

Night Collecting Light

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I.

Gathering my awareness is instant. Gathering in my room is an orange sickly glow, incestuously derived from her brother with the jaundiced eye. At night she blinks thoughtfully and with childish contempt she blows her gift forth. She was dumb from birth but her manic hoots are the color orange and they spray my walls. They spray my walls with a tinge that appears moist so I dare not touch. It is during these times of night that she dominates my room.

During the day she dreams of her brother and a parking lot coating the earth's surface. She stands tall upon her narrow post and barks out her laughter through the heat that rises from the pavement. During the night she tugs at my sheets trying to peek at my body.

When I was young I saw her in the moments before sleep. Staring far into the dark I could view four glowing squares that one would see behind the tangled trees of an enchanted forest, a cottage window alive with light surging through the fairytale and into my bedroom. It was a gift when I was young and I accepted it with mature appreciation, only a play of light upon the eye that scans the retina for imprints left over from the day. Now it has resurrected itself upon my wall and I fear it. My nerves have rewired themselves the past four years and I feel rearranged, but not well. The wiring is tangled and pulled tight across vast surfaces. I'm thinning and my wiring bulges.

When it rains her light enters every drop upon the window and spreads forth into my room. When I lower the blinds she produces a milky ginger smolder I can nearly smell. So she remains upon the wall at an angle that bounces naively when the wind blows and then I'm overcome with anxiety and must remain still.

Gathering my awareness is instant. It shoots through me and I observe my surroundings immediately. This is partially because I rarely enter deep sleep. My ears must have announced this warning because I would like to think she is speaking to her brother now. He is far away from her, but she longs for his attention and reaction. She clearly admires him more than she admires me. She would lie here with me throughout the night but she wouldn't laugh with me. What he says is always golden and her laughter is overdone. He is careless around her and thinks not of what she wants. She performs this trait herself by thinking not of what I want.

I didn't truly love her from the beginning. I was young and accepted her when she entered my room. I only asked for her simple return in the following nights. As I drifted further away from my childish stability I began to need her and asked for more by attaching love as an appendage. Now I lie upon a different mattress covered by her gaze. She carries on watching for her brother with admiration and with hopes that he'll reverse his solar crawl forwards and come back to her.

(At night I enter dreams of highways with phantom light posts stretching over the road. They line the empty highway in overabundance. I'm probably heading the wrong direction and I can't drive fast enough. The city lies in the distance straight ahead and this should be able to inform me of whether or not I'm on the right course, but I can't seem to remember if I should be able to see the city to get to the city. The people are in the city and that's where I need to be.)

We can't speak to each other anymore but I carry many conversations on with her to myself everyday. She's the first one I ask questions to, the first I show art to, and the

first I complain to. The reactions I give her to hand back to me are realistic. She has moved on from here but I still remain in a town devastated. I lie in the light that was ejaculated by the sun himself and into the light fixture outside my bedroom window. I am surrounded by parking lots. Her glow is infected with the old blood of family and she sprays it continuously across my wall.

II.

The summer shades of green plaster the skeletal systems of life around me. White bones will show with winter, and revealed in between, the red arteries of autumn. It is within and underneath the peeled shades of plaster that I will show you. It is these moments close to the approaching starkness of winter that completes my attention. Moments that fall short of excessive carry shovels. They dig away at me leaving a canal for apathetic waters.

We will walk along and you can ask me any questions you like. I've seen remarkable changes through the years and I've experienced little. I've grown tall and my ideas have grown taller. Expectations are set and my chamber grows wider and the walls thinner. There is only so much material to use and I'm splitting rocks to obtain new surfaces.

When my walls expand out a new crack will form. An approaching storm will signal my joints and the rain will slip through, filling the canals and eroding their walls to make canyons. This water is apathy and I must remain filled emotionally with every given moment. If the moment does not arise my full potential then the water will top me off.

The excitement the fall gives me is the excitement handed to the dying. It reads: here child, for you have been a child this entire life until soon when you will subside and here child, is a package of beautiful experiences that only you have experienced and you shall love them all, the good and the bad, and the moments of great sadness you wanted to escape you will now love, so why did you not love them then?

You can ask me any questions you like. But I love the past like I love the stale sunlight that reaches us now. It is old and false and I look back on it as though I am the sun king and they are my children. Expelling them from myself I cried, but with time they shall become beautiful and illuminate the past that I cannot experience; they are a gift to others.

Streams of sunlight pour over the branches and down to the ground. Waterfalls of golden sawdust have grainy textures and the light here is similar. It overflows and spills, dumping the leave's autumn colors into the hardened earth. Gray thin clouds stretch across the sky. Grooves in the farm fields give a focal point to the moment and we head in that direction while the geese cross overhead.

