

Abstract

Dream Horse is a fictional project which follows a young woman who moves from her small village in Scotland to pursue her dream in London. The young woman narrates her journey, exploring themes such as Language, experience and communication, all through past and present events. The narrator engages with the reader to demonstrate their evolution and understanding of language, following through the narrator's subconscious is the 'Dream horse', who watches and engages throughout the journey and eventually corrupts the narrator's experience of London.

The project took the form mainly from readings of Hélène Cixous and Julia Kristeva, as well as other feminist writers such as Jeanette Winterson and Marta Felicina Faccio. 'The Third Body' by Cixous was the main driver in the development of this project, where she combines flesh and words, guiding the way the narrator speaks about her experience with verbal and nonverbal communication. Would words be used more carefully if they appeared on your skin after being spoken?

The project is presented in eight chapters, which are the first and last few chapters in the project. Thirteen chapters are intended. The remaining chapters will discuss in more detail the narrator's experience of London and how she tactless points of feminism while, engaging and evaluating language on a much deeper level through research of said authors above and more.

Essay-

The project *Dream Horse* focuses its story on the ideas of language and how our individual experiences of life can alter how we understand Verbal and nonverbal communication. Body language is a great way of expressing, and it can use physical touch, but what would be the case if words could physically touch the skin too? To explore the idea of the verbal and non-verbal the narrator uses her experience of equine knowledge to describe her journey of communication. This later becomes important when the narrator's subconscious dream horse begins to feel words as if they were physical and shows the power of words if they were able to cut your skin or leave permanent visual damage. The narrator is from a small village and moves to the big city of London where she is left questioning her position as a woman, rather than feminism in a political sense itself. This makes a more personal experience like language highlighting how different scenarios can change your viewpoint. This was inspired by the novel *A Woman* which was published by Marta Felicina Faccio who at the time went under the pseudonym name of Sibilla Alermo. This was one of the first key Italian feminist novels, and rather than taking us through a textbook narrative of feminism, she places the reader through different aspects of her life from youth up to adulthood and reflects her journey as a woman, which carried onto the building of my project, where the narrator looks at her youth with horses and slowly seeing the world that is out there with her time in London.

Works such as *The Second sex* and *The Hour of the Star* by Clarice Lispector were closely examined to gather further knowledge on the topic of feminism, and also this feeling of being an outsider. However, I don't believe it shines entirely through in the project as it was more of a stabiliser to the planning. I Later come to the findings of an essay by Bell Hook called *Feminism for Everybody* and again although feminism is not greatly apparent to the project itself, I do believe that it is a backburner which with more time and understanding could be brought in more accurately.

As every experience for the narrator is new in London, I thought it would have been ideal to use the horse as this subconscious ego of the narrator. By nature, horses are curious but fearful, they are essentially just living to survive. At times being quite bold and others perhaps reluctant to do so, and I wanted to encapsulate that within the narrator herself, while also creating a relationship between the narrator and the second character Cuerpo, who himself has a similar experience of language. In a sense, this juxtaposes the timid and the bold, which at these moments also question her relationship with herself as a young woman.

As I mentioned above everything was a new experience for the narrator and to get a more in-depth understanding of "experience" itself I read work from Joan. W. Scott *The Evidence of Experience and Feminism Interrupted* by Lola Olufemi. The Evidence of Experience gave the thought that perhaps the narrator's situation was, a historical moment, even though not hard-hitting facts of history but still an experience, a moment lived by someone like Wise in Lola Olufemi's book *Feminism Interrupted*. The first quote stated,¹ "Some of us are politicised by the trauma we experience".

After reading this sentence it stood highlighted in my mind for quite a while and gave me the understanding that even though we might have had the same basic lifestyle/ upbringing there can be moments of trauma or life-changing events which will easily influence our viewpoints. This inspired the section on page 51 of the project "*Can't write as female if I'm not getting fucked religiously. I don't feel in touch with myself as a woman, as a person who pushes life into the earth...*". At this point, the narrator's viewpoints have sort of been altered by the second character Cuerpo and she starts thinking about perhaps undermining herself and other women, by bouncing this idea, but not entirely as it is still in her subconscious Due to the fact the narrator is young and in love, she is in a way unaware of how the artist is changing her. The next line inspired the dream section and dreams in a broader sense for everyone. "Just because I felt free did not mean I was"²

These repeated moments for the narrator when looking back on her youth, she believed it was a place of freedom, running with the horses and drinking down the park but perhaps in fact it was holding her back it wasn't allowing her to grow into the woman she needed to be, or maybe showing signs that society offered her to grow too fast into a woman when she was not ready to leave that past. We all use memories to look back on and sometimes it is an escape, we shift slightly what happened to make it better or in other cases worse. It almost feels like memories are dreams because our minds will alter over time and even if two people share that same moment it will not be the same. The final quote from *Feminism interrupted* was "Theory does not only mean reading dense academic texts but it can also be lived, held, shared"³. I found this line interesting to the project to encapsulate the meaning. And making the connection between Scots *Evidence of Experience* Yes, of course, textbook history is necessary, but you can't shift your personal feelings and that holds a strong part in anything. Whether, that is the train journey shared or the political movements you are fighting for, it means something and maybe that experience is how each word affects us and plays on our mind, depending on what we see today or 25 years to come, every time a word is spoken or any action it is essentially a new-born, perhaps, it is the way you said it, or it was the first time you said it to that person. You can't tell how

¹ L. Olufemi, Introduction: Feminist work is Justice Work (London, Pluto Press, 2020)
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² ² L. Olufemi, Introduction: Feminist work is Justice Work (London, Pluto Press, 2020)
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³ ³ L. Olufemi, Introduction: Feminist work is Justice Work (London, Pluto Press, 2020)
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that word will translate to that person. So, finding this out allowed me to think well, what if words could have the power of a touch, coming from my background in equine? Verbal is not something that should be used. It is body language, and you must have that understanding of that language as one wrong subtle move can me something completely different. Putting the two together I realised that my experience of language is unique to someone else's, but what if words were visual like body language? While reading Cixous's *Third Body*, I began collecting phrases which, drew me to play a role in the project. "Grated the flesh of my eyes"⁴. I found this concept fascinating as the eyes were a major role in the project, in the sense that prey animals are stalked in the eye by the predator and eyes horses in particular find this quite terrifying. Using the narrator at times this timid, nervous character shifting through different positions, would show her almost as the prey, the prey when she was younger with her father, when meeting new people. It was her experience as eyes. This resulted in eyes being quite symbolic the words could almost affect the body of the narrator; they could physically scar in a sense. The next quote helped balance out the toxic relationship between the narrator and the character. "But he is in my flesh"⁵. This quote makes the bond between the narrator and the reader. That the ink was almost in the body of the narrator, especially in sections of the project where the narrator is slowly losing her sense of herself and is confused that she is losing this person she thought she loved but keeps seeming to let go as he is in her skin. While also looking at sections of naked lunch to show the chaos of the narrator as she loses touch with herself and begins seeing herself as a dream horse, this is almost in a way a comfort turning into a nightmare for the narrator, as she dreams of her past, but before long this dream horse destroys her comfort and begins to become a woken nightmare, hallucination. The dream horse is taking over her while keeping in mind the anxious gaze of the narrator and looking back at Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. In a section of the project, the narrator being fucked on a bed of words, this took inspiration from Cixous's *Third Body* "With mouth open, eyes open, hands open"⁶ she would let all words be poured onto her and the trauma from the "violent bed"⁷ the bed became hard. The bed is no longer this place of comfort that it used to be the words, or more even the act of love is going and, the narrator does not know how in a sense to get it back. Coming back to the dream horse where Cixous mentions "dream of being an imposter"⁸this was the instance in the dream horse being created and when the project reaches the I took inspiration from Cixous's sentence for the fire scene when she writes "Such as now when breathing one...and if I wake, I will be dead"⁹.

As the story comes to an end, as I mentioned above words can birth like new experiences, and experiences are new and changing to that specific individual, and the research I took

⁴ H. Cixous, *Third Body* (America, Northwestern University Press, 1999) p. 1

⁵ H. Cixous, *Third Body* (America, Northwestern University Press, 1999) p.1

⁶ H. Cixous, *Third Body* (America, Northwestern University Press, 1999) p.10

⁷ H. Cixous, *Third Body* (America, Northwestern University Press, 1999) p.16

⁸ H. Cixous, *Third Body* (America, Northwestern University Press, 1999) p.16

⁹ H. Cixous, *Third Body* (America, Northwestern University Press, 1999) p.17

from Julia Kristeva's idea on *Chora* balances out with all these themes. This in a sense holds the project together, which I want to explore later with Cixous *Ecriture Feminine* and the phallogentric language using the horse as this feminine and the narrator shape-shifting through both. The horse in a sense is pure, the horse cannot express words and is essentially the none verbal which links similarities in Kristeva's *Chora*. In the book *Ecriture Feminine*, I was inspired by a "Feminine style of writing characterised by disruption in texts, such as gaps, silences and puns"¹⁰. This influenced the form of a text as a whole. Some sections are stand-alone and some move around, causing pauses and as well breaking the reading. I wanted the rhythm to change but as well to have the idea that a reader could pick up at any moment and carry on, rather than it being a continuous flow. emulating a raw, new experience.

