

... and thus Antiochus wept.

## Preamble

The cover of this album is an artistic piece by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, titled “Narcissus.” The subject of the painting, being Narcissus himself. Narcissus, within Classical Greek mythology, was a hunter from present day Thespieae. Being a hunter of Laconian origin and the son of a god, he was naturally one of the most attractive men to ever live, but as the mythology describes, beauty would damn him. While hunting in a forest, an Oread appeared before him. Having startled Narcissus, he denied the Nymph’s advances and stepped away from it’s embrace. The Oread from then on would spend the rest of its days weeping in the mountains, hoping Narcissus would come back. Nemesis, the goddess of revenge, noticed the ordeal between the Nymph and Narcissus. So as far as the powers of the goddess extended, she felt that Narcissus should be punished. Nemesis lured him to a pool of water, whereas he leaned upon the water. In the pool, he saw himself described as “a bloom of youth,” having not realized that this was just his own reflection, and thus falling madly in love with his reflection as if it were another being. Knowing that his love would never be reciprocated, Narcissus ended up having to kill himself as he knew he would never love anything else as much as he loved his reflection.

The story of Narcissus was particularly appealing to artists according to the Renaissance theorist Leon Battista Alberti: “the inventor of the painting . . . was Narcissus . . . What is painting but the act of embracing by means of art the surface of the pool?” (sic.)

What is music but the act of embracing, by means of art, the surface of the pool?

Who are you but someone who wishes to embrace, by any means, the surface of the pool?

“In this painting Narcissus is depicted . . . representing the dark infinity of obsessive self love.”

In the case of the title, Antiochus is based on a fictional semi-deity found in a certain literary work established by a musical artist. If more is to be understood regarding Antiochus and his story and how it relates to our own, feel free to look for it. If you don’t wanna, don’t. Enjoy the title for what it is.

christmas morning - 2004

a child born sinless and with pure intent. the fire crackles beside his crib, with instinct he looks into the red flame. he sees nothing. it's just a flame, right? it is, its meaning isn't inherent. the young, pure boy still has much to experience. by the end of our story, he will no longer be young or pure, but a boy he will remain. the dichotomy between a boy and a man will be discussed in conjunction with the boys story. all that the reader is required to know now is that he started as a boy and will end as a boy.



what was her name? why did you love her?

a blossoming youth, you don't quite remember your early years. the years where you had no responsibility, and thus forgotten to time (memory serves to retain knowledge of hardship as a means of presently avoiding pain). you do remember a head without a face. you remember its hair, the long and flowing black hair which had captured your eyes from first sight. you try so hard to remember it, or rather her. your brain tries to match faces to a memory but nothing works. she was beautiful, she was your angel for your years of ease. she was beautiful but she no longer retains a face. you still hope, you still try to remember. you anger yourself, not even remembering her name. her name comes as static in your brain and it's a feeling inescapable. by god, what was her name? you remember you first fell for her when her hand accidentally grazed yours. what was her name? her skin felt like it was ready to love you, to hold you. what was her name? she may have never felt the same way about you, for all you know you may have never existed to her... what was her name? you hope that wherever she is, she lives on in happiness, with the faintest chance she remembers your soft, childish smile you would give her at every sight. the static hurts too much, you can't bear not remembering your first love. you just want the STATIC to stop.



dad's record player no longer plays beautiful music

do you miss him? you can be honest with yourself, no one is listening. it's just you. or do you not want to look beyond the grand wall you've built in your brain, because you're afraid of the established issues hiding. issues which, uncovered, would plague you for months. it's inherent to want to avoid pain, so you don't look over that wall. but maybe you should, for a truth hidden in pain is self-fulfilling. his stuff is still scattered around the house. do you see his watch? how about his old laptop? his favorite record player set aside his favorite record, "One of These Nights" by Eagles. do you remember how the songs play? it used to be sweet. i think it still is. do you?

you don't remember the morning news



waking up on a saturday morning with the soft hum of the reporters is a feeling all too known. your parents consumed by what's happening in the world, they know more than you do about how fucked everything is and you'll know too, in due time. you're still a kid, you don't have to worry about that yet. your highest concern is dependent on what friends you're playing with today. you sit and watch the news with them at times, but do you really remember any of it? i mean, did it ever matter? so much injustice but you never had the capacity to understand. now you do, but you turn a blind eye. why do you forsake us?

praise to you! o' father of chaos

in the late embraces of the night, what is there to feel? there's too much. you overload your senses and you can't take it anymore. you stopped feeling long ago, but this is no longer a lack of feeling. this is a brain that's been rewired to never stop, ceaselessly feeling every word spoken in its jurisdiction. you feel so much and you just want to scream. your impossible ambitions embody themselves as spirits and they haunt you. their presence makes you want to scream and sob at the top of your lungs, but you KNOW that it won't make them go away. these spirits exist as insatiable entities. have you realized yet? you've been staring at your blank wall for thirty minutes. look down at your desk, look at the anger and pain that awaits you with each page of work you complete. will this ever end? you know you've doomed yourself.

