

HOTEL RAUME

1

He'd finished the story on schedule: he'd sent the photos on memory cards back to the magazine and the copy had been successfully received by the London office. The trip had been memorable, interviewing a series of people who had once led the small country, but were now no longer in the public eye.

And now he'd ended up here in a small short stay apartment, on his own. It was getting colder outside and the small town where he was staying was out of season and some might argue past its best. At the time, opting for the additional four week stay had made sense; it wasn't as though he had anything to hurry back to, but if he was honest he would have been ok with going back now. His eyes caught his name on the suitcase 'Ray Avenue' and he remembered how proud he had been of his school jacket as a child, the name sewn into it by his mother. One of his earliest school-friends had suggested it would be a good name for a magician or a showman of some sort and Ray had laughed.

A light sleety rain was falling from the evening sky and he looked out of the window. There was a small hotel, several stories high, and there were at least nine street facing rooms which he could see directly into. The woman who had booked his stay in the apartment had mentioned there was a pretty good coffee shop in the hotel. She had been unable to recommend anything else about the place which had struck Ray as not insignificant at the time.

His eyes fell onto a young woman with a ponytail who was standing with her back to him in just a light top and her underwear. She stretched herself upwards and sort of tumbled lightly onto the bed. Ray's eyes stayed where they were. She moved out of view and then he could make out half of her on the bed. The figure was a little shadowy, and she yawned and stretched again and her top lifted up along her slim figure and she ran her fingers over her body a little, slowly ran her hands over her breasts, smoothing down her top and her hand seemed to sort of linger a little at the top of her underwear and she slowly slipped her hand under the lace waistband edging and as she did this her other hand came into sharp focus and Ray noticed that her right hand was disfigured with just two fingers and the skin on her hand was red and around the wrist it looked raw and twisted somehow and she seemed to suddenly stop what she was doing and look upwards and out of the window and Ray gulped and twisted away without thinking about it and his heart was racing and he felt a guilty flush over his face.

2

Ray noticed there were several people outside the hotel, a doorman who was also the receptionist, a small man stood next to a few industrial sized commercial waste bins; a woman with a suitcase, and a fat young man sat on a bucket. So far, he had noticed that they were there pretty much all the time; at nights they would occasionally disappear but other than that they were there.

The man who was stood next to the industrial bins seemed to be selling cigarettes from inside a smaller rubbish bin next to where he stood. Taxi drivers, delivery boys, regular people, old folks would stop and Ray watched as he would take their money and give them cigarettes. In the afternoon Ray watched him play a simple card game with a man – the man had started shouting about something being fixed and the man had only laughed and then handed the guy a pack of cigarettes from the bin and waved him away. It was unclear where the cigarettes were from or why the cigarettes were in the bin.

Ray unpacked only a little; he still had a few bits of camera equipment with him and glanced at the small safe in the wardrobe. He kept important things like his passport with him, preferring to leave as little as chance to possible. It was difficult to know who to trust.

He went to the grocery store to get some milk for coffee in the small flat. He did some simple shopping and when he was paying for it could overhear the two cashiers talking. "She's out there still" the one not serving Ray said. "Who's she? I'm not a mind reader" asked the other. "Lorraine's daughter. You know, the one who was with Mike. You remember Mike, and Maria". Ray's mind had instantly returned to Maria, his childhood sweetheart. Since Maria had gone nothing made sense anymore and Ray laughed at the thought and for a second wondered where she was now. "She's been out there ever since" said the cashier. "Since what?" and then to Ray "She thinks I should know what she's talking about, all the time!". "You remember, I know you remember. She had a baby with Mike but Mike wanted Lorraine, her mother. He was always trying something. Maria got sick of it and they had a huge row, Mike threatened to set fire to the house. Maria screamed all kinds of things at him and Mike took the baby and took the car and went. She says he told her he'd be back on the phone later that night and she says to me she's going to stay out there until Mike comes back with the baby and picks her up and they're moving South. That was nearly four months ago and she lost her job because all she wants to do is stay out there with that suitcase and all she can talk about – all she ever says these days is 'He's coming back... I know he's coming back, with my baby'. Both Ray and the woman had raised their eyebrows at the story and the other cashier had said "Oh, Maria? And Mike; why didn't you just say that to start with? I've heard that story a thousand times" and had shaken her head and the other cashier had rolled her eyes and carried on putting price stickers on some chopped fruit.