III.

Jeff, one day I will jump off of an overpass and into a windshield of a car like yours. I will splash into the windshield. I will merge into your lane. Together we will move the speed limit. Together we can argue a new topic that we have never argued before. I didn't need to die, yet I wanted to prove something to you, I wanted to prove that I could change at least one life, which was yours, through the process of taking my own life, through your windshield. Through your windshield my face can remind you of your own face, the lives I've shared, the childhood I flowered from. Your face reminds me of my own face, the childhood you've endured, and the parents you've had. I need moments of the grandiose, Jeff. More than you think. I need *a* moment of the grandiose. It just keeps me going, neutrality wears me out.

The windshield curves and reflects what it can. The bugs are pasted on and they're flat. The wipers are old. The fluid is dry. I'm tired of lying to you. The fluid is wet. How silly of a lie. How silly of a moment of peace.

Before I entered your car I have already introduced myself. I have already extended my hand as a gesture of greetings. My hand will remain drawn throughout the car ride. In perfect conjunction, my leap was with diligent grace, if you had seen me you would have thought I practiced this, but I hadn't, I had only merely thought of it. As you grew closer I remembered how one falls from a tree. My terminal velocity will barely be reached. My head swung forward so I could land with my face close to you so we could talk. I wouldn't want my feet to be in and my head to be out when we finally have the opportunity to speak. This was a game of Battleship with an extra dimension. C5b. You entered the horizon at B. Approximately a mile away you left B and entered C. I stood at 5.1g ready to fall forward directly into 5.0 and descend down from e to b, slightly above ground level (a), and into your windshield (b).

With my face pressed against his right cheek I began to speak: "When I leapt I thought of how terrible it could be if I chose the wrong car, it's easy to overthink in situations like these you know, and when I left the overpass I could hear the wind catching in the folds of my ears, it was just like the sound of a shell, I thought for sure that I could maybe even capture this sound for you and when I came in it left with the crunch of glass, if I'm bleeding out in your car I'm sorry, but when you spoke the other night of Andy's paintings I couldn't help but to wonder who you were to say such things, nobody should critique in such a way, nobody should critique like they know, when all is poured into a work all the viewer can do is feel it, why critique?, the artist either didn't care about such things or he took it into consideration and moved on, and when you said he deserved death when he was wounded, who are you to say such a thing?, why would anyone deserve to die for that?, he recognized your dance as art and you leave him with death, so I know, its more than this, we already spoke of such matters, there are just not enough things going on in my life at the moment, I'm paled and bored, I've already experienced the best parts so I didn't mind doing this really, I'm just glad I can make a difference in your life, but this was always my preferred style, to fly is only second to jumping, with a jump you leave control behind and let the earth take over, and the juxtaposition of an earthly death meeting a vehicle, why it's beautiful, so when you didn't realize what you were saying the other night but continued to spill out I was already getting ready to change you."

As we continued to drive Jeff changed the radio station four times until he finally inserted a compact disc. We traveled the speed limit together for approximately half an hour when he decided to accelerate beyond the law. He may have forgot, lost in the moment of music perhaps, since it was quite a climax. All I could do was watch him for a while. He was still absorbing everything I gave him.

My body had entered a state of paralysis upon my lodging. I couldn't move any of my parts except my tongue and jaw and eyes. I watched him intently for some time with a look to make him think about everything, very deep into his eyes, I tried to scrunch my brow from time to time but I'm not sure it worked. Then I would gaze away, giving him time to himself to understand the recent event that should change his life. I could already feel the effects of my immobility; my tongue was sharpening, and by this I mean my thoughts were pouring forth buckets of sand while my tongue would manage everything with extreme precision, even better than the thoughts may have first appeared, the sand would be shaped into tight intricacies, I was thinking of more to tell.

We pulled off the highway and rolled onto a lit street, it was now dark and beginning to rain. Late fall, it is rather cold. I could feel my chin numbing and surely my bottom half was drenched. We rode down slippery streets and the sound of the tires upon the wet road reminded me of many things. "I can also relate to such things Jeff", I told him. "I also associate such seemingly random memories with seemingly random details throughout my day. Surely you do too. Just don't suppress, Jeffrey. You hide so much with your conversations. This was my gift to you. Remember me. Remember you."

When Jeffrey pulled into to his parents driveway I slide forwards all the way into his car. The driveway was the only hill we encountered the entire trip. Surely man-made. My face slid into the back seat and my feet went somewhere, I don't know, I couldn't feel them so I don't know where they went.

Jeffrey, Godfrey, Gottfried, God's peace.