

*The Reporter Regression* 

# The Reporter Regression

by  
Barry Oliver

First Published 2020

Copyright © Barry Oliver

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced,  
stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form,  
by any means electronic, mechanical,  
photocopying, recording or otherwise without the  
prior written permission of the publisher and author.

Any resemblance to any person, either living or  
dead, or actual events are a coincidence.

Title: The Reporter Regression

Author: Barry Oliver

Editor: Rosalie Bent & Michael Bent

Publisher: AB Discovery © 2020

[www.abdiscovery.com.au](http://www.abdiscovery.com.au)

## **Other Books by Barry Oliver**

The Rehab Regression

The Daycare Regression

The Virtual Reality Regression

Max, the Diapered Zombie Killer

## **Other Books from AB Discovery**

There's still a baby in my bed!  
So, Your teenager is wearing diapers!  
Where Big Babies Live  
Home Detention  
The Book Club Baby  
A Woman's Guide to Babying Her Partner  
The ABC of Baby Women  
Overlapping Stains  
The Babies and Bedwetters of Baker St  
The Bedwetter's Travel Guide  
Me, Myself, Christine  
Adult Babies: Psychology and Practices  
The Joy of Bedwetting

Living with Chrissie – my life as an Adult Baby  
The Adult Baby Identity – a self-help guide  
The Adult Baby Identity – the dissociation spectrum  
Six Misfits  
Six Misfits – A man and his dog  
The Six Misfits – the seventh misfit  
Becoming Me – The Journey of Self-acceptance  
The Epitome of Love  
Australian Baby: a life of diapers, bottles and struggles  
Fear and Joy: a life in and out of diapers

## *The Reporter Regression*

Diaper Discipline and Dominance  
Coffee with Rosie  
Being an Adult Baby  
The Adult Baby Identity – coming out  
as ABDL  
The Adult Baby Identity – Healing  
Childhood Wounds  
A Brother for Samantha  
Mommy's Diary  
The Hypnotist  
Chosen  
The Snoop  
The Washing Line  
My Baby Callum  
A Baby for Felicity  
The Regression of Baby Noah

The Fulltime, Permanent Adult Infant  
Sissy babies: the ultimate submissive  
Tales From The Nursery 1-10  
Living Happily as an Adult Baby  
Bedtime Stories for Sissy Babies (Vol  
1-3)  
A Baby for Melissa and her Mother  
Baby Solutions  
Discharged into Infancy  
The English Baby  
A Mother's Love  
The Psychiatrist and her Patient  
The Reluctant Baby  
Alice and Her Baby  
Damaged Goods  
Embracing Infancy  
One Week in Diapers

## Contents

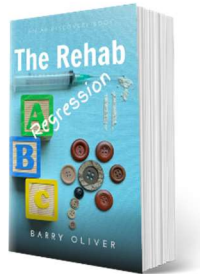
Investigative Reporter   Chapter 1 .....	7
Hunted   Chapter 2.....	21
Timmy Turtle   Chapter 3.....	31
Toddler Routines   Chapter 4 .....	44
Mr. Dillon   Chapter 5.....	54
Blanket Forts   Chapter 6 .....	62
Turtle's Forever Family   Chapter 7 .....	74
Car Seat Confession   Chapter 8.....	82
Pizza Delivery   Chapter 9.....	92
The Kern's Kids   Chapter 10 .....	97
Weekend Plans   Chapter 11 .....	108
Swim Diapers and Water Wings   Chapter 12.....	116
A Black Eye   Chapter 13 .....	129
Timmy's New Life   Chapter 14.....	140
The Kerns Revisited   Chapter 15 .....	152
The Lion's Den   Chapter 16.....	161
The Coffee & Book Jazz Club   Chapter 17 .....	167
Ransom   Chapter 18.....	176
The Mafia Man   Chapter 19 .....	187
Thunderclap   Chapter 20 .....	196
Goldmine   Chapter 20 .....	205

## *The Reporter Regression*

The Centerville Children’s Museum  Chapter 22.....	214
Adoption   Chapter 23 .....	221
The Promotion   Chapter 24 .....	230

# *The Reporter Regression*

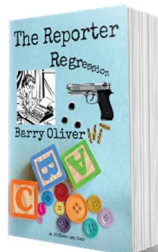
## The Buttons and Blocks Regression Trilogy



*The Rehab Regression*



*The Daycare Regression*



*The Reporter Regression*

# Investigative Reporter | Chapter 1



The Director of the Forever Free Drug Rehabilitation Center was a tall man, at a little over six feet, with a firm handshake. His hair was dark and styled professionally. His suit was crisp and unwrinkled. He was an obvious leader projecting confidence, a man clearly used to being in charge and comfortable with that fact.

“Donald Miles,” he extended his hand in a professional greeting. “I’m the Director.”

“Tim Lansing, reporter for the Centerville Daily Newspaper.”

The reporter introduced himself by way of name and title. As a career reporter, Tim was used to dealing with such confident men as Donald Miles. He accepted the handshake with a firm though not crushing grip. In his own way, Tim Lansing was just as confident and used to being in charge as the Director. However, to be a good reporter he had learned to mask that confidence behind a disarming, friendly curiosity, a projection of honesty and likability.

“Thank you for meeting with me today,” Tim continued. “I’ll try not to take too much of your time.”

## *The Reporter Regression*

The two men were standing in the front entrance lobby of the rehab center where various chairs and coffee tables set with courtesy magazines on them were placed in the corners. A security guard sat behind a semi-circular station lined with video monitors, microphones, a control panel, and a telephone. Without saying a word, he pressed a button that unlocked the door behind him with a loud buzz.

