

TEXT ADVENTURE

*' SPIRALS,
PT. 3 '*

stanley lieber

1

Albert Lunsford stomped into the kitchen, snatched the cigarette from Plinth Mold's mouth and promptly knocked over one of the bowls.

"I'm not eating that slop!"

Slow drag on the cigarette. Noticed the mess he had made on the floor.

"Something fell," tutted Plinth.

2

"Where are we going, anyway," asked Lunsford, eyes swiveling to the program of scenery changes that cycled outside the kitchen window.

3

"Wait, what am I doing here," Lunsford finally wondered.

4

The panther loped into Lunsford's room and nosed through his blankets. The child was still asleep.

Poked through his papers and other personal effects. Tepid fare, nothing actionable. Motioned for the others, who entered the boy's room in order of descending rank. Counsel could remain outside.

Each panther resumed his usual station, studying the menu with pronounced concentration. Selection completed, their shadows merged above the corner bed.

Julius Schlumpfe was the first to be eaten.

"Halt," whispered Alpha.

The youngest panther licked the blood from his paws. "Schlumpfe bland," he complained, a fresh streak of blue paint drawing a line across his cheek.

"Clean yourself," whispered Alpha.

"Trying to do," mumbled the youngster.

Alpha pulled back the covers as Lunsford shifted, turned over in his bed.

5

Opened his eyes.

Pictures, in and out.

Moire.

A large black cat lay sprawled across his legs.

Lunsford reached over and turned on the light. The cat held his eyes, which felt as if they were spinning out of his head.

The cat divided and re-absorbed, but maintained eye contact throughout its performance.

The cat was a panther.

Lunsford's pleasure was evident.

NOTES

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