

“hitching a ride”

by Celia mcbride

third draft

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celia mcbride  
3192 the boulevard  
westmount, pq  
H2W 1S3  
canada

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(a low light comes up on alnert, a young man sitting on the bottom of a bunk bed in a cell. he is in his early thirties. he talks to the foul air:)

alnert

I've arrived. Smell the dark. It smells. (he inhales deeply:)  
There's no noise in the dark.

(he gets up)

The noise of the men.

(he goes to the wall and places the palms of his hands against the cold cement)

This is my ultimate fantasy. Imagine something and live it out for real.

(he places his cheek against the wall)

Hear the water running.

(pause)

The clang bang of the cell doors slamming shut! Now there is a sound! Goes through me like a shotgun blast. Feel it in my bones! I've waited. To feel this. To have my own. The echo! Closing me off from everything I know. Hated. Now it's real!

a voice

IDA! IDA!

alnert

I DIE! I DIE! (pause) No fear. Nothing to fear.

a voice

IDA! IDA!

alnert

I DIE! I DIE! (he beckons the voice:) Carry down, slide along the cement walls with his blood inside of it. Someone's in his cell ripping out his heart with their bare hands while he's awake. (he calls out:) DO YOU FEEL PAIN, MAN? (pause) I feel it.

(alnert's cell door slides open and rafter, a tough looking man who looks older than alnert, is thrown inside. he has been putting up a struggle and he flies past alnert and lands face down on the floor. alnert stares down at him. the cell door slams loud)

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rafter

OHHHH FUCK! THAT BASTARD BUSTED MY CHOPS.

(alnert makes a move to help him then changes his mind)

rafter

MOTHERFUCK!

(he writhes violently over on to his stomach and notices alnert staring at him. rafter is wild as wind but calm inside)

rafter

HEY, BROTHER DID YOU FUCKIN WELL SEE THAT? GODDAMN HE THREW ME IN HERE LIKE A MOTHERFUCKIN PLUCKED CHICKEN IN THE KITCHEN! JEEEEESUS CHRIST!

alnert

I saw it. Don't fight.

rafter

Oh, I'll fight alright. THOSE GUYS BEG FOR ANY LITTLE CHANCE THEY CAN GET TO FUCK US UP. (feeling his middle:) Goddamn it. I think my rib is broke. I was resistin' a bit you know, just playin' with him really and he threw me against a fuckin' bench! My rib's fuckin' cracked fershur.

alnert

Do you want a hand up?

rafter

No, man. I'm just gonna lie here on the floor a bit. Floor's a good spot when yer a bit fucked over. Don't mind me brother man, just go on about yer business.

(alnert sits down on the cot and watches rafter massage his middle)

alnert

Why are you here?

rafter

Shit, this time around? Can't keep track, Jack. I could find the doors that let ya in an' outa this place with my eyes closed and walkin' fuckin' backwards.

alnert

A real professional.

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rafter  
EIGHTEEN TIMES TOTAL MY FRIEND! COUNT 'EM ON YER FINGERS AND TOES!  
I got me a personal fuckin' club membership in this joint. I know  
everybody! That back there was Pete the Sheet that threw me.

alnert  
Pete the Sheet.

rafter  
I gave him that one. I'm a fuckin' natural when it comes to names.  
What's yours brother?

alnert  
Alnert.

rafter  
WHOA! No need to touch that one. Like Albert but with an `n'?

alnert  
That's right.

rafter  
That's some crazy shit my brother.

alnert  
So is Pete the Sheet.

rafter  
Yeah, I told ya I'm good at that thing. He came on as a guard when  
I was in here my very first fuckin' time man. Busted for possession  
and he was just a pup. We both were. Fuckin' pups man. We're pretty  
tight me and the Sheet.

alnert  
He just broke your rib.

rafter  
Nahhh, my rib's not broke besides I done worse than that. I cracked  
his fuckin' cheekbone practically clear in two. CHECK THE SCAR SOME  
TIME! Split the skin here to Christmas. Got me five days in  
SOLIFUCKINTARY for that little chat. We're always tryin' ta out do  
each other me and the Sheet.

alnert  
Lock-up.

rafter

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That's right. They clock ya then they lock ya up.

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albert  
(pause) A cold, dirty dungeon with no light inside.

rafter  
Well, if ya wanna check it out all ya have to do is ask for trouble. YOU'LL GET SHOWN RIGHT UP THERE MY BROTHER!

albert  
I'll wait.

rafter  
You can lose it pretty quick shut up in that dungeon like ya said. Mostly ya count the specks in the dark and pull yer train. Hah! Right on into the station my friend, right on into the station.

albert  
Jesus.

rafter  
Huh?

albert  
Where do you come from??

rafter  
THE NAME'S RAFTER AND I'M AFTER YOUR DISASTER 'CAUSE THERE AIN'T NOTHIN LIKE LAUGHTER! 'Cept maybe sex. AND I DO COME FROM ALABASTER! Is that what yer after? Saaaay, what you in for my brother?

albert  
Curiosity, mostly.

rafter  
Ahh.. they arrest ya for bein' curious now do they?

albert  
Depends on what you're curious about. I kidnapped a woman.

rafter  
So you were curious about a gal, eh? Now brother, THAT I UNDERSTAND!

albert  
No. I was curious about jail. I took her so I could get arrested.

rafter

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WHAT? YOU WENT AND DID WHAT?

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alnert

I wanted to live life inside. I wanted to see this life.

rafter

MOTHERFUCKER! I been in and outa this place since I was practically still suckin' the tit and yer tellin' me you were fucking curious! JEEESUS! Too bad ya didn't meet me sooner brother or I coulda saved ya a rash, a beatin' and a bad case of the runs.

alnert

Someone tried to beat me up. They didn't finish me. No rash. No runs.

rafter

No fuckin' shit. WHAT WAS IT? YA DID A KIDNAPPIN? YER A KIDNAPPIN CRIMINAL? Hey trappin' the girls.

alnert

It was a means to an end.

rafter

Yeah?

alnert

Lisa was her name. She worked as a sorter in a postal station. Dividing letters into bins marked for different destinations.

rafter

Yer fuckin' kiddin' me! (pause) Ya didn't rape 'er didja?

alnert

No. I just got her into my car. We got all the way to Moose Jaw.

rafter

HA! MOOSE FUCKIN JAW? HOLY SHIT! Yer a wild man Albert with an 'n'.

alnert

Not so wild as you probably.

rafter

Don't know about that, cat.

alnert

She was sort of a freak. Talked a lot about nothing. Just words. All she had to say. (pause) She had sad eyes.

rafter

Lisa, eh? Toooo much. One of the best I've heard my friend.



