

She has sparkles on her face full hips and a thin waist. Where did her clothes just go? It doesn't matter. Alone in the middle of the lake, her eyes locked on Calvin. The city's emergency warning system erupts in his ears. Slowly the buildings which towered over the street Calvin stands in disappear, the remaining details turn black. Calvin drinks the glass of water he sets by his bed side every night, his alarm clock still whining, he walks across his bed room and hits the off switch.

Its 7 AM, on the first day of the new quarter. Before cracking his eggs in a buttered pan Calvin washes the dishes left in the sink from the night before. He must be careful to only use the water as he needs. The district is allocated a strict amount each day. Its his standard weekend morning routine; wake up tidy up the living space, eat breakfast, and open a book. 11 AM rolls around and the door adjacent to Calvin's opens. Tye steps through the doorway making a straight trajectory for the couch. Tye fits his virtual reality device to his head and disappears into adventure where he will spend the majority of his day. Staring from his workspace Calvin envies his living mate.

Calvin's dream since he was a boy is to get accepted to the program. It is extremely rare for anyone of his societal class to be accepted. When he is not working his [shift](#) he is exercising and reading. He keeps his life organized and is his biggest critic. Although he is occasionally envious Tye's lifestyle of leisure, there is not much time for pleasure in these critical years. BEEP BEEP BEEP the street sweeper screams, SMASH SMASH the garbage truck operator has no concept of respect. Calvin screams "FUCK YOU!" out the window and returns to his work. Unfortunately for Calvin, he has a creative writing assignment due in an hour. Stress is flowing and creativity is not. He puts a tea pot on the stove top burner and Lil Yaghty on the stereo. Its astounding how Yaghty can lay a track with seemingly no effort, if Calvin was on the track not even his mother would buy it. Writers block still plaguing Calvin he thinks about the street sweeper, garbage truck, and Yaghty. They're all good at what they do and they only do their own job. Implicitly they [trade](#) with each other. Calvin is inspired. He finds his living mate whom is living in a pigsty. Calvin may be weak at writing, however has the organizational skills to tidy a room. As for Tye he is a creative writer but lacks the motivation and organization to clean the space around him. Calvin proposes to Tye that if they switch tasks not only would they get done faster, the quality would be much improved. Tye praises Calvin's wisdom.

Within half an hour both tasks were complete. They both felt much better they didn't waste their time struggling through their own work especially when the quality would have been much worse. Yaghty still banging in the background, Calvin is free to focus on things he does well.

Calvin grew up outside of the high class always envious of the lifestyle and prestige that came with it. The social construct of the state is nontraditional. There exist the members of the program and the others. The others are allocated sufficient recourses to live comfortable as long as they work for the state. The outsiders can become members of the program by passing rigorous tests and getting recommendations. It is a highly competitive process, but this is Calvin's dream.

Approximately half a century ago the members of the ruling class revolutionized the way their society functions. The leading council began observing a trend where by the well educated were not reproducing and the poor and uneducated were creating offspring at alarming rates. What the program aims to do is create two divisions; the first is the care takers, the second is comprised of the leaders of the state, scientists, and corporate heads. The care takers are surrogate families that raise and nurture and educate the youth. The latter division have their reproductive organs harvested and return to focus on the advancement all of society. The members of the program live a generous lifestyle however a key pillar of the program is that the quality of human life must trickle down to all members of society.

The hours that Calvin does not spend working his [shift](#) he spends preparing for his [entry](#) exams for the program. It is not just the quality of life Calvin seeks, he idolizes the [efficiency](#) of the program and believes he can contribute to further enhance society. Calvin wants his legacy to be written in history.

Echoes of explosion shook the building Calvin lives in in the middle of the night. The darkness temporally illuminated by the energy of the blasts. It wasn't till the morning that the Calvin could make sense of the events of previous nights. In the center of town, a mob surrounds the carnage of locomotive scraps. Rumors say the railway company's new mandatory minimum speed could be the cause of the disaster. Allegedly the company tried to increase supply by requiring the trains to travel faster.

Regardless of the cause of the accident, the line was the main supply of fish imports. Fish being the primary source of food due to the awkward positioning of the city. The city resides at the base of a large mountain range, on the other side lays the sea. Due to the accident, not only has the supply of fish the locomotive was carrying has gone to waste, but the railway will be blocked until the wreckage is cleared. The extreme shortage of fish causes the price to skyrocket.

