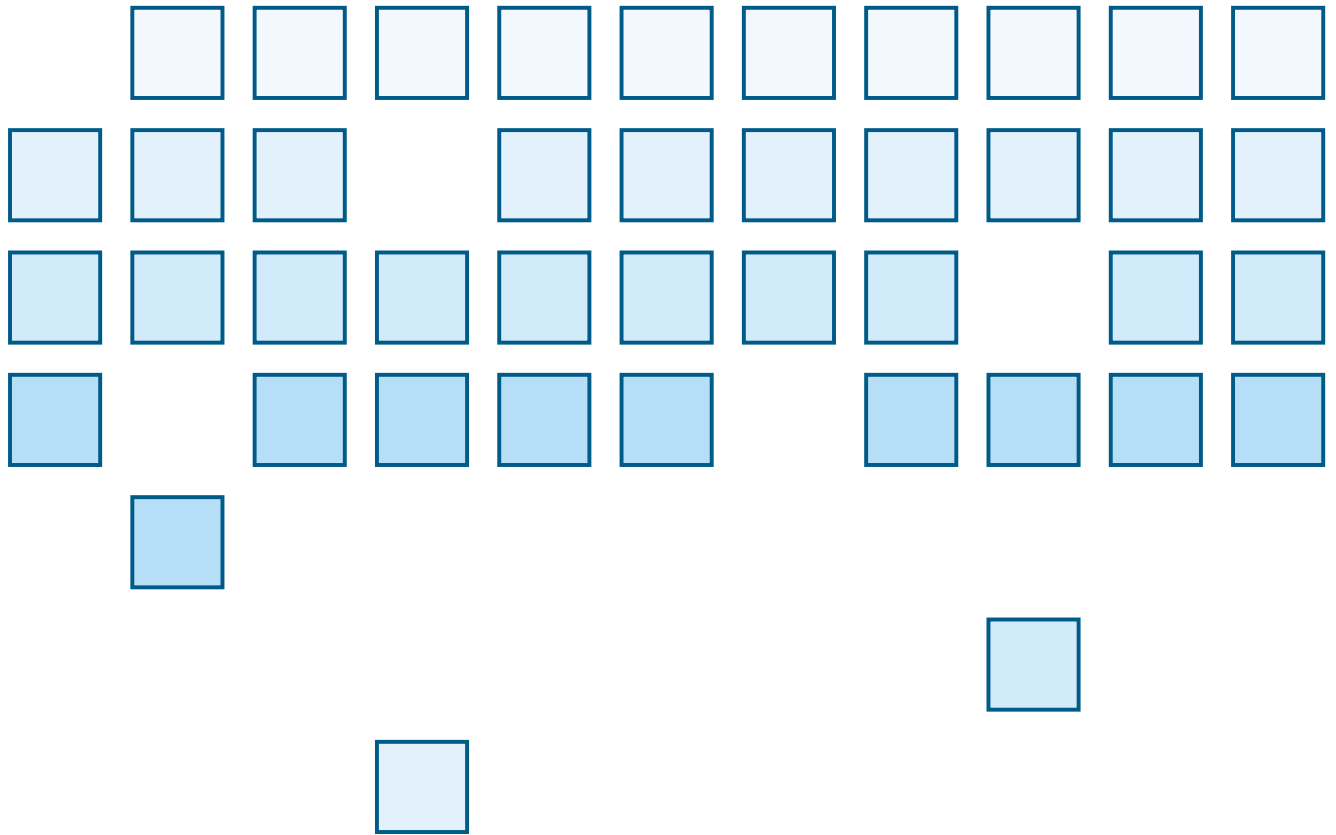


..the .cheshire .catalyst..



Author : error11

the cheshire catalyst

login: root

password:

Last login: Sat May 29 12:21:06 from system console

```
[root /root]#cat | more /home/catalyst/sex_drugs_and_drum-n-base.txt
```

The sky outside is pale gray. The walls inside are pale gray. The art on the D n' B CD playing is a cool techno blue design, but the sounds are gray. I read for an hour or two, after I wake up and wash my face. I didn't brush my teeth or put on deodorant this morning, didn't really feel up for it.

You can be sure things are going bad when legacies of youth die :\
My Star Wars book had a ludicrous sex scene, of which the participants

were of course, 100% non-Lucas characters, completely lacking any true hero mentality. It turned me on, but the disappointment of seeing innocent childhood fantasies mixed with explicit debauchery, procured by an adult mind, my dream-land wrecked, far outweighs the minimal frustrated pleasure. The goal and passion of the saga declared null and void by the New York Times Best Seller List. They don't understand, actually they probably do, they simply no longer care.

I talk with Linnea for almost an hour. She had a good night's sleep. I always pray that she will. We chat about the homework we won't finish for tomorrow, the chores our parents yelled at us to do.

I met Linnea about 6 months ago. Our friendship started as any other internet conducted pseudo introduction. We were both idling on the same Hotline server, the deceased great and mighty Black Veil. She begins to list off poppy punk bands she likes out of boredom. I recognized some of the bands and started up a conversation. The anonymity offered by the small windows and blinking cursors strip the user of his inhibitions. Apathy soon wanders off, as traces of sympathy walk into my head. Apathy is a little kid with a lot of expensive Legos, I never had many. Sympathy is a little kid who knows what it feels like to be lost in the supermarket, I used to cry and cry, toddling along looking for my mom. As Linn and I talked, over time, the conversation became more sincere. We didn't do or say anything especially bonding, we just talked. And talked, and talked. We found ourselves able to make each other feel better, at times when we thought that nothing could. We found something to love about each other.

In my eyes, our whole situation is perfectly natural. There have been times I have heard people talk about similar ones they hear about on radio shows or

something, many find it plain bizarre. I guess it must be to an extent. Normal kids should have better things to do than sit at their keyboards for 8 hours a day. Heh, I have terrible posture and am already developing carpal tunnel syndrome. I bet the kids on the school golf team do not share my afflictions.

