

Hamburg—

The regular bar. A home. A safe place. A shot and a proper beer. Anna hunched over the round table in the corner. Summer. The glass front open. We were surrounded by a paper-mâché cavernous landscape. Golden stalactites. Heaven. And hell. Autonomists stickers, Antifa, feminist slogans, vegan paroles. I purred the left-over beer that I had bought at the Kiosk next door into our empty gin glasses. I spilled most of it. I was out of cash. Anna always looked at me in this Lolita-ish way. Dolores, Kubrick, Britney, Alizee. These eyelashes. I always wondered how she did it. She used to say she had sympathies for me because we have the same face shape. She always looked somewhat Hippie-like, first grade school-teacher, Zooey Deschanel-like but less colorful. She might have been a wallflower if not for her almost French not really French, arty not really arty personality, sensual—her face. It's impossible for her to actually be a wallflower.

Quand je reve aux loups  
C'est Lola qui saigne  
(Alizée—Moi Lolita )

That night I wondered if she had been smoking weed. She told me about her trip to the Calais Jungle, one of Europe's most notorious refugee camps. Her voice was shaking. I was surprised that she was shaking. They are dissolving the camp. People keep on coming. She said she has had sex with a woman. I thought she had done that thing all along. She said she had to think of me. It might have been because she found me attractive, congenial. I said "thank you". I told her she would never get me into bed. I was scared of the female body. We spoke about this guy. Her guy. My guy. Always an illusion. He enjoyed being with me, he said. He was affectionate. First. He wasn't. Later. I thought he knew who I was. None of his Tinder photos showed himself. I was working the late night shift at the entry door of that Techno club, they played Justin Timberlake around six.

And now you want somebody  
To cure the lonely nights  
You wish you had somebody  
That could come and make it right  
But girl I ain't somebody with a lot of sympathy  
You'll see  
What goes around comes back around  
I thought I told ya, hey  
What goes around comes back around  
I thought I told ya, hey  
What goes around comes back around  
I thought I told ya, hey  
(laughs)  
See?  
(Justin Timberlake—What Goes Around Comes Around)

He walked in. A silver tray, two Vodka shots. We knew who we were without actually knowing. We were these kind of people.

Money is the anthem  
Of success  
So before we go out  
What's your address?  
I'm your National Anthem  
God, you're so handsome  
Take me to the Hamptons  
He says to "be cool" but  
I don't know how yet  
Wind in my hair  
Hand on the back of my neck  
I said, "Can we party later on?"  
He said, "Yes, yes, yes"  
(Lana Del Rey—National Anthem)

Friday to Sunday. Seventy-two hours. He said it was irritating to wake up next to someone. Another being in his three bedroom loft. He wasn't used to that, he said. I might or might not have believed it. He said he wondered how I did it that his linens still smelled like me. "Issey Miyake". He kept my hair. He was great on drugs but had issues getting it up without. One cold shower after another. Overly intellectual. It fit into his self-appointed role of a tortured genius. He snored. Alcohol. I did not mind. I held him. I told him about never having had an orgasm. I like to think that that was nice of me.

I was good on my own  
That's the way it was  
You was good on the low  
For a faded fuck  
On some faded love  
Shit, what the fuck you complaining for?  
Feeling jaded, huh?  
But baby, don't get it twisted  
You was just another nigga on the hit list  
Tryna fix your inner issues with a bad bitch  
(Rihanna—Needed Me)

He had the most ugly tattoo. On his back hip. He wasn't exactly skinny. A souvenir from his self-discovery as a teenager. He went to India after high school. Yes, that kind of thing. His face—it had what people call "something". This something that was in his voice, too. He knew how to play people.

He even wore cuff-links in the beginning. He looked bloated now. Sweat. Pale. His hand movements were the same. The way he holds his cigarette. Round smoke. The way he holds his bottle of water while walking with that girl. She was wearing this lame parker. I never ate that take-out Bacon-and-cheese-burger that I had been waiting for. He smacked my ass. I bit his chest, he bit my inner thighs. Bruises. Scars. A rare sensibility. Intensity.

Come chase the night with me  
They say I'm bad, you say it back  
And you deny yourself and then you scream my name  
And I can't take it  
I'm in your head like  
(ABRA—Fruit)

He just didnt want it. Affirmation. Recognition. Self-aggrandizement.  
My blood on his sheets.

I want money, power and glory  
I want money and all your power, all your glory  
Hallelujah, I wanna take you for all that you got  
Hallelujah, I'm gonna take them for all that they got  
Dope and diamonds, dope and diamonds, diamonds.  
Dope and diamonds, dope and diamonds, that's all that I want.  
Dope and diamonds, dope and diamonds, diamonds.  
(Lana del Rey—Money Power Glory)

He took my face into his hands. A kiss. "Seriously?" I said. It might have been just too much.

Shitted on 'em  
More talent in my mother fuckin' left thum  
If I had a dick, I would pull it out and piss on ,em  
(Nicki Minaj—Did it on 'em)

Beirut—

A bar. A home. A safe place. A shot and a watery beer.  
The way flesh, muscles move when being cut. The mass swings from right to left, It snaps back. The organs show. The gut recoils. The smell of iron and mud—  
blood on the street.