¹⁰ J. Shintani, *Ecriture Feminie and musical analysis* (Germany, Lektorat Baer, 2016) p.38

Dream Horse
By Hannah Fraser

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A Dream to Forgive

I do not remember the day I cannot seem to grasp the day when life carries on as usual, and somewhere in the middle experiences and memories develop. In the Hope that we will preserve every moment in its most truthful form. Those days I do not remember, does anyone?

The moment when you screamed as a stranger pulled you out of the womb and into this new world, that other stranger who delivered you oxygen as you lay on your final bed, and all the other rotten, beautiful and tragic tales of life, every new experience that you birth will shapeshift as you grow older, the memory still feels like its young and radiant self then you pause and come to realise it has been 5, 10, 25 years. Take a moment to confess to yourself and understand that only a fragment of this once-lived experience is left. You capture and cherish it like your favourite dream and ask that it never leave you. Your dream changes when another body takes you back to a memory you lived together once, understanding that they felt that experience different from yours. The memory of the past becomes more distorted, and you feel trapped in this realm of the illusionary and the real, you recognize the date, the month or the year, but the magic of time will always leave room to demolish a once-lived reality.

However, one dream will not dissolve into the flesh of my skin, burrowing deep enough that my carcass will cage the thought. Refusing to grow weak, continually dragging me to answer with forgiveness.

It was the last dream.

What Dream?

It is the last experience.

What experience?

We broke the language shared among us.

Who? We? As in I? Your reflection?

I paused, staring at myself, a reflection of me in my childhood mirror, the mirror that never changed, never aged, only a sheet of dust covered the glass, which even the lightest breath of air could lift. The mirror sat opposite my bed and was comfortably placed in the middle of paintings by my grandfather, filled with bright reds of spring and the warmth of the blue sky in summer. It was a place of tranquillity where I could escape from the outside world but still feel amongst nature.

My reflection was the last thing to glance upon before I switched off the lights and the first silhouette to gaze upon in the morning. Nothing in the room had changed. It felt unnatural and consoling at the same time. The only one that had changed was me. Whom did the mirror see now?

I stood directly in front of the mirror and travelled back to the memories of my little town, just on the outskirts of Edinburgh. A place which trapped many, but I had no desire to escape.

The air was pure, that smell of rain when it hit the freshly cut grass or waiting for your parents to shout halfway up the street at 6'o clock. "Your dinner is ready". While running back with skint knees. The land stood still, well, it felt as if it did. Allowing you to be among it, to share the joys of the blissful freedom of nature. The nickers of the horses, the moos and caws, 5 am cackles from the neighbourhood junkies, " You got another baggie?" or "Oooft have seen that fucking lassie."

Most of the time I was down at the stables with my two horses, although in the height of summer, I would enjoy a day of drinking at the park Iron Mills and get completely rat-arsed with all my friends, to which mother was never happy.

To resurrect that time now, to bring it back is a pitiful task. I remember what happened and see all the memories as a happy 5-year-old girl bursting with life, living in the complete present, and later morphing into a nervous shell. Around 11, I was too scared to speak up in case another voice dared to share an opinion. The stables being the place where I felt most confident, I was free to be myself. Next, of course, was the dreaded age of 15. It felt like cruelty served on toast, hormones high and the world against you, filled with curiosity and disbelief, breaking friendships and testing parents. I feel lucky to have spent all those hours at the stables understanding the language between humans and horses while gradually understanding myself. The humbling patience of it, the silence that grounded you. To care for something that has only experienced fear due to the lack of knowledge of another partner's language. Not many people have such an experience as this belongs to me. It is how I appreciate the world and those around me. It is my rare experience of how I see the world. To be at the age of destruction in the family home while also being a safety net for these creatures that have broken and will never return to their natural language again. overwhelming, destroying to watch, but magnificent if you can begin to even listen to what a horse has to say. The scent of youth is rare but fantastic if you can hold it up in the twitching, smelling holes of yours. A scent I try with all my power to keep lodged in there so my memory never forgets, but I fear that the last winter cold blew most of them out and is now becoming a dream that I wish only to come true once again.

What do you see?

Someone once free with magical delights is now burdened with an inescapable dream, which I see in my sleep and woken day reflections at every angle, clear and distorted.

Are reflections ever as honest as we think though?...

They must be because yours is fucking tragic.

Snake.

Cunt.

Slowly, I felt my body shifting, appearances changing, protruding cheekbones, and extending tongue, a feeling that I knew far too well during my time in London.

When I was younger, I would endlessly daydream of being a horse it allured me, seduced me innocently, was truthful in its paces and movements, free to go where and when it wanted, graceful in its manners, never judging, only setting boundaries and limits for their fellow members of the herd. Although, the reflection before me was not the horse I ever dreamed of as a little girl it was a segment of a monster that escaped from a nightmare. It was dark and colourless, broken and ragged resembling an old grumpy sod that had lived a hard life. Painful eyes of sorrow, with its mouth gagged open, a single tear rolled down the cartoon-like face and the tear freezing never to vanish, glass or ice I can never work out. The nose is almost a skeleton resembling a carnation if they could have bones and the ears stretch. Two bodies float there, but each time I see this reflection the figures morph and change, to something else. The pain in the horse's face never leaves, but the bodies do, my body does, and I always wonder why? Red liquid pours from the gums, it is not blood but hurts as if it were. A liquid that sews through your mouth stitching the words back in.

Let me forget... please...

Please let me forget ...

I can't, I am sorry...

I begged myself to forget the memories of London it was a living nightmare. It broke my spirit. I was once a horse on rollerblades, forced to work in the pits. Many others like me, slowly you could see them turning darker and darker with the coal until you could no longer see their face with a few crying chronically, pleading words of relief, others nothing I imagined that if they dropped dead that their faces would show more animation. Colliding emotions and obscurity of thoughts to leave the house and move to this city of London from a small village was a huge leap of faith I put in myself. I never left my town before I was unsure what was out there or who was out there. The experiences altered me, and my personality changed, I became static and tiptoed around life. It was never a place to rest, I knew deep down I never wanted to go back to the life I once lived before. The city taught me lessons, a surrogate mother and father if you like, each goddam day was a lesson, hope was on trial, pushing me to go further testing my limits, placing these strange aspirations that people would understand, talk with me, and express their feelings a little like me. I shot myself and disposed of a lot of my heart and soul to try and feel alive in this one. London was a disruption to my head, the metamorphosis of the anxious gaze, destroying my beliefs, trying to express my freedom when you don't feel free. Gluing your personality to the bedroom door. The fear was ripe in case I ever offended anyone with my personality, and yes, come to think of it I suppose it was rather silly, blanketing myself like that, timid little robin, nervous of leaving the nest.

Terrified... terrified, I believe is the word you're looking for.

Perhaps there wasn't even anyone to offend, could I even offend anyone being that fragile? Trickery of the mind, everyone is laughing at you in capital fucking letters. Words are dangerous, stuck on you forever like the cheap stamps from seedy nightclubs.

The minutes, the hours you spend rubbing that off, stop trying though you would be better off slicing the layer of skin off. Ahh, wait it is still carved in there it's on your muscles, it's in your bones. Those words will not leave. It's an obsession, it's compulsive, and some stay, some don't. The ones that don't leave a tickle at your ego till you can't handle it anymore.

Ugh, not again, fucking shut up... nobody, no one cared that much, they weren't even listening in the first place...

The move was corrupted, a volcanic eruption, melting any desires or passions I had in life, trembling ideologies that only terror could sniff out. Many strive to be someone other than themselves. It was a constant costume party when heading for the weekly pint. Each Friday, a few people that I had managed to acquaint would go to this pub called the Fox and Hound. There were the usual five including myself: Selly, Katrine, Nathan and Emily, and then others who would come as they chose. Lots of different personalities and bodies merged, which often felt like no one was talking.

But they would talk, it just wasn't the conversation you were looking for.

Yes, there would be discussions of all sorts, but it never quite felt real. It never did feel that relaxed, seeming as if everyone was in a low-key competition of snobbery.

Or maybe, that was just the people you decided to sit with, not everyone can be as awful as you are saying.

Perhaps, I was still looking for parts of my old pocket-sized life in such a vast city, everyone else was just experiencing life the way they knew to be for themselves.

Smile... drink up... two more pints before you finally begin to laugh. Stop checking the clock, and smoke another cigarette, time will only last longer, and not everyone can see how tender you are, remember this is everyone's monster, let your mind ease and slip into dreams and surrender.

A Cold Summer Morning

It was the first dream I let my heart become a prisoner to sitting in that pub listening to background slurs, who ordered the “Salt and chilli chips” or “I was working on this really interesting idea”. Most of the time I was usually around other creatives as I had moved there to start working in the fashion industry, other than riding horses and drinking in parks, designing women’s lingerie was a craving of mine, now at twenty-four I do feel I have at least made a respectable start to all three of these hobbies or perhaps even going as far as to say lifestyles.

