

I.

In reality, nothing really changes. There was a concentrated atmosphere, but without a clear place to go, we wandered lost for the first couple of hours. It was a beautiful place to be, and it lent itself to creation in one form or another, but it wasn't openly hospitable. Change in this place was slow and difficult to come by. Hidden, decades old newspapers waited inside the pillars and peeked out at us. This and other things about the space (a door marked, "keep closed") gave the space a haunted sort of feeling, and a very distinct history. I felt that we weren't alone there, possibly because of my tentative belief in the occult. I didn't like traveling anywhere in the building by myself for this reason. Every time I turned a corner I imagined, or thought I imagined a grey creature or a person, something dusty, emerging from the walls or the floor or the piles of rubble. The whole thing was unbelievable because it was too much what it was. To research whatever we are trying to research, in a place like this, is something that people have been doing as long as places like this have existed. "artists" and researchers seek out places like this, to have space, to have room, but also to have a built in narrative. I am almost sure that we could save ourselves valuable time by just researching this narrative initially, instead of trying to uncover it through esoteric uses of the space and the tension, and the pillars, and the darkness, and the dust, and the electricity, and other imagined, nearly imagined, or surprising things, that haven't existed or won't exist in the future, or have never existed, or may seem to exist but are in fact things that have been created by people with a lack of imagination, or more imagination than necessary, or other forms of creative handicap.

II.

I attempted to remount my bicycle but it was quickly becoming apparent that it was a ridiculous thing to do. I could peddle two, maybe three times, then I would stop and dismount, breathing heavily and teetering sideways. Suddenly everything enraged me. The quaint little trams, the narrow streets, the ridiculous street signs with their "schaff S". Most of all it bothered me that was in such a predicament. "I must be hungry", I told myself.

I limped along, bicycle now nonchalantly perched over my shoulder (One wants to promote an air of individualism, even in a time of crisis). I was bothered with myself that I hadn't eaten sooner, but it sounded more pressing to go and have a beer with my new colleagues. So many things to do. So many beers to drink, and I brought my favorite jokes too.

The closer I drew to my apartment the more panicked I became. I realized that I probably didn't have it in me to wait anywhere for takeout, so I choose the fastest option. I haphazardly locked my bike and fell into a Pita Shop. The putrid meat revolved behind the counter, undulating and wobbling on its thin skewer. I told myself that it smelled delicious and I ordered one with everything, and sauce. I departed biked with the last fury that I had left to my apartment, flinging myself on my bed to, in my mind, quickly devour my dinner and pass out, ready for work the next day and done with my bothersome body.

I pulled open my computer and streamed "Modern Family" to help me with the process. I unwrapped my complicated meatglory and took a bite. The wrap tasted old and I quickly had the juices of some poor, though religiously murdered animal all over my chin and beard. I felt dirty and revolutionary. I was in control. I was going to make this happen. On the screen a hysterical gay man ruined his daughter's birthday party.

Thirty minutes later the pain had doubled in on itself and grow talons. It stretched out in my gut and dug its heels into places that i didn't know I had organs to bother, or maybe created new things to fill my stomach with. Living things with shells and hot innards. This new community that lived inside me was not a pleasant one. I looked down and my meat wrap and threw it across the room, the thing landing in a pile of waste in the corner of the room. It was around then that I decided to ask for help. What's pain without a little bit of pity?

The girl was a course one. In a pinch she'd be the one to swing a bat at the intruders. She was the adoptive older sister that I was constantly afraid of, but she gave pretty sound advice.

I'll show you yours if you show me mine, or maybe even his.

### III.

Done in the classic style of a stop-frame, the gravel around our feet lifted up, to varying degrees, to the heavens. In that moment, the entire terrace froze with surprise and wonder and the space that we had all shared together was to be changed, in my opinion, for the better. Everything happened in three to four seconds. The German family across the terrace had been there the longest. The parents were in their mid fifties and the two sons had met them here, to show off their new city and their newfound adulthood. It was unclear what field the two sons worked in, but they seemed content and proud of their surroundings. They had all probably come from a town that wasn't too far from here. I could be jumping to conclusions, but it seemed like they were, at least on some level, locals. They didn't have a problem with downing a number of beers with four sets of car keys piled on the table. Maybe they didn't have far to drive, or maybe the four of them had such incredible tolerances from years of locally brewed beer. They carried on and laughed at each other, lovingly. More than twice, the father pretended to hit one of his sons over the head, as though to say, "I see what kind of man you have become, and I like it, but it's not perfect." The four of them never dropped their grins.

The mother had lit her third cigarette when she, and I, noticed the first spike of rock towards the heavens. It was tentative and sluggish, and looked almost fake. It looked to me like the small piece of gravel was attached to a fishing wire. This was theater magic. The corner of the rock where the energy was coming from, the corner that seemed to be attached to transparent wire, was the first point of entry for this new and incredible idea. All the idea needed was a vehicle, a beautiful departure from the situation that was happening, and the creak of a door into something chilling and fantastic. The rock blade shot up quickly against the underside of the table and made a noise that was incredible, and shocking. A piece of gravel had suddenly become, not just weightless, but directly weighted in another, more beautiful way. I could not help but to smile and to let all my senses tighten, so as not to miss any aspect of what was to come.

The disease spread quickly from the rock to its brethren. The idea was contagious and it looked like it hurt. With a shudder, all of the remaining gravel pricked at their points of entry and redid themselves for departure. The family, and the other families like it on the terrace tried their best to ignore the coming change. They thought to themselves that the noise was probably made by an earthquake, or other common such earthly phenomena. I closed my eyes and the departure was breathtaking. All of these ideas, all of these concepts, constant and shattered and revealed within.

### IV.

They Disappeared.

Into the ridiculous barracks that they have built for themselves. They coo and they splinter in three different ways; from top to bottom, back again, and lengthwise, from throat to sternum, and around the shoulders, and any of the other lengths imaginable. They were sat on the couches.

The fly entered the room about halfway through. I lay on my back, on the carpet, next to the windows, and watched as the fly made a beautiful pattern in the air above my head, and on the same level as the heads on the couch. The design was simple. It was created almost entirely out of straight lines. The residue could be imagined as any color imaginable, but for aesthetic reasons, I will imagine them in a kind of lime green. (the green looks good).

I do not think that it's a bad idea to be bound up in looking at the world through the lens of aesthetics. You are able to see a beauty in almost anything because your aesthetics are actually pretty malleable, if you can stand behind your conjectures. At least I think that this is the case

The task is great and the spaces are different than they used to be.

*Joseph Hernandez*