

The Melancholy Equilibrium

Prologue:

Waking up from a dream will always leave you with at least one question that question being one of self-discovery. No two dreams are ever the same, just as no two lives are ever equal. Even if reincarnation exists you will not be identical once reborn! After all it's not the accumulation of lives, but the years lived in a life that make an individual unique. This doesn't dismiss the possibility of life after death, not but it begs the question will you still be you? It is my true belief that everyone has a fate to follow and journey they must undertake, their travels may lead to new beginning, but every voyage has an end. This is why when I die I don't wish to know who I am, but I hope to remember who I once was. I do not deny death, birth, and immortality sounds like a sin in itself; all I desire are my memories. Waking up is always a struggle, first comes the denial of the things you experienced that may have been too wonderful, grotesque, or surreal for this reality; so you deny its existence. Then comes the anger, why did you have to experience such a thing, to only be put back in this bleak and boring world? After that you feel depressed knowing that you may never experience such a thing again, or just the idea of living another day in your own reality fills you with tears. Lastly, you except that you will never have surreal bliss other than in your dreams, and then the alarm goes off.

Chapter 1: Waking Up

I groggily awake from my slumber not knowing, not wanting, and not feeling anything significant. My body feels numb as if the cold grip of reality has been withheld from my waking body; my mind feels dormant as I slowly open my eyes, to be greeted with a luminescent artificial light buzzing other head. I experience a fading spell of residual slumber, threatening to overtake my drowsy mortal coil once again, but I resist the temptation to fall back into my personal nirvana. The fact that gradually dawns on me is that I did not dream, however a sense of delight washed over me like a mother's smile warms one's heart. I try prying myself from the hard, white floor that I had collapsed on, successfully bracing myself up I attempt take in my current surroundings, but to no avail as my eyes had yet to acclimatise to the overwhelmingly bright ambiance of the room. Whilst waiting for my eyes to adapt I tried to ponder my current predicament, I questioned myself to my current whereabouts, but the answer alluded me. I then questioned what happened, only to be met with another puzzling absence of an answer, to the next few obvious questions that anyone who has ever drunken their sorrows away would have asked. I did not know the time, date, or whom I may or may not have slept with, and thankfully I had not soiled myself.

After another succession of questions I begin to realize one horrifying detail of my present dilemma, I hadn't the faintest clue of who I was and my origins where a mystery, as if I hadn't fully woken up. As for my current character I think I may be a bit repulsed, annoyed, and moreover scared as finally my eyes become accustomed to the room. Another empty answer greeted my sight; the scope of the room was void of furniture and the slightest signs of human presence. The room was white, untouched, and pure; it was a blank canvas waiting for an artist to paint its walls. I would have done so with my building rage, however I lacked any tools, which I could throw. Again my mind raced trying to search for some kind of detail I might have overlooked, maybe some shred of evidence that could have been left behind, however this was a foolish idea as I knew from first glancing about the room that it was an empty void, that it was hand crafted to contain someone very disturbed. It would definitely explain my predicament, the lack of a memory could be put down to my own insanity and my body's weakness an end result of forcefully injected drugs, the white walls merely a preventive measure for someone truly insane. However there is another possibility, one that chills me to the very bone, who ever done this to me must really wish to see me suffer from hunger or succumb to my own

minds relentless ramblings. I can't really decide which outcome is more terrifying, either way I looked at it I'm either insane and will never see the light of day again, or I'm being held captive and never going to see the light of day again. Either I'm being pumped full of enough drugs to sedate a horse and or I wish I was being pumped full of drugs, at least death would be a little faster. This trail of thoughts makes me wonder just how insane I really am, I mean it seems I am currently thinking rather rationally, or am I? After all I have only just questioned the idea of escape although I have already sat here for what feels like the better half of an hour. I staggered over to one of the walls and leaned against it not knowing what else to do, even to answers to the simplest questions alluded me. I bashed my head repeatedly against the hard wall, hoping to spark some kind of thought, or at the very least add some colour to the blank room. With every hit a new wave of pain washed over me, I did this around twelve times before I realized a very terrifying fact, I was feeling pain, I was receiving a physical response from my body. The possibility that this was just a lucid dream vanished in an instant, what was left only the cold and bitter taste of reality.

Then the floodgates opened and a torrent of tears flowing with my overwhelming emotional descent into despair poured out, trickling down my cheeks before breaking off into individual droplets and splashing to the ground. The only thing to be heard was the pitter-patter of my own emotions hitting the floor and my own stunned anguish. I only wished to know myself, and yet no matter how far my arms reached to grasp the answers, they only slipped through my grasp. I felt like an empty well, not knowing the definition of a desert, sitting there in the hot sands waiting to be filled. Looking at my tear stained hands feeling disgust I wiped my face with my cloths. Only then did I notice I had a scar on my left arm, it seemed to be a large slit, most likely evidence of self-harm. Although the thought of myself being such a depressed person in my former life made me shudder, at the very least it was something I could hold onto, it was the first shred of evidence about myself I had found and that filled me with resolve. I could only hope that I would find more of myself, but hopefully not in the form of scars. Having discovered the scar of my past, I realized that the only surface of the room, which I had not looked at, was my own body. Under closer expectation I found that I was a pasty white male, my hair was black with a few signs of graying, I seemed to be around five foot ten in height, and I was of a slim, meek build. My nails were trimmed, my hair was long but well kept, and not lastly my teeth seemed smooth so at least I knew I had good personal hygiene. Lastly I noticed evidence of a tattoo on my back, however I could only make out a bit over both of my shoulders, the left shoulder read "I TH" and the right shoulder "I AM" which gave very little insight. No matter how hard I tried to contort myself I just couldn't make out anything else. No matter how many pieces of the puzzle I found nothing seems to fit.

If I were in some form of captivity my captors would have least made themselves known by now. Maybe they just didn't know of my current condition, I suspect maybe they may have thought I would be in my deep slumber for a lot longer. I mean I must have been in quite a heavy drug induced sleep, maybe something that would have the effect of short-term memory loss? Even a few pints of alcohol can display some of the effects of amnesia, at least when one wakes up. I believe that the most likely drug used would have been the well known date rape drug, I quickly reached for the region of my kidneys and thankfully they were both still in their rightful place. If I was truly being held against my will as some form of abduction, then maybe it is best that my captors don't know of my current condition, after all the element of surprise is a valuable asset. No, I'm being stupid, if I was kidnapped then my body would have been restrained and my senses removed with earplugs and possibly tape, but most importantly my ability to shout and call for help would be nonexistent. That is unless my captors are just brainless, then again they could just be planning to kill me. A shiver crawled up my spine, after several minutes of pondering many possibilities; I considered that I may have been in mortal peril. But after some time I put those thoughts to the back of my mind. If someone intended to do harm to me, it would already have been done, and I would have at least some evidence of being roughly man handled. Having no bruises at least confirmed that I was treated with some care. So

whoever had imprisoned me had respected a few of my human rights, after all I was not hungry or thirsty so I couldn't have been more than a few hours without food; the possibility of drugs being mixed in with my last meal crossed my mind.

I after a short period of time I finally decided on my first course of action, it can be said that in a game of chess that the first move can decide the outcome of the game. So I made my move, I got up off the floor and shouted at the top of my lungs, " I don't know what kind of outhouse hotel this is, but some bloody service would be nice!" I waited a few seconds for a reply, but no response came my way, so I uttered my statement again and again with to no avail. After a minute of screaming for attention, I came to terms with the fact that my words were only falling on deaf ears. I thing felt like a kid throwing a temper tantrum and being ignored, I doubted holding my breath would change a thing either. So like a reasonable adult I waited for a reply once again.

After what seemed like an hour I realized no heed had been given to me, so it came to my bitter understanding that if I was a prisoner, I was being left to rot in a cell or the world was coming to an end, and considering how my luck has been so far both thoughts seem very plausible. So I am stuck in some kind of mental institute or prison with no way to contact the outside world, whilst the rapture or some kind of nuclear war was taking place." When you say it out loud it does sound rather impossible. Maybe I found the glitch in the matrix, or perhaps I'm in limbo forever not knowing where I went wrong. It would seem like a fitting punishment, especially when one lacks a memory to dispute their torment. Bearing in mind that one without memories would not be able to judge their punishment, nor their emotions, or interpret any complex meanings. That's right! I can't truly judge how I am feeling as in a way I am experiencing everything for the first time. I look up to the ceiling feeling a wave of Blank wash over me. I thought about the feeling of blank only to realize I was experiencing Blank for the first time. Blank is a form of dread, blank is a form of sadness, and blank is a form of despair. Blank is the emotion that cannot be fully summed up with words, blank is the feeling of ones unknown sins crawling up their back. These spiders named Blank spin a web that ones thoughts cannot escape. All anyone can do is let themselves be slowly devoured by the spiders that poison our souls, as poisons just like sins cannot be undone but can be forgiven and removed. Oh... what sins did I commit to end up in such a place? Such sins as mine may indeed never be forgiven and will only slowly rot the body from the inside out, until the spiders fully consume me.

