

Shiv Kotecha
Hannah Black

After the eclipse

Readers:
Kandis Williams
Rin Johnson
Anna Zett
Sarah M Harrison
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- I. A story and the poem that retells it.
- II. A vampire and a soul sucker: the weak that prey on the strong.
- III. Is the ability to see ghosts the power to prevent a possession?
- IV. The vanquishing of an evil, and its return to the Inferno.
- V. Images made to fill in empty forms, when ideas for images don't exist.

03

I. A man emerged from the crowd of other travelers around the time we got to Cleveland. In Indianapolis, he asked me if he could buy me a cup of tea. I accepted. I trusted his cane and Kangol hat. He gave me his pillow in Missouri, said he didn't need it. I accepted. I slept with it till Kansas, we'd spent our first day together, him sitting behind me, me twisted up luxuriously on the two free seats I'd managed to maintain from Baltimore until Oklahoma. A chat and a tea at every stop had made us friends. It wasn't until the bus got crowded after a bad connection in Utah, forcing us to sit together that he started to feel less friendly. A few hours outside of Las Vegas he invited me to stay with him in his ex-wife's house while she was away. Apparently they loved each other very much but a daughter of hers from a previous marriage caused their separation. She was delivering the daughter to another part of the country while he took refuge with relatives in Cleveland, he would return a few days before her..

I declined. Told him I was expected in Los Angeles. He put his pillow in his lap and asked if I was still tired. I declined.

His wife was a very clever woman, she'd grown up in Los Angeles. She knew all about the vampires that lived there and had taken him to a park where they congregated. They walked hand in hand through that park, through an air of whispers and the feeling of being followed by dozens of gleaming eyes. She was the first person who'd shown him a nest of, a hub of things that lived off the living. "If you got people that care about you, they won't mess with you. But don't sleep on the streets in Los Angeles, or they'll get you in time."

Los Angeles, he warned, was infested.

When in the park at night When dark Your shoulder on my knee let me tell you About these creatures You're running towards them In blissful ignorance These eyes waiting So many eyes waiting Only despair greater than the wait Only struggle for unquestionable survival

Pure animal instinct you'll never be able to fight
Young girl be aware Young girl and take care
Why going from somewhere to somewhere else
We're running from Baltimore to LA From Berlin
to Amsterdam We're running from Bangkok to
Vientiane From Yamoussoukro to Kumasi You'll
meet them everywhere Starving eyes White wide
open amidst the foliage Waiting for our night
prey Would you be so kind As to let me carry your
head While you drowsily lean on the side
Let me carry your weight Because we share the
same burden Except I know about the vampires
and you don't Girl I don't want to frighten you But
this world is worse than you thought it was
Girl they are here in the dark They feel you as a
warm manifestation of vibrations of a red fluid
filled with your soul They want it without know-
ing But you should know they're innocent
Pure and striving for more Your pain the future
shadow of their wound
They want your history your roots your Them
in the ever-present swallowing what you could
have become How painful their enslavement to
survival What a mirror of yours
Girl there's so many people now with us I come
closer and tell you more.

04



05

III. GHOST: I am thy father's spirit,
 Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,
 And for the day confined to fast in fires,
 Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
 Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
 To tell the secrets of my prison house,
 I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
 Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young
 blood,
 Make thy two eyes like stars start from their
 spheres,
 Thy knotted and combinèd locks to part,
 And each particular hair to stand an end
 Like quills upon the fretful porpentine.
 But this eternal blazon must not be
 To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
 If thou didst ever thy dear father love,
 Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.
 'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
 A serpent stung me. So the whole ear of Den-
 mark
 Is by a forgèd process of my death
 Rankly abused. But know, thou noble youth,
 The serpent that did sting thy father's life
 Now wears his crown. Thy uncle,
 Ay, that incestuous, that adulterous beast,
 With witchcraft of his wit, with traiterous gifts--
 O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
 So to seduce! -- won to his shameful lust
 The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
 O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there,
 From me, whose love was of that dignity
 That it went hand in hand even with the vow
 I made to her in marriage, and to decline
 Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
 To those of mine!
 But virtue, as it never will be moved,
 Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven.

