

BURNING KARMA

David Rafn Kristjansson

Wild Pressed Books

Published by Wild Pressed Books: March 2016

First Edition

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters and incidents are the product of the author's imagination. Any resemblance to actual events or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

The publisher has no control over, and is not responsible for, any third party websites or their contents.

Burning Karma © David Rafn Kristjansson 2016

Contact the author through their website:

<http://burningkarma.net/>

Chief Editor: Tracey Scott-Townsend

Cover design by: Jane Dixon-Smith

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

Paperback ISBN: 978-0-9933740-0-5

eBook ISBN: 978-0-9933740-1-2

Print edition

Printed in the United Kingdom

Wild Pressed Books

UK Company registration number 09550738

<http://www.wildpressedbooks.com>

BURNING KARMA

Kafli 1 - Kunming, China, 2011

The Hospital

MY MOUTH TASTED like a dirty pavement, my head pounded as if demolition was happening inside it and my body ached all over. What the hell had happened to me? More to the point, I didn't even know where I was. I called out, managing to mumble something in Chinese. At least I was able to remember that I was in China. With the tread of quiet shoes a nurse appeared, looming over me.

Oh, so I am in hospital.

"How do you feel?"

"I'm good," I mumbled haltingly. But my face must have been telling a different story.

As I scratched my head I felt the rough surface of a bandage under my fingertips. I also noticed some bruises on my hip. I saw that my foot was hanging out of the bed, too. What clothes I was wearing were filthy: thin black socks, underwear and a ripped stained t-shirt that used to be white.

A thorny, dry throat made it hard to swallow.

"Please," I said to the nurse. "Can I have some water?"

"Give me a minute."

Why the fuck is she laughing? Wasn't that against some kind of nurse-patient agreement? *How dare she laugh at me?*

I tried desperately to remember what had happened, why I was at the hospital, but I couldn't and my head hurt even more by trying.

"Where is my wallet?"

"You didn't have any wallet yesterday," the nurse replied. She was still laughing, her face contorted with it. Or was it my fucked-up brain making me think that?

I watched the nurse tidying an empty bed while I tried to recall the previous night.

Absolute blank.

Damn, I needed to get out of this place, whatever hospital I was in.

She must have sensed my restlessness because the nurse paused in her duties and came over to me again. She asked if I needed more water. I nodded, watching her closely, hoping she wouldn't laugh anymore. As she left I looked around the room, afraid that people might hear my thoughts, they were so noisy.

Three beds in the room. On my left side an empty bed, the one just made up by the nurse. On my right was an occupied one. I couldn't see the other patient's face because it was hidden behind the curtain between us. I only saw feet. It looked like a woman's feet; they were small. They were also dirty and yellowish. No movement. I wondered if she was already dead. The thinking made my head spin, so I tried to stop but that was impossible.

Where's my phone? I have to get out of this place. What time is it? But I didn't really want to know what time it was. I just wanted to sleep and wake up somewhere else where my life was a bit more manageable. I wished I had my cell phone so I could call someone to pick me up. My flatmate would do. Anyone.

I tilted my head back, closed my eyes for a rest.