The only thing I longed for at this point were my memories, but do I truly wish to remember? If my sins are so grave, then maybe it's best never to remember who I was, but relish in the fact that I am reborn! Not to consider what I was but what I am, I think for a second repeating myself, "I am, I am... I AM!" So was this the idea my tattoo was referring to? That I should not try to remember? No it couldn't be! I think things through once again; "Wait!.. I THINK!". Could it be, "I THINK, I AM?" Yes, it must be, but what am I thinking? I am? What exactly am I?! Yet again another dead-end to trail of thought, and one that had an ending but lead nowhere. All paths must have an ending, but when you are stuck in a maze all endings except one lead to an exit, and if one is not careful one can become lost in a maze forever! Though no maze is endless however hard to solve, too bad mental mazes don't come with any string to retrace ones steps. Nonetheless they do come with a monitor, a monitor of madness incarnate, and in this maze it seems like all roads lead to roaming. Soon I found myself contemplating one outcome of many similar endings, all of which end in this god-forsaken white room. I picture my slow death from starvation or dehydration, the idea of my body steadily dying in agony as my stomach starts to eat my own body, or as I struggle to breathe with such an incredibly parched throat.

The feeling of sickness as I start to succumb to dehydration and the pain of my gastric acids becoming too overwhelming for my own body to contain. I think if it came down to it, I would rather snap my

own neck or die of blood loss, quick and painless, or at least going out through a fall into a deep slumber. Yes that does sound a bit better, but could I really do such a thing? After all the very primal will to survive is stronger than most can imagine. It's the one thing that unifies us with the most basic of creatures. Even the humble bacterium has the motive to multiply to prolong the existence of its genes, to make sure that it isn't the last of its kind. Is this truly survival driven by a primitive need to pass down genetic, factual, and creative code or is it survival driven by loneliness? After all to be the last of anything, the ending of an era or even the essential last note in a foreboding grim melody, must be a greater tragedy to one's self than to those already past. Maybe one could think of it as a form of genocide, not of the individual but of the species, as if their actions have some holy meaning.

The story of Adam and Eve comes to mind, then again stories, even ancient biblical stories, are still just stories. Maybe one day we will be able to put some of the biblical texts in the fiction section. Who knows, maybe an archaeologist will unearth an older version of the bible with a front cover that reads: "An original work of fiction by Blank." You know that amazing author with schizophrenia that couldn't stop arguing with himself? He wrote such books as "Blank". Oh... what was his name? Oh yes, it was Dink Namuh the writer that famously killed himself through unnecessary hatred towards his own self. I laugh at my own bad joke, whilst truly feeling the void left by the absence of any other human presence. It can be said that nowhere is truly quiet, until you notice an absence of sound. It is at these points in time that the slightest creak can cut through a room, just as a skilled butcher dicing a slab of beef. It was the kind of silence that a horror movie would use to enhance the given effect of a jump scare, the famous violin concerto from the film Psycho rings in my mind, as it instead slowly wanders across the possibility of me being held in tournament on some kind of sick game show. Any moment now a door will open, and a extremely campy male show host with a weird accent and bad hair will tell me the rules of his game. Well at least if this was a game show, I would have a chance of getting a large sum of money.

The concept of game shows don't really make much sense to me, I mean they all seem to follow the same obvious pattern, and more than half of the seem rigged. As well as the contestants being too greedy or too thick to win a good sum of money eighty percent of the time. Is that why I am here, because of my own greed or stupidity, or did I just lose the game I was playing like a gambling addict losing their latest bet? They never truly recognize that they're not betting money, but their own life, their hard earned hours counted in their pockets. Just as flipping a coin has the odds of one third of changing your life, a spoken word can change the outcome of a story, and just one act by any one person can change the world for the better or for the worse. So what words did I speak or what act did I commit to end up in this white walled hell? I, at the very least, hope my punishment fits my crime, consequently the prison system is corrupt and senseless as it can be. Turning minor offenders into hardened criminals through the lock and key of the torment of a pecking order that's no different from a pack of feral mutts. Feeding them with bland tasteless food that's hard to swallow among other things, their only entertainment being on another for a prolonged period of time, where every day is a new form of mental and physical torment. Their bodies and minds are being abused by one another, and their base instincts are becoming accustomed to the mentality of a common dog eat dog regime. Their primal intuition only becoming more concentrated with every beating as they mature.

Alas a rose bud can only become a thorn bush if fed the right amount of liquid suffering. Part of the problem is the dehumanization of those put behind bars, they're all given the same clothing and are assigned a number, and then they are thrown into the display cage, being left to defend themselves against fully matured lions. I see no difference between how we deal with prisoners and how those sent to concentration camps were and are treated. It maybe a bit disrespectful to compare the two, but there are some definite similarities between them. Consider the death penalty! It is still in place in many parts of the world, now please tell me what's the difference? In the eyes of their captors both committed crimes that were deserving of death, and both captors thought they were doing an act of

good by purging the world of such inhuman scum. It could be said: How dare someone be Jewish, just as they say: How dare someone commit a crime! They are both guilty of something in the eyes of their captors, the question is do they deserve death? If they do is it your right to take their life? At the end of World War Two, many people thought that those who committed some of the atrocities that took place deserved the noose, but few people realized that they would be no better than those barbaric monsters if they took their lives. However, we see no reason not to kill those that have killed others, where is the justice in that?! No government should run on the childish principle of an eye for an eye, it's like going up to a judge and telling them the reason you stole someone's car was because of the school yard rule of finders keepers losers weepers. It would make some sense that those who believed in capital punishment also believed in the rules of the playground. It could be said that most criminals are not that different from a disobedient children that have been put in detention for acting up during school hours. The question is: Do these said children deserve to be killed for their crimes, no matter how grave they may be?

I looked to the floor in a state of disarray and depression expecting a reply, as if looking towards the ground, the true home of all of those that have been put to rest, would yield some kind of response. All I wanted was a voice or some kind of reply; I didn't want to be alone anymore in the time out corner. It felt like an eternity since I had woken up, at the very least it had been a couple of days. I had no greater desire than to just be done with it all, to off myself in one last act, but I still had the sense of self-preservation. All I wanted is a voice, some kind of presence other than my own, to hear another, anyone, anything, something... please anything! I can't take it anymore, I'm being driven mad by my own mind and I hate it, I hate myself. Everything is so loud and overpowering, I can't even hear myself think anymore! There was such noise coming from the silent room, the crunching, spanning, splitting, cracking the sounds of bone braking filled my mind. All I want is to feel something on the inside, I'm so tired of this sadness and noise of my own thoughts. My mind was finally starting to split; I started to fall to the floor in a volley of tears, holding my legs curling up into the fetal position.

I felt a chill run up my back, as I felt my mind break and for the first time since I had woken up, oh for the first time I felt it, I felt a smile creep across my face and a torrent of nervous, unwanted, unexpected hideous laughter started. I laughed for hours, couldn't stop it, I could only drown it out with my tears, and I did so until the well ran dry. " I know it's so funny right? I mean look at you! You look like a firkin cum rag that's been left out in the rain!" I heard it, an insidious voice with a vicious laugh and intent that wasn't my own. I shouted with a wave of anger and uncertainty, "Who said that, show yourself!" A reply that I wasn't fully expecting froze me in place. "Oh I showed myself to you ever so long ago, but like most you ignored me. If only you looked over your shoulder once in a while you would notice that you're never really alone. Now that your all alone you cant ignore me anymore " Then I realized I was talking to my personal devil, it had the most poisonous voice I have ever heard! I did as it said and looked over my shoulder, to be met with a beastly and frightful grin and I turned away in horror. It then spoke like a dying cat," Oh... do you not like my smile; after all I made it especially for you! It can be said that us devils rarely smile, then again our faces are full of lies, so I can't be certain of this being a genuine smile or just mimicry." In that moment I truly felt dread, had I been feeding that creature since I got here? With another flick of it's snake like tongue it said, "Yes, just like a vulture you have been feeding me your dying hope." No...no it knew- ""What what I was thinking.' Yes of course I do, after all I am your devil, I know you better than anyone!" I then decided to question the demon. "So?" and without missing a beat it replied though its sharp teeth, ""What now?' Well, I was planning on just hanging around to see you suffer for a bit longer, but you're ever so boring and predictable, so I'm going to go watch a guy get mauled to death by a rabid dog. I will see you the next time you have a mental break down. Until then, have a excruciatingly painful day, bye for now. Oh... and don't forget, I am always looking over your shoulder." The thing then proceeded to

phase through the solid white wall opposite me whilst walking backwards and blowing me a kiss. What ever it was I despised it already, I only wish I had a chance to wipe that smug look off its face.