3

Time passed and he began to become more acclimatised to the place. Ray smoked at the window looking out at the hotel – he didn't smoke much but every so often, when the mood took him. In the corner room the curtains were open and Ray could make out some kind of bright white artificial light being shone aside from the muted lamps. He blew on his coffee to cool it and could make out two fat pink women with curly-ish hair in nightdresses. They were talking to each other and Ray thought nothing of it until he could make out the shape of a videocamera and a cameraman moving across the room, his back to the window. As he moved back towards the edge of the room, the two women came closer to each other and nervously began kissing. One began loosely caressing the other's back and the other began moving her hands over the other's breasts. At some point they sort of stopped and they both looked up and then moved towards the bed where one of the fat women peeled off her top revealing a pair of heavy looking breasts with fat pink excited nipples and the other fat woman knelt up and then Ray could make out the hairy legs of a man come into the view standing on top of the bed, above both of the fat women who were still making out with each other, kissing and rubbing each other and the cameraman moved again round the window and the man was suddenly on his back and the two women who were now both naked and fleshy knelt around the man's body and Ray turned so that he wasn't watching anymore and shook his head and muttered quietly slowly 'Jesus Christ what is happening!'

4

There seemed to be very little in the way of entertainment in the small town. There was a small cinema playing one movie at a time, each run for two weeks. There was a small 'locals' bar which Ray didn't really like the look of. Ray went to the hotel coffee shop one day and noticed a sign there, a singer who made irregular visits was coming later that week to sing, there was a picture of a woman wearing heavy sunglasses and a bob haircut and it looked interesting. On the way out of the hotel Ray could hear the doorman and the man who sells cigarettes talking and heard a snatch of conversation about gambling and a card game and the cigarette seller said loudly and with emphasis '...I'll break his fucking fingers' and Ray hurried past them back to his flat.

5

By the flat window Ray was looking through some of the other photos he'd taken for a personal project; photos of interesting looking people; old people, young people, a couple; all taken in 'cinematic' settings. The rule was that he allowed himself just one single shot which he would take some care over setting up before finding some people to pose. He would take their names and addresses and painstakingly made sure to contact everyone whose photos he put up on his website. Outside he heard raised voices and looked over just quickly enough to see the cigarette seller half grappling with a man in a hat and as he looked over the man's fingers were bent back and Ray watched the cigarette seller push hard against them, the wrong way, and the man jumped and yelped in pain and crumpled to the ground almost fainting. The cigarette seller began laughing hard and pointing and the doorman broke into a quiet mangled grin, his eyes half closing. The man, holding his other hand in agony, staggered off and away from the rubbish bins as quickly as he could. Ray was a little shocked: violence in real life, as opposed to in films, was both bigger and smaller than when it was on a

big screen. The noises stayed with him for some time, the yelp of the man and the broad laugh of the cigarette man.

6

Ray had got distracted with adding the details of each shot to a small notebook. On his way to the hotel bar to listen to the singer, the young overweight man sat on the upturned bucket asked him for some change and he pulled out his wallet in which there were a few notes and as he gave the man five, Ray noticed that the man's eyes, despite what he'd been given, was on the rest of his money. Ray put it away and sort of mumbled sorry and the man snapped out of it and said in a sweet high pitched falsetto 'Thanks, I appreciate it!'. The man put the money deep into his pocket and returned to just sitting there on the upturned bucket. 'Nice seat you have there!' said Ray. 'Well it's the right height and it's pretty much as good as a chair; it's about all I have' said the young man. Ray nodded affirmatively and smiled and walked off into the hotel bar. She was already singing. Ray ordered a beer and sat at the bar. The place was only small but still it was half empty. The sound was pretty good, sounding quite close. The woman had no microphone and somehow it sounded like she was singing right next to you. She was playing the piano pretty badly – the best you could say about it was that it had '*character*'. She was singing old pop music, and she had slowed down every song so they all had a sort of sad feel. Ray was gripped by it. She had the heavy sunglasses on even though the bar was pretty dark, and a dress which looked like it had seen better days. As she softly began singing one particular song Ray felt like he could melt. It was a slow version of a song he'd heard as a child. His mother had bought him the record but he couldn't listen to it without breaking into tears. His mum had offered to exchange it for a different record, or a toy, but that wasn't what he'd wanted at all. Since Maria had gone nothing had been the same.