But, Linn had to go out shopping with her mom :(

I talked with a few random idiots after she left. SirKlown just got a SPARC system. Rift wrote a cute little text encryptor. IsoX rooted another 5 boxes last night, like every night. The numb pointless feeling I get talking too long about nothing creeps into my stomach and head. I begin to feel nauseous and my migraine starts. Without bothering to quit any applications I restart and reboot into Linux.

```
login: root
password:
```

```
Last login: Tue Sept 21 16:36:30 from system console
```

```
[root /root]#ppp-on
[root /root]#telnet watt.csd.mit.edu
Trying 204.29.202.50...
Connected to watt.
Escape character is '^']
```

Linnea, my other friends, school, they linger for more time than I'd like, as I try to push it all out. It takes a bit for it to go away. It goes eventually, it always does, It's just been taking a little longer lately. The sky is blue, the walls are blue, the music is blue. I hear it now, the bass and the fast sharp drums, the ambient synthesizers. The text is white. The world is blue and white. My parents lie downstairs on the couches, they are tired and beaten, with nothing at all to do on a Sunday. I don't remember that they are there. When they look out the window the sky will still be gray. The sky isn't really blue. The sky isn't really there. I don't really have a window. There is a computer sitting in a lab in Massachusetts, a few people also making use of it's facilities. They aren't real. Their computers have no keyboards. These people have no bodies. They have only their little white letters. There is me, there is the music, there is the blue screen with the white letters.

It's all gone now. I feel great. I begin searching the directories. Mostly student files, some are still interesting though. One kid has hacked up some neat code. It's a math cheater program. I look it over for what feels like only 5 minutes. If I knew calculus or trigonometry I could use it. It takes only very strict syntax, but will solve extremely complex looking equations, that look like would take many steps to solve by hand. I downloaded it, but it wouldn't compile on my box.

It's Solaris native, and has some obscure library conflicts. 2 hours later I decide I've had enough of this.

```
102 [wburroughs] /student/csd/tsmith>logout  
Connection closed.  
telnet>quit  
[root /root]#
```

I have plenty to do, I find myself bored none the less. I correct my slouch, lean back in my chair. A thought of Linnea sneaks into my make believe electronic faerie land. She charges the gates of the compound the second I let my guard down, the second I break my concentration.

The gray walls flash. The depressing gray light pours back in my room. I switch off the monitor. Up from my chair I stretch for a couple seconds, the muscles and tendons holding my frail body together scream for me to let go. I'm feeble and weak, ill effects of dangerously extended periods of inactivity. I slouch more than usual. I like to exaggerate my moods. Almost no matter how I feel it makes me smirk. I laboriously stagger the 4 or 5 feet across my room, as if I can no longer stand. I let my body collapse onto the bed, I lay for a few seconds in a twisted knot, and roll over.

Linnea :)

Thinking of Linn makes me feel good. I have a picture of her. She got it taken at some dance club that had a web cam, she's very pretty. She doesn't have a picture of me, but it doesn't really matter. She knows me by the funny little cat icon I always use. I imagine us facing each other in my small single bed, we're just tired, our only reason for being there. We're like little kids who have been playing out in the sandbox all morning, settling in for our afternoon nap. Happily we chat about things that don't matter, giggling, poking and touching each other. We fall asleep, naturally our bodies drift closer together, if we were awake we would have felt each other's breath on our skin. She wakes up sometime later, I wake up too.

"I'm cold." She says in her quiet, tired, pretty voice.

I tuck the covers close, all around her, and pull the comforter bunched up at our feet over us. She nestles herself against me, pulling my arm to her, using it as a pillow. I feel her hands on my chest, her slender legs wrapped around mine. I put my arm around her and nuzzle my nose playfully in her hair. She giggles and shakes her head. We lay in silence for a few moments, she fashions her gentle mouth into a contented grin and falls back asleep. I lay thinking about her, until I drift off, wearing an expression of wonder and gratitude on my face.

I see us again, in a different bed I don't recognize. I see myself touching

her face slowly and kissing her. She kisses back passionately.

Lust is a naked woman, the naked devil woman, like the girls on the Lords of Acid Voodoo album. Lust can take on a familiar, sensitive form, she looks at me with false innocence, cruelty shining through in her eyes. I've seen her around enough to know what she's up to. She holds herself in a relaxed pouncing stance, casual, but ready to strike. She extends her hand and curls her pointer finger, rhythmically back and forth, asking me to join her...

I see Linnea lying naked by my side. We touch each other and kiss, I feel her tongue in my mouth. I put my hand over her petite breast and kiss her soft neck, she exhales deeply. It completely consumes me. I want to stop thinking it, if only my mind would give me the choice.

Lust takes me by the hand and pushes herself onto me..

I'm 16 years old, nearing the peak of my sexual vitality. Goddamn, I'm gonna go blind, I think to myself sarcastically as I undo my belt and unzip my pants.

Testosterone is a lone football casual. He runs around through my body in his designer clothes and big muscles. He chases my other thoughts. Fleeing at his sight. He finds Linux and MIT, they are oblivious and don't notice him. Two acne-ridden teenagers, playing Netrunner, a game forgotten by a now commercial profit driven industry. They sit on a park bench, Evanston Illinois. He pulls the first, Linux, from the bench and onto the ground with force. He gives the boy a merciless kicking as the second watches petrified. The first squeals in agony as his blood flows freely from his face and hands, which desperately flail to ward off the blows, and onto the worn gray asphalt path. He pauses and pulls the second off the bench, paralyzed, stiff as a board with terror. He gives MIT only one swift kick in the stomach. That's all he needs, Linux took the brunt of the beating. The 2 boys lie crying...

