

As soon as I was conscious of no longer being asleep, I was acutely awake. Functional enough to force myself to not look at the time, to know that the precise knowledge of what middle of the night hour I was now awake in, of the exact number of too-few hours left to sleep, would destroy any hope of using those hours for their rightful and intended purpose. Instead, I turned to my side, found the cool spot on the pillow, adjusted the blanket, tried to imagine what it might be like to think of nothing at all. The moments of solitary wakefulness passed uncounted, unnamed, but not unnoticed. The darkness and stillness might have been outside of time. It could be 1 am, 4 am, the sun might be coming up at any moment. It made no difference. There was wakefulness and no one to share it with—the time would pass and no one else would know. I would be tired the next day.

I would be tired the next day among the people who were sleeping now and there were things to be done with and for and near and to them. No—nothing to be done, don't think of the things to be done or the people to do them to. Will never sleep if the things to be done make their way into this bed—this bed is for the solitary not-passing of time in the dark. No—but it's not quite dark is it? The orange glow of the neighbor's porch light is visible—there is a light outside the window, there is a house outside the room, there is a neighbor. There is a life unfolding that isn't mine just next door and that life is asleep.

This uncounted, unnamed series of moments seemed to end but was also horrifying in its formlessness. I am awake and now I am hungry and I am outside of time. Is this forever? This development is annoying. If I have to be awake, I would like to at least be here awake and unmoving, reasonably comfortable, definitely warm. I do not want to be hungry. I do not want to leave this bed and subject my body to the shock of the air outside of this bed. Tomorrow will eventually be here; it's there somewhere outside of this excruciating formless no-time. There are things to do tomorrow and I should lie here not moving until I sleep and can be in the time of activity and other people. I won't get out of bed and leave this warmth and walk into another room, a silent room of more darkness that is used to its own solitude of whatever hour this is. This warm space is the space I am meant to be in, not the cold, dark space of the kitchen that should be left to its own formless, dark no-time until timed time and coffee and sounds of people in the world moving fill it. I am not here, I am not awake.

I am hungry. I am trying to will myself into a form of my choosing; I have been eating cleanly lightly mindfully for some counted, named time now. I make choices and I choose to believe that these choices will have some bearing on my being; my corporeal self will be changed because I have a mindful life of the mind. I mindfully self-care for myself. I will not leave this warmth and eat at this awful formless no-time because it is not time for food, but for sleep.

I ate a salad at 7:30 last night because I am regularly eating sensible foods no later than 8 in the evening. This is good time. Right, timed time. Doing this will affect my materiality and in turn

my spirituality. *Ésprit* is a French word that means both mind and spirit. I know this fact even in the dark.

Because I need to change everything, I will not leave this bed. I won't leave this formless time and space and I will become part of it again. I can't see my hands or my chest or my face so it means I am already there, I am already just a warmer section of this warmth. I am the opposite of the chill one walks through in a haunted house. I am warm formlessness and I won't move and I won't eat because I have no hands and no legs and no mouth and no digestive tract.

I am in the dark without form or time but I am still hungry and so I am still awake. Now, maybe the mindful choice is to give into desire. The body wants what it wants, that's how the saying goes, right? Maybe if I eat, then I will sleep.

I leave the bed. It's cold and I put on a robe and slippers, an attempt to partially remain in the soft warmth of bed's formlessness. The kitchen is colder. The refrigerator is a cold form. I stand in front of it, open. I see the things I would eat in more formed time—I see mindful choices that have been made. Yogurt, hummus, a bottle of probiotic capsules. Almond milk and half a lemon. Leafy greens. Lean proteins. Little that would be immediately satisfying in this precise, cold moment of the body. The refrigerator casts a rectangular glow of light in the dark kitchen—the opposite of a shadow. I'm the shadow of whatever this unnamed patch of light is. It starts to feel as if I do need form again, if I've become just a shadow obstructing an otherwise perfect rectangle of cold glow that prolongs life and form.

Hummus is a thing to eat mindfully. Wikipedia says: Chickpeas, the main ingredient of conventional hummus, have appreciable amounts of [dietary fiber](#), [protein](#), [B vitamins](#), [manganese](#) and other nutrients.^[25] As hummus recipes vary, so does nutritional content, depending primarily on the relative proportions of chickpeas, [tahini](#), and water. Hummus provides roughly 170 [calories](#) for 100 grams, and is a good to excellent (more than 10% of the [Daily Value](#)) source of dietary fiber, B vitamins, and several [dietary minerals](#).¹

A no-guilt midnight snack.

I eat hummus standing at the counter with cherry tomatoes. I eat them quickly and greedily with my fingers. They carry their weight in hummus and as a combined entity enter me. I do this for some time. I remain unsatisfied.

Standing in the refrigerator's anti-shadow again, I open a jar of pickles and eat one still with my body propped against the refrigerator door, still with my fingers. This feels pretty good. I eat another. I close the jar and put it back but do not change position. I open a Tupperware and pluck

one of its contents out, this time with my whole hand. It doesn't matter what the content is. I eat the entire container using one hand. This does not take very long.

My eyes scan the contents of the fridge again, the things kept alive by its cold, left in the dark until I choose to look at them in the light. I no longer have the keen awareness of each of my movements and decisions as separate entities; I bend closer and reach in and pull things out and open and eat them. This goes on for some more time.

Then, I have awareness again, am aware that I lost awareness for a time. I am sitting now, cross-legged in the rectangle of light made by the refrigerator and disturbed by me. The refrigerator's insides are gutted and strewn on the floor and inside me. I've made its insides my own. If my teeth and tongue and soft tissue of my mouth and throat and esophagus and stomach were capable, I would have crunched and swallowed every glass and plastic vessel in that cold rectangular vessel. I don't have quite the form of a cold, hard, rectangle but I am not so formless anymore.

Tomorrow I'll be tired and bloated but I'll know that I'm a mindful form. Tomorrow I'll shit a countable number of times and say, "I'm a form and those are forms, I'm me and they were me too; they have been given form by my mind and choices."

I close the door on the rectangle light and return to the still slightly warm softness of bed and I fall immediately asleep.

Goat turds are uniform spheres; what do you think this says about a goat's innate sense of self?

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