

THE MODERN MAN IN SEARCH OF MEANING.

No bygone reality could melt my mind away as the memory of that bogus night, this last memory of oblivious truth, sudden and dry. It was about a fly landing over the eye of a dead fish rotting on the dry coast, far away from the salty waves. The fly grasps and bites the succulent and lifeless retina of the fish, the quivering pupil surrounds the tiny silhouette of that decrepit green carcass; the fish peers ethereally at the sky, thinking it has finally reached the sun.

Oh, that perturbing fluttering, it surrounded me and the idea of my existence; it reflected melting molecules across the walls of a universe unknown to me. Its two eyes look at my head, it wiggles its mouth, its fat feet land over my shoulder; the fluttering stops, there. Yet it laughs, because he thinks I have a thousand heads.

“Jesus, the size of these things...” I said to the gruesome fly standing over my shoulder.

“Surprising, right?” the fly responded with a nod.

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There I was today, obliterated by the chaos that surrounds the violent street of Hollywood Boulevard; omnipresent between the gangs and revolting scum of mankind. Trying to escape from my own delusional escapism, I entered the Roosevelt Hotel, in seek of the idea of freedom that was never promised to me, but sold. The fresh air tackled my sweaty body away, I could feel it blowing through the end of my suit pants, gripping my back throughout the neck hole of my blue suit jacket. My buttocks shake with the sensation of wellness, with the existential hope that I will make it another day in this wasteland.

Behind the madness outside, in the background the song “Twisted” by Annie Ross corrodes with my reality, it plays across all the hotel, like a creeping nightmare at the end of a good night’s sleep.

I can imagine myself, in the back of my head, far way back, in that dark room no one but me has seen, dancing at the bebop of that classic song, alone. I could feel every tapping of my crazy shoes, every note of this classic running through my body, through this feeble bunch of atoms; this music makes them feel like if they were somebody.

The cool shades that cover my eyes hide very little of that which goes on inside my head. I can feel it, once I entered the hotel all those screams from the outside halted; what kind of glass are they using these days? It’s fantastic!

I stretch my legs in my shoes, they squeal; akin ducks. A waiter approaches me immediately, he smiles, or at least he tries. Poor bastard, lost here inside a refrigerator during the melting of the poles; when did, mankind lost its strive to be?

“Can I take your briefcase and your hat?” The waiter said softly to my vague ear.

I saw him again, good god... he was beautiful, beyond that which is gorgeous.

"A whiskey? Good idea, that will make me very happy!" I walked away towards the lobby with a smile.

He walked away, I could tell I left him confused, confound, completely caput.

When I began to walk towards the delicate rug, my feet began to slush and melt within the carpet, sticking gum, every step was a vivid representation of a soldier walking through a mine field during that forgotten and rainy World War 2. I could hear the German bullets flying across me, the mud blinds me, yet I keep running through the absurdity of mankind; towards somewhere. Here I am, melting in the post war cynicism of freedom. The yellow walls that surrounded the small hall shook in compulsive quivers, then the walls began to cave in; I tried to cover myself, but it was too late. The bastards had already entered my brain.

This kind of revolting things always happen after I introduce a pharmaceutical pill, of a high and expensively dangerous drug, into my body. I happen to begin to hallucinate, to see things that are not always there but that in some other weird realm they do happen to be.

If it happens in an instant, a dream you have over night or during day, it exists within time, like we do; therefore, the dream is happening in time and space, mentally, somewhere, in this absurd reality. If we look back, aren't just but a memory, a physical thing that becomes an idea, a sophisticated and intangible retainer of madness; that will one day cease to be in this bygone void.

Or in fact, these are just mere hallucinations of a fearful and paranoid man, who tries to hide over a shadow while standing in front of the sun. Maybe I am melting, in a land of dead men, maybe I am already gone. Who knows? Maybe I never existed.