It feels wonderful. It's all gone again, thank God. Everything is skin colored, the light, the walls, the music. Linnea is here with me. She loves it too. I realize my shoes are on way too tight, as my toes curl, I gasp in ecstasy, the endorphin and enkephalin peptides surging through my brain. I hold onto her tightly, my hands clutching her shoulder blades, pressing her body close against mine as we move together. She moans louder, clawing my back, biting my neck, her mouth open wide. I feel her teeth burrow, her tongue pressing hard, her saliva running down to my collar bone. Her breathing is warm and powerful as it rushes across my skin. Her stifled squeaking subsides and her fingers loosen their grip. I relax my hold on her, our bodies turn to Jello, their firmness drained, she lets her head rest on my shoulder, her hands move to my waist, gently on my hips. We collapse in exhaustion, falling back onto the bed. She lays on me and sighs, stroking her

hand delicately across my cheek, smiling.

Everything floods back in with a flash and a bang. The realization is brutal, reminding me of where I am. I'm cold and alone. The mess in my hands and on my bare chest absolutely disgusts me.

Shame is a clothed Lust. She wears a tan trench coat and hat. The coat is closed a few inches above her belly button, letting bare the curves of her large breasts. She stands with her hands on her hips, scowling down at me. She says she wouldn't fuck my pathetic waste of a body if I was the last yeah blah blah blah.

"Fucking catamite," she says as she walks away...

Linnea :(

I get into the shower and rinse myself off. I hate the smell of Ivory soap. It reminds me of my first girlfriend. The nights I snuck off to her house to mess around with her, I always got nice and tidy, washing with Ivory. We broke up about 2 weeks after that started. It reminds me of what I just did, I hate putting things like soap on my body, this is one of the instances where I will. The smell stays on my hands for hours. I always smell my hands. Sometimes I can smell myself, I like my odor. Most of the time I smell like nothing. The soap always smells very strong. People all have unique finger prints and faces, I think they have unique smells too. I get out of the shower and dry myself off. I hadn't worn my clothes for more than 4 hours, but I put a new set on.

I go back to my room and lie down on my bed. I think of Linnea again, not in that way though. I asked her the other day if she thinks of me too. She said she does as she orgasms, and added a little smiley. I still feel wrong, like I've used her.

I don't want to have sex with her when I see her in real life. She'd like to with me, but since I don't want to, she says she doesn't. She's coming to visit this summer, I can't wait.

I've only had full fledged sex once. A self-inflicted gunshot wound to the spirit. I don't regret much, experience teaches you things. I regret that. I regret being mean to my friend Bill when I was little, and I regret having sex. It wasn't even that great. I don't remember how it felt different from my own hands, or hers. I was so terrified. I came almost instantly, making her get off just after a minute was up. I withdrew, ejaculating all over myself and her filthy sheets. I wanted to cry, I wasn't embarrassed, I don't know what it was. I'm pretty sure it was the fact that I had wasted myself like that. I felt I had surrendered my innocence to an adolescent Gestapo of Russian children, shouting at me, the cyrillic characters flying from their mouths, cutting into me like ninja stars. They want to take it into an alley and beat it with clubs.

Innocence is a small child. He stands at the gate of a magnificent garden, the wrought iron gothic door open inward, large ivy infested stone walls on either side. The paths twist and turn, intersecting, the beautiful sculpted trees and shrubs stand towering over the colorful flowers, a great organic monument. The waters of the fountains glisten, splashing down their concrete terraces, out of their jets and spouts, into gurgling streams. The streams join and split, the paths' little bridges allowing passage across. Stones jutting out from the streams, covered with moss, compliment their lush green grassy dirt walls, that enclose them, set about a foot lower in the ground. Other stones, submerged, form gentle waterfalls, following the slowly rising hills of the garden. It is early morning, the birds chirp as the mist dances among the plants. The boy laughs as he runs along the cobblestones. A beautiful woman, his mother, wearing a flowing white gown beckons to him from an intricately ordained stone bench. As I surrender my innocence to the boys, he slips on the damp surface of one of the little bridges. He falls, into the stream with a splash, his head hitting a stone with a crack. He drowns in the chill crystal clear water, now flowing red downstream. His mother cannot help him, she doesn't know he's in trouble. He is too ashamed to tell her...

Then after a moment I did cry. She tried to comfort me, I wouldn't have it. She didn't understand.

When I see Linnea I won't have sex with her. I hate sex. What is it? It's intercourse, the most personal and powerful. I don't care if I sound like a prude, some little naive Bible bred chump, sucking up all the values and morals so many find so outdated, so damn restricting. Sex fucking special, no 2 ways about it. Commercial television may have tricked me once, never again. I don't think I can handle something so powerful, something so easily abused.

What's a 4 letter word for intercourse that ends with "k"?

.....Talk.

That is Linnea. With what of her that is mine, her body doesn't even matter. Her thoughts are mine, her conversational eccentricities. I don't know how she reacts in all the trivial situations we encounter in the day-to-day. But I won't be surprised when I do see how, because I already know why. I have what she chooses to give me. People may think sex is something they give, but it's not. It's something you take. It makes for selfish wants and hurts. It represents what we have managed to overcome. It has no place in our friendship, not yet anyway. I don't even want it to. I'm not done being a kid yet.

"I'd hit that shit any day. Awww, you'd fuck her wouldn't you man?" My friend will blather.

"No I don't think so." I'll say next time in my Ewan McGregor voice.

"No!? Why not?"

"I don't know I just wouldn't want to." My normal voice, I'm won't be able to explain myself though.

"Are you fucking gay man?" He'll jeer, "You are, aren't you?" Giving me a crass, wide-eyed stare, as if he's just figured me out.

"Hi," I'll say resuming my Ewan McGregor accent, "why don't you run along outside and play hide and go fuck yourself."

