BELIEF

Written by

Richard F. Russell
INT. FINN’S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

A typical college room. Some music posters on the walls, a desk, small fridge, the usual amenities. On the bed, CARL, 25, paunchy and sloppy, shaggy beard, concert souvenir t-shirt and boxers. He reads an iPad and eats potato chips.

The door opens and in steps FINN, 19, backpack and ponytail, a pretty coed. She stops and stares.

FINN
What are you doing?

CARL
What does it look like I’m doing?

FINN
You’re eating chips in my room, in my bed.

CARL
Finn, Finn, this may be your first year here, but you know the rules. No one has a personal room. We’ve evolved beyond the ancient constructs of ownership. We share, Finn, we share.

FINN
Your room is a mess, isn’t it?

CARL
I don’t have a room. The space I was occupying no longer fits my needs.

FINN
And this ‘space’ does.

CARL
Precisely.

She goes to the closet, opens the door, and finds his clothes hanging here. Hers have been dropped to the floor. She picks them up.

FINN
Really?
CARL
I think there’s a nice corner space available one floor down.

FINN
Why didn’t you take it?

He nods at the binoculars on the window sill.

CARL
No view.

He grins, and she’s disgusted.

FINN
You’re a pig.

CARL
Whoa, Finn, that’s hate speech.

She drops the clothes and goes to the desk, opening the bottom drawer.

FINN
You ate my cookies?

CARL
They were delicious. But next time, could your mother make more chocolate chip and less peanut butter? Peanut butter sticks to my teeth.

FINN
That’s stealing.

CARL
Didn’t we just cover personal ownership?

FINN
Wait till I tell the resident assistant.

CARL
(chuckling)
I am the resident assistant. But you’re welcome to take this up with the council. The leaders of Marx quad work hard to create a safe space for everyone.

She retrieves her clothes.
CARL
(pointing to a garbage bag)
I packed your underwear for you. You don’t have to thank me.

FINN
You went through my--

CARL
It’s not as if I tried on anything. I mean, I’m not feeling transgendered today.

FINN
You went through my UNDERWEAR?!

CARL
Besides, nothing fit.

FINN
I can’t believe...what are you?

CARL
When you’ve been here as long as I have, you’ll appreciate our forward-looking system. You’ll leave behind all that BS they fed you back in Iowa.

FINN
Wisconsin.

CARL
And embrace the new order. Unlike the Neanderthals who still believe in an antiquated constitution.

She turns from him, goes to the plastic bag, and dumps all her underwear on the carpet.

CARL
You’re making a mess.

She takes the bag and stuffs in the clothes from the closet.

CARL
I can’t wear those.

She sets down the bag and goes to the window where she picks up the binoculars.

CARL
Hey, those are expensive.
With a smile, she opens the window and dumps the binoculars.

    CARL
    What the fuck.

    FINN
    No personal ownership, right?

She grabs the bag and leaves.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Finn, with backpack, walks a dark, narrow street. A lone streetlight on the corner provides scant safety. No cars, no people, the houses derelict, this block looks abandoned. Ahead of her, a mangy dog crosses the street.

She pulls out her phone, looks at the screen a moment, and keeps walking, trying to read non-existent house numbers. She stops in front of a dark house, something falling apart.

Taking a deep breath, she walks up the steps to the front door. There is no sign of life. After a moment, she KNOCKS.

Nothing.

She KNOCKS a second time.

Nothing.

She’s about to turn away, when the door is cracked. Only blackness can be seen within.

    FINN
    I...I heard there was a meeting.

No one speaks, no one moves.

    FINN
    A meeting for people like me.

No answer from within.

    FINN
    If I’m wrong...

The door starts to close.

    FINN
    Wait, wait, I believe in property rights and freedom of speech and due process.
From inside comes a voice.

VOICE
And?

FINN
Capitalism.

The door swings open, and Finn enters.

FADE OUT.