

Today

If death I shall become then experience leading from time I now document, shrouded, cowering, sweat sliding along the keys, upon this beating, this pounding. The sounds are tuned to my thoughts: a creak or crinkle, the wind blowing against the door rattling the lock and handle, and my nerves—the knife is clenched harder between my fingers. I still giggle thinking nonsense has rewarded my rationality. But poems and letters sent through holes, that tapping in the hallway, the quiet stepping, bones cracking from lack of movement; sharp but determined movement. There I sense my mind directly, in wait, veins stretched by anticipation. Terror. Should I also rustle—cough, sigh, yawn, scrape across the carpet—and show my presence, that I'm aware of her presence. I give myself away in, as before, those moments of fear. And she listens, which strives more madness, that feeds upon both her soul and mine. So I MUST document these happenings. Not letting another

victim to be presented to plastic, incense, crosses, and earth, prior to their own undoing.

I can hear your voice, observing, watching your eyes follow this sentence, your inquiries: ‘My name is Derek. What is your name?’ But is he clairvoyant. Understood. Maybe I’m dead; this idea long ago saved and printed (maybe implanted). Goose bumps. I HEARD that! Gentle please. Gentle and peaceful. . . . How I salivate. And again. Gentle. GENTLE PLEASE! Or maybe this document wasn’t achieved, that my writing and your viewing ends right here. Or here. . . .

Right now!

From misalignment.

No luck eh. I’ll proceed then. If there was a choice: 1. Relive those days and nights; 2. Nothingness. Hmmmm. I wonder where I’d agree. But you’ve already picked and chosen. Have you not? Go ahead. Scratch your ear. Let me give you some space.....

Enough? A few more lines. I bet your leg is also itchy. So what is going on. . . . How does the author know? Never mind. Just scratch away.

Yes, I am very generous. Are we friends yet? Because under no possibility will I venture out. For you I traverse those weeks. And I push to finish this retelling, to continue to finish this retelling of the past and the future (as this has already been typed). OR should I say my past and my future. Who knows what is to be composed next. Wonders indeed! The magic of the brain. . . . But now I'm drawing her into context, blurry images from memories into focus, into echoes, into screaming. Stop this! STOP IT! Maybe too melodramatic. I was serious though. Is there something you forgot to do? Well do it. I'll be here sitting. You shouldn't miss what transpired, to the immediate state of my consciousness. Clang! That was the knife being dropped onto the table. Swoosh! That was the sweat being wiped from my hand. Cough! That was the breaking of the pause before I embark. Are you ready?

Probably not long enough. A bit more. . . .

No!

Well exhaust your task and I'll linger.

Waiting. . . .

Waiting. . . .

Waiting. . . .

So you're back. Let's begin from the beginning. . . .

Sunny, bright, and warm: in May, my second year of renting. I'm in the hallway, about to descend toward the ground floor. But first the elevator, the pressing of the triangle, the orange glow. Chains clanging and whining. More oil. Or a greater expense to be used. Greedy bastards! Then a door opens from behind, from across my apartment, where the other slob also deposit their garbage down a shoot. No bottles or kitty litter. Recycle those perishable items. I do try, except for the landlord's insistence that less than ten percent is reused, recycled. Which doesn't matter? There's more to worry about. But I think it matters. I know you would say the same also. Do you? It's easy to say, to voice an opinion. Taking action is difficult. Well fuck the

excuses! Yes I'm delaying. I feel foolish sleeping with the bulb on. Sometimes, or I did at the start. Nothing under the bed. Nobody through the peephole. But what was that! A noise. . . . The table against the entrance. And the familiar washroom necessity later. Then repetition and reshuffling. The table is removed. The steel lamp: a lamp that can curl around a wooden post (kinky), used for reading books. This I place behind the bedroom door, which is slightly shut. A test confirms the protection. Now I return. . . .