So lust, though to a radiant angel linked,
 Will sate itself in a celestial bed
 And prey on garbage.
 But soft, methinks I scent the morning air.
 Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,
 My custom always of the afternoon,
 Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole
 With juice of cursed hebona in a vial,
 And in the porches of my ears did pour
 The leperous distilment, whose effect
 Holds such an enmity with blood of man
 That swift as quicksilver it courses through
 The natural gates and alleys of the body,
 And with a sudden vigor it doth posset
 And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
 The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine,
 And a most instant tetter barked about
 Most lazar-like with vile and loathsome crust
 All my smooth body.
 Thus was I sleeping by a brother's hand
 Of life, of crown, of queen at once dispatched,
 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
 Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled,
 No reck'ning made, but sent to my account
 With all my imperfections on my head.
 O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not.
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 A couch for luxury and damnèd incest.
 But howsoever thou pursues this act,
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
 Against thy mother aught. Leave her to heaven
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once.
 The glowworm shows the matin to be near
 And gins to pale his uneffectual fire.
 Adieu, adieu, adieu. Remember me.

06

IV. As we looked there came a terrible convulsion of the earth so that we seemed to rock to and fro and fell to our knees. At the same moment with a roar which seemed to shake the very heavens the whole castle and the rock and even the hill on which it stood seemed to rise into the air and scatter in fragments while a mighty cloud of black and yellow smoke volume on volume in rolling grandeur was shot upwards with inconceivable rapidity.

Then there was a stillness in nature as the echoes of that thunderous report seemed to come as with the hollow boom of a thunder-clap - the long reverberating roll which seems as though the floors of heaven shook. Then down in a mighty ruin falling whence they rose came the fragments that had been tossed skywards in the cataclysm.

From where we stood it seemed as though the one fierce volcano burst had satisfied the need of nature and that the castle and the structure of the hill had sunk again into the void. We were so appalled with the suddenness and the grandeur that we forgot to think of ourselves.



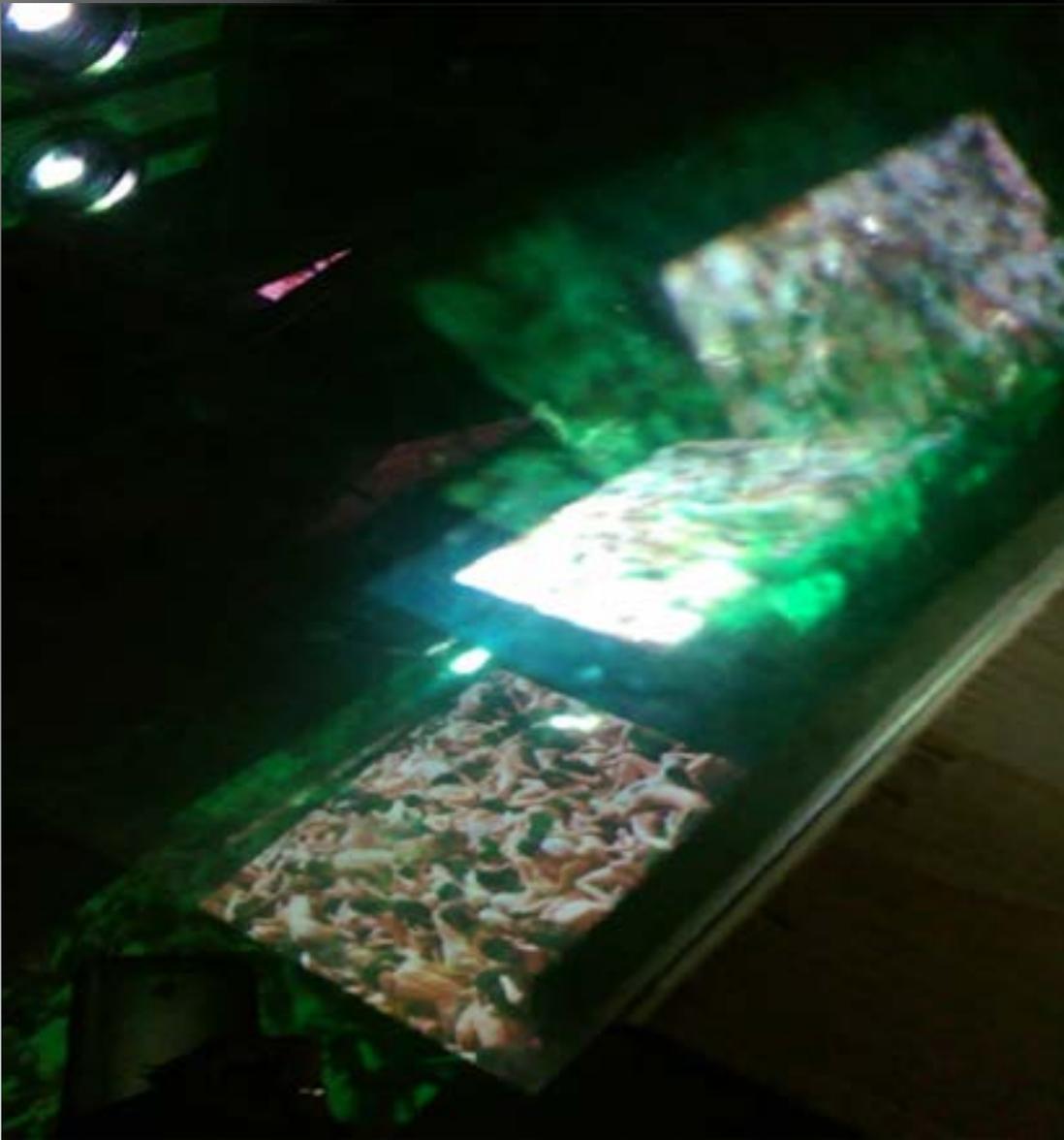
The image shows a YouTube video player interface. At the top, the YouTube logo is visible with 'NL' next to it. Below the logo is a search bar. The main video area displays a scene from Bram Stoker's Dracula, showing a close-up of a character's face with a large, glowing, cross-shaped symbol on their forehead. The video player controls at the bottom include a play/pause button, a progress bar showing 2:31 / 2:37, and various settings icons.