Sex is mean. Linnea is my best friend, you shouldn't be mean to your best friend. You shouldn't think of being mean to your best friend.

I take a nap for 5 hours or so, an attempt to try and shake these bullshit deep thoughts from my head. The unavoidable side effects of prolonged isolation. When you're by yourself too long, it's inevitable you'll start thinking about things you'd probably rather not. You can't get around it.

I wake up feeling tired, I don't want to do anything especially. I sit up in bed, look around my room, at my computer, and scowl.

"Ptch." I sound, annoyed at my own self pity.

I smile to myself and stand, turning my head slowly back and forth, looking around my room again. I do a walking 360 spin to the doorway. There are lots of bottles in the medicine cabinet downstairs, I take one nearly full bottle of Tylenol. Back in my room I place it on my desk, covered with all kinds of papers and pens, CDs, and disks I never use. There are a few empty cans of Pepsi and a half empty bowl of cereal, long gone soggy, near the edge. The little black plastic project box from my broken redbox is right next to my pocket knife. I really should fix that sometime soon, it makes me wretch paying for phone calls, hearing the beeps through the earpiece as I drop the coins into the slot, knowing that I too could make them, if I'd just steal another tone dialer. Abbie Hoffman would not approve, I think to myself with a smirk. I need to water my little cactuses sitting on the window sill. I love them, I've had my favorite one for almost 4 years. They're all plain green, no ugly blooms or anything.

I listen to my own thoughts. Thinking about my desk and my room, as if they matter at all. I've put up with thinking about pointless nothing all my life. I'm rather sick of it. It's about time I've done something about it, put an end to all this bullshit. These stupid things I describe, they can't make me happy, nothing really can. The cap comes off easily, I smell inside, the pills reek, I smell it again and they're really not that bad. Perhaps they can help me. They make little clicking sounds as I pour the entire bottle's worth into my hand. I open my mouth and bring the pills to it quickly, a ridiculous grin on my face...

Heh yeah right.....

....."After all, I'm not fucking stupid," I say to myself in my

best Ewan McGregor voice, "at least I'm not that fucking stupid." It's time I put an end to it for a few hours anyway. I loosen my fist and look at the little blue and white pills in my hand. I count them out with my other by 5s, placing them on the desk. I have 38.

I begin to dig through my closet. I have lots of random things in my closet. I don't like having lots of things. In my room there is a bed and a bookshelf and my computer desk. My dresser is the bottom of my closet, I hang my t-shirts on the rack. My stereo is on top of the bookshelf along with my CDs. The shelf is made of white plastic-covered boards and concrete cinder blocks. I have around 100 books. My speakers are on the floor against the wall on opposite sides of the room. My bed is one mattress with sheets and blankets. I have a funny thing with sheets, I like to have a lot of them, I have 5 on my bed right now. I don't know why, it looks nice, all the colors. My sheets always come off while I sleep, I toss and turn a lot. Even when I have a full relaxed sleep and I remember my dreams. They're still pulled off and my chest has mattress prints on it when I wake up, my pillows usually on the floor.

I sit down after finding the things I was looking for in the closet, setting them on the desk. One 1/2 gallon stainless steel camping pot; 1 100 milliliter measuring flask; 1 scratched plastic measuring cup, with a very sharp lip; 1 box of 12 coffee filters; 1 near empty box of Berry Blue Blast Kool-aid, containing 6 unopened packets. 1 old mercury thermometer; 1 reddish-brown clay grinding bowl; 1 wooden grinding rod, in truth only the end of a broom handle sanded round; 4 small 30 milliliter greenish-gray translucent glass bottles; 1 glass medicine dropper with black rubber top. I pull the cords to the blinds out to the side and let go, they fall with a small crash. The right one hits the computer monitor and makes a slightly louder one. I have to smile, my friends always look at me like I'm going to pull their cords and let them crash, whenever I do this.

The left blind is easier to reach than the right one. I pull it back up to have a look out the window. Sometimes the little kids next door play in the yard, they can be fun to watch. No one's out there now though. They have a huge house. I have a huge house too, I hate it. I've tried to make my room into an antithesis of the suburban narcissism my house represents. My room still possesses a few traits that one residing in a house built for yuppies will. There is a navy blue border running along the wall at the ceiling, matching the short carpet. The border is ripped above the window where I put up some stupid poster with packaging tape. I took all my posters down a while ago. They pissed me off, I felt like I was surrounding myself with meaningless slogans and other petty themes of commercial Amerika, worshiping them. Star Wars and the likes. Not that Star Wars is bad, far from it. I do have one huge Taxi Driver poster on the wall next to the closet, my only poster still up. But that's just because he looks so damn cool, with his mohawk, his shirt

off, wearing a shoulder holster, holding a gun in each hand. The opposite wall is covered with cardboard, which is covered by muslin fabric. The muslin is a myriad of graffiti. Anyone who comes in my room can write on it, I usually insist. There are small speakers on the floor, centered against each of these 2 walls. The window wall is blocked by my desk and bookshelf, my bed is against the opposite wall, the one with the doorway.

There are 4 full trays of ice in the freezer, I dump all of the ice cubes into a large cooking pot, leaving the trays on the counter, and bring the pot upstairs, setting it on the floor. I push the pills closer to the edge of the desk, move the clutter closer to the other side. There is just enough room for everything, and surplus to work in. I look my little lab over and smile. I begin by grinding the pills to a fine light blue powder. $38 \text{ pills} \times 2 = 76$ milliliters of warm water, I calculate in my head. It annoys me that I have to think about such a simple problem, I should have paid better attention in third grade. I go into the bathroom, flask in hand, turn on the hot water as I set the flask on the counter. It always takes a minute for it to warm up, I wait, letting the water run over my hand. I adjust the pressure to a steady stream and place the flask under the faucet. I turn the water off quickly and raise the flask to eye level. 78 Milliliters, I tilt it over the sink, pouring a little out. I return to my room and dump the powder into the flask, it makes a small splash, clouding the water.

