

# The Beauty of Loss

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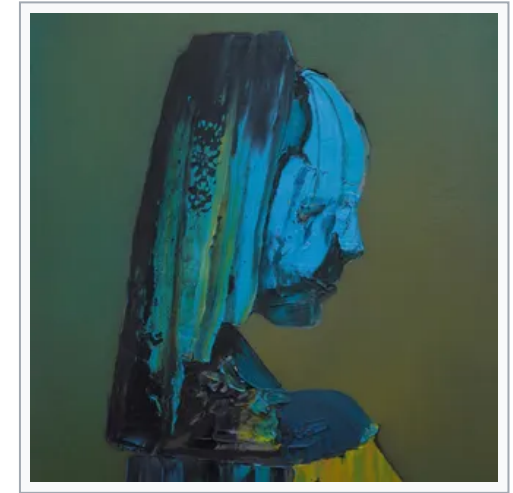
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Imagine you are listening to your favourite  $\grave{a}\text{-}\grave{l}\grave{e}\grave{v}\grave{e}\grave{r}$ -after many years of its release, but something is off. The sound is not entirely correct, some parts are  $\grave{m}\grave{e}\grave{s}\grave{s}\grave{e}\grave{n}\grave{t}$ /some things are  $\grave{g}\grave{r}\grave{a}\grave{n}\grave{t}$ . You decide that maybe playing your favourite game will distract you from this weird experience, only for it to glitch out in with black and white textures. Nothing seems normal anymore, So, -you-just/six-and-think/about-all-the-times-in/your-life-you-felt-like-you-were/fall-through-the-sky-like/how-you-favourite-have-all-the-best-of-the-best.

Disintegration is a part of life. Systems, nature, architecture, music, and technology will all diminish overtime, How can we cope with this? Is there beauty in finality? Loss often hurts, but it can also give us an insight into our own perception of the world. The album *everywhere at the end of time* by *The caretaker* is a great example of how we gain empathy/ nostalgia for a time long gone.

In "Everywhere at the end of time" Leyland tries to and succeeds at sonifying the scary descent into Alzheimer's. Where in the first part it's all old songs that invoke a feeling of nostalgia, Leyland had this to say "... like an old person daydreaming" ((Doran, 2016)1). It invokes a feeling of familiarity and sets up the

theme for the second part, where the realization kicks in that there is something wrong. A looming dread hangs over you listening to this part. This sonifies the part where someone suffering from dementia would still realize what is happening, but can't stop it. "We, as listeners, know what's happening, but we're powerless to stop it." ((Hazelwood, 2021)2), The next and final part is where the battle is lost. The disease has run its course and there is no real thought or realization left. The songs are completely scrambled, but now do have more euphoric and energetic parts. This final part is called *An empty bliss*. This whole record puts you through all the stages, nostalgia, dread, and bliss. The album shook me to my core, I felt scared but also gained a new appreciation for how we can think about the forgotten and finding beauty in emptiness. I agree with the statement said by Jake from A Bucket of Jake "it good" ((Jake, 2020)3).



In a different digital realm, we can take a look at the artist duo *JODI* and their work *Untitled game*, this artwork changes the game Quake 1 into an unrecognizable set of textures and glitches. Alex Galloway has said, "it "propels the game into fits of abstract modernism."" ((Galloway, 2006)4) talking about how JODI opposes the grammar of game modification. By in a way destroying the game and its narrative structure JODI opens us up to rethink our relationship with technology and the fleeting nature of what happens to all technology overtime; disintegration and fragmentation is a

part of technology and JODI have found a beautiful interactive way of explaining this to the observer.

### Rene Magritte The Lovers

Whilst talking about disintegration, we should also talk about loss. For the previous two paragraphs we have seen how disintegration leads to the loss of information, but in the painting *The Lovers* by Rene Magritte I would like to talk about loss a little bit more. The painting according to Rene people often asked him about the meaning behind his works, responding in kind "It does not mean anything, because mystery means nothing either, it is unknowable" ((Magritte, ?)5). This surrealist art piece as this can be up to interpretation by anyone, and for me, it portrays the loss of the person becoming someone anonymous for the sake of love. There is beauty in this feeling. Who are we when we lose ourselves. Are we fragmented in anonymity, or are we more us and connected with others? I will let you decide this for yourself, but in my opinion, anonymity and the loss of self can mean we become ourselves. This is an oxymoron, but for me a truth.

To conclude I do believe there is an innate beauty in finality. The end of anything created gives peace. And the before mentioned artworks make us think about what it means for art to disintegrate, what does that do to the original works, and what has it done with the artworks themselves. We are forced to think about our own mortality, the fragile nature of our mind, lifespan of technology, and the loss of self. The



beauty is in the eye of the beholder they say. And in my eyes, There is beauty in the end.

1 Doran, J. (2016) 'Out Of Time: Leyland James Kirby And The Death Of A Caretaker', *The Quietus*. Available at:

<https://thequietus.com/articles/20970-leyland-james-kirby-interview-the-caretaker>.



2 Hazelwood, H. (2021) 'Rediscover: The Caretaker: Everywhere at the End of Time', *Spectrum Culture*. Spectrum Culture, 18 January. Available at: <https://spectrumculture.com/2021/01/18/rediscover-the-caretaker-everywhere-at-the-end-of-time/>.

3 *The Darkest Album I Have Ever Heard* (2020) *The Darkest Album I Have Ever Heard - Everywhere at The End of Time - A Bucket of Jake*. YouTube. Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l\\_x08kbj-Fk&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_x08kbj-Fk&t=1s).

4 Faes, D. (2020) 'TRYING TO UNDERSTAND UNTITLED-GAME', <https://caesuramag.org/posts/trying-to-understand-untitled-game>. caesura, 19 May. Available at: <https://caesuramag.org/posts/trying-to-understand-untitled-game>.

5 Avocado, J. (2022) 'What is The Meaning Behind The Lovers By Magritte?', *Medium*. Medium, 10 July. Available at: <https://medium.com/the-collector/what-is-the-meaning-behind-the-lovers-by-magritte-3293e58b8573>.