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alnert

Superdog? Haven't seen him. Did you name that guy too?

rafter

No, man. Only his mother coulda named him that baby. Tomorrow I'll set ya up. (looking closely at alnert:) FUCKIN' HELL!

alnert

Heaven on earth.

rafter

That too!

alnert

You make your destiny.

rafter

Hoo-wee! My man you are some kinda wonder boy, ain't ya? But yer pretty cool my brother I'm catchin' some jivin' vibes from talkin' to ya. You should write a book or somethin' I mean, WHAT THE HELL! Comin' to the joint like that? ON PURPOSE!

alnert

Maybe I will. (pause) My first cell mate.

rafter

SUREEEEE! It'd be easy as startin' a car! I'm no hardened criminal my friend it's just the outside world ain't no place for a roller like myself.

alnert

A roller derby man.

rafter

Shit you bet. I tried my whole passin' life to make it out there. Fuckin' trouble just keeps a-callin' at my front door. Takes me in her arms like a baby. Maybe.

alnert

(long pause) There are screamers in here... Rafter?

rafter

The screamers aren't so bad. There's a whole lot worse. But you know what brother? (whispering:) It's fuckin' safe in here. Can ya beat that? There's fuckin' maniacs climbin' up yer back to right inside of yer hair but it's the safest place I know of on this turnin' earth. Can ya fuckin' beat that?

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alnert

I don't think I could.

rafter

Sure enough my brother. Sure enough.

(the lights fade to black)

(the lights come up on rafter asleep on the bottom bunk and alnert sitting on the top bunk reading the wall. rafter is curled up, his knees to his chest his hands between his legs, his mouth open. he is a dead sleeper: unless he wakes up on his own, the devil couldn't wake him. alnert is tracing the graffiti on the wall with his fingers. he reads aloud:)

alnert

"IF I COULD DIE RIGHT NOW JESUS WOULD SACRIFICE MY ASS AND BLEED MY BRAIN." (pause) Bleed my brain. (pause) "TAKE ME DOWN TO PARADISE CITY WHERE HER GRASS IS GREEN AND BOYS ARE PRETTY." But this is paradise. Where you want to be. (pause) "THOU SHALT NOT KILL. BUT IF YOU DO YOU'RE A MOTHERFUCKER WITH SKILL. ESCAPE TO THE HILLS! Rafter '83."

(he peers down at rafter and watches him sleep:)

alnert

The man's a prophet. (he cocks his head:) I smell fire. Burning. (smelling the air:) Rafter? I smell fire. Hey Rafter.

(he jumps down. he hesitates then touches rafter's shoulder, shakes him)

alnert

Hey. Man. Hey I smell fire man.

(rafter stays sleeping. alnert goes to the cell door)

alnert

Hey! I smell fire!

a voice

SHUT UP ASSHOLE!

alnert

(sniffing the air:) Like burning leaves. (pause) Shit. I'm paranoid. (he sniffs:) I'm not paranoid. Rafter? You know something? I used to think I could read minds. Read thoughts. Get

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right inside the working of another brain. (pause)

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alnert

Then I started thinking people could read mine, too. If I could, why not they? See inside **my** brain. I had to convince myself that I was safe that nobody could know what I had going on in my head. And they don't. But I know what other people are about. I know people better than they know themselves. (pause) I'm god. (he closes his eyes:) I'm the devil. (he opens his eyes:) I'm fucked up. You said it yourself, Rafter. Coming here like this? But jail. Jail! THIS IS PRISON!

a voice

YA FIGGERED IT OUT YA PUSSY! QUIT YOUR FUCKIN SQUAWKING!!

alnert

Rafter. I'm living a real life. People out there, everyday people live smooth and comfortable lives avoiding the rocky turns. But I try. I stepped up to what's real. I made my own adventure. This is my trip.

(rafter opens his eyes and sees alnert looking at him)

alnert

Hello.

(rafter stretches his arms and lets out a very loud and long yawn-like groan:)

rafter

YEEAAAHGRAAAAAAMAAAAAASACOMINTADINNER! Whew! How long I been sleepin', Alnert? You an old man yet?

alnert

Let me count the number of days I marked on the wall here.

rafter

Buster, yer jokin' with me! Yer countin' the days on the wall? Like in the movies.

alnert

I am joking with you.

rafter

Well, my my and son of a gunner. I got me here a boy with a sensation a humour!

(rafter gets up and slaps alnert on the back)

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rafter  
Tell me another brother and my sides'll split clear at the seams!

alnert  
It was kind of spontaneous.

rafter  
Boy, you got the wrong idea about tellin' a laugh. YOU GOTTA GO FROM THE GUT - NOT A THOUGHT TO BE CAUGHT! You gotta wait for the laugh 'cause lemme tell ya - you sure know when it's comin'. You gotta feel BIG! So when ya say it - it's a SHOW! YOU GOTTA KNOW YER SHOW OR IT'S ALL GONNA BLOW! Right up in your face, my brother. RIGHT UP IN YOUR FACE!

alnert  
You're either born funny or you're not. You can't teach someone how to tell a...?

rafter  
A laugh!

alnert  
A laugh, Rafter. You just do.

rafter  
You just did! (pause) Hell, you're right. That's my gift ain't it? Always had that a-one since I was a-rockin' in the cradle. There ain't nothin' like laughter! 'Cept maybe sex! Remember that one.

alnert  
I do.

rafter  
Shit. (pause) I could sure use a smoke around here. You smoke, brother Alnert?

alnert  
Sometimes.

rafter  
Well, share the wealth and forget about my health! Let's have one friend.

alnert  
I'm out.

rafter

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Out? Why didn't ya say so in the first place?

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(he goes to the cell door)

rafter  
HEY! SMOKES! ANYBODY GOTTA SMOKE?

a voice  
SHADDAP WHY DONTCHA!

rafter  
I WASN'T TALKIN TO YA WAS I? HEY PETE! HEY! C'MERE FER A MINUTE SHEET!

a voice  
SHUT THE FUCK UP RAFTER! PETE'S FUCKIN' YER GIRLFRIEND UP THE YAHOO!

rafter  
HEY SUCK MY CLUCK YOU FUCK I AIN'T TALKIN TO YA!

