

Börkur Sigurbjörnsson

I vs Society

flash fiction



Urban Volcano

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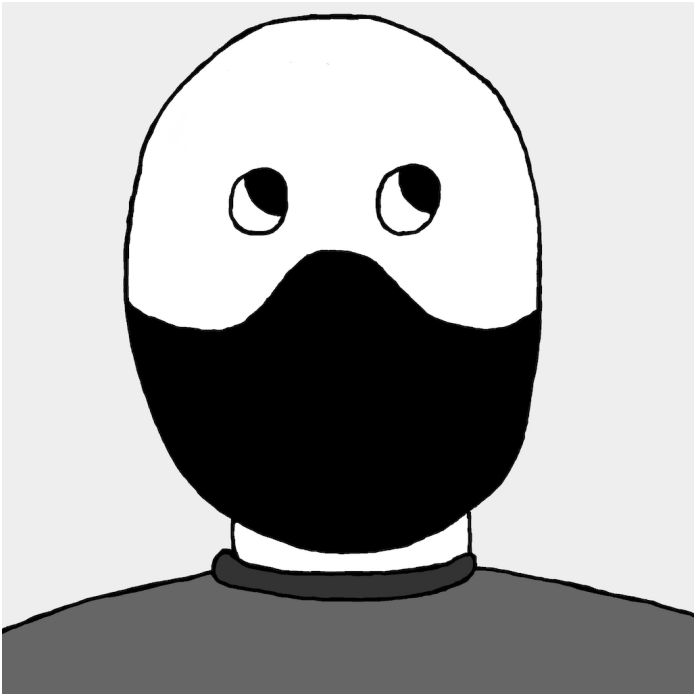
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Illustrations: Börkur Sigurbjörnsson

Publisher: Urban Volcano

<https://urbanvolcano.net/>

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I VS SOCIETY

“Would you care to explain to me how this box of Ferrero Rocher chocolates ended up in your pocket?” the security guard hurled at me as I sat motionless with my hands in my lap on an uncomfortable wooden stool in the corner of his office. His voice was partially muffled by the resistance the sound-waves struggled to overcome on their journey through the thick fabric of the high-end face-mask covering the lower part of his face, no-doubt reducing the dramatic impact he had intended his speech to have on me—not unlike the effect of a gunshot silenced by a feathery pillow, as we so often see in the movies, I

assumed. “Do you realize that shoplifting is not merely a crime against this very fine retail establishment? It certainly is not. It’s a crime against society as a whole. It’s an attack on the core values of our civilization. Trust. It’s people like you who erode the trust between the human beings in this world.”

I just looked up at him and shrugged without giving any verbal reply. I had nothing to add to his philosophical analysis of humanity and its interactions. There was no point. He wouldn’t understand me anyway. They never do—his types. Or any other type, for that matter. He wouldn’t understand that from my point of view—from my philosophical standpoint, if he wanted to take the discourse to that level—my acts were not aimed against society. Quite on the contrary. One could clearly see them as being caused by society. It was not me who was mistreating the code of our civilization. It were the norms of this said civilization that were mistreating me—putting me into an awkward situation.

Had the world not demanded of me to put on a face mask before entering the supermarket, it would not have ignited in my head the stereotypical scene from the movies where the bank robber puts on a balaclava to cover their face before entering a bank. And whenever a cause rears its head, effect is bound to follow. Just ask Anton Chekhov—although he would rightfully accuse you of misquoting him. The point is that the whole episode was out of my control. It was society, with its norms and values, that made me feel like a bank robber. And when society makes me feel like a bank robber, I feel like robbing a bank. And if not a bank, then at least a box of choco-

lates. It's just as simple as that. But I knew he wouldn't get it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Börkur is an avid storyteller with a keen eye for quirky characters, funny dialogs and vivid scenario descriptions. Much of his writing falls within the genre of realistic fiction and his stories are more often than not based on real events in the author's life. Although the tales contain grains of truth, they are melded with fiction, making the reader curious to know the line between reality and fantasy.

Books

Among Other Things, flash fiction (2024)

Talk To Strangers, short stories (2019)

Flash 52, flash fiction (2017)

999 Abroad, short stories (2012)

Links

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