The bitter coldness of the train station began to sink into my body I could feel the wheels of suitcases rattle along my arms as they trembled not to be lost. It was the day I left home and headed for the wastebasket city of London, where I would find myself locked in for eternity or so it feels at present. Farewells and hellos, rushing and pausing. I always found the train station to be a funny place. It is vast, and spacious but crowded, sometimes dead. But it’s even stranger when you’re leaving home, yet it was a journey I had to take. Sitting on the train, it felt bare it was still, too still, I took my notepad out and decided that I was going to write however, I found myself staring into the middle of the wine glass that I was drinking for at least 34 minutes stunned at the fact this glass had no motion, nor did the sea. Yes, it thrashed against the rocks, but it gave the appearance that it had become motionless. I sat there immobile, yet peeling with fear on the inside, wondering where I was heading, a change was coming, a change that I will never forget, or perhaps it is a change that will haunt me for the rest of my existence. I feel I should apologize for the life I left behind for the life that is no longer mine. To say goodbye to those fucking pet horses that didn’t have a clue where I was going. To my mother who cried out her eyes whilst she waved me goodbye at the train station because she knew this was the best journey, she could send me on.

I'm sorry... I'm sorry that you don't know where I've gone. I'm sorry that you don't know when I'll be back. I'm sorry that you'll wait for me day in and day out hoping I'll run back through the doors, I'm sorry I won't be there to run up the stairs and look out the window to the world each morning. I'm sorry that I left you, and I'm sorry that when I return, you'll forgive me like you never missed me, and I'm sorry that every other time I'll leave you'll wonder where I've gone.

It felt as if a knife had plunged right into my chest you howled as the suitcase rolled to the car laying on the dog bed, holding in the tears trying to keep any emotion under control. A moment of hysteria to cry over this, but I couldn't wonder why it felt so dreadful was it because they knew something was happening but not completely knowing what?

It was a pain I didn't want them to know but you can't ask pain not to visit people simply because you are guilty or conscious. Harrowing as it was a part of me was glad to get on the train each day I looked back and dreamt of the green grass or my favourite tree, the smell of the cut hay, even the fertilized fields. Reminding myself of how that little town had created me, along with a few pets, people and family, dare I say that it never made the experience of London any less strange. The first months were tough, but there was a youthful excitement in me, perhaps even a naivety. Hopes and dreams to look forward to and a new start, yet, every day that passed I wondered why I put myself in such a position feeling like a silly little girl in this gigantic world, believing I was inferior it was not the place for me. Every day became more isolated, and I could not even see any company in the bed bugs no more even the rats were starting to become a burden. What was my reasoning for being here?

I tried searching for comfort in others, but they were too absorbed in becoming the best version of something that wasn't them, painful to watch at times crippling and burdening just to be there. I just wanted to run home, but I was not allowed something inside my body would not let me. Instead, I began reliving my youth over and over in my head times that taught me who I was as a person, and times that tested me.

A coward I will sit here and cry, I do remember a land so beautiful. The freshness of the air that infected my lungs with purity, the glistening sun on an early summer morning, or the mud slipping through the grips of your shoes, on a cold winter day the breeze brushing through the trees, followed by the silence, it was safe heaven, it was my heaven. The land was children of gods that spoke to the sky, day and night. I was never ready to let it all go. The green fields ran from my eyes and dissolved from my touch. I repeated, "I am not ready to let you go" Stay with me while I find my eyes locked onto the grey skeleton of windows and bricks it is something of a monster.

The Three Stages

Three crucial stages happened as I morphed my way to being the young woman that I am today. Three of which I think would only be honest if I explain through the mind of a horse. Allowing you to feel my second language and understand my upbringing, it is how I would like to talk to a person, how I would like to touch them and for them to touch me that way too.

If a horse could use spoken words, I wish that was the universal language.

I will try to explain to you in the kindest and purist way I can. I feel that is something that I must take with delicate care, so forgive me if I take some time to get to the point. A horse is not an easy partner, neither is a person both minds are complex, yet extremely different. One is predatory one is prey. Both take time to understand that owning a horse is a privilege, not for wealth or not for status, but for the gratitude of being able to let us sit on your back and take care of you, to never steal a ride and listen to his words. To be the voice, and hope you are almost close to getting the words right. Imagine someone ripped your words right out your mouth and tossed them in the bin, never to use again, your sound, your voice never to own again taken without choice. Your main way of communicating is silenced.

Feelings are all too familiar in the big smoke words were tossed in the trash or unheard and passed by it were all the same things. Everyone silenced to hear you speak but never really listened.

Tell me, and I ask softly, how would communicate? Maybe you bang something, throw something in frustration, mime with your hands, and even become more expressive with your body in thinking this how would you feel if your main way of

expressing was ripped from you because someone was lacking interest? Lacking an understanding of your way of communication.

Now, again I ask gently, imagine yourself learning a new language in three days.

I will never really know what it feels to be such a creature, nor will I ever but as the years go on, I gain more of an idea and the more years passed, the closer I feel.

You must always communicate in 1...2....3... It is the golden rule.

Eyes

The first step of understanding and the first moment I can recall was when I was born, my father was the first person to hold me, to lock me in his eyes that moment I sadly will never know, a father holding his daughter. Nevertheless, I do remember his eyes when I was around four, green with subtle hints of blue. Gentle eyes, but hard to see under that frown, always leaving a tension, a moment of fear, that if the frown ever got sterner you were in trouble. I watched his frowning eyes from a distance, wary not to be caught. I didn't want him to see the love I was building for him, not yet I would crumble if he ever looked at me. Prey stalks the eye, and prey animals fear contact unless it loves you whole. Maybe that is the same reason why I always found the eye a daunting little ball, but maybe not. As I grew it was no longer just my father's eyes I feared, it was nearly everyone that crossed my path it sent shivers down my spine, those gooey spheres with cataracts to analyse. What are you looking at? What are you trying to study? Are you kind or are you going to hurt me? Sometimes those predatory instincts in me would kick, whether it was through anger, love, happiness or lust. I was now the stalker.

I Hated when people wore sunglasses when talking to you.

You still do!

Why?

Can't see their eyes, it's like walking around the bedroom and night trying to navigate yourself to the loo.

Come on it's not that bad

Yes, it is.

Sunglasses are illusionary I suppose they filter sight, disturb and destruct the face, and look like bugs on steroids. We look fucking stupid, could you imagine horses in shades? Maybe they'd be happier, maybe it would freak them. Horses have a limited colour palate in their sight, yellows and blues imagine how intense their solarized shades would be. Adi my big black majestic noble steed was shit scared of dandelions.

Big scary monster... I'd to be attacked by one of those...Think...digressing, where was I the eyes.

I do not like my eyes as looking objects, I think maybe we should look at eyes after we gain trust or love.

The eyes should be the last thing you see and the first thing you leave.

Eyes, why does everyone say that we should always look into the eyes first? It's the window to our soul. I do find this quite a rude and unwanted curiosity how dare you expect to understand my soul on first viewing? Can we ever truly see a person's soul if we never honestly feel them?

Hands: Why can't we look at hands first? Perhaps this is the first step towards a person's soul.

As a young girl that was brought up around horses, the biggest lesson I ever learned was the importance of your hands. You can tell much about a human's temperament based on their hands; passive, tense, gentle or scared the list is never-ending. As I advanced in my horsemanship and began teaching, I finally understood the exact meaning of this. It is next to impossible to teach great, even good hands. why? Because they mimic the brain's thoughts, the signals shock down. It takes a great amount of effort to hide this expression in our hands, and in doing so we need to change our mindset and challenge the perceptions of the mind. But when emotions are overwhelmed, this is easier said than done. With that being said why don't we start by looking and body language, and hands to know what is that person thinking? Watch their movements and feel them. It's like those little sensory boxes, you put your hand in and have a little scrumple around you to gauge a rough idea of what it may be, but still uncertain, nevertheless. If, however, we put our heads first, what would we see? Nothing, most probably... darkness? Now if we explore the box first with our hands, and then take it out to look at it we know exactly what it is.

Eyes can be misleading, they can be blind, they can hide a lot or show too much. Perhaps, you think you know what they are saying, maybe you have a rough idea. If we now think of the hands as the beginning and the last stage of knowing someone truly, you may be able to tell what that person is thinking in just a blink of an eye. Never assume you own the right to one's soul so dangerously quick, it is

not yours, and it never belongs to you, it may be once shared or loved forever, but never yours. It owes you not one thing, and it is a pleasure to even scratch the surface of one, a pleasure that if you ever leave, you should forget, forget everything you learned, pretend the hands have turned to stone, their eyes are glass. Forget that soul ever existed and keep the memories in your heart's confinement.

Look into my eyes...I may look away...I may continue to stare. What do you see?
Marbles? Resembling a cat's eye? Your eyes

Wander.

Steal my hand at a steady pace feel the beat from my heart, feel the beat of my heart pounding. Desire my hands when my mind is at ease. Watch my fingers, a petal floating unexpectedly through the air is what you see, yet, my soul, you have now seen a little of.

