A translation
of Hieronymus Bosch's triptych
through the perspective
of the written word.

by
FRANCIS ROURKE
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I

Let's start at the bottom,
a place where all should begin.
This dungeon beneath the rest will govern where
you'll be heading next,
if any place at all.
The bottom is surely cold,
much colder than one would like to think.
It's the place where those infamous furnaces are believed to be.
The great flames burning for all eternity.
Don't be fooled by the scriptures!
The ones written by men dressed in robes.
They, too, can be found here at the bottom,
a l o n e,
trapped within the insanity of their own minds,
their own hypocracy,
wanting to break out beyond the depths of this inner dwelling.
Here, there are no flames,
no nymphs and demons.
There are no horned beasts and grotesque monsters
contorting in unimaginable shapes and figures.
You have been lied to.
I cannot say that I am sorry,
for there is no sorrow,
pity,
nor sympathy
contained in these words.
(((This is only a declaration.)))

At the bottom,
darkness consumes us.
It holds us with a lie.
It imprisons us by belief.
We are shackled by the notion.
And there is no worse lie
than to believe that you are somewhere
other than where you truly are,
in **HELL**.
Where the lipless seek words that are lost,
broken and meaningless.
The tormenting sound of stutters and mumbles
shatter our ears in an endless reel,
an eternal nail to chalkboard insanity.
Monotonous jesters gesticulate forgotten memories.
They play charades and captivate us with their folly.
This place is for the hopeless,
the heartless,
the empty.
At the bottom,
in this prison,
men fornicate with swine and swindle their inhibitions.
They copulate with the heroin between two giant arching thighs,
the demon of their delight.
At no cost.
No charge at all!
Everything is free.
But that freedom has a price.
And that price is an endless trudge
through the vast degradation of ones soul,
this desert of loneliness.
They lick salt from flesh seeking sweet sugar.
The nectar that drips from a mother's breast,
but there is only blood and guilt.
Skulls line these forever halls
with faces so familiar that the struggle
to remember names bludgeons the temples.
Memory is
DEATH
is of the bones.
Dying becomes a prison.
At the bottom there is no escape.
No light.
The ceiling is **black**.
Void.
. . . E M P T Y . . .
Where are those apertures!
Those twinkling little eyes!
They are nowhere to be found
at the bottom of this abyss,
this abysmal loneliness
ripping away flesh from flesh seeking immortality.
What foolishness from a fool
who grasps at the wind.
The eyeless hunch towards the floor,
their bony fingers like tentacles
feeling for pennies made of dust.
The heartless weep with no meaning.
The beautiful lick their own portraits.
A singer grasps at her throat.
In her hand is a glass of sand.
She pours it down to bury the songbird inside her
in an endless death.
How trivial.
How pointless.
Here at the bottom we see strings attached to limbs,
but the ventriloquist is nowhere to be seen.

HARK!
LISTEN!

The music has begun to play.
You can hear the singer choking.
A skipping record rolling on like the scrolls of Time.
A fiddler snaps a string with a symphony of gnashing teeth.
You can feel the cracking of the bones!
Quick!
A razor!
To split these veins in two!
Emptiness pours out from those three hands that spin endlessly,
hopelessly.
Someone coughs while another cries.
There is no laughter.
Where are the voices of innocence?
They are gone,
a forgotten thing down here at the bottom.
But the music continues to play.
A crack of a whip.
A slap in the face.
A shrill scream.
The breaking of mirrors.
The conductor wears a top hat.
The orchestra smashes notes like porcelain bones.
The sinister grins have no faces.
A conveyor belt of limbs flows
like a river towards a gaping mouth,
swallowed whole,
then digested by the great belly
of this beast to become the secretion of the dead.
A crow can be seen hatching from the anus of a priest.
It squawks,
"*Raaape*!
THE END IS HERE.
Raaape!"

And the song continues to play,
on and on.
The dinner bell rings,
then cracks.
Where are the Rothschilds with their greed,
the Medici and the priests?
Where are the two hundred and sixty-four Popes?
Edward Bernays advertises sodomy,
his body like a baby hippopotamus,
drool dripping from the corners of his mouth.

