# Ch 5 - Purge The Poison

In the absence of freedom, compassion is dissolved, along with beauty, in the wastes of life. When there is no longer a need for solidarity, when nothing matters, nothing is beautiful—just a grey void of all that ever was or will be.

A tremendous consequence of contemporary life is the insistence that productivity is essential to our health and that boredom should be countered through every disposable means. From sunrise to sunset, what often happens is the fatal acceptance of life on autopilot. No stopping to think, no stopping to observe; one must always be moving ahead, no matter what.

When I worked in a warehouse over the summer, I observed a gross system of neglect based on productivity benefiting not the workers, but those over at corporate—states away. By enforcing a strict pick rate (or, how effectively productive they were) and monitoring idle time by the minute, workers are forced to fend for themselves, shoving solidarity aside so that they may keep their jobs. In the aisles, compassion for others around oneself is neglected because if one fails to meet their numbers, it is hardly ever their own fault; you spend a lot of time behind another picker or waiting for a forklift to be done placing a palette atop an aisle. Because solidarity was discouraged, compassion was thrown aside and the need for bureaucratic systems of enforcement was created to stand in its place.

Compassion as an expression of beauty is essential to the goal of peace and solidarity. One cannot expect to progress in society if there is an overall lack of compassion in regards to how one lives their life. In chapter 3, we learned of existential dread and suffering in relation to being. That is mostly a metaphysical symptom; however, suffering can also be an expression of pain. Surely it isn’t a leap to understand that through compassion, one has a mutual interest in diminishing all suffering?

Many of you may not like this chapter or find it the least relatable of the bunch. I completely understand and can relate to this feeling. It is common, in having a deep belief challenged, to fortify and double down even if you suspect the other party may be right after all. What I will come to lay out here is by no means meant to affix blame on any individual, but we will find that in action, it will indeed become a personal struggle to overcome. At the very least, I am asking that you attempt to challenge your beliefs—to pay attention to what you're paying attention to—even if you conclude that the way you are currently living your life is sufficient enough for you.