Suffer my hands when I'm a broken mind watch my fingers, a caged rabbit waiting for death is what you see, yet, my soul, you have felt even more. Love my hand when my mind is a red mist watch my fingers near an exploding jack in the box is what you see,

Yet, my soul, you have now felt it all. Find me from my touch, now gaze upon my eyes. If you should ever leave, watch me rip off my hands and see me turn blind watch you forget...Ah, you have already forgotten.

Don't look me in the eyes

Why?

I fear you may kill me.

Hands

Little whiskers at the end of the snout, multiple sensors, and octopus' hands determine the temperature, boiling or cold. Tremendously powerful those little whiskers put the muzzle of such a creature.

So, what do you find so interesting about hands, most of us have them.

They are the little clues of someone. You know that half up half down hand when you'd be waiting in school to ask the teacher if you could go to the toilet?

That's a great way to describe yourself as a child that is half up, half down hand.

Imagine I was just a hand, perhaps it feels more comfortable in my body, I'd be annoyed or maybe I'd do more things than I'd ever possibly imagine. Maybe I could hop onto a flight and not pay the fair. I'd only be a hand., a hand that could say a lot, without a body or a tongue. There was a time when I believed my friend was just a hand, a claw almost, my best friend was a claw, no...no, not a claw, she was the whole thing, the foot of a bird, the paw. Ah, never mind she was the claw hand. She spoke through her hands and would lie through her lips. I saw the echoes of pain from the joints, they just wanted to ease, she wanted to be loved by all for a good part of her life, but then something happened and she switched, the claw hand taught me how to love, what it feels to trust another hand more than anyone, a platonic companion for life, which I will keep company until she is ready to open up to another, because that the great thing about claw hand, once she opens to you and grabs a hold she will not let go.

Oh, I do love hands, but hands are connected to our arms and our arms are part of our body and the body has all the slushy delights hidden behind its hearts, and my heart learnt from human error in myself.

Body

I dragged you in, I stumbled I swayed, I danced and laughed. I stood still long enough to listen to my heart, I sensed danger my drunken mind was not alarmed. I realise now that I cannot blame myself as my body is slightly different from any horse. It starts from the coffin bone, the bone that is connected to the hoof, that hoof that touches the ground. Slowly working its way up, the leg, travelling along the humerus, which is the closest bone to the heart, up the cervical vertebrae, round the skull, down into the spine, where the legs meet again and your back at the coffin bone. I love the name of the coffin bone. Is it because it touches the ground where we lay are dead bodies, that we call it this, does it curve like the shape of the coffin? because for me it's quite sharp and pointy. It seems as if it could puncture you. Coffins are rounded and ridged, a place where you would expect someone dead to lay. But this little coffin bone has more shape. It's distinct. it is the pedal that drives the animal forward or back. it's surrounded by a wall of emotions. the emotions of danger or love. If you stand for meters from a horse, it can already feel your heartbeat, like someone who is deaf, the shocks send waves to their brain. That is how they escape danger. The function of their herd's heartbeats. They feel the herd beating. A horse can read you before you enter a paddock. Nothing, no one will fool such a creature. If you stay grounded, then you feel this. That night was my lesson to never leave the ground again.

Watch how he flicks his tail in anger, the stomps, the whinnies and the bites. This is the only way he must speak, and yet he can feel and know every single thought inside, without opening his mouth to ask one single question.

I now try and stop regularly and let the silence figure out my surrounding, let my body and senses take control, and listen to the beat of my heart. Allowing myself to feel completely in nature, some call it horse whispering, but I believe it is just another language, a language that not many are too familiar with. Maybe even confusion, but try and force what you see, feel or touch, to see its honesty. Hold it and if it doesn't want to stay let it go.

Heart, liver guts, not sure if or what, take what you see, but the words will be mush. Broken jaw. Bloody forever, wiped by a car or perhaps something worse. Don't think about it long it might become confusing. See its true state then let fade away.

Show yourself beast, that you are looking in the mirror again, you twirl around all day admiring those pretty pimples and big, huge eyes. Eyes?? They seem vacant to me though. You're distracted by the need to do something, and you blur your evil with beauty. There horse knows nothing of vanity and crumbles at the thought of eye contact, only in the truest form of love with a horse consider looking you in the eyes, for many only dreams to be looked at by a horse.

London

Temporarily I had switched off, I could have stared into the distance for what seemed hours, but perhaps it was only seconds, I watched the ducks settle for the night, people rushing by me as they go from A to B while sitting chain-smoking, maybe I had only had one. I was not conscious of my mind or state I often found myself daydreaming of that old past that I once shared, it calmed me, and I would always try to come down to the park just around the corner from my flat. The flat was oh so grotty and disgusting I had two flatmates from hell. One who just bumbled on about his ridiculous scooter, which was stolen, so I don't know how he could cry when someone else stole it. Both stoners of course. The other was a girl, nice enough, I suppose, but all she would ever do was moan.

'Good morning' I would state while checking the watch, she'd usually wake around 4 pm. The joke never transmitted to her brain.

'Ahhh this fucking asshole of a manager...'. At this point, I would tune off and let the words disappear. Often, I would need to go to her room to fix the boiler, Knock, knock.

A groan was the response.

"Do you mind if I just fix the boiler"?

I would get no response and she would continue to masturbate.

Apart from the flatmates, the flat was also a disaster, I felt as if was living in faulty towers. The boiler never worked, the sink would flood if you used the washing machine, and then if you used the washing machine the sink would flood. On top of that, there were rats, mice and bed bugs, which the landlord refused to say was his problem.

I was in utter disgust that such a gentleman thought I would bring such filth.

So, I simply replied.

"BED BUGS, I have never fucking seen one in my life till now".

The horrible curtains that no grandmother would dare to put in her bedroom, the constant arguing from the drug dealers next door and how could I forget the terrifying old woman next door? She would get parcels delivered to my number every time and she would bang on the door as if it were death ready to claim you. She was tall and unkept in nighty from the 70s with two squint eyes.

"Have ye got my parcel?". And over I'd hand it.

There was nothing in that flat that worked at all, I would have been better off living in a tent.

Come to think of it now no wonder I found myself in a state of unconsciousness if that's what I had to put up with, bonkers indeed. I would wake up and stare out the window at the great big tower blocks next to me. Two teas and 4 cigarettes, and shower before anyone else stole the hot water and leave for the park as quickly as possible and come to the usual spot. Usually, I'd sit on the bench facing the pond, the point I was sitting at before I took you to the flat. Sometimes if my bench wasn't free, I'd change to a couple of seats down. Any bench would do if I could see the pond, I think the local crackheads assumed I was one of them too. We were all regulars at that spot.

The more time I spent in London the harder I found it to hold onto the day-to-day sounds. It was all a busy mess the bikes were so frustrating. I never wanted to hate a bike so much in my life before. I was irritated by the fact people would just want to zoom about on a bike.

You can't ride a bike though was that maybe not the reason?

In all this frustration, I could hear a stranger shouting "Do you mind if I sit here".

At first, I didn't respond I was confused by what he was saying, I didn't believe it was me he was talking to. It was the first person, well stranger that had spoken to me in public.

'Excuse me, is it all right?'

Ah yes of course, sorry I didn't think you were talking to me.

He was probably in his late 50s and had a small wee dog. It was coming up for bonfire night and he was taking the dog out before all the chaos started.

"So how long have you been in London?" while petting his dog

Not too long perhaps a few months, what about yourself?

Then Oldman went on to talk about how he moved down this way after his wife died. He was from Scotland as well, the dog seemed to have developed a nervous reaction and wouldn't leave the house after dark. I felt a relation to this little black scruff of fur. A change had happened, that she didn't know but had a duty to get on with it, to comfort her owner, at the expense of losing his wife. I felt this duty alongside my mother, I didn't want her to know how miserable and fearful I was it was a city where dreams could come true. A place where all I wanted to do was sleep and drink.

"Do you enjoy London?" I asked the man.

"No', he replied, 'I don't, it finds it hard to make friends down here, especially if your old fuddy-duddy like me'.

'If I'm being honest, I find it just as difficult as you do'.

'It just seems as if everyone is too quick or busy to stop and have a chat, thankfully I have the wee dog, to keep me company".

Correct your statement about the dog.

It felt nice chatting with someone whether it be because they were lonely or not, I was in the same position and felt that I finally managed to have an honest conversation with someone. I felt myself opening as if it were a friend of long ago, perhaps it was a claw hand in London. Maybe, it was just the state of mind I was or maybe it was a lovely little conversation. But if anything, it was one of my best moments in this city.

We continued blethering away, and the sun was near to setting.

the man stood up "Righty that's me I better go before it gets too dark".

"See you later, it was lovely to chat with you".

Just like that, he was away, and I remember having a deep sigh of relief, I could smell the freshness of my town in Scotland, and it brought me peace.

What a cold place you can be, what a lonely place you are. As blank as a void but busy indeed. Forgotten hellos, lost goodbyes. It's the 31st of October oh fuck it's time. Rewind the clocks, reverse my mind. Bleach my body, turn my frame dark, colder than dark, emptier than black, whiter than silence. Perish. Forget. The winter void is back. Blackout

Oh, fuck! I looked at my clock at seen the time.

