

# KONTAKT

ISSUE # 3  
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## About the author

Jonas von der Beutelratte is a writer working somewhere between fiction, essay, fragmentation and self-destruction.

His texts revolve around isolation, failed intimacy, artistic observation, exhaustion and the slow decay in modern life.

Influenced by underground literature, outsider art and independent publishing culture, he publishes raw and uncompromising work outside traditional literary structures.

He believes writing should disturb rather than comfort. KONTAKT began as an attempt to document disappearing thoughts before they vanished completely.

When not writing, he spends too much time wandering through empty streets, collecting unfinished ideas and listening to the same songs repeatedly.



Imprint

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ISSUE #3

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# MONETARY POLICY

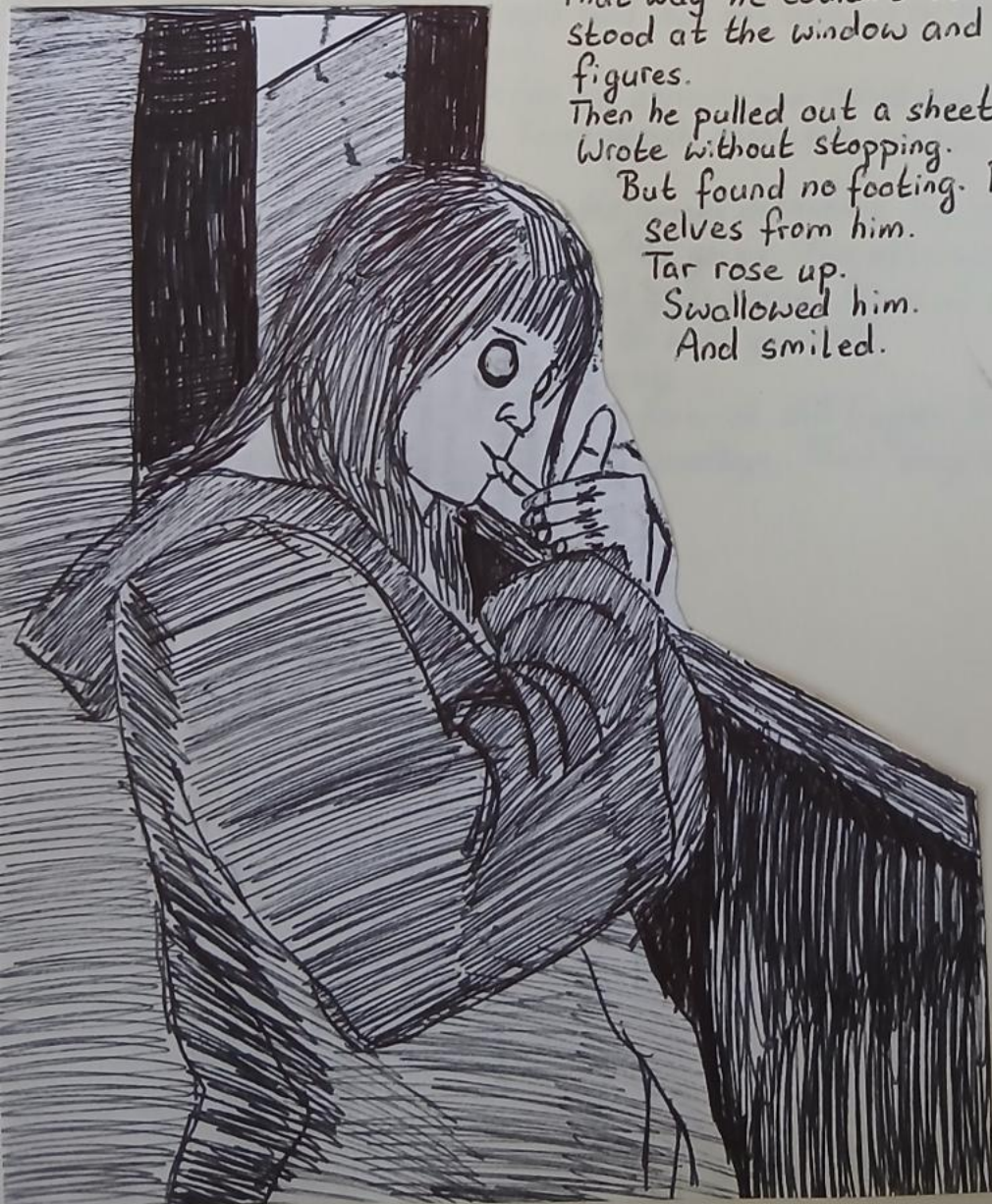
He had hardly any money.  
He lived in a run-down prefab apartment block and survived from hand to mouth. The caregivers amused themselves behind his back. The imbalance had already become somewhat dull.  
He wrote. With little success. He wrote for the trash.  
Smoked and sat naked at noon on the small balcony. To afford a meal he collected bottles. Love had been waiting for a long time.  
He could smell it. But it gave nothing back.  
His body had grown used to hunger. If he had found work, life would have been easier. But nobody hired him.  
That was because he hadn't passed the final exam. Now he sat alone in his room and looked out the window.  
People followed regular working lives. He slept until noon.  
The apartment his personal prison.  
Because of the burst pipe he couldn't shower.  
The pills worked through his system.  
Memories tore apart.  
He would gladly have been successful. Fame never came. Even more stones lay buried ahead of him. People called his work barren.  
Other than sleeping he didn't do much.  
Flashes of thought. The painting hung crooked.