Shuddering! A whiff, then insanity. The eyes! Burning into my swallows. The intensity. Who is this person? Am I floating in recognition. And she knows I know! That is the worst indescribable understanding. The crooked, sly grin. Her eyes drilling deeper and deeper. Do you really want me to continue? Not her look, her swaying, confident, darkness. The shadows smiling upon her lips and teeth. Not her gaiety, not those EYES! No place to hide. To play silent. To act. To gulp again and nod in reflex. "Hello to you also." Nonchalance. Static. To be empty, letting her vision pass across, over my body, my listening.

There is doubt permeating between life where laughter forces a slice—separating both light and dark—even more ambiguous than time washing grays along experience. But as distinct and greater still than silence itself. A mockery of sensibilities and rationality. Laughter is smaller than that duality, as emotions are; larger than the madness that tingles around, which it keeps within grasp: A nucleus for sanity. So I try. . . . And that's why you are intertwined in this journal or history or novel or long ago transformed to dust thoughts. Why not? I will reveal more humour to keep the shadows away, those instances just

mentioned, and the unknown perspiration which will fill my spirit in suffering.

It was her eyes—black, beady, endless—comprehending an echo of my aura not hidden by attempts at camouflage. (If only I was wearing a baseball cap.) Then my acknowledgment, tilting my head with a mumbling: “I’m fine. How are you?” And this last query drawing the mistake in commitment for future greetings. I was doomed; am doomed. The pressure now gravitates in torture, unrefraining from pause, at all periods alive, dwelling, insatiable, toward our hello’s (yes mine and yours) and the words progressing in parallel lines till violence or murder or the simple action of changing apartment buildings is obtained; a two month pocket; the hours and days; the hours and days! With only ten vanquished. In paralysis! Nightmares! Something. . . . To obliterate nouns and verbs to present formations, but no fun in a cynical desire for agony that human nature loves; would be boring, the psychology of which doesn’t draw readers into my vortex. This horror. The laughter of fate (or unfate). So giggle as I giggle. Let’s see the results. Nothingness in the end will overshadow this commitment anyways. Grab some wine. Sit back and read my pain.

Where did that come from? See, it’s all magic. And ducks. Not to forget the ducks either. I’m ready for the blow. There she stands. My voice already gone. A smirk congealing my toes. And her reply: “Hello my buttercup. Nice ass.” Hahaha. Just some more amusement. But I do specify the truth from untruth. Honesty interjected, glazing the surface and inner workings of every sentence. So with our nods and smiles concluded, the monster reversed by swiveling, sliding, melting her feet

across the carpet, confidence dragging that disease back, back, back! Then another smile. Mine by routine. The knob rotates. Locks clicking. Many, many locks. And a final chain slipping into place to finish her sanctuary. Phew! The elevator crashed to a halt, the sweat I flung to my jeans, my legs preprogrammed into the steal box, my hands following in directives. But I pondered less till later when in safety. My sanctuary also, with fewer locks and no chain. But how that would deviate, later creating walls of furniture and using my balcony for pizza deliveries. Later! Or is it now. . . . Later persisting. Soon. . . . Oh . . . shut up! I'm going at my own pace.

And now for the plug-in:

Don't distinguish a charitable cause with regrets. (White teeth, plastered hair, strong athletic body slanting—a courageous pose.) Lacking initiative? Vanishing to sleepiness, disavowal of promises toward cogitation, the undone still lingering, stopped, straggling along by my emotions, knowledge? Yes! Cast away doubt! (The shrug with silent grin. Then. . . .) Or was that acceptance to banter the opposite, irreparable, lost, dismayed? Or my own imprint in confrontation? The consciousness seeing the consciousness which is reflected against itself. A two tiered soliloquy. No sorry motion to evoke trepidation. The assimilation of the paragraph dissolves to an indentation.

