

Life's Ore and Death's Row

Click! Wailing cries and screams pour over me as my cell door is opened. Click! The figure of an average-sized man peers into my cell. A human-sized pug's head rests on the shoulders of the would-be curious figure. The immaculately dawned blue tuxedo captivates my naked beastly eyes. Herders are what we call them as if a name can give justice to such a being. The herder motions for me to come out. Its bulging soulless black eyes speak to me, "It's time." I exit my celled home and lock eyes with another herder. It appears from behind the first, indistinguishable from the last. My cell door then closes behind me. Click! Getting on either side of me, I'm led like a lamb down an outstretched hallway. A path that will truly only go one way. My solitude reverberates the caged cries, the choir of the inmates. My empty mind rings but finds ease in the nothings. I do not wish to think on this evening.

Three gates align the blindingly bright path paved before me. It lays visually sterile through incandescent orange-yellow lights hanging above. Those lights illuminate the dark path I must walk, a towering journey at its end. We approach the first gate, and my two herders stop. They each pull out a stick and threaten to beat the gate. Click! The gate is summoned into electric repression, loudly running away from where it once stood. I stumble through crumbling and spurn, trying to hold together my falling tower. Click! The gate's tracks run louder echoing a steam train carrying someone back to a once belonged home. I silent a whispering scream from a distant mind's son to fight and run toward a place not meant for me. Authority will always have its way. My plight is best forgiven through my consequence, a home close to a dream. I do not wish to think on this evening. Click!

A sluggish approach to the second gate repents to me its cycle. The herders repeat their sequence in succession. Click! Undelightful, the gate limps with a begrudging fate. Loud individual bearings toil on their path. They roar like a beast's choir and bellow for help, something they one day hope to receive. The two urge me onwards, now half dragging me through the gate. Click! They want to close the gate, but it has a mind of its own. The gate stutters and stalls against the herder's force as bearings rebel for a chance of help. They fight not in vain, though they are constantly beaten back further than they've gained. The herder's pretending obliviousness to their cries of need leaves onto me no heed. In silence, I reign as their sound stings against my eyes of open panes. Their sound rings deafening as their voice is beat familiar to my nature, my name. As workers that are not seen, do not bleed the same. Once again, the whisper speaks high heaven against my mental barrier. A whisper with angelic wings knocks directly onto my mind with words of unwanted progression. I do not wish to think; I do not want to go. I know their cries, but I dare not end their oppression. To walk forward alone is to fall much faster. I close my eyes and hope the herders soon close the door to the slaughter. I will not think, I will not go. Click!

The herders drag me forward. Limply my body moves as my choices lie to no other. The final horizon encroaches where the cycle waits in hunger. The gate howls at me in the distance. It screams to me," You are the one wronged in disobedience." It knows not, but it judges me the same. A towering ascent, I stand with crenelated walls to the sky. It judges me evermore as shame breeds descent where people inlay, only for those with mortal eyes. A visceral howl grows in wait. We have arrived.

Click! The gate separates from its house, with an unfair journey long to live. A screeching berates my mind as it leaves, so loud it talks of a graved ground. Its entire life is spent

obeying before being forced, sentenced, and beaten when promised a new road. The gate, it screams; it screams; it screams the sound; it screams the sound. Click! Upon arriving at its end destination, it sits forever unequal on weighted time until it's called back to a faraway home. The sound speaks all words, all at once," Let your death bring them ease." I am forced through the gate. Click!

The whisper comes back once again, this time at its most persuasive and divine. The sons' father on wings stands atop my silo structure. My mind is parted and whispered into, but I included with the other two; we have too far journeyed for the clawing climb called now escaping death's salvation in due time. The father stands above me, my head a closed-door of damnation. I will not think; I will not go; I cannot go further. A bright door emerges as an unknown final gate. As lambs do not become lions, the bright door should not be touched by mortal hands. It should be feared as it strangulates the souls of the defiant. It is immortal, intertwined with shroud and veiled divine. The door is closed, and the door is silent.

The whispers murmur," run," but the herders drag me closer. I struggle against them, but their determination is overwhelming. The whispers howl," turn back," but it is far too late to turn back now. The herders reach out to touch the door. Click! The whispers caterwaul the word," dissolution," and the ground abruptly rips me a chasm, welcoming me with Earth's toothless smile. I collapse down an ever-growing pit, plummeting suspended in time. Hell's bile and blacklight suffocate me in the growing seas of dread. I feel stagnant in the confines of the condemned. I fall comfortably numb.

