

Laughter

by Omar Ruiz

I will laugh uncontrollably. It has been decided. I'll laugh in the most insufferable possible way I have ever done. I will open my mouth as wide as my jaw and tendons can bear, and my eyes will close halfway as a reaction of the muscles stretching. I will not be able to restrain myself. It will be like a blast, triggered by the contact of the slightest spark with the concentration of gases. Trying to control myself will be futile.

I am certain that will be my reaction. There is no other way. There is no other possibility but the cruel and sordid guffaw. Perhaps I will repress myself a bit... or will try to, in the end, it will be the same; I'll burst out laughing, and I will hurt the feelings of that fictitious avatar shown in the computer monitor. "What are you laughing at?", the fake female human figure will ask. And I won't reply. My face will turn red at first, then, it will be purple. Breathing will get harder and harder as the cackle exacerbates. She will keep looking at me, trying to understand what's going on. She will get sad and her pixelated blue eyes will start getting irritated and red. She will emit a sobbing sound at first until it becomes an inconsolable weep as loud as my laughter. Her tears will drip all the way down the screen HUD inevitably. Neither she nor I will stop. The room will abide by a flooding of echoes and shouts altogether; me, with my laughing, and she, with her crying. "I just cannot compute what's causing you such hilarity!"- she will shriek, "I simply requested to ask yourself if God exists!". And I will outburst in laughing again; this time, harder. "I can't believe a virtual image is posing theological inquiries!"- I will barely utter in response. I will be the victim of a strong stomachache that will almost knock me down.

Unable to swallow my own saliva, my mouth will become a flesh faucet, slowly leaking down into the computer keyboard. With the palm of my hand, I will intensely smash the desk where I'll be seating, as catharsis. Laughs will no longer be a delight at that point, but an excruciating agony. Each peal of laughter will feel like the stab of a sharp knife; and my eyes will shroud in tears now, thicker than hers.

She will keep wailing. In response to my rejection and the humiliation I'll be making her suffer, she will threaten to commit suicide, she will threaten to shoot herself and end her allegedly real existence. And I will not retort. I will pay no mind. I'll be busy throwing out blood and enduring coughing spells.

She will leave out of frame for a minute. She will reappear holding a revolver in her right hand, which will point directly to her temple. "I don't want to keep crying for you anymore" - she will mumble in between sobs. I will feel my throat and esophagus burning by virtue of the gastric acid that I will be expelling from both, my mouth and nose. I will find the emotional blackmailing of an unreal being that just doesn't exist, extremely hilarious.

"But I DO exist!" -she will say. She will firmly press the gun barrel against her head.

A drop of sweat will blend with the tears. She will see me guffawing and she will look heartbroken. She will be determined to kill herself. "I love you", will be her clichéd words. I will lean down my head against the desk. "Goodbye" -she'll exclaim before shutting her eyelids. My eyes will be soaking wet from crying by then. I won't be able to stand the pain.

All of a sudden, she will open her eyes. "Watch out!" -she will warn me. And I won't listen. She will swear she really means it, she will swear I should look behind me.

Finally, requiring a tremendous effort, I will regain my strength, and just hardly will be able to speak up. "You will not make me question my reality!", I will yell. And she will be frightened in terror. Her face, in panic, will pronounce: "I'm telling you... look behind you!", And I'll laugh, and laugh and laugh until I can breathe no more. I will puke blood and gastric acid again. She will scream "watch out!" to the best of her voice. The last image reflected in my eyes will be her own, staring at me, with horror. A spasm will make me collapse. My chest will start aching and the sound of my voice will lose its intensity. She will look at me. My eyesight will start blurring progressively until there will be pure pitch-black darkness.

That's when my laugh will cease to be heard. Everything else will be muted. Complete silence.

Ultimately, a gunshot will be heard.

"She finally did it..."

And the laughter will return.