

CHAPTER ONE OF TAURUS

IN WHICH

*Taurus sips,
Capricorn uses,
and Virgo faints*

Being a contented materialist is good.

If I were more creative, I'd say being a contented materialist was like being a garden because it means accepting the bounty of one's boundaries with a sunny heart. We can't all be Amazons, and a garden doesn't attempt to expand into an Amazon because it's already full of itself and peace thereby.

I sip.

This Garden is nice. I like being a contented materialist within it.

If I were an artist, I'd paint the scene.

However, I'm not an artist.

I'm a contented materialist.

So instead, I simply view it.

This morning my room was full of summer breezes. I smiled before I opened my eyes.

It was good.

I sip.

If I were skillful with linguistic acrobatics, I'd say the palm fronds hang over this Garden like sultry bangs. I'd say this Garden was a lounging man with bangs in his eyes. I'd say I'm the sexual carnivore who strokes them with a ringed finger.

If I oversaw sexual séances, I'd definitely perform one here.

However, I'm not a sexual

séance overseer.

I'm a contented materialist.

So instead, I sip my Comet.

For lunch, I made blueberry muffins. I unrolled the tinfoil and intentionally burned the tops for afternoon coffee dipping.

It was nice.

I sip.

Virgo is stressing again.

I try to calm her—not for her sake, for mine. It makes me uncomfortable to watch people stress. My hand goes to my phone when I'm uncomfortable. I wish I could say it went to my heart, or perhaps

to the nearest religious icon, but I can't: my hand goes to my phone because in that moment I'm an uncomfortable materialist.

Oh my phone.

I take it out.

I unlock.

I sip.

My phone's background has been the same shade of blue ever since I swam off the southern coast of Cyprus. It's a plain choice but I like plain choices because they inspire me to stay the same.

Capricorn asks me to count the bricks.

Easy.

"Two thousand and six," I say.

She smiles and continues circling the Pond.

It's a nice Pond.

There's a Statue in the middle of it. This Statue presses into me with the effect of pressing me out of myself; perhaps this is what Beauty is.

If I were less inhibited, I'd scream.

However, I am inhibited.

And I'm OK with this.

So instead, I sigh and
caress my phone.

I love my phone.

Its value is my value. I do not exist outside of it because my entire life is inside of it.

If I had to spend a day without one thing, I'd gladly give up my body to keep my phone. I don't value freedom if it means I can't enjoy my things. I'd accept other people's tyranny with a smile if it made my life more comfortable.

Capricorn asks me to count the bricks again.

Easy.

"Two thousand and six," I say.

I don't use a calculator to do the math. I erased the one on my phone and now I use that space for pictures of well-plated sushi. I order it with red wine instead of white wine because white wine washes out in the camera flash.

Although it is true that white wine is better suited for sushi's gastronomic subtlety, however, red wine enriches the overall aesthetic of the sushi-eating experience. Sometimes, I don't know which I prefer to embellish.

Usually, I give the wine list to the best-dressed person at the table and let them decide.

Virgo faints.

I sip.

The silk lining of my brassiere is contrasting the humidity nicely.

It was a risky choice.

I almost went with cotton.

But Zod knows a contented materialist can't always be practical.

I sip.