Ray ordered another beer and settled down to enjoy the rest of the music. The woman seemed to pay scant attention to the handful of people in the bar, but Ray felt she seemed to be singing directly to him, and he spent the evening smiling at her. Her voice was calm and soft as well as raspy and characterful, and it cracked beautifully as she had to reach for some high notes. Ray liked it best when she would half whisper half sing and he closed his eyes from time to time and half imagined some kind of future with a woman like this. He hoped she'd noticed him. She hadn't noticed him, or if she did, she didn't show it, clearing off into the night without pausing. He didn't realise it at the time, but she reminded him very much of Maria.

7

A few days later Ray was trying to write descriptions for the photos. He found it best to do this as soon as possible because otherwise you lost details and got things mixed up. It was important that everything was as accurate as possible. Day-dreaming, his vision wandered over the hotel; a strange looking couple had come into the room: they were strange looking because the man was heavily set and sixty or seventy and the woman looked early twenties and slim. The man, in a grubby shiny suit with greasy balding hair teased backwards with some precision, grabbed hold of the woman's arm lightly and she began to take off her clothes and Ray looked away.

8

The cigarette seller was around all the time. The young man on the bucket was around all the time. The woman with the suitcase was there and had taken to wearing headphones all day every day, you could watch her lip-sync to the songs. Ray felt slightly settled there; the flat felt as much like home as anywhere ever did and he was on nodding terms with the cashiers in the grocers. Things got worse as Ray began to get more comfortable there. The young man was standing. The cigarette man was standing by his bin as usual and Ray noticed the bucket chair was in the big bin as he walked past. The young heavily built man with the falsetto voice looked sad and Ray asked him where his chair was. 'The man took it, the man took it' said the young man quietly. Ray laughed 'Ok', and he walked over to the bin and pulled out the bucket while the cigarette seller watched. Ray said in a low voice 'Hey man, it's all he's got and he's only a kid; give him a break' and the cigarette seller had squinted at him before looking away and shrugging and muttering 'You shouldn't interfere' and spat on the ground. Ray gave the bucket to the young man, who seemed pleased.

9

Sat drinking more coffee in his room one morning after a short run and a shower, Ray noticed a car drive up to the hotel, with a 'Just Married' sign. The young couple looked happy, Ray could only presume that they were on the way to some other town, but had decided to stop here for a break from driving. Ray was killing time, half reading a book and half thinking about the singer from the other night, and noticed the couple. He

thought it was funny how one minute the couple were walking through reception and the next minute they must have walked up the hotel stairs and into the room. They would have been completely unaware that Ray knew this; they were completely unaware of his existence and this was not reciprocal. Ray watched them collapse onto the bed and she pulled the curtains. Later that evening the curtains were back open and Ray could see the woman who seemed to be shouting a little, she looked quite agitated. She seemed to be shouting something to someone in the bathroom or at least behind some door, Ray hadn't really tried figure out the layout of each room. Without warning a door opened and the man, naked and red-faced rushed out and stood there a second before hitting the woman just once across the face. She held her face and didn't seem to quieten down particularly and the man clamped his hand on her mouth to stop her shouting and he held it there for maybe ten seconds and she calmed down pretty quickly at that point and the man walked off back to the bathroom closing the door.

10

Ray had found out that the singer's name was Rachel, and that she was due to return to the bar, and the same picture of her turned up in the coffee shop in the hotel. Ray went to get a haircut and paid more than usual attention to his appearance. This time Ray was there before the performance and sat at the table opposite the piano. The singer entered the bar ready to sing and sat straight down at the piano. She looked up, wearing the sunglasses still, and paused thoughtfully for a second before playing some clean crisp slow chords on the piano and started singing.

When she finished the show she whispered, 'Thanks' huskily and she began to hustle her way out of the hotel bar. Ray got up quickly and followed her out though she was moving hurriedly. She slowed for a second as she approached her car and Ray said 'Hey I just wanted to say I thought you were just terrific, your voice is just beautiful...' and she looked at him and nodded. It was dark out in the car park and she was still wearing the sunglasses. She paused but said nothing more. Ray, with no idea what to say, blurted out the first thing he thought of, 'I... had my hair cut for you!' and he laughed as he realised what he was saying and it sounded strange, even to him. 'That's cute' said the woman 'and I didn't get you anything!'. Ray laughed again, 'Are you coming back?'. She laughed back, and said, 'Don't be so dramatic', and she smiled and got into her car and drove off.

