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Social Fabric; Clothing in a Free Society

A Speculative Fiction Essay

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11/3/2023

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Author note: Thank you to the Srsly Wrong discord server for
help editing and generating ideas.

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Amongst the anarchists, there are great collective lending libraries of clothes, and accompanying them are great collective laundries. Most clothes that are washed in the collective laundry are held communally, and can be selected from the whole on a basis that anyone can use them, but no one is allowed to destroy them.

Those who do not wish for a great variety of clothing will often go to the seamstresses and tailors and have constructed for them a few perfectly chosen items, or will select a few items from the whole which are close enough to be made over to their needs. Often, these choice items are of a form of traditional dress; those articles that have proven themselves under the wide test of history; kimonos, saris, chitons, the great plaid and shirt, shift and petticoats and stays with an over dress, the various robes of the various monks and nuns — although, there are some more recent designs which serve the function just as well, such as the common over-dress. Many of these traditional and custom dressers have very few

total articles of clothing, but also rarely share them. In a majority of these styles, there is an under layer that is easy to launder, and most individuals have 2 or 3 of these under layers, and launder only them frequently and often by hand or in smallbatch guilds, creating little strain on the great laundries of the clothing libraries.

With these two main ways of organizing one's dress, the society manages to keep overall production rather low. Those who wish for variety hold their variety in common. Those who wish for more custom design tend to need little more in the sake of variety. In any case, the total number of clothing articles someone from either group may be using at any one moment is fairly comparable.

Those in society who are at the outlier of size and shape interact similarly to the rest, just in an expansive system of time. New articles of clothing are almost always brought into the fold because an individual cannot find something that suits their exact desires or needs, and there is nothing available which would be appropriate to make over and reshape for the wearer. Items are returned when they are no longer suited, and then they are kept in common till they are suited to another, or made over, or worn out. When one is very large, or needs medically assistive clothing, or is very tall, they have clothing made if there is none available. However, because there is less of a demand on these more specific articles of clothing, they are also worn out less, and take up relatively little in storage space. And so, the clothing of these outliers is also in the library system, just checked out less often- just as a specialized book might be. If something is so particular that after a few generations it still sees no use, it can be made over completely or scrapped for stuffing, and new items can be made for those who come along.

Due to the nature of bodily change; that we will grow, that we will shrink, that we will convert to new religions and reembrace old ones; that we will give life and be taken from it, there are always a fine number of perfectly crafted custom clothes being returned to the share houses and clothing libraries.

Having worked in the laundry, and having worked in the cotton fields and flax thrashery, and in the hunt or slaughter, and understanding of the limitations of production, those who make clothes take great care to make them to last. But that is not the only way that they ensure that their uses can be long in years and multitudinous in function. Clothing that is being made for general use is often made with removable panels to adjust the sizing, and overcloths are often pieced together and held by a great many laces, easily stripped stitches, or zippers. The sleeves are often designed such that many are in great bell shapes, with fastening cuffs that can adjust to a variety of sizes. Buttons and loops can be used to bunch or loose the large folds and plumes of fabric, or to hold them higher and short, which creates a vast array of looks and shapes and configurations of one garment. The same is true of many of the great skirts of the common overdress, which is designed to be floor length, but which can be easily folded and set to rest just past the crotch in a great petticoated cone; or nearly any length in between. These adaptations, along with the lacing panels on the bodice, mean that these dresses can sometimes be worn from child to elder in many configurations, sometimes even by the same individual across a lifetime.

The lower total articles needed by the society, and the immense length of time that many articles stay in circulation, means that garment workers can take much more time for the planning, drafting, patterning, and stitching of each garment. To assist them with this task are the vast collections of patterns, tucked away by generations of previous stitchers, and curated by the many librarians, historians, researchers, and other everyday individuals who take their interests there. There are also a great many people in the society who seek something to fill their minds and their hands, and whom are willing and eager to assist with the hand sewing and embroidery and button hole stitching; but not everything is done by hand. Where it is of no sacrifice to the garment's quality, mechanical means of stitching, riveting, and weaving are used. Those within

the society are not against such machinery; they are only against its application for the sheer purpose of speed when speed is not warranted, or the purpose of abundance when clothes already abound. In this society, it is seen as the duty of everyone, the most sacred duty, to use resources in the best ways possible. To intentionally make an easily-exhausted garment is seen as a great disrespect to the cotton, linen, wool, or hide that gave itself for the production, and it is seen as a great disrespect to the others who helped harvest it, weave or tan it, stitch it, store it, and wear it.

