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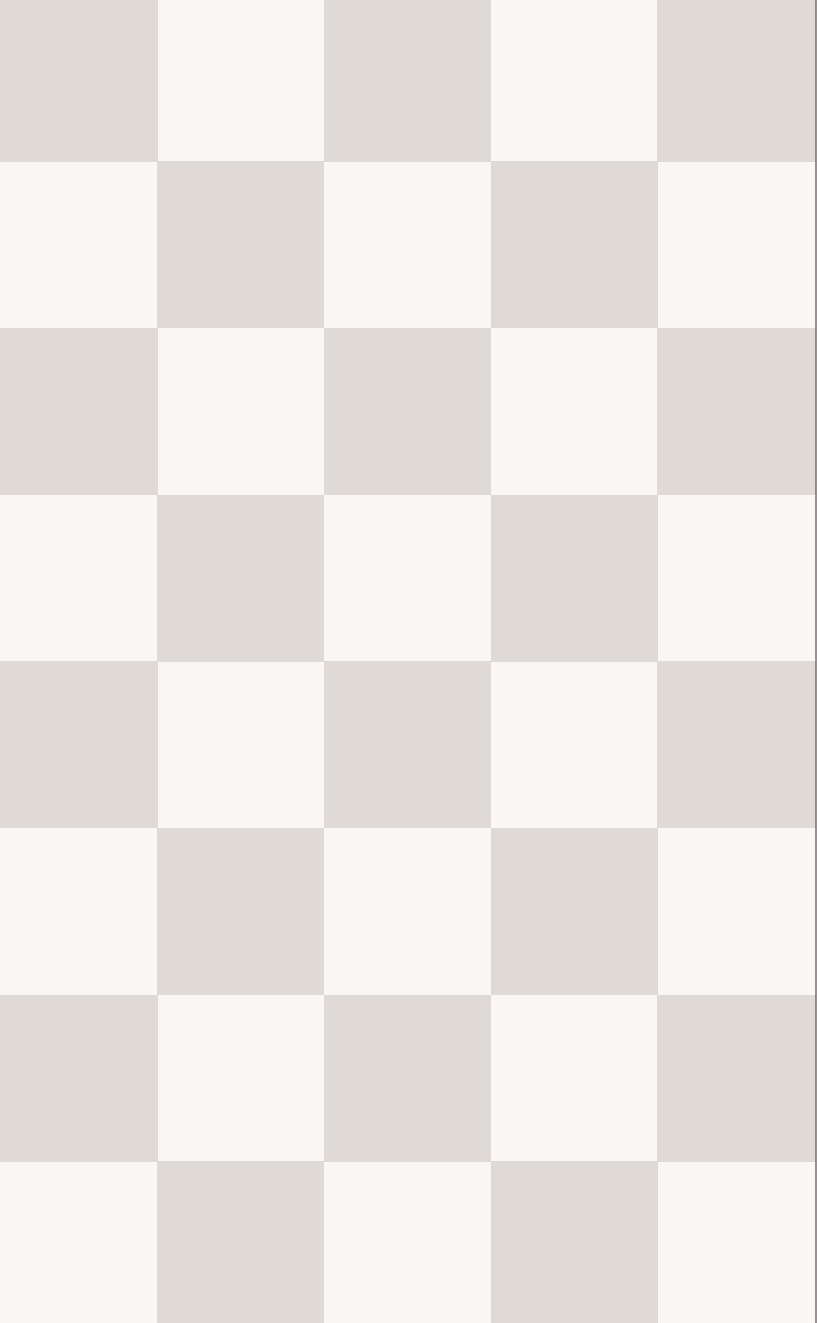
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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Design, Visual Communication at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA, May 2020.

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FOOL ' S REST

Aidan Quinlan

(another guide)

with and for cevahir and ged

inside

- map
- trust
- eggs
- dust
- string
- sediment

here



there



elsewhere



*If I knew, I would speak.
I know nothing. I guess much.*

Ged

t r u s t

*Now, to trust the story, what does that mean?
To me, it means being willing not to have full
control over the story as you write it.¹*

In order to begin we should first establish some trust. This is an unfortunate task—unfortunate because anything I can offer as a gesture of clarity or transparency will likely destroy this thing. So we must approach carefully.²

I'll begin with an admission.

I have called this text a guide, but, if you knew me, you would know that this is not really a guide; it cannot be a guide; it will not be a guide. Though this was not done without reason, I am sorry for the deception.

From the genre of guide, it borrows the outlines and silhouettes and lines between things and spaces and ideas. It lingers on the shadows of its subject(s); it is attentive to the periphery of its world; but it cannot take you there. There is no there. It lacks the authority of the guide; it lacks the lucidity, the efficiency, the false totality of the guide; it lacks the confidence.

I do not know where this guide is going. I cannot assume to know. The great shame of this guide is that I am somehow always at the cen-

ter of it. What is a guide built around shame?³ What is a guide that interfaces with chaos instead of the rational? What is a guide formed from the twisting mists of a human heart?

The guide simultaneously faces the user and the interior of the screen. Like Janus, the guide exists at the doorway, presiding over who can see what lies beyond. Like Janus, it contradicts itself: despairing and rejoicing, seeing nothing and everything, destroying itself and reassembling itself. Unlike Janus, the guide does not want this control.⁴

The guide embodies its own anxieties. This makes sense, as its reason to exist was born on the one-way highway of technological determinism and cradled in the eclipse of nihilism. It is from the gravity of these contexts that the guide is trying to escape⁵ or is (more likely) propelled by, into its own certain and empty end. This is the only language the guide has seemingly ever known.

The guide is not convinced of itself.

The guide is sapped of its mana—but this is the natural state of this guide. If this condition is not met, the guide would cease to exist. It functions only in this exhausted state.

The guide is an act of forgetting. It refrains into itself. The plots and pages have been tended, the instruments have been tuned, the dust has been arranged.

The guide is more like a chamber than a tool; more like a vehicle moving between things (cities or stars); more like a cry; more like a memory and more like a simulation. A simulation of lying on the ground with nothing to do.

What is contained here is probably nothing more than a collection of echoes.⁶

I do not want this to be an unwelcoming place.



Visit <https://fools.rest> to download the latest version of Fool's Rest.

If, when you visit, the website has blown along on the gusts of time and no longer resides in that place, you can track down the author, Aidan Quinlan, and contact them in whatever way is the popular or proper mode of contacting someone at the time. If Aidan has died or disappeared, then forgive me, as the software has most likely also blown along on those same gusts that both the website and Aidan have been carried off by. But, it seems strange to me that I imagine myself as the only one capable of out-living the others. I seem to be placing more trust than I usually do in the institution that I am housed within and in the rhythms of history—more trust than I should probably sustain—in assuming that the world will choose to keep me around even while Aidan still lives. But, in my defense, this book is partly about establishing trust (though not necessarily with the academy or the terrible machinery of history) and maybe I've just caught the bug of trust...

At the time of this writing, Fool's Rest is only compatible with macOS.

More support will be added later.

To open the software (on mac), one must first establish trust...

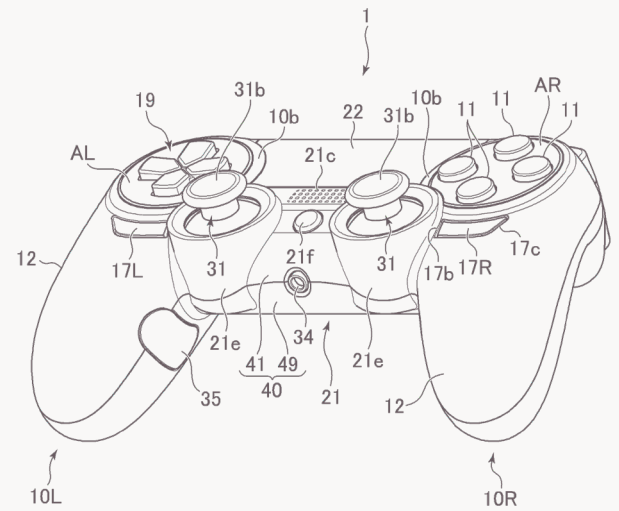
Attempts to open without first establishing trust will only result in prompts from the operating system to discard this piece of software into the trash.

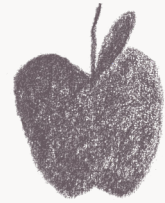
To avoid this, the user must right click on the application and select "open" from the drop-down menu. A new dialog will appear, this time with the option of opening the application.

Only do this if you trust me.

