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Magnesium for Sleep

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I

The kid was projecting. His psychology was tense. Moon shapes formed on his ceiling and all light became a ballet in the early morning haze. His father ate downstairs in the kitchen. The red morning sun watched him like the IRS while he chewed on his bland toast, which had the texture of Jupiter. Upstairs the kid was going the speed of night, grasping the sheets like dough and praying for release.

II

The Ethiopians warned him. They said, “Clear out your screen after the transaction.” The kid knew what he was doing, or, rather, not doing. He came from a different system, a better system. The leads cornered him one day, 7 to him at the bottom. A dismal 14.5 items per minute. “What is this?” Abel said, “This is too slow.” The kid tried to explain, tried to say that he came from a better system without saying as much. He said next time he’d tear it up. “We need you to go faster. We want to be the best.” How was this customer service, the kid thought. He knew a different way, a better way.

III

The kid’s psychology was tense. He dreamed of a reduced sphere, a visible curve, a planet that you could see from a flagpole, something beyond sense but resembling it at the same time. He took a taxi boat to another island. Every island was another experience, another heaven if you could only find it. He suddenly felt himself watching himself from above, on this drastically reduced sphere, lacking menace but containing fear, for it bent too blue, and the white sheet he hung from twisted against the sky, struggling for nothing but release from him.

IV

One day the kid found a dime in the street. He rolled it like a bowling ball and it blew up a

building. Sleep and dust rolled through the city in clean blue sheets. Half of everything now belonged to nothing. The kid woke up and was blind, his eyes pale blue oceans of beauty without purpose. He dusted himself off like a silent movie victim and walked into an old bakery. He no longer had to read the signs. Was this corporate? Was this real? Was this another hustle? Everything was old and real again. The blue dust moved through the streets like a ghost. The blue city rose up before him like the old city. No more highways. No more spinning, glowing, godly names. No more sun. No More moon. No more city in the distance of an endless drive. He was finally home.

V

The kid joined the chorus of voices against the idea. They marched and protested and screamed and kicked and yelled and won themselves a new idea. The kid held hands with his hippie mama, Cheryl, who treated him like a giraffe. Reach this, reach that, barked cruel Cheryl. There were loose ethics. It was the climate of revolution. It was the time of change. For a long time, they were headed towards God. Now, they were just headed somewhere. It was ok. The movement is true. The past is a lie. The future awaits the just. Animals are everywhere; they tell us nothing.

VI

“Hate comes from language,” said the kid. “We are trying to hammer the hammer with the hammer. We live in a malaise, smoking cigarettes as we chatter on our typewriters, penning screeds against the way we were.” The kid found power in the word; he learned to accept it and trust in death. He hiked in the mountains and studied kung fu film, searching for the messages within bodies in flight. Night came and he slept a fitful sleep of voices blaming Rousseau, blaming Voltaire, lost names of greatness and of humanity. He awoke to yelling coming from the television, he couldn’t understand what about.

VII

The sky now had a sound. A hubcap rolled through the street and children filed out from the smoke. People only smiled when the cameras moved on. From the mountains, you could see the name of the world. It was tattooed on the face of the land. Breaking through the sound barrier, breaking through the barriers, we used to write names in the sky. Now we know the name of the world. The kid was not there. He never wanted to be. The iris of a child cuts through the smoke. Be careful not to offend.

– Kevin Parme, October 2015

Please contact gallery@laurelgitlen.com for images or more information.