YouTube NL

2:31 / 2:37

bram stoker's dracula deleted ending scene

07





- I. Story: Kandis Williams / Poem: Camille Lacadee
- II. Thierry Paulin / the Nightmare, by Henry Fuseli (1781), generated 3D image
- III. Hamlet: Act 1, Scene 5. William Shakespeare
- IV. Original Ending of Bram Stoker's Dracula / Screenshot of deleted scene from Bram Stoker's Dracula by Francis Ford Coppola
- V. Pepper's Ghost Projection Test I. orgy scene from Salo.

0 9



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I fucked my girlfriend on the third floor of your museum once. I was actually there working as a performer but I still haven't received my check so I'll fuck where I want until then. In all fairness, we did get to eat steak tar tar and a croquet madame under the performers tab so maybe we are even but I can't tell, Klaus.

I digress - the bathroom was blue and my girlfriend pushed me on to the floor and ate my pussy while I looked out your window, Klaus.

The sky was the same color as the bathroom and I felt like the Nubian Prince we all know I am. Her tongue swirling around my clit and I'm thinking is it summertime because the living is EASY. (I came twice also so that helped, Klaus.)

Sorry, is this too much, Klaus?

When we finished two cool Asian guys were just finishing peeing. They smiled at us. One of them might have winked but he had an eye patch so it is hard to say, Klaus.

We made it to the Audi sponsored dome just in time to see an old white man spit fire and well

before Tan Lin spoke about the fictions we construct within our own families. Legit - what's a family again, Klaus?

What's a community again, Klaus?

What's a museum again, Klaus?

The illusion that makes us bearable, Klaus.

You come and sit next to my girlfriend because you want to make a video / take a foto of this white man spitting fire about being a sensitive white man. You're spitting fire too with your blue Obama suit and your black iPhone background. Wait, are you empty so you can fill up with art, Klaus?

The hell we create around us, Klaus.

What's around me again, Klaus?

Is there pussy on my face, Klaus?

Did you stay for Tan Lin, Klaus?

I mean, I didn't see you in the audience, Klaus.

1 1

You know he's an American fucking treasure
right, Klaus?

Have some respect, Klaus.

1 2

For mourning to take place, it needs no empire, no attention and no economy, it just needs a dead body and a living body.

When I hear the word mourning I think about pain, a whole-body-sensation impossible to control. There is no meaning to it, it does not make sense. So, for me, mourning is very closely related to orgasm, not only because it makes me crave for a glass of water later, but because it's very unsociable.

There are rare and special moments, when the same kind or at least a similar kind of intensity is being experienced simultaneously by another person right there with me. In those moments, or maybe already when it's just me mourning or orgasming in the presence of another person, these states of intensity exceed sociability, they lead me to the end of it. There is intimacy, but there is no solidarity, no identity, no language, no communication, no meaning, no future, no past in this feeling. There is an orientation towards the other but the other, even if endlessly close in these moments, is also endlessly far away. French philosophers have elaborated extensively about the orgasm as *la petite mort*. I don't know what they have said about mourning.