It happened very often, I questioned myself constantly, never sought for an answer. I am a freak by nature, there is no fixing *me*.

I felt the kick of the second pill, it happened right there between the wide doors of glass that cut the corridor from the lobby. I could feel the air caving in, it was unbelievably cold; I felt like a hiker, tripping over the top of the Matterhorn in Switzerland, taking hold of the tumultuous wind, fighting for unprovable survival. I could hear the horns, begging me to return home alive.

"I won't let you kill me Matterhorn!" I screamed through the hall of the hotel.

People stopped while I crippled through, scared they halted their reality, they were not an obstacle for me; the real obstacle was that mighty AC wind that punched me over and over each time a drifting soul crosses by its tingling green light of that door.

"Hit me again Rocky!" I yelled to those mammoth doors. The real question, I suppose one should ask in this kind of situation, is very simple, Was I ready to cross? I look up, the doors open and close like a babbling mouth, the tongue licks my dreams

away, I wake up and behold its laughter, it laughs up there, at the peak. Is it laughing at me?

This had become personal. Death don't matter anymore; had this become a killed or not to be killed situation? This was the new question the post war era of the asphalt jungle proposed to his most devoted thinkers; the new rules in which a rotten society must coexist and survive. They left all the animals in a cage, see who kills who and who eats what; what wrong curve did we take? Why did we give up? Why did we conform ourselves with this delusional escapade? When did we begin to believe that this façade was real?

There I was now, standing at the fucking edges, trying to reach that glorious core, where the idea of me sleeps stoic and forgotten. I float in awe. I tremble in sickening commotion. I land at the very edge of my own doom.

The doors open and close centimeters from my nose. The wind pushes me back violently, but I'm stronger. Seconds go by, and the door closes, another second disappears, and the door opens. Repeatedly and in a random manner it continues this depraved action. Does the machine ever gets tired of opening and closing at unsuspected moments, for all its life?

I see a man entering the hotel; he wears a brown leather jacket, blue tight jeans and a white wet shirt; he holds his nose with his right hand, underneath a stained red cotton it bleeds; with his left hand, he holds five lobsters tied to a string; he holds the wet string tightly while the red and crusty end of the lobster's hands drip ocean water over hot manmade concrete. The man stops and observes me for a while, he gazes at me watching the door opening and closing in front of me; he smiles, I notice he is missing a finger. I think he is enjoying my trip, maybe he understands, maybe he has been here before; here where I stand. Oh, the pathos!

I wanted to, but I didn't look back, I jumped into the void. The doors opened and I leaped through time and space, I felt older. I looked at my hands and they were dripping. Something was wrong. The jump, it was badly calculated! I could tell! I became ice cream at a child's party! While holding the briefcase with ten million dollars in it, I saw it slipping through my fingers. I am melting! I reach for it once it drops to the floor. People turn around. I try to act normal, but it becomes even difficult if you are a freak like me. I grab the leather handle, my fingers slit again and the suitcase bangs into the floor. Bang. Silence. Lapse. Of. Reason. That fellow, the waitress, begins to approach me with something on his hand, he is becoming bigger and bigger, too big to be a tree of tangerines that's for sure. He reaches slowly for the suitcase.

"Don't touch the suitcase sonny, or it'll bite ya!" I said with a John Wayne voice while throwing myself over the suitcase, which perplexed the void and gave me strength to keep walking through the land of corpses, towards the eye of the absurd.

The Waiter removed his hand once I waved my melting ice creamy flesh over his young face. I reached down my suit pocket in a flash, he gazed worried at my intentions. He stepped aside violently, catching the penny I slowly threw in the air. A smile paints itself over my rusty lips. The sound of the coin clashing through the air reminds me of a glorious past, a not so far future; the sound of money absolves all my worries.