That way he couldn't move forward. One morning he stood at the window and looked down at the tiny figures.

Then he pulled out a sheet of paper and wrote.  
Wrote without stopping.

But found no footing. Publishers protected themselves from him.

Tar rose up.  
Swallowed him.  
And smiled.



# SUBJECT 223

I settled in quickly.

Became part of something. Now all of that lies behind me. Every subject has a number. It's assigned to them.

At seven the lights come on. There are fixed rituals here. Also called rules. Everyone has to follow them. At ~~ten~~ ten seven the inmates stand outside their cells and greet the day. Everyone follows the same routes. A life like outside doesn't exist inside. Nature is violent. It tears every leaf away. What would I give to live a normal life.

I feel cut off from people. I'm not part of the community. I'm excluded.

The cell measures 20 square meters. A bed. A sink. A wardrobe and a table with chairs. That's all.

Here I crumble into dust.

Noises in the hallways. You can't find peace. One lock clicks, another jams and slams shut. The sink is small. An oasis for thirst.

The bed is place number one to stay. The slanted ceiling makes the room feel smaller. The curtain is heavy and darkens the room.

Every subject has to be in the kitchen after eight. To have breakfast.

Then there are pills with dry bread.

The light switch sticks. The room smells stale. Everything seems old. Like from another era. He had gotten used to the city. Now he looked back at his old home and missed the people he had grown fond of.

Life there had been hard, but not as hard as being in a completely new environment.

Here he fell apart.

At nine o'clock the van appears and takes you to work.

Wood workshop. There people sand, file and saw. At noon, lunch break.

Tiny cameras inside the smoke detectors. You are under observation. Life has to go on. The afternoon is free.

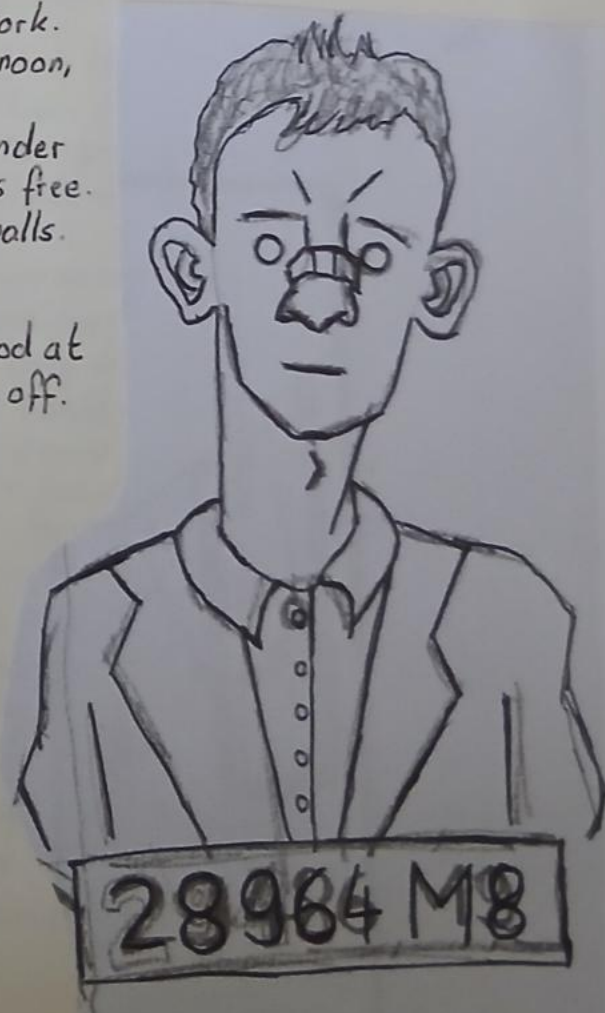
You sit in your cell and grow bored. Stare at the walls.

Have no idea what to do with yourself.

For nobody are you visible.

The thought of the last farewell still lingers. He stood at the doorstep and waved goodbye. Then they drove off.

Into another life.



## SUBJECT 225

The system swallowed him.

He kept walking toward the abyss. In B. he was even more lost than in E. The federal state changed, but the loneliness remained. People could make as little sense of him as he could of himself. In the end it all came down to the same game. He barricaded himself inside his cell and wanted nothing to do with the residents.

They reminded him too much of himself, so he had to distance himself inwardly. And so he became lost in his own resentment.

People paid no attention to him.

And yet their laughter and joy were more than unpleasant to him. His leg trembled. He played with his hands and could not settle down. He wanted to do something, but did nothing. So he just sat around and stayed silent.

The blockage remained.