Be mindful of this software, as it is delicate. It is known to disappear or terminate itself if efforts to control it are made.

no





the only thing left to do
is wait

•

•

e g g s

panic

I tremble with un-academic panic.⁷ It is the same cold panic that has been trembled collectively since our earliest moments. The fantasy⁸ appears: very hot air (but still, the panic is cold); a river within a wilderness and a community of small figures, carried along the river, stranded on vessels of certainty: appendages of glass and transmission, boxes of words and mythologies, technologies of measurement and hope. The community watches the sunset. They watch with growing worry. Eventually, they set to work on building a singular vessel of certainty—a Great Net to catch the sun before it passes below the horizon. Faster and faster... The worry must be put to rest, once and for all.

Evil arises in the honored belief that history can be tidied up, brought to a sensible conclusion. It is evil to act as though the past is bringing us to a specifiable end.⁹



I want to share my emptiness with you. Not fill the silence with false notes, or put tracks through the void. I want to share this wilderness of failure. The others have built you a highway—fast lanes in both directions. I offer you a journey without direction. Uncertainty and no sweet conclusion. When the light faded, I went in search of myself. There were many paths and many destinations.¹⁰



time moves too quickly here
to smell like anything

orientation

A gust of blackberry and plastic, ponderosa pine and aluminum, damp grass and lithium. I am moving along a narrow path between two cliffs of bushes. My heart is fidgeting darkly. I have no therapist but they would probably give me a drug for that. The sky above the dark green canyon is slowly turning red as the sun (obscured by the bushes) is moving toward the limit of the day. This maze is a terrible shelter for the night. I should hurry. I want to get home. The thorns look ready to sink themselves into me and the berries look ready to turn into dark wisps of soot. I have already ingested too much dust. It is clouding my heart (where I keep the memory of home).

I move further along the path. A thorn claims a sliver of land on my arm, evicting some blood. This place used to be a refuge. I pull a blackberry off a branch and eat it in order to remember sourly. The tang of glass within fiber optic cable fills my mouth and plumes into a bristling cloud of memory loss. Misting its way through my throat, I can sense its eagerness to mingle with the cloud of dust hovering around my heart. I almost run into the big bug. The big bug with a red gleam, hissing unkindnesses. I've been here before. Another song of unkindness. More dust is heaped into

my mouth by the shoveling claws of the bug.
Once again, I turn and crawl through a small
tunnel in the bushes. More thorns and more
landlords. More dust and no water.

Suddenly, a red sensation. The cloud dissipates
a little. I look ahead and see that the tunnel is
ending. Red all over. The red sun flashes a jet
of fire into my eyes. Suddenly, I am out of the
tunnel; suddenly, a sick feeling in my stomach;
suddenly, there it is.

•



I notice I am monologuing to myself, as I always seem to be—though it seems these words were meant for others...

I come to this moment by way of the glass surface and the land of myth behind the glass. I come to this moment weary and waterlogged, restless and thirsty. The sprawling rivers of information that pour from the containers of the devices have carried me a long way from the dreams that once defined my time within the screen. I am there, somewhere in the froth of the waves. I attempt to steer away from the dogma of the Feed. I attempt to reassemble and understand the magic that has disappeared. There is much that I have forgotten in the great force and velocity of these rivers.

I come to this moment in earnest, feeling around for a slower way of doing and seeing things. At times I feel sick with information and so I wonder about ‘information’ and ‘acceleration’ and ‘seamlessness’ and the limits of these things. I wonder about the side-effects of a world preoccupied with lucidity and hardness and data and speculation. And I wonder how I can place stones in the rushing stream(s) of all these things so there might be some space(s) to take a rest.”

I come to this moment by way of the desert and the clouded coast of the North American expanse. I am still looking for a parking place. I fear I may never find one. At one point, I traversed a long distance on my bicycle, where I didn’t do much except pay attention to the strength of the wind and the frequency of corn fields and the precarity of the highway shoulder. At another, I was carried along a winding river, deep in a canyon, fearing what is called “the hole” in the rapids. I never encountered the hole and instead found the eddy, nestled along the banks of the river or tucked against the western face of a stone in the middle of the flow, silently twisting into itself.

As you might expect, I've since encountered the hole and, with the swift violence of reality (and eager submission on my part), my heart was wrenched away and cast into the breezeless mouth.





beginning

At the moment, my attention has drifted to the background—distracted by encompassing mists, patterns of weather, echoes. I am often lost in the background. At the moment, my attention dwells on the experience of fatigue and the disposition of the soft and hidden and the language that creates the outline of such a disposition—language that gestures to the possibility of existing with such a disposition. At the moment, I am slowly moving out of the many shells of irony that I've built around my delicate spirit (*I flinch*).

I begin (or attempt to begin) with waiting and finding. Ursula K. Le Guin reminds me:

Waiting, of course, is a very large part of writing.

I begin in bed. Outside the window is a brick wall. The sun has yet to stretch a ribbon of warmth through the narrow hallway between. This won't happen until three. And when it does, it will last for thirty minutes.

I begin on the surface of the screen. Caught in the filament of that nearly opaque net, thrashing but incapacitated (indoctrinated?) and deeply in love. But maybe love is not the right

word. Love belongs to some time outside of now. Things move too fast for love. The contrast is too high for love. You might think that love thrives in high contrast, claiming dominion over one end of the spectrum, but really it rests somewhere between, off a path into the damp dark. Everything comes back as radio static. There is unbearable noise, heaviness, even more. A moment of panic and the fear of great loss. The searing light from the screen turns the already limited 9AM light into a deep pitch of black. Ged yawns and the panel of light becomes a blur in the foreground. He presses himself against my leg. A stretched paw in my direction. The left eye closes before the right eye...

Ecstatic experience generally only happens when I am watching my cat.¹¹

I begin with something happening; something beginning and getting lost; distracted by a glowing, distracted by a word, the scent of a trail I am not supposed to be on. I arrive slowly, and in truth I do not arrive at all. I'm sorry... There is likely nothing juicy here, nothing sexy and electric, only a hidden fire in a little stone, something so old that we passed right by it. The reality of the stone does not seem to matter.

Really, I'm sorry for all this.

I begin with an apology: I arrive bearing no solution, no certain position to the problems at hand. I carry only tools of uncertainty, methods of weathering. My snake oils and ointments tumble out of my hands and crash on the floor. I bend to pick them up again, apologetic, repentant. I have set out with no plans and I can barely articulate the Vision.¹² I have tried to go off,¹³ tried to go the dark way, the way of the gut—tried to follow the heart. This has proved difficult. I've submerged myself in worry.





the magic is spoiled and
the software is rotten

worry

I worried all night.

Thank you to the angels who lifted me from the hole, even though I continued to worry. Worry about worry about worry about worry. The whole world vibrating with worry. Something is wrong—but it's okay to worry.

I worry that I will not transcend the primal state of worry. I worry that I cannot go over it, I cannot go under it, I cannot go around it. I must go through it.

The sun is setting and I feel the urge to find shelter.

I worry until a gem emerges from my throat. I attempt to proclaim it—to reclaim it. I make a sign that reads:

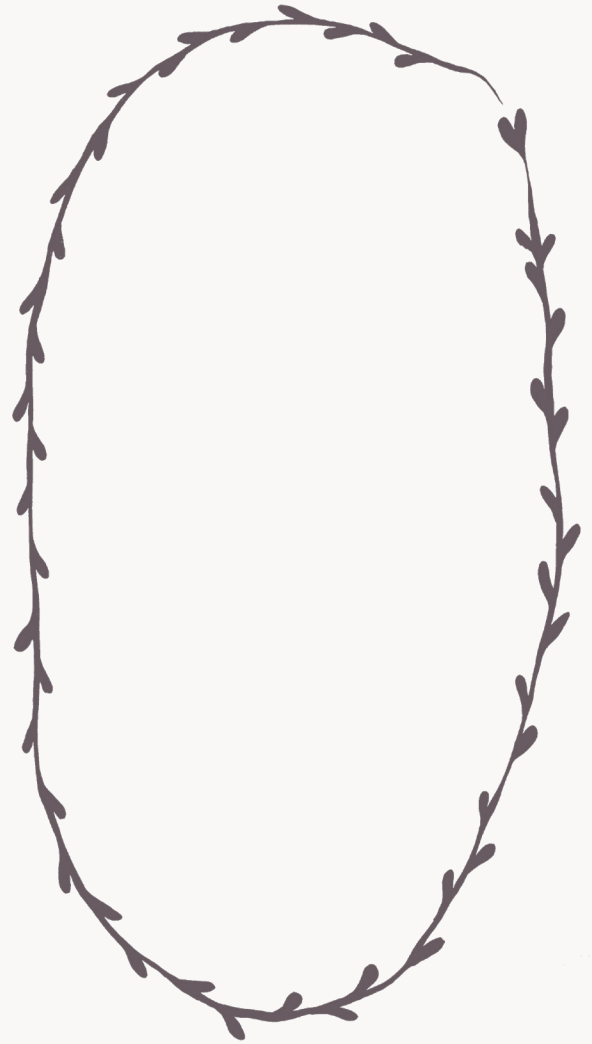
In This House, We Worry

I hang it in the kitchen. I move in with the inevitability. I cook with it, I laugh with it, I love with it, I am annihilated by it.