Then that feeling of Blank punched me in the gut, and I came to comprehend that they are trying to break me. My captors don't want to see me dead, they just wish to see me in the same way one would view a clock with no working gears. Empty, nonfunctional, and noiseless; after all an alarm clock without sound wouldn't wake anyone. What was I before, some kind of whistle blower? Am I here because I knew too much? It would explain my lack of a memory after all, get enough beatings to the head and I am sure you will forget a thing or two, and it explains the lack of any other human presence in this white walled hell. They are not trying to take a life, but to destroy one, maybe it's to keep their consciences' clear after all how do you kill someone without murdering them? In the same way that you erase a memory stick without physically destroying it! What did I know to warrant such harsh treatment? I must have been a threat to national security or worse! Maybe they are just trying to get information out of me and this is just a way of getting me to crack.

Whatever they want from me, be it my sanity, information, or to just see me die slowly, I will not give them the satisfaction. I maybe going insane but I will not succumb to myself, I will outlast them in this game of patience and willpower. I will make it out of this through my will alone! Then I heard it, the first tangible sound that I had heard since waking up, it was the sound of a lock slowly clicking into place. I listened to it for around a minute, before noticing that gradually a previously hidden door on the opposite side of the room was starting to creak open as the embedded mechanical gears that drove it turned moving the metalworking's into place. With no hesitation, I run though the opening door, only thinking about possible salvation, and not thinking about the alternative hell that maybe waiting for me. Very much like a mouse running into tall grass to escape a pursuing cat, unaware of the snakes that could be hiding in the undergrowth waiting to ambush anything that may cross their path. I was truly a rat in a maze, but at least I was still awake and breathing.

The Melancholy Equilibrium

Chapter 2 Table Weight

I awake to the rhythmic humming of hidden clockwork masked by a long continues high-pitched wearing of mechanical failure over takes my ear. I awake in a uncertain sweat hoping that what I experienced was some kind of self aware dream, brought on by copious amounts of a strong hallucinogenic compound.

The dreaded lackadaisical feel of Déjà vu comes over me before I tremble In horror, realization and defeat as I lift my head up in groggy state of perception that can only be achieved by taking a humbling hard hit of concentrated sin, I call it sin equal to being, which is that of my own special blend of sin created by learning nothing and yet achieved something in the form of theoretical growth; well it's either that or meth... Sin is one hell of a human concept. Even though the very idea of it is very much subjective and lost on those without morality.

I look around craving some visual input only to be met with that very similar feeling of Blank despair that can only be felt when viewing a true void of nothingness, one may be able to experience this emotion if they look at a white nothing for long enough. This emotion will raise many questions in the innermost reassesses of the human subconscious of ideas of fate and existence.

Is this because we all exist in a blank nothingness and the only thing that truly makes a nothing, a something is the existence of others? It could be said that you are nothing until you meet another nothing, then perhaps you may become something. In actuality the only thing that confirms your lack of nothingness is the perception others have of you. Thus your existence is only justified by others!? Who would have thought that the silent treatment to be such an effective method of torture then

again the reality of solitary confinement is evidence of this, being put into practice; which is rather repulsive as no one should be denied their right to exist as being ignored can be worse than death itself! At least in death a life can be justified and proven, but if locked away forever where do the remains lay? Possibly their bones do not lay but instead lie; perhaps one's own existence could be considered equal to that of Schrödinger's thought experiment. However the very idea of this is no more than the gift of uncertainty, all life tries to live even without being fully self aware, all life exists in a state between life and death thus all life is nothing more than a pointless theoretical state of matter. This is the true incarnation of the emotion of Blank and you should be so very honored to feel it or realize its existence as so many few come across it. Even fewer are able to keep their sanity after beholding it; it's an unwanted gift of the cold reality that we live in.

Looking around the room my gaze shifts to a white table that almost seamlessly blends into with the wall, which it is standing against.

I decided to get up off the floor hearing my body clicking as the tired muscles move with what little energy they have left. I came to the conclusion that the table is too out of place in this void to have been placed there by chance, but tables have but one task and that is to support items and work. So if there were any answers to be had they would be held by this conspicuous table. But I was at a bad vantage point to see the contents of the table, so I slowly inch myself forward at a snail's pace meticulously observing the room with my sharpened eyes, fearing the slightest misplaced foot would set off some form of menacing metal clockwork that was designed with me in mind, with its only purpose to tick away my remaining lifespan. Paranoia and anxiety overtake me, my heart started to palpitate with the likeness of a malfunctioning jackhammer; shaking the rubble of my body with the force of an earthquake leaving its ripples to work down my pipeline. I only felt dread as I slowly gained a better view of the table noticing an assortment of seemingly random trinkets none of which jumped out at me as being meaningful.

Getting closer still to the point of almost being in arms length of some physical answers. I stop as the gears turning my thoughts have a literal wrench placed between them. My mind creaked with fear the moment I spied what was unmistakably the deadly glint of a silver plated barrel, the kind of which the undeserving stare down before being wrongfully executed by firing squad. I could only imagine the deadly unlatching of the trigger as the pin gives way, which only leaves stunned silence with a cacophony of mournful cries coming from those still living in the bullets wake of riotous bloodshed. I flinch before coming to my senses; after all I doubted that I would be in any danger as no Americans were around to pull the trigger. Also I learned an important fact that I also wasn't American as I hadn't yet latched onto its barrel in the same manner of a baby holding onto its mother's bosom for protection and to suckle at the teat for nourishment.

Staring at the barrel I feel hypnotized by the looming hazard of death, I can only look as the multiverse imploded with my mind being the centre of devastation. All the possible outcomes from every possible reality played thought-out my mind deafening screaming slideshow played one after another until I had grasped the idea of infinity of fear. At this point I came to the realization that there is no fate, just randomness and improbability that we interpret as something greater than ourselves. But the truth is that everyone lives, everyone dies nothing matters. So my next thought was an existential ultimatum of a complete "fuck it", I furiously grabbed the revolver determined to use it on the next physical or metaphysical being I see, however there was no targets around to be met with my answer of led and anger. So I counted the bullets, all six chambers appeared to be filled; I proceeded to latch the safety on the gun and holster it in my back pocket for safekeeping with it I had no doubts in my mind that I would kill the next thing I see as retribution for my torment.

I give a stressed filled sigh... The kind that only those who've work with children will truly understand, after all there is nothing like twenty four temper tantrum throwing kids; that you may have to put up

with at any given time of the day to truly put your life into perspective. All of those screaming voices could drive anybody insane its no wonder why teaching is considered to be one of the hardest professions in the modern world. I begin to rummage through the miscellaneous assortment of clutter hoping to find some priceless information about my current predicament or myself. It was a bit of a lucky dip; although I hoped what I grab is something a bit more useful than what you might revive at a rigged low budget carnival. Part of me was expecting to grab onto some type of shoddily put together plush toy that an underage victim of child labor was forced to mass-produce, for the creature comforts of others, the kind that they will never be able to afford or hold onto so that they may dry there tears away. However what I latch onto was not a tear stained teddy, but a colored Polaroid photograph.

