

NOTES ON WAVES OR THE ANTI-SOLIDIFICATION STATE



In the 1977 essay 'Many Mansions' by Joan Didion, she refers to a Californian home made for politicians, which was originally meant for Nancy and Ronald Reagan with words such as contemporary, flattened, mediocre and malevolently "democratic". The house seemed to appeal to no one in its attempt to appeal to all at once. The cost of the home was naturally worth quite much, the recent listing of this home was 7.5 Million US Dollars. It seems no one wished to truly live there, and despite the consistent labour and landscaping work put into the house, it was always merely a vacant mansion.

Luxury coats the eyes, open ended, clear for all to recognize. Black, Grey, White. Always the most pure form of White. Eggshell, Alabaster, Pure White, Titanium White. A world devoid of rejections, yet hollow of true acceptance and plenitude.

There might be something somewhat worse, or rather, less human than the insult of ugliness. That is to say, something that is ugly to the eye confesses something to the observer. Whereas something which is neither ugly, nor attractive, neither friendly nor abrasive, that is something beyond the realm of honest vocabulary. That is the language of concrete. The language of machines. It is not to be understood as the well known concept of subjectivity in the realm of beauty but as a sort of non-being. Looking up at the long lines of blue light lamps hanging over our heads, or the clear glass doors, that plain palette, the deadness of it. Like a host of emptiness, created only to be replaced. Only to be refurbished or laboured with. One of those "Many Mansions" which remain vacant.

The waves on the El Matador beach in Malibu, California ebb and flow, and stop right at the doorstep of the shore. Waving backwards in that mystical motion. As it is, real and of this world, colored and prepared for that natural subjectivity. Eternal, and always changing in motions beyond any single year, decade, millenium or century. Clean waters reach over the sand like a brush. Irrefutable,

proven blue. We see the reflection of spirals, change, and being, all at once in the push of a wave. Never "vacant" rather, always occupied in mutual agreement.

Nostalgia encompasses much of the modern life. An emulation of the yesterday and the yesteryear. A short rekindling of honesty and naivety. An Eve, and an Adam, just before the shaking down of the black apple. Just before the plain palette, before the knowing.

In some ways, we have to ask if there is beauty in the "end". If there is life at the curve of the cul-de-sac. What is waiting at the apex of progressions is a nothingness greater than we can imagine. Something which I believe can only be truly accompanied in death. As we faint and fall from a lack of water or oxygen, we are brought to the surest end. An image of infinite void. No rejections, no acceptions, merely an unmentioning. A forgetfulness of oneself.

We are brought to that image before we can cradle the spiral of color, and life, and wave. As if shot up in the air, like a human bullet from a massive gun, only to see the great endings. And we know now the meaning of "forbidden". Our adventures through the sky were once filled with slurs of clouds pushing west, winds brushing upwards, feeling. Always a first feeling. And then the vertical line stretches out. Further. Upwards into the darkness. Into a field of black and grey matter. A devolving of humanity. *"Nothing is wrong with it"*.

Our push toward the excellence of machines and comfort, luxury and ease, has shot us up into the sky. From somewhere, to nowhere. Everything then, becomes a system from which to improve. And even humanity itself is a character in the language. An "A" or an "X". Variables, to be pulled away from the waves and into the dead blue lights. With ease.

The element from which we connect to the truly beautiful, in any subjectively or objectively understood manner, is not of this world. That element is connected to the unspeakable. The long chain of words. Whispered from inside an invisible world. That is the sea. That is the Torrey tree. The wheat fields. Those strands are a key to our lock. An instant mood and color. And we feel them without explanation, without a "nothing is wrong with it", without a vacancy. We become the light on the water and the warmth in the sands. We become.

Some acts of human creation replicate this process. Those are sometimes more open to subjective experience, and yet most eyes see it. It truly is a search for that feeling. A search for the ebb and flow.

The 1978 album 'An American Prayer' by Jim Morrison and The Doors featured a song called 'A Feast of Friends'. And one line: "They are waiting to take us, into the severed garden" pits your ears. And you feel it, you smell it. The saltwater, the hush of the waves, a deep blue. You are occupied with the sacred element. The human coil. That thing that lies at the center of all human layers. A malediction wound up from the soul.

Before we experienced the pathways that led us here, we were in a void of a different kind. A sort of instinctual void. There could not have been anything to hold us back from such a progression. How could we have halted ourselves at the gate, as our candles blew out in the night? How could we abandon a dream of clear Titanium White? We had to see for ourselves, had to exchange our spirals to become a bullet. To become system without shape. But now we have seen the end of the road. We have felt the world beyond fainting. And this world need not replicating. We need not more grays and blacks, more low ceilings and hard edges. Those homes we could not fit in. Like a growing Alice with no use of the room.

"At the same time nature gradually takes on her divine character, and divinity more and more takes on a human shape", Simone Weil wrote in her essay "The Great Beast". And that is the final question. The final test, if there were ever any of use. Does the world of today, take on a human shape? Do the homes and the textures, the paintings and conversations, become? The cold lights hang above our head. And we, a medley of ammunition, become one with the barrel of the gun.

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