The clothes are maintained with regularity, often by each wearer, and also by those who take their work at the laundry. At the great communal undertakings, such as a large harvest or construction, it is not uncommon to see groups take long lunches and darn each other's nipped clothes. In the community houses and eateries, there are also a great many people whose fidgeting hands turn just as gladly to mending as to creating. Objects being moved from one repository to the next are often passed along with people on the rail lines — and often, they reach the new destination having been embellished, cherished, and turned over several times by several hands looking to find where they are weary.

There are many regional variations in dress that develop to suit the climate and culture of the wearer. However, the overlays of climate and culture tend to be rather expansive and slow, not reaching sudden shifts upon some border. And so interchange between the local systems of depositories takes place in overlocking regional scales, with each library of clothing taking its exchange and refreshment from those nearby. The microcommunities of regular laundering and stitching and curating in any area tend to have some overlay with one another, and that overlay allows them to contact one another to ask for specific patterns, fabrics, skill sets, or garments to be shared or exchanged or gifted.

All members of the society participate in the production of attire, as the production of attire is a result of all the interlocking

to store more and more information, which further feeds back into the accessibility of reference material for further garment drafting. The fine motions of needlework teach movements of the hand that carry forwards into music, facilitating unique styles of plucked tremolos, allowing those so inclined to play and bring joy to the laundries with their sweet songs. Experimentation in waterproofing outerwear and soft shoes has led to the invention of canvas boats, as well as patches that can be applied to fix leaks, further assisting in the safe and ecologically sound transport of materials.

All aspects of the society overlap to form a cohesive and coherent whole. Each process is entangled with one another. The waste from one becomes the bedrock of another. Each skill learned in the pursuit of a task is then applied to the next task, and each lesson learned in the specific is then analogically applied to the general.

The society is clothed together in the great cloth of interdependence, woven in the ten thousand strands formed by the tensions of material life. It does not come to pass without thought, or planning, or intention; just as a length of flax left loose will tangle. But together, each giving and using, but none destroying, all are cool in summer, warm in winter, and cozy all year round.

elements of the society itself. Urine collection assists in the processing of wool and leather. Leather and wools themselves are a byproduct of ecosystem management tactics. Sheep eat away at invasive and aggressive plants, and they form a coat to keep themselves warm. They do not shed the coat of their own accord, and those who assist them are left with the need to dispose of it. Not wanting to be wasteful, they turn it towards the purpose of fabric. The textile it makes is incredibly useful; it is warm when wet, it is water resistant, it can hold its shape, or it can be felted into new ones.

This is the general principle of the anarchist's, that all society is in process, and that the meeting of one need is always in process of the meeting of others. Interlocking systems, in which each individual does what is most helpful for the least effort given their personal and social circumstances, and in which the whole of the society takes on together that work which no one likes to do very much, leads to little begrudging in labor. And the complementary design of the ever changing social systems leads to new innovations being constantly added into the system. The ecological project of invasive species removal leaves a grand number of seeds which cannot be planted; and so the largest are turned over by jewelers as beads, and rendered sterile, whereas others are pressed as dyes, or sterilized as coat stuffing. Many other parts of this flora rendered into cordage or fiber, assisting in making the body of clothes that can be selected for different purposes, but also in the weaving of baskets, which aid in the transport of many things besides the clothes themselves.

Overall, the relationship to clothing amongst the anarchists is their relationship to a great many things. It is complex, as the needs and desires of the community are complex. It is seen at scale, as the management of resources must always be done. Each individual playing their part, the day to day small scale of weaving, wearing, washing, and darning; and the social organism as a whole managing the long term store and circulation. And even then, the social

organism and the individual being on the same continuum of self, each covers where the other cannot.

Basic mending skills — in relationality and in fabric — are acquired by most through mentorship, sometimes with relatives, but most often mentorships develop out of the simple connection between one who knows and one who will come to know. The communal holding of labor creates a great many opportunities to ask questions of artisan crafters, and the slow nature of production, and the abundance of skilled crafters, lends to no shortage of time for education. These mentorships often create lifelong structures of support and kinship, and can serve as a primary social means for transference and norm setting, but not all are so long term. Some last but just a single moment, in a single stitch. The informality and overlapping of the mentorship structure leads to many students and many teachers, and often one is a student of one craft and a teacher in another, reversing the roles of knowledge giver and receiver, flattening the power between. And when that is not enough to flatten the hierarchy of knowledge, the simple giving of knowledge over time, and the gathering of one's own skill, brings the mentor and the student together in talent and regard. If one teacher is a jealous guard of their hardwon tradeskills, the student simply moves on and learns from another, or watches and interprets the actions to recreate them.