Let's be thankful for praise of rhetoric, by poets singing dust, for dead politicians. (Viewing disintegrates to blackness with quiet questions.) How close we are! The only two people about, in reference,

unable to not intercept. So leave the pages readable for inquiry, hopefully merriment, and the fear, dread, horror that is amplifying. Sympathy for my time. Friends! Don't throw me onto a shelf, the waste bin of laziness. I'll feed historical data, facts & statistics, and geographical tidbits, fusing the genres of autobiography, suspense, history, everything ever categorized into a slim, beautiful, slice of madness, discerned from the subjectivity I display to you. And notwithstanding religious tones. Holiness completed with crusades, terrorism, Sunday school, naps, praying, plastic figurines, literature. See . . . a difference for everyone. And what—

SILENCE! Shit! She's coming. . . . Can't you hear it! Tap . . . tap . . . tap . . . tap . . . So subtle. Again and again. In the hallway . . . the outer bathroom, the closet wall. . . . No movements! Please! Should I laugh and fling open the door? Should I! Caught in the act, described and dictated, for those goose bumps less with your presence to hold my gaze. Thank you! Closer. . . . The knife feels my fingers . . . strangling. By the living room—tap, tap, tap. A broom shaft or stick. A stuffed hand? Why! Soft typing, chest crunched in pounding, thumping toward button bursts. SILENCE! SILENCE! She's waiting . . . her feet shadows by the entrance (do you see them), the crack with broken patches of light. LISTENING? Clammy fingers; armpit dribbles; sticky toes. Thank you! No alone applied couch squatting, and frozen notions tonight; no voices in my head, no friend not to alleviate. Is she still there! Can I breath again. Another speaker: 'Open the door you sissy. Don't worry. One big hug. Screams of violent desire. Carpet burns.

Open it. OPEN IT!’ Fuck off! The tapping: tap, tap, tap. Silence? Implosions drawing, sniveling, screaming! Screaming! Now shuffling . . . drifting backward from originality! Is she gone? Thank God! Thank fucking God. Was that a lock clicking? So faint. . . . Sneaky little bitch. How lucky you are! To observe the future. But you’ll understand the fear, reminiscing from this previous entry. The lights will also illuminate your bedroom till dark becomes aromas of coffee and toast, eggs and bacon. Is that all. . . . Just hold on! Soon we’ll shriek together! My friend. My quiet eyes, heart, and soul. A big gulp of air. Exhale. Inhale. And another. Shall we . . . chuckle? Smiles and giggles. Holy shit!!! Phew! Thank you buddy! Thanks with cheers. A salute to life. Thanks. Now let’s hope she fades to daytime, away, asleep, a heart attack to console our love to an honest conclusion.

Our second meeting collages into a frenzy of mysterious ‘Oh there she is again’ coincidences that separation makes implausible for number columns: Pieces I’ll delegate to intertwined strings of happenings. Yes . . . I’ve become a rhetorical analyst, taken from the more fitting for job titles span where all words ending in man were transformed to person or engineer or abbreviations. A corporate human resource initiative: 15 billion dollar campaign. What a waste! And more ramblings to divert our attention from onwardness. I am scared! Who taps the wall along a hallway then stops at a door and eavesdrops for sounds emanating from inside. I should be scared. You would be scared. Even the gods would be scared. An avoidance of conjuring I impose to this page to withstand flashbacks, the madness that my mind reverts to, and the lateness of the hour to further distill an explanation. A little rest

and we'll resume.

OH MY GOD! She's still there! The crack is partitioned again by feet. Was someone else locking their residence earlier! And I've been snickering, sighing, chattering to myself. . . . Sorry for the long lapse. Paralyzed. It wasn't even a minute though. Blacking out. . . . Blacking out. . . . Noooooooooo!!!! Knocks? She knocked at my door! The famous soft but determined knuckle shuffle. Another and another! I'm going to take a look. Don't worry. A quick eye flick across the peephole. A louder knock! Strange. . . . Maybe it's someone else?