

## Soon as I dived

Soon as I dived, the world shut its eyes, murmuring: “Who was that man? I cannot recall his name.”

“Too late,” I answer. “If you want me returned now, just alter your laws; make water heavier than stone.”

A murky slime of rotten leaves overheads me, closing a secretive grave of gradient greens. Curious child, the world blinks inquisitively, but does not want me back. Deep-dragged by the stones, I am anchored to the fate I have chosen.

“Did I mistreat you then?” the world challenges. “Did you not enjoy the beauty I displayed? The smell of rain on grass; the warmth of an unexpected sunbeam through a bitter winter chill; the smile of a friend – could they not enchant you?”

For those who seek oblivion, as I do, this advice: move to the city, and choose a big one. The anonymity of crowds makes it so much easier to resist the constant temptation to reply.

I rode on buses, pressed against fellow passengers who did not notice me. I wandered through shopping malls, packed with people who did not ask my name. I lived in housing estates with immaculate lawns and a gaping absence of neighbors. But in the end, even the city could not provide the solitude I sought. A cheerful bus driver welcoming me on his jolly ride; a satisfied salesman wishing me luck with my purchase; the angel-faced child across the street, waving to me as I gazed absently from the bay window. Disgusted, I knew it was time to depart.

I will leave no marks. There will be no remembrance. The remains of my clothes lie in a burned heap on the shore. Having discarded my last possessions this way, only my body still reminds me of myself. Now comes an end to the pains of that revolting sack of flesh.

Wondering why I took that last gasp of air – old habit I guess – I now release it in a spiral of dancing air-domes. I am effervescent. Longing to dissolve in peace, I hope no one mistakes the popping, surfacing bubbles for distress calls.

I'll no longer need to endure the presence of others, nor suffer the interminable nagging of their endless opinions. Let the last living soul I meet be this little fish. It floats toward me in open-mouthed astonishment, barely visible through the deep churning dark.

“Well, hello stranger,” mocks the fish. “Funny how intruders here always end up at the bottom.”

I cannot resist the temptation, and pass it this last wisdom: “There is no synergy, no conclusion. And you – pitiful, nautical fool – you don't even know how to drown yourself.”

“Watch me,” replies the fish, as it breaks the surface and leaps to the shore.