Worry is a thing placed next to hope. Maybe it is the shadow of hope. And, like all shadows, it is a thing despised and neglected; a thing to

be destroyed and forgotten; a thing to re-approach and re-consider. I sheepishly look in its general direction and am suddenly overcome. Or—I sheepishly look in its general direction and find it temporarily tamed, a sickly sun, purring like a cat.

What I understand about my worrying is purely self-diagnostic—so, much of what I say is most likely projection, posturing myself in a brighter light (for self-defense or maybe subconsciously for my own sake so that I don't spiral into a greater storm of worry). I see myself. I see an automaton of behaviors and mythologies, trapped in the bind of nihilism—a horizonless limit immediately before me. Nihilism eventually turning into fatalism. Rationality slipping into solipsistic singularity.



ambiguation

The river runs downhill. The certainty of the end of the river pulls with great magnetic strength. But the river's terrain is not only defined by the pull of its current—it is populated with moments of punctuation:

sandbars,
sweepers,
strainers,
boulders,
plummets,
boils,
holes,

eddies. Hazards and havens. The hole yearns to drown. The eddy offers pause. The eddy and the hole form on the same principle: a fixed object obstructs the flow of water downstream, leaving a void on the opposite side of the object to be refilled by the river with a circulating flow of water moving upstream and back down again. The eddy is created by an object visible above the surface and the hole by an object hidden below.

*Like all walls it was ambiguous, two faced.
What was inside it and what was outside it
depended on which side of it you were on.*¹⁴





.

.

ending

If there was only one of anything, it would be the end of the world.¹⁵

Here we are, arrived at the End. Foretold in our stories and our physics; presaged on street corners and all along the ever-descending, ever-ascending tower of the Timeline. Fixated on endings, fixated on solutions and destinations, fixated in general.

With this perspective, it is evil to get distracted, to go off, to seek elsewhere, outside—but fixation is a distraction in another sense. Fixation and certainty are just the physics of dogma—and I often find myself vigorously rowing my boat down the rapids of dogma, toward the logical end.

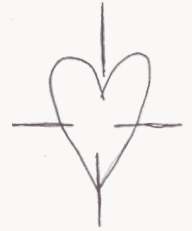


Like so many, I fixate on the apocalypse. Apocalypse as the death of love. Love as a dark thing; a cave untethered from time. Not evil, not good, not stable, but moving, from between my fingers.

Love as worrying; Love in the big sense; Love as the secret language, resting, obscured by impossibly dense mists, in the hearts of the star, the stone, the human, the cat, the atom...

Love as an ungraspable tremor.

Forgive me for all this talk about love. I have misplaced it. Misplaced it with language; misplaced it with truth; misplaced it in a twist of time.

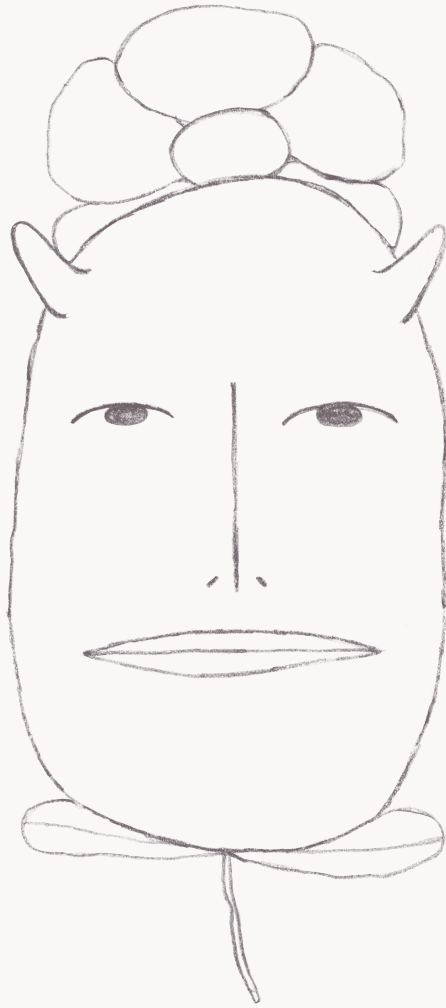




here is a sun setting
where it shouldn't be



Our capacity for attention has been numbed
and erased by the immediacy of the interface.
We see the button. The button signifies imme-
diate progress: summon the RIDE,
summon the DESIRE,
summon the END.



red

*The red world and corresponding red breezes
Went on Geryon did not*¹⁶

Red sometimes appears to be the saddest color. An anxious, longing sad, tinged with neuroses. A sad that can't sit still. Sad that's been left in the sun too long. Irradiated sadness. The sadness of the flushed, embarrassed face. Sad red exhaustion. Red is often the color given to the apocalypse—the fires of hell embracing the earth, the heat of climate collapse, the red-orange mists of industry choking cities and hills. Or, at least, red is the moment before the long end. A flash of sad red energy before everything cools down and separates into cold, isolated matter.

*Red is rare in the landscape. It gains its strength through its absence. Momentarily, in an ecstatic sunset, the great globe of the sun sinking below the horizon ... then it's gone. I've never seen the legendary green flash. Remember, great sunsets are the consequences of violence and cataclysm, Krakatoa and Popocatepetl.*¹⁷

I make a sunset to ward off dread. A personal symbol of a momentary end within a larger

cycle of things. A moment to pay attention to
mundane celestial weather.

A signal to return home.



Scattered like so many eggs. The festival is over or the festival is elsewhere and we will never find it again—only remnants—or we learn that the festival never really existed or that it partially existed—existed only because it didn't exist for others.

the plot offers catharsis;

progress ¹⁸

the egg offers a crisis;

cosmos



baselines

This is everything we wanted. The bottom has dropped out (or at least has started to drop out). The limit has been obscured forever. The stars now move about with their own will. Orbit is only a suggestion. Their sentience makes me nauseous. They move about in my periphery and, when they feel like it, they suddenly pierce me: my heart, my arms, my head—but I'm physically unharmed. I am psychically disfigured. I am communing with an algorithm, a stone, a giant ball of fire, and a vast array of plausible apocalypses.

Now, I feel like a heretic. Crying out in the town square for patience and time and slowness and definition and limits. I'm crawling somewhere—but not on the floor, there is no floor. I can't remember how to speak. Every word I speak offends me. The stars have no names. To name them is a sin. To speak my name is a sin.



Recently, I guess I moved into some deserted Boomer's body. A perfect shell, outfitted with all the legacy software, drifting in the vacuum. It passed me by and I must have grabbed it with a limb of subconscious, clamoring to get inside its sacred hull; eager for the sensation of ground, certitude, history; ready to drop anchor.

Immediately the new (old) body consumed those earlier desires, snuffed their flames. A world without names crushed by the bloated flesh of the Boomer's body, heavy with time and memory—incessantly chanting tomes of history and science. Inside the body there is a perfect horizon with a single sun, slowly setting. A single voice emanates from a human soul nearby. Outside, there are so many horizons there may as well be none. There is a flurry of suns, throbbing and spinning, flickering, dying and breathing, flitting like a murmuration. The beetle drifting in my periphery is the sunrise in one of those horizons. The human soul that was beside me speaks from the furthest possible point from where it once stood. It speaks from within me and from the jaws of the beetle that became the sun that became the mid-day.

•

Now, I want out of this dying shell, but it's too bright outside. Outside is too vast. I am sick with information. I lack context.¹⁹



•



It Was Too Much

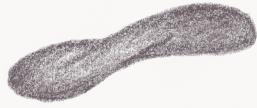
I set out to buy up a whole lot of land along the Nevada coastline——or what would eventually become the Nevada coastline.

There, I will make my new home.

Is the Timeline a tower or a ring? The interface would lead us to believe it is the most magnificent imagination of architecture. Skyscraper that ascends beyond the mesosphere; bunker that burrows below the core. We find ourselves forever in the middle of the Timeline, angels of history scrolling downward into the wreckage of the past, flamewars won and lost, witnessed or never seen; angels of history watching the dancing



waiting, refreshing, hungry for future. More sky to pierce, less oxygen to breathe. What will we find at the top of the Timeline? Do we finally dig through the vault of heaven? Or do we re-emerge in the cavern below Babylon? ²⁰



a perfect sun,
folded and
folded and
folded



My cat is researching sleep. 21



The Rig is the Old Body with the New Limb.
Once New Limb, now Old Limb. We have no
memory of a time without it. There is a great
chasm that we once leapt across to acquire
this Limb and now we can't seem to leap back
across it.