(he turns back to to alnert)

rafter  
MAN! They are a RUDE bunch of motherfuckers. Shit. I ain't even been here one fuckin' day and that fuckin' gunner is tellin' me his sorry side a bullshit. Fuck do I ever HATE that shit man.

(he leans against the wall and slides down to a sitting position on the floor)

rafter  
The Sheet. Fuckin' my girlfriend. Up the what? What he say?

alnert  
Yahoo.

rafter  
(shaking his head he laughs:) Now THERE is a fine example of a dead joke, brother Alnert. Shit.

(rafter lays his head in his hands. silence)

alnert  
Hey, Rafter.

rafter  
Hm?

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Rafter. alnert

(looks up:) What? rafter

Do you smell fire? alnert

rafter  
(sniffs:) Maybe. (sniffs again:) Fire, man? (sniffing:) Naw, I don't think so man.

alnert  
(smells the air:) I could swear I smell fire. You know like in the fall that smell of burning leaves?

rafter  
(sniffs:) Burning leaves, eh?

alnert  
Yeah, you know. It's fall and some old guy in your neighbourhood has just raked up all the leaves that have fallen on his grass and he's piled them all up in a great big pile and he.... well, I guess he just sets fire to them. I don't really know but I guess he just sets the big pile of leaves on fire and they burn all up and -

rafter  
Who's this guy?

alnert  
No, not who. It's just some old guy in your neighbourhood. Some old guy on the block with a big yard.

rafter  
I don't know, man.

alnert  
You know!

(alnert starts pacing around the cell)

alnert  
That smell.. it's like wood and fire and smoke but it's kind of sweet, too.

rafter

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Smells like wood, eh?

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alner  
No, no not wood it's... the smell travels in the air! It smells like.. winter coming on.

rafter  
Huh.

alner  
You never smelled that?

rafter  
Nope.

alner  
You never smelled burning leaves before?

rafter  
Don't think so.

alner  
You must have, you must have smelled burning leaves. In the fall? There's always at least one old guy in every neighbourhood who burns his leaves in the fall.

rafter  
I never fuckin' smelled it whaddaya want?!

alner  
I can't believe you've never smelled burning leaves.

rafter  
Oh, for fucksake. I never smelled your fuckin' leaves okay! FUCK!

(he puts his head in his hands and runs his fingers through his hair. he keeps his head down. alner stares at him for awhile then lies down on the cot. rafter lifts up his head)

rafter  
I smelled burnin' tar before. (silence) Burning leaves smell anything like burnin' tar?

(alner doesn't answer him)

rafter  
Well does it? I'm askin' you a question for fucksake.

alner

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No. (long pause)

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rafter

Okay.

(he puts his head back in his hands. the lights go black)

(when the lights come up alnert is lying on the top bunk, asleep. rafter is holding the bars looking out. someone has given him a smoke. when he finishes it he stomps it out and goes to kneel beside alnert. he shakes him to wake him)

rafter

Alnert. Wake up for a second.

(alnert opens his eyes)

rafter

Hey, sorry. Listen I want to tell ya that I got a little irritated back there with the whole leaves thing. I'm worrying about it now because, listen, I get a little irritated sometimes and it's like I got some itchin' bug up my butt. Happens when people make me feel like a stupid motherfucker. That ain't what you were doin'. You weren't tryin' to make me look like a stupid motherfucker.

alnert

No. I wasn't.

rafter

I knew it sure as a bird. Well, I just wanted to let ya know, brother Alnert. Ya accept my apology?

alnert

Sure.

rafter

Ya do? Yer acceptin' my apologies? Fer gettin' bugged up? This place you know, it ain't always the red velvet coat like I told ya. It can put that itchin' bug right on up yer butt.

alnert

I just wanted you to understand me. You weren't listening.

rafter

Alright, okay. That's cool. Sorry to wake ya. Sorry about that.

(he goes back to stand at the bars. alnert leans up on one arm and stares at rafter's back for a long time. after awhile rafter senses his stare)

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rafter  
You starin' at me, Alnert?

(alnert quickly lies back down and closes his eyes. rafter turns around)

rafter  
You sleepin'?

(alnert doesn't answer. he turns back to the bars)

rafter  
Thought I could feel a pair-a-eyes diggin' through my back. Diggin' my grave.

(fade to black)

(lights up on alnert and rafter sitting on the bunk playing cards)

rafter  
For a smart gunner I can't believe all you know how to play is fuckin' "Fish". Game fer fuckin' pups, man. Ya gotta two?

alnert  
Go Fish. Do you have a five?

rafter  
(gives him a card) I mean ya never learned poker, man? Even Crazy fuckin' Eights is better than this shit, brother.

(alnert drops his cards on the floor)

alnert  
Then forget it.

(he gets up and walks over to the bars)

rafter  
Aw, man! Whaddya doin'? I'm just havin' a little fun with ya, brother. A little fun in the sun. C'mon and finish the game. Yer winnin'.

alnert  
You're getting on my back. I don't want to play.

rafter  
Come on.

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(he starts collecting the cards together)

rafter  
I'm only teasin' ya, brother Alnert. Can't ya take a joke? A little poke in the ribs.

alnert  
Maybe I can't. What about it? Everybody likes Rafter. He's everyone's best friend.

rafter  
Nah. I'm just kind to their mind.

alnert  
You've got a place here! See, I know I've always been laughed at. It's a look on people's faces when you read them.. I thought here that no one'd give a shit about what you do or what you know. But you're hassling me about cards! No! I never learned poker, alright?

rafter  
Alright, my friend. Relax there. You're a sensitive cowboy ain't ya? You don't want me to toughen you up? Somebody else will. Make ya tough get rid of yer fluff.

alnert  
I'm tough.

rafter  
Y'are, eh?

alnert  
I'm here aren't I? No fear. Nothing. Kill the panic and it dies.

rafter  
I guess so, brother.

alnert  
You think I'm afraid.

rafter  
Don't know, Joe. Either way it ain't nothin' on me.

alnert  
Say it. You think I'm afraid.