Due to the unusually high price in the area fish retailers are bringing their supply from other districts to the east district because it is more profitable. The city government decides to step in and temporarily restrict the price on fish sales in the district. The citizens rejoice because food is once again affordable, however Calvin knows this will have negative consequences. Calvin campaigns within his district that in due time the government restriction will backfire and there will be a shortage of fish. He tries to spread the message but the citizens discount his opinion.

Just as Calvin had predicted. The supply of fish in the district drops to dangerously low levels. The government thought that supply could maintain constant levels and be affordable at the restricted price, however Calvin's intuition allowed him foresight to see the bigger picture.

The mountain range overlooks the city, the white caps and tall trees seem to stretch infinitely far. Smoke rises from the city, the reflection of the skyline can be seen in the crisp morning water. Calvin feels bliss breathing the morning air knowing that the [market](#) for fish has stabilized.

Although the [market](#) has stabilized the citizens are still feeling the effects of a recession, mainly they have less disposable income. Calvin has taken note of this as he walks about the city on his way to work. He ponders how can buyers and sellers best mutually benefit without lowering the price of goods? Fish is the primary source food for the people of the city, a price change wouldn't create large fluctuations he thinks to himself as he crosses the street. Calvin passes through snow white steam rising from beneath the street still pondering concepts of the [market](#).

If he can't resolve the fish [market](#) perhaps he can resolve a different [market](#), he thinks to himself, perhaps the [market](#) for soup. Soup is a fairly unnecessary good in the city, as price changes the amount people that purchase it changes quite a bit too. Calvin looks up to the pale blue sky in a

eureka moment.

Calvin headed for his local soup shop. He explained to the owner that because his good is relatively unnecessary if he ran a deal where the price of the soup per unit was reduced as the size of the container the customer bought increased he would be effectively selling more soup and also achieving more revenue. The store owner couldn't believe what he was hearing, he thanked Calvin for his revolutionary idea. Word began to spread amongst the city of the new sales model as well as Calvin's radical ideas. It is extremely rare for anyone outside the program to achieve such notoriety. Although Calvin is proud of the impact he has made on his community, it is unlikely that he will gain [entry](#) on one achievement alone. He stays humble and keeps to his plan of passing the [entry](#) exams. Due to the increased profits he has brought the shops in the area they have banded together and gave Calvin a monetary gift as a thanks.

Because of the money from the shops Calvin helped out he has some additional income this month on top of his normal salary. He begins to ponder what activities he can do or additional purchases he can make with the extra money. Calvin has always wanted to get out of the city and visit the great mountains. He gathers all the information for ticket pricing down at the train station. After reviewing all the pricing information Calvin realizes he can not afford the trip he has always dreamed of with the extra money alone. Calvin debates the possible strategies that would allow him to take his trip. He comes to the conclusion that if he forgoes a few extra, non necessary, purchases he makes every month he could use that money to fund his trip. Things such as milk and cereal that bring Calvin less joy could be substituted for funding the trip. With his budget in order Calvin heads down to the ticket office and buys a ticket to the base of the mountain range.

Calvin looks up in awe. The mountains stand taller than any building in the city. White with snow and covered in tall lanky trees, the range appears to stretch infinitely long. A gondola loading station stands in front of Calvin, the cable stretching to the peak of the mountain. The cable must be half a mile long but has carts every 50 feet it moves quite slow however due to the single loading station.

Calvin steps inside the cart. A young bellhop with a drawn on pencil thin mustache greets him and takes his belongings. Calvin has never experienced this luxurious of service before. It is a long journey to the top of the

mountain accompanied by sights unimaginable to the people of the other class. The door opens and a crisp breeze bites Calvin's face. The cart bellhop hands a second bellhop, mature enough to grow a real mustache, Calvin's belongings. Perplexed, Calvin continues to the hotel where he will be spending weekend. The true mustache bellhop opens the grand door of the hotel revealing the grand foyer. He hands Calvin's belongings to a third bellhop. The nonsensical inefficiency begins to bother Calvin. The bellhop shows Calvin to his room.

Upon settling in to his room, Calvin heads back to the lobby in search of the hotel manager. He explains to the man that although the bellhop 'assembly line' of sorts may run efficiently, he could actually run the hotel more cost effectively if he had less bellhops. Calvin goes on to explain that the salary of each additional bellhop is not returning the same production, but actually productivity is falling. The manager contemplates Calvin's words for a bit, nods his head and shakes Calvin's hand.