The clear shapes corrode across my eyes, the drug is hitting me hard, I might begin to fall. There, in that moment of unpleasant heed, I observed over the glorious edge of that hotel, at the far end of the glorious lobby, a sofa calling me by name. I start walking there, holding my hat while crossing under the thunderous air conditioner, reaching the other end of the room without obstacles across my path. I was safe for the first time in my life. It was a pleasant feeling; to know for a moment that you won't die. What a foolish thought, that is the end of the mind, the horizon of reason. Have I reached it yet? I take out a cigarette and think about it for a moment. I suddenly realize I have a whiskey in my hand; so, I take a sip and try not to spill it.

My pants squashed down with the brown soft leather, comfortable Victorian couches for two, but tonight, I was alone. I drop the case next to the couch, touching my feet, it bounces back and forth for a while, almost as if the money was trying to get out. I look at the case, and a rabid animal is trying to leave the case. It shakes in anger, in complete revolting wrath! It will break the case! I take hold of it and press it together with both arms, preventing the creature from getting out and moving. I hit it several times, pushing it back violently as it pushes me with intense force too, I close the briefcase immediately; ending the chaotic dispute. Two fellas turn around once I look up; they are observing me, everyone is, even that bogus idea of god spits at me; but it misses once again.

I place the suitcase underneath my feet, it wasn't moving anymore. The waiting always made me paranoid. Anything could happen when you have ten million dollars in a suitcase and you are up the peak of drugs; living in a paradox of self-consciousness and the absurd. I embrace you, absurdity; my hands tremble, yet I try to hide it. I might make it, if I try hard enough not to laugh.

After the scene in that hallway, I was safe and in peace here, at the elegant leather brown sofas of this gorgeous postmodern lobby of false hopes; at least it makes me laugh a little in these troubled times. The television reflects many images of horrors beyond my comprehension; war, peace and happiness I will never understand. The images are morbid and depraved, all I see are machines of delusion, men destroying men. Yet, the absurd keeps approaching from the darkness, crawling underneath the sewers, troubled times are everywhere; those times never stop, they come from the horizon, grow with time once they reach the coast of reality, only tomorrow knows what horrors its unexpected wave will bring. Will it bring comfort or a sense of delusional threat? Like the ashes of the American dream, whom still fly far away in other lands, far away from

here, in other continents it flies free; that sensation of righteousness has left us naked and in bare bones, alone in this desert of mind. Where *we* not the idea of hope? A false idea of hope at least, the mouth laughs at the peak, akin coffee in the morning after a night of voluptuous drugs and revelations; *no good, no bueno, sonny boy!*

I was in complete harmony to be honest, in a deep relaxation for the first time in my life; for a moment, I could even say, I felt at the other side. Terrible to find out I was still here once I woke up, but still, those clouds sure don't laugh without mouths.

Tranquility lasted little, as I immediately began to bath myself in paranoid fear, everything became very silent. Something was not right; something had happened and I was not aware of it; there is a secret the world is hiding from me; I am the only one that is not in on the joke. Everyone turns around, I see no faces beyond the horizon of those fancy lamps, only wide backs and overlapping shadows, everything seems dim and beyond my state of control; it was obvious I was starting to feel the explosion of the last pill. Flashes of breaking light bulbs fade across my view, turns out I was just blinking. I open my eyes again, suddenly, I observe the things that surround my absurd environment. Everything was so fake, out of touch, inhumane. I gave a sudden laugh, which echoed across the whispering of the costumers. I finally understood, that's exactly why I am seating here, because I need to escape all human ideology; I need to deprave myself from all rational thought. My lips paint a unique smile after that thought; an afterthought smile. I can still hear, if I pay close attention, the echo of my last laugh; at least it reverberates inside my mind.

The cold AC never halted its freezing wrath, it makes the ice cubes of my whiskey tremble; or is that my hand shaking the ice cubes from one side to the other? I can't tell any more.