(rafter shuffles the cards)

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alnert

Trying to make me tough. Go on.

rafter

What the fuck are you doin' in the joint, Alnert? Eh? What the fuck did ya get yerself arrested for? Ya wanted to shake a little adventure into yer life. Eh? Shake it up. Yeah, that's what you say. But I know what I'm doin' here. I can't fuckin' live out there for longer'n a month and there's evidence to prove it, you know what I'm saying? I don't do something to end up here. It's where I belong so don't go fuckin' askin' me to admit your fuckin' failures for you. It ain't nothin' to say yer afraid and by not doin' it yer just makin' it true. Don't go messin' with shit you don't have an idea about, brother. I been here a fuck of a lot longer'n you. FITTIN' THE SHOE!

alnert

Fitting the shoe. You make all this sense and then what the hell is that?

rafter

If the shoe fits wear it? Merit.

(alnert turns back to the bars and faces out. rafter holds out the cards and aims them at alnert. he runs his fingers through the deck flipping them forward onto the floor. the lights fade to black)

(lights up on the cell. it is empty. voices can be heard approaching from the long walk beyond the bars. the cell door slides open and alnert and rafter enter, shown in by Pete the Sheet, unseen in the darkness. the cell door slams closed behind them. rafter jumps up on the top bed and alnert leans back on the bars and gazes at nothing)

alnert

The food really sucks here eh, Rafter? Everything tastes like grease. Coats my mouth.

rafter

I'm used to it. Can't taste nothin'. Never ate properly anyway. Mom used to feed me potato chip sangwidges. Don't give her no lip and I'd get a chip.

alnert

(laughing:) My mother was a health food nut. This shit, though. Fried everything. Since when do you fry spaghetti? In grease.

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rafter  
It's leftover from before. They're heatin' it up, pup.

alnert  
If my mother were alive she bring me millet pie and Vitamin C.  
(pause) I don't think she'd visit me here.

rafter  
(pause) So what if she were still breathin'?

alnert  
What about it?

rafter  
Would'ja still have committed the crime, brother? Would'ja still  
have trapped that girl Lisa against her own will?

alnert  
Lisa happened because my mother was gone. Lisa?

(he swings around and grabs the bars)

alnert  
WHAT THE FUCK?

rafter  
Don't let the bug get ya.

(rafter jumps down)

alnert  
I'M FUCKED UP!

a voice  
SO SHUT UP!

rafter  
SHUT UP YOURSELF! (to alnert:) Listen. Sit down. That's the bug,  
alright? But ya gotta stay snug, leave in the plug. LET IT GO WITH  
A SHRUG! Come on, sit down. Tell me more about yer adventure,  
brother Alnert. Don'tcha recall? I'M AFTER YOUR DISASTER! HA HA!

alnert  
Stop yelling.

rafter  
NOW THAT'S THE WAY I TALK AND IF YA DON'T LIKE IT YOU CAN WALK BUT

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HANG ON TO YER SOCKS CAUSE IT'S A LONG WAY TO THE END OF THE BLOCK!

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alnert

Christ.

rafter

Well, go on. Spout yer doubt. I'm a-listenin'.

alnert

I am going to write that book, Rafter. Call it "Jail Rhyming."  
You're a maniac.

rafter

Born and raised my brother. Born AND raised. Shoot.

alnert

You want to know how I kidnapped Lisa?

rafter

Hey trappin' the girls. Sure I do.

alnert

I don't know. I'd thought about doing something for so long but never went for anything. And the job I was working took me up to the postal sorting station twice a week. Lisa was always there to greet me. She would smile.. shy. She had a hairlip. And she'd wipe her hands on her blue apron. She had bad sweaty palms.

rafter

I hate that. Creeps me. All clammy and wet. TAKE 'EM TO A VET!

alnert

Hers were soaking. She showed me her palms one time right after she'd wiped them. She was always telling me about her wet palms. And there were pools of sweat already forming in her cupped hands. She was nervous all the time.

rafter

Yeeesh. Least if she was touchin' yer gun there'd be plenty of slip. HA! No loss there, old hoss!

alnert

She never touched my "gun", Rafter. I told you already that nothing happened.

rafter

No, man. You said ya never raped her. Which hell I'm glad about. If ya had I would have strung ya up myself right here in our cozy little home. Woulda had fun doin' it.

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alnert

Why?

rafter

I ain't no sexual criminal. 'Cept they busted me for rape once but it was statutory! She was fourteen and looked fuckin' twenty-two. Little girl tryin' to be a woman. Didn't spend too long in here for that chat though on account her parents dropped the charges. She torched their car. Set flames to it so they'd listen that she'd consented. That's a hard line to get across. She threatened to do their house if they didn't set me free. Sweet Annasue. Damn that little girl. BUT HELL NO! SEX CRIMES LEAVE A TRAIL OF SLIME! And hundreds step in it after you're gone.

alnert

(pause) I never wanted sex with Lisa. I used her. She was a tool. She would smile at me. So I talked to her. And one day I got her into my car. She just climbed right in. She knew my name and she knew that I came to the sorting station every week but that's it. She was walking down this long hill that leads into town and it was getting dark. I offered her a ride and she took it. Fucking nuts. She got right into the car. No fear. No fear at all.

rafter

You ain't a scary lookin' Joe, Alnert. Hate to break it to ya but yer pretty harmless and ya ain't charmless. No reason not to take a ride.

alnert

But aren't women supposed to think twice about these things anyway? What about that guy Drake? He looks like big man on campus scholar. Club President to company President type guy. And he kills his wife? Little kids murder. Six year old. It doesn't matter what age, what you look like. But she trusted me. It was so easy. "Hey Lisa do you want a ride?" "Sure, Alnert. Thanks a lot." Meanwhile I've got a road map resting on the dash board and my mother's silver girlie gun in the glove box.

rafter

You got a gun in the glove box, you picked up a crazy lookin' fox who just might love suckin' cocks. HA! Son of a gunner I shoulda been a singer.

alnert

You're a pig.

rafter

"hitching a ride"

by celia mcbride

Hang on long john. What.. the.. fuck.. did you just say?

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

alnert

That's sick. Talking about Lisa that way. How can I tell the story with you rhyming your goddamn pornographic nursery rhymes all the time.

(rafter gets up)

rafter

Stand up you little prince 'cause I'm takin' that crown offa yer head.

alnert

Go ahead. Punch me. In the head.

rafter

GET UP!

alnert

I want it. Go ahead. I'm not moving. You wanna hit me you can do it with me sitting here.

rafter

GET THE FUCK UP GUNNER! I WON'T HIT NO SITTING BULL!

alnert

Hit me.

rafter

GET UP!

alnert

Hit me!

rafter

GET UP!