Calvin's reservations have been extended for a day as well as become all-inclusive by the hotel manager, grateful for his advice. He heads down the grand stairway to the lobby of the hotel. During his stay he has gone skiing and also ice skating. Curious to find an adventure for the day he peruses the brochures stacked in the lobby. Calvin notices more than ten brochures advertising trail hikes and sight seeing. Calvin reads the brochures comparing and contrasting in order to find the best hike for the cheapest. To his surprise, they all advertise the same trail hike at the exact same price. When Calvin arrives at the head of the trail he finds ten trail guides all advertising the same hike. They each have their own small podium with a trail map on the front. All but two tour guides are busy on the trail with other customers. Calvin ponders which one to choose. He offers to pay \$90 rather than the \$100 that they are all charging. Only one accepts Calvin's offer. The one who refused the offer begins to break down his podium and leave. It appears he cannot compete at such low prices.

The hike takes Calvin through the back side of the mountain range, over rivers and through caves. They come upon a large waterfall, Calvin is in awe, the water fall is taller and wider than any building in the city. They continue the hike back around to the head of the trail. Upon leaving Calvin notices the price is back to \$100 and there is one less trail guide. The city's standard of living is regarded as the highest in all of the state. Despite being home to two distinct classes. The lower class has all the basic

necessities of life plus some luxuries. The upper class has access to unimaginable luxuries. The two class system is widely accepted by all city's inhabitants because the upper class provides for the lower class. Class mobility is possible, however the members of the lower class are generally satisfied with their quality of life. They would rather enjoy their virtual reality systems and Fast Fish Tacos than devolve the future.

Moving out of the city is not a consideration that crosses the minds of the people. The city is one of a kind. Sophisticated and well established, any other settlement in the state cannot compete with its glory. Aside from the quality of life it offers the well-established infrastructure allows for easy movement and [trade](#). The large walls and fortified gates keep intruders at bay. The city owns all the known mineral mines in the state as well as the oil wells. For a person or group to attempt to establish a competitive society would be foolish.

Calvin acknowledges the facts of life in the state. Although not apparent to many of the citizens he realizes that he does not have a [choice](#) of where to live. The most Calvin can do is get accepted to upper class by entering the program. the program requires an [entry](#) exam in order to be selected for the exam. Calvin boldly chooses to write about the dangers of having no competitive cities in the state.

Calvin seeks something more significant than a lifestyle from becoming a member of the program. Calvin has always wanted to make a difference in the city and be remembered for his great contributions. If a child is born with in the program, they are grandfathered in. it is assumed without question that if both the parents were great scientist, business aficionados, superior law makers, or visionary artists the child will inherently possess a high IQ and natural talents. If the child is less fortunate to be born outside the program they have a small margin of [entry](#), however, it is possible.

On this day Calvin is to compete amongst 5 other prospected members for [entry](#), only two will be selected. Over the past year, through his contributions to the city, Calvin realized he has a natural talent for what he has called "economics", or the science of the interaction of sellers and buyers. Calvin hopes his ground breaking discoveries will get him accepted to the program. some of the other contenders are proficient in math and others in business. The selection committee has to choose the two worthiest applicants.

The program is a synergistic organization; each member provides as well as consumes, in the end no one person is greater than another. Many people take part in many different occupations ultimately fulfilling the same goal. Calvin enters an empty room. He will spend the next four hours completing an exam then one more hour in a interview.

The city seemed especially quiet on this morning, dark shadows cast by looming clouds complimented by the white noise of the rain drops drowning out any individual sound. It seemed like more bikes were on the road than ever. The bike lane which ran directly through the center of the street was densely packed with two-way traffic dangerously lacking organization. Crossing the street on this particular day was a nightmare. The chaos of the morning commute was perplexing to Calvin as he stood alone in the bus stop. Calvin stood alone ten minutes past the scheduled arrival time before catching a glimpse of a morning paper passing by in a gust of wind. Snatching the paper out of the wind and unfolding it the headline appeared in bold “Bus Union on Strike.”

Calvin continued to read the article on his long walk to work. A bus driver is regarded as a specialized occupation in the city. Workers will attend nine months of special training before receiving their certificate. The article explains that the workers banded together to seek higher wages. If the bus company is to comply with the union its operation costs would increase which would ultimately transfer to the consumer. This is not the first time the bus drivers’ union has exerted their dominant power over the city as ticket prices are already unusually high. The paper goes on to explain how the citizens of the city plan to fight back against the greedy bus drivers by seeking alternate means of transportation. Calvin puts down the paper and smiles. It’s his first project as the first ever chief economic advisor for the state.