Those who are less socially skilled, or who find themselves no compatible mentor, or simply desire extra or specific training, often attend lectures and workshops and such that are arranged by other crafters. Often, these workshops are organized out of a sheer exuberance with one's work, an utter yearning to share information about it. Occasionally however, some person or group will ask of someone to share in an open setting, and this is rarely refused.

There are of course a great many people who participate little to none in the direct social production of clothing, but whose very existence, and whose feedback and desires, inform the trends and advancement of production. There are those with little use of their

selected councils and ecological research syndics, and occasionally are selected.

The clothing arts, being widely shared and thoroughly understood practices — weaving, stitching, drafting, patterning, grommeting, buttonholing, thrashing, and all the rest — all help form the shared cultural motifs by which metaphor, aphorism, and wisdom can be drawn. Young lovers first separating compare themselves often to the grommetted panels of the common overdress; coming apart, fitting together, finding their way into new patterns that suit the body. To unfold one's skirts can mean to be growing, or otherwise, to be seeking more warmth, both emotionally and practically. Similarly, to raise one's skirt often means one is preparing for hard work, acting unencumbered and uninhibited; tho sometimes it can take on other, more sensual meaning. In the great stories of the many peoples, one often finds motifs of dress demarcating the overall plot of the story, giving character insight, or implying new layers of rich meaning. This shared understanding of material culture is often generative in individuals' attempts to further interpret their own experiences, and in the describing and shaping of relationality between one another.

In this metaphorical approach, it is said that all reality is the fabric resulting from the tension of the threads of dialectical synthesis; overlapping and informing and supporting one another. Physics is the loom. Society wears the fabric. Individual consciousness is the act of looking in the mirror. Social consciousness is the act of looking over the fabric to see how it is made, and to understand its construction. To darn is to reform. Revolution is the act of changing the drape of the fabric, often requiring the ripping of many seams, experimentation, and many practiced and skilled hands to sew it up right.

The richness of metaphors that arise from such a multi-skilled population is a driving force for innovation and communication. Familiarity with the methods of weaving allows for consistent innovation in data storage, requiring less and less resources

The society is not, however, in any lack of materials. There are a great many fibers grown in the great many biomes, and much of global dispersement of goods is in textiles, used as packing in-between medical components and other fragile specialities, and bedding in the rooms of travelers. The great diversity of communities – and the uniqueness of each bioregion- leads to a multitude of fabric fibers, an abundance of processing methods for each, and then still a great many more use cases constantly being developed and discarded and elaborated upon. The many cotton species in the world are referenced in guides for their strengths and weaknesses and sourcing and abundance. Yucca, nettle, wool, cashmere, linin, seagrass, straw, mulberry bark cloth, jusi, silk, river cane, and hundreds more are grown in mixed ecological systems around the world, mostly in their places of origin or long term cultivation. This variety means that crop failure, blight, or other disruptions in one area do little to depress the collective supply of textiles.

To avoid species invasiveness, new crops are introduced slowly and carefully into the ecology of desired regions. The primary focus of new introductions is to provide redundancy in local and regional food systems, ensuring that all nutrients are available in multiple forms at every time of year, preempting crop failures, and ensuring that allergies and other health conditions can be easily dietarily accounted for. However, the longscale nature of society, and the ability to selectively breed native crops towards different seasonality, nutrition, and shelf ripening, often mean that there is little desire to import new food crops. Many ecological maintenance systems are built to expect new species introduction every generation or so (with some more fragile ecosystems being on much longer time scales). While crops suiting some ecological niche besides food are also often needed, such as to hybridize a beloved blighted local species, there still, on the grand scale of time, comes moments where the opportunity to naturalize a new species for the explicit purpose of human use and human joy arises. In these moments, new base fibers for textiles are considered by the sortion