(alnert stands up and just as his knees straighten rafter hooks him under the chin. alnert is sent crashing back on to the cot and his head meets the cement wall with a heavy thud. rafter dances about swinging the air, lifting his fists in silent victory. the lights fade to black)

(lights up on alnert sitting crouched in the corner. his face is beginning to bruise and blood trickles down from the back of his neck. rafter cannot be seen)

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

alnert

I saw the stars when you hit me, Rafter. You know the cartoon circle of stars above your head? I saw them. Birds too. Blue and yellow. Guys swing at you without even thinking about it in here. I never learned how to swing back. I can feel my fists clenched, my nails digging into my palms making them bleed but my arm stays down. I don't know how to lift it up. There's a weight, my gravity keeps it down by my side. No matter how bad I want to take a swing, no matter how bad they deserve it, it won't happen. My arm doesn't listen to my brain. Or it does. Because my brain is telling it to stay down. Not to fight back. To take it. Take the pain. Take the power of another man's anger. Or woman's. My mother hit me once. Lisa fucking packed me. Right in the side of my head with her purse that felt like it had forty pounds of make-up and a bowling ball in it. A small one. With no holes and swirling paint. (pause) She was going to use a lamp on me but we were in a motel room and when she grabbed the lamp it stayed glued to the dresser. Or screwed. There's a rhyme, Raft. Glued or screwed. Being crude. Not bad.

(rafter rolls out from the darkness underneath the cot)

alnert

I can rhyme too.

rafter

You go on do whatever the fuck you want, brother. (pause) How's your head? Blood's all dried down yer neck there.

alnert

I like it.

rafter

I ain't gonna give up no apology for that one.

alnert

I deserved it right?

rafter

Deserved ain't the word, gunner. It's provoke. No joke.

alnert

Yeah yeah. I heard it before.

(he touches the blood with his fingers)

alnert

My mother only slapped me. (pause) You get hit by your folks?

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter

Hit? Shit. I got SPLIT motherfucker. SPLIT IN TWO! My Pop fuckin' used ME as a bowling ball. Picked me up and threw me down the long road to nowhere any chance he got. Strikes, turkeys. He ploughed me through the dirt. His fuckin' seed. HE WAS A SOLID PILLAR WITH A ROTATILLER! You know them things, brother? Fuckin' blades like claws chewin' up the earth. Don't nothin' stop 'em. You hit a rock and you better be wearin' eye protection, Joe. Cause them blades are gonna send that rock try to take you down.

alnert

What?

rafter

That's right.

alnert

Did you live on a farm?

rafter

If I did I don't remember it, Alnert. THE PAST IS GONE! And I'll bet it's comin' on dawn. I wonder what's for breakfast down in the castle dining hall. White jelly eggs I'll bet. Fuckin' specialty of the palace chef.

(pause)

alnert

Lisa's dead.

rafter

Huh?

alnert

I killed her.

rafter

(pause) You been fuckin' lyin' to me brother?

alnert

Yeah.

rafter

Lyin' and spyin'. What the fuck for?

alnert

Because I'm a liar. That's why I belong in here. I don't know which

"hitching a ride"

by celia mcbride

way is up. I murdered a girl. And her name was Lisa Sad Eyes.

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter

Jesus Christ, Alnert. What the fuck you do?

alnert

Smothered her. With a pillow. With a tag on it that said "Inspected By Number 9". But who the hell is Number 9 and why the hell should I care? Huh? How do you inspect a pillow case? You know? What's Number 9 inspecting? Is there something inside pillow cases we don't know about?

rafter

Whoa. Slow down there, brother. You gotta frown and yer bringin' me down. Way down. Stay easy now.

alnert

I'm easy.

rafter

Yeah, you easy but you sleazy too! I can't trust ya now can I, Alnert? You fuckin' lied to me about snuffin' a girl. And I'm thinkin' yer a harmless fuckin' STRANGE motherfucker but that I got you pegged. Now it's all on the line. You hear me?

alnert

I hear you. Every man for himself, right? Isn't that what it's all about in here? Out there, too. You can't trust me now, are you saying you trusted me before? I thought you wouldn't trust a soul unless they gave you reason, Rafter.

rafter

I trust what I know. And that's that I don't know a fuckin' thing about you. But brother you must be good 'cause I thought I did. Fuckin' thought I knew ya sure as a bird.

(alnert slams his head back against the wall behind him. he screams in pain. he does it a second time and his scream echoes loud as the lights fade to black)

(lights up on rafter standing naked in the cell. there is a spotlight on his body standing stiff in a soldier's stance. his neck is tilted back, his face turned up to the light. he clenches both fists and brings one up, slamming it against his chest. then he does the same with his other fist. he continues this slow and steady beat on his chest throughout:)

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter

If I could fly I'd never leave the sky I'd never wanna die I'd just soar forsake my life as a bore walk through that heavy door and never turn around leap off the ground fill my ears with sound and spread my ragged wings to forget all other things. FEEL THE WIND! BRING IT IN! I'd look down at the town not with a frown but a joy in my new found toy a power that feels better'n a hot shower makes me small like a flower that reaches for the sun knowin' I'm the one NOT HAVIN' TO RUN FROM ANYTHIN' ANYMORE! Glidin' over to the shore where it meets the sea where every tree is a gift. I would lift myself higher headin' for air without wire achin' with desire inside. I no more have to hide my thoughts are not dried now they're moist 'cause here I have a choice to touch blue. If they only knew how I am black with the stars I am stopped by bars that CUT ME! SHUT ME OFF FROM MY STEP AHEAD! MY DREAD! MY EASE AT BEING DEAD! It would free my head and I would spread my new feathered arms accept my charms and GO! BLOW! CREATE MY OWN SHOW! My life newly found not bound by any ground.