"Will someone kill this monster!"

A voice cries out.

"It's too late!
He's already bought the farm!"

Another screams.

The hyenas gather round.
The table is a pulsating heart,
beating to systolic and diastolic rhythms.
A spread of severed limbs,
compliments of Vlad the Impaler
from his private reserve.
At the far end you will find Qin Shi Huang
reading ancient Chinese poetry
from the ashes in his hands.
He smiles wickedly and thinks
that he alone has burned something beautiful.
Alas!
Nero smacks him upside the head
and wiggles his finger at the little Chinese emperor.
Tsk tsk.
"No evil deed is done alone."

Conspiracies of the macro sort.
Their blood runs cold,
as cold as **dead** bodies.
And the table throbs on and on whilst the evil things eat.
Nearby,
Hamarabi and Hitler
play chess while discussing law and order.
The soulless smoke souls,
blowing grey movies on a **black** screen.
A remedy for their boredom.

Down in the depths,
the water runs dry as the world crumbles to dust,
falling away from itself from the inside out.
And still the scenes roll on.
Seedlings birth fetal apparitions.
A two headed woman becomes conflicted.
She bickers back and forth in a jealous rage.
One swallows the other in a cannibalistic fit
then slits the remaining throat
as a sacrifice to appease the dead.
Whores bathe in the blood,
splashing about and screaming wildly
like beasts on a war path.
Bloody Mary nods approvingly and applauds.
Cascades of entrails fall like dead armies.
Leftovers from the conquests of the Conquistadors,
from the Roman and Persian Empires.
Those swindlers who indulged in the construction
of St. Peter's Basilica.
Lost, forgotten souls
now silently sifting through timelessness,
beyond purpose and reason.
Gone for good,
left at the bottom forever.
And who can blame them for living a life in blind faith,
blind servitude?
Who can cast that stone?
For we are told to do what we believe in,
to fight for the right to live.
The Styx
has it in for us,
whichever
_p_*a*_**t**_***h***_
we
choose.

II

The time has come!
to scale these walls and leave that wicked place behind.
Here we ride the serpents tongue to witness that first bite,
to witness those rosette lips wrap around the fruit.
Innocent teeth sink into soft, delicate flesh.

Forgive them!
For they know not what they do!

What was this fruit,
this poisonous thing that gave us this hallucination,
that gave us the perception of choice,
to choose what we become?

BUT LOOK! THERE!
A star has begun to shine!
A child is born,
innocent and clean.
Its mother holds it close,
squirting warm, cumbersome milk
into the poor soul
as Karma's merry-go-round spins erratically,
flashing like bright neon lights.
The babe wails in confusion.

FEAR

The mother swaddles the child.
Holds it close to her chest
while the bright lights continue to flash.
The babe becomes silent,
wary,
all the while knowing that something is there,
something holding it to this plain,
in this tailspin of a game.
A breath of life woos the spirit into being
with eyes and limbs and teeth and mind,
and the whole world comes rushing at it like a whirrling
mechanism of noise and imagery.
Scenes of light and chaos with brief breaths of symmetry.
Our senses shackled to superimposed traumas of the past
with traces of that other place.
A single thread holds the world in motion
and the players wear their masks,
do the dance,
and laugh like hyenas at the madness,
the insanity of it all.