hands, or an inability to learn motor skills, for whom laundering and stitching and patterning are most often out of reach. The abundance of high quality garments, seamsters of all skill levels, and the length of time in which clothes can remain all lead to their being plenty extra to go around. In fact, it is in designing assistive clothing for these individuals that many crafters take their finest joys, and sharpen their design skills towards greater invention. In building a dress suited for all seasons, not abrasive to the skin, and which can be put on and adjusted with the use of only one finger, for instance, even the greatest crafters must return to thoughtfulness, experimentation, and research. For this reason, those circles of high craft and artisanry spend many meetings and byside conversations discussing the nuances of clothing the disabled. Disabled people themselves, especially those who cannot participate in social clothing, often host the most widely attended lectures and roundtables within the halls of the great laundries and pattern libraries.

Babies also do very little to participate in laundering or stitching, except occasionally bring smiles to the eyes of those doing such work. And yet it is the babies' clothes that wear out the fastest. They often do not notice the holes to be darned, nor do they ask others to darn them. They take no care when catching the nape of their jumper on a twig, and move blithely forward regardless of the damage. Their exemplary quick growth often means things are quickly returned to the library of attire. However, babies rarely suggest new designs, or give clear and concise feedback on flaws or opportunities, and they almost never order custom designs. This is all of little concern to the stitcher, in spite of it all. Babies' clothes are easy to make, famously small, and can be incredibly entertaining. A swaddling cloth designed to look like a fish becomes, when worn, a stunning image of a baby being eaten by a fish. When the baby is sad, the baby looks sad about being eaten by this fish, and this is heart wrenching and sympathy driving. If the baby is happy, the baby looks happy to be eaten by the fish, and this is silly and jovial.

In this way, design can be used to help assure appropriate reactions to the baby's behavior, ensuring socialization and emotional coregulation. The babies being dressed very funny also serves as a good impetus to look at them with regularity and rigor, forming one line of care in the overlapping fabric of child rearing. For all of these reasons, it is not uncommon for the tired milliner to lay down their dress form, and take a restful opportunity to stitch some baby clothes. There are a great many festivals and art fairs in which baby clothes are shown as fun and enriching representations of the collective's ability. The novelty also rarely wears away, as babies grow so quickly and baby clothes are exchanged so widely that one is always seeing new babies in new fun fits, doing new silly things.

Still, though, the novelty and sweetness of a babe does little to assuage the dread of laundering the baby's diapers. There are a few in the society, however, who don't quite mind the smell, or who cannot smell it at all. They cannot alone handle the masses of baby breech clothes, but as everyone does what is most helpful for the least effort, there's a lot of effort left over for the more difficult and undesirable tasks. When each knows it has been done for them, and — should things go well enough into age — will be again, it is not hard for most to swallow their pride. But still, some cannot handle it, and turn themselves to other unloved tasks to take their share in the whole.

The menstrual pads and rags and cups are much less challenging, as most can be rinsed or boiled and then washed aside the rest. The blooded water is often boiled down for meal, to be used in the fertilization of soils, just as the wastewater of the babies and the incontinent are processed into the greater waste treatment for ecological return. All things, even the least desirable things, are revitalized to make part of a complete system. The laundering can circle back to the growing of the very fibers from which the laundry came, making them thrive alongside their niche neighbors and other biologic users, such as the butterflies and flowers and vines that form

contributors to library society. On the scale of time, their return is as blessed as any return to the collective while.

The same principle is applied to any area within the whole that does not seem to be in alignment with the usufructian values. There are those materials that seem more time or labor intensive than their fibers or substance could possibly be worth. However, to a utopian, one who views all society on the great scale of the fullness of time, it is known that ease comes through careful work, not through abandon. The ecologist knows that it is complementary diversity which brings ecosystemic tranquility. The anarchist knows that it is noncontrolling complexity, each acting in their best towards a shared future, that drives all of reality into collaboration. Each being all three, they clothe themselves not just in the simplest of fibers, which are easiest to mechanize, have the most history and example, and are most comfortable. With such a great portion of labor assuaged, and such a great portion of discomfort brought low, these people find themselves with extra tolerance to bare labor, and extra tolerance to bare discomforts, and they measure these tolerances out and find ways to use them towards the greater social good, and the greater good of themselves. If there is a great waste in hickory nut shells, for instance, one may practice methods of grinding them down into a fine powder, and pressing them with adhesive to form the shape of a sandal. This is not ideal for daily wear. It is too hard and uncomfortable. But the wearer finds themselves building familiarity with the material, seeing where it chips and what surfaces it is assistive to walk on. This process is intended to be personalizing and generative. Even if hickory nut shells never become a meaningfully useful clothing material, their temporary adoption as such allows individuals to build a relationship with them as a material, and explore what they could be used for. All things and all people have their place in the society; so long as careful attention is given, with understanding of needs, through personalization and diversification of the relationships that are had with them.

offered it with regularity and without shame. This care is like water, and sinks to the low places in them, filling them up, rendering them unneeding; needs continuously being met.