Ray stood smiling and shaking his head in faint disbelief for a few seconds and headed back to the bar. A piano player was hanging around taking the chance to play a piano nicer than the one he usually played. Ray walked back in and sat in his chair was a good looking girl. She was holding his coat and looking around for someone. Ray wandered over to her, and as he approached she said 'Hey, is this your jacket?' and she was pretty and he was full of confidence from the encounter outside and he said 'Yes it is, I just... can I buy you a drink?' and the woman said she didn't see why not as her friend was running late but that when her friend turned up she would need to check out.

When her friend just plain didn't show up it didn't seem strange; by that point the woman and he had had enough alcohol to move things along to that early phase of a relationship where it doesn't really matter what you say because the endgame is simply inevitable, barring an outburst or some kind of real unpleasantness. They left together and as he fucked her he thought of the singer and he thought of Maria and later he realised he didn't know the girl's name. She said she was going away the next day but she'd be back in ten days and maybe they could meet up again. As she left in the morning she said, 'Holy Jesus, you can see right into the hotel rooms can't you!' and Ray laughed as she waved at someone passing.

11

As he walked past the hotel the cigarette guy motioned to him to come across to him. Ray wandered lazily across the street. 'So, I saw you met Donna'. Ray didn't understand what the guy said at first as he had a thick accent and looked blankly. 'I saw her leaving your flat' and the cigarette guy grinned wolfishly at him and winked. 'I said to myself, I said, I bet he plays cards that guy I said that guy right here IS A GAMBLING MAN!! Am I right? Tell me I'm right!' and the guy put his hand on Ray's shoulder and pushed once and folded his arms and laughed loudly. 'What do you play?' 'Now don't you worry about that, you just come along and bring some cash and we'll show you the rules!' and he laughed again and unfolded his arms and said, 'I'm just messin' with you, it's ok man, you come along, next door to the pharmacy, next to the grocery store. I'm Tony, by the way. We got a game on next Wednesday'. Ray was sort of uneasy but he was used to dealing with all sorts of people and the guy seemed ok, and besides, he did like to gamble. Ray nodded at the kid sat on the bucket. 'You think

it's a good idea to play cards with this guy?', jerking his thumb at Tony, and he laughed lightly. The kid looked up a little confused looking and hesitated and said 'Well that depends if you're any good at playing cards' and smiled a half smile at both of them and they all laughed together. 'Well if he says it's ok, then it must be *oh-kay*' said Ray, and he laughed and smiled broadly at both of them and made the 'ok' sign. The man said to see him there at 8pm, and as Ray walked away Tony yelled 'Hey man, you smoke?' and Ray said 'Uh, yeah' and the guy dove into the bin and pulled out a fresh pack and tossed them to Ray 'That's ok, bring a bottle of something, we'll be drinking while we're gambling!'. Ray raised his eyebrows a little but smiled.

12

Ray was watching the TV in one of the rooms through one of the hotel windows smoking and thinking of Maria and thinking of Rachel and thinking and smiling about Donna when the occupier of that hotel room, a clean cut looking guy and an older man who he'd presumed to be a family member or some kind of relative, flicked from the news to some pretty hardcore porn which Ray at first thought was just regular porn but something didn't seem quite right and it dawned on him that although there appeared to be both men and women on the screen it was in fact very much an *all male* cast and he half grimaced and half laughed as he realised and stubbed out the cigarette and moved away from the window and back into the flat. The singer was also due back into town on Wednesday but he figured he could go for a card game and still not miss too much of the show.

13

As Ray bought a cheap bottle of local spirits from the grocer the two cashiers were arguing about the price of stamps – how much they used to be, and how much they were now, and they couldn't agree. Far from it, the gaps in their estimates seemed to be actually growing and it was only because of their slowness that Ray began looking out of the window and thought he saw the girl from a week ago, Donna; someone who looked just like her turned a corner and went down a nearby street. He told himself he must be mistaken as she wasn't due back for a few more days.

