

Hauntings

by Robert Hergenroder

What shall stain the page with metaphorical wisdom? Words fell short of intention, displaying only a faux interpretation of ultimate meaning. They drifted in and out, and he struggled to coerce their conformity to a given system. We struggle so much to connect, to share our being, that we would do anything for that feeling of true understanding and acceptance by another. Yet- why were his connections given to the page? An impersonal blank sheet slowly filling with splashes of ink. Was that his fate- to be ultimately addicted utterly to the pen and the forms which flew forth?

He took his time to sacrifice a dear ally that was tobacco; inhaling its death in a grey fog, he rightened his spine with a cracking as vertebrae snapped back into place. A long sigh left lips, a long exhale of darkness. He and the page were merging once more, the distinctions of border dissolving around him. Writings began alluding to that sense of self, petitioning to become who he had deemed he was. The wall sprang up in metaphors- the one that was built up around and portioned with that vague sense of self, creation of a realm he was afraid to commit to and confront. The linguistic prison which masked his views. Yet it allowed the ability to connect and shape the world to his desire, ultimately creating his perceptions.

A thought drifted within the confines of mind, it flashed brightly yet briefly upon vision as a white light- "Are you dreaming?" It faded quickly, energy dispersing into the environment- sharpening his senses. It struck him as odd, and mind protested as a finger pressed deep into the inside of his palm.

A voice screamed out from the abyss and stuck thought- "What if you refuse to acknowledge the truth that we are all portions of a dreamer dreaming?"

A spectral energy appeared, separating from the core of being- a lean black figure with striking ivory horns. They entrapped his

visualizations until his body automatically spoke; “What about our third dimensional limitations?”

Angels and demons are the same, equal in their knowledge and wisdom; its the application which created the difference in our minds. Typical interpretations handed down to us after generation upon generation. Darkness and light are one, two halves of a whole being- yet we have been taught to extol the exasperation. Another illusion.

A subconscious interpretation visually appearing was aghast at the logical conclusion, it dispersed its energy into the rest of the universe- entanglement in light.

Drifting in and out of universes and conceptions, the spirit of ethanol had allowed him so that detachment allowed what perception deemed to become the totality of reality, odd contradictions embodied at their fullest form.

A peak sustainable by appearances of the moment.

Another long breath with slow closing of the eyes.

When he opened them again- he was no longer in that place that he came, although he could feel it on the fringes of his being. He was sitting in darkness- a single candle casting shadows across the void.

The flame was bright, dancing somehow in the absence of wind. Shadows cast, they started whispering to him. They spoke little lies he knew they could not manifest in a sustainable level- he had tested them after all.

One should never take their illusions of knowledge for granted- and always test their bounds. Their words slowly warped and twisted his mind in this place outside of time. Generations passed with their seething and false promises. It slowly tortured his soul as he felt himself lapse to the brinks of sanity, letting the darkness fill his being until only a speck of light remained- one he had almost forgotten about.

Whenever strife had appeared, an ugly rearing head who would attempt to threaten the emotional grasp of reality- he shook it off and consulted his death. A comfort of existence sparked when he

could feel the heavy blackness breathing on his neck and the tip of a scythe combing through his long mangled hair. Sickly sweet breath barely audible on his neck-

“Not yet...”

A raggedly black mass would block out the sun for a nanosecond-cultural impartations into a visual representation. Death had assisted through many experiences, always changing- multifaceted for any situation.

Like others, the first appearance was was startling. It began deep in his gut- a black hand squeezing and darkening his life. It dug claws into vital flesh, slowly turning over and over while fear bled out into his entire being. He found himself folded over a toilet, gagging on watery vomit- whole form ablaze. Tears streamed carving a river down his cheeks and he struggle to remain sitting upright.