There are occasionally those who seek to accumulate, not wishing to return their clothes. This is often met without issue. A few hoarded items by a few people is not enough to break such an abundant and cared for system, and most of these individuals return their hordes eventually, after community support and care drives them to unlearn their anxieties of scarcity or fear of noncontrol. However, occasionally, one or a few people will attempt to check-out a great sum of the most desired and necessary clothing, setting themselves up as lords of such a resource, and demanding that others give to their whim in order to attain things. In the many upstartist attempts of this nature, this is thwarted simply by those users of a library going to another library for whatever items are now locally scarce. Those whom have such hoarded abundance are then denied the access to remove further items of the type they took, and are given only standards that meet whatever real gap in need they have. Eventually, their whims not being sated, and their laundering now needing to be done individually, they almost always end up returning the clothes to a laundry, and quietly returning to society as though nothing had happened. In those few cases where individuals hold out for their entire lives, the clothes are simply reclaimed upon their death. In rare instances, some small familial groups have established long lineages of holding on to hoards of checked out clothes. However, much of what they know is the library model, and seeing its practicalities, they often emulate its customs and systems. Having no input aside from their own craft, they care for the clothes just as diligently. Within a few generations, they become indistinguishable from the collective laundries and libraries around them, and begin to slowly open exchange and public services. These more isolated library systems do tend to create new systems and innovations in storage, sewing, distribution, and laundering, so, in this way, those who dissent become great

the very dyes that are then represented again in the clothes embroidery and patterns.

There are, of course, some items of particular sizing and customization which must reliably be returned to each individual for whom they were made, until such time that they are no longer of direct use to them. The low sorting pressure applied from the communality within other aspects of the laundry system leaves this a much less daunting task. Those working in the laundries do not have to return each item to its preferred wearer; infact, relatively few and relatively small items are returned. Injury preventing daily support items like bras and corsets, and medical assistive items like splints and braces, take the first priority in both washing and in sorting. Many of these items are also designed to need fairly irregular washing, but the labor required to make them, and the changing nature of the body, often means that wearers rarely have multiples that suit their exact specifications. In this case, the library laundries also keep on hand more general purpose items that perform the same functions, if not quite as specifically. General adjustable braces, a selection of corsets that previous users have given over to the system, a variety of wrap bras, compression bras, and retired bras all serve the intermediate function whenever a custom item is in the wash, awaiting repair, or under construction. The sorting of other items is not unavailable, just rarely used. The most common requesters for this are those who wear underdresses and undershirts, and these being relatively easy items to launder and to sort, this request is most often obliged by simply placing a hold on the item in question. However, something given over to the larger system always has some risk of being missorted, or mistakenly checked out to another, and this is understood by those who choose to handover such important items for general laundering. Hand laundering or small batch laundering are often tactics used to mitigate sorting pressure and ensure diligent return.

Small batch laundering forms a layer of communal organization and laborsharing that is far more personal, and used for more

personal items. Crotched underwear is one item for which many wearers have their own personal or near-personal supply. Except in the coldest of environments, these items are rather small, and not difficult to hand wash or small batch launder. These items are often shared between small groups of friends, family, or partners, but just as often held individually. Within the larger laundry system, there are often undergarment guilds which co wash and sort together. This smaller scale tends to provide more comfort and ease than sharing such personal items with a whole library's worth of users, but also helps benefit from the pooling of labor. Still though, there are those who hold these garments in full commons, taking from the library whatever will fit their body and their use, and returning it with no desire for privacy. It is the nesting of larger scale and smaller scale systems that makes the meeting of all of these seemingly conflicting needs simultaneously possible.