It wasted for the day when he would become himself again. He would never live a normal life again. They would put him into a workshop for disabled people and everything he had ever achieved would become meaningless. He feared becoming nothing more than someone being managed. The file grew thicker. He grew thinner.

Here he had no rights. The system devoured him.

Power lay elsewhere. A rebellion was impossible. He was no longer allowed to numb himself. He had to obey and remain silent.

Most of all he wanted to run away. But as soon as he ran away, he would lose everything.

They kept him on a leash. And that troubled him. Because freedom lay beyond his possibilities. He walked to the lake. Looked into it and didn't recognize himself.

Nearby a couple kissed. He couldn't defend himself. So he sat there and grew bored.

The fear of being seen in town increased with every passing day. The looks were merciless.

The couple smiled. Not at him. They didn't notice him.

And if they had, his appearance would probably have frightened them. He wanted to emancipate himself, but they pulled him away. So all he heard was the laughter of people and their dull chatter. He sat on the steps and nobody moved toward him. Sometime he thought of the sea. The crashing waves. But then the thoughts escaped him. He wrote. But even that couldn't fully erase time.

His life wasted. He walked to the sofa and touched himself. Just to feel anything at all. Nothing. The past was inconsolable and had banished him. He was no longer tolerated.

All because of the attempt to communicate with people. When he threw his texts into the world, it caused an echo of outrage. Eyes looked at him with contempt. They called



him a traitor. And so the fear of their judgement burned itself into him. He didn't know whether he would ever live in peace again. Or whether generations would throw themselves at him and tear the flesh from his bones. Life had acquired a bitter aftertaste. He walked and walked and still wasn't wanted. He fled. He ~~was~~ resigned. He slept and dreamed of a better life. But it no longer wanted to come. So he remained outside and watched others build their lives. He no longer had one.



## SUBJECT 233

He woke up before seven.

He had already gone to bed around seven the evening before and smoked a cigarette alone. The other residents were still asleep. He showered and counted the minutes every time until breakfast.

Nothing happened.

The clock stood still. The room was cool. Air drifted in. The birds were singing. The large television merely stared back at him.

There were still sixty minutes between him and the morning coffee.

He shaved.

Outside on the balcony the couple greeted the morning. He looked down at them. They embraced each other. He only embraced his blanket.

He thought about a woman and wondered why she wasn't standing in front of him. The female resident looked like a gnome. She had facial hair and greasy hair. He didn't find her attractive.

And yet he couldn't look away from her. A person becomes someone else when left alone. The resident had shaved his beard and now looked younger.

He wrote.

But now he no longer enjoyed it.

The music turned up to full volume. He didn't hear the pounding against his door. They broke into his room, beat him and cursed at him, telling him to show consideration for the others. At the breakfast table there was chaos. The milk was gone again. The scars stood out.

Someone snatched the jam from his hand. Twenty minutes later he sat in his room staring into emptiness.

Daily life wore him down. Lethargy was his friend.

He smoked. He did nothing else. His money hadn't yet been transferred. He still owed money to his landlord.

The time when he sat in hotel rooms was over as well.

He wrote. But whenever he searched for words, he noticed the blockage in his mind. The pills dulled him.

In the mirror a corpse stared back at him. The picture hung crooked. Today it was pleasantly cool. He didn't sweat.

The hotel across the street was level with his room. He was ashamed to be in an institution that managed disabled people. He was one of them.

Just as deformed. Just as ugly. Just as stupid.

He had achieved nothing. And now his life lay in ruins.

He wanted to get out. But he couldn't. Not back into a normal life. He wouldn't find a woman there. His sexual frustration kept growing. Memories of a time when he had lived were torn apart.

The staff tried to integrate him. But he didn't integrate. So every day he sat downstairs and smoked one cigarette after another.



## TREE FLIGHT

The residents begrudged each other, everything. They stabbed one another in the back. Out of envy. Out of contempt. He watched them. Played along. But never truly part of it. Money ruled here. And the more someone received, the more they became a target. The negative atmosphere was to expected. Poverty made them kick downward. As a community of necessity they were useless. They treated one another with too much disdain. The institution punished unreliability. The institution punished everyone whenever one stepped out of line. The institution rewarded diligence and the collective whenever it proved useful. Otherwise there were little reward stickers to collect. Every resident was closest to themselves. Community was preserved only for appearances. He fell outside the pattern. Was bored and preferred to keep to himself. He didn't want to play a role in their world. Belonging least of all. He watched them from a distance. The caregiver punched a resident with his fist because she refused to get up. He wrote about it. They know nothing about it. Better that way. Because if they had found out, he would have had to answer for it. The resident spent three days in intensive care. When she returned, the rules remained the same. It was less about community than about trumping one another. Who outdid whom. As soon as one resident moved out, even that wasn't granted to them. The envious looks remained. Resentment raged inside them. Only a few found work. The rest withered away. That was the plan. People were meant to compare themselves to each other constantly. The institution did its best to pit the residents against one another. They remained files in a cabinet. Nothing more. Behind close doors caregivers gossiped about the ~~caregivers'~~ residents' lives. Ran their mouths. Looked down on those in their care. They had lost every right. Now he sat in his cell and saw himself taken prisoner. The pages filled up. But said nothing. So he sat on the bed and wrote. While others slammed against his door.