"I'm leaving town baby; I'm leaving town for sure." Sings Albert King in that faded background, I can barely hear its voice, it's too far away. Dim beyond flies that approaching passenger; I can see its silhouette burning into the horizon of that pathoic fear I have experienced so many times before. He always comes to rescue. Outside, the violence rumbles with the owl that sings at the crest of the chaos, melting with the laughing moon, creating an exotic eclipse that left a shadow over this city about fifty years ago; this city gets kicked every time it tries to get up, and he laughs.

There was no time anymore, the clock was no longer ticking; life is trying to trick me again. I don't remember how many years I have been seating in this lobby, waiting for him. How long have I been waiting? How old am I today?

A fly, oh that bygone friend, lands over my shoulder gently.

"Hello Jack..." it whispers in my ear, "*I thought you promised me never to come back, yet I'm glad you are here.*" He whispered in my brain. More and more my friend talked, about a tomorrow that will never come. Within dreams, I like to hope in wonder, just more

false freedom in search of an aspiration for a better day. It told me things I didn't want to hear, it made me listen close. He is now my best friend, you know?

The thing about this exotic lobby of remote thought, the fly reminded me, is that once you are in it, you will always expect someone to come, but nobody will ever arrive. Who was I waiting for indeed? Was the fly over my shoulder telling me the truth? Why would it lie to me? Why would it tell me the truth? Maybe I have always been here, waiting for something.

I observe the branches of those plastic palms trees made of cheap Chinese plastic, which quiver elegantly from one side to another at the beat of Pink Floyd's Relic Arnold Layne; the branches and the song begin to stretch underneath the couch; two of those palm trees began to carry the couch up into the ceiling from both sides; I reach the sky. I can see eyes, all those eyes observing me within the clouds; they have all turned around now. To observe me. The glare of those eyes, pulping and quivering beneath the water, wondering about what's outside the fountain.

"Oh, no, careful with that Axe, Eugene! God Damn it!" I say while flying across the sky. I was sweating in this cold environment. All those eyes emerged from the depths of the fountain, where they quickly quivered over the marmoreal floor; they could not breath outside the water, so they quivered until death over that cold floor. The fish were jumping over the carpet; I saw one die. I thought it was not real, but as absurd as it sounds, it was.

All I know right now is that I am in the trip, running at full speed, no red light can stop me; I'm locked in and I have swallowed the key.

Up there I was free, the clouds covered me with their vaporous shape, they carried me around and danced with me while we prayed for those fishes who jumped out questioning their reality; they always look at the sun.

Up there I could see everything, that which lays beyond thought. I understood with a mad laugh, that the shadow over the city was just our bogus idea of reality, which consumed us each softly, madly, from the core. We eclipsed our reality into a dim dream, and now we can't wake up.

I was alone up here, in this mental dogma of irrational thought, I could see nobody at the other edge of the desert; I was alone for the first time in my life. Fading, growing old, being forgotten. Was I dying? I am dying each second I live; am I living to die?

I landed back over the couch, my hat followed and fell over my head; the blistered room, which once showed me the heavens, had come back to its ordinary absurdity. I could hear people laughing and drinking, the world kept on moving outside my reality, they did not halt their absurd ambiguity; will they one day forget us all when we are gone?

I observed everyone, the people talking and drinking; caving into the joke. They were all acting. The fruit over the table, the drinks over the counter, the books about

Hollywood stars piled up in the corner of one night stand; this was all clearly set up! I could tell, how they are all acting, how they are all trying to be someone else, but for what? I keep looking around, with a closed eye and the other wide open, suddenly I beheld that which was beyond madness. My lungs were out of air, the cigarette over my hand falls over the rug, I begin to cough as I was mad. The briefcase, my suitcase with the money, was gone! This was a set up indeed! I reach inside my pocket, looking around like a depraved animal for something I no longer had control of, ready to kill; I am at the verge of ecstasy, standing at the mountains of madness.