“It’s not a problem at all,” the Director replied. “Come with me. I’ll take you to my office.” He led Tim through the now unlocked door. “Would you like anything to drink?”

Tim had learned to always accept polite offers as a way of putting others at ease. “Yes, I appreciate it. Coffee if you have it.” Coffee was always a safe bet. Everyone had that.

“Of course.” Director Miles walked ahead down a hallway on the other side of the door. “I have a coffee bar in my office. It’s just this way. You can choose whatever you want.”

The hall leading to Director Miles’ office appeared to be in the administrative section of the building with various small offices on each side bearing placards with labels such as Human Resources, and Operations, and I.T. Department. Tim imagined the part of the building housing the rehab residents would be behind yet another locked door guarded by another security officer. If the interview went well, he might even ask for a tour. If not, well, he had no particular interest in seeing drug addicts. It wouldn’t be the end of the world.

At the end of the hall, Miles turned left and opened a door to an office labeled simply, *The Director*. Tim followed behind. The office was clearly larger than those of his underlings although not extravagantly so. Its walls were lined with the usual assortment of



## *The Reporter Regression*

business degrees and awards. In the far corner was the obligatory executive desk with the obligatory executive chair. Situated in front of the desk was a guest chair, padded and comfortable, but specifically designed to make its occupant feel smaller than the man behind the desk. Tim smiled and took the guest seat.

Director Miles walked to the other end of his office where he kept a mini-coffee bar. The coffee maker was the usual business model, the kind that used a pre-made coffee pouch, pouches that came in a variety of flavors. Next to it was a small tray of danishes, muffins, and fruit.

“What flavor would you like?” he asked while selecting his own pouch.

“Oh, just a breakfast blend, if you have it,” Tim replied.

“Care for something to eat?” Director Miles asked next.

Eating while trying to conduct an interview could get awkward. It was the one polite offer Tim had learned to turn down unless they were sitting at a restaurant.

“No thank you. Just coffee.”

Miles returned to his desk, handed Tim the breakfast blend coffee, then took a seat behind his executive desk with his own extra dark French roast. He took a slow sip from his mug, then set it down on his desk.

“Well, Mr. Lansing, what can I do for you?”

Tim took a much quicker sip of his own coffee, then set it down on the guest coffee table, also designed to look inferior to the executive desk. He smiled inwardly, being quite familiar with this sort of game. In this sort of formal setting, Tim would only get

## *The Reporter Regression*

*official*, company-approved answers to his questions, but official answers were at least a start. The real questions might be answered, or at least hinted at, if he were granted a tour of the facility. Tim would have to see where this went. He pulled out a notebook and pen, then opened the notebook to his questions.

“Well, Director Miles, as I explained on the phone, the Centerville Daily is doing an article featuring various mental health and social services in town. Forever Free has acquired quite a good reputation.” Tim turned a page in his notebook and pretended to be surprised by a note that he had already memorized. “You advertise a 100% cure rate.” He made his most disarming smile. “Man, how do you do it?”

Timothy Lansing, investigative reporter for the small-town newspaper *The Centerville Daily*, didn’t give a rat’s ass about Director Miles’ answer. He couldn’t care less about the fates of the reported missing drug addicts that he was supposedly investigating. Tim was far more interested in his own fate at the moment: keeping his own ass alive.

In his former life, under his original name Michael Stone, he had published an article describing the activities of the powerful Mansford mafia family, based out of Chicago but with operations around the country. He had dealt them a stinging although not crushing blow. The head of that family, Mr. Julius Mansford a.k.a. Don Mansford - although he was neither Italian nor Sicilian and had no relation to either of those mobs - had nearly gone to jail. “*Nearly*” being the operative and most relevant word with respect to Michael’s life.

When the protracted court trial was over, Don Mansford had ordered a “hit” on Michael Stone’s life. Michael had fled Chicago and

## The Reporter Regression

took another newspaper job under the name David Boseman. When David Boseman had been found by the mob, he moved again, this time taking the entirely generic name John Smith and working for a much smaller newspaper.

When John Smith had been discovered, he fled yet again. Now on his fourth name, fourth state, and working for his fourth and smallest-of-them-all newspaper, *Tim Lansing* had landed in the small college town of Centerville in the middle of nowhere. He had no desire to draw attention to himself by writing spectacular stories or exposing powerful people.

Tim was merely following a story about some missing drug addicts who no one really cared about. The police had already completed their investigation and found nothing. The addicts in question had merely completed their treatment at Forever Free, then gone off somewhere and disappeared. It was presumed they had gone back to drug use, overdosed, and died and their bodies had yet to be found. It was really the end of the story. There was little chance that Tim Lansing could turn up anything big.

This was exactly what Tim Lansing wanted - a nothing story - something no one would care about or pay attention to. Tim just wanted to stay alive. So far, he was doing a good job of it. He was determined that Centerville would be his last move and the name "*Tim Lansing*" would be his last name.

Still, the Forever Free rehab center did claim a 100% cure rate. If that were true, then what happened to the missing addicts? Tim smelled a story and rather enjoyed the intellectual exercise of tracking it down. He enjoyed interviewing a confident executive in the center of his power, then later, if a tour was granted, trying to weasel some morsel of information unintentionally out of the man.

## The Reporter Regression

Tim just hoped the story wouldn't be too big. He was hoping for the more mundane and pedestrian answer that, *No, in fact, we do not have a 100% cure rate. That's just advertising.* Then, Timothy Lansing could write his story and be done. No one would care about a drug rehab program that didn't cure 100% of its clients.

Story forgotten.

Reporter goes on living.

The Director drummed his fingers on his desk with an uncharacteristic look of uncertainty. He seemed oddly confused by such a simple question.