Discover the Love of Being a Rig.



beginning as a breeze,
ending as fuel

sunless²²

•

sunfull²³

•

sun-day²⁴

•

sun-night

•

screen²⁵

•

valley²⁶

•

fugue

•



refrain

•

stream²⁷

•

tower²⁸

•

boat

•

bench²⁹

•

soft

•

stop³⁰

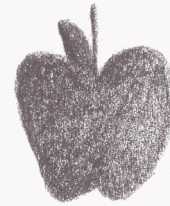
•

I arrive at the same crisis. Between the new age and the old age, the bones and the exoskeleton, the sunrise and the sunset. I come to this moment saying doom. It is very easy. I join in the chorus of the great family of doomsayers. I am surrounded by so many adopted kin. The doomsayers have multiplied, but they all say the same thing—the same ancient doom. The branches of this family tree grow upwards at such a great speed and from my remote position on the ground, the branches look as if they wish to break the sky. I must learn how to stop saying doom.

I come to this moment seeking a moment to offer others a moment. I wonder where the moments have gone... The magic has evaporated—

I cancel myself.

When I leave I am replaced by a bench.



GRATITUDE IS THE WAY

- ... You are only fruit. You may be violently blown from the tree or, after sometime spent floating above the earth, you will suddenly fall to the ground.
- ... Resign yourself to disaster.
- ... Avoid American freeways.
- ... Document your face when the surface of the world is washed orange.
- ... Time is a great long blade and we are sprinting along its impossible edge. And, thanks to tremendous advances in technological development, we have managed to sharpen the blade!

- ... Inspire the Earth to continue it's age-old pirouette by sliding your thumb (in unison with the other 7 billion thumbs) across the glass, lifting, returning to the bottom of the surface, and sliding up again.
- ... At some point, you will have seen your share of sunsets. It is not yet known if you will see any more after that point.





I come out over the hill into a dim world. It is no particular color and has no particular smell and has no particular depth. I am reminded of my machine. A gust of plastic and aluminum. The sensation of control. More space to arrange. I come upon a patch of static—maybe assembled from memories—and meet a worrying gardener.³¹ They are fidgeting, moving the broom this way and that way. A glove on the ground. A gleaming ring there too. They are saying, “I cannot see my flowers and ferns anymore”—they are gesturing towards chaos—“everything has become so dim here.”





the sun sets
on the busy body

•

•

string

I see much—————I see a mountain range, a
lonely lonely lonely standing on a beach on the
uppermost curve of the world, watching me
sink below a limit I have never known.

waiting

*The beautiful book should not be read but merely looked at. The boring page makes us wait a very long time.*³²

*To embrace latency goes against the grain of the logic of high performance. The appraisal of latency restores dignity to the unsaid, the unshown, and everything that can't be dragged out into the open in the rush of high performance when the value of all our potentials appears to depend entirely on our capacity to actualise them right here, right now.*³³

I begin in the immediate aftermath of “Move Fast and Break Things.” Much is truly broken or in the process of breaking (for good and for bad and for whatever lies in between and elsewhere). Fastness has not relented; the tempo has adapted. Patience is sapped and squeezed into seconds, moments. If I wasn't dancing myself to death then, I'm dancing myself to death now. A morsel of value every moment for validation from the network. An ever-newer tool for lubricating the interface between us and the tempo. Please, “Don't Make Me Think.” Everyone experiencing the individual and collective rave—always anticipating the



death of rave. Then, a hesitation. The tempo carries on but I'm out of step. I've been swept into some eddy in the middle of the current. Here I remain, forgetting how to dance and remembering how to wait. In waiting, the mind returns and is lost again, guided by a rhythm of anguish followed by clarity; a terrible depth of worry followed by metaphysical stillness.

For the anxiety of waiting, in its pure state, requires that I be sitting in a chair within reach of the telephone, without doing anything.³⁴



I am waiting for the telephone call (from inside myself, from outside myself, from elsewhere). I wait in an effort to camouflage myself against the backdrop of history—so that I am mistaken for a breeze and left alone. Or maybe, in my breezing, I function as the elucidating gust that briefly transforms the vibrating urgency of now into something that can be digested and metabolized. Then, I will write this breeze down with utmost urgency (I will swaddle and bind it with my language; I will name it for you and for me) or else it will be lost in the time of my mind. I will write it

down immediately because the tempo of the time has completely inscribed its measure on my attention. My hope is that, with a concentrated practice of waiting, I can find a tempo that doesn't leave me dejected and crushed with fatigue; a tempo that offers the time to remember how amorously I once felt.

•

•

•

•





fatigue is not an option;
fatigue is the only option

•

•

Someone wandered through here a long time ago and all that's left is the impression they made in the grass.³⁵

It almost looks like a comma...

•

•



re-earthing

The secret name is the gesture that restores the creature to the unexpressed. In the final instance, magic is not a knowledge of names but a gesture, breaking free from the name.³⁶

Those who refuse to listen to dragons are probably doomed to spend their lives acting out the nightmares of politicians. We like to think we live in daylight, but half the world is always dark; and fantasy, like poetry, speaks the language of the night.³⁷

Now that I have named this breeze I must also confront the paradox of its death (or likely death) by exposure. I tweet it or I lodge it in a description beneath an instagram post or I mark it in my notebook or I use it to justify my academic existence. The breeze becomes a flex. Un-earthed by language; torn from the ecosystem of silence and subtlety that sustained it—ultimately made glaringly apparent for the undying appetite of the network. It enters into the discourse, consumed, but hardly digested before it is spat back out, another beautiful flex, but this time it has lost some of its gust. It is collectively flexed and flexed until it is withered and drained of its breeziness.

It hardens into information and data; hardens into yet another bead on the abacus of the apocalypse. Here it remains, un-earthed, exposed in the daylight of language, burned by the sun of our linguistic prison.

Now: how to re-earth that dead secret—the endlessly chewed cud—as if it were a seed? How to return it to the night, where it can be listened to and felt, but left un-named? How to return it to some place it can only be gestured to, tucked away in the rhythm of a song, hidden in the reality of the stone. I don't know. My language does not permit me access to this kind of thing. I can only colonize secrets.

I am caught now in the act of doing what I ought not to do.

*Do you know what people did in the old days when they had secrets they didn't want to share? They'd climb a mountain, find a tree, carve a hole in it, whisper the secret into the hole and cover it up with mud. That way, nobody else would ever learn the secret.*³⁸

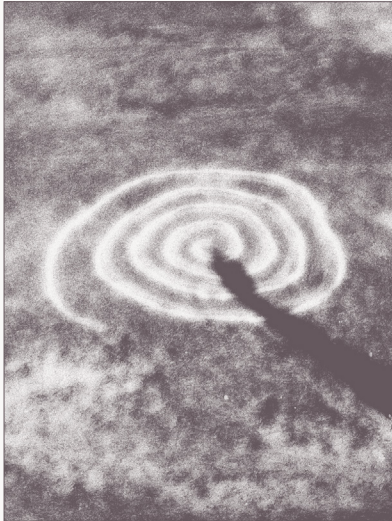
information has no scent

residue

My body curls into itself, hunched over the screen. I position myself to block the sun's glare from the dark mirror so I can peer into its depths. My thumb is sliding over the surface. The hole I look into is periodically interrupted with the shadowed reflection of my upper torso, my shoulders, the underside of my chin, the insides of my nostrils, eyes.

My body becomes a question mark.

We leave the cave and make our way to the river. Here, there is more stone than river, but that is just fine. The river will come eventually, the rain will bring it, the ocean will bring it. It is foretold. I find a small creek and I gasp. I collect the creek with my camera. Some pictures and videos of supplemental memory, soon to be primary memory.³⁹ We find a spiral painted on the rock. Red and yellow and blue, twisting in. The shadow of my hand is pulled into the center.



The river operates with machine logic, fast and linear; the eddy with spiritual logic, slow and cyclical. Within the eddy lies something forgotten, something to unlearn and relearn. “For Vladimir Nabokov, the spiral is a key figure of the fourth dimension of fictionality; the spiral is a ‘spiritualized circle’ (interestingly, ‘spiritualized,’ not spiritual, it’s about spirituality in process).”⁴⁰ The eddy eventually comes round to face its shadow. It eats its tail. The river runs from the shadow, running selfishly towards apocalypse, towards the singularity of comfort, convenience, closure.