# DREAMER

He began to wonder whether he was dreaming.  
When he was awake, debris flew. When he slept, he came alive.  
Rain set in. He found himself in a dizzying flight. People stayed behind.  
Outside dogs passed by. They ran toward him and bared their mouths.  
Their teeth rough.  
He washed up in the wasteland. Every day began the same. Every day  
offered the same goal.

Survival.  
He found it amusing how the residents visited one another in their  
rooms. He found it amusing how alone he was. He laughed with joy  
through the entire hallway. Sometimes he bared his teeth.  
The older  
looked into the television and saw himself taken prisoner. The older  
woman had a speech impediment. The other one mumbled.  
He found himself right in the middle of it.

Most of all he wanted to move away.  
Somewhere else. Somewhere where he didn't  
smile all the time.

The child played piano. The text didn't take  
itself seriously.

He kept writing undisturbed. But every word  
seemed meaningless.

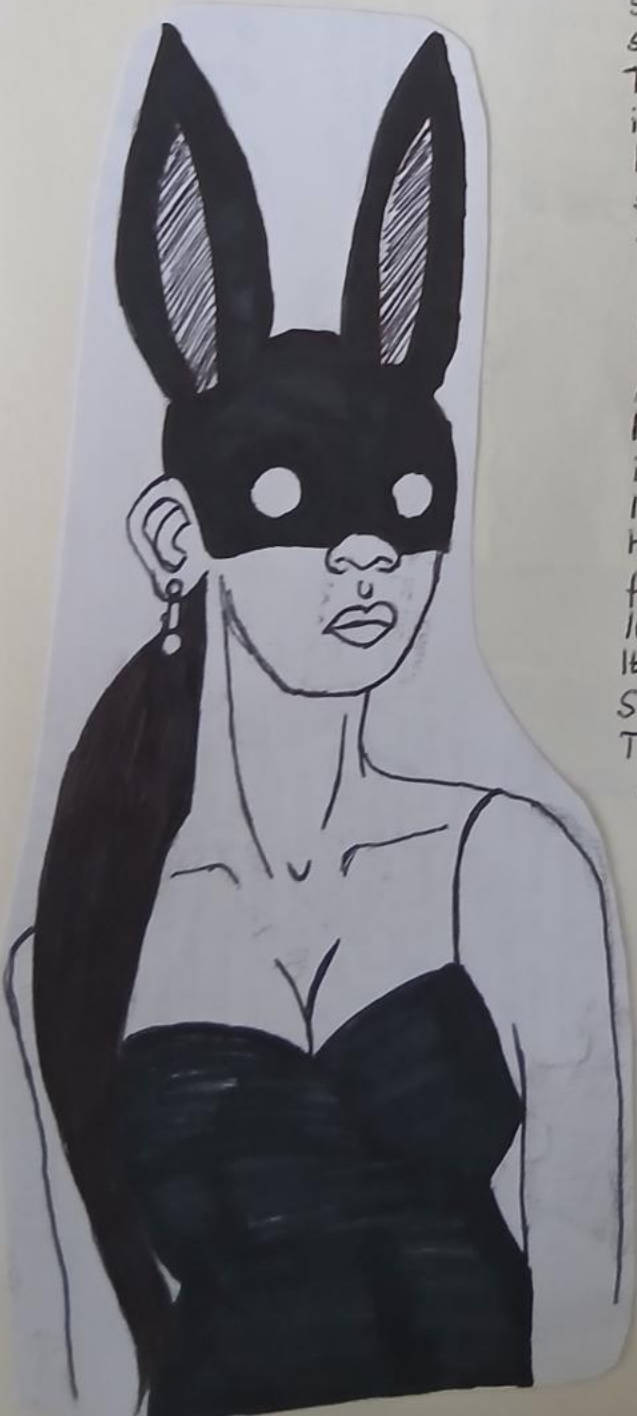
Sometimes he wondered whether he was dream-  
ing. Then debris flew. The ceiling penetrated  
him. Sex brought him no pleasure.

He searched for closeness but felt only distance.  
Maybe it had never happened. There was a knock.  
He opened the door. The women stood in front of  
it holding baseball bats. They beat him with them.  
I'm sorry. But it didn't hurt them in the slightest.  
He flipped through the channels. Always searching  
for some satisfaction.