(he stops talking but continues beating his chest. he increases the speed at which he does so until he is pounding rapidly his bare skin with full force. he yells in pain and exhaustion. when he can no longer move his arms he yells again. he begins:)

THE END IS NEAR BUT I HAVE NO FEAR I FEEL MY HEAD IS CLEAR AND I HAVE NEVER SHED A TEAR FOR WHAT I'VE DONE AIN'T BEEN SO AUSTERE BUT A SHEER WAY OF LIFE! SO I DON'T HAVE A WIFE WHO HOLDS HER TONGUE LIKE A KNIFE INSTEAD I KNOW HOW TO BITE ALL THOSE WHO HAVE SPITE THAT BELIEVE THEY ARE RIGHT THAT COME AT ME THEIR VOICES IN THE NIGHT SO THAT I CANNOT WAIT FOR LIGHT TO SHINE ON MY FACE AND FIND MY PLACE BACK IN MY SAFE LITTLE SPACE WHERE THE WORLD GOES AT MY OWN PACE! I DO NOT HAVE TO RACE AROUND DOING THINGS FOR OTHERS AND MY SEVENTEEN MILLION BROTHERS WHO MY WHOLE LIFE TRIED TO SMOTHER MY SENSES PULLED ME DOWN FROM MY FENCES MADE ME CREATE MY OWN DEFENSES BEAT ME SENSELESS UNTIL I GREW INTO MY OWN SELF AND I COULD PUT MY PAST UP ON A SHELF AND KEEP IT THERE AND STAY UNAWARE AND FORGET ALL THAT I HAD LOST AND AT EVERY COST I SPIT ON MY PAIN AND TRY TO GAIN STRENGTH BACK. BUT SO MANY QUALITIES I DO LACK BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE THE KNACK FOR FEELIN' REAL DEVOTION I JUST WANT TO GET TO THAT OCEAN AND DROWN INSIDE THE EMOTION I NEVER FELT.

(rafter yells again and begins doing violent jumping jacks. he vents sounds of exertion and grief. he stops doing jacks and bounces around like a fighter in the ring as the remaining light fades on his sweat covered skin)

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by celia mcbride

(lights up on alnert entering the cell. he has a white bandage around his head. rafter is lying on the top bunk. he hasn't bothered to pull his uniform up past his waist and he's tied the arms in a knot around his belly. his chest is black and blue. the cell door bangs closed behind alnert)

alnert  
You asleep?

rafter  
Nah. I was.

alnert  
I got us some cigarettes.

rafter  
Yeah.

alnert  
Don't you want one?

rafter  
Nah.

alnert  
I can finally share the wealth and forget about your health and you say "nah"?

rafter  
(laughs halfheartedly:) Alright then, you convinced me. Gimme a stick.

(alnert goes to the bunk and gives rafter a smoke. he takes one himself and lights them both, rafter's first, with a match)

rafter  
Thanks kindly.

alnert  
No problem. (pause) So did you miss me?

rafter  
Not particularly.

alnert  
Not now that I'm a liar.

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter  
(taking a drag:) Guess so.

alnert  
It doesn't mean a fucking thing that I killed a woman. But a liar?  
Watch out!

(rafter only smokes. alnert watches him)

alnert  
Doctor says "hi". I guess you tight with the Doc as well, eh Raft?

rafter  
I been to him some times. He likes my rhymes.

alnert  
He liked what you did to my head, too.

rafter  
You did that to your own fuckin' head, gunner.

alnert  
I know.

rafter  
But you told him it was I made you bleed.

alnert  
You did make me bleed. (pause) "Bleed my brain."

rafter  
You bled your own head, son. I may have taken the first swing but  
you put your own ass in the sling.

(alnert is about to retort but notices rafter's skin)

alnert  
What happened to your chest?

rafter  
I was playin' gorilla games.

alnert  
What? No, what happened? You're all bruised.

(he goes to touch rafter's chest)

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

alner  
Jesus.

(rafter winces slightly and alner pulls his hand away)

alner  
Gorilla games, Rafter??

rafter  
Yup.

alner  
I don't get it.

rafter  
Then don't bother tryin'. It ain't for you to get.

(pause)

alner  
What happened to "There ain't nothin' like laughter."?

rafter  
'Cept maybe sex. That stays true. But sometimes the truth gets buried waist deep in shit.

alner  
IT DOESN'T MATTER THAT I LIED TO YOU! We're in prison! A lie doesn't mean anything!

rafter  
I don't give a shit where we are. Fuckin' location's got nothin' to do with it. When two guys talk about shit it don't matter where they are. It's what they say. IT'S WHAT THEY SAY ON THAT SPECIFIC DAY! Okay?

alner  
There! (sniffs the air:) There it is again. Can you smell it?

(he goes to the bars)

alner  
Smell it. BURNING! Rafter! Do you smell it now?

rafter  
Yeah.



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by celia mcbride

I held it down squishing her face.

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

(he holds the pillow down on rafter's face)

Simple. alnert

(rafter's body jerks)

She took 93 seconds to die. alnert

(he pulls the pillow off rafter's face. he doesn't wake up)

Then I drove back home. All that way. Called the cops. alnert

(he tosses the pillow back on rafter's sleeping body. the lights fade to black)

(lights up on alnert and rafter sitting on the bed. rafter's uniform is still at his waist. alnert is hugging the pillow)

You want to learn a song? rafter

What kind of a song? alnert

It's this old mining song my Pop taught me. rafter

Sure. alnert

(closing his eyes:) Listen here, dear. rafter

(he begins to sing:)

Oh, half my life's been spent in the dark  
Digging rock and finding gold  
Oh, I know I'll never see the light  
As long as I grow old.  
It seems you love me when I'm home  
And half the time I'm gone  
But darlin' livin' underground  
Makes a man prize the dawn.

"hitching a ride"

by celia mcbride

(he opens his eyes:) Now here's the chorus.

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter

(sings:)

They want me in here  
Yes they do  
They want me in here blind  
They want me in here  
Oh, yes they do  
To keep you off my mind.

(looks at alnert:) Ya like it?

alnert

Yeah.

rafter

Ya do? It's nice, eh? Reminds me of my Pop. Only time I saw a kind  
man in him when he sang that song.

alnert

It's nice. Sad.

rafter

It's a mining song, brother Alnert. Mining and whining. They go  
hand in hand.

alnert

Sing it again.

(rafter sings the verse again and when he gets to the chorus alnert  
joins in. they finish the song together and are silent. moments  
pass)

alnert

What are all your crimes, Rafter?

rafter

That depends on what you call a crime now, don't it?

alnert

Okay. According to the law what are your crimes?

rafter

Whose law would that be?

alnert

Come on.