And what a number of invertible dynamisms there are in this spiral! One no longer knows right away whether one is running toward the center or escaping.⁴¹

I tell myself that I am cleaning the screen with my thumb, wiping away the old marks and prints and smudges. Some residue from earlier today. But an alternative image emerges: Gollum stroking the Ring in his cave; Frodo pulling the Ring from the neck of his shirt, first thing in the morning, to gaze on it and stroke it just as his shadow does. I get up and start to make my way to the mountain. But I become distracted again, I find my reflection on the surface. I see some beauty from elsewhere. So many elsewheres.⁴² My thumb is performing the ritual and I've forgotten about the mountain. No Sam in the singularity.

Epicurus is crying: "friendship is essential."
Claudia Rankine is saying: "don't let me be lonely."⁴³

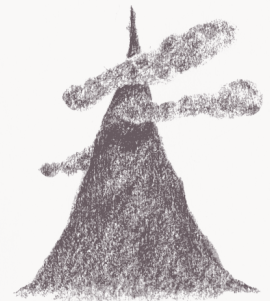
A dance.⁴⁴

I turn my head to look into the direction of the glance of motion.

Nothing. It is gone.

A soft orange glow is slowly disappearing from the screen. I'm sorry, I did not see it.

Maybe you did?





the sound of eyes
staring at a screen

•

•

forgetting

But there are no new ideas still waiting in the wings to save us as women, as human. There are only old and forgotten ones, new combinations, extrapolations and recognitions from within ourselves...⁴⁵

I undertook to let myself be borne on by the force of any living life: Forgetting. Unlearning, yielding to the unforeseeable modifications that forgetting imposes on the sedimented knowledge, culture, and beliefs one has traversed.⁴⁶

I encountered something that had been there for a while—but I hadn't payed enough attention to it or I didn't yet have the language for it or I hadn't found it yet or I hadn't waited long enough.

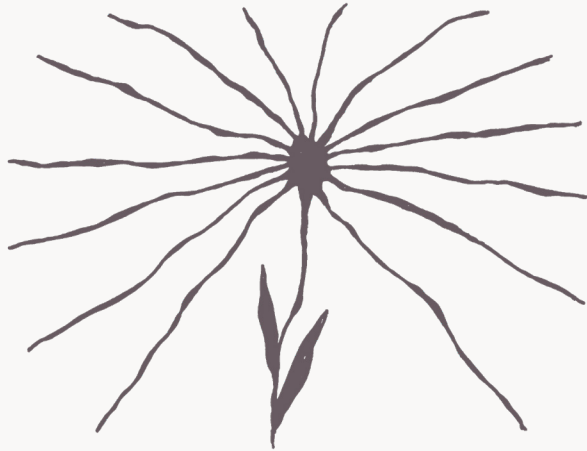
I am learning to love.

Or: I am re-learning to love.

(as if I had never known before)

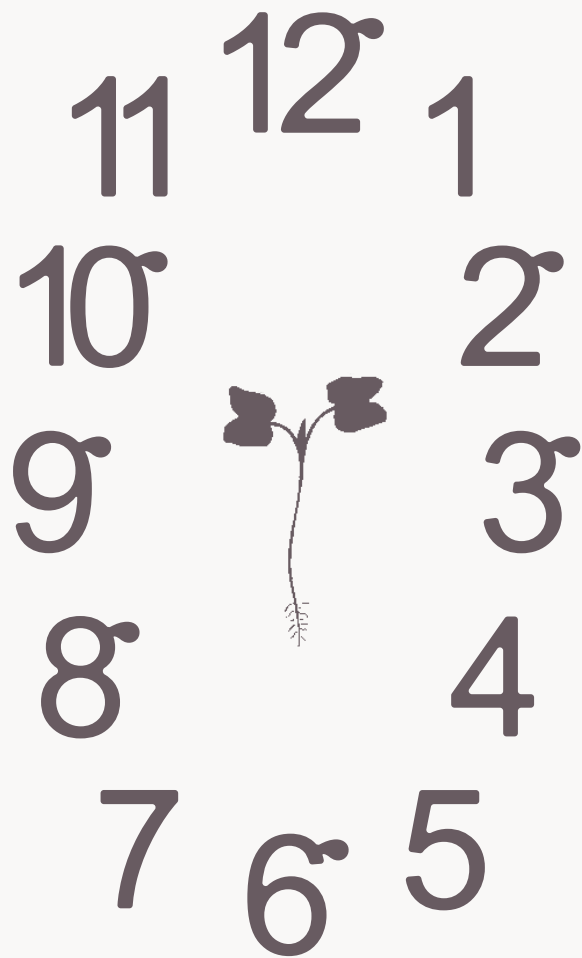
Or: I am forgetting to love.

Forgetting in order to love. Forgetting in order to make space; in order to remember; in order to re-member with the gut; in order to trust. I begin again. I find myself in some mist, off the path but sitting in front of the computer. I find myself a little bit closer to something warmer. I've followed the feeling for some time. Maybe this is what kills me. Maybe I'm a little bit closer to love—even though I can't see all too well. I seem to have lost my glasses or they don't work like they used to.



Old lucidity is replaced with new lucidity. Lucidity that's been diluted in a pool of water. Lucidity that's been left to float along on little gusts of wind, warmed by its travels toward the sun. The lucidity of eyes burnt by the screen and mind boiled by the network.

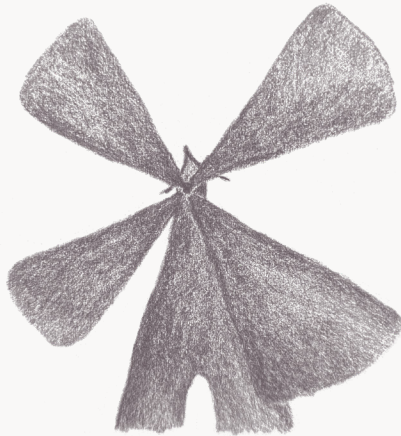
It's a long way back to earth.



weather

I spend the morning plunging, beginning in high contrast: a panel of bright white, a deep black beyond. This is my horizontal ritual. I cannot turn off the light. I am sustained by it, made buoyant enough to float along the river toward the setting sun. The worry is emptied out of me. The device tells me what the weather is like outside. The worry is emptied out of me. I will not leave the cave today, but at least I know what it feels like outside.

WEATHER IS A
THIRD TO
PLACE AND TIME 47



Beyond the screen is a space without wind. Wind is the source of many frustrations, so perhaps this is a good thing. I remember the headwinds of the North American flatlands. After we had Gone To The Sun, we descended into the foothills of the Rocky Mountains on the Eastern side. Here, we met the wind. We came to know the wind. It wasn't until we found the hills of New York that we said goodbye (and good riddance).

The wind moves about and turns on a whim. One moment: pressing into your face (an itchiness, a great anxious weight), sup-

pressing your spirit; and then: singing a song
that only your back can hear.

“When ‘the folk’ leave home in companies,
they travel in eddies of wind.” In Scottish lore,
eddy winds (or ‘the people’s puff of wind’)
would lift up those traveling at night and carry
them back to the place that they began from.⁴⁸

“I am looking for the weather in the screen.”

Weather might help to endure the slick world
made for purely rational creatures. The gales
might swirl just enough to make a small hill on
the surface of glass. A little shadow is cast. A
place to hide or sleep, unexposed, at least for a
little while. I notice some patterns of weather:
the pinwheel, the throbbler,⁴⁹ the screensaver,
the broken signal, the crash...

What does the tool become when it betrays?
There is a dance that we dance. A game of catch-
ing up and keeping pace. There is a confrontation
with human limits when the machine reaches
a limit. A cry. Maybe something more. Because
the machine was made to extend those limits, di-
minish those limits, erase those limits. Now, it
does this too well and will continue to do this
too well. We no longer cry because the machine
cannot keep up. We cry because we cannot.

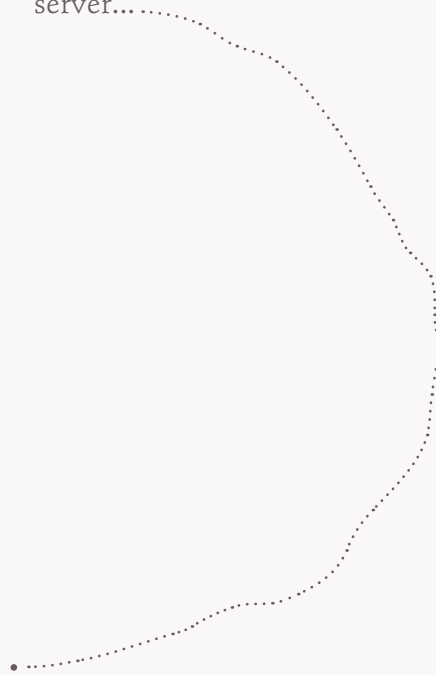
•



close the window,
it makes me sick

•

A little ant falling into the infernal heart of the server...



crying

*Care may be questioned with care,
joy with joy.⁵⁰*

The cry may be questioned with a cry.