There are also some for whom crotched underwear is rarely worn, such as those who primarily wear skirts and underskirts, or shifts or other underdresses, and they often hand launder out of a sense of ease. A couple shifts can take only a moment to rinse, and are often set in soapy bathwater, then rinsed in clean water, then hung to dry. This process fits so neatly within the routine of many wearers that it forms almost no extra labor. However, any particular stains or longwear smells are often requiring of a more specialized removal, and so shifts are then sent to the laundries. This rare return makes individualized sorting somewhat unnecessary. In the great rooms and halls and closets of the libraries, there are sections for different categories of items. One room or wall may be devoted to underdresses, with each section sorted by color, then circumference of the garment's fabric at its waist point, and then from shortest to longest. The measurements of each are typically then sewn in tags to the outer hem. This creates an ease for those seeking to find something in their particular size and use, often such ease that one can find the exact item they left to be laundered just days before. One can even send a message ahead to hold an item,

need, and gives to their ability; and in death, there is always the last giving.

A central premise of anarchist philosophy is "From Each Their Ability, To Each Their Need". In the world of the anarchists, the near complete overlap of hobby and labor, alongside complementary labor facilitation systems, social principles of nondestruction, and production paced to an abundant sustenance allows for this to be accomplished. "We who waste not want nothing. We who do not destroy are never led to destruction. We who meet needs are met in abundance," goes the song the launderers sing to pass the time.

Amongst the usufructians, most beloved is the social relationship. This is the relationship of the individuals to one another, the individual to the society, the society to the ecology, and so on. The social relationship is, in essence, the whole relationality between all parts of reality, interconnected, caring and providing for each other. In this regard, all are cared for and all are accounted for. One who allows their clothes to tatter unmended will be doted upon by the community, offered a great deal of help in repairing them, and in stabilizing whatever aspects of their life must be out of order for such a tragedy to occur. One who does not maintain their leather storage wraps will be repeatedly brought food in glass containers, with many people offering to bring them food each meal, up to their mouths if needed, and to take the storage items to be cleaned afterwards. This is done with a special caution against condescension, and the work is passed amongst the abled participatory community as to not fatigue one another's compassion. In this way, neglect is managed by understanding that it comes from a place of inability. Those few who are able, but unwilling, often find the hassle of being cared for more exhausting than caring for themselves, and tend to begin maintaining their resources once again. Unable and unwilling is rarely the case however. Most neglect comes from an inability in other respects, throwing one off of balance and out of systemic living. Those who are in greater need are offered care, and

it. The skin is turned over to leather, often making up shoes, or strong gloves. The same is done with those animals which must be harvested, either for the purpose of ecological management, medicine, materials harvest, research, or cultural use. Those items which would be contaminated if made from one another are made from the other living things; bog tanned hide and organ bags for food and water storage being the most common need. The usufructians do not harvest from animals what they will not harvest from their own dead, feeling no justification in holding only one species' life sacred. Still, however, the human body does not provide for all services, and the death of animals is inherent to ecological systems. Some, not wishing to take life, utilize glass for drinking and food storage purposes, and avoid all leather whenever possible. But those who can not bear such heavy material often require the use of the more light and durable animal derived bags and wraps. These items are treated with even greater care than the fabrics. It is not uncommon that when one sees people sitting down to eat on the sides of the lush walkways, one will notice them spending more time looking over their packing materials than actually eating from them.

The use of animal products, human and otherwise, is treated with both graciousness and solemnity. A great deal of meditations and spiritual practices revolve in part around this posthumous use of the body. Usufructian funeral services are varied, with hundreds or thousands of regional, cultural, individual, and religious options to discern between; but even so, a great majority of them speak of the return. Not all return their body through leather and fed flesh; a great many are composted, returning to the soil which fed them. Some are burned in the great forest fires that bring the flowers. Bones are turned to field powder. All things that come *from* return *to*. From ashes to ashes, from life to life, from body to body, from soil to soil, from all to all; to be a usufructian is to eternal only borrow, to never completely own. The anarchist takes what they

and each item's tag has a unique identifier. Occasionally these are barcodes, but most libraries have their own systems of identification tagging. The selection of underdresses may be large, but the selection which meets one's needed measurements is often concentrated to a few racks per type of clothing item. In this way, very little time is needed to actually find desired items, especially considering most members in any given community have worked at least a few hours stocking their library's shelves and becoming familiar with its methods and its collections.

