

## OPEN DOORS

Once upon a time, he turned his own head around, although he attributed his renewed belief in himself to his friend who had kept him alive by not letting him drink any more.

“He had to stop, he knew it, or he was done.”

Our subject: “He protected me from me.”

This was when they were back in the hood.

The black guy got rolled up. Some Crip trip.

The white guy, our subject, he worked on it. “The alphabet thing,” he called it. He learned to read. Then he gets rolled up.

The black guy walks into the South library one day. He’s on his way home. Heard I was in town.

“I heard about your class.”

I tell him I spend more time on that class than my squeeze likes.

“Women need attention,” he tells me.

The class? Through a local community college. They don’t know what the fuck I do, it’s well attended, that’s how they get their dough.

My riff about Plato’s cave. You know it? I extrapolate on it. Have copies of Plato’s text if you want to read it.

They laugh.

We’re all in the cave now: Advertising is the one they pick up on quickly.

My disclaimer is: Quiet is kept.

The black guy listens to Anderson, the inmate clerk. While he’s in the hole, Anderson figures out a reentry plan that has legs.

The Crip’s plan is simple. “It’s not a de Crip, that’s unrealistic, un Crip is the goal,” Anderson tells him, “escape from that consciousness.”

This guy sees this.

Get him out of his county of commitment. Find a community college with a program he likes anywhere in the state and find a way to fund it. Get him out of Dodge with something rewarding to do, before they slam the door.