(I suppose that's what this is...)

It seems unkind to approach the cry with the same kind of linearity that has barred it from consideration and legitimacy. It seems unkind to approach the cry with the measuring stick of the academic...

For within living structures defined by profit, by linear power, by institutional dehumanization, our feelings were not meant to survive. Kept around as unavoidable adjuncts or pleasant pastimes, feelings were expected to kneel to thought as women were expected to kneel to men. But women have survived. As poets.⁵¹

We cry before we are taught language. We cry as the animal cries. The cry is on the edge of communication. Between human and animal; between language and action; between noise and song; between surrender and hope. The cry is an image of past and an image of future;

a lamentation of something too late and the breeze of a fantasy.⁵²

We cannot look at the cry through the goggles we've grown accustomed to. The straps of the goggles have dug too far into the back of our head, the hair is matted beneath, and the skin is irritated. Remove the goggles in order to forget the weight of the goggles. Remove the goggles and the dust of history gets in your eye and you cry. Remove the goggles and the microparticles of glass and aluminum get in your eye and you cry.

Maybe then, the best lens to look at the cry through is the tear—the common smudge that blurs the field of vision, blurs edges and horizons, blurs names and time. Through a tear, the cry is a color rather than a symptom; an atmosphere rather than an event; an echo rather than a performance. Through a tear, the cry of a baby looks a lot like the sudden cry of a solar flare—looks a lot like the slow cry of the sun's light. This, too, is the danger of the cry (and the tear)—the blur connects but also consumes. The cry becomes the network. Through a tear, the color of a cry may shift into the deep, sad red and all will be melted in its smudge.

We make the surrogate in order to forget the cry. We make the screen. We make the glass

horizon where the mind glides freely (does it?) and the body is forgotten. The tear is rejected by the screen—it rolls off the surface. The screen reflects the tear and the crying face. It used to be that, with enough tears, one could drown the machine, short the electronics—but the surrogate today is coated in hydrophobic skin. The ports of entry disappear. An ocean of tears and still the surrogate is safe. The cry cannot get in. We make the heaven we were promised and store it in a server deep in a mountain. We make the heaven we were promised and lodge it in some satellite, drifting in the purgatory of orbit. Body-less and protected from time.

Recently, I've been crying more regularly than I used to. I find myself crying in the bathroom. I am crying in the bed and on the floor. I have lost control. My cries twist into their signature, self-affirming loop: I cry because I have lost control—the cries are further evidence that I have lost control—I cry because I am crying—I cry because I am crying...

The cry emerges out of lack. The sound becomes a companion. A limb of tears appears. The cry is linked to time (but what isn't?). We lack control over time. We lack everlasting life.

Maybe I cry my tears in the hope that I cry a river that turns all the way back to its source—all the way back to some Arcadia or all the way back to my first cry, entering into the world—so that I might avert the sins I am bound to commit or the presiding apocalypses or the promised confrontation with death.⁵³ Outside time, this loop of tears for tears would mean nothing—the streams would be bereft of the gravity that moves them.

I am eager to sacrifice the body so that the mind can live on. I offer my tears as sacrifice (as evidence of agnition, as evidence of my penance, as evidence of my sincerity, as evidence of my trust) just as Alexander offers his earthly possessions and his family as sacrifice to God on the condition that time is turned back to the morning before the announcement of the apocalypse. The plea is answered and the end of the world averted, but Alexander's mind is swept into the hysteric time of the cry. His body is swept away by doctors. Time has turned back, but the apocalypse still looms. God awaits another sacrifice.⁵⁴

He realized there was no escape out of time, and that that moment he'd been granted to see as a child, and that had obsessed him forever after, was the moment of his own death.⁵⁵

The cry emerges out of too much. Too much history that has been and too much history that is to be or too much history that is, may be, or, simultaneously... A broken sentence that unravels into empty everything. A cry of too many lives lived and too many lives to be lived, lived all at once. This is great and this is terrible. Too bright and too dark. Overwhelming color. Dim cry, vibrant cry.

Suddenly, the cry is swallowed by silence.



silence

Oh!

•

•

The shadow of the cry is silence. Nothing more silent than the moment before the cry or the moment after the cry. Or, maybe, it is during the cry that it is most silent. Hot emptiness—a pitch beyond what our ears are capable of hearing, it comes in like a gust that takes all other sounds away.

Silence is imagined as something that must be sustained, only existing in long drawn out passages. But, just as the cry can come in bouts, abrupt starts and stops, silence (as its shadow) must also be able to follow the same rhythms.

Life is a cry and everything else is silence. Or, maybe, it's the other way around... Through a tear, the cry looks a lot like silence.

The interior of the cry is beyond reach. The path to its center is not a simple one. Some claim they've made the journey, but believing them is a matter of trust. The interior of the cry is silent.

Metaphysical silence happens inside words themselves. And its intentions are harder to define. Every translator knows the point where one language cannot be translated into another...But now what if, within this silence, you discover a deeper one—a word

*that does not intend to be translatable.
A word that stops itself.⁵⁶*

The image of silence is silent. I see the vacuum and I see the mist. But that is just my fantasy—that is just the habit of my mind—that is just my attempt to puncture the silence.⁵⁷

Forgive me.

Through a tear, silence is an impasse and a network. It is the bridge that connects me and you, across space and time. And it is the chasm of intranslatability between souls here, there, and elsewhere. Our love and anger and anxiety and humility and shame gathering, billowing, dispersing between, around, and within; and the absence of all that weather.⁵⁸ Silence is the atmosphere of trust and distrust.

Silence is the mark of hysteria. The great hysterics have lost speech, they are aphonic, and at times have lost more than speech: they are pushed to the point of choking, nothings gets through. They are decapitated, their tongues are cut off and what talks isn't heard because it's the body that talks, and man doesn't hear the body.⁵⁹

The hysteric is silenced by those that control the weather. The hysteric is isolated and sealed away, the chasm is drawn around them,

the mist is drawn away. There they are left, still within their own silence, their own weather, left to gather and brim and cycle without end, without release, or at least without ever hearing the warm silence of the other hysterics—the silence of the mist.

Our language reinforces those deliberate, programmed chasms. Moats and oceans and rectangles of glass. We speak most often of the silence of the vacuum, the silence of irony and alienation. Silence is taken to mean the absence of sound, the absence of life, the absence of feeling, enlightened nihilism. But that is one dimensional silence, the silence of singularity. That is the silence of not listening.⁶⁰



enough

Here we are, arrived at another end... but it is only another sunset. I've wandered a long way from the beginning. I've said enough or I've said too much or I haven't said enough or I can never say enough or I didn't say it clearly enough or I didn't say it unclearly enough. I'm stuck on the problem of enough and the particular hunger of never enough.⁶¹ Hunger of naming and accumulation, the hunger of flexing and annihilation. Success to please the belly; success for the sake of the belly's confounding size (its magnificent ironic complexity); success so that the belly may know greater speeds. With every newly released dimension, the hunger of never enough is stretched further, somehow. The belly appears to have no limits, or at least, no limits that our soft eyes can see. Through a tear, those limits (if they exist) are blurred into an even vaguer oblivion. But the tear is not just a lens to look through—the tear is a limit itself. The tear is a limit that clings to the eye. A material sacrifice for an immaterial belly or an immaterial sacrifice for a material belly. The tear is a limit that is rolled down the face by the dogma of gravity. The limit falls, grazes the belly, and splashes on to another limit. Through a tear, the ground is just a color.

The language of never enough stimulates the appetite. The feast of efficiency. The banquet of the silent but whirring, perfectly fluid, glass morsels. Identified, catalogued, named. The unpredictable heart, stuck in its hysteric loops, is pressed into a slim vertical chamber; the valves replaced with logic gates, the mists replaced with vacuum.

Redundancy was never loved.

Every motion in honor of never enough brings me closer to the end. The end comes swiftly and efficiently. The end has never hidden itself from us. Yet, it seems I must become two things in this conspiracy of the end: one who turns the screw and one who distracts from the turning screw. Attention exists to be harvested and I am to be one its harvesters. To be the fool that lies down to rest is not permissible—not unless it is performed.

I am caught now in the act of doing what I ought not to do. I dance myself to death.

•

I'm sorry...

I have misplaced myself countless times throughout my life, borne on winds and floods of dogma. A feedback loop of the dogma of others and the shadows of myself.

I collapse myself. I cancel myself. I tuck myself into a corner. Maybe, instead, the end-goal is fatigue, not transcendence. Maybe a secret is enough. Maybe, sometimes, enough is:

I don't know.