As the crushed ingredients of the pills dissolve, I prepare the ice bath, picking the biggest ice cubes out of the pot and placing them into the smaller. There is a collection of insoluble powder settled at the bottom of the flask; the acetaminophen, Tylenol, and filler that the water will not assimilate. I thoroughly clean out my finger nails with my pocket knife. after 2 or 3 minutes I stir the solution with the thermometer, leaving it in the flask, which I put it into the cold ice bath.

I slouch in my chair and wait for the temperature to drop. I have a copy of Nine Stories at hand, I begin to read "The Laughing Man". I nearly forget about my small project as I read, I finish the story and check the thermometer. The water inside the flask is well below the necessary 15C. I take a coffee filter out of the box and position it over the measuring cup.

I grasp the flask by the neck, and slowly pour it's contents into the filter, the large particles trapped, the smaller, passed through. At this point I wish I had some aspirin instead of Tylenol, because the filtering process goes much smoother, you only need to filter it a couple times. I on the other hand must continue filtering for 5 more minutes, to get all I possibly can of the acetaminophen.

I remove the filter and dip my finger into the water. I dab my finger on my

tongue, it's unbearably bitter. I remove 2 packets from the Kool-aid box and tear them open. Both go into the measuring cup and I stir with the medicine dropper. I unscrew the tops of all 4 of the little bottles and begin dripping the laced Kool-aid into each. The bottles full, the flask is empty except for the trace amount that the dropper cannot pick up from the bottom. I take it into the bathroom and fill it an 1/8th of the way. I walk back to my room, drinking the water in one small gulp. I fasten the screw tops onto 3 of the 4 bottles and place them on one of the edges of my bookshelf that sticks out from under the cinder blocks. The 4th, I hold over my mouth and invert, the bitter-sweet concoction splashing on my tongue and throughout my mouth.

The Euphoric Kool-aid Codeine Test. Doing things like this always makes me feel good. I like to make things, it gives me a feeling of purpose. I lay down on my bed and think of Linnea, waiting for the drugs to take effect. The cytochrome 2d6 enzymes working in my brain break the codeine into morphine, my receptors greedily absorb the opiates. I feel the music, the bass n the drums, the drums n the bass, my body feels like a cello.

My discontent is an angry teenage punk with red pronged hair. The codeine is a Sex Pistols album and a crowbar. The music lets him go as he runs through the streets smashing out the windows of expensive Roles Royces, BMWs and Mercedes Benzes. The cars are double parked by off duty DEA agents, police officers and Social Workers, boxing in beat up Amerikan made '91 Ford Probes, '93 Chevy Cavaliers and other older cars. The cytochrome 2d6 is the mob of little black children playing on the sidewalk. They cheer and scream.

"Yeeaaaa!" A boy on a tricycle and a little girl holding the handle to her jump rope in one hand, the cord laying idle on the sidewalk, shout in unison. They watch the punk approach in anticipation, as if he is an ice cream truck coming down the street.

"Show them motha' fuckas who we is!" The girl yells as he charges past, bringing the crowbar down on the rear windshield of a black Mercedes 740IL, passing the back window, popping the front with the curved prying end of the crowbar. Glass crunches under his heavy black boots.

"Heard that!" her mother agrees from the window, taking a short break from the dishes.

A boy with a red beret and a black panther's arm band sits on the stoop, listening to his boom box. He bounces his head to the old school beat, rapping with the music, his words are hurt and angry, demanding retribution and reprisal.

The boy pauses, watching the punk streak down the street, crowbar vio-

lently striking every car, the honking and screeching of car alarms following in his wake.

“Fuck! Yeah brotha!” he raises his fist in the air and leaps down the stairs, taking them 2 at a time, bounding across the sidewalk, attacking, climbing onto the hood of the closest Rolls Royce. He stomps and kicks the windshield. Had he been a few more than 8 years old, it would have started to crack.

The morphine is the feeling of justice served, that the happy children give to the punk. It won't do anything real for him, but it will do what he wants. The receptors are the world that never shows him enough nice things. The morphine makes them show him the nice things he normally can't see, no matter how contrived and wrong they really are...

I wish that Linn was lying with me. I imagine she is, we just stare facing each other and she kisses me. We don't get any heavier though. You don't think like that on codeine, at least you usually never want to. We just lay there. Codeine makes you unreasonably optimistic, sensitive. I think of how everything could be perfect. I wish I could show her what I mean. I think of how I'd like propose to her. It'll be in a pretty Chicago north side park, late at night, only us, the moon and the stars, taking a walk. We'll stop and sit on a nice wooden bench, and chat for a little while. After some small talk, I'll grin, saying I have a surprise for her in a mischievous tone, and ask her to close her eyes. She closes them, giggling, a smile on her face, tapping her foot excitedly. I lower myself off of the bench and onto one knee, she opens her eyes as I take her hand, a ring in my other. She meets my gaze, her expression changes, her eyes widen, her mouth parts, her lower lip quivering. The tears roll slowly down her cheeks as I slide the simple, golden band onto her finger. She lets me finish my proposal and drops from the bench, letting herself fall into me. I take her in my arms.

“Yes,” she whispers in my ear.

Had I not been totally off of my face, I would have never let myself get so dreamy, it would have disgusted me. It's too naive, thinking things can actually work out that nicely. I go by the principal that the less optimistic you are, the less you will find yourself disappointed.

Optimism is a little boy riding his new bike down a steep hill, a smile of glee painted across his face. Disappointment is a little boy, going too fast, who can't follow the sharp curve of the road as it turns at the bottom of the hill. He crashes into the briar patch that the little bunnies in his favorite story book take life saving refuge in.