He knocked on the door of the place and inside was just like a regular shop; the windows were blanked out, but there was a cheap coffee machine and some tables and a counter and a cash register. There were a few guys sat around, some of them smoking. Tony noticed Ray and said loudly 'Oh hey Tony, how are you! Didn't think you'd show if I was honest!' and Ray grinned his confident grin and said 'Nice place you have here; looks like it should be a taxi office!' and Tony looked shocked for a second but then broke into a wide grin 'Well that's exactly what it *did* used to be! But then we got tired of driving people around and thought we'd sell the cars, buy this place outright and... stay out from under our wives feet! We're good kids though, we stay out of trouble!' and he flashed a shrink-wrapped brand new pack of cards out from a pocket.

He set about finding out who was going to play and started setting out the limits and the rules. Ray had brought some cash and some emergency cash but nothing he couldn't afford. The exchange rates were pretty favourable for him and he was pretty careful with money generally. Ray noticed the man with the broken fingers was sat towards the rear of the place, silently sat there watching the TV with the sound down. A man with hunched over shoulders, a local guy, was nodding at Tony and a few others. They sat around playing a few rounds of cards and Ray's doesn't play badly but he's just pretty much treading water; he wasn't being all that carefree but at the same time not passing up anything which seemed plausible. About ninety minutes in the man with the hunched up shoulders who has been losing pretty heavily since they started leaned forward and rested his forehead on the table and began mumbling a little and cursing. Tony began laughing and he said 'I thought you said it was going to be your LUCKY NIGHT!' and the guy sat up straight and Tony handed him a cigarette and the guy lit it and his hand was shook slightly.

14

Tony shouted 'Stop stop hang on everyone's got to hear this! Tell them the story!' and the man with the hunched over shoulders whose face betrayed the fact that he hadn't had an easy life said 'No no, I don't want to, I just want to leave' and Tony slammed his hand down on the table and said 'YOU TELL THAT STORY NOW!' and the room went sort of quieter and the guy said with an even thicker accent, 'Every morning I buy scratchcard on my way to work. While I drink my coffee and smoke the second cigarette of the day, I scratch the card. And every day, I win *nothing*. This morning, I buy a scratchcard and I win – just small. And I'm the kind of guy when he hits a winning streak he just carries right on with it. So I traded in that scratchcard and I won again, this time a little more. Now I know a thing about winning streaks because I've seen enough of them

and I'm thinking; this is it! Finally! So I trade that card in for more and two of those win, again only small and I won on sixteen scratchcards and I have enough money to pay off the car early, catch up with the bills, take my wife for dinner and maybe save a little. So I came here to carry on my winning streak. And now, in ninety minutes I've just lost all of it' and the man looked genuinely upset. Tony laughed hard and yelled 'I THINK WE CAN ALL AGREE YOUR WINNING STREAK IS PROBABLY OVER AHHAHAHAH!' and he laughed louder than he needed too to drive the point home. The guy with the broken fingers at the back of the room was softly rubbing his hand and trying not to pay any attention to any of this. Another guy leaned over to Ray and said 'Don't you mind Tony, he's just got a little bit of a mean streak' and Ray shrugged but began thinking it would probably be a good idea to try to get out of there sooner rather than later. Ray said 'Well I'm not sure I'm exactly on a winning streak but I guess let's have another drink and maybe give it one more go' and they got back to the game, the man with the hunched shoulders just sitting there looking defeated and blankly watching the cards being dealt.

An hour later, they'd almost finished the bottle of spirits and Ray stretched and said he wanted to go and watch the singer at the hotel bar and no one objected to him leaving, he was a little down in monetary terms but he'd liked the fact he'd been invited.

15

He wanted to pop up to his flat to get a copy of a photograph that he wanted to give to the singer. It was a simple photo of some lemons laid out for sale, on a cart, but the way the lemons had been cut and were opened, coupled with a slight mis-exposure had led to a really beautiful shot where the lemons seemed to be arranged so randomly but with such balance and such arrangement that it looked completely *un-random* and the shot had a print-like quality to it, and the light was unreal. As he reached his room he noticed that his door had been forced and he gingerly walked inside, pushing the door slowly. He had the sense that no one was there and stood still for a half minute to confirm it. There was some family sort of noise from one of the other apartments on his floor so he didn't feel completely alone. He looked round his flat and noticed one of his suitcases had been pulled out of place. He went over to the suitcase and flipped the lid open with the side of his finger and inside the suitcase were two guns and an envelope. Ray's heart pounded hard. He picked up the photograph he'd come for and closed the door leaving everything as it was as best he could and went back downstairs and outside into the night.