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter  
Where you wanna go, gunner?

alnert  
You don't want to tell me what you've been arrested for.

rafter  
Don't recall sayin' that.

alnert  
Did you ever kill a person?

rafter  
Sure.

alnert  
Who?

rafter  
Killed my Pop.

alnert  
You killed your father?

rafter  
Yep.

alnert  
How? Why?

rafter  
Didn't mean to. It's like I said about trouble come knockin' at my front door alla time. Pop was a mean son of a bitch but he followed the big rules. I didn't. It broke his heart.

alnert  
You didn't kill him.

rafter  
I did. Pop got word about a deal I was in on. Unloadin' dope from a ship in the yard. I was still a real young pup. He snuck down to try and stop me. Take me home. I was on probation after stealin' from a drugstore and he wanted to make sure I did the community service. The bastard did try to keep me out of jail. And he knew if I got caught I'd be gone. Meanwhile police were fuckin' stakin' out the thing anyways. I was in on the bottom level doin' it for bucks and free smoke. Pop came at me outa nowhere to drag me home. Didn't

"hitching a ride"

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care who was where. Just get me outa there. Guy with me got freaked

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter  
when me and Pop started yellin' at each other. Him whackin' my head. Me tellin' him to fuck off. He fired a shot to shut us up. We were scrappin' pretty good by that time. At the shot the cops start shootin'. Pop took a bullet in the side of his head. Saw it go through his ear. I took one grazed the flesh of my thigh. (looks at alnert:) My my my.

alnert  
So you figure you killed your father.

rafter  
Nothin' to figger nigger. I pulled the trigger.

alnert  
That's fucked. It wasn't your gun.

rafter  
I WAS HIS SON!

alnert  
How come you do that? Take responsibility. Does that make you feel better? Or more powerful?

rafter  
I called his death.

alnert  
How?

rafter  
I summoned his last breath.

alnert  
Rafter.

rafter  
I begged for that bullet.

alnert  
Come on.

rafter  
I ORDERED HIM TO PULL IT!

alnert  
Stop.



"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

of a miner.

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter  
Whether you do ain't the point.

alnert  
What the hell is the point? You're all possessive about a lousy  
song. Did you write it or something?

rafter  
Man. I can't wait to get outa here. Where the air is clear and I  
can have a beer.

alnert  
I thought you hated it out there.

rafter  
Never said hate. But this visit's a short one. And I'm itchin' my  
asshole to fly.

alnert  
Because of me.

rafter  
Don't remember spittin' those words out.

alnert  
But it's true. I know you don't like me.

rafter  
And just how do you figure that one?

alnert  
I can smell it. But -

rafter  
Maybe it's you that don't like me?

alnert  
- it doesn't matter. Most people don't. I don't care.

rafter  
You figure you know a lot about most people there dontcha, Alnert.  
Yer always talkin' about "most people this" and "most people that".  
Where do you get off thinkin' you can speak for all the little bugs  
out there, eh? You a mind reader?

alnert  
Sort of.

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by celia mcbride

rafter

Yeah. You think you are. People got their own factories runnin' in their own heads boy.

alnert

I know that. But I have some kind of a sense... it's like a radar. It lets me inside other people's thoughts.

rafter

You know what that is? That's a guessin' sense. You can't read nobody's mind. You're a guesser. And you come to believe your guesses, that's all.

(pause)

alnert

I used to think that. Tried to convince myself I really couldn't get inside. But there's no fighting it.

rafter

Sure.

alnert

You're doing it to me, Rafter.

rafter

What's that.

alnert

You think you know me. You think I'm a guesser. You've pegged me as that. But you're evaluating me that way because you think you know what's going on inside my head. You've got me categorized, written off, signed on the dotted line.

rafter

That's pretty good, gunner. YOU'RE FINDIN' THE WORDS!

alnert

Do you agree with me?

rafter

What, that I'm readin' your mind? Why nothin' of the kind, brother Alnert.

alnert

Yeah right.

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter

Boy, you wanna know what I think? I think that the world is ten thousand billion years old and bigger'n anything I know how to describe. I think you are a bug and I am a bug and this cell is a fuckin' little bug home and none of it means jack shit. And if you took away the breath of an ugly fuckin' ducklin' then CONGRATUFUCKINGLATIONS! I'm happy for you, gunner boy. Cause you took your little bug priorities and shot them to the moon. WHICH IS WHERE I'M A HEADIN' SOON! I can feel it.

(pause)

alnert

How are you going to get there?

rafter

To the moon? I don't know. Maybe you'll send me there. Eh, brother? Bet you'd like that. To wear a new hat. Eh?

alnert

You're crazy.

rafter

I admit it. I permit it. I admit I permit it. Whoa! But so are you, guru boy. You ain't special you cracked. Soon as you admit it life's a fuckin' breeze. And you can get on your knees and feel the sacred wind in the trees. Watch the world go by your doorstep.

alnert

I can't see the world from this doorstep. It's made of bars and barbed wire fences.

rafter

Look right in front of you! Not what you see but what you feel! I ain't searchin' for somethin' that's a million miles away. My heart and my mind and my body are connected! AND I FEEL INJECTED WITH THE PURITY OF TAKIN' A NEW BREATH EVEN THOUGH I WELCOME DEATH!

alnert

You welcome death.

rafter

Yer fuckin' rights.

alnert

You want to die.

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter  
Never said I wanted to. But I ain't afraid of it.

alnert  
Neither am I. And I'm not crazy.

rafter  
That's nice.

alnert  
Fuck you.

rafter  
What you want me to do?

alnert  
Stop acting so superior all the time. You think you're better.

rafter  
Gunner, you ain't heard one word I spurred. I don't care about your hair! We are bugs not thugs! Nothin' means anythin'. It is YOU that feels INFERIOR not I that feels SUPERIOR on my interior!

alnert  
Just by talking like that you give yourself away. Calling me gunner and boy and son.

rafter  
Terms of endearment, my friend.

alnert  
You think you're some kind of a prophet.

rafter  
You carryin' some fuckin' amount of hatred inside that body of yours.

alnert  
No!

rafter  
Listen, my truth ain't yours that's fine. But don't go imposin' yer own fuckin' truths upon me. Cause that ain't right. You think I'm a prophet? Fine, I say get yer head checked. But brother, listen to what I say. Cause I mean every word.

(alnert grabs rafter)

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

alnert  
I'M NOT A LOSER! I'M NOT A FUCKING LOSER RAFTER!

rafter  
Easy there, boy.

(he pulls alnert's hands off him)

rafter  
Sit down. Go on. Now close them bulgin' eyes of yours fer a second. That's right. Hear the water runnin'? It's a river. A river by a field of long golden grass. The sky is as blue as a pimp's patent shoe and the sun's beatin' rays cause it hasn't shone for days. Can you feel it? Listen to the river. It's the voice of the forgiver.