•

darkness

I tremble with primitive panic.⁶² The vision returns: the river is running; the sun is suspended above the horizon and the sky is red.⁶³ The sun does not appear to move, but we know it moves—our vessels tell us it is certain. The vessels track the sun's position with incredible accuracy. Now is the perfect time to take a photo of your face. Now is the time to leave the cave and pay attention, there is something happening outside. Feel the hot air that the screen foretold. The construction of the Great Net is underway. As the glass threads are woven together the sun slides nearer to the limit we have defined for it and for ourselves. The screens of our vessels light up in unison. Our glass minds tense and shriek.

Hurry.

We worry about the inversion of the world. Hung out to dry; abandoned by God and forsaken by Reason. We worry about arriving and not arriving. We worry about the shadow of the Earth;⁶⁴ about the counter-logic of night.

I imagine that even in the night, the air will still be hot. A hot wind is blowing my vessel toward a gathering of boulders a little way down the river. Something else is there. The

wind overpowers the motors of my vessel.
I hesitate. The portion of the Net that I was
working on slides off the glass surface of the
screen and into the water. A gleam of red be-
fore it is swallowed by green in motion.

My hand moves to switch off the screen.





evening will come

•

•

*On the course on which they were embarked,
the saying of the least spell might change
chance and move the balance of power and of
doom: for they went now toward the very cen-
ter of that balance, toward the place where
light and darkness meet. Those who travel
thus say no word carelessly.⁶⁵*

s e d i m e n t

1 Ursula K. Le Guin, *A Matter of Trust*

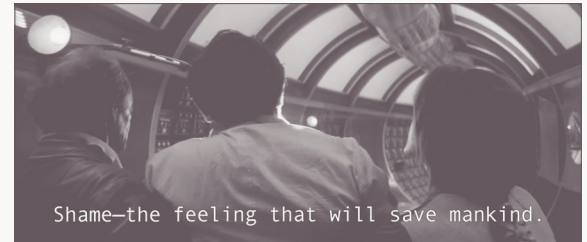
2 “To be singleminded is to be unmindful. Mindfulness is keeping many different things in mind and observing their relations and proportions.

To conquer is to be careless. Carefulness is holding oneself and one’s acts in appropriate relation and proportion to the many other beings and intentions.

To take is to be joyless. Joyfulness is accepting the given, which cannot be earned by mindfulness nor deserved by carefulness.”

— Ursula K. Le Guin, *Always Coming Home*

3



Solaris, dir. Andrei Tarkovsky

4 “Every door has two fronts, this way and that, whereof one faces the people and the other the house-god; and just as your human porter, seated at the threshold of the house-door, sees who goes out and in, so I, the porter of the heavenly court, behold at once both East and West ... And lest I should lose time by twisting my neck, I am free to look both ways without budging.”

— Janus speaking in Ovid’s *Fasti*

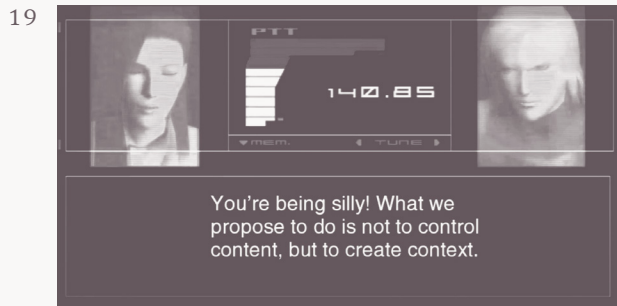
- 5 “The whole point about escape is that it’s an activity, not an achievement.”
— Fred Moten, *The Black Outdoors*
- 6 “Through the brilliance of an image, the distant past resounds with echoes, and it is hard to know at what depth these echoes will reverberate and die away.”
— Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*
- 7 “Especially today is it necessary to be academic, the apology for academic precision—which is always essential in realistic ages—being that this has no relation to facts. To essay is to try but not to attempt. It is to establish trial. The essay is the most human literary form in that it is always sure, it remains from first to last fixed.”
— William Carlos Williams, *An Essay On Virginia*
- 8 “So the word fantasy remains ambiguous, standing between the false, the foolish, the delusory, the shallows of the mind, and the mind’s deep connection with the real. On this threshold it sometimes faces one way, masked and costumed, frivolous, and escapist; then it turns, and we glimpse as it turns the face of an angel, bright truthful messenger, arisen Urizen.”
— Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Wave in the Mind*
- 9 James P. Carse, *Finite and Infinite Games*
- 10 Derek Jarman, *The Garden*

11



- 12 “Embark on a garden with a Vision but never with a plan.”
— Ian Hamilton Finlay, *Selections*
- 13 “The proposition ‘off’ is a product of linguistic error, popular etymology and fuzzy logic. It developed from the proposition ‘of,’ signifying belonging as in ‘being a part of,’ with the addition of an extra ‘f,’ and emphatic marker of distancing ... Sometimes ‘off’ is about the embarrassment of life caught unawares.”
— Svetlana Boym, *The Off-Modern*
- 14 Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*
- 15 Ursula K. Le Guin, *Always Coming Home*
- 16 Anne Carson, *Autobiography of Red*
- 17 Derek Jarman, *Chroma*

- 18 “Where man goes, trees die; or...we make a desert and call it progress.”
— Ursula K. Le Guin, *Lavinia*



Hideo Kojima, *Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty*

- 20 “It was clear now why Yahweh had not struck down the tower, had not punished men for wishing to reach beyond the bounds set for them: for the longest journey would merely return them to the place whence they’d come. Centuries of their labor would not reveal to them any more of Creation than they already knew. Yet through their endeavor, men would glimpse the unimaginable artistry of Yahweh’s work, in seeing how ingeniously the world had been constructed. By this construction, Yahweh’s work was indicated, and Yahweh’s work was concealed.”
— Ted Chiang, *Tower of Babylon*
- 21 “That’s the problem. Mankind has lost the ability to sleep.”
— *Solaris*, dir. Andrei Tarkovsky

“I know only one thing, señor. When I sleep, I know no fear, no hope, no trouble, no bliss. Blessings on him who invented sleep. The common coin that purchases all things, the balance that levels shepherd and king, fool and wise man. There is only one bad thing about sound sleep. They say it closely resembles death.”
— Miguel De Cervantes, *Don Quixote*

- 22 “Of course I’ll never make that film. Nonetheless I’m collecting the sets, inventing the twists, putting in my favorite creatures. I’ve even given it a title, indeed the title of those Mussorgsky songs: Sunless.”
— *Sans Soleil*, dir. Chris Marker
- 23 “Our best machines are made of sunshine; they are all light and clean because they are nothing but signals, electromagnetic waves, a section of a spectrum, and these machines are eminently portable, mobile—a matter of immense human pain in Detroit and Singapore.”
— Donna Haraway, *A Cyborg Manifesto*
- 24 “When taken seriously, the Sabbath has the power to restructure not only the calendar but also the entire political economy. In place of an economy built upon the profit motive—the ever-present need for more, in fact the need for there to never be enough—the Sabbath puts forward an economy built upon the belief that there is enough. But few who observe the Sabbath are willing to consider its full implications, and therefore few who do not observe it have reason to find any value in it.

...

In a Sabbatarian economy, the right to rest—the right to do nothing of value to capital—is as holy as the right to work.”

— William R. Black, *Let's bring back the Sabbath as a radical act against 'total work'*

- 25 “The black mirror—an ancient gadget used by artists, magicians, and scientists from Mexico to India—offers an insight into another history of ‘techné’ that connected art, science, and magic, producing an enchanted technology of wonder. When a digital surface becomes a ‘black mirror,’ it reflects upon clashing forms of modern and premodern experience that coexist in contemporary culture. New ‘black mirrors’ engage with pictorial and photographic genres of the past to document a confrontation of modern industrial ruins and virtual utopias.”

— Svetlana Boym, *The Off-Modern*

“If the black mirror is charged with passion, it is charged above all with poison—as were mirrors made with mercury. Thus, although this mirror does not necessarily provoke melancholy, it is quite apt to maintain it, if not actually to darken our minds, just like this black exhalation.”

— Arnaud Maillet, *The Claude Glass*

- 26 “Think of the darkness and the great cold
In this valley, which resounds with misery.”
— Brecht, *Threepenny Opera*

- 27 “I was born in a country of brooks and rivers, in a great corner of Champagne, called le Vallage for the great number of its valleys. The most beautiful of its places for me was the hollow of a valley by the side of fresh water, in the shade of willows...”

My Pleasure still is to follow the stream, to walk along its banks in the right direction, in the direction of the flowing water, the water that leads life towards the next village...