16

As he walked into the bar the show was already halfway through and the singer with her sunglasses on was moodily drenching a popular old song with smokiness and seriousness. As he crossed to find a seat she seemed to notice him and he couldn't tell but he thought she sort of glanced at him. He sat down in a chair with his drink and put the photograph on the table and wondered what on earth he should do and what the fuck was going on.

17

Donna came and sat down beside him almost immediately. Exactly at the same time that Ray quietly said 'You're... back early?' she said 'I'm... back early' and they both laughed at the coincidental timing. She asked 'How were things without me? Managed to stay out of trouble?' and she winked theatrically and laughed childishly and lightly. Ray looked straight at her and decided to take a gamble. 'I don't know... something's going on'. She gripped his arm and said 'Shit I knew something was up I just fucking knew it man'. Ray said 'Will it wait until the end of the song?' and she looked strangely at him and said, 'I guess' and shrugged. Ray carried on listening to the singer. The song finished and Donna, hardly able to contain herself, breathlessly continued, 'I overheard something about they're going to call the cops and frame you for some heavy shit, we have to get that shit out of there quick!!'. Ray gulped but didn't panic. 'I don't know'. The singer announced that this song would be the last song, she had to cut the set short to help someone in trouble. Ray said 'Ok, we'll go after this'. Donna looked at him like he was mad. The singer sang a dreamy song from a few decades ago and Ray sat very still and again got the feeling that she was singing just to him. The piano player played the final chord and Rachel moved slowly towards the back of the club. Ray said 'I've just got something I need to give to her' and wandered off, while Donna looked very confused.

At the back of the club Ray looked around for the singer with her sunglasses but couldn't recognise anyone and then saw a woman with a bobbed haircut and a lazy eye and realised it was Rachel, without sunglasses on. She looked up darkly and Ray smiled and she sort of half smiled too and Ray wandered over and said 'Rachel, I brought you something'. One of Rachel's eyes looked at Ray and the other looked out somewhere far off, in some other direction.

Ray smiled still and said 'I brought you a photograph, I mean, I'm sort of a photographer and I wanted to give it to you as I'm nearly finished staying here and I thought you might like it' and as he said the words, at the back of his mind he panicked at the current situation back at his apartment which he still had to work out, but this was more important right now. 'That's a beautiful photo' said Rachel, her lazy eye wandering everywhere apart from over the image. Ray said, 'Listen... I have something to deal with, with someone, and he sort of nodded in Donna's direction '...but will you wait here while I deal with it, I'll be back really soon?' and Rachel said 'Ok' calmly and smiled. Ray wanted to stay with her but he handed her the photograph and said 'Just... hang on...' and turned and walked swiftly out of the hotel. Donna was saying 'We got to get rid of it'. Ray still hadn't put a plan together but knew he had to do something.

As they headed towards the entrance to the apartments Ray had a strange instinct that something wasn't right. Several things happened in quick succession. The cigarette guy appeared in the window of one of the hotel rooms but only for a split second. The man with the broken fingers crossed in front of the bin. The fat young man was drumming on his bucket louder and louder and seemed to be holding his breath. The woman waiting for her boyfriend broke into tears and started yelling 'HE'S NOT COMING BACK, IS HE? THEY'RE NOT COMING BACK, ARE THEY?' over and over and louder than Ray had ever heard it before. A car passed slowly in front of them with the music loud and distorted blaring out the back of it almost in slow motion and it set Ray's nerves even further on edge.

Ray turned around and Rachel was there in front of the hotel holding the photograph and she looked calm. Everything went quiet and the focus, the frame, seemed to settle onto her and Ray walked over to her and asked her, 'You got some place we can go? I don't think going in there – my own apartment – is a good idea right now' and Donna had crossed the road by this point and was yelling over the noise 'Hey come on let's go let's go, we gotta ...you know' and Ray shook his head real slowly and all of a sudden the air was filled with sirens as four police cars screeched into the road in front of the flat and a few policemen jumped out of their cars and one of them gestured to Donna and Donna threw her bag down on the ground and said 'goddamn it you're goddamn too fucking *early*' and she looked up at the hotel window and shrugged and Rachel looked at Ray and her other eye looked in a different direction and she said blankly 'I don't think so' and when Donna looked back around Ray was gone.