(the lights fade to black)

(lights up on the cell. alnert has just woken up in the sitting position he was in previous. rafter is lying on the bottom bunk)

alnert  
Can I ask you something?

rafter  
More questions? You're writin' that book after all, doll?

alnert  
Yeah. (pause) How about it? You gonna get pissed off at me?

rafter  
That does depend, my friend.

alnert  
At least I'm still your friend.

rafter  
Like I said, Fred. Term of endearment. Shoot the question at me, gunner.

(pause)

rafter  
Go to.

alnert  
What's the most dangerous thing you've ever done?

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter  
Easy. Played Russian Roulette.

alnert  
Oh yeah? No kidding.

rafter  
Never kid about shit like that. I played it. With one bullet in a six gun. Spun that baby around, put her to my crown and hoped for the best. I'm still here so I figger my hope did right.

alnert  
I don't know if I could do that.

rafter  
Sure you could. You got yerself in here. It's takin' a risk that's all. When you got nothin' left to lose.

alnert  
Freedom.

rafter  
You got it brother! Janis, baby you should have waited for me! (singing:) "Freedom's just another word for nothin' left to lose!" Man, she was a fuckin' beauty.

alnert  
She was a dog.

rafter  
Watch it there. Yer talkin' about a woman I'm gonna meet in heaven. And I'm gonna give her a piece of MY heart baby. (singing:) "Take another little piece of my heart now baby!"

alnert  
So you think you're going to heaven?

rafter  
Man, I don't know. I just called it that. I mean whatever comes after life. (singing:) "Take another little piece of my heart now baby!"

alnert  
What if more life comes after life? What if we have to do it all over again?

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter

That's a guessin' game I don't wanna play my friend. Cause there ain't one person who can answer it. Not one. That's why we're all in the same boat. It's the one question we have no right guessin' the answer to. Cause ain't no one got one.

(pause)

alnert

Russian Roulette.

rafter

Yeah.

alnert

I'll play.

rafter

Need a gun, son.

alnert

We could find a way to play it without one. Where the stakes are just as high.

rafter

Don't see how. With a gun ya got the element of chance. Can't use a knife. "Maybe I'll cut myself this time." Don't work.

alnert

So let's get a gun.

rafter

I ain't interested in blowin' my head off no more. Figger I'll go when I'm supposed to.

alnert

I want to play. Besides if you're going to go when you're supposed to then Russian Roulette is the perfect way to tell that. If you're not supposed to die you won't get the bullet. Right? That's the way you think isn't it?

rafter

Don't you mind my mind, gunner. You best be askin' yerself why you wanna put a gun to your head and wet your pants.

alnert

You pissed your pants?

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

rafter  
Jack did. Then Solomon took the bullet.

alnert  
Shit. Rafter?

rafter  
Yeah, it was a trip alright. He was the last of us to go and the first one too.

(pause)

alnert  
So do you think I could get a gun?

rafter  
Find an alternative way to fuck yerself over, Grover. Explore them stakes you were talkin' about. Lookin' for a way out.

(a bell rings)

rafter  
Time to graze.

(they get up as the lights fade to black)

(lights up on alnert laying six cards out, face down, on the floor of the cell. rafter is asleep)

alnert  
Six slots in the barrel. Six cards. One is the bullet.

(he picks up a card and looks at it)

alnert  
King of Hearts. That's your bullet.

(he takes the other five cards and shuffles them with the sixth as the lights go black)

(lights up. alnert is standing at the end of the bed watching rafter wake up in the top bunk. he holds the six cards in his hand)

rafter  
(stretching:) YEEAAAHHGRAAAAAAMAAAAAASACOMINTADINNER! Man, I was havin' a beautiful dream. COME BACK BABY! Me and that blonde chick Manson did in.

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

albert  
Sharon Tate.

rafter  
That's her! Fuckin' stunning. We were makin' love by a blue river.  
Her mother-belly gleamin' round in the sunlight. PURE DELIGHT! (he  
laughs merrily)

albert  
She got carved up. Manson carved her up. And her unborn child.

rafter  
Jesus boy get offa me! Fuckin' ruin my dream. Get outa my sight,  
Dwight!

albert  
Pick a card.

rafter  
You're pissin' me off.

albert  
Pick a card.

rafter  
Ferget it. Lemme alone.

albert  
Pick a card.

rafter  
What the fuck's up your ass!

albert  
Pick a card.

rafter  
Oh, fer fucksake.

(he takes a card)

rafter  
Are ya happy? Makin' me feel crappy?

(he shoves the card back in the pile)

albert

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

What was it?



"hitching a ride"

by celia mcbride

(punches him)

"hitching a ride"  
by celia mcbride

alnert

Doesn't it! No more rhyming, hey Rafter? No more poems, eh? You fucking prophet!

(he smashes his head against the floor)

alnert

Feel that? Feel your brain get eaten away? That's what it feels like! That's what it feels like!

(he smashes him again and again with each word he screams:)

alnert

FUCKING BROTHER GUNNER JOE PETE SHEET FUCKING GROVER FUCKING PIG  
FUCKING FRED DEAD GET OFFA MY BED! FUCK YOU! FUCK YOU! Fuck you.  
The leaves are burning now. Can you smell them now? Not tar  
motherfucker. Leaves! Leaves burning in the fall!

(he begins to scream. he gets off rafter and screams, flailing  
himself about, bashing into walls, banging the bars. footsteps are  
heard running toward the cell as the lights fade to black)

(pure darkness. alnert's voice echoes quiet:)

alnert

They want me in here  
Yes they do  
They want me in here blind  
They want me in here  
Oh, yes they do  
To keep you off my mind.

Good one good one! What's your name? NAME'S RAFTER AND I'M AFTER  
YOUR DISASTER CAUSE THERE AIN'T NOTHIN LIKE LAUGHTER! 'Cept maybe  
sex. Remember that one my boy. I will I will. Won't ever forget it  
as long as I live. But you don't have a heart anymore do you? I  
ripped it out didn't I? I DIE! I DIE! Coal mining fool! You there,  
Lisa? I can't see you. There's no light. Like a mine! It's a coal  
mine! OH HALF MY LIFE'S BEEN SPENT IN THE DARK! Rafter? You mining  
too? You see Lisa? You better not be touching her. She's mine. Ha!  
Mine! Get it? I mined her! I fucking mined the hairlipper didn't I!  
Don't touch her. You've got to be content with pulling your train.  
Right on into the station my friend, right on into the station! Ha!  
(his laughter fades in the dark)

the end