WHEN STARS COLLIDE



DOMNICK SORACE

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MONOLOGUE BY DOMNICK SORACE





I look at the night sky, stars talking in a Morse code of flickering light.

I look through the abyss of my pupil, reminded of the contracting lens in my head made from the heavens above. Pulled in like rain, the smallest of droplets holding a concentration of the infinite outwardly.

And so, they fell:

Sodium, **Potassium**, Magnesium,

Your heartbeat.

Chlorine, **Sulphur**, Selenium,

The ocean.

Chromium, Manganese, Zinc,

Coagulates.

Rubidium, Scandium, Cesium, Thorium,

Fifty-five protons.

Antimony, Cerium, Europium, and Cobalt...

Cobalt...

Cobalt blue like the celestial hemisphere that we endlessly tried to bring closer to us, still holding onto years and years of dedication in the form of encrusted beasts and Gods, with faces, arms, hands and fingers, torsos and legs, with ten bony, fleshy digits, arched, ready, just in case they get the urge to experience gravity on their limbs.

And to them, the ones who kept stories alive within the muscle memory of their tongues. To the ones that knew the endless persecution of six sisters, all while also searching for their lost seventh, whose light diminished to grief and shame, leaving them longing for her return.

I sometimes wonder, when we started longing too. When the intangible is also so, so far, what is there to be done?

Is it to be made palpable? Or is it to be given meaning?

Does the lack of meaning scare you?

He once told me *"The act of looking is the act of validating existence"* to which I replied, *"The act of holding your hand is the act of keeping you here."*

keeping...you...here.

You.

On your hand I left a cut, your autonomous body will heal, just to see if I could find where exactly, you, are.

Keeping.

I can't keep anything forever... all that is borrowed must be returned.

Here.

Here as opposed to there... but... where does here end and there start?

Yet here you are, kept intact.

Kept by what?

by whom?

Shh

I'm asking too many questions.

From the bright cut still full with the colour of life, I'll pull a string made of you and everything else. As I held your hand I was reminded of all that took place for you to be right here, with me. Defined, in a mash of flesh, interconnected web of nerves.

So... the all-encompassing can be held?

Can be drank and eaten? Morsels chewed, chopped, hacked, slashed, spat, put back, re...

Shh!

Are you still here?

Here, in this place?

In this place left behing from when stars collide.

I... I want to go back, back to that cold January Monday morning in the Doctor's office, complaining, complaining that as of late I hadn't been feeling like myself. She asked me if I get shortness of breath, or if I get dizzy. She checked my blood pressure, booked in some tests, lifted her gaze and asked:

"Are you eating well?"

"I think so", I replied.

"You know, the gut affects your cognition", she insisted.

I was taught that the mind and body are separate. I was taught that the one is made of two halves, one half gets trapped, while the other half traps.

"Are... you... ever tired of your body?" I asked.

"Yes, sometimes" she answered as she handed me a prescription, *"This will help you manage yours"*.

Selective

Angiotensin

Serotonin

Receptor

Reuptake

Blocker

Inhibitor

“Oh, and try some Vitamin B12 and C… the water-soluble kind” she said on my way out.

Soluble?

Soluble like everything, like the self, a vessel filled with matter, solid to liquid to gas to solid once more, to melt once again.

Often at night when I’m motionless in bed, kept in place by my own body weight, my physical boundaries become so hazily undefined. So, I press my palm flat against the cold wall to see if I can ground myself. But the feeling of being just a floating presence inside this head, right behind, in-between my two eyes, is so difficult to shake off.

And then I face my palms, and the longer I stare, the more otherly and foreign they become.

There is an eeriness to staying perfectly still, until embraced, squeezed the right amount to feel whole again. It must feel lovely to be at peace with being still, a sort of numbness, the sort that feels good.

It’s like that sometimes, using pills and walls, scrolling endlessly, flashing lights, drinking and eating, controlling and satisfying this body and its thoughts that seem to have a mind of their own. Making notes and little diagrams out of shapes and colours to define one thing cut off from everything else, this as opposed to that, that as opposed to this.

But the atoms will oscillate, rotate and move with or without notice.

As Hydrogen births,

Oxygen sustains.

Carbon stabilises.

Nitrogen (Inhale) inhales.

Calcium bites

Helium surrenders.

Iron bursts.

Like the multitude of combustions taking place inside your head, as you listen to my voice, a microcosm filled with small explosions of light, an idea born, a feeling growing, a thought. Thinking about how putting things in neatly defined boxes is so comforting, not having to think and just being told what is black and what is white, with no room for muddles of grey.

"Grey is where the magic is", he said waiting until he caught my gaze.

No inwards or outwards, all of the in-betweens... everything simultaneously.

(Exhale) This head is a prison...

and when this vessel ends?

Will I be let go?

Or am I already what I'll become?

I crave feeling small, I often get the urge to move onwards until I reach the middle of a vast nowhere, where the land is flat, the grass is soft and green, surrounded only by a pitch-black sky, and all you can hear is the gentle breeze and the rustling of grass.

As the stars appear one after the other, I join them with a string of light like many did before me, and my worries flow away.

I crave this... I crave how insignificant things can become.
As I sit, I stretch my arm out to reach for a glistening star, I grab it between my thumb and forefinger and bring it closer to me. As it expands, I cup it with both hands, lost in a beautiful, emitted warmth, caressing my face... and all I can think is...

"This feels like life".

An addictive game is the game I played; I plucked them out of the skies one after the other and lay them down close to me to keep myself in good company. I'll make my own stories, myths and reasons, and they will bring me solace.

I no longer feel the want to be alone... because I never was. They have always kept us company, now weighed down by desires.

0.00000000000125% of compacted life... the smallest of matter... a smallness gifted with a magnitude.