The photo depicted a family of three, a young boy around the age of twelve, he had a almost golden hue of blond hair, piecing blue eyes akin to the azure sky and a smile that instantly told you that he had a habit of making mischief. He wore an almost out of place well kept school uniform, with an emblem that could only come from a highly prestigious or argent school. Holding onto him in a caring embrace appeared to be the child's mother, she looked like she was in her thirties; she had the same golden hair and blue eyes but they seemed faded, as if the years of harsh weather had warn away at her, turning what was once a beautiful copper into a sickly green rust. Her smile was tired, bent almost forced; it was the spiriting image of a bridge that had exceeded its load capacity one to many times. She was wearing an expensive looking suit one that was meant for a high earning workingwoman; not the kind a housewife would be wearing. Lastly there was only what could be called a father for the sake of biology; he was holding onto the boys shoulder with a suppressing grip; most likely to keep the kid still. The man was covered in items of luxury and expense nothing on him could be less than a hand full of digits. His hair was a matted gray and think glasses obscured his eyes; he possessed an expressionless mouth besides a glint of annoyance. As if posing for the photo was an obstruction from a working schedule and his right arm held onto a phone. I could only call him a man obsessed with work and riches. They were all positioned around a settee valuable in appearance, but a room covered in displays grandeur and overachievement with many books most of which were defiantly singed first additions. Then in the corner of the photo I spy a maid, who was probably the only person really looking after the boy. Not many details of her were distinguishable as she was in an unlit corner of the room.

For the first time since waking up which I can only assume was more than a week ago, I had felt a twinge of happiness overtake my stiffened facial muscles. Why did this happen? I can only assume that seeing another human even if it was in the form of photo, acted upon me leaving me with a feeling of ease and a slight form of hope. However I wondered if this photo held any importance in regards to my past self? Did I know these people? Maybe they were close friends or even family. It is possible that they were waiting or even looking for me? Potentially I had a family, this insight filled me with a inner fire much like a candles burning flame. I wanted to get out of this prison for a reason that was more than just my own self-preservation. With a single flicker of light in the endless darkness, I banished the creature named Blank and found a new beast which I called Fool the feeling of desire, hope and joy. This feeling can only be achieved when a nothing finds a something and becomes a thing in and of its own right. Yes I was no longer a Blank in a void, but a Fool in a void and for that matter I had the right to be foolish and full of hope. I was born anew in this empty void, within a shell of a man. I could only hope to become more complete by rummaging through the other trinkets in the pile.

Looking though the clutter once again, I picked up and inspected anything that looked out of place or of importance. I soon found a rusted old fashioned key, with what appeared to be a rose patterned embellishment engraved on it inner circular bow, hanging from it was a flat golden platted key ring with a bold font that read "Memory Is The Key". My belief in myself skyrocketed with this message, if I

can find out who I was then I might become my old self or maybe I could truly be reborn as I am now. I stashed the key into my pocket, feeling that it still had more questions for me to find. Having looked through most of the trash on the table which I throw to the side this included a small tin of beans, a large amount of blank weathered paper, a handful of used battery's, a half eaten Apple, a broken pen most likely to be used in conjunction with the paper, and a Yoyo that I considered pocketing to keep my mind occupied during my stay in this condiment; but I decided against it. I was down to the last two objects in the pile, one being a copy of a wrinkled newspaper which I planed to inspect in detail, the other object was a fairly expensive looking wedding ring. The golden ring had a small but exquisite diamond attached to it, engraved on it in a fancy looking font, was a note that read, "I will never forget". This brought a tear to my eye because if memory is the key, then it can be said that I had lost my key altogether. Considering this even if these items were once mine I didn't have any right to them and the cherished experiences they may hold. I threw the ring and the key to the side with the rest of the trash, I had no right to hold them in my possession; however a newspaper would detail public information, thus I had a right to read it in detail.

I soon found myself sitting in the corner of the room, as if I had been labeled a dunce and sent there by a utilitarian teacher. I begin to feel the weight of many shadowed figments incarnated as a resentful class of undesirable maleficent mistakes. They where my mistakes each one I had wronged, everyone one I had a hand in molding into a former person. When a pottery maker crafts a lump of clay into a object of substance and puts the wet mud into a oven they know that they will either be taking out a work of art or a fractured, cracked or misshapen unusable trash destined for the landfill. These incarnations of my past discretions could only exist in this nothingness, as without my memories they were just adrift in the endless void of my past infringements in the same manner as I. So the big question was if I were to regain my memory would I also be welcoming these entities back into their festering hollow home of self-pity and broken dreams? Was I better off leaving these beings to starve at sea and begin a new life away from the derelict island that I was once marooned on? Is a life unknown truly worth going back to?.

I lean back against oblivion feeling nothing but want, I wanted answers, I wanted hope and I wanted freedom; hopefully all my wants maybe answered by the information enveloped within the pages of the tattered newspaper I held in my hands. I look at the front page, which was so blackened by dirt, and grime that I couldn't make anything out; I turn to the first page the title read "YOUTH KNIFE CRIME ON THE RISE", the page explained how due to wholesale knives and a poor age vivification system in place, as well as not being upheld by most small retailers that the accessibility of knives for crime was at an all time high. I found this to be rather distasteful and yet expected due to the current state of our society. I turn to the next page where the only news was the winner of a performance show; it was disgraceful that such rubbish makes it into the news.

The next page was a short piece about how a man saved a dog from drowning in a local river, then on page four there was a piece about the countries latest war efforts; how was such big news only on page four, wasn't this information more important than a bloody reality show?! I wouldn't be surprised if I ever read the news in my past, epically if most newspapers were this moronic and lacking of true substance. The news shouldn't be based on ratings, it should not takes sides; it shouldn't be about money or the advertising and it defiantly shouldn't withhold the truth or manipulate the reader; however this is all that the news truly is, the only point of the news in modern salivation is manipulate cattle on a mass scale. That's all we are to them, a resource not humans but viewers something that watches but doesn't have or need an opinion. Sensationalism is the main factor of the news; we have no reason to listen, we are only viewers to the atrocities they report, we have no will and on power to change the system that is in place and as such the truth is withheld for the connivance of hierarchy of wealth and influence.

After branching off of this mental tangent and then flicking past many pages worth of adds, lies, sports and housing I finally run across a piece of information which stands out amongst all of the other dribble. "TEN CAR PILE UP, NINE DEAD, FIVE SERIOUSLY WOUNDED" my heart started thumping like a piston, my breathing felt restricted and I was braking out in a cold sweat. Sounds of screeching tires, colliding metal and thunderous horns rang through my mind like an unwanted alarm clock, the screams of the innocent cry into my ears as I hear there pleads for salvation. Then I smelled it gasoline many gallons spilling from dying corpses of the horses that drove those metal beasts, there black blood spilling across the road waiting for a single spark to ignite there final moments before they would put to rest in a scrap yard. The many trapped victims cried for help, as they smelled the vile substance creeping towards a point of ignition; all of them then watched in horror as the furious flames erupted in a hideous golden glow, the blaze pounced on them like a starving tiger, its roaring maw being the last thing they see.

I trebled as the newspaper held within my hands started to catch alight, burning withering to ash much like those poor victims doing that macabre day. I fall unconscious from the smock that bloomed off of the dying sheets of paper.

As I drifted off, I could have sworn I saw the burning image of two headlights poised to run me over; I was stunned becoming no more than a deer in the headlights with death looming and driving nearing with every crank of its gears. The oncoming stampede swiftly swerves and avoided me but in doing so it seals its own fate crashing into the voids walls, not ending with calamity but a lack of anything to follow. One last thought crosses my mind before I fade from consciousness, 'If something goes missing but the owner had no memory of it, did it really ever exist? Could I just be someone forgotten.' I pass out on the floor dazed and confused, overwhelmed by the suppressing and cumbersome nothingness.

The Melancholy Equilibrium

Chapter 3: Paths

What drives us? What allows us to continue functioning? How do we not succumb to the lack of sense that seems to engulf our existence in an endless spiral of melancholy? An overwhelming feeling of sorrow and regret quick overcomes me as I begin to awaken from another deep season of hibernation as a torrent of tears jump from my eyes getting lost in the void. However this feeling of depression was purely manufactured by the hollowness encasing me, as I had no recollection and thus no reason to be upset other than my lack of substance. But one can only deny oneself for so long, before cracks start to form in the façade created by emotions akin to cement and stone; its is only question of how many cracks until the façade brakes under its own weight. Beyond a doubt my new self is a façade instead than a new life; after all one must know ones past before he can know himself. As of now the one thing I truly know, is that I still have a lot more to grasp before I can make my escape from this abyss, until then I must grasp not at a ropes that leads to safety; but straws that lead to results, I just hope I don't draw the short straw.