"Perhaps you are thinking about the incident a couple of years ago." Miles opened a manila file on his desk and retrieved an old newspaper clip. "A college kid by the name of Toby. He had graduated from our program, then overdosed and died at a party a few weeks later." Miles slid the article across the desk toward Timothy. "I believe your newspaper printed this."

Yes, Tim was familiar with the article. He had found it while researching the story. It pretty much confirmed that Forever Free did *not* have a 100% cure rate. But Tim wondered how Director Miles would explain that fact.

"Yes," he replied as he accepted the newspaper clip, though he already knew its contents. "I was wondering about that. Do you have a comment?"

Miles drummed his fingers again, then stood abruptly from his desk. "Perhaps I could give you a tour of our facility. Would that interest you?"

*Score!* Tim cheered mentally.

## The Reporter Regression

“Only if you have time for it. I know you are busy.”

Director Miles walked over to the door to his office and stepped out into the hall. “I have some time. I would like to show you.”

Tim followed the Director back into the hallway outside Miles’ office. At the door labeled *Operations*, they turned right down another short hall that ended at an unlocked, unguarded door.

“This is it.” Miles opened the door and both of them stepped through.

The hallway beyond was no longer carpeted and the overhead florescent lights were a little harsher than in the executive suite. Still, the hall was clean and neat with business artwork hanging from the walls featuring calming forest and ocean scenes. Miles led Timothy to a windowed door where he could see a group therapy session in progress.

“For our clients’ privacy, I ask that you not speak with them, but this is one of our groups. I can show you their dorm rooms as well.”

Tim regarded the therapy session which was composed of five residents and a lead therapist. It appeared to be entirely ordinary. Next, he followed the Director farther along the hallway.

“What we do differently,” Miles proceeded to explain. “Is to create a nurturing, almost family-like environment for our clients. We meet their needs, whatever they may be. They learn to trust that their needs will be met. In some ways, it is like a parent-child relationship. You might even say we pamper them. But it is our hope that through our unique therapeutic approach our clients learn that they can be loved and taken care of without the use of drugs or alcohol. We are confident that if they adhere to our lessons

## The Reporter Regression

and instruction, our clients *will* be 100% cured by the time they leave.”

“I see,” Tim nodded knowingly. The Director’s explanation sounded like the flowery placating words used by corporate management.

The Director now lowered his head with a slight shake.

“But, alas, when they leave Forever Free, they are still adults free to do what they will. There is nothing legally we can do to force them to follow our instructions. Sadly, this is what happened to Toby. He chose to veer away from our teaching. If only there were some way we could keep them in their child-like state...” The Director’s voice trailed off. “But that would be impossible.”

“I think I see what you mean,” Tim answered calmly. There was no need to point out the obvious, that Director Miles had just admitted that Forever Free did not have a 100% cure rate, that this number was perhaps their *target* or *ideal* rate, but not the real one. Tim now had what he needed for his article. There was no need to continue the tour, though he followed the Director out of courtesy.

At that moment, another rehab employee approached the director holding a tablet open to a client’s file.

“Sir,” he interrupted softly. “We have an issue with...” He glanced suspiciously at Timothy who was obviously not an employee. “With one of our clients,” he continued. “Could I talk to you a moment?”

“Of course.” Miles waved Tim away. “If you will excuse me, Mr. Lansing. This is confidential. It will only take a minute.” Miles walked with his employee farther down the hall out of hearing range from Tim.

## *The Reporter Regression*

Tim stood in place patiently while glancing at his watch. There was no need to stay any longer, so he planned on making an excuse to leave as soon as Miles returned. Then, he noticed another hallway branching off perpendicular from the main hall. Glancing back at Miles and the employee to be sure they weren't watching, Tim innocently stepped down the adjoining hall. He could claim to be interested in a mountainscape picture framed just ahead.

When Tim came to the first doorway, he turned the handle, and finding that it wasn't locked, stepped into the room. He was immediately taken back by a most unexpected sight. Tim had apparently walked into an infant nursery room. Along one wall were two cribs. Another wall had a changing table with an adjacent sink. In the middle of the room were playpens, rocking chairs, and an assortment of infant and toddler toys. The floor was covered in an appealing primary color checkered carpet, and the walls were painted soft pastel colors. A border wallpaper along the ceiling featured various infant jungle animals.

"That's different," Tim commented out loud.

"Yes," Miles responded, suddenly standing behind his reporter guest. "It's a nice touch, don't you think?"

Tim jumped slightly at Miles' silent approach. "Oh uh, I saw that stunning mountain scene at the end of the hall and I just wandered this way. The door here was open."

Director Miles smiled disarmingly. "No need to explain. I'm glad you found this room. As I said, we cater to our clients' every need." Miles stepped into the middle of the nursery and panned his arms around. "Some of our clients have children. Rather than break up the family, we can house their children here while their mothers get

## *The Reporter Regression*

the rehab they need. It really works for the better. Our moms are so much happier knowing their children are nearby.”

Although the principle of the thing sounded nice, Tim wondered about the wisdom and safety of housing children in the same building where drug addicts were receiving therapy. He knew many of them also suffered from mental illness in addition to their addictions. Being this close to children seemed like a bad idea. Either way, this was not Tim’s problem. He had the information he needed for his “fluff” investigation piece to be printed in the minimally circulated Centerville Daily Newspaper. He looked at his watch again.

“Well Director Miles, I do thank you for your time. I’m impressed by your center. I can see why you get your well-deserved praise. I, however, have another call I have to make in about ten minutes. I hope you don’t mind if I head to my car.”