The sand between your fingers.

The endless downward pull,
and the endless upward push.

A lover's lukewarm skin.

The sound of crackling wood on fire.

The friction within your arteries.

Waves of light pushing through your iris.

Contracting muscles as you stand...

Stand on the in-between, on a thin hairline fracture. There, right there is where I asked myself, *"Where are you?"*

"I am in my head... I am... within it."

I then chopped my arm cleanly off and asked myself once more *"where are you?"*

"I am in that cut, it's all I can feel"

I then buried my arm underneath me, and finally I asked myself *"where do you end?"*

Where do, I, end?

The ironic singularity of I...

Endings don't interest me, I want to start something instead. I want to feel how Philomelus must feel every night as he ploughs through Boötes, planting seeds of compressed gases, tending to his fields of stars. I want to sow a sunflower seed in the richest brown of soils, so rich that it looks like ink, and then.... just sit near it on the damp earth and stay with it... waiting. Wait until the first two embryonic leaves appear, still stuck in their dry flaky husk. The smallest stalk, succulent plump green, asking for kindness and patience...

I wonder if we are ever looked at with such eyes from above, with the same kindness and patience.

As it grows, it will teach me the patterns of existence, from two to four to eight to a flower with an arrangement of half copies packed in perfect density and consistency, following the sun like a devout believer.

How comforting it is to know that the sky still has its admirers, with their polite acknowledgments, their long-headed nods, from sunrise to sunset.

How comforting it is to know their commitment is then carried over by the vastness of water, oceans willing to spend the entire night following the glowing full moon.

Hmm...where do I end?

Where... I... end... might be where I continue.

Like golden-brown leaves, ready to fall back to the ground, gliding through the air, to be dragged around, stepped on, ground to dust, reduced to their most minuscule components, waiting to become part of something alive again.

Matter becomes life and life goes back to being matter.

Like golden-brown leaves...

"Hums 'Golden Brown' by The Stranglers".

Brown was the colour of the classroom door. A child, at school, pressed against a desk, half paying attention, half distracted by whatever was happening outside the row of windows.

I was given a leaf to cut into small little squares, shiny side up, shiny side down. I remember the feeling I got from looking at these shapes of lush green through the thickness of lenses arranged in a row, allowing me to peek into a realm that shouldn't have felt distant.

There they were, constellations of spheres in shades of jade, within compact blocks, that somehow knew what to do, where to stay, what to become...

The lining of your kidney,

from the lining of your liver,

to the stretchy alveoli

and the hardness of teeth,

the chatty neuron,

the memories held by molecules.

I get lost in thoughts, I run out of breath, lungless from spiralling in... further and further..., Preoccupied thinking about things not worth thinking about, while trying to not think about things not worth thinking about...

"Don't get trapped in analysis paralysis," the words echo in my head...

And then I realize that I just need to tilt my head backwards and lose myself upwards, get lost in the endless beauty that I'm so fortunate to witness. Trying to remove myself from this endless loop by raising my gaze...

Like the child who used to, quietly, so as to not wake anyone, go out on the balcony in the middle of the night, trying to escape the summer's heat trapped inside his room. Only to then be kept there for what felt like hours with his head held high by the twinkling of stars, truly believing that they were playing hide and seek with him.

Fortunate for the hot and dense focal point, for the cooling that comes with expansion, for the small unions somehow forming larger amalgamations, until reaching awareness.

To question,
and find answers.

To believe the universe might align for you,
and when it does.

To recognise affection,
and to... recreate it.

To dwell in pleasure and sadness,
and recall it.

To be in awe...

All while awe becomes rare.

Drowned in a flood of light. Disconnected by our own hands, and I worry how we are meant to marvel under this thick haze that leaves nothing in the dark for us to fill.

Orion's fight with the scorpion is over, Gawarrgay's seasonal sprint has come to a halt, the four heavenly posts have been abandoned, and the six sisters have come to terms with not finding their sibling.

What is the need for stars, when we now make them? Lit streets, pure reflective metal welded together, launched at speed to reach Sputnik's graveyard.

Orbiting forms of Aluminium, named after Gods, faster and faster, crashing into each other becoming trails of debris launched at an even higher speed, more collisions, ripples, quicker, bigger, flashing lights, clouds of dust and fire, loud and louder booms, brighter, Hotter, den...

Stop!

The syrup of progress.

An addictive rush of blood to the head.

Darkened oceans.

Search engines for eyes.

Islands of polymers.

Cloud seeding.

The syrup of progress.

An addictive rush of blood to the head.

Darkened oceans.

Search engines for eyes.

Islands of polymers.

Cloud seeding.

Grains of collective hope.

Wandering above the sea fog.

I'm in need of Romanticism; I'm not leaving the feeling of awe behind. I refuse to forget the night sky, because how else will I be reminded of everything? They remind me of impermanence, they remind me of when I asked you about your star sign, so that every time I stargazed, I'd always be reminded of you.

Instead, you taught me something important...

"That's where the magic lives", you answered.

So in the meantime, I'll stay here, here is where I'll rest. Here in this place left behind from when stars collide... a nest, a refuge... laid bare among the heavy stars.

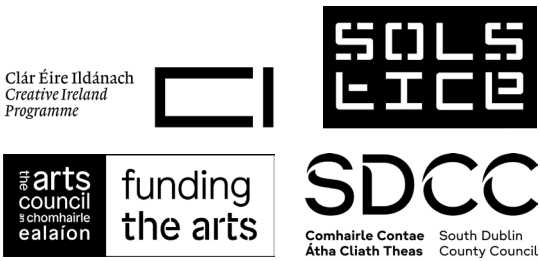
Waiting... waiting to see God and die.

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Contributions
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