

LEONARD. And I'm glad to provide the opportunity for you. Feels good, doesn't it, spewing the the truth, the truth is like a great fuck, it's one of the few remaining reasons to get out of bed in the morning. It's not for everybody, some people are so crippled they can't stand the truth, but for those who partake, nothing else really come close. But you know what? All those other people, who can't stand the truth? They're going to be a problem for you. This is why: You're a fucking nobody, Who are your parents? Nobody. Who are your connections? NOBODY. Where'd you go to school? It isn't Harvard Princeton or Yale, so wherever you went? It DOESN'T MATTER. You're no Douglas, Martin. You're a talented nobody, everybody is going to hate you. I mean, you'll get this published, and it will get some attention but not what it should, and then you'll write a second novel, which will mess up your brain like nothing you've ever lived through, it will be the worst three years of your life, writing that second novel; you'll feel like you're in the ninth circle of hell, where the betrayers of Christ are frozen in eternal cannibalistic silence, only it's not flesh you'll be consuming, it's your mind. Maybe a few years after the second novel you'll be on to something with your third and you'll finally get into one of the big writer's colonies but your bitterness at having been rejected fifteen fucking times will take a lot of the fun out of that. You'll start to hate everyone out there who's more successful than you; what you feel for Douglas right now is nothing compared to what's coming. But the work work be good! Everyone will keep telling you how good the writing is! It's too good to be mistaken and that will become the bane of your existence. You might not get nominated for an occasional award. But you'll never make any money. Hollywood will start to look like something pretty good right about then but you won't feel like sucking up to them either so you'll waste months of your life wandering around that hellhole of a city wondering why so many hacks can make a go of it out there but you can't get arrested. You'll end up taking a university job so you can pay off your credit cards, which you ran up like some fucking woman all those years you let yourself get sucked into the writing, and then you'll be really screwed. One year of teaching and you'll get so sick of how stifling and boring and utterly pointless it all is, teaching writing to a bunch of hyper-privileged droning children, you'll start drinking even more than you already are, you'll start fucking your students, even the freshmen, especially the freshmen, they're the ones who haven't been ruined yet, and they'll be so in love with your genius their adoration will be like a drug and why not? Why the fuck not. The work is still great! You're a fucking artist! You have to feel something to write, something more than just bitterness and contempt for the idiots you write for, the biggest problem with being a writer finally is that ALL YOUR READERS ARE HUMAN BEINGS AND THE HUMAN RACE IS...

(a long silence)

LEONARD. *(cont.)* You'll get fired for fucking undergrads, which is apparently against the law now. One of those undergraduates will make a reckless, devastating claim which too many people will want to believe by then. Things will continue to spiral. Your few remaining friends – maybe Douglas here, or Kate – will lend you a hand for old time's sake. You'll let them And then you'll take on a few editing gigs, to make ends meet, and you'll be good at it and people will like it, they turned you into a servant, that will them all feel great, and you'll get more and more editing work, and then you'll teach private writing seminars, which will feel like shit for a while until you realize you really could do something, you could help the ones worth helping, if you only take on the best. The best students. And that will make it better. But you'll still be a fucking servant. Because at the moment in your life when someone said, you're a talented nobody but I'm going to help you? You said I don't need help.

(a beat)

LEONARD. *(cont.)* Class is over. *(He goes. Blackout.)*