Perhaps the most abundant particular clothing item is socks. In appropriate climates, many individuals wear sandals and slides much of the year, but even so, socks add that extra layer of friction and size adjustment which allows for wear during even hard labor. The greatest extent of clothing mechanization takes place in the weaving of these thinner, warm weather socks. These wear out extremely quickly. A pair of thin socks may only last the dedicated wearer 5 or 10 years, and then, that is with less than weekly wear. Those socks held communally often last even less time, being worn near daily, and get worn out in about a year. The society does have an ethos of repair; however, these items being so thin, and also so easy to produce, they are one of very few items in the society where repair is less sensical than disposal. This quick disposal does form an abundance of easy rags. The society does also have purpose made rags, often those made of old clothes converted to new lives, but the socks fill a different role, especially in cleaning those things that are rather unpleasant. It is no great loss if they are sent to an early life in the compost, but many are used and reused as rags for longer than they ever survived in their intended purpose, as is with many things. The abundance does also lead to them being seen as wonderful test items and craft supplies. A learner trying out a new stitch may use an old sock, and worry less about ruining it and more about learning. This allows breathing room for mistakes within a society where the proper use of resources is the most prized social virtue. These socks are often embroidered with

strange frills, and are taken with the others and made into craft items. Dolls of sock are a common children's craft. Sock coats and capes are a pleasant and fashionable adornment, especially for the many festivals, which themselves are lined with sock garlands.

The abundance of socks, however, does not speak to a great uniformity of them. Many cuts, shapes, sizes, thicknesses, and materials are used. For the purpose of laundering, socks are separated from the rest of the clothes, and then themselves are split into batches by cut. From there, they are sorted by size. Different localities have their own standardizations of sock sizing and therefore their own sorting methods. One of the most common methods is that socks of a certain size have a certain number of horizontal lines across the toe. This method makes machine sorting and hand sorting both fairly simple and reliable, as well as adding little extra to production. It does sometimes clash with other intended designs of the sock, however, and so is not universal. The interchange of people can also occasionally cause socks of one standard to enter into a sorting system of another standard. These tend to be placed in their own sections at the clothing library, and those who wish for a little more variety in their life often spend time digging through these to find the most different and unique examples, often saving them as personal items to hand launder. Most of the rest, though, are sorted by system type, and, if feasible, used as packing material when a shipment is made to a nearby area that uses that system. If there is no shipment to be made, or if there is more relevant and needed resources to be sent as packing material, then the socks are simply retired early. Even a near wasteless system must balance between reuse, return, and efficacious material and energy management. In such a case, having a few select categories of items which are generally exhaustible and low priority can free up the system to more easily prioritize everything else.

The rest of the worn out clothes are not treated with such abandon as the humble summer sock. The respect of the labor put into them creates little incentive to waste. Trimmings and leavings, the

cabbage of the patternmaker, is used to stuff sleeping pillows and mattresses or coats, still being of high quality and not inundated with allergens. Old clothes worn to thinness find new homes in the cookeries and kitchens, assisting in the straining of broths and cheeses, or as the cover of steaming vegetables. The leftovers of cloth, after spending many years in their function with the body, can continue to serve for even longer after. The stuffing of seating, the control of erosion, the wrapping of fruit trees in a harsh winter, lining, all are beloved uses of the clothes of a great grandfather's generation. Work clothes are drawn from those items who are close to being put to these purposes, but whom still hold some rigor. Those tasks which may be most compromising to the cloth are often done in near dressup, emulating the visages of the past. This occasionally leads to rips and tears in the clothing, but it is seen as no great waste, and in the lack of worry, laborers are able to take joy and laughter in the mild embarrassment of a crotch seam bust open. Otherwise, many of those fabrics which are beautiful — but well worn — are turned towards quilting, or used as patches. This creates a fine degree of adornment and expression, with those who do keep personal garments being able to customize to the extreme, and with those socially held garments each having their unique quirks and flourishes.

It is the entropic nature of things to decay, and decay does reach the usufructian society. However, this decay is made use of, slowed, understood, and worked with. Each moment where material reality causes a breakdown in the system becomes an adaptation within the system, increasing complexity and diversity, preparing for the next breakdown, and innovating for new uses. Moments of waste are turned over to become the foundation of other systems, or to be used as input. The very waste of death; that we may die and leave behind that vessel which has made us, is undone in its revamping towards use. The body is processed, with that which is meat serving the ecological role in carnivore rehabilitation, or in feeding those animal domestics which require