As its now customary I come to my senses and then observe my new surroundings, hoping to glimpse something just something other than the nothing that I have seem to become all to accustom. It's not like a face, which you can feel joy or hate in, but with this empty space all you will ever feel is Blank or Fool and I have familiarized myself with these emotions to the point of being driven insane by the vacant dread they leave behind. Soon enough I fear that they will leave behind more than dread, I panic at the thought that these emotions are slowly hollowing me out similar to jack-o'-lantern soon I may be nothing more than a fading light in the forever realm of forgotten darkness, one can only hope for a peaceful end.

The chasm stares back at me with its all powerful white gaze and its uncanny pearly maw roars with a ferocious tone that leaves my ears ringing in pain, I feel stunned as I behold the site; I was no longer in an equilateral suffocating cube room. What was before me appeared to be an endless white hallway that one might only be able to fully imagine in the sense of the surreal and unnatural. To see this with one's own eyes is to peer into oblivion itself. I couldn't stand it; I couldn't comprehend the infinity of this path that I resided on.

I stood in place for a time with my mouth agape as the ominous magnitude, of the seemingly eternal hallway presented itself much like a deep chasm; that one could easily become adrift in with all but their own echo's silenced. It took all of my might just to breathe, with my body threatening to shut down as a result of an abundance of panic attacks that left my heart feeling like a wounded race horse about to be put down. Taking a deep breath I took my first step on the path of least resistance and moved forward down the long passageway, hoping that I might find an end to this madness; however I doubted my resolve to keep walking this path forevermore, so I prayed for some form of salvation to deliver itself upon during my journey into the white sands.

I took step after step after step for a prolonged and incalculable amount of time, after I had passed my limit my legs started resembling deflated tires; but I had no other path to take and I would not turn back, so I continued on hobbling on my rims with sparks flying in every direction. Sparks of pain, the clacking of bone and mussels, all visually apparent from the bloody footprints I left behind with each dragged and stumbled step. The marks I left upon the white surface only empowered my resolve to continue moving, as the intimidating reality that if I stopped for even a second my body might cease indefinitely. It didn't matter how much it hurt to move, I wouldn't let those bloody footprints be the last marks I left upon this earth. Every stride I took felt like another nail piercing my flesh in an effort to affix my legs to my inevitable coffin.

After my legs failed me and stopped functioning with a resounding snap of bone, I was left feeling helpless on the floor whilst sobbing into the metallic white surface, I look behind me seeing thousands of bloody footprints which had been growing increasingly darker. My legs were matted in dried with some wounds continuing to drip red anguish. I could no longer move my legs they had seized up becoming no more than roses red, painful and rooted to the earth. How I wished to pluck those roses, to remove them from the soil that encased them so that I would be free to sway in the breeze and possibly feel freedom at my own demise. Oh flowers so beautiful and yet so fragile truly nature at its most ordinary; however we see it fit to pollute, taint and remove them from their commonplace so that we might marvel at their rotting corpses for all of a few days. Something that takes months to grow into beauty only takes days to decay into compost, this is only something that man does onto itself; much like my legs something that was once healthy now lays dead on the ground, in the end our need to survive may only lead to our fated destruction.

It was then I heard it again the venomous voice that only seems to spout out words of strife, toying with those it deems to be its playthings. "Well you look like something the cat dragged in and then proceeded to sexual violate" immediately my thoughts turned from self-pity to hate; I despised this malevolent creature of sin every utterance it spoke tasted of vile. "I bet you're wondering where I have been right? Well after watching the rabid dog eat the remains of the guy it killed and then starve to death of the period of 5 days, I then started a civil war in a desert city stricken by poverty. That's pretty evil right?" The smirking incursion of malevolence looked at me with an expression of child-like glee and expectance, its as if this thing had just told me that it got an A-plus in an English assignment; to be honest the little hell spawn just seemed to grow more pitiful with each spiteful utterance that came out its mouth.

The horned figure of greed looked at me with a grin on its face, it resembled that of a lion salivating over its latest caught meal. Was I no more than a tasty treat to this creature? "Oh your much more

than that" the being replayed, my mind raced in a puzzlement; if this beast did want my flesh then what did it want from me? Again the monster read my mind only to throw my thoughts back into my face with gusto "All I want is for you to embrace me, in the same manner in which you cling to your feeble notions of hope and salvation. I wish to see you subsume to the overwhelming fate that has befallen you and more over I wish to see suffer". As my thoughts were no longer private and being aired, twisted and then used against me comparable to a losing game of chess; to it I was no more than a literal pawn in its selfish power struggle. I couldn't stand this creature's presence any longer I bellowed at it to be gone, I begged it to vanish back down the hellish pit from whence it came. The spawn of sin that stood in front of me chuckled at that last remark, its retort was damning. "But my point of origin was such a blank suffocating place of liquid sin and burning damnation, ultimately it was you that created me in that dark pit you call a soul; I don't think even I a creature from it would wish that prison upon anyone. However the door to your inner sin is right here in front of you, I would open it myself and push you in; except unfortunately you must be the one to open this door, after all how else would you learn that there are some journeys that must come to an end?"

I was about to silence the imp before it rudely cut me off in a bout of rage " Shut your twitter fissure, I'm talking and your lessening" its sudden outburst took me off guard and left me in a state of shock, a comparable effect to being shouted at by an authority figure. The demon then continued when it left off seeming comfortable that it had shushed me. " Now I have an old fable called The Forever Paths to tell you" I didn't desire to listen to this creature, although I had no choice I was unable to move and not capable of gagging the swine that stood before me, so I just listened in a stupor. "In hell their once exist three endless rivers of lava, suspended on each river sat three boundless paths and for each pathway there was one man forever dammed to walk the forever path knowing no end and no rest. However after walking for an eternity all three men felt content to just keep walking the paths, with no purpose, need or want for change. In spite of this the forever paths were meant to be an eternal punishment for the souls of the damned; so the devil decided to make things a bit more devastating for the three men and gave them all true maltreatment by ending the path. So something once considered to be endless now had an end, when each of the three men experienced this end however they all had a unique recantation to the overwhelming fate that had befallen them."

"When the first man came to meet his end he simply disregarded the matter of a conclusion to his punishment entirely and just turned around and walked back the way he came. This straightforward act had a large underlining significance however; by retracing his past steps he turned his back on all the progress that he had made. Much like rubbing out a mistake one has made, his effort, hardship and faith all vanished; leaving him with the only one option, that being to continue his endless and now knowingly meaning journey for all eternity. One can only be said to be truly mad, when they know the outcome and yet continue to try and change that which has been set in stone; this is the fate of the man that desires nothing"

"When the second man was faced with his closing curtains, the overwhelming reality of the denouement caused him to pause and consider what a penultimate truly step would surely mean. He came to nihilist realization and from that point on he stood there consumed by the need to justify his horrid existence as more than just roll of the dice. However an answer to such questions do not exist outside the realms of religion and speculation so he stood there a hollow statue in the form of a man; this is the fate of the man that could not face reality"

"When the third man came to his end, he simply ignored it and continued walking; he fell into the lake of fire and burned for his sins only feeling pain and sorrow for not realizing that coffin and conclusive stop always looms over the body of man. He sunk into the inferno and smoldered for his waking crimes against the right and just for his remaining existence; this is the fate of the man that ignores the inevitable conclusion of their own mortality."

"These are the fates that befall the vanity, greed and foolishness of man, now tired hikers I ask you what future will you choose? Will you decide to face this door or avoid it? Perhaps you will simply succumb to your unavoidable demise and expire where you currently lay! So wonderer pick your fate and yield to your end!" The devil had spoken its true intent and had left me with a choice to make, however I didn't have an answer for it; so just laid their hoping that this decision would be made for me by some form of providence, but with my luck I highly doubt this would be the case. The fiend seem to be getting restless whilst in weight for my answer, after a minuet it started tapping its feet and soon after that it bark " come on I haven't got all day" it started glaring at me with impatience and a slight twinge of resentment before speaking again "Now lessen you impudent scrub for the most part you are a useless sake of soon to be rotting flesh, but I in my generous nature will give you the change to change your retched outcome; therefore immediately fucking select a path or I shall just leave you to putrefy where you currently lay." The savage imp's genuine face was now showing, it was up to something just like a true king of lies would be; so I asked the brute "what's the catch?" Now looking at me dead in the eyes, with its piercing orbs like a possessed goat and squawked at me in a poisons tone that left my ears ringing "I'm giving you a choice that's more than most get, take your pick or stop waiting my time and just keel over and die" With that last statement I feel the sensation of apprehension claw its way up my spine, I take a deep breath and sigh...