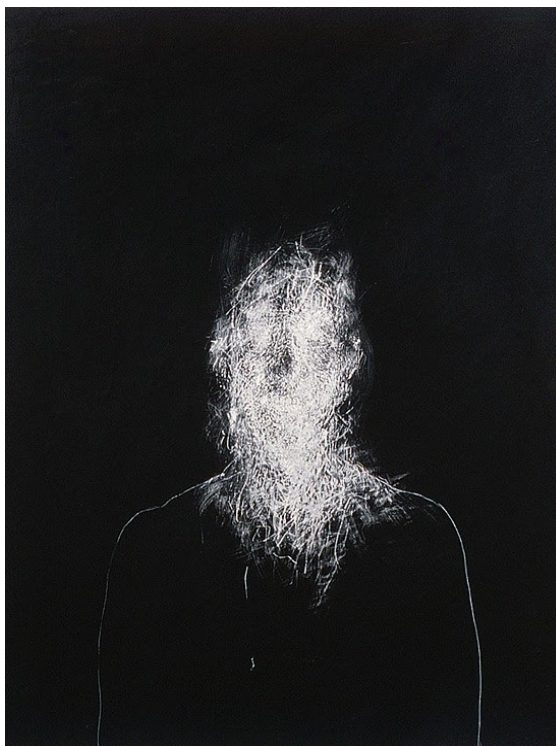
chaining your arm to the light-post

there are days... nowadays... where you feel like you're the only person left who knows you're still around. you feel that if you crucified yourself in the town square, right now, people wouldn't even see you. they continue on in their own worlds, too preoccupied with their own issues and worries to care about yours. you HATE that people won't come to you, asking if you want help. you HATE that you're not the center of attention in everybody's lives. you HATE that you give love that is never reciprocated. you HATE that you're beginning to understand how small you are, how little you matter, how softly you'd pass away. looking at your ego from the outside, or rather looking at your ego like its a separate being, you realize how much it hurts you. but maybe vanity is a sign of growth. growth is good . . . right?



i think it's time you looked in the mirror

but maybe you shouldn't.



refuge in silence

there is no narrative here. at the end of the song, just wait. silence is valuable.

is this it?

the stars above you blanket your thoughts. the dichotomy of the sky far above you and the ground far below you. your feet dangle, you can feel the blood moving irregularly through them. looking down always gives you a pit in your stomach, but tonight it feels a little more soft. intrusively, you think how quickly you'd die if you hit the ground right now. how painful would it *really* be? maybe it'd be worth it. the unthinkable option. always there, always on our minds, but an evil we dare not name. giving it a name, gives it an audience. an audience gives it power over our actions, and before long, it's too late. do you really want to? i don't think you do. i think you want to stop all of the suffering but you can't bear to let go of the few things you still have. those small moments that shine a light through your heart, moments that help you understand yourself. you don't want to give that up, you understand it's an entity of unending beauty. is it truly time to give up? you've grown into a man, is it worth losing it all now? . . .



and so you jumped, but you never hit the ground

what is sometimes forgotten is that the prospect of the 'unthinkable' option can portray equivalent mental damage with comparison to actually committing the act. you reached the peak of human emotion. the act of such would utterly exhaust your mental stamina. in essence, you did take the final step by considering it. be proud of yourself. you fought the full fight but you won.

promises beheld to no truth

keep your promises, to yourself or to others. hope can only exist with some sort of accelerant. without hope, there isn't much left to your humanity. grown MEN and women keep their promises. or maybe you're still that baby staring into the fire. maybe you're still that little boy. i know he's still inside you, somewhere. i miss him.



a cacophony of validating slurs

i'm so sorry to everyone. i wish i had the courage to say this personally, but i was born knowing that my faults lay in my inept emotional state. i'm sorry for not being what you wanted, i'm so sorry. i exist naught without your guidance and assistance, and still, i remain ignorant and selfish. i wish i wasn't this way. why did i have to be born this way? please don't hate me. i don't want to be like this, i wanna be back in your arms. i'm so sorry that you think you lost me. i promise i'm still here. i'm still that boy you remember. i wish you could understand the boy in me never left. he's just terrified of the world, it's so dark and painful. i wish i could bring him back out so you could realize that I AM STILL ME. please don't leave yet. i'm not ready.