

THE SENSATIONALIST: #22

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“Phone, wallet, keys: the modern hymn of man”



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A LIFE IN THE MOVIES

HENRY LEVITT

A warm blue buzz pulses from unseen suns.
Palace walls now breathe a stretching labyrinth.
Hallways whisper foul taunts in rancid tongues,
Scraping my healing scabs in voice-shaped synth.

A new lover squeezes my hand, we slow.
Above our heads dazzles tonight's display:
"Living Holograms: Be Part of the Show!"
My friends save two chairs and beckon, we stay.

Shifty translucent blue, a Hero steps
Forward with a spiteful grin--just for me.
I test the ghost with words and watch his specs
Dance and settle, waiting for my next screed.

The glowing Hero crawls beneath my skin,
He glances blows. I writhe viewing his grace.
In a hollow bluff I exit to win,
But the Hero deserts his holy place.

Meeting his villain with an earnest smirk,
His lifeless sermon spews from sky-blue jaws.
And deaf to my slanders he'd schemed to shirk,
He basks in the theater's thunderous applause.

A mangled husk drifting the barren seas,
I cannot rescind words that vilified.
Friends maraud in rotting horse heads to seize
Their traitor, stripping him bare with limbs tied.

Minitaurs parade my bones in the sky,
Crumbling the blue maze in manic stampedes.
Over my head, endless gray wisps streak by,
And green threads bend on waves of centipedes.

At last Elusyium rests in still air.
Fiendish friends are gone. I'm stranded once more,
But for a buckling shack--a leper's lair.
And on that hilltop stands one open door.

The Sensational Times

Breaking: Jared Kushner iPad Found by Robert F. Kennedy in NYC Repair Shop

Henry Levitt

New York City, October 4th - Reports from three former Apple employees allege that Robert F. Kennedy acquired an iPad that belongs to Jared Kushner. The tablet is said to hold footage of every time his personal bathroom was used, the entire architecture of his heroin-trafficking investment empire, and an active list of grievances against 31 people--including family members--that stretches 200 pages, single spaced.

The tablet was discovered by Kennedy Jr. at the midtown Apple store on the morning of September 25th. Mr. Kennedy was tipped off by former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani who was in a ketamine induced psychotic episode under the Brooklyn Bridge earlier that morning. Sources familiar with the iPad say the screen had frozen on an image of Kushner's bleached anus perched among various Pillow Pets. It was not immediately clear whether the image was the lock or home screen background.

When Mr. Kennedy Jr. arrived at the Apple store, he asked to speak with the repair team and was led to the "Genius Bar" at the back of the building. The repair team would not allow Kennedy, who was verbally accosting the employees, to pass into the repair room. Patrons of the store report hearing aggravated yelling about weak immune systems and the repeated insult "Hedgehog Freaks" and "Autism Addicts" ostensibly directed at vaccinated "Genius Bar" workers. After approximately 20 minutes of screaming and flailing, Mr. Kennedy pulled a folded IQ test from his back pocket. He demanded to be let into the control room if he scored above Steve Jobs--approximately 160. After a few minutes of deliberation, the manager known as "Wizard Genius", agreed citing article 3, section 11 of the "Genius Protocol".

Mr. Kennedy proceeded to the test which he finished in 4 minutes scoring 172. Seeing that the lawyer scored well within genius territories, the manager and other employees huddled around their new messiah in awe and promptly asked for orders. Within 40 minutes the Kushner iPad was located and repaired, leaving the memory cards intact.

Apparently, the “Kushner Anal Surprise”, as it has since been called, was so disturbing that the repair required six employees and three separate visits by EMS. Five workers were hospitalized and four remain in critical condition suffering from severe brain hemorrhaging.

Mr. Kennedy, in a public statement, gave his condolences to the affected employees and promised to screen share all contents of the iPad in an unprecedeted marathon livestream with Elon Musk and Mark Zuckerberg on Friday, October 13th. The event, to be held in the Metaverse and over X (formerly Twitter) is expected to be pay-per-view, though the final arrangements have not been solidified yet.

The livestream is expected to be disturbing to most viewers. The Sensational Times advises viewer discretion and preemptive Xanax for those planning on buying a virtual seat to the event.