“It was my pleasure,” Miles stepped out of the nursery and closed the door behind. “I hope I have answered your questions. My employee here can show you out to your car. I, too, have another pressing matter to attend.” Miles then handed Timothy his business card with a phone number written on the back. “The direct number to my desk. Don’t hesitate to call if you have further questions.”

Tim pocketed the card. “I appreciate your openness.” Tim handed the Director his own card. “In case you need to reach me for anything.”

And with that, Timothy Lansing’s interview with the Director of the famed “100% cure” Forever Free rehab center was over. Tim was certain no one would care about the story. He anticipated living for a long time to come.



## *The Reporter Regression*



Silvia Wilson, the Director of Buttons & Blocks daycare center across the street from Forever Free, stood in Miles's office. She had helped herself to Miles's coffee bar while he was out. Silvia was the pressing matter that Miles had alluded to the reporter.

"Well," she said sipping her coffee. "Do you think he knows anything?"

"About what we really do here?" Miles walked to his desk where his earlier cup of coffee still sat cooling. "I don't see how he possibly could." He sipped the cool, bitter liquid and grimaced. "In fact, he hardly asked any questions at all. Nothing that isn't already public knowledge. I had to tell him about the Toby incident. But of course, he already knew about it."

"As long as he doesn't next try to interview our daycare, then we can assume he doesn't know," Silvia said. "It's only the Centerville Daily after all," she added judgmentally.

Miles had to agree with Silvia's low opinion of their local paper. Regardless, he still felt ill at ease. First the police investigation last year, now a newspaper reporter. He wondered how much longer they could go flying under the radar, so to speak. How many missing clients could they afford before the investigations became serious?

Of course, none of their clients had actually died. They were all safe and sound in Silvia's daycare across the street, or in adoptive

## *The Reporter Regression*

homes across the state. But no investigator would ever recognize a missing client if they happened to find one. Their appearances had quite dramatically changed. Oh, the occasional reported death such as the Toby incident - although the whole story had been fabricated - lent credibility to the theory that Forever Free's missing clients had merely moved on somewhere else, then resumed their drug habit. But how much longer would that story last? Miles scratched his forehead.

"What are you thinking?" Silvia recognized when her colleague was hatching a plan. "Something special for Mr. Lansing?" She grinned wickedly. "Your predecessor, Director Steel, wouldn't have hesitated."

Miles shook his head. "No, not that. We're not in the business of silencing people anymore." He thought a moment longer. "But something. We have to act before it's too late. Having the newspaper on our side could be helpful."

"And how will you do that?" Silvia put her coffee down, never really wanting it in the first place. It was just something to do while she waited.

"I don't know. But I'll think about it."

Miles walked over to the sink by his coffee bar and dumped the tepid coffee. What to do about it? How could he win over the newspaper? Miles toyed with one idea after another. Surely, he could do something that would convince the reporter.

One of those ideas began to form and take hold. Perhaps Miles could learn something from the previous Director of Forever Free after all. Perhaps he could demonstrate to Tim Lansing the real power of their therapy—a therapeutic intervention, but one that would not be permanent.

## *The Reporter Regression*

Miles turned toward Silvia again. “Funny you should mention Director Steel. Perhaps his tactics might be of some use in this situation.”

Silvia arched an eyebrow. They had both disavowed doing the kind of thing Steel had done. “What are you thinking about?”

Miles tapped his chin and side-stepped the question. “How is our former Director these days?”

Silvia crumpled her disposable coffee cup and tossed it in the waste. “Oh, he’s still running around in diapers. I’m told he is slow to potty train. Has no interest in it really.”

Miles continued tapping his chin. “But he’s happy, right?”

Silvia nodded confidently. “Very much so.”

Miles was satisfied with her answer. He next regarded the business card Tim Lansing had given him. “Perhaps I’ll give Mr. Lansing a call later. Invite him back to Forever Fee. Let him see what we really do here.”

## *The Reporter Regression* 🖨️



## Hunted | Chapter 2



**A**fter two years of evading and nearly being caught by the mafia more than once, Tim Lansing had forced himself to accept his real name so as never to utter his real name - Michael Stone - by accident and had learned a few critical survival tricks. Some of the more obvious were to take different routes to and from work each day, to not shop in the same stores or eat at the same restaurants within two weeks, and to never park in the same parking space either at work or at his apartment complex. In fact, Tim didn't even park in the same lot assigned to his apartment building but made liberal use of nearby parking lots. He never rented an apartment for more than one year, and never drove just one car—he now owned three.

Tim was constantly growing and then trimming his facial hair, constantly experimenting with different hairstyles and colors, and continually buying new clothes. It became a running joke at work, as well as a betting game among his colleagues, as to what Tim Lansing would look like today. To his office mates, it was merely

## *The Reporter Regression*

workplace fun and a chance to exchange a few dollars. To Tim, it meant daily survival.

After the interview at Forever Free, Tim had taken one of his dozen routes back to his apartment and parked in a place he had not used in over a month. He then sat in his car for nearly an hour pretending to read emails and texts on his phone, while really keeping an eye out for suspicious people in or around his apartment. When he was certain the coast was clear, Tim quickly made his way to the building, always careful to keep his head down and avoid direct eye contact with anyone.

Once at his apartment door, Tim waited until he was alone in the hallway before actually opening his door, pretending to fumble with his keys if anyone happened to walk by. He then disarmed his alarm system and rapidly closed and dead-bolted his door. Only then could Tim breathe a sigh of relief.

Tonight, that sigh was interrupted by a leather bag being thrown over Tim's head and a fist punch into his gut. Tim doubled over in pain, unable to breathe, and was dragged by his shoulders into the kitchen where he was forced, still gasping for air, to sit in a chair.