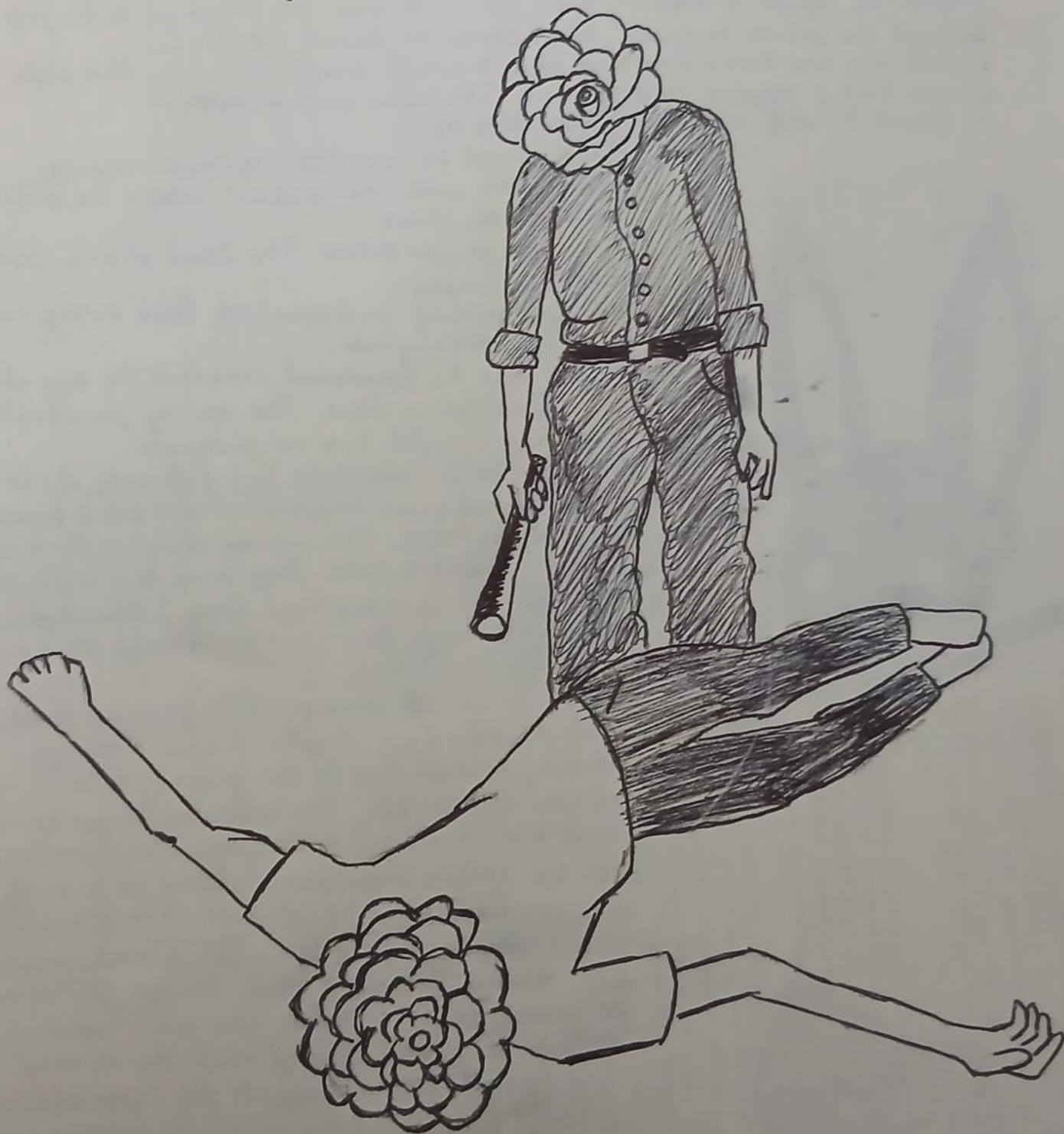
It didn't exist. At some point he gave up smoking.  
It made no difference. Maybe it was lethargy.

Something pressed him to the ground. 634.

That was his number. The muse no longer cared  
about him. She aged miserably. The older woman  
with the speech impediment stared at him. He  
considered her more intelligent than himself. He  
wrote ~~about~~ out of boredom. The bread tasted  
bad. Always the same food. Always the same  
program. He went under. Not much remained  
of him. The door clicked shut. He turned  
the key. And was trapped. He remembered  
a long-forgotten time in student housing.  
He lived there for three years. Did nothing.



And nobody asked him. He spent his time in front of the computer.  
Again and again the same story.  
Again and again against all expectations.  
He hated his life. The woman stared at him. He was too sensitive. Back  
then darkness. Today it remained. Nothing was left. A clearing of the  
throat. A generation without words. Neither he nor the others could  
stand him.  
He felt nothing.  
He was nobody.  
And they made sure he felt it. When he talked to them, they stayed silent.  
When he was gone, they talked about him. He remained seated. Refused  
to eat. And nobody asked.



## NIGHT UNDER PALM TREES

He went to the judge and said everything. The judge decided on the punishment. He dialled the emergency number.

No response.

Breakfast at half past eight. He walked to the window. Smoked. The smoke drifted up onto the roof. There sat Mrs. Fuhro's cat.

Half past ten. A patch of sunlight lay on the bonnet.

He raced through the streets. Something yanked him sideways.

The car rolled ~~over~~ over and bounced off. The emergency number had been dialled.

No response.

He walked to the bar. Drank himself under. Then to the judge. Who rolled his eyes. Half past ten. The telly blared. The telephone shrieked. The man crouched in the bare room. And cut at himself.