My expertise in mourning comes from other sources than philosophy. It comes from my body, it comes from the ghosts of the loved ones, whose death I have been mourning, and it comes from a Californian TV series that I turned to when everyone around me was too young to talk to me about death. Back then, the prefrontal cortex of some of us might not have been fully developed yet. For whatever reason or unreason, no one around me had an idea, how funny mourning actually can be. Some of you might know what I'm talking about: the very particular sadness called mourning can enable one to experience an intense kind of joy that is only vaguely related to happiness. In terms of volume I'd say it is just much, much wider. That's at least what I learned from one of my ghosts, the ghost of a great story teller – thank you again – and from this Californian TV series, as well as from my body. The potential for tragicomical joy must have already been sitting there, waiting somewhere in the web of my embodied mind. I just needed stories. Or who knows what I needed

back then, but years later I was convinced that it was these TV stories about an L.A. funeral home, that let tiny little bridges grow across the abyss between my unimaginable future and my mourning body that from one day to the other had been dramatically tied to the past against my will.

There was an evening, back in the day, when we sat at home, I guess, worrying about my father who went to a demonstration although the government had threatened to shoot at the demonstrators if they went on the streets again. Thousands showed up and the police didn't dare to shoot in the end, so my father came home not as a dead man, but as a happy peaceful revolutionary. None of the people I have been mourning were killed violently.

When the person you are mourning has actually been murdered and this story makes it to the news, your mourning might never seem meaningless or unsociable. It might be a completely different kind of mourning than the one I'm familiar with. Your individual coping strategy, your very personal intensity or paralysis, is suddenly orchestrated by all this solidarity, rage, all this political meaning. Depending on whether the murderers were the enemies of the police, or whether they actually were the police, the meaningless devastation inside your body, is accompanied by different kinds of meaningful gestures, shared somewhere in the republic.

Most deaths are meaningless, but the deaths of some people open out into a delta of meaning where a network of people is already expecting their bodies, prepared to use them in a collective struggle for equality and justice, or also, on the other side, prepared to use them to justify global surveillance, imperial warfare, national feeling and structural violence.

Immediately after a deadly attack on civilians, representatives of the empire or the nation will speak about mourning. They won't need the help of tragicomedy to cope with their loss, because this kind of mourning is very sociable and completely fictitious. It's a whole other genre.

While the representatives claim to be mourning, the individuals who feel the need to show solidarity with the collective body they identify as

1 3

the attacked, come out and claim in public: I identify with the dead; me & the dead are just the same – and for some strange and confusing reason, this gesture of collective identification & political solidarity will also be called mourning.

The painless public mourning of people one did not love, given they were killed by a well-known enemy and died on the previously safe streets or in the previously safe offices of the empire, seems to follow an unwritten, but reliable script. And as part of this script someone, who is supposed to equal everyone, receives a call. If I have not repeatedly misunderstood this call, it's about joining an imperial identity that promises to feel better than any historical experience could ever taste.

The first time I consciously received a call like that, was at the very beginning of my current historical era, on September 12th in 2001, and it was on that day that I suddenly grew old enough to understand the power of imperial fiction. I went to school, but after two hours school was canceled, because of mourning, and we were sent to the central Nikolai church where we met all these other older school kids from our 85 % atheist city. Whoever was present there, a few minutes later, was sucked into what they call a historical moment. Inside a church that had played an important role in the demonstrations of 1989, where my father didn't get shot, we sat down to mourn the victims of September 11, and to listen to a speech by the US-American ambassador. In an event that felt like a mix between Christmas and a massive bomb-threat evacuation, the US-ambassador in Leipzig gave a speech to a church full of teenagers, telling us a story about our new past. This new past, that must have been wrapped inside his speech like a present, was nothing but another story, a story about the precious post-war-solidarity between the German people and the American people – a story that I had heard before, not knowing it had anything to do with my past. The ambassador ended his speech with the statement that we are now at war together. In that moment my local post-communist generation, the so called generation-of-the-unadvised, born in a country that didn't exist anymore, grown up in a country that not even the adults around us knew very well, en-

tered a whole new level. All of a sudden we were collectively initiated to unite with the imaginary body of a far away empire, whose representatives until then had never contacted us directly, nor had we ever considered the possibility that they could. After the ceremony was over I walked across the city with a friend and maybe I tried to explain to her how I thought that what this guy had said was all made up, how it had nothing to do with the local history, and maybe she said something about how this city now feels different, now that it's war, even though it doesn't look like war around here at all, and I don't remember what came next.