"Well, if it isn't Michael Stone," said a gravelly voice, the kind that belonged to someone hired to kill. "We've been looking everywhere for you."

Tim was able to choke out words from under the leather hood. "My name is Tim Lansing. I don't know who you're talking about." It might not be convincing, but any seed of doubt would be to his advantage.

## The Reporter Regression

"Let me see," the gravelly voice spoke again. A hand lifted the leather hood for just a second, then lowered it quickly. "Looks like I win the bet. The beard is gone."

"Looks like you're right," another rough, although higher-pitched, voice answered. Tim could hear the sound of paper bills being thrown onto his dining table.

*Fuck*, Tim swore under his breath. *They know about the office betting. They know where I work. They know who I am.*

As if reading his mind, the first voice replied. "Yeah, we know who you are Tim Lansing, A-K-A John Smith, A-K-A Michael Stone."

*Fuck*, Tim swore again. "You forgot David Boseman," he added bitterly. That earned him another punch in the gut.

"Don't be a smart ass," the deeper voice said when Tim could finally breathe again. "We know who you are. More importantly, Mr. Mansford knows who you are. Seems you owe Mr. Mansford some money so he sent us to collect." The voice paused, then a hand grasped Tim by the jaw. "You still there? You didn't pass out did ya?"

After that second punch, Tim struggled even harder to breathe. "Yeah, I'm here," he grunted between clenched teeth.

"Let's see, Mr. Mansford says you owe him one hundred? How much is it, Brian?"

"You're not supposed to say my name, you idiot," the higher voice complained. "It's a hundred and twenty."

Tim nearly laughed at the goof, but he knew it would earn him a third punch and he would likely pass out after that. He clenched his teeth tighter.

## *The Reporter Regression*

After a second, the first unnamed voice caught his composure and continued. “A hundred and twenty million. That’s about it.”

Tim could hear both men moving to the opposite side of his dinner table. He also heard the sound of bullets being chambered into pistols.

“So,” the first voice went on. “If you happen to have one hundred and twenty million lying around, we’ll just take that and be on our way. Otherwise, we’ll take your life as payment.”

This was it, the end.

Tim had only one chance. In their haste, the thugs had only covered his face but had not bound his hands. Tim kept his own 9mm pistol taped under the dining table in the event of emergencies. All he needed was a small distraction giving him time to find the weapon blindfolded. It was now or never.

“Are you sure you want to do that here?” Tim asked, pointing to the front door with one of his free hands. “My neighbors across the way are cops. They’re sure to hear it. You won’t have much time.”

Tim’s statement had the desired effect. From under his leather hood, he could hear the two attackers turning toward the front door to look.

“You’re lying,” the voice named Brian said.

Tim’s other free hand found the gun taped under his table. He pulled the trigger and began firing blindly in their direction. Tim simultaneously dove for the floor while ripping the sack off his head. The two thugs also dove for the floor, returning fire wildly. Cops or no, someone in the apartment complex would certainly be calling the police now.



## The Reporter Regression

Tim scrambled for the hallway leading to his bathroom as he covered his retreat with gunfire.

“I would get the *fuck* out of here if I were you!” he screamed at the thugs.

Once in the bathroom, he locked the door, then went for the outside window. Living on the second floor, Tim didn’t have to worry about someone being just outside his window. He only needed to look down to make sure someone wasn’t waiting for him below. The coast was clear. He climbed out of the window and dropped to the ground below.

Living on the second floor was yet another lesson Tim had learned the hard way after. Living on the ground floor was not an option—too easy to break in from any direction. Living on any floor above the second meant you were likely to be seriously injured dropping to the ground. Thus, the second floor was only ever his living option. It made apartment hunting rather difficult if not impossible.

Tim hoped that all the gunfire would draw any other attackers out into the open. Seeing no one moving suspiciously outside, he was able to dash through the apartment complex toward one of his cars - not the one he had arrived in. Tim closed the door and was starting the engine just as he heard the first sound of police cars in the distance. Help was on the way and his mafia hunters would likely scatter like roaches.

Still, Tim wanted to get out of there unseen. He knew better than to speed away. With almost superhuman willpower he steeled his nerves and drove calmly at the speed limit out of the parking lot, onto the main street in front of his apartment complex.

## The Reporter Regression

Tim drove a full mile before he realized blood was streaming down his face. *Oh God, I've been hit!* He pulled his car to the side of the road and desperately felt his scalp for the gunshot wound. After a moment, he found the source of bleeding. He had not been hit by a bullet. He found only a small, half-inch gash where his head had struck the dinner table when he dove for the floor. Tim's fear eased just a fraction. He reached into his glove box for a box of facial tissues, pulled out a handful, and pressed them firmly to his cut. Looking at himself in the rearview mirror, the left side of his face was covered in blood.

"You look like shit," he said to his reflection. "Better get cleaned up before I attract attention."

While Tim was locating a bottle of water on the floor of the passenger side, three police cars went zooming by at high speed with sirens and lights blaring. Tim waited for them to pass by before sitting back up to clean his face.

At that moment Timothy Lansing was overcome by emotion. Despite all of his survival tricks, the mafia had tracked him to his workplace and apartment. They had even circumvented his home alarm system. Now he was on the run yet again with only the contents in this car.

Tim leaned his head against the steering wheel and sobbed. "Where the hell do I go now? I'm screwed."

The police were one option, but they would do little more tonight than take his statement. He would still have to go somewhere, but where? With a credit card, he could stay at a hotel, but he had learned the hard way that hotels were not a secure option. It would only buy him a few days, then what? Fleeing the country was now out of the question since his passport and all

## The Reporter Regression

identifying documents were back in his apartment. It would be death to go back there since the mafia likely had the place under surveillance, and the police would probably confiscate everything anyway after the gunfight.