So let us bathe in these earthly delights,
this paradise of an infinite jest,
where gesticulations of the common clay
became sound patterns as a way to communicate
what the collective body was trying to say.
But in their confusion they built towers to the empyrean
thinking it was the stars that had to be reached
and not matters of the human heart.
Epiphanies became motivations of power.
The hour of potential and possibility forms of control.
Manipulation a tool.
Empires clashed and fell flat in a vacuum.
Ideas and dreams consumed in the conflagration
as centuries burned away like calories in the action.
Oh this garden of evil!
This garden of love!
From Babylon to California's palm tree scene
and every island in-between,
spanning a thousand years and more,
there's still the crack of a whip though it's unseen,
unheard,
as silent as a serial killer.
It drives us on without ever spilling
the blood of those who fall under its lashes.
But it's worth it now in the twenty-first century
because we get to *choose* our master.
The Desire no longer sails to Africa for sweat equity.
There's no need.
We have plenty of bodies to do the work.
WE ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH.
And in return we get life-insurance and dental plans.
Contracts for a just-in-case.
Maybe manifestos.
Security in the back pocket.
While children get caught up in the drama.
Lose sight of curiosity and wonder and awe.
IMAGINATION.
It's better to give them hope!
Something more powerful than fear.
A carrot dangling.
Go to any playground and watch the future laughing.
See what a smile looks like without the created weight.
Their fate displayed on the world's stage.
I wish they could last forever.
I wish they never found out what it's like.
But the clocks have us,
along with the banks.
And we're told that this is the only way.
That *this* is *it*.
What a farce!
A facade.
Ask any child and they'll tell you the real truth,
that the world is a cardboard box
and that pain can be kissed away.
They know it.
They feel it
Dream it.
But adults walk around with egos on their shoulders,
casts stones because they can.
Yea we're still building something expecting it not to fall.
More skyscrapers!
More oil!
More debt!
More!
More!
More!
We just keep on moving,
building,
eating,
shitting,
breeding.
Wise beings sit silently.
Shake their heads.
The children point their fingers and laugh.
Everything coming down to ROIs and GDPs,
YOYs and CDCs.
We'd be better off feeding LSD to the bureaucrats,
all at once in a giant wave of lucidity.
A consciousness shift of mass murderers,
maxing out awareness to be sure
they're looking at the thing more acutely.
Analyzing.
Mulling it over.
Seeing all sides.
Becoming part of the solution.
CONNECTIVITY.
Instead of hiding in their white halls
escaping through the shadows of a reptilian hemisphere.
Living their lies behind eyes wide shut tight
as the masses live quietly desperate,
desperately crying in silence.
A giant cowering in the corner at the sound of a hiss.

In the garden,
altruism is a brand that stands for vanity.
Happiness gets sold as a vanishing point
that vanishes when it's grasped at.
And love is a contract that's supposed to outlast the honeymoon
though we know it can only be cultivated over time,
worked out,
adjusted.
A compromise through understanding.
But here it's better to be an ass than someone with facts.
Each day is an eternital moment played out
to theme and variation of the same old thing,
manicured lawns and fresh laid pavement,
disdain,
entropy,
shame.
It gives us something to do.
Gives meaning to the mundane.
And war is the stain of those plagued by gain.
It rages on all the time.
In the Middle East.
On drugs.
Your tell-a-vision screen.
That's BIG Business as usual.
The board members take their seats.
Stuff their pockets full of greed.
And fewer times than most you will see a fist rise
through the flames like in Lhasa.
Fewer times than most you will see
a flower growing from the tip of a gun.
Or see tears and warm bodies embracing in the rain.
Watch a monk set himself aflame
to prove that death is just part of the game,
that these bodies of blood move beyond this place.
But remember to watch the news to tell you what to think.
What to feel.
They'd surely enlighten these moments of gold
only the ratings wouldn't go up.
I guess we haven't come that far in the last few thousand years.
But wait!
We've got whatchamacallits and thingamajigs.
We've got fake tits and bug spray,
pain-a-way and duct tape,
Apple pay,
sex changes,
paid parking,
self-driving cars and plastic hearts,
abortion laws,
nuclear bombs,
coffee shops,
nitwits with selfie sticks,
pills for pricks,
TikTok,
liposuction and botox,
drones with infrared,
Big Pharma,
Big Tech,
crackheads,
bedspreads,
pet strollers,
CRISPR,
3D printers,
a a a n n n d d d
STYROFOAM.
Don't forget about cell phones vibrating on our frequency.
Now we can all be availabe to everyone else.
Instantly.
Foreverrrrrrrrrrr
And live in the metaverse,
a synthetic reality where you'll never
have to create one for yourself.
Isn't that nice!
What a lovely thought.
A dreamland within another's nightmare.
A distraction through fantasy and fiberoptics
immediatley urging conversions of currency for a change of complacency.
A Kansas City shuffle.
An Island of the Blessed to forget what tangibility means.
The textures of reality.
FEELING.
It's confusing, really
All this mess.
The distress.
Opinions as common as hair on an ape's chest.
Days advertised for consumption.
How strange.
The way we throw flowers to decay over dead bodies.
Bury the dead in boxes made from dead seed,
hoping something will grow from the bones.
Expecations the death of opportunity.
To grow.
To change.
To rearrange our current perceptions of race.
The only finish line,
DEATH.