There was an exhibition that I was meant to go to.

I took a brisk walk there and managed to get there in enough time. It was just in time to get most of the free alcohol.

When you entered the exhibition, it was in this tiny little basement. The door was blue and it was tight feeling as if we were invited just to steal another's oxygen.

'Hello'.

'Hi '.

'How are you?'

Sipping as much of the wine as I could to make this experience less socially awkward. Suddenly, the light went out. I openly thought there was a power cut. I turned to the person next to me and exclaimed 'What a disaster'.

'Oh no, this is part of the performance'.

'Ahh, I see...but what is the performance, because I can't see a thing?'

In the back of my mind, I was thinking there is some nice work in here, but you can't see it, how long are these lights going to be off for? Was this a performance of me? I did yes find this relatable. Devastating. Heart throbbing, pretty works inside, but all there is to watch is darkness.

It was never a sympathetic experience for you, there was once a person of heart and life, joyous, timid, now nothing. Nonetheless, now you stand there like.... like a lemon...

A lemon...?

'There's a photo of a lemon', screamed Sarah, one of the girls I know there. 'So there is'.

The lights came back on, I blinked and scrunched up my eyes it was horrible fluorescent light, so intense every engineer of light should have to sleep with it every night. At least the work was now able to be viewed. Intense music started playing,

doosh, doosh, doooosh. Do you know that horrible music techno heads, gobble swedgers too?

Fuck it, I took myself to the toilet thinking about how I can waste enough time before this "performance" ends, in my eyes, it was a sad way of hosting a party and boosting their work.

"I am wanker" "I am a wanker" come thee watch thy show.

Right, Shakespeare shut it.

In my time of contemplating, I decided to take a shit that would do the job. As everyone does before the performance happened, I checked that there was sufficient loo roll.

Halfway through the process, I went to pull the toilet paper out, and much to my despair, the bog roll was stuck. Panic began to sweat in, it was only one cubicle so there was nobody else I could ask to chuck some under. 'Right'. I calmly tried to say to myself. 'What do I have on me that I can use?'

'Hands? Absolutely not'.

'Scarf? if it comes to it'.

I spent maybe 5- or 10 minutes rummaging through this bag and then it clicked.

"Fantastic!!"

I could use the Rizlas from my cigarettes. This was not as fantastic as I had planned. Anyway, I swallowed my pride and decided to pull my pants up and head for a fag. I got outside and passed all the disco doughnuts that were still enjoying themselves. Took a seat and realised that I had used all my papers up on the last affair.

"Excuse me could I borrow a few papers? I've just run out"

'Of course,' replied the girl sitting all by herself on the smoking bench

I sat down and began speaking to the girl. We ended up having a conversation on lots of different topics. She was from Berlin, and she was over here visiting her sister.

When she was younger her parents had horses too, but that conversation came to a quick end she bluntly stated.

‘The horse is dead, it had cancer’.

Unsure where to take the conversation after that, I let her take control. It was mostly filled with exhibitions and her obsessions with plant pots. Which I never quite understood. Anyway, there’s no harm in plant pot-loving.

I think her name was Julia, and I could feel her scratching to ask what I identified as. Every time she would get a little close, I would divert the conversation.

I never felt comfortable with people being nosey about if I were she, he, or they, nor did I mind if people wanted to say it, I never felt it had to be second-hand news for strangers, especially to someone I was just having a cigarette with. Maybe that isn't correct in me saying, maybe by me telling her it would have made them feel more at ease, perhaps it was ignorant of me, not wanting to open. After all, what harm was it for me? I could see how important this was and is for people and by taking myself out of the situation, did that make me just as bad or worse maybe because I had some loose education around it?

Much to Julia’s distaste, she began speaking on music, a subject I was interested in also. We shared what music we were fond of and even liked a lot of the same artists.

“What are your thoughts on Dolly Parton.”, asked Julia as she rolled another cigarette.

“Can I have one?” I asked.

Putting the tobacco into the paper I started to open up about the song.

“Yes, I don’t mind her work, Jolene is probably one of my favourites. "Are you a fan?”

Julia paused and took time to collect her thoughts, or so it seemed. Unsure about what was about to come out her mouth, I sat there patiently, while taking draws of my cigarette.

“I don’t believe the song Jolene, should be played anymore.”

What the fuck??

“And why is that?”

“It is offensive to women; the character Jolene is insulting to all women”.

I was rather shocked at the statement, so I let her carry on for a bit, then rudely interrupted “Is that not the whole meaning, point of the song? We can’t help what happens in our own life. Some people leave some interrupt, some stay, all of us do it. It is very difficult for me to see that it is an attack on women as such, It was the singer’s experience to that individual.”

“No.”

Blunt.

I could feel the tension rising in the conversation and decided that I should probably leave before our personalities clash. It was clear that there was maybe more a deep-rooted issue in there, rather than just a song. Even the fingers were clawing the fag.

I waited till she finished her sentence and said. “I’m going to go take a wee look at some of the work now it was nice talking to you”.

“Bye”.

Up I got and left, finally, the music had stopped and the crowds that were initially inside had headed out to the smoking area. It was great to just get time to look at the work in a relatively soundless space. Time to think... Breathe. I wandered around and the work was lovely, it held power and fragility, it wasn’t like someone saying, “Look at me,” it just had this sensation that you couldn’t look away. Captivating you, making me feel something within that broke a layer in me. The

colours were intense, but they never screamed. They held you like the fresh smell of rain in spring. I was curious to find out more. I walked a little further around the room and found myself fixated on one specific Piece. It looked like a memory of mines back in Edinburgh, I was almost sure to recognize it. There were strong yellows, forceful reds, and a girl sitting in the foreground who looked like she was about to read. The shutter was slow so her hands slightly blurred. Then a male figure dressed in black standing in the background. The shape and the smell of the image were all too familiar. I couldn't quite place it I wanted to touch the image so badly, run my nails into the ink in the hope that it would restore, bring a little glimmer of memory I believed to have had. There was no description which made it all the more wonderful. It was now my image, I could tangle myself in it, transfixed on the black figure

Who are you? Why do I know this, why can I feel you? The girl by style looks exactly like me, but why are you all black? Are you real? The colours I remember those colours were from a previous photograph I saw...?

touch me... glass smashes... drift chaotically, rippling and oozing. Wait, am I still in this exhibition? Your fingers glide over my arm, goosebumps.... background noise... the wine is dripping off my lips. Who are you? unbutton my shirt, take off yours, and your figure will be clearer. Did I once know you, because I seem to desire you? Are you an old lover, old friend? Oh, fuck I hope not my dad. Or just an illusion of someone I wish I had. Melting, crumbling growing weak in those knees. I need to change the subject and maybe look at the bed. oh bed, bed and figure. fuuuuuck why can't I know you? Are you just a photograph? My lonely head is wanting more of... but that is me in the reflection of you I see my eyes looking in that's me, ah that is me, my eyes and my big nose, very big nose. Wait but it's not me, is it? Is it you or me? I don't know, who is me? Who is what? Warping, belting out nickers, is he me? I, confused, go back to the picture and think of the picture as

a viewer, but this is what viewers do, they place themselves as the object. Am I doing anything wrong? It feels wrong? But I don't think it's wrong. Flustered hot, tickling. want to zone out of this zone, yellow, red, blaa...

A startled real man living next to me. Pinch self-wake up.

“Oh, you gave me fright I didn't know you were there, I was slightly lost in the image”.

“Sorry, I didn't mean to scare you, what do you think of the image?”

Still startled by the experience I had foreseen; I jumbled a few words together.

“I thought it was me”.

Thinks you are a weirdo now.

“I'm glad you think that it was what I intend in all my images, I want the viewer to experience it like it was their own.” Shit, that's the artist, I nearly choked on my glass of wine.

“So you are the artist of the show? I am sorry I didn't realise. I sort of turned up here spur of the moment”.

Nervously I brought it to his attention. “Can I say though, I enjoyed the work you put up, but why the big faff in between, the music... the darkness? The artist gave a long-winded response, which I will gladly abbreviate to him saying that he wants a big circus, a show around him, and wanted all eyes on him. A nice enough man but there was just something that didn't sit well with me I was not at ease, he seemed to crave attention from everyone and anyone, making me weary. How could one body enjoy that many black dots scrutinising them? Why was he still talking to me? Was I his prey of the evening? Was he intrigued by me, by the fact I had questioned his exhibition? Or was he looking for a fuck?

I wouldn't say no to a screw.

Don't ask, don't ask.

“What are you doing after?”

You've had too many wines.

The artist, who did have a name, but I don't yet know if I can repeat that name, it seems to still be locked inside me. It exists in my body, not my reality, not anymore. Anyway, he had plans to go out with friends and invited me along. The next day I had plans and thought better of it, yet the wine head had already agreed. We ended up going to this quaint flat it felt as if you were stepping back in time, I was in the 1920s, with candles for light and ambient music. Proving to be intimate I sat next to someone else. The artist was composed directly opposite me, a coffee table distance away. The tension grew, and my alarmed eyes tried to avoid any contact. I'd look at lamps, ashtrays, and my fingernails. His eyes drifted up and down my body like a floodlight, burning holes through my clothes. I was cautious but inquisitive. Fragile, I knew this man he is safe.

