

To: Ezra & Jerrit

Time period: Post Covid

Items: Chicken Nugger, Bad Colombian Cocaine, and a Mechanical Keyboard

CRUNCHES IN THE NIGHT

Violent flashes from Jake's computer screen illuminate his blood-shot eyes. Spells and screams leak out from the gaming headset that Jake wears; composing what can only be described as an erratic symphony of fantasy and death, accompanied by sharp clicks from the constant button mashing on Jake's mechanical keyboard.

Several stories below Jake's apartment, a local bar buzzes with energy. As if coaxed in like flies by the low hum of the fluorescent lights, eager college students and young professionals exchange germs and suggestive looks. The excitement of the bar can be felt even as high up as Jake's 5th story apartment window.

But Jake wanted nothing to do with the plebeians below. He wouldn't allow himself to be so easily disarmed by the empty promise of alcohol and good times. He had work to do. A high score to beat. An E-tournament to train for. Jake is a creature of isolation and solitude, this was his life long before the world shut down, and this will be his life until his last breath. Reality only mattered in-between games.

As if in protest, Jake's stomach rumbles from within. It's been too long since he fed himself, The energy drinks had finally worn off. Jake leans over his desk and forces himself to do a line of bad Colombian cocaine through a biodegradable straw. He rubs his nose in disgust. He could almost taste the baking soda cut

in it, but he didn't care. It got the job done. This was the pick-me-up that he needed to get food.

Jake stands up, and looks out of his window past the bar. A few blocks away, Yellow and blue neon calls like a lighthouse to a hungry sailor's stomach in a storm of starvation. It is the glowing sign of "NUGILICIOUS NUGS AND CO." Jake knows what he needs. Chicken nuggers.

Jake checks his phone. 10:40 at night: 20 minutes to secure the sweet crunchy golden nectar.. But he has to hurry. This is the only thing that will give Jake the boost he so desperately needs over his virtual enemies. Sweet poultry power.

Jake maneuvers his way through the busy street as the bar crowd shambles throughout the street like drunken zombies. He pays no mind to the people partying, pouring out into the streets around him on this cool Friday night, he had a task at hand.

And then, there Jake was, in front of the sacred temple. Nugilicious Nugs and Co. His stomach growls in anticipation for what is soon to come.

Jake yanks the front door open. His palms are still sweaty from stress gripping his gaming mouse, making the cold metal handle slippery to his touch. Jake holds the door and waits, not to be polite, but to expedite the departure of a man in a burgundy suit, whose hands are too full with a large order to quickly push the door open and leave.

The Young woman behind the counter smiles warmly as Jake approaches the counter, but Jake isn't interested in pleasantries. There is no reason to look at the menu or delight in small talk with this woman, for he knew what he wanted. The infamous 24 count chicken nugger and a large cola sipper was the only thing worthy to satisfy his hunger. Jake smiles, bathing in his victory, as he proudly states his order.

But something wasn't right. The woman behind the counter didn't ring him up. "I'm sorry, we are all sold out of chicken nuggets." She politely states, her eyes filled with eager optimism and customer service.

Jake's triumphant smile vanishes. He stumbles backwards in disbelief, struck by a thousand heartbreaks. They were all out.

"You, you sure there is no more in the back that could be cooked?" Jake's plea comes out as a whisper. No louder than a wounded beast exhaling its last breath.

"I'm sorry there is nothing I can do. Would you like a Crispy Nug sub instead?"

Crispy Nug Sub? Crispy Nug Sub!
What an insult.

It took Jake every fiber of his being not to go off in the middle of the restaurant. Preposterous. THEY'RE OUT!?

The veins in his neck pop out as he shakes his head. Jake tenses, Holding back the threat of tears in his eyes stemming from a disappointment few people in this world would ever experience. And then, without a word, Jake leaves.

Stumbling through the night, only the eruption of nearby Sirens and flashing lights bring Jake back to his senses from being plunged in his own world of despair. Jake rounds the corner to see an ambulance park in the middle of the intersection in front of him. Several police cars block traffic. A horrific accident has taken place.

Jake scans the carnage and spots the man in the burgundy suit. Paramedics check his vitals and promptly load him onto a stretcher. The man stares with glassy eyes at Jake as blood oozes from his forehead.