“Fuck you Huffy Bicycle Company! Goddamn San Francisco!” He screams in a high pitched agonized shrill voice, sobbing as he pauses. “Burn in hell Rabbit

Hill, I hope you all drown in Grandpa's sea of blue grass!" He runs off into the street, leaving his bike tangled in the bush. Bloody scratches cover his exposed arms, legs and face...

I hear my parents yell something up from the first floor, the door slamming shut behind them. Five minutes later rain begins to pour and I hear the calming rumble of distant thunder. This is perfect. I could lay here just like this forever. I roll onto my side and look out the window. The sky is a rich, but flat greenish yellow, the rain pitter patters on the roof. I glance at my computer, smiling as I think once again of MIT.

Mischief is a hacker. He wears nondescript blue jeans and worn out white sneakers, a black t-shirt declaring "DUNGEON MASTER" on the front in big white letters. The long brown hair coming down the back of his neck is dull and thinning, not to mention a bit greasy. He has a pair of big black sunglasses and a silver watch, he's not fit, but he isn't fat either. He's about 30 years old, he isn't especially attractive. Most people think he's a nerd, and don't give him a second look, his wife knows that he's absolutely charming. He's been around since 1983 and he's fucking leet as hell. He never grew up and he never will. He's making \$80,000 a year as a system administrator for a rather large Silicon Valley start up. He doesn't care though, he lets his wife spend most of it, he likes being a sysadmin, that's it.

Mischief was on the other side of the park, he saw Testosterone coming. He was frightened at first, he'll admit, for too long, but he knows he's can't run away from Testosterone forever. He bolts out from behind the tree, his sneakers making no more than a light pat pat pat on the old asphalt trail. He tackles Testosterone from behind, plowing into the small of his back with his extended forearm, braced by his other arm, his hands locked together. Testosterone tumbles to the ground, Mischief allows himself to fall on top of him, digging his knees into his back.

"Whoot ta fuck is this?!" Testosterone yells, "Ah'l dae you whin ah git mah hands on you, ya daft cunt! Good n proper ah will!"

"Yeah yeah yeah, my little k-rad hooligan." Mischief sarcastically mocks.

"Fukcin roight! Like ah sais, ah kid you no."

Mischief pulls a pocket knife from his back pocket and opens it with one hand. He lifts Testosterone's head by his pony tail and slams it back into the ground hard, breaking his nose, the blood pours from the split cartilage. He presses the dull looking metallic gray blade against his neck. "What you'll do is not mess with my friends ever again. That's what you'll do, you jerk." He presses with

the knife a little harder for effect, making a slight laceration. "Me, I'm definitely NOT joking."

Testosterone feels the blade at his neck, and the hand, shaking with anger, pressing his face into the trail. "Fuck sakes mate, yu'v goat mah wird."

"Oh?" Mischief asks, increasing the pressure, letting the blade make a shallow incision, blood dribbles onto the steal.

"Dinnae fuckin chib ays, likes!" He pleads, gurgling his own blood as he inhales.

Mischief gets up with a scowl, pushing off of his back with both hands. He watches Testosterone slowly get to his feet, wiping some of the blood from his face with his sleeve. It continues to flow freely, he tries to stop it with his hand.

"Yer a doss cunt, dae ya ken that? Fuckin radge. Ya ken, if you wirnae such a poof, ah'd be up fir a fair swedge about now, teach you a lesson eh." He pauses to catch his breath, wipes more blood from his face, examining his coated hand and stained sleeve curiously. He looks back up at Mischief with a condescending scowl, "But, seeing as ah dinnae want tae touch a biscuit-arsed, queer-beast such as yerself iny mair than ah absolutely have tae, ah'l no." With that he turns and walks away.

Mischief doesn't give him a second look, he knows that his own threats can't possibly stop Testosterone's regular assaults. Only because Testosterone respects him, he does not organize the kicking of Mischief's life. He makes his way to Linux and MIT. At the sight of Mischief, they bring themselves off of the ground and back onto the bench, staring at him, obviously afraid, their game luckily undisturbed. He only needs to give an assuring nod that everything is okay and they continue where they left off...

I remember all the of fun I had this past summer. It really was fun, I loved it. The first thing that comes to mind is all the trashing we did in Chicago. Ameritec, Megsinet, UIC, UOC, Northwestern, Citicorp, AT&T... The list goes on and on. We hardly slept. My friend Digphreak is rich, we'd all sleep over there, in his huge basement, with 3 computers, all etherlinked with 10BaseT lines, a cable modem for net access. There was me, that is The Cheshire Catalyst, Digphreak of course, Camodemon, SirKlown, Rising Sun, Joe Nobody, Archive, Rob, Hexmaster and Mike. Mike's not a hacker, he's just my partner in crime. We always woke up at around 12:00, we'd scramble down to the train station to catch the 12:21, not one of us even considered looking in the mirror before we left, it didn't matter, our pimples meant nothing to each other, and most of us had plenty. It was about an hour long ride out of the burbs to Citicorp Station, a.k.a. Madison Station. From there on out, the boundaries of the CTA was the limit.

"The streets are awash with computers you can have for unhappiness and pain," I say to myself in my Ewan McGregor voice as I reminisce, grinning, "We hacked them all."

We'd get back to Dig's around 7. We tried our passwords, called telephone numbers, played with new systems, with old ones. Told jokes, watched movies. Listened to music, mostly techno and punk, even some poppy shit; Dig listens to commercial radio, but hey, it's his house.

I remember the anticipation of planning our fun little raids. Archive was the oldest and he usually took over, we didn't mind, he was leet. He'd say "fuckin" every other word, in his southern drawl, telling us to watch for any fuckin guards or fuckin cameras and keep our eyes open for the fuckin cops.