Be careful, listen to the silence.

The night continued and we all went to a club near Brixton. I always struggled with the fact I couldn't buy myself a cheap pint of Tenants. The artist offered me a drink, of course, and I said yes. The price of alcohol in London is ridiculous. I'm positive Blue Monday came on and I headed straight to the stage for a dance. I locked eyes with the artist we were both predators and prey in one. We had a 10-minute kissing session on the dance floor, and both decided it was time to head to a more private location. My flat was being the shipwreck that it was I decided it would be best to go to his.

FUCK.

Panic dashed in, the shit at the exhibition, I wasn't sure what to do, but I couldn't just blurt out "Stop, there is shit in my knickers". Frenzied, I escaped to the bathroom, and the best possible plan was to chuck them out the window. I went to lift the window, but it just wouldn't go up. I had to think quickly I didn't want him to think I was taking a shit. The bin won't work, what if he finds them? In my mind I had sussed what was the best plan ever, I will shove them into the cupboard under the sink and pick them up when I leave in the morning. I got back to the bedroom and presented myself to the artist, my clothes were no longer on and his floodlight eyes diminished, he still devoured me like I was the last rump steak on earth, but I no longer felt as if I was on the stage of death. It was as if someone were to ask you "Please, do you mind if I suffocate you with this pillow". "Well since you asked so nicely, why not".

In the morning we woke together, he had no curtains, so the sun burned directly through the window and heated the room. The room was full of colour and paintings, a lot of his own. He painted eyes, many eyes. I wondered was eyes important for him too, how did he see eyes. All 2d paintings, as if they were just an object to stare at, there was nothing behind them painted all in blue, with sometimes a red pupil.

"You have a book here, on nature and plants".

"Yes, I always wanted to be Gardner." He replied.

The man absorbed me dearly when I was near him that morning it felt as if I were back in my village, surrounded by all the wonders of my past.

From then on, my life was never to be the same again another body shared my language.

Cuerpo

Now, I had met another body, a being that was no longer just an object of words. Those words had sounds and visuals. He was compassionate, and we'd go places that made us feel alive in a city that had brought us misery. He invited me into his world, showing me the similar past we shared, but how different they were. The beauty of these two planets joining as one, as much as hurts to think of it today. I can't ever dream of finding such passions like that again. Was it the adolescence in me or was it true I don't know, but for the short period it lasted it was magnificent. He would take my mind to new places, I never thought I'd reach. Sing songs of praise about his hometown, while I found myself absorbed in him, love, I suppose. *Did you love him that early on? Maybe, I think so.*

The artist, whom we will now call Cuerpo was from a small village like mine in Granada in Spain. His mother was born deaf, so as a child, he grew up trialling other ways to communicate. He wanted a more personal way of communicating rather than just sign language, as a young boy he would build the words he wanted to say to her in the sand, smiles of laughter or even just a warm touch of a hand. At the age of 13, he realised she used her eyes to hear the world. Cuerpo began painting, not for fame or glory, but to show his mum his life to let her hear the music of the world. He painted so his mum could hear his voice. Using bright colours that would speak to her through no sound, a silence that can say a thousand words. That artist, the being that he is expresses solely through the eye. I become trapped in Cuerpo's web of words. His passion for art, to life, almost brought me to tears. Days felt brighter now and nights not as long, he was my spring all year round. Apart from me knowing this was too good to be true, was he real or a figment of my imagination?

I am a figment of your imagination, but he was real, not now though, just a lost reality of words and forgotten sounds.

He let me into his world and opened my eyes to his vision to his pain and hurt. He continually repeats the phrase “Man will always be fooled by a woman’s true form due to her beauty, and women will always never understand her true form because she is jealous of her beauty”. “Or she will see past the beauty and understand who she is. However, men will always remain too stupid to see unless that person is ugly.” A statement, which I never let bother in the past, but I see it and I understand that the previous language he shared with whoever destructed our trust to come.

No... stop, don't...don't say it don't think... stop... you're going to bring it all back.

I fell in love with someone. I fell in love with your that hair messier than a crow's nest in the morning. I fell in love with the way you stand first thing in the morning looking out the window while scratching your balls. I fell in love with the way you talk for hours on Sunday with excitement. I fell in love with your stupidity. I fell In love with the way you bend your legs when you're thinking or even the way you think. I fell in love with the clicks you make when describing your thoughts. I fell in love with the passion you have in life. I fell in love with every single part of you. I fell in love with you and all the little things you do, every day I fall in love with all of you And I will probably fall more in love with you as time goes on.

The first six months of the relationship were great. We'd laugh till the early hours of the morning talking utter nonsense or walking through the concrete trees of London getting distracted by bees. We would spend the whole day out, talking to birds which we probably looked like right nutters, but at least we weren't alone. March 23rd was one of my favourite days we sat in the sun, on top of a red blanket that was planked on top of the grass. Afternoon alcohol and spanked by the words of Tropic of Cancer, it was Cuerpo's favourite book, I now understand why. He took a picture of me laying there and I thought of it as innocent, I never liked my picture being taken, but this one felt right. I wish that night had never ended, not that it was anything spectacular, but just the thought of me being sat down beside you.

Morning delights and rainy-day cuddles. Our bodies and flesh merged into one, and naively I cancelled the world around me for the second time my feet weren't on the ground. Human heart, human heart, human heart...whisper not a horse's heart.

Things moved and the next thing I knew we were living together, he wanted to live in my rotten flat. Taken aback by this statement I looked at those dark brown eyes in a subtle frown

“You want to live in my flat?”

“With the rats and bedbugs?”

“Yes, why, would you not want me to live with you?”

“No, no it’s not that I just didn’t think you’d want to leave such a nice flat of your own. Would it not make sense to move into yours?”.

“My lease is ending.”

I paused; “Your lease is ending I see. However, my feet were off the ground, and I had completely ignored the fact that this may be a bad idea. It was one thing to merge bodies with someone but to live with them...

*Can you smell that... the end is slowly coming, and the flesh is beginning to burn?
Goodbye, goodbye, you need to say goodbye.*

It was nice at first living with a partner, not having to travel the distance, to get too there. Buying shiny objects for the house or even just the mundane shop for toilet rolls. There was something I always enjoyed about going shopping. Everything from making the list to spending the money and cooking the meal. Using the hands for the act of love. Seeing the other hands eat it.

Romantics.

It was not romantic how messy that man was, pissing in bottles in the early hours of the morning because he was too lazy to go to the toilet. I’d wake up looking for water to drink. I’d let out a scream of anger and swear words, “You have been pissing in the empty water bottles again”. The fury would hit but a part of me couldn't help but laugh. He was like a puppy, driving you insane, and it was next to impossible to stay mad.

Stop... stop stay angry, he is not your flesh anymore, I can't help it he is still in my bones, how do you un carve a word on bones, it's not possible, think of all those words on my bones, where do I throw them the morgue?

The bones are deep enough in that I can't see them anymore. I can feel them, is that not enough? Let me live in the old moment, let me hold them, please. Let me cherish his brown broken glasses, soft delicate hands, his red robe, and objects, give me back an object of his at least because I will not have a body ever again.

You must forget. I don't want to though.

Forget, to forget the rest, you must forget.

My heart started pounding faster and faster, my senses becoming aware, I knew I had to let go of this happy second in my life, but I did not want fleet, I did not want it to leave my heart. Cuerpo was the horse, and I was the carriage, he ran from me, but I still latched on. Slowly but surely as the wooden carriage becomes old, parts will start to fall and that's how I feel my love for you will die, yes, it will die, my love for you will become mouldy.

Mould can change.

When you sit there and work, I can't help but love you, the sound of the printer the click of the mouse the late nights when you run into bed. The side of the glasses and the constant cigarette. I'll wake and see your lively puffy lips. Good night sweetheart.

The Model

I was part of his vision, of the future he wanted to use me as a subject, a subject so I could be a memory. There were times when I agreed and times when I refused. I mostly refused and I never really knew why I did refuse. I always believed that I was doing myself an injustice by being a pretty face model for the male gaze, I didn't want to be a part of any gaze. I had my gaze I was, slowly crumbling to life that we were living together. It had been good for some time now, I could see his eyes beginning to wander to other people, was I not doing a good enough job as a partner? I was so deep in sadness that I didn't even feel attractive, I didn't feel like me anymore, tormented by my thoughts. The beast in me would come out and all I could do was listen, there was no other option. Hysterically I would plead with Cuerpo for attention, but he would ignore my silence. It angered me why he wouldn't listen.