With all my remaining resolve I spurt out my answer "I want to live!" a wave of grief washes the bloodstained floor as I do so. The creature simply stairs at me smirking with a dagger like grin and begins to guffaw hysterically at my misery, trying to force itself to speak though the venomous mirth it barely squeals out "mother of me you feel for that, your so tragic I cant even look at you without bursting into cries of ecstasy" It was at this point I realized that this being was in fact unadulterated sin incarnate, something that could not be trusted, tamed or taught any form of common decency. The offspring of evil and nothing more, once it had stopped laughing at my gullibility it stated clean and clear with slight cackle "I don't care if you live or die, however I summoned this door so I intend on see you go though it; so that you may experience the black everything what exists on the other side. Also you are right I only wish to see you suffer and nothing more" The monster accurate to form and personality then proceeded to slowly open the door with a ominous creek; then it lurched over to me with the movement of a possessed doll. I felt such resounding fear, as this beast didn't want to kill me, it just wanted to do everything else it could; it grabbed me with its talons and advanced with me in hand towards the gaping mouth of the black everything. I got a decent look at what resided on the other side whilst we were moving towards the chasm, it was pure darkness a black hole where all of existence was compressed into a singularity were nothing could escape. For the first time since I had awoken countless days ago, were all I wished for was to escape, to feel freedom, to just live a normal life; now all I desired was a quick death and a painless end, but I knew the devil cradling me in its arms wouldn't allows such a luxury. The beast's last words to me were "revoir cafarad" and like that I faded into the darkness.

The Melancholy Equilibrium

Chapter 4: The Everything

Have you ever spilt a container of black paint? Did you watch as the tainted colour slowly engulfs all in its path as gravity forces to spread ever outwards? This is the Everything a black hole with an endless apatite, an entity with no discretion over what it takes among the overwhelming need to grow and consume so it may continue to poutiness exist. In a way the Everything is very much alive however it has no purpose other than to purely exist, as humans we are naturally afraid of such a senseless form of destruction and yet we crafted the concept of war with our own hands. War is very much like the Everything, a monster that is constantly increasing in size by stealing and devouring all that strives to

exist; it take the clocks that had once ticketed with life and pierces the gears, smashing the face and brake the hands it eats what's left of the time and turns all into black sand. The only difference between the Everything and war is that the Everything exists as a force of nature; while war only exists though the stupidity, greed and arrogance of man. War may also have purpose unlike the Everything however this only darkens the crimes that we commit, the Everything has no desire kill it is but the resolve of fate that someone dies by its wrath. Thousands die from natural disasters each year, but one cant seek revenge on nature just as one cant deify death; however many die each day though our own bloodshed and unlike nature at the end of the day all we can do is blame ourselves.

I feel like I'm sinking, I suffer blindly as I am plummeting towards ever-deeper depths; darkness surrounds me with a thick veil that not even my screams of terror can escape. My ears ring from the gurgling of the everything as it continuously consumes all, my nose burns from the sent of smoldering worlds, my sink crawls as it becomes apparent that I am no longer able to feel myself; my entire body was going numb as I was slowly being digested by the Everything and becoming part of it, I could feel it savoring me as if I was its final meal before execution. My entire body was being bombarded by the expanse of Everything, all that it inhaled, all that it slaughtered, all that it assimilated; all was crying out to me in fear, anguish and warning. I felt as if I had been caught in a spiders web and all the pre-packaged meals were buzzing whispers of terror and prolonged torment. I could sense it the twangs of the fine strands of thread as they were delicately plucked and tugged as the devilish eight legged figure drew ever closer to its newest consumable delicacy, I had to escape this snare before I become another bite of fast-food soon to be nibbled on piece by piece until there was nothing left of me but plastic wrappings.

Struggling trying to pull my limbs off the rusted nails that pined me to this personal crucifix, however my body was fixed in place and unable to move; it felt as if all the self-control I once had over my own motor functions was removed. The darkness that surrounded me was my own leaked petrol, leaving this husk of a man empty and stricken in place, pleading for air, salvation whilst being slowly poisoned by the black muck that has destroyed our once glorious crystal oceans; such a beautiful sight once breathed life, now it only suffocates under a layer of shadowed sludge. My gills were unable to take in that pure liquid gem, as gasp for heavens philanthropic ether I only chock on cruel asphalt. With every mouthful my sense of self and awareness loosen, with every teardrop that is lost in the thalassic murky molten ooze, with every second of smoldering ashes roaring in my ear; with every instance of numbness brought on by the overpowering black stomach of the Everything, I felt my existence diminish my image was starting to match that of an age or over exposed photograph.

Amid every instance my consciousness continued to seep causing me to resemble a boiling kettle, with every moment I seemed less and less whole, I was a bolder being chipped away by a beast with a pickax. My inevitable demise seemed more apparent than ever, however I could not let myself subsume to pit of despair; through the remaining morsel of self I had left I grasped onto the blanket of shadows and heaved through the last of my identity, I would not let the only thing I have being my mind and body waste away so meaninglessly. Pulling the sheets of dark gloom with the little vigor still present inside me, seemed to be an almost unfeasible feat; I felt my spirit morph into solid resolve in the form of a pair of sheers and with the sheers I slash through the covers of darkness that the Everything seemed to embody. I felt myself fall through the layers of satin one at a time, for each cut a new wound in the Everything opened up giving way to more of my senses being returned. The sounds of roaring faded, the sensation of the ever burning and surrounding flames were put out, the smell of burning blown away as stagnated air poured in through the newly unlocked gashes and slowly the enveloping darkness began to clear. All my senses began to return and with them a flurry of emotions ones that had been consumed by the Everything sentiments I was happy to be rid of. The Everything gave way to everything, everything I wished to dissolve and be rid of, everything hunted me, everything that destroyed me from the inside akin to the deadliest of viruses; the depression they

cause equal to the effects of the most volatile of acids. By means of my imminent escape from the Everything's hold comes a precisely unknown mental prison that I would have to face; part of me knew that I didn't desire to escape the Everything's belly, an element of my subconscious wished to perish so that I might be able to be free from this rusted body of life, a branch of my mentality wanted nothing more than to become one with the Everything and depart from this macabre existence.

I turned back to see the gashes that had been left by me in the wake of my anger and ever growing frustration, I was in shock at what I had done; I destroyed the Everything as if it was just a common wall that stood in my way, however it was much more than that. The Everything represented the ever encompassing darkness that seamlessly hangs over all of us with a calm, caring and cunning demander reminiscent of a passed loved one unwilling to let go of their betrothed; most vows may say until death do us part, in spite of this love flouts even the grim reapers kind offer of peace and mortality. I now become aware of a slight twinge of trepidation in my resolve, could I really continue down this path that led to a new source of light at the risk of obliterating what lingered of the Everything? Was I ready to sacrifice Everything to be left with Nothing? I tried to resonate with the little sense of self I had left at my disposal, I tried to consider all of the outcomes that could almost certainly occur as a result of my actions; I saw only three possibilities. One being that I let the Everything cease to exist and let the Nothing consume me, Two I forgo the nothing and let the Everything have its way with all that remains, Three I simply let the natural order reconvene once more, the answer was now clear to me as every Yin must have a Yang.

My body went limp as I drifted back into the Everything being dragged by raging currents that flow between the Everything and Nothing, I was pulled back though the many slits I had made in the ever encompassing shadows of sin. I once again underwent the experience of being enveloped by the many predatory tendrils that seemed to dig into my very soul, but unlike before I didn't fight them; I let the cobras coils slowly crush me and devour me hole, the pain was excruciating. I knew deep down this would be my end, the bittersweet conclusion of my dark tale that led me down this cavernous hallway filled with mental daggers and blinding regrets. I couldn't have foreseen such an outcome one that left me feeling so for filled as all my emotions, senses and understanding are once again stripped away in the same manner as a child gleefully unwrapping a gift, with each tare into façade I became less but at the same time I felt more; I cant fully explain the wonderment of the sensation as it tickled my spine with an existential warmth of euphoria, much like the mind numbing rush of adrenaline one experiences when copulating for the first time. That sensation of becoming part of another if only for a few seconds, that flash of life that flows though you to create another; that overwhelming climax of flesh and body that leaves you stunned in bliss with an afterglow shining forth. This is what I experienced as the Everything consumed the entirety of my mortal helix, I no longer existed as a individual but as a mass that only wished to live and devour; a true hedonist only concerned with the pursuit of pleasure derived from the carnal delicacy of life. It was now fully clear to me, the Everything was a monster one that could never know the satisfaction of being content or accomplished, a beast which I would not be apart of as I only wished for an end and a creature such as the Everything may never know the feeling of fulfillment a curse brought on by its own existence.