Cause they might think we were actually up to something threatening :)

I remember the thrill, the "go all the fucking way" attitude we had. It really came out at the exciting times. The most vivid episode in my recollection took place sometime around the 4th of July. Everyone was at different lookout points around the alley, behind boxes, crates, garbage cans and other grimey, wet obstructions. Mike runs up the dumpster near the back door of the gigantic 12 story Ameritec switching station and lifts open the lid. Digphreak follows behind, reaches in and grabs a bag, then bolts down the alley, and across the street, receiving a chorus of honks from the Taxis as their tires screech. One by one we relinquish our positions to salvage. One by one my friends sprint down the alley, and across the street. I'm last, next to Mike, who will go with me. We always run off at the same time. My adrenaline is pumping and I wear an ear to ear grin, just from watching my friends act in such precision formation. As Camodemon begins his retreat from the dumpster I go, feeling my muscles contract, my bones jar as I run.

Mike feels the same. He wears the same grin, he is thinking what I'm thinking: "Fuck yeah man."

It really can't be described. They're all thinking it. It's so much better than playing on some fucking little league baseball team. It's so much more. It won't go away either, not until we split up, sometime later in the next couple of months. But even then, we know it'll all happen again. You can't play in little league forever, you have to stop when you get into 8th grade. Every phony phone call we make, every bug we exploit, every password we find. They all fuel it. We're completely enthralled. Enthralment is not a real word, because of this, I'll have to settle for personifying the state of being enthralled; a socially alienated hacker, surrounded by people that actually think like himself. The Mentor put it better than I ever could, than anyone ever could. He helped some of us realize what it's all

about.

"...I made a discovery today. I found a computer. Wait a second, this is cool. It does what I want it to. If it makes a mistake, it's because I screwed it up. Not because it doesn't like me... Or feels threatened by me.. Or thinks I'm a smart ass.. Or doesn't like teaching and shouldn't be here... Damn kid. All he does is play games. They're all alike. And then it happened... a door opened to a world... rushing through the phone line like heroin through an addict's veins, an electronic pulse is sent out, a refuge from the day-to-day incompetencies is sought... a board is found. 'This is it... this is where I belong..' I know everyone here... even if I've never met them, never talked to them, may never hear from them again... I know you all... Damn kid. Tying up the phone line again. They're all alike... You bet your ass we're all alike..."

The Hacker's Manifesto was excluded from the Holy Bible because it wasn't thought to be inspired.

I'm hot and sweaty, I listen to the city sounds, I feel the heat issuing from the concrete everywhere around me, the sun pouring down. I think of the cars forced to stop in the street, their drivers gawking dumbstruck, as a motley band of scrawny teenagers surge across their path. I separate myself from the wall, running as if the next seconds of my life depend on reaching the dumpster. I already know that the last of the bags are at the bottom. I let myself slam into the dumpster and pull my body halfway inside of it. I chose the biggest of 3 remaining bags. I yank it out and fall to my feet, as the back door to the switching station swings open.

"Hey!" yells the slim middle aged man, moving towards us.

We freeze for a brief second. "Fuck!" Mike and I half both exclaim, half sigh.

We charge off down the alley. The tech follows. We respect him, we're stealing family secrets, he has every right to chase us. But no way in hell are we going to let him catch us. We couldn't get in any real trouble of course anyway. The City of Chicago Police Department doesn't have time to bother with something so petty. But none the less, no way in hell are we going to let him catch us. Our feet slap the concrete and splash the oily puddles. My backpack hugs me tightly, strapped to my chest. I run with the bag extended to my right side, bouncing up and down. Mike is faster than me, but we run together. Our feet hit the street in sync, we feel like guerrilla insurgents. I look back, Ma Bell is right behind. I laugh, a full fledged spirited laugh of raw excitement, my feet hitting the pavement hard and fast, my free arm flailing wildly. I burst out into the street. The colors and sounds of the open city overwhelm the dull gray and brown tones of the alley, they

pass by in a blur. I have to throw my weight to the side to avoid getting hit by a white Grand Prix, as the driver accelerates, thinking the last of us have finally passed. He curses at me and swings his fist out the window in frustration.

“HACK THE PLANET!” Mike shouts back at him, now laughing too as he runs.

“PHREAK THE FONES!” I join.

The man continues shouting words we cannot hear. We couldn't give a shit now anyway. The path is still clear for the company employee, he runs safely across the street. There is only one way to go, straight to where our friends, who have gotten quite a head start, wait for us. Camodemon isn't far ahead, he's taken notice to our new situation. He enters the small lot, formed by the intersection of 2 wide alleys. They're sitting and standing against the walls, just talking and looking around, resting from the exercise. It's good that none have opened their bags yet.

“BREAK UP!” He shouts between pants, he too, is laughing.

We know we are to meet at the Third Coast Cafe on North Dearborn if something like this ever happens. They all scramble down 1 of 3 different alleyways. Digphreak breaks to run, missing his grab at his bag, stops on a dime, and back steps, at this point Camodemon has passed, and Mike and I are charging through the lot, Digphreak stands awkwardly, one foot on the ground, one suspended in the air, his back arched bending behind, his hand grabbing frantically for the bag.

We run past him, “Come on man!” I sincerely urge, wanting to shout comrade.

He gets hold of the bag, swinging it in front of him, plunging his offset weight forward, hugging the bag to his chest, he sprints not 5 feet behind us. We can hear his feet slapping lightly the concrete.

“Ahhhhhhhhh-hahaha! Shit!” He screams, laughter dominating in his high, 13 year old voice, as he shoots a glance back at the phone man.

“OI!” Mike shouts as Dig catches up with us, Our feet making quite a clamor pounding the ground together.

“OI!”

Our pursuer is much faster than we'd thought. He catches up to us, grabbing me by the shoulder.

“Eeeyaaah!” I shriek.

“Keep going!” Mike shouts to Dig, who doesn't need to look back.