“Where do I go?” he called out to his car.

As if in reply, Tim’s cell phone buzzed with a text message. He looked down at the screen.

MR. LANSING. THIS IS DONALD MILES FROM FOREVER FREE. I REMEMBERED SOME DETAILS I WANTED TO GIVE YOU AFTER YOU LEFT. I KNOW IT’S LATE, BUT CAN YOU COME BY THE CENTER TO TALK?

*What an odd request, Tim thought. This late at night?*

Any other time, Tim would have said “No, how about tomorrow,” but under the circumstances, he thought differently.

*It will give me someplace to go, if only for a few hours. Tim thought half-jokingly. Maybe I’ll check myself into his drug rehab center. I’m sure I can make something up.*

Either way, Tim decided to accept. He texted his reply.

YES, I WOULD BE HAPPY TO MEET. BE THERE IN AN HOUR.

Of course, he could be there much sooner, but that might look desperate. This time of night, an hour would be more socially acceptable. Tim finished cleaning up his face, then drove off on a long, circuitous route around the city, trying to waste an hour of time before arriving at the Forever Free rehab center.

## The Reporter Regression



Tim knocked on the glass entry doors at Forever Free trying to get the security guard's attention. Obviously, this late at night, the center was closed, and the doors were locked. When the man looked up from his video console, Tim pointed to his cell phone and shouted.

"I have a meeting with Donald Miles. Give him a call. I'm Mr. Lansing from the Centerville Daily."

Tim could see the security guard lift up the telephone on his desk and speak into it. All the while, Tim scanned the parking lot nervously. He didn't think he had been followed, however before tonight, he didn't think the mafia knew where he lived either. A minute later the guard was at the doors unlocking them.

"Please come in sir," the guard said politely. "Sorry to keep you waiting. Mr. Miles is expecting you."

Tim was relieved to be inside and out of view of the parking lot. He had every intention of stretching this late-night interview with the Director for as long as possible. He was now half-serious about checking himself into the center for the night.

*Surely, I could make something up about drinking too much.*

The guard led Tim through the electrically locked door, into the hall that passed through the administrative offices, then finally through the doors that led to the client wing of Forever Free.

## The Reporter Regression

“But Director Miles’ office is back in there,” Tim pointed to the administrative hallway.

“The Director is working on this side tonight. He told me he would meet you here in a few minutes.”

The guard walked down the main hallway, then turned down the side hallway that had the attractive mountain landscape picture. He stopped at the door to the nursery, then opened it.

“Director Miles asked for you to wait for him in here. He asked that you not worry about the location. The rocking chairs in this room are the most comfortable on this side of the facility.”

The guard’s explanation seemed satisfactory enough to Tim, so he stepped into the nursery room and took a seat on one of the cushioned rocking chairs. He had to agree, the chair was certainly comfortable. After the shocking events of the evening and the relief of being at least temporarily safe, Tim felt he might just take a short nap before Director Miles arrived.

The nap eluded Tim, however, as he regarded the nursery. He considered once again how odd it was to locate such a room this close to potentially mentally ill adult patients.

*What mother would feel safe with her baby so close to the other residents? I wonder whose idea this was?*

Of course, the room itself was very welcoming and seemed perfectly appropriate for babies.

*I wonder if they have rooms for older kids. I’ll have to ask the Director when he arrives.*

## *The Reporter Regression*

Tim's memory of that night would end here. That last question about rooms for older kids was the final thought Tim would later be certain of. Everything after that would seem like a jumbled dream.



## Timmy Turtle | Chapter 3



Fifteen-month-old Timmy was flexible enough to be able to get his toes into his mouth, something he routinely did while having his diaper changed and something he was doing at the moment while his caretaker, Ms. Mandy, gathered the supplies to change him. Timmy had a beloved turtle plushie that he slept with at night. He also carried it everywhere with him during the day. It had earned him the nickname “Timmy Turtle.” Mandy had even found a t-shirt with a cartoon turtle on the front, which happened to be Timmy’s favorite shirt, and which he also happened to be wearing at the moment.

Mandy laughed when she returned to the table holding a diaper and wipes. “Timmy Turtle, I can’t believe how flexible you are. I hope your toes taste good.”

It was while his toes were in his mouth, and Mandy was about to remove his wet diaper from that night, that the adult Tim Lansing “*woke up*.” It wasn’t exactly like waking from sleep because, of course, he was already conscious. Rather, it was like remembering that he had once been someone else. For the first seconds, it was like a 15-month-old baby imagining that he had once been an adult—an odd memory for a baby to have but one that entered Timmy Turtle’s mind anyway.

## The Reporter Regression

Then, the memories switched places. He was now the adult Tim Lansing remembering life as a toddler for the past few days. His eyes opened wide and he gasped.

“What happened?” he said to the young woman standing over him.

“You wet your diaper,” Mandy said, smiling as she unfastened the tapes. “I’m putting my little Turtle into a new one.”

*What the hell?* Tim thought although he had sense enough not to say those words. *I must be dreaming.*

Tim had experienced some bizarre dreams over the past two years while running from the mafia. However, those dreams usually involved themes like trying to run while not moving, or desperately looking for one of the many guns he had hidden around the apartment only to find cooking spatulas instead. Once or twice in his life, he had even experienced waking dreams, where he was fully awake in the dream and knew that he was dreaming, although unexplainably couldn’t wake himself.