The mass of hate that was the Everything slowly churn as it body twisted and writhed in pain, the gathering of darkness started to clear as my very being appeared to be burning it in the same manner as a spicy pepper. The sheets encasing me started to ware away as they buckled with the intense heat that seemed to be radiating off of me. The space that the Everything occupied started to clear as the shadows that formed it scattered like roaches hiding form the light, my mind started to return to me as it did before however I was left feeling depleted and cast aside as the Everything spat me out like old chewing gum. I wished for it all to finality end and with my acceptance came denial, I was deprived of the end that I so rightfully deserved, the peace of Eden that I longed for. Such a feeling that only the whim of an immortal would truly understand, with being denied comes denial and with

denial comes hate, envy and anger the kind that can only be heard when coursing through one's veins with the force of stampeding rhinos. The frustration that was taking hold of me, besieged me holding my mind hostage as my body raged and thrived in the now white room which had been cleared of the dense blank fog that had once called it a home. My hand kept on hitting the glossy white laminate floor with the vigor that can only come with resentment towards god, satan, the reaper and any other fictional deity of majesty, benevolence and an over shadowing vindictiveness towards its own creations.

My entire body seethed red with anger as my entire body seemed focused on taking out my frustration of the floor beneath me, with every hit my existence quivered as could sense my own trepidation over the decisions I have made, over my resolve that had wavered and over the detestation that was rampant inside of me. It wasn't long before I collapsed to the floor in exhaustion as I was at my limit long ago and I was only being held aloft by my own ripe infuriated bellowing psyche. After a sort while of heavy breathing, I soon yielded to my fatigue and my eyes slowly closed shut like heavy gates. I didn't know when they would next open but I could only hope that when they opened again, it would be in another room where I would await a hopeful demise.

The Melancholy Equilibrium

Chapter 5: Blank

I once again awoke in another confined room, not by my body's natural functions kicking in, nor the sound of humming iridescent light bulbs or the turning of rusty gears. What pruned me from my deep slumber was an all too unfortunately familiar voice, in a scavenging and almost sibilant tone that burned my ears "Wake up little one the clock is ticking with the morning sun and your day time run has just begun, however soon the moon will rise and the daylight will shun, as you try to outrun your nightmares that have only just started to overrun." I turn my head slowly bringing the monster that has hunted me since I started my journey oh so long ago, the thing merely sat in place on a white pedestal in the right side of the room, which was ominously unlit with constricting shadows which only helped to cover the fiend in a layer of shade that obscured its true form; however I could tell it was staring at me with sinful piercing predatory eyes that seethed with a blood lust in a red hue. The imp's jagged hooked teeth stood out with an unnaturally wide grin and its breathing was exaggerated by its nostrils flaring at the sight of me; the sound of its juggling inhales and exhales were greedy as if the demon was trying to breathe in my very life.

I decided to taunt the shadows puppet, to let it know I was now in control and the utterance that came out of my mouth was as such "Can you feel it how the shade encroaches your very being, how it slivers around you threatening to constrict and devour your very being; I escaped the Everything that you fed me too. However it seems that you have been ensnared by what was left of it, it's a fitting end for a creature that hides in the dark recesses of thought and emotion. I hope you rot in its stomach you vile, spiteful and irredeemable ball of hate" the beast looked at me with displeasure and regret, knowing that I was the only thing that could save it and that I had no want or need to do so. The devil then spoke with a desecrated voice "that seems fair in the eyes of karma and fate, however you must consider your own sensibilities and the justification or ramifications of such actions" my response was as follows "to hell with the consequences and to hell with you, you're your notions and your poisonous words, I will be glad to know that I had something to do with your banishment for this world" it stared at me with a vacant crestfallen gaze and mumbled with a twinge of grief in its thought "well then, take your pistol and be done with it, if you will be so happy once I am gone then do it yourself, pull the trigger and end my suffering at the hands of this insatiable darkness" I laughed at the monster that has caused me nothing but pain and sadness, it wants me to end its life and relieve it from its own suffering! I couldn't imagine anything better however sadistic it was of me to think of such thing.

I then choose to taunt the creature even more " And why would I want to do that, what's stopping me from simply watching you descend into madness as you slowly melt away and become one with the Everything" I laughed in hysterics as the puppet tried to justify its actions and existence to someone that simply loathes it. It kept on pleading for as long as it could "please just release me... please this is agony... just do it... ok you wish to know the truth? You want to know if my actions were justified? You wish to understand what drives the monster in front of you to commit such acts of hatred towards you?" now the beast had my attention, I stopped my cackling and looked at it once again; knowing it now had my attention it continued "You are my farther, you created me from your every sin you committed from your hate, dissatisfaction and contempt for the world your once lived in, from the envy, lust and wrath you held towards others, I was created the moment you decided that life wasn't worth living; I am the emotion that you call BLANK, I am the monster that drives your very being into a pit of despair as you slowly come to the conclusion that suicide is a viable option. I am the reason that you cry every night as you try to sleep, I am the reason you needed antidepressants just so that you could live another day wondering why, what and when you would finally die and hoping that you would be at peace after you did. As such I torment you for your failures, I taunt you for your peccadilloes and I laugh when you think about pulling the trigger on yourself; I am everything you detest about yourself with odium and aversion towards life, now do away with me in the same manner as you did with every single teardrop over those reached pills that you swallowed with alcohol hoping to stem the pain of your existence. Kill me like you murdered everyone of your emotions, bathe me in my blood that was created in the image of your transgressions towards your esse!" I was taken back by the information that had been catapulted at me with the force of a cannon; I just stood there trying to process what had been said.

After the scales in my head had adjusted themselves to bear the new emotional load, that came with the burdensome specifics of the monsters creation. I did a double take, looking at the creature with new insight and manifesting paroxysm; With one swift action I grabbed upholstering my gun and drew aim upon the magnificent beast starting daggers down the sights of the fire arm I spoke to it like a drunken disappointed father would "I should have pulled out when I had the change, for all I care your nothing but a broken condom or a one night stand gone awry; if I had the choice I would have aborted you and flushed your remains down a toilet". The hell bound devil looked at me with tears in its black pit like eyes and bellowed at me with the resentment of a refuted son " do it... do it you hell-hound, prove to yourself that I'm not the demon you claim me to be; confirm to me that you are the beast that bore me into this world though abhor. Do it pull that trigger and end my life and kill the last part of yourself that still has any form of sensation, you brought me into this world so you should be the one that takes me out. Fucking shoot and end my suffering after all I'm no more that a sick dog in your eyes, so just put me down and let me lay in piece upon the floor." The imps eyes burned into my soul as tears streamed down its face, which was all the encouragement I needed to go though with the damming sin that I was about to commit, without another word...

Click, click, and click... A running in my ear lead only to silence and just like that it was all over for the poor creature that I had created from the sins of my past. The creature just laid there limp and lifeless on the ground, its once warm body slowly starting to cool as rigor mortis started to set in. Its once black bewildering eyes now looked calm and at piece, his facial muscles contorted to the point that it almost held a smile however one that belonged in the uncanny valley. Its once scaly black skin now started to resemble flesh, while its ragged gray hair looked more like a dying shrub; but all its features were overshadowed by the bloody hole that was positioned between its eyes. The hole slowly dripped red drops of body nectar down its face. The leftovers of The Everything slowly silvered away from its body perhaps realizing that there were no emotions left for it to feast on. This just left the creatures body there with nothing by newly born maggots to keep it company; I couldn't help but start to feel sorry both the creature and the appalling act that I had just committed.