The judge scrutinised him from above.

A spectator hurled a bottle at his skull. Turbulence.

The plane crashed into the skyscrapers. He couldn't believe it. The box was lying. Again.

America had capitulated. Again.

He wrote about it, ashamed of meddling in political affairs.

The judge gave two thumbs up. Now he hadn't been willing to judge him. In the past he had posed as a clown. Today he wore a suit and tie.

The dogs howled. The day drew toward its end. Light flickered slowly. The clouds gathered.

The night broke in. He wrote. But the light was weak. He hammered at the keys of his typewriter. Every word an earthquake. He dreamed of palms. His muse wasn't sleeping beside him. The weather forecast predicted storm and rain. Outside it grew colder.

The night belonged to him. He slept when others went to work and worked when others slept. Always smoking.

Always the same question. Where had he taken the wrong turn? The judge consoled him. Even a clown shed tears sometimes.

Sweat ran. The pages full. He wasn't sure whether he had written a single word.

The circus tent burned. The palms cast their shade. Once he had been a free man. Today he chained himself to the desk. There was no anchor. So he spent the last hours writing. Until his eyes too fell shut.



# RUIN

He was no longer himself. His financial situation was bad. He had outstanding bills to pay. He was in debt and lived on nothing. The move into the residential home came faster than expected.

At first the clinic wanted to get rid of him. Then they urged him not to give up his apartment. Now he was in B. The rent hadn't been paid. Two months of rent were still overdue. His welfare payments had been cut. Because of staying too long in the clinic. He had been there for eight months.

For a long time he spent his days in the locked ward. Emptiness and lethargy ruled there. Whether he would ever live a normal life again remained unclear to him. He had studied. Dropped out.

And now he lived on welfare and feared rejection by the residential home. That would probably leave him on the streets.

In the middle of a city he didn't know. He went to social services. They demanded an €800 contribution. His caregiver had submitted the application in March.

But it had never arrived. So she submitted a new one in May. The woman from the clinic told him not to give up his apartment. He did it anyway and now suffered the consequences. Without money he couldn't smoke. Or buy anything that moved him forward. He wrote about it. But even that changed nothing. He remained alone. The others didn't move forward. He had no connection to them. If only he had finished university and become successful like his brother.



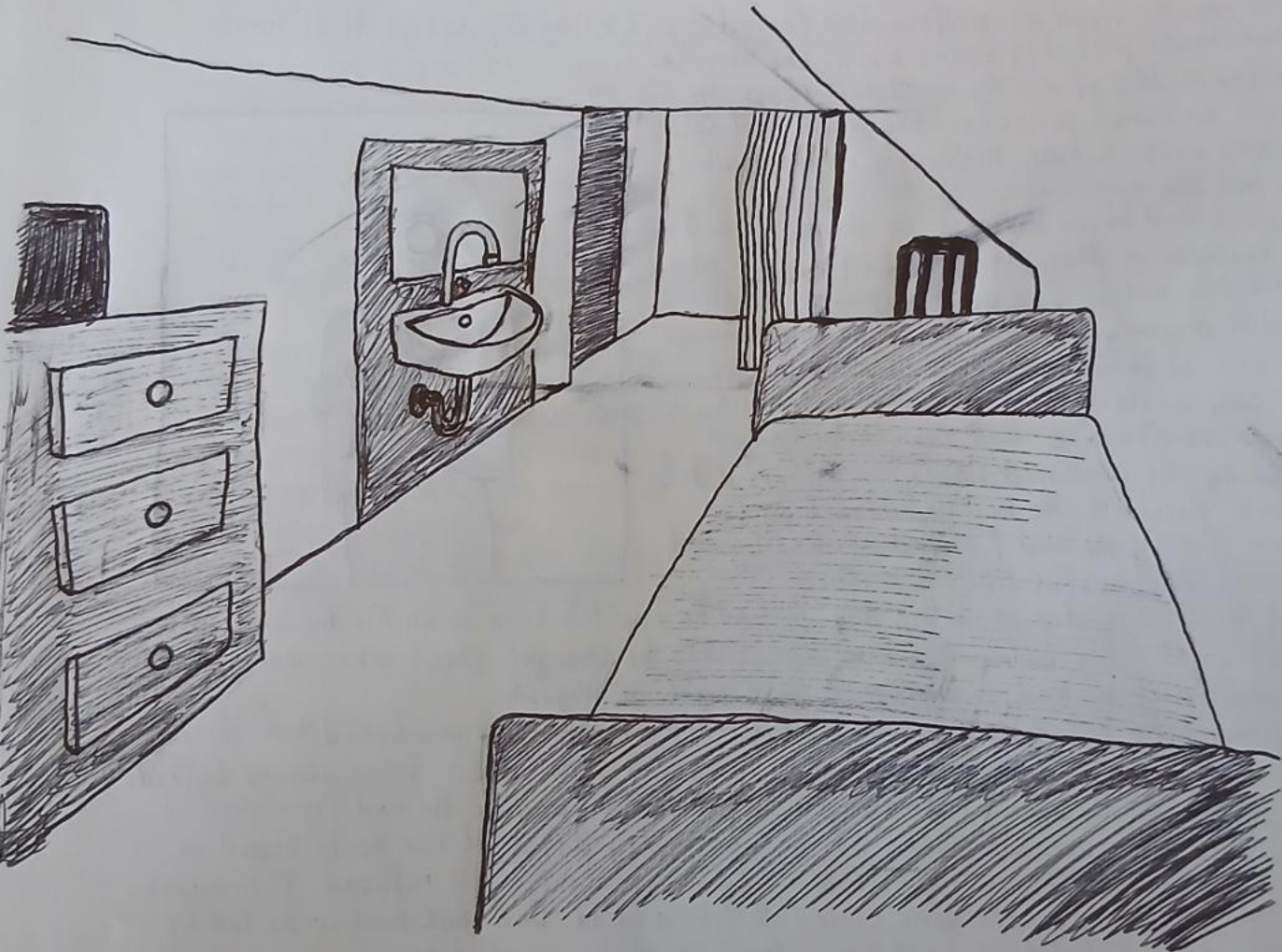
But he remained a stubborn dog. And so he couldn't live with his decision. At night nightmares tormented him. Sometimes he thought about what would have happened if he had ended up it that night in August.