Will you cry for me, my love? My darling. Will you cry for me in the morning? At noon? At dusk? When you're still? When there is no light to be shed? When all else shatters? And I can't love you anymore? Will you cry in an empty bed? A room of no conversation? Infiltrated with hate? You will stop loving and you will not cry, you won't even feel. You will abandon any feeling you had and perish it with dread

You forget that I loved and that you loved too. You will forget each moment and desire a woman, any woman you can, you will forget that I know you desire another woman, and you'll sit there thinking that I'm never once aware. You will rip out my heart right in front of me and never dare to say I do not love you, for you never had me in your honest desires. It was a moment to be forgotten until I tell you I was aware and then I won't love you and you will know I love you.

I am sorry.

Puzzle.

Unfinished.

Jigsaw.

Instead of letting go, I tried to hold on he was losing interest, we were losing desire, and we were longer moulded into one. I had a free day and suggested we'd do something, just to bring some life back into our relationship, but he didn't seem entirely bothered.

"Where to?" was his response, all he wanted to do was make his images. It felt as if a hammer had been whacked over each knee multiple times. I felt the pain of Sisyphus in the back, but yet this pain was caused by simply two words.

"Perhaps an exhibition".

His response was "I am busy, maybe another time, sorry".

I took myself to the exhibition alone, which was Klimt paintings I felt myself drop to the floor and realised that this was how I felt at this exact moment. Once I was the figure in Cuerdo's images, now as part of Klimt's, but why did I not want to be a model for Cuerdo?

Perhaps if I couldn't speak to him, I could write down how I felt. The letter read...

Dear Cuerpo,

Tears rolled down my cheeks, and I cried today, not because of the beauty but because it was the most intimate room of paintings, I have ever surrounded myself in. The power it held broke me to sit on the ground. I witnessed Klimt for who he was, what I truly saw in every painting. A man fierce and honest, intricately delicate, passing through the strokes of his landscapes, emerging into his most authentic form, his past held reality. Unknowingly incurable in his youthful years. Not one form of the human body. He swore to honesty the pencil was his friend, and he captured the soul of every face he graced. Later he destroyed, corrupting his beauty. Absorbed by multiple lovers, seducing the canvas. A pain in nearly every subject's eye, except one; Emilie Floge. I feel the conversation between them both was lost in words through a painting. An emptiness trying to fill in each subject, trying to fit her in every lover, in every mother to his fourteen children, every painting after they met has a part of Floge, but every painting was too tender to look at. Apart from The Kiss, the painting was unfinished, as he ran out of time, but how could you ever finish a painting of a woman you loved so dearly but could never be yours? Always hoping to love her more yet torn by other eyes. At the beginning of the exhibition, there was a quote from Klimt himself saying "The best way to know me is through my paintings", and I think I did find his true self, maybe not what others would have, but then many would be blind not to see a glimmer of that.

Chase me round the trees where I always thought of you.

Dance around the moon, forget that I'm watching.

I never thought you would tell me your secrets.

Let them feel no shame, never.

Let my vanity ruin me.

Hold every truthful moment and bare each burden.

Perhaps, one day I'll regret all the time spent without you.

So, for now, I'll paint you in every woman,

Imagining each one as a life we lived because

I now regret the choice made by art.

Let my punishment be your pitiful eyes staring back at me in all my paintings
surrounding my deathbed,

And when the time comes, I pray I end in one of my landscapes where I'll sit with
you for eternity.

Perhaps this wasn't the letter you were expecting, but it felt right, over 400 letters
were written between Klimt and Floge and hardly any of them were found, I think
the value of this is the hope that no one will ever understand the true meaning. The
purposeless letter to unexpected roads.

Here are a few words from the last letter written by Klimt to Floge.

A water lily grows by the lake.

It is in full bloom

But a handsome man has wounded his soul.

with love xxx

I brought the letter back home to Cuerdo, he read it and stared deeply into my eyes with that hateful form of my father. It cut me. His words were laser beams carving words onto my skin that I never will erase. Never forget, and never be able to forgive. My eyes were lacerated. I wanted to become blind. Why was he being so cruel?

He screamed, "You do not know how to love; you do not know how to love". I couldn't handle the pain these words were causing my heart I fainted and blackout. It was the first time I had fainted in my life. I heard voices of red swirling around my head. You are not pleasing him, you need to become his model, his subject. A bug was crawling in and out of my eyes, infected like a disease. A baby was growing inside. I was itching the spiders were under my skin. It was terrifying, but I wanted to stay there.

Wake, now wake, ask to be his desire, let him smell your fresh body, and don't leave it too long.

He won't stay forever; he has a dream to follow.

Destructive Mind

The detaching of these bodies was now in complete progress. I was now seeing the world in Cuerpo's eyes and no longer mines. I would think that he is pressuring me to manipulate my words. I started questioning my position as a woman was I just something to satisfy him? He never would spend time with me... sex... sex would lead to nothing...

Can't write as female if I'm not getting fucked religiously. I don't feel in touch with myself as a woman, as a person who pushes life into the earth. Who can encapsulate the beauty in the unbearable toxins of life without hate because she loves like Mother Nature and no other wisdom? I cannot do it. Neither can I be a male with infuriating desire, infecting, poisoning his mind and momentary consolation that his sperm still works, indulging in a half-Whitted fool just saying it's a fuck. I am platonic to the universe a breaking of nature, standing here questioning what must I write, what can I argue? if I'm not what I am and aren't what I want. feminist not even. Writing for masculine. Reduce the size of my tits. Give me that one at least, feminism I beg you, please bring back what I want to argue for, so I no longer feel what I call an error.

Praying that he would do something, clenching my fists. "Rape me" I screamed but he did not hear me. I cried "Hurt me, give me something to feel I am losing the will". I go down onto my knees is this what you want? Take me into the night, I may not like it, but I'll go. Take me to your cold, hard floor. Pour into me the endless (cruel) passions you once did before. Cry my name and I will cry for mercy you'll think I like it. Take me from your filth and toss me to the side, that's how you like it. Take me into the morning, I'll be gone, you won't like it.

The screams had been heard.

I lay in bed that evening, ready to slip away from all the sins of the day even if my dreams were troubling, I knew it wasn't a reality. I pretended to sleep as Cuerpo pulled down my pants, I wanted to see how far he would take it. I had a silk gown on maybe it seduced him, he slipped his cock in, and he imagine I'd wake up. I do not wake, as I didn't want to fall into the trap of his pleasures. He finished quickly finished and came all over himself, ashamed and embarrassed I lay there guilty. This was my problem I could not have stopped this. I let my subconscious take over and drifted into the dead night.

The smell of fresh cock in the morning is a special treat.

You are my snack, my special treat, the reason to add a sauce, the object of desire, the gate into my dreams. I dreamt that I could taste your lips.

I want to kiss your lips, upper and downer, with the enthusiasm of a teenager, to find a truth, to find myself.

Can't stop looking at myself now, can I stop understanding... when will this stop.

Stop with your bullshit it's time to live. Time to enjoy. Time to produce, time to forget.

The world will end here.

The world doesn't need any more women without a head, but the real ones, the real woman.

Fake man, what is this argument?

She is a fake mouth.

I cannot think and do not want to.

Is this right or wrong? Will the tide swallow the best of me?

It will either swallow the best of me or I will be as coarse as a broken shell forever.

I see no future or present, neither here nor there.

This is final.

You.

My mechanical heart will subside, I want a heart a real one, no pride I'll rip it straight from a horse's chest and plunge it into yours if I must but don't give a heart of human ever again, God I swear.

I see nothing but love for you, which will torture me for a lifetime.

Love is blind, like lace.

I am ruined with you, and I am ruined without you.

Alone we have our parts and somewhere in the middle, our other pieces make a whole.

Puzzle; Jigsaw

I woke that morning and I knew we had shared some kind of connection. The bed felt different. We still loved each other in our sleep but there were now too many scars. While sleeping we were blinded by these problems. The problems of life the problems he faces, and I faced. We could tell we both drifting apart. I wanted my home, and he wanted his. His journey was not the journey that I wanted to live. He had seen what the life the artist could bring and couldn't let me be a part of that he lost the little boy in him that understood eyes and sound that wanted to live as cyan, magenta and black. For me I did not want to become a story of second, later to fade over time. I knew that the words scared me when in fits of rage, which left me contemplating and contemplating what to do.

Feeling exposed to the world of art, I never wanted to be a picture, I never wanted to be a memory for maybe the world to see. I didn't want to be a stage, an idea, or a perception of someone who I'm not. The unauthenticity of it all spooked me and made my heart pound. If ever I want to be captured at that moment, I'm not a project of lovers passed, I was real and I am not anymore, stuck in a place far from your reality, I am unphysical, created with cyan, magenta, yellow and black.

The last dream is approaching I can feel it, our words are dying, and the flesh is beginning to smell. The tone is neither here nor there, lost in the past or the future, but never the present. Write down... your last dream, quickly please don't hesitate. Reluctance leaves room for dishonesty. This is the last moment of raw intimacy; this is our last dream you are starting to get lame. You acted as my dream horse in times of fragility, my eyes, my hands, my body, and now it is time for the black ink to the fleet from my body, so all I ask is that you take your pen to your eyes and scowl at me with every truth. Look towards me with what you feel, then fuck me on the bed of words, your words, my words. So, when you are gone my tongue can lick the canvass, bite it with my teeth. Scrunching it into undesirable shapes. That's how I will cherish your touch, feel and sound. I will remember your voice.