Explainable but Mystical: A Curious Paradox

Ellis Zusel

A common hallucination for people on mushrooms is the appearance of the colors green and purple around various objects. Why green and purple? What is interesting about these two colors is that they are the secondary colors of the primary color blue. Anyone currently involved in the memorization olympics of college psych knows about the trichromatic and opponent process theories of vision. These theories postulate that the rods and cones in our eyes detect different colors. It would then seem likely that the common green-purple phenomenon is merely the psilocin impairing certain receptors in our eyes. The experience is mystical, but it's also plain, old biology.

This realization introduces an interesting paradox. How can something be explainable and mysterious at the same time? A mystery, by definition, is something inexplicable. And psychedelics are only the tip of the iceberg. Love is one of the biggest mysteries known to man, even though we know it's only hormones trying to get us to mate. We know how the universe came into existence, but that doesn't help us understand why we are here one bit. I'd wager consciousness is simply the brain making sense of all the receptors the way a computer does, but that conclusion certainly doesn't make the human experience less valuable.

All of this is to show that asking "why?" is pointless. There's nothing to gain from knowing how something works or why it is there. The real value comes from experiencing it. As Alan Watts said, "Don't tell me what the plant is made of. It's right there, just look at the damn thing!"

Romanticization of Belligerent Drunkenness

James Hooker

Old friends
Flirtations
Dissolution of tears
Ever clear stays the night
I can't see the hands in front of me
A hookah makes its appearance
With strangers under the orange glow
Delightful soliloquy
Friends lead me to my closing
As darkness shrouds I cite my references
Standing nowhere

Do you ever find yourself doing weird, random tasks to procrastinate? Last week, I decided a good use of a few hours was pretending to juggle two avocado pits in the mirror...

The Harmonies of Melodious Minor

Chapter 1:

“Attentio Figler, will you please convince Melodious Minor.” The round glass case resting upon a titanium cart--the only descript furniture in the beige room--has been emanating a dull gray glow for a few minutes now. A. Figler promptly wrestles a seven-prong cable from the wall, pulling to extend the ZLC connector with a whispering revving noise. The scientific monk, having confirmed his pseudo-ecclesiastical covenant many years prior, relished his commands. After all, his veil had been lifted through his extensive studies and he was no longer suitable for any leadership or engineering position--especially that of the Blind Leader, the one giving commands to A. Figler. The guiding force of the entire operation, one could say that the Blind Leader is truly the most sensitive follower of the Grand Noir’s design.

The Blind Leader, and every other veiled individual, are fine tuned conduits of the chaotic noise, transforming indisputable nonsense to devastating harmonies. But A. Figler, in his perpetual covenant, is scrambled; his tuning needle flips wildly among all the states--states he no longer believes in. And yet within his strictly material mind, he finds meaning in beauty beyond simplicity, in ecstasy beyond emptiness, and in solitude beyond humanity.

A. Figler, rejoicing in his servitude, connects the seven-prong plug to the precise input of Melodious Minor’s glass cylinder. From the immediate display of scintillating blues and purples emanating from the white mass floating in translucent liquid, it is clear that Melodious Minor needs no convincing. A. Figler, finished with his role and uninterested, lays on the bare floor intending a short nap. Meanwhile, the Blind Leader and his gathering gaggle of Geloshov groupies fall silent in the control room.

A wide girth, represented by three concentric circles painted on the floor surrounds the speaker cube. Engineers in the control room step outside the rings and assume serious faces. Only the Blind Leader, reveling in his self-imposed self-importance climbs the speaker cube and stands with his fingers pointed upwards. Though there was no connection whatsoever between Melodious Minor’s captivating wails and the Blind Leader’s erratic hand movements, the Geloshov engineers humor the poor eunuch. He had been castrated at 11 years intent on a life of choirship. Of course, that was prior to the collapse of Sense. So the engineers allow the Blind Leader to live at least one testicaless fantasy.

As Melodus Minor begins its devastating musical performance, Geloshov Supreme, the inventor of the crucial transcription and translation device, commences the recording on a primed G-Man.

The whole spectacle--the vibrating cube; the heart piercing minor melodies; throngs of lab coat-enveloped men and women wholly bored and emotionless; and of course the Blind Leader's laughable self-assigned conducting role--is the nexus of all innovation and inspiration.

This evening, Melodious Minor's performance lasted a mere 37 seconds before converging to chaotic white noise with indistinguishable pitches. Now however, the lab coats' work begins. In the control room, voices eclipse each other vying for attention from Geloshov Supreme to obtain a G-Man-transcribed and rudimentarily interpreted copy of the performance they had just experienced--a performance none listened to and all promptly forgot.