Here in the garden I would prefer a hug than a gun.
An embrace rather than a reason to take aim.
All we've ever needed to do to find the messiah
was look in the mirror.
Our words are the gateway to our thoughts,
our universes.
Matter shatters,
dances and blends.
Vibrations like hummingbird wings.
Here in the garden we bend them with rhythm and soul
and a case of the blues.
Something light,
something heavy,
like ideas we choose to believe.
But this music it moves us,
this sweet music it sways us.
Without it we would have died centuries ago.
This grey dance.
A rumba with the harlem shake.
A waltz to *Sing, Sing, Sing*.
Be thankful for a struggle.
Something good is bound to come of it.
No matter the cost.
No matter if it takes the death of two hundred million people.
Sometimes it might just take one.
Perhaps your uncle Dave,
or my uncle Dave,
everyone's uncle Dave,
to sacrifice themselves for the rest of humanity.
A martyr of the greatest sort.
Human with a dose of divinity.
A flower growing out of the asphalt.
Here in the garden we become forgetful,
forgetting such a beautiful mess.
We forget that out of the infinite cosmos,
that this life,
right here,
right now,
is happening.
Billions of atoms are dancing to different rhythms.
Energy all the time,
for eternity.
No need to bottle the sun.
Our souls burn brighter.
Even when we think we're all dried up
at the pruned age of eighty,
ninety,
one hundred years,
our bodies arched like question **?** marks,
we still have a little spark.
Even when we are knocking on Death's door
we have the verve to utter one last word,
a smirk,
raise a middle finger.
Here in the garden it's *your life.*
Go out kicking down the door.
Go out like a stampede.
Go out until there is nothing left.
Give it everything you've got.
And as you stand at the edge,
the sheer cliff looming there,
all doom and gloom,
and the weight of disease,
famine,
war,
grief,
strife,
debt,
resentment,
guilt,
depression,
anxiety,
all of it behind you,
purged of all the worldly physical and mental sufferings,
once again you become clean and pure like that little babe
nestled back in the womb of its mother.
The holy secretion returns to the loins of the Eternal Soul.
And you will hear all the angels sing,
"At least the music was good."
"At least the music was good."
"At least the music was good."
"At least the music was good."
"At least the music was good."
"At least the music was good."
"At least the music was good."
"At least the music was good."

III

Silence permeates the land.

Grey clouds part in the empyrean.

Golden light showers down.

Evil is cast out of the garden.

There are no laws.

The land is verdant as far as the eyes can see

and the towers cease to exist.

Finally there is peace.

Peace of mind and tranquility of soul.

Rivers of blood run clean and flow like silver.

Flesh meets flesh with a warm and loving embrace.

There is no wealth,

no poverty.

A whisper can be heard on a breeze,

its says,

"There is nothing you need
that you cannot find here.
From stardust to ashes and back again,
man has staked his claim
within the confines of his body,
feeding the beast within.
And the beast feeds on and on
for the worldly lusts
and gluttonous greed.
Here in this realization,
this awakening,
the body is no more
and the beast sleeps eternally
within the emptiness that births all things.
Here in this holiest of places
there are no illumined beings,
no cherubs,
just vibrations forever flowing
to the rhythm of creation.
Call it Heaven.
Call it Tathagata.
Call it Eden.
Call it Xanadu.
Call it Nirvana.
Call it Shangri-La.
Call it anything.
But most importantly,
call it HOME."

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