Blank sheets take the words from my body and begin to erase what we have said and shared because this is too painful for me to remember, but I can't erase what is scripted on my flesh. I'll burn these frames, so I never have to look inside an image again or I'll burn these images, so I never have to look inside a frame again

Breathing slowly, trembling into the night, I cannot think, and I do not want to, vanishing through the air. Falling openly to the earth, consuming my mind and soul till nothing is left, my mechanical heart is beginning to ruin. I see no past, no present, never here, never there, the crows call dawn and swallow the best of me, circling these final moments. Destroyed by this madness, I will soon be at peace when humanity breaks free from tragedy and chaos. This earth we tear, forget and never rebuild puzzle; jigsaw, broken forever.

The clouds break dawn, with a tooth and a brush of hair separating the pain. Pouring now and forever more, existing to die. You see me here talking with nowhere left to go I want something to live for but what joy can I bring in a world so corrupt, apart from you? The darkness looms but the clouds always pass and I ask these questions, questions, not I or no man can answer, questions that I hope one day will bring silence. Let the rain pour down hard, and know the bird sang for an hour today in the same spot and will never again. I don't know why God gave us the brain to feel complete heartache, to love someone that will only ever ruin you. To bare that pain each day but love it all the while. Why does love to have to be so cruel, if it's meant to make us happier? Must we still suffer in love for good to come? Or is it not possible to find an honest soul if we truly can't see our honest reflection? I will not take off my dress, as this is not what I came here to do, I came to tell you that I love you, even if my bones tell me not to.

I am ruined with you and ruined without you.

Alone we have our parts and someone in the middle other pieces make us whole.

Puzzle; jigsaw

*Will I die with grace? Thinking about death. How will I die? Do I know how I will die?
Thinking, thinking, thinking. Thought.*

Fake flowers - thought- beginning.

*A fake flower, what's the point? What is the purpose? To sit and be beautiful all day and
night. Pfft - it needs no love, no care, and never weeps for air. Can't tell where time has
gone, where it will go and where it will stop. It pervs on the real flower and hangs the
emotion. A confusing world it must be for all. Where is beauty and how do we accept
something or someone ugly? A fake flower is just an idiotic liar in my view. Yet, a real
flower, she knows beauty in all its many forms. Never will she hide. She accepts that some
months she may be weary and broken, but she understands that she will grow again. She
understands when her time has come, and as always she is grace in a time when have never
needed it more. I was born to a generation of artificial fucks so surely I will die in a
wasteland of false thoughts and minds.*

So to answer, will I die with grace? That I probably doubt. Answered. End.

*Crackling, burn, end this war, I don't want to be part of it anymore, we will live in this
dream forever more, merely fictitious? Or am I a ghost of your past, who knows? Not me,
not, not your ha ha ha? The heat is tormenting you, causing you to sweat, wake up, wake
up, this is not a game. Look at yourself in the mirror... who are you beast or woman. Do
your nostrils flare as you run into battle, do your screams haunt people as they whack you?
Are you asking for peace in a happy field of grass? Do you want to sit with my titans, then
watch from your dream and see others too? We could be forever if we weren't from different
parallels, say goodbye, let me go. Hang me in words or nail me to the frame. Will I ever
see you again? Of course, my dear you will. But I will not be here for a while, for a long,
long time, goodbye for now, goodbye forever, unless you set me free and tell me to love me
once again.*

I love you.

No more.

Fire please begin.

The Last Waking

Have you ever smelt skin burning, or pigs squealing for their lives as they head towards slaughter? Have you heard nightmares come to life and dreams not come true? That is how I felt when I woke alone in bed. Cuerdo was not anywhere to be seen. How long was I sleeping? Was I out a whole year, was I snow white ready to be saved from the prince, when in fact I was the only one that could save myself? What had happened? I can't remember, I remember my dream; we were happy and free ready to plan a life together, I was ready to go into his world. Drop my dreams for him, I didn't care who else was in my way I had found my dream horse, resembling the one I dreamed of as a little girl but when I woke, I was surrounded by a carpet of flesh, body parts incinerated, leaving not much more than a trail of hair. I thought for a moment to myself and wondered if I had done anything to push Cuerdo away. Was I infecting him with my past and present? Was this man ever in my life or had I dreamed it all? My life had changed, flashing all too quickly, what was I going to do now? Resembling that black silhouette in his picture, empty I complained the whole time when being with him. My words of complaints caused him to vanish. The words that I had spoken, could they have held some sort of magic? One week had passed, and I was unsure how to handle any emotion every emotion. I wanted to gauge my eyes out, chop off my hands, constantly itching at my head, I was a ghastly beast.

Monday, I laughed. Tuesday, I cried. Wednesday, I felt hate. Thursday, I felt nothing.

Friday, I sympathized. Saturday, I'll probably die.

It is now Saturday, but I have not died, how much longer can I go on like this? I am running a race and the track is spiked, I don't even have any bute to ease the throbbing.

The void it's deaf, it's blind, it can't even tell the time. It's something of nothing.

Laughed when he grabbed me and cried for years.

There was one sheet left it was a sheet of writing that I had written a note for you and on the back you had painted an eye specifically for me. It was how you saw my eyes, placed tenderly on the body, so it couldn't be seen but could watch the whole world without ever having to hide. It had big bold rays illuminating it and was vacant until you uncovered the beauty, it was drawn with a black pen, and I wished you had drawn it onto me so it would stay. There was a time when I believed you did not know that you were fierce and dangerous, but I think we let our dreams get in the way of our love and my dreams were mostly nightmares. A nightmare you did not want to be part of and I'll be thankful for the note as I will always feel near you.

The note read-

I am Sitting watching the absence of your time. Life was still but it felt just right. The world was moving, carrying on without you, as it does. The colours moulded into one, for it looked like a picture of a memory I saw before. I photographed the absence, which was before me, to give me calmness. A calmness for if there is ever a time you might never be there, I'll feel safe like you were there. I am at home now and the picture I cannot see. I tried to write how this made me feel, I could not. Understanding that I have now reached this daunting point. To create from loss is a beautiful thing, to create from love is a beautiful thing. To understand that my mind could do all this before you were here but knowing now without that I couldn't is terrifying, a body left on the earth is all I am. I am no longer a soul.

Chew the paper. Taste the paper.

I licked the paper and scrunched it in my mouth so I could hold you and taste you once more. To remember your smell and to hear your laugh. To hear your sound, your voice. Salvia dripped from my mouth onto the sheet, damaging and so did my hands. I will continue to damage this sheet until it tears and rips to pieces, to shreds, and your words are lost forever, lost into another world. Broken, only I share these thoughts in my mind and body, but 10 years from now will I remember exactly what you said, I doubt that I will, and it will just be a faint dream of a voice I once knew.

It was the last time I was going to sleep in that bed, and I let myself decompose on the mattress.

Go home, go home, there is no need to be here anymore. This life is not meant for you.

I was scared to sleep I could smell the ash from his old frame. Cuerpo was present in a way, but I was lost... lost always lost, I turned to the bedside cabinet and out popped one of the mice that had died in the flat. I stared at him for a while and wondered why he was here what was he up to, and why had I imagined him. The small mouse that brought me comfort, persisted by flames. I began contemplating if there ever was a fire. In an outburst of distress, I packed my bags, I couldn't bare to spend one more night in this bed, the dark itching walls that crept in on me. It was time to go home and so I headed straight for the train station. I wanted to smell something other than a graveyard of words. It was the night train.

OH, night train and graveyard of words.

This time on the journey I was watching everyone sleep, wondering what they were dreaming of because what I learned from this experience is somewhere on this atlas of life, we all try to find our ways of surviving, it's rutted, cock-eyed and gross, it is a feral dog waiting in the pound for the right family to come along and adore it. We love and we adapt, we create our meanings and ideologies and even alter our realities, yet this individuality unites us in a way. It is the conscious dream, but sometimes the dreams get messy we break ourselves and others in the process. We lose many and learn to dream our realities without them. That dream slowly becomes a nightmare, a nightmare so real you can feel the heat licking your skin each stroke of the tongue is one step closer to the gates of hell, and your heart pulses. If Satan invented brail this would be it. The oxygen in your chest tightens and anchors you through the mattress taking the bedbugs and rat shit with you. It feels so real you feel as if you're watching a shitty sitcom except, you're the only viewer and Barry Manilow *Can't Smile Without You* is playing on repeat. Then you wake and see the surrounding mess, and you simply turn a blind eye and head back to sleep, while hitting the full-blast button to that Manilow track.

You see the great thing about the unawakened dream is that it is only intended to hurt I, me, you the individual. Or perhaps I have just made another excuse for wanting an extra hour in bed.

I opened my front and headed straight to the kitchen. I gazed upon my reflection in the patent splashboard. I was morphing, dissolving it was an acid trip if CBBC presented it. Only the Lonely came on the radio by Roy Orbison and hysterically danced around the kitchen island. Was I free? I looked at my reflection, I could see I was in discomfort. So, I asked myself.

What do you do with a Lame Horse?

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