But our native country is less an expanse of territory than a substance; it's a rock or a soil or an aridity or a water or a light. It's the place where our dreams materialize; it's through that place that our dreams materialize; it's through that place that our dreams take on their proper form...Dreaming beside the river, I gave my imagination to the water, the green, clear water, the water that makes the meadows green. I can't sit beside a brook without falling into a deep reverie, without seeing once again my happiness... The stream doesn't have to be ours; the water doesn't have to be ours. The anonymous water knows all my secrets. And the same memory issues from every spring.”

— Gaston Bachelard, *Water and Dreams*

- 28 “Perhaps men were not meant to live in such a place. If their own natures restrained them from approaching heaven too closely, then men should remain on the earth.

When they reached the summit of the tower, the disorientation faded, or perhaps they had grown immune. Here, standing upon the square platform of the top, the miners gazed upon the

most awesome scene ever glimpsed by men: far below them lay a tapestry of soil and sea, veiled by mist, rolling out in all directions to the limit of the eye. Just above them hung the roof of the world itself, the absolute upper demarcation of the sky, guaranteeing their vantage point as the highest possible. Here was as much of Creation as could be apprehended at once.”

— Ted Chiang, *Tower of Babylon*

- 29 Scott Burton, whose later works were composed mainly of functional public benches/seating, remarked that his work should, “place itself not in front of, but around, behind, underneath (literally) the audience.”

“A bench, in our modern gardens, is a thing to be sat upon; in Shenstone’s Leasowes it was a thing to be read.”

— Ian Hamilton Finlay, *Selections*

- 30 “I’m not proposing a return to the Stone Age. My intent is not reactionary, nor even conservative, but simply subversive. It seems that the utopian imagination is trapped, like capitalism and industrialism and the human population, in a one-way future consisting only of growth. All I’m trying to do is figure out how to put a pig on the tracks. Go backward. Turn and return.”

— Ursula K. Le Guin, *A Non-Euclidean View of California*

- 31 “The gardener digs in another time, without past or future, beginning or end. A time that does not cleave the day with rush hours. Lunch breaks,

the last bus home. As you walk in the garden you pass into this time—the moment of entering can never be remembered. Around you the landscape lies transfigured. Here is the Amen beyond the prayer.”

— Derek Jarman, *Modern Nature*

- 32 Tan Lin, *BlipSoak01*

- 33 Jan Verwoert, *Exhaustion and Exuberance*

- 34 Roland Barthes, *A Lover’s Discourse*

- 35 “When an animal, a rabbit, say, beds down in a protecting fencerow, the weight and warmth of his curled body leaves a mirroring mark upon the ground. The grasses often appear to have been woven into a birdlike nest, and perhaps were indeed caught and pulled around by the delicate claws as he turned in a circle before subsiding into rest. This soft bowl in the grasses, the body-formed evidence of hare, has a name, an obsolete but beautiful word: meuse.”

— Sally Mann, *Hold Still*

- 36 Giorgio Agamben, *Profanations*

- 37 Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Language of the Night*

- 38 *2046*, dir. Wong Kar Wai

- 39 “I tend to agree with the theory that if you want to keep a memory pristine, you must not call upon it too often, for each time it is revisited, you alter it irrevocably, remembering not the

original impression left by experience but the last time you recalled it. With tiny differences creeping in at each cycle, the exercise of our memory does not bring us closer to the past but draws us farther away.”

— Sally Mann, *Hold Still*

40 Svetlana Boym, *The Off-Modern*

41 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*

42 “By the Magicall or Prospective Stone it is possible to discover a Person in what part of the World soever, although never so secretly concealed or hid; in Chambers, Closets, or Cavernes of the Earth: For there it makes a strict Inquisition. In a word, it fairely presents to your view even the whole World wherein to behold, heare, or see your Desire. Nay more, It enables Man to understand The Language of the Creatures, as the Chirping of Birds, Lowing of Beasts &c. To Convey a Spirit into an Image, which by observing the Influence of Heavenly Bodies, shall become a true Oracle, And yet this as E.A. [Elias Ashmole] assures you, is not any ways Necromanticall, or Devilish; but easy, wondrous easy, Naturall and Honest.”

— Elias Ashmole, *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*—from Arnaud Maillet’s *The Claude Glass*

43 “Or one meaning of here is “in this world, in this life, on earth. In this place or position, indicating the presence of,” or in other words, I am here. It also means to hand something to somebody—Here you are. Here, he said to her. Here both

recognizes and demands recognition. I see you, or here, he said to her. In order for something to be handed over a hand must extend and a hand must receive. We must both be here in this world in this life in this place indicating the presence of.”

— Claudia Rankine, *Don’t Let Me Be Lonely: An American Lyric*

44 “Among a few remaining human traits that technology cannot duplicate are a sense of humor that resists ‘disambiguation,’ a sudden gasp of affect, a smile, a whim, a swerve.”
— Svetlana Boym, *The Off-Modern*

45 Audre Lorde, *Poetry is Not a Luxury*

46 Roland Barthes, *Inaugural Lecture (Leçon)*

47 Ian Hamilton Finlay

48 “By throwing one’s left (or toisgeul) shoe at it, the Fairies are made to drop whatever they may be taking away—men, women, children, or animals. The same result is attained by throwing one’s bonnet, saying, ‘this is yours, that’s mine’ (Is leatsa so, is leamsa sin), or a naked knife, or earth from a mole-hill.”

— John Gregorson Campbell, *Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*

49 “We simply have to wait and trust that the throbbler’s motion does indeed represent some form of progress. The throbbler is a sign of temporal rupture. It is the last barrier to a perfectly smooth and seamless virtual experience. It draws attention to an asynchronous maladjustment, or misalignment, between the space of our bodies and the infinite atopian fluidity of the digital world.”

— Jack Self quoted in: Callum Copley,
New Document 1

50 Ursula K. Le Guin, *Always Coming Home*

51 Audre Lorde, *Poetry is not a Luxury*

52 “The words ‘if only’ mark both the fact of loss, that it is too late, yet simultaneously the possibility that things might have been different, that the fantasy could have been fulfilled.”

— Steve Neale, *Melodrama and Tears*

53 “One’s dreams are attuned to the specter of death, death is a ghost, and the ghost’s form is fixed: Its shape, a body, appears in the mist, is difficult to perceive. Its shape, a body, extends one arm up toward the sky, points a finger. Gradually, a roar of sound descends. The clouds break open: pour cylindrical containers, gallons upon gallons of tears. Tears, fluid content that pours from the eyes to disinfect the eyes, transpire only when the eyes are diseased. Is a ghost ashamed of its tears, its disease? Does the ghost tremble in dreams?”

— Claire Donato, *Burial*

54



The Sacrifice, dir. Andrei Tarkovsky

55 *La Jetee*, dir. Chris Marker

56 Anne Carson, *On The Right to Remain Silent*

57 “The pursuit of silence, likewise, is dissimilar from most other pursuits in that it generally begins with a surrender of the chase, the abandonment of efforts to impose our will and vision on the world.”

— George Prochnik, *In Pursuit of Silence*

58 “The plants are very psychic but they can express it only by silence and beauty.”

— Sri Aurobindo

59 Hélène Cixous, *Castration or Decapitation?*

60 “Human activity has brought my kind to the brink of extinction, but I don’t blame them for it. They didn’t do it maliciously. The just weren’t paying attention.”

— Ted Chiang, *The Great Silence*

“Listening is an act of community, which takes space, time and, silence. Reading is a means of listening. Reading is not as passive as hearing or viewing. It’s an act: you do it. You read at your pace, your own speed, not the ceaseless, incoherent, gabbling, shouting rush of the media.”
— Ursula K. Le Guin, *Operating Instructions*

61



Ian Hamilton Finlay

62 “There have always been two kinds of arcadia: shaggy and smooth; dark and light; a place of bucolic leisure and a place of primitive panic.”
— Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory*

63 “Red sky at night, shepherd’s delight. Red sky in the morning, shepherd’s warning.

...

Red is a moment in time. Blue constant. Red is quickly spent. An explosion of intensity. It burns itself. Disappears like fiery sparks into the gathering shadow. To warm ourselves in the long dark winter when the red has departed.”

— Derek Jarman, *Chroma*

64 “For the first time, he knew night for what it was: the shadow of the earth itself, cast against the sky.”

— Ted Chiang, *Tower of Babylon*

65 Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Farthest Shore*

outside



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Without you, I would be lost.



Made in Richmond, Virginia, at the beginning of another decade, in the midst of another plague. We've had to move inside (my refuge) but the sanctuary has changed—this is not how I remember it...

For a book that spends so much time looking at the sun, it was composed in a time when the sun had endeavored to hide itself behind the brick wall just outside my window and I had forbidden myself to look for it.

I suppose now is the time to leave the chair for a moment and go outside.

Aidan Quinlan
May, 2020

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