Upon attaining the miniature white cube containing a symbolic semblance of Melodious Minor's mastership, the scientists and engineers push for the door eager to present their team with the latest discovery in the way of quasi-divine inspiration--though no person in the room, perhaps excepting the Blind Leader, would describe Melodious Minor in that way.

The miniature cube, when placed atop a magnetic tray, would rapidly pulse like a heart in cardiac arrest, conveying some deduction of a deduction used for more deductions. Each field utilized the cube slightly differently; laboratories like the Organic Chemistry Warehouse, projected their crude deductions across the entire length of the building so that every lab coat could work from their identical station in unison. And from those seemingly endless rows of black and white tables, new molecules, substances, and medications would regularly arise.

The Aero-Ward, a term for the aeronautics skyscraper, printed thousands of stacks of paper for their engineers. With the complexity of their deductions, even the 37-second transmission totalled 217 and one half pages, single spaced. It was not uncommon for Aero-Ward members to receive stacks of paper standing taller than themselves. Practically every engineer in the building was afflicted with varying degrees of neurosis, likely induced by the ink used to print on the paper. The overseer, an eccentric woman, insisted on lacing the ink with Cloud-7, a glittery substance known to induce hallucinations. No one in the Aero-Ward seemed to mind...perhaps they lost that ability many pages ago.

The Storm

Vince Munchkin

A storm is brewing. The once white clouds are connecting and darkening, obscuring the light. On the same day the sun shines over the horizon, the clouds block it from welcoming the night. The sky is getting angry. The lightness that once filled everything with life is gone. The once blooming tree has withered. The clouds rumble. In an instant lightning strikes, a signal for the rain to begin. The small drops of water that started as spots on the dry concrete are now beating at the stone with all of their might. It doesn't stop, the flood takes over. This town, once so radiant, has turned grey. The water rises inch by inch. The weak pray for it to stop, the ignorant prepare to battle it. Hope, once in abundance, has run dry. But just as the town takes its last before fully submerging, the rain slows to a stop. The people recover but the damage is done. The freshly paved roads are nothing but gravel, the once lively streets are filled with despair. The night comes to an end and the sun peeks over a hill. As the people heal, the spark of hope begins again. The sky clears up. The weak thank god, the ignorant cheer on. The few smart ones do nothing more than prepare. The storm will start again. The thunder will rumble day and night.

The O.A.R. Project: Redux, AKA Obscene Amount of Radishes Project

Backstory:

Last fall I began what has henceforth been known as the “Obscene Amount of Radishes” project in pursuit of being disowned by everyone I know for possessing an improper amount of radishes for a single person. Those familiar with the project know it ended in abject failure due to a lack of water--the lifeblood of chlorophylllic creations. Since then, Mother Earth has transformed mounds of bamboo-root laden clay in that little plot behind Brumby Hall to a foreign jungle--healed from my spade’s touch. Fortunately, I have moved on to new pastures and do not have to battle tough roots anymore. This new pasture in question is a sunny patch in the backyard of my rented house.

Goal:

The goal of the O.A.R Project is simple: grow an absolutely obscene quantity of radishes. I want more radishes than I know what to do with, then I want more on top of that. I want to have so many radishes in my possession that even the mere thought of the root vegetable thrusts my mind into an unhinged cycle of regret and mania. I hope that everyone I know avoids my radish ravings, for if they do not I would be worried about their own mental stability. The Obscene Amount of Radishes project should undoubtedly alter my life and future entirely, and not in a good way. So for the next six weeks I will toil upon the hard clay, day after day, night after night, to cultivate an unearthly amount of radishes.

Plan:

1. Choose location
2. Gather materials
3. Amend soil
4. Plant radishes
5. Water radishes

Location:

As discussed earlier, I now have a small plot of earth at my disposal and do not have to resort to nefarious means of planting (though I gladly will if prompted). The below picture is where I plan to dig the radish plot.



Materials:

The soil is red Georgia clay--depleted from centuries of cotton agriculture using unsavory forced labor practices (this means that there was probably slavery here, and if I had to guess, in most of the region too). It also means that I need to amend the soil if I want to grow anything besides this godforsaken grass (may the lord have mercy for these nutrient-deprived blades!) So I drove to home depot and acquired some stuff! Below is a picture of my bounty.

I also found a shovel while walking the train tracks! That's pretty cool. (Not pictured here).



THIS HAS BEEN THE SENSATIONALIST: #22

“Paul? Are you inside the sewer system again?” So I was.”

“Happy 22nd Birthday, Hope!”