Everyone is laughing and talking, I look at them closely, they seem to be having a better time than me. I wonder if it was me who had made me end up here, or was it already written in time, somewhere; that my bad luck would always be there, stepping on the back of my shoes.

I close my eyes for a moment, I try to remember what had happened. Only blanks of deliria flash inside my head, moments that never happened in the phenomenon of reality, only in that which is known as dreams; or subconscious thoughts happening in reality. I could see everything inside my head; places, cities and worlds in a thought. Yet I could not remember who took the briefcase. Between drops of sweat crawling behind my neck, the heat was growing. I cannot lose that money; my life is on the line, but who am I? I wonder between the melting heat.

I remembered, in a distant glare, a drifting old thought; searching deep inside memory about an encounter that happened few minutes ago. I recall a fly, who spoke to me, once I was up there, that bastard was alone down here with the suitcase. Had the fly taken the suitcase? Once he saw the money? Oh, that greedy bastard! I knew it, he promised me to end me if I ever saw him again, and now he has accomplished his mission.

"You, greedy bastard! Don't fly away! One of these days I'll cut you in half with an axe!" I yelled while being ringed by aggressive fire. I was burning alive; yet the fear of losing something as ironic as money was greater than that of dying; I could feel the heat breathing in the back of my neck. That shit fly consummated my reality, he left me behind; he was my only friend, or so I thought. I guess he never knew, I guess he never will. I raise my hand, and my flesh is melting; pieces of meat fall off my arm into the corroded floor, akin my pathetic reality that crumbles into the void. Am I standing at the edge?

People are screaming and running around and away from me, I stretch and yell loudly while my lungs melt inside my intestines; I begin to feel a new kind of pain, the pain of being.

"So this is what it looks like, eh? Is this what it feels to be alive?", I said between the loud yelling, then my tongue fell off my mouth.

It seems that the cigarette I dropped moments ago had initiated this fire once it was exposed to the high flammable rug; I'm sure they are giving ashtrays to costumers from now on. A Saucerful of Secrets bangs on the turbulent background; it adds a style to the drama and high octane phenomenon; what a good song to die to, *I thought*.

The case of money burns underneath the couch, too far from my view, the locks open thanks to the pressure of the heat. Hundred dollar bills began to spread everywhere across the burning lobby. I saw the money and tried to cry, but had only one eye left; the other one had already popped out of my skull. I tried to pick it up, but could not see inside the fire; I was melting into the floor. I look up, and the people was running for the money, stepping over my melting corpse. Fire men entered the hotel immediately, they blasted water across the place, and people swam across the lobby to get the case with cash. Some fire men were pulling people out of the chaotic water, but they just jumped back in. I was glued to the floor; it was all so unconceivably surreal; I could only see the people kicking my skull. I became a sea creature, like those sponges from the Cambrian period that lived under the sea, almost like a fish with no desire; my only eye floated to the surface, still connected through my optic nerve, it floats atop unaware of reason. In a second of chaotic cynicism, I lost all memory and capacity of comprehension, once the heel of a woman slashed my head in two. The waters where high and my air was meager. People where swimming in my own blood, trying to pull out the money, dancing in a soup of my meat; in that loathing waters of perversion and dementia, tides will always be high.

The promised land never came to the fiend, so he must convince himself he got there at the end, at least to make the other believe that he did; so, they can all continue to wonder in that dream they imagined; they will and have all die in that thought. All of them, they halt their existence, their meaning; akin a diamond in a desert with no eyes, they all crumble in that heat without greed, becoming mere sand.

No eye observes you. No one to judge, no one to hate, no one to love. Be free. What happened before? I don't know, I had forgotten and moved on.

The bygone sun has settled across the equator, darkness ruled us after all. The stoic windows remain wide open, and from that morbid outside, that old passenger I could listen in dreams fades back into existence, approaching me in giggles he flew high. The fly now laughs and dreams over my corpse, inside my eye, it eats out of me; I keep him alive, it consumes that which was the idea of me.