*That’s what this is, a waking dream. Only in this one, I’m a helpless baby.*

He remembered the thugs who had tried to kill him in his apartment. He expected them to burst into the room at any moment while Tim lay helplessly on a diaper changing table. Eyes wide with fear, he glanced over to the door of the nursery and waited for it to happen.

*You have to admit, Tim Lansing, this nightmare tops them all.*

The woman, Ms. Mandy, went about the ordinary routine of changing Timmy’s diaper. It was simply no big deal to her. She noticed Timmy’s fearful expression and misinterpreted it.



## The Reporter Regression

“Don’t worry. Your turtle is waiting for you at the breakfast table. See.” She pointed to the plushie turtle lying on a plastic picnic table, next to the highchair where Timmy Turtle would presumably eat.

Tim didn’t say a word. He waited for the nightmare to unfold. He knew from previous experience that he would wake up in his bed, drenched in sweat, just as the bad guys were about to kill him.

*Just wait for it to happen. Then this crazy baby dream will be over.*

Mandy finished the job and slipped a bright orange pair of shorts over Timmy’s diaper that matched the orange hat worn by the cartoon turtle on his t-shirt. Next, she carried him over to the highchair and clipped a seatbelt around Timmy’s waist to keep him from climbing out. Mandy reached for the plushie turtle and set it on the highchair tray.

“There you go,” she said cheerfully. “Turtle misses his Timmy.”

Timmy Turtle, a.k.a. Tim Lansing, watched the whole thing like a kind of slow-motion horror film.

*When do the men break into the room? Now would be the time while I’m strapped helplessly into this chair.*

He waited and watched, as Mandy turned to the plastic picnic table to prepare his food. Moments later, Mandy set Timmy’s breakfast on the tray of his highchair. It consisted of a sippy cup of milk that also featured a cartoon turtle on it, and a sectioned plate with yogurt, mandarin orange slices, and oatmeal. She placed a toddler spoon next to the tray, the kind with a large plastic handle and a slight bend in the shaft of the spoon thus making it easier for less coordinated hands to scoop their food. Tim watched the scene in total disbelief.

## The Reporter Regression

*The moment I start eating, that's when they'll attack.*

He could feel it coming. Tim took a deep breath and picked up the toddler spoon.

*Let's get this over with.*

He scooped the first spoonful of oatmeal into his mouth. He was too focused on the coming attack to notice the flavor. The mafia men didn't burst into the room. Next, Tim reached for the sippy cup and drank some milk. Still nothing. Bite by bite, sip by sip, Tim ate his breakfast in this ridiculous fashion.

*I'm a baby eating breakfast in a highchair. I've got to write this one down when I wake up.*

The mafia men never burst into the room. Tim finished his meal. Mandy then unclipped his seatbelt and lowered him to the ground. "Run and play," she said to him warmly. "I'll clean up. Then it's time for daycare."

Tim stood where Mandy had set him, paralyzed in place. Every moment seemed a good time for the mafia men to burst into the room. Now, all he had to defend himself with were plastic baby toys. This would be an equally good time. Still, the expected event wouldn't come. Tim took a few cautious steps. He was surprised by how bad his balance was. He nearly fell over.

*It's like I'm drunk, he thought as he literally toddled from side to side around the room. I'm a drunken baby wearing a diaper holding a plush turtle to defend myself!* Tim held out his arms in a sign of resignation. *Take me now!*

Still, nothing terrible happened.

## The Reporter Regression

Nothing terrible, that is, if Tim didn't count being picked up by the woman Ms. Mandy and carried to his daycare class. Somehow, he knew her name since, in his dream, Mandy had been taking care of Timmy for the past... however many days. He had learned her name sometime during that time.

"Time to play with your friends," she announced. Tim also remembered the daycare room populated by other babies that she had taken him to each day for the past...

*How many days has it been?*

Tim began to experience the uneasy feeling he might not be in a dream. Even for a waking dream, this place was beginning to feel a bit too real. Mandy carried him down the now-familiar hallway outside his nursery room, down the familiar flight of stairs that led to the—also familiar—main daycare hallway now bustling with parents arriving with their children that morning. Some of the children were infants destined for the infant room. Others were older preschoolers destined for the "Big Kid" rooms.

Tim had learned that he went to the young toddler room for those babies, usually around 12 months, just beginning to walk. He had also learned the name of his daycare center: Buttons & Blocks.

*I'll be sure to Google that name when I wake up*, he thought as Mandy opened the door to the toddler room and deposited Timmy Turtle on the floor with his toddler classmates.

"Good morning Ms. Rachael," Mandy said to the lead teacher in the room. Tim had learned that name, too.

"Good morning Mandy," Rachael replied. "Everything okay this morning? How's our little Turtle?"

## The Reporter Regression

“We had a normal night, but Timmy seems a little off this morning. He got scared when he didn’t have his plush turtle with him on the changing table. He also didn’t want to play with his toys. He might need some extra attention today.”

“Or maybe an extra nap,” Rachael added. “We’ll keep an eye on him. He’ll probably perk up when he starts playing with the other kids.”

“Okay. I’m sure he will be okay. Well, I’m off,” Mandy said as she turned to leave the daycare center. She would return later that evening to take care of Timmy for the night until the next morning.

Tim remembered that detail. For some reason, in this alternate reality, only *he* lived at Buttons & Blocks while the other children were taken home by their parents. In his dream state, this fact had seemed unremarkable, just a random detail of the dream. Now in his more waking state, Tim began to think this piece of information was oddly specific.

*Something real is happening.*

Tim shivered at the possibility.

Tim also knew about the naps Rachael had mentioned, and the playing with the kids both inside the daycare and on the outside playground. He remembered the toddler swings and slides and crawling tunnels. He next looked over to the diaper changing tables. He remembered those, too. It seemed like he was always being changed in this dream. Tim lifted his turtle-themed t-shirt and regarded his pant waist where he could see the top edge of his diaper protruding above.