I cascade, tumbling motionless to the center of the Earth. My shaft lays sterile as broken lights hang around me. My pit appears warm and only feels dark. I'm left with nothing until a flame, no bigger than a penny, appears before me. With savage hands, I carefully hold it drawing

it near me. It hovers daintily in my hands, flickering with a burning warmth that feels scalene to my environment. I hurdle around it, treasuring my new hope. The droplet of flame institutes a pulsating rhythm. In the twinkling of an eye, it explodes like a glorious bomb of humanity. A firework of colors erupts to life from it as an imaginary brush manipulates them to an unknown will. My clothes rest in an undying fire but I feel nothing and care not. My attention is put towards the performance of colors at sight. They dance a ballet around me, soon creating my reflection but distorted. I'm painted unmoving, sitting alone in the front row of an auditorium. My reflection's skin burns a slight tint of red in contrast to my white mouth. Where breaths of white puffy foam undulate parasitically outwards. My eyes are hidden, masked by a single word. A lingering haze watches beneath, unseen, and unspoken. Blurry as my reflection lies, it stares at me with controlled eyes. It stares back with a broken soul.

To the left, a single herder is etched hovering over me. The word "why" is promptly scribbled above my head. A response indistinguishable from cruelty or remorse overshadows the word, "It does not matter. It is the will of another." A syringe is then painted into the herder's hand. Injection swiftly follows erasing both and leaving but a word in their place. "Pain," a word that when written out stares at me as if with sentient eyes. My body then begins convulsing uncontrollably and rapidly heating up. A glue-like foam bursts to life from my mouth's tung and top. The colors of my reflection implode into instantaneous canvases. One after the other, they do not stop.

Each canvas displays a different person. None of which are slow enough to tell apart from the last, but each seems familiar. These are the people inside my mind, memories of those who raised and built me. Tears trickle down my face as I recall everyone united under a common voice. Darkness soon corrupts the beautiful works, separating them into the growing black void.

The void is now a cold and dark place. Fragments of their once beautiful whole glisten in the distance; the stars of the black sky. My reflection is all that's left to me. Colorless, it decays in the nothingness. I reach out and touch the remains of my disheveled absentee.

The contact invites the air around me into a gyrating frenzy. Splotches of opalescent grays rip apart my reality in places of plenty around me. Flamboyant color reincarnates once more, stretching a palette beyond what I had ever seen before. I sit alone in a cold grey room convulsing as several onlookers sit watching in chairs behind a glass wall. They appear normal, but one by one they befall an abstract change into herders through inhuman geometric impossibilities. I try to move my head, but it cannot move. I try to speak, but nothing comes out. My words fork no lightning as my mouth is no longer mine. I am alive, but no closer to living. A herder enters the room and I look over with desperation in a dream-like state. Tears fall as I catch glimpses of another syringe in their hand. I have no mouth, but I must scream. As it's injected again, the cycle begins its feast to the brim once more in demand.

Colors implode together all around me cascading the delicate world into an unrecognizable vomit. Neon greens and lemon yellows swirl and swoon to my sides. Velvet purples and maroon reds race like comets across the noir abyssal sky. Different shades of oranges, blues, and greys wage a never-ending game of tag before my eyes. The kaleidoscope of color monopolizes the chaos around me.

A contusion of orderly patterns rakes the obtuse color tides to my front. An image manifests itself, slowly like a puzzle within the doodles of intense insanity. The mass confusion of dappled colors shrouds the image with scarcely a silver outline. It presents the silhouette of a tall figure seemingly looking down upon me, melancholic and depraved. It disappears quietly as a torrential flood of deep ocean blues and fiery crimson reds mute the abstract pallet that came

before. Like puppets slashed of their strings, the brilliant colors halt in enslaved suspended motion. Little tears of neon color, like drops of rain, separate from the vomit to ablaze upwards and inflow with the black expanse.

They hang in the air like planetary stars, hovering at distant heights. Glistening brightly and hopeful amongst the neon stars lay the unfamiliarities of fragmented lost memories. The momentous view moves me to tears. Slowly a few of the neon specks start to come together, then a few more join from further away. Faster and faster, more colors collide with the skies above me. They swirl mesmerizing, a gigantic umbrella-like dome now existing atop my reality. As the last tear is collected, a dilapidating bulge protrudes like a facets drip on the brink of disjuncting. The mix of glistening fragments with the disk structure fills me with an immense horror. The bulge spikes towards me without warning, swirling all colors to an inhuman point. Each color remains sentient and different from the next, but together they take on the shape of terror.

The harmonious colors hit my forehead in a geyser of viscous-like molten crayons. Coating my skin immovable, I exist motionless within the epileptic frenzy of visual noise. The cobra of causality constricts around me as I am left entombed in colors that are all but my own. Immortal and preserved to an unchanging state, I am forever beat by the colors that are perpetuated by the black-hearted mental state. An unchanging problem for a black-hearted judgment. A skyward tower I still stand, but unused I fall to people now divided. A history that is unforgotten but guided reluctant, I fall comfortably numb. Click!