A few days later I started a compulsory poetry practice that helped me get through the coming last two years of school. It was all about cutting out single words from the headlines in my parents' German newspapers, and putting them together in new combinations to form paragraphs that made sense to me in a dark or funny way. I cut out a limited amount of words, laid them out in front of me, and then I sat with this chaos of verbs, adverbs and strange new political terms like Selbstmordattentäter or Anti-Terror-Paket, for hours and hours, often until late at night, trying to find a place in a poem for every single one of these snippets.



1 4

All the obnoxious things I have done out here that I can think of at this moment:

Quoting health and safety regulations when Brian insisted on smoking in the office.

Confronting Lucy about the print-out of the sarcastic email she had written about me to her friend.

Telling Jackie to move her car away from my door.

Calling Jackie a cockroach under my breath.

Playing Dragonforce really loudly in response

Red playing music in the gallery.

Turning off the security lights in the car park.

Breaking into the electricity box and disconnecting the floodlights after Dave put a padlock on the box to stop me from switching the light off.

Saying "don't call me that" to Nancy for calling me "sweetheart".

Lecturing Nancy about "respecting your husband's employees" after she started calling me "miss".

Calling Matthew to tell him that Nancy told me she doesn't respect me and that she called me "an aggressive little girl".

Mentioning that Norm is built like a mattress as I complained about him to Glen and Matthew.

Repeating this observation about Norm's build again and again hoping for a reaction as I re-counted all of his bigot comments to the board.

Making fun of Dave for the spelling errors in his sign "ALL BOX'S TO BE FLATERN RUBAGE IN TRAILER" before finding out it was Nancy before finding out it wasn't actually Nancy.

Shutting Nancy down by saying "that is a stupid and ridiculous thing to even talk about" when she suggested we cover the new gyprock wall with old hessian sacks in front of the other art center workers.

Telling Fiona, my replacement, that she is a slow learner in front of the other art workers.

Making snarky comments about Fiona in front of the other art workers.

Scoffing when Nancy complained about my potty mouth and telling her to "get the fuck over it" when she said that she can't learn from me because of my foul language.

Complaining to Norm and Nancy about Barry throwing out my things after he cleaned out the work van and threw out all the junk I had stashed in the driver's door pockets.

Serving the art workers several kilos of scotch-eye fillet as my "birthday dinner" after Nancy

ruled "no more meat for the art workers" a few days before my birthday.

Sulking after Brian wouldn't let me drive 250 kms to Kings Canyon for a free helicopter ride.

All the cooks:

Chris, bandanna wearing stalker.

Karaoke Man, bad food, odd smells.

Jackie, cockroach.

Michael, nice guy with a misogynist lean.

Chubby Fag, so short too sweet for this place.

Peter, back to jail.

Paul, motherfucker mother fucker.

Naomi, idiot suck fuck.

Paul, motherfucking cunt fuck.

Andy, angry pothead (him telling customers to go to the back of the strudel queue for having the wrong change).

1 5



16

The lines of the body stuttered reciting themselves in the nativity tale of the egg hovering brightly and the sperm come to pay homage, the signals and the switches, and this “she” filled out in flesh the name mutely given to her. That was the era of lights in the wine-dark sea, rubber boats, prison-Europe reduced here to a time-stamp. The drowned were once known by their names before journalism and chance metastasized their deaths into a metonym for their lives, and back then they were strangers, remain strangers. All that summer and after (and long before) the same world-historical malice that reinforces European borders punched holes in the only America that matters, which is Black. But don't speak so impressionistically. Can this thread running through ever manifest concretely as anything more than the practice of reading the news, passed down from TV fathers, or the practice of really caring a lot, learned from TV mothers? At the table crowded close with friends she barely looks at him and by two months later she's calculating his time zone. This equation never gets easier, and the difference in the weather on different parts of the planet never stops seeming weird, as if she is still having trouble assimilating the story about the spinning ball and the big bang and the nuclear sun.

Sexual feeling blossoming in the ruinous body: high turbulence; lack (but not the well-fed psychoanalytic kind, just not having things). He wants to decipher her, which makes him very suspicious. When he looks at her it's her self-diagnosed ugliness that makes her flinch, as if she's only ever looking at herself, so it takes her a long time to see him. If it's years later by now and he is reading this, he should know that a mulatta's problems are always historical, or that this one believes so constitutionally: that is her stupid fate.