*I wear diapers in this dream, just like the other babies.*

## The Reporter Regression

Just then, one of the boys in his class toddled over to Tim holding a plastic toy car. “Play cars. Turtle play,” the little boy said, then toddled away to where the other plastic cars were spilled on the floor. Tim also remembered that the boy’s name was Darrel, and in the dream, they often played together.

*I’m not drunk, Tim now remembered. We’re just toddlers. That’s how we walk.*

Tim sat a moment regarding his toddler friend Darrel playing with the plastic cars a few feet away. The past few days of Tim’s dream now came into sharp focus, as real as the present moment. Tim flexed his fingers and clapped his hands together. They felt entirely real.

*This is real, he thought, shaking his head. The past few days have not been a dream. This is a real daycare center and I’m in it...as a BABY!*

Tim lay back on the ground and stared up at the ceiling. Even the ceiling was decorated in nursery style with drawings of flowers and cartoon bees and a smiling sun.

*What the Hell am I going to do?*

At that moment, a little girl toddled over to Tim as he lay staring numbly at the ceiling. “Turtle!” she screeched, then fell on top of him.

Tim was jolted out of his daze. “Oh, hi Lydie,” he said as the little girl continued to sit on his chest.

Lydie was another little friend who had become one of Timmy’s regular playmates in the class. In his dream—that he now understood to be reality—she tended to be like this, all rough and

## The Reporter Regression

tumble, more so than many of the boys. Tim wondered if, at home, Lydie might be the only girl in a house full of brothers.

Tim rolled out from under her. “Okay, I can’t breathe. What do you want?”

Then of course he remembered what she always wanted - to play in the soft blocks. It was the same every day. Lydie grabbed Timmy’s arm and dragged him with her to that part of the room.

Lydie was maybe an inch taller than Tim’s toddler self, so he guessed she must be a little older. Tim was not good at guessing baby ages, so he had no idea what exact ages were in his room. Looking around the class, there were between ten and twelve babies at any time in various stages of toddling. Some, like Darrel, had obviously just started walking and fell quite often. Others, like his “girlfriend” Lydie, were pretty good at running, though even she fell from time to time. Tim guessed that put them somewhere older than one and less than two years of age. He also remembered that when kids are this young, their ages are given in months, thus he deduced their ages were between 13 and 23 months.

*That range now includes me!* he thought in total disbelief.

At the soft blocks, Lydie took a diving leap into the pile. Tim stood back and watched her roll and climb over them. The blocks were composed of a spongy material formed into various shapes of squares, rectangles, cylinders, and pyramids. To an adult, they would be the size of a small kitchen appliance, but relative to Tim’s toddler body, they were nearly as big as him. In theory, you could stack and build structures with them, but apparently, that was not what toddlers had in mind. Bouncing and climbing over them seemed to be the point, and it was among Lydie’s favorite activities.

## *The Reporter Regression*

Tim remembered playing in the soft blocks with equal enthusiasm during the past few days.

*Not today.*

Tim could not accept the impossible reality that he was actually one of them, a toddler, a walking baby in diapers.

*It's just not possible.*

Yet, somehow, it was *very* possible and *very* real.

*What the Hell am I going to do?* Tim thought once again.

Tim looked around the daycare room while Lydie climbed and jumped through the soft blocks. The place was, at the same time a familiar sight, but now somehow foreign to him. The room was an open rectangle shape divided in half by a three-foot half-wall. On his half of the room was the play area, with toys kept in brightly colored plastic bins along the walls. There were also four toddler-sized tables used for both eating and doing artwork. Apparently, the highchair was only used for Timmy back in his nursery.

On the other side of the dividing wall were the diaper changing tables and the nap area which had a combination of cribs and toddler cots. Some of the younger toddlers still required a crib to keep them in place. The older ones, like Lydie, could sleep on the cots. Tim gulped and covered his eyes. He remembered he was one of the younger ones still in a crib.

And of course, their lives seemed to revolve around the changing tables. Tim blushed again thinking about it. He would be changed sometime after morning snack, again after lunch, after nap, after afternoon snack, and usually one other time. Tim estimated he would be on the changing table four to five times a day. In the morning it was Ms. Rachael and Ms. Claire who did all the work. In

## The Reporter Regression

the afternoon a part-time college student named Mr. Dillon arrived to lend a hand.

Tim had also learned that in daycare, everyone went by first names. The kids went by just their first name, while the adults were either Ms. or Mr. First-Name. Last names were deemed too formal. It was just as well. Tim had no intention of mentioning the name Lansing, ever.

*I know what I'm not going to do*, Tim concluded as he took a seat on a soft block cube while Lydie continued to play. *I'm not going to tell anyone who I am.*

Over the past few days, it was clear that both the children and the adult caretakers seemed to think he was just one of the toddlers. Tim intended to keep it that way. Until he could come up with his own plan, he didn't want to reveal his hand thus bringing down untold consequences.

Staying undercover was especially hard right after lunch when little Timmy's bowels did their usual thing. Tim knew that his toddler body would give him very little warning before it happened. He walked over to the closed door that led to the adult bathroom. Standing on tiptoe he could just reach the door handle, but he couldn't get a grip on it.

Even if he had managed to open the door, it was too late. Tim could feel his bowels release. He squeezed his eyes shut.

*Oh God, this is not going to be easy.*

Although he had been living in diapers over the past few days, this was the first time he had pooped while in his adult waking state. It was a force that his immature body could not hold back.

*I can't stop it.*