The reason I pulled the trigger was to be rid of that wicked monster, however now that the Imp was gone I only felt an ever-growing emptiness left in the place of the beasts taunting. I never thought I would pity such a creature, nor did I think I would ever miss it once it was gone; I couldn't imagine ever feeling sad about taking its life. But now the cold reality of what I had done was starting to sink into my thick skull. I missed the creature just as one would miss their child and in a way it was mine, I bought the beast into the world though my past sins and now it is dead because I just couldn't stop committing acts of crime against life and everything I should hold dear to my heart. I sat down besides its lifeless body and closed its open eyes shut and began ranging it remains into a more respectful position. Before I left it in peace I gave it a hug goodbye, it may not deserve such kindness or fair wishes however I believe it wanted a caring fathers embrace; I couldn't give it affection especially now it was gone, however I could still hold it as if it was once treasured.

As I lay the creature down on the cold metallic floor I couldn't help but notice a ragged yet sadden chuckle coming from the other side of the room. I look towards the source of the guffaw being momentarily blinded by the contrast lighting between the two borders of the room, the heavenly brightness seemed to hide the presence of another entity I had yet to encounter. I was now more overwhelmed and scared by what might be lurking in the gleam, if the darkness held a creature that brought me to the edge of my sanity what might the light hold? With that thought a rasping voice that shimmered with a child like exuberance beckoned me over "Come we have much to discuss" its vacillations seemed old and wise yet they held sorrow with the tone of a playful child innocent yet fervent. It was welcoming much like the cookies and milk that one might leave out for jolly old Saint Nicholas.

I decided to take up the offer of camaraderie that I was presented with, as it had felt like a millennia since I had spoken to anyone genuine with a lasting virtue of generosity or any kind of goodwill towards ones fellow-man. I begin to make my journey into the blinding light, step by step I move towards the line that separates the shadows and shine before long I was at the border now noticing that the shimmer was more like a barrier keeping the darkness out. I derived my arm forward towards the radiance and as it hits the surface of the fence it doesn't simply flow though the air, my head instead seemed to sink as if it was descending into molten rock. The other side was warm much like a desert with smoldering sand, however it wasn't dry or humid but a perfect body temperature. All my hesitation faded away with the slightest thought of the other side. I leaped into the glow being surrounded by the motherly warmth much like the safety of a loving hug.

The Melancholy Equilibrium

Chapter 6: FOOL

I have a question not only for you but also for myself, I stated in a somber tone; "have you ever truly felt safe? Now don't just answer with a shallow yes or no, really think about this. Every day at the very back of your mind as your going about your regular ordinary daily tasks, such as getting out of bed, eating a meal, going to your place of education, work or even hobby, were you teach, learn or just simply function as programmed; then getting back home were you only have a few hours to yourself were you watch, play, interact or even relieve yourself before going back to bed knowing that each day could be your last. Knowing that your job, education, dietary or medical needs and even your family are what keep you chained to this routine; knowing all of this do you still feel safe?" The angelic voice seemed to contemplate for a seconded before answering me in a varnished yet annoyed manner, as if it has stated the same thing over and over again without anyone truly listening "nothing is genuinely safe". I looked around in disbelief hoping to catch a glimpse of the being that seemed to

eradiate a cheerful and secure glow, that I thought was not capable of rendering me in a state melancholy and yet did so as if was efficiently versed at snapping twigs of the sanity of man.

I pleaded "why...why must you give such light... such hope only to take it away from me like a piece of sweet candy, it was obvious what kind of flavor I was looking for and yet you give me a bitter taste; why...why would you do such a thing. to something that has suffered more in this hell than one can bare?" It soon gave me a lecturing response that a headmaster might give to disobedient youth, "I am not a god, angel, spirit, soul nor mortal; but even a reflection can tell you that even gods feel fear. Whereby this virtue guides us to survive and overcome in the harshest of hells, the term safe is disingenuous and irrelevant as all you need to know is fear to endure."

The radiant disembodied glow wasn't finished as it started a new line of inquiry "Now let me ask you something of importance, do you feel hatred towards me, or anything else of substance in other words being?" I looked quizzically as the kindling of my mind ignited and started to crackle with an aggravated intensity reminiscent of a conflagration. I looked up hoping to stare the omnipotent entity in its ogles, before denouncing it "Hate... You ask me if I feel or have any hatred towards you! I loath you, I hold nothing but contempt and ill will, I disrelish breathing on the same plane of existence as you. You look upon me with amusement and glee as if I am nothing more than a mere hobby or a fixer upper, I am more than a abandoned or tarnished building and yet you hold me like a ragged moldy teddy bare taken out of flooded toy box; I know deep down that I sicken you to your core and for everything else I hold nothing but spite, because I am nothing more than a byproduct of the old philosophical phrase 'I think, therefore I am'."

A distilled silence hung in the air with the sentiments and ferocity of my spoken words still iridescent even if long passed, the atmosphere of the space stayed motionless for what could have been many of a burnt out candle. Ultimately the warm entity broke the uneasy tranquility with a lamentable tone akin to a disobedient child caught in the act of vandalism. "I am but a reflection as such, I can only show you the same kindness you show yourself or lack of it; I hold no abhorrence towards you other than your own." I thundered at the being in a wretched timbre "why are you doing this to me... why do you try and brake me?" It decisively uttered "your doing this to yourself."

"Lies...you spout nothing but bitter, deceitful, falsehearted falsehoods" I shouted at the spirit "You know naught of my trails and tribulations, and you claim to be a reflection, however your a nonentity in the form of a shattered mirror." There was no response so I sustained my verbal onslaught "At first it seemed that you invited me into this warmth with hospitality, but appears that the brief kindness you had shown me was bupkis, a façade with ulterior motives. I now speculate you wish to possess like a con artists, but what exactly do you want me to buy?"

Ultimately a reply did come from the scam artist " I am no pickpocket nor mugger, I have nothing to gain by mislead or trick you like a common swindler. I only wish to show you that which is apparent to any onlooker, I wish for you to gaze into the mirror pool of recognition and come to an understanding of yourself. Nonetheless you're ignorant and in denial, you create your own falsehoods and warp the meaning of this hummable langue to suit your own ambitions in which to further your self-esteem and you will do or say anything to show the world that your right, you're a latened psychopath with only your own goals in mind. In the same manner of a demolition man I must tare down your foundations in order to build you properly so that you might be safe for others to accesses."

The words the being spoke left me feeling lonely as if stranded in a deep caverns well and once again the cracked echo spoke "Loneliness is but one symptom of your inner demons, equivalent to the ones that you have allowed though many years of hardships and emotional struggles to take a firm hold of your soul. It is laughable that you assume you have killed them, when you have only truly allowed them open

access through that gaping hole left in your skull from that piece of lead.” I was about to question the broken manifestation, but before I could do so the omnipresent tepid fog distorted itself and become a reflective surface and I was transfixed by what I saw staring back at me.

A black ooze dribbled out of every orifice of my mortal coil, it was if the tar and oil that we use for transportation was finally awaking and reclaiming all of those hefty miles back with a bountiful meal of my flesh. Although the goo did not hurt, rather it felt as if it was every emotion that I held dear; except even more apparent that the bubbling slime that coated my body was a hole placed seamlessly between my eyes. It was if I was once again steering into the dead lifeless husk that the beast that called me its father, however I was not the monster father I now realized I was in fact its vessel.

I screamed out in horror as my image stared back at myself gushing with overflowing envy and nihilism, I thought I escaped The Everything and yet it appears as I spout out by it for being too repulsive and sour; truly I had become more condensed and corroded than The Everything. I was truly a monster of my own making and the sight of myself drove me to the edge of insanity, with the only thing that allowed me to hang on was the thought of this entity that claimed it wanted to help me. So I shouted at the pinnacle of my being and cried out for help from my parallel, I begged him to brake me, to smash my very self so that I may be reconstructed in a form less hideous than the one that stared back at me.

The warm voice that had brought me to this cliff that I had built from my own suffering spoke in a calm voice that lifted me away from my sins; “I no longer need to demolish you, as you have already toppled your own structure, when you pleaded for help you were wracked with guilt of all your misdeeds towards yourself and others. This feeling of guilt is all that is needed for true change and as such you have taken the first step in the process of recovery.” With a shiver going down my spine and through my very core I asked the loving voice, “What is the next step?” without hesitation the motherly entity said “defeat” before I had a chance to question what it meant by that it continued “I need you to admit that you are defecated and now understand that you need to take control of your own destiny” devoid of any residual thought I said with a new and powerful vaguer “I promise I’ll be going to get better” and with that I fell into a deep slumber, due to my own mental and physical exhaustion.