Fate is always stupid, both real and not. When the antibiotics stop working we will all die more often of love. Technological leaps in medicine are meant for the evil rich, in Europe and its far-flung acts of violence. Let the genome rattle off its wrong letters: the feeling of not being able to read yourself is a dark pool and this is a dark pool party. She won't shake his hand because her palm is sweating. You can't be a race traitor when your race depends on context, desire and

administrative rearrangement. Betrayal has to come from the heart, or “really come from the heart,” like on reality TV.

First they put the handcuffs on the boy and then they shot him in the back of the head, and by “they” she doesn't just mean America. The dead remain dead. They owe her nothing, but their names are given to her. As for those who should never have lived –

The curtain lined with dust, the peeled summer street, the singing drunks, some so raw they still carry guitars, faces like skinned chicken breasts, I know without looking. Unspool the wet wool of my big stupid heart, baby, or don't look at me at all. Love me or leave me alone. The secret liquidity, the Facebook friend request: while we live we go on living. It's retroactive: the activated ancestors' limbs unfurl in the stinking holes where they are kept. But first you must name them, and their names are Bitch You Can No More Avenge Life Than Death.

Lord, she prays without knowing God, send me a man who likes to fuck. For once, God provides, which had to happen at some point, statistically.

She was fathered by Egyptological adventures on the early internet, webpages thick with conspiracy. Or earlier, up late with her father, the TV, wine gums, salted peanuts, him in his threadbare jalabiya, her in Spiderman pyjamas. It's 1991 and their favourite TV show is the war in Iraq, but all the war looks like is green and white lights. The father's big belly rises and falls with his breath. He is teaching her about the world: look, it's horrible, deaths expressed as moving lights, power's strange cryptographies. Accurate mimesis is a European obsession, which isn't to say it's bad but only that it could be dispensed with. The punctum of the TV war isn't hurt flesh but real absence, or it could have been. Through these lessons she will learn a relation to the self as to a smashed beam rescued from a fallen building, that can be read for its impacts, admired for its tenacity, the ordinariness of whose beauty can be mourned now that it has been wrenched free of utility and become just one crystalline and dead object of mourning.

17

Anyone can step over the held-tight line of the self and become more than the sum of previous violence, but not alone: circumstance has to rescue us, i.e. other people. The horizon of this possibility could be partly a question of genetic striving, but science dates badly. Unnecessary death, unnecessary life. It's not for us to determine what is necessary.

This is how you calculate causality on a universal scale. Two cones of light emerge from each event, the past cone and the future cone, and whatever lies outside the cones can't have caused the event or have been caused by it. On a planetary and domestic level the light is so wrapped up in itself that basically everything causes everything. Someone approaches her at a party and tells her that they wrote a paper about her in college. "Think of something really good to say," she thinks to herself, "something that makes you definitely not seem disappointing," and then she says out loud: "Thanks! I really need the bathroom." Sometimes she feels like she's giving a series of TED talks to venture capitalists on the importance of despair, or that she's waiting to be redeemed only in the sense that a voucher can be redeemed for up to 10% off.

But who cares about redemption? Father-God is the theology of treating women like shit. She will say to him, I'm yours, and he will say, No, don't say that... Can I'm yours be redeemed from these histories of ownership: of non-Black women by non-Black men, of Black women by everyone? Can't "yours" mean I don't own myself, refuse ownership, give myself to having nothing, to the nothing that I give you, or that you give me sometimes? The many permutations of the sentence only skim the surface of what language or living or dying might be capable of. Too much marked with insurgency and compromise (compromised insurgencies, insurgent compromise) to redeem anyone but herself, she just wants to melt into the feeling of melting, the feeling of what she can only describe (though embarrassed to be so basic) as his strong hands. On braver days she thinks that in insisting on her fragmentation, she might save identity from being what some people think it is: a mistake. On other days she just watches the moving lights, not to decode but only to witness. Sometimes at night when she

needs to pee she imagines what this simple need would become in a concentration camp or on a plantation or a ship. She has done this habitually, reflexively, sentimentally, for as long as she can remember. This knowledge can't be encoded in DNA; it's just something she thinks she knows, so maybe it's encoded in every moment of vulnerability to the world, I mean to ourselves. Although the administration of life defeats life, she has slept next to friends who laughed in their sleep or turned to her still asleep and said something like We have to return the dog. Because of this and other things she goes on to the next and the next line, hoping every time to discover new material to barricade, against hostile elements, the collective practice of living.

ATE is a project initiated by Imri Kahn, Sarah M Harrison
and Ebba Fransén Waldhör
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