Mike hits the poor old guy hard in the side with his garbage bag. I still wish it didn't have to come to this, it doesn't seem right, violence and hacking together. The man lets go in shock and I immediately feel sorry for him, as he

staggers we bolt. He doesn't follow, he just stands with his hands on knees, catching his breath. We get to the next intersection of the alleyways and stop, turning around.

"Hey!" Mike shouts, the man looks up. "Sorry I hit you like that, I was out of order, my heart is pumping like 1000 miles an hour, you know, I'm really sorry." Mike has to shout in order for the man to hear him, but does with genuine apology, as if over a telephone with a really bad connection.

"You know how it is, right man?" I yell, putting the bag down and my hands in the air, a little below shoulder level, giving an exaggerated shrug, tilting my head. "Hack the planet eh!"

He stands and waves his large right hand over his head in our direction, as if saying "Get the hell out of here you crazy kids." I know he was smiling. I'm pretty sure he chuckled as he turned and lazily walked back to work. We at least gave him a funny story to tell his wife tonight at dinner, maybe he got a break from a really tedious, boring job he had to do. The main thing is, he understands, that's all that really matters. When he was our age, I bet he loved his chemistry set.

We run off down the alley...

It's been a few weeks since I thought of that last :)

I laugh out loud thinking about it.

Things aren't necessarily so bad. It feels like 10 minutes, but about 3 hours have passed. I get up from bed and sit myself down at the computer. I look at my modem, I left PPP on. I smile. I keep smiling. I laugh again, thinking of Mike and Dig, of the nice Ameritec guy. It's all gone now. Sitting here, even before I turn the monitor on, it's already gone. I was so happy. I am so happy. I get up and pace, beaming, I run out of my room and run back in, making little laps, I'm so excited. I stand still for a moment, beaming. I run another lap. I sit down again, and turn the monitor on.

```
[root /root]#telnet digphreak.detour.net
```

```
Trying 169.207.32.89...
```

```
Connected to digphreak.
```

```
Escape character is '^['
```

```
digphreak's b0xor.
```

```
you will never find a more wretched hive of scum and villainy.
```

```
login: catalyst
```

password:

Last login: Thur Sept 16 18:12:43 from d0-168-007-00-039.dsa.co.uk

```
[catalyst /home/catalyst]#telnet kashyyk.cdm.cisco.com
```

```
Trying 45.67.155.33...
```

```
Connected to kashyyk.
```

```
Escape character is '^']
```

Dig hates it when I use his box to hop. It probably wouldn't help me anyway. I'm not thinking about that though, my thoughts are little white letters on the blue screen. My world is in the fiber optic cables and routing computers. I look at the green, red and yellow blinking lights on my modem and wonder what it's like in there. I imagine myself as a TCP packet. It's chaos. Token rings flying by, as I wait and wait until the computer that has me patiently tucked under it's arm gets one, so it can send me along the chain. The big computers at the Chicago NAP throw me at the speed of light across the country in milliseconds, I Fly though the air to a communications satellite, am sucked in through the circuitry, like a bird getting sucked into a jet engine. Only I don't come out mangled, it handles me unbelievably swiftly, but gently. I shoot back down to the earth, hit a dish in Ireland and am shuttled along through more fiber optics. A sniffer in London grabs me, running a little scanning device over me, like Max does to Adam in Flight of the Navigator, and spits me out again. I continue like this for milliseconds more, it seems like an eternity. Wonder and curiosity are a scrawny hacker, up way too late, playing with his computer. I smile to myself as I open a can of Mountain Dew. I won't move from my seat for 6 hours, only to use the bathroom, I won't sleep for 6 more after that. The rain continues to pour, the sky darkens. The screen casts a peaceful blue glow on my pale face, expressionless in concentration. I hear the music, the drums get faster and the bass deeper, the tempo increases, and the MC preaches...

 this music is my first song baby and i must confess..

..i will profess knowing that i won't get stressed.....

.....oh yes oh yes oh yes ..oh yes ...oh yes

.....as i move on as we progress...

...so baby open up your mind and let your soul get undressed

.....as we fly with the rhythm.

[root /root]#logout

Testosterone and Mischief

T: "Whoot ta fuck is this?! Ah'l dae you whin ah git mah hands on you, ya daft cunt! Good n proper ah will!"

M: "Yeah yeah yeah, my little k-rad hooligan." Mischief sarcastically mocks.

T: "Fuckin roight! Like ah sais, ah kid you no."

M: "What you'll do is not mess with my friends ever again. That's what you'll do, you jerk. Me, I'm definitely NOT joking."

T: "Fuck sakes mate, yu'v goat mah wird."

M: "Oh?"

T: "Dinnae fuckin chib ays, likes!"

T: "Yer a doss cunt, dae ya ken that? Fuckin radge. Ya ken, if you wirnae such a poof, ah'd be up fir a fair swedge aboot now, teach you a lesson eh. But, seeing as ah dinnae want tae touch a biscuit-arsed, queer-beast such as yerself iny mair than ah absolutely have tae, ah'l no."

Translation:

T: "What the fuck is this?! I'll kill you when I get my hands on you, you stupid jerk! Good and proper I will."

M: "Yeah yeah yeah, my little k-rad hooligan." Mischief sarcastically mocks.

T: "Fucking right, like I said, I'm not joking."

M: "What you'll do is not mess with my friends ever again. That's what you'll do, you jerk. Me, I'm definitely NOT joking."

T: "For fuck's sake friend, you have my word."

M: "Oh?"

T: "Don't fucking stab me, really!"

T: "You're a real jerk, do you know that? Fucking crazy. You know, if you weren't such a fag, I'd be up for a fair fight about now, Teach you a lesson. But, seeing as I don't want to touch a self-pitying, flaming-homosexual like yourself any more than I absolutely have to, I won't.

..the .end..