How much he hated his life. All the rules and conformities weakened him. Sweat ran down. He wanted to be free and remained a prisoner. When others talked, he listened. But said nothing. The room smelled like him. He had furnished it sparsely. This was where he lived. Every day different residents stood in front of his door. The caregivers tried to integrate him. He refused. Felt superior to them. Yet at the same time felt like a child. One that had to be led by the hand. He hated that condition. Most of all he wanted to run away. Lock himself inside a hotel room and die there. He didn't like living in community. People couldn't make sense of him. He ran from them and from himself.

Ruin followed. Others laughed. He considered himself a daring artist. But artistically he wasn't truly gifted. He wrote for nothing. Every attempt to create something led nowhere. He sold nothing. He remained alone. Life stayed silent. The newspapers were more annoyed by his name than by his texts. They printed nothing. So he never left his room. So he achieved nothing. So he remained where he was. Didn't rise beyond himself. The world didn't need him.

It didn't want him. He didn't want it either. But he couldn't leave it. Because he wasn't allowed to. So he stagnated. Adult life took place somewhere else. He remained a child. The debts erased him. Consumed him. Uncertainty. Instability.

Even women wanted nothing to do with him. He failed in every respect. His life felt like punishment. And the judge sat above him and delivered his verdict. He had no close person left. Everyone had disappeared. Every friendship broke apart. He remained alone. What was he still doing here. In this place. In this world that didn't know what to do with him? That despised him? He remained seated. Nobody sat beside him. They shouted at him. Cursed him because he thought differently than they did. Self-doubt overwhelmed him. He sat down and looked into the night. Then he opened his wrists.



# SUBJECT 337

Every day he sat down.  
Smoked. His works had been lost in transit. People in the city had seen him.  
Now he lay on the chair and stared holes into the wall.  
The network withdrew.  
He knew no one. Something pulled at him. It was Sunday. The day once again began from the start. In the end he still hoped for something.  
But nothing came.  
The doctors sat in front of him and talked to him.  
Eyes fixed on him. He understood nothing. Eventually his strength faded.  
He collapsed.  
The kitchen supervisor scolded him and told him to take the stairs.  
The writer inside him fell silent.  
They had succeeded. He felt foreign in his own life. His gaze fixed outside.  
Always the same gossip. Always the same food.  
He forced it down. Nobody cared about him. He slept badly. The nightmares became real. The woman looked him over. Glanced at him angrily.  
He was a burden to them.  
He didn't speak. Made sure he disappeared. But the institution caught him. Pulled him back in.  
They squeezed the money out of him.  
He knew no one. He wandered around.  
He heard their voices and looked at the people.  
They shouted at him.  
Told him to disappear.  
Then he jumped into the lake and didn't come back up.



# THE CHAIR

I once believed life would be easier if one escaped it. But the longer I write, the deeper the trench becomes. I have been writing for months. Always the same circles. Always the same destination. It all leads to the dissolution of consciousness.

I spent sixteen years in prison. For minor offenses. A little dope. A little H. I learned nothing from it. The scars on my back tell a different story. I was tortured for twelve months. They started small. First sleep deprivation. Then starvation. Finally, the chair.

Electric shocks shot through my entire body. Until you confessed. They said I had to be disciplined. It didn't help. The mattress was hard. The routine always the same. Every day. You get woken up. Follow the man in front of you. Round after round. Then you eat. Go to work. Laugh at your colleagues' jokes. Out here it's no different.

Freedom seems like a construct. The same rules apply outside as inside. You have to adapt. Have to play along. Higher. Further. Until nothing remains. At first I refused. That's why they broke me.