Chaos continues to unfold, but then Jake sees it. The unattended box was visibly undamaged. It must be the final order from Nugilicious Nug And Co. Sitting there, in the street, like a lost puppy with no master.

For only a second, Jake thought about returning the order to the wounded man in the ambulance, but then why should he? Why should he show the man mercy when that man so selfishly took all the last batch without a bat of an eye for the other customers that might follow him? This man deserved the justice he had received. And Jake deserved his prize.

Jake darted past the first responders and into the street. He grabbed the boxed order and fled the scene like an Owl hunting its prey. As Jake gets to the

street corner, he glances back at the ambulance as the doors close. The man in the burgundy suit locks eyes with Jake for a fleeting instant before the doors slam shut and the ambulance speeds off into the night.

Back at his apartment, Jake wastes no time unraveling the plastic bag and popping open the large box. Like a true Christmas miracle, the order was miraculously in pristine condition.

Two boxes of twenty-four chicken nuggers, two large cola sippers, a crispy nigger sandwich, and two sides of Crunchy French Nug Fries!

Jake takes a large gulp from the sweet cola sipper before carefully removing his first tender, juicy, nigger. His taste buds explode with ecstasy. Jake holds back his urge to devour the entire order, and instead forces himself to savor each bite, out of respect for the chicken nuggers, as he should. Something this special should not be so mindlessly consumed.

He moves onto the Crunchy French Nug Fries. The French Nug Fries are so perfectly crunchy and salty, he drinks an entire large cola sipper to finish both servings. But this wasn't enough. Jake finishes both twenty-four nigger boxes. It was a feast!

Soon it was time for a shower. Jake had a blanket of crunch crumbs and crispy flakes on his clothes, paired with the sauce, which covered his mouth and fingers, plus, Jake had nearly broken into a sweat, simply from the excitement of it all.

Jake hops in the shower and washes himself. A faint clatter from outside of the closed bathroom door raises every hair on his body. The warm flush of adrenaline takes Jake's breath away.

"Hello?" He Yells, poking his head out of the bathroom, using the door as a buffer to protect him from the hypothetical intruder. He scans the apartment.

"It must have been the apartment next door, or maybe something fell off of my desk after it got moved when I was eating."

Convincing himself that nothing is there, Jake returns to the shower.

"W h e r e a r e m y c h i c k e n n u g g e r s ?"

A voice booms just outside of Jake's bathroom. Jake jumps from the shower and grabs a towel. There is the unmistakable movement from the other side of the bathroom door.

"Hello?" Jake yells again; although, this time with much less authority. Silence. He cracks the bathroom door open. The apartment is unnaturally dark. Through the crack of his ajar bedroom door across the living room, Jake's computer monitor abruptly lights up.

Jake sprints across the living room and flings the bedroom door open, to confront the possible intruder, but finds no one and nothing out of place. He slams the bedroom door shut, safely locking himself in his room. Jake's shallow breath is the only sound.

Then, a clitter clatter from the mechanical keyboard. Jake creeps closer to inspect the source of the noise. There's text movement on the monitor.

"Where are my chicken nuggers????" is typed on the screen.

"W-Who's there?!" Jake cries out. The door to his bedroom clicks open.

Jake freezes. *"I just shut that door."*

The piercing groan of un-oiled hinges is unmistakable.

Jake spins around to see the man in the burgundy suit floating in his doorway. He holds what was left of the large cola sipper in his hand.

"Where are my chicken nuggers?" the man says in a ghastly whisper.

"I-I ate them I'm sorry- I tried to bring them to you but you were already gone and I didn't want them to go to waste!"

"Silence!" The man screamed. "There's a Crispy Nugger sandwich in the bag still!" "WHO DO YOU THINK I AM?!" The man's unnatural voice booms throughout the apartment.

"Please I'll give you whatever you want just-" In a flash, the man lunges toward Jake.

Jake's screams are cut short as he cries his last breath while the man in the burgundy suit slashes Jake's stomach open with a knife.

The spectral man's pupils dilate in delight. "MY CHICKEN NUGGERS!" He inserts the plastic straw from the large cola sipper into Jake's stomach and sucks with in-human force. Jake's lifeless body jerks and convulses from the vigorous sucking from The man in the burgundy suit as he triumphantly pulls the half chewed and liquified chicken nuggers out of Jake's stomach.

That day Jake learned a valuable lesson, never take another man's chicken nuggers. Never.