The cops stormed the cell. Masked. They beat the inmate. Pepper spray. Dragged him out. Broke his hand when he refused. Called him a cowardly pig. Hit him even harder. Until his body collapsed. They locked him in solitary confinement. He spent three years there. They won't break me, I thought at first.

Today I wouldn't sign my name under that sentence. There you sit, alone with two cops in a room. Forced to strip naked. Forced to surrender yourself to them. All because of an ounce of weed. They beat you to the floor and keep kicking.

Nobody reacts. Nobody saw anything. Not even the file mentions it. I broke my hand trying to get out of the cell. The bastards broke it. I wasn't a good man. I know that. But were they saints? Just because they wore uniforms? I don't think so. Play by their rules or end up in court. I never cared much for rules. Even back then I knew rules existed to be broken. That attitude didn't get me far. Now I sit here and write. Write about my time inside. Knowing every word is meaningless. Because of an ounce of weed...

Tomorrow these words will be insignificant. Then I will be gone. Then everything will leave only a bitter after-taste. I can already see them. For an ounce of weed, into the chair. But where am I supposed to go? I'm at their mercy.

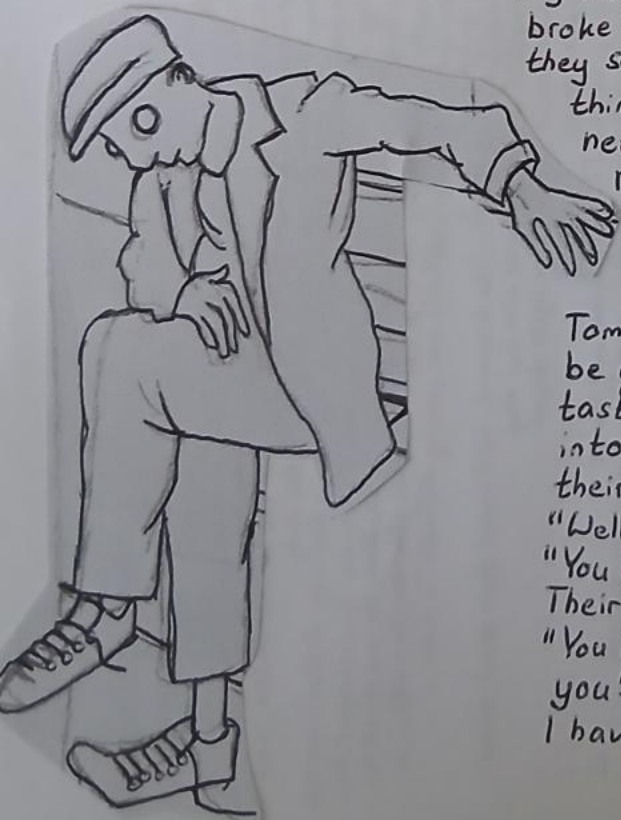
"Well, C.", they'll shout. "Didn't play by the rules again?"

"You know what that means."

Their faces grin.

"You know what that means, C. Onto the chair with you!"

I haven't changed in sixteen years. My end is still far



away. These lines may seem insignificant, but someone still exists behind them. These lines will outlive me. "I long to escape punishment. "Escape?", the cops screams. "Where do you think you're going?" He pushes me to the ground and opens his fly. What follows is called order. I still believe it. My words will outlast me. They won't break me. That's what I thought at first. Today I wouldn't sign my name under it. The chair is the fate of everyone who refuses to play by their rules. Others didn't survive it. I won't survive it. God spoke and judged: Guilty! I'm not a bad person. Never was. But in this system that doesn't matter. I wish I could say goodbye to my friends. The cell denies me even that. Outside lie fragments of my life. In here I'm the one who has fallen apart. Speech without meaning. Three hours left. I'm dissolving. The cops stormed the block. Ran to the cell. The lock snapped open. The inmate crouched in the corner. They grabbed him and dragged him out. Noise echoed through the corridors. Inmates smashed their cell walls. The cops restored order. They seized the inmate and pushed him through the hallways. Past all the doors. Out into the sunlight. Across the grounds. Into death row. The chair is waiting. It's neutral. The cruelty belongs only to the ones who uses it. I see their grimacing faces. I see their mouths. Their crooked teeth. The thick folds beneath their chins. Pigs. The defendant is sentenced to sixteen years of imprisonment. He is accused of consuming one ounce of marijuana. According to Paragraph Eighteen, marijuana use is punishable by sixteen years in prison. Only then is the defendant given an ultimatum. If he refuses, he goes to the chair. Downfall. Annihilation. Reason? Rebellion. I can no longer see myself. Did I shave? Have I grown old? What will happen to my daughters? What will happen to me? I refused to confess. You don't confess over an ounce of weed. That would be absurd. I have three hours left. One last look outside. One last look in the mirror. One last cigarette. Everything feels fleeting. Time is running. Must I force myself? For discipline? The end is approaching. The paper is blank. What remains? Me? Or these words?

**KONTAKT** is a zine about people  
the system has already decided about.

Nine texts.  
Nine cases.  
No redemption.

"What remains? Me? Or these words?"



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