

Monday.

Without aspirations he truly embraced his suffering. He simply existed, The man hated brushing his teeth and tying his laces. For if there is nothing to-do, to hate is something. To hate is easy, It is simple and requires little reasoning. The man's existence was not one of misery. He met the criteria of a conforming human person, he was employed, had a place to stay and a partner. However, meeting the criteria is not the goal, it is the minimum for respect. The man didn't have a goal nor a desire to meet the criteria. By chance alone, he met this standard.

The fatigued man concealed by his cheap ill-fitting pyjamas acknowledged the endless bay before him. In his dreary stoop the parapet shielded his Bare legs from southerly winds, his chin resting upon spindly arms sprawled over the concrete coping. His eyes study the bay. Deep waters framed by the clash of urban expanse and retreating nature; an armistice is signed during the night. The generals of unnatural light ceasefire, though, still spitefully hide the constellations above. The emergence of the sun draws near; eternally peeling back the mysteries concealed by night. Until then, the hunched man watches distant strangers depart the wharf. The newly refurbished wharf, filled with extravagant boats provides a meeting place for the urban man to communicate with nature. From this wharf, before dawn, Eager men present enthusiastic grins, climbing onto their boats, presenting their joy through a wave to those overly motivated runners. The boats confined by the harbour-bridge are consumed by the horizon; through this the man sees the truth of the Ocean. It welcomes two types of man. One which desires to play with their toys, like children in a bath, prolonging facing the abrasive air above. For the other, the ocean is where they face the abrasive air. The land and connections are mere sentimental illusions. Deep in thought, muffled groans and shuffling feet go unheard,"my little sun, how long have you been awake?"said timid sleepy Natasha. Without glancing he replied, "not long". He thought it was simpler this way, just as there is no point in an owl explaining the magic of night to a monkey.

The man turned his back to the bugle call of morning sun, golden rays gingerly colouring Pymont. Ignoring sleepy Natasha, he enters the unwelcoming apartmentment, its walls touched by golden rays of the morning sun, yet still bare. The unfinished drywall intermingling with the beige plasterboard. He passes dirty dishes in the sink, opening the navy door beside the refrigerator, its paint flakes at the hinges like a well loved book. A grey suit lays on the single bed, his most expensive investment, measured to his exact dimensions. Now, sits loosely on his frame. After procrastinating his journey to work, he finishes his breakfast with a lame word of gratitude. With a furtive smile to Natasha he leaves.

The icy embrace of the street wakes the man into consciousness. His breath appeared in front of him like forgotten thoughts or overzealous hopes, quickly dissipating. He walks leisurely through quiet streets, admiring the last auburn leaves falling and collecting at the foot of newly

planted trees. The last autumn leaves of the year, thrown by the wind into the bay, appreciated only by the fish hiding under the wharf.

The first people he spots are groups of cafe workers; Down the street all following the same routine, setting up their chairs and each writing on a chalkboard their “specials of the day!”. Most morning’s he read the “specials of the day!”. He pondered if today was the day he should've skipped breakfast and treated himself, however, like yesterday and the day before that, he only notes one difference. The handwriting. The icy sweat of a cold morning burns his skin as Pymont bridge fades into view. The hustle and bustle of Sydney becomes apparent, false smiles and strange people join the funnel that leads to the CBD. The bridge separates the quiet streets and friendly cafes of Pymont from the corporate glass towers of the CBD; he liked this separation. Here he embraced his corporate persona. The bridge served as a dam in which the floods of despair could be halted. This dam was a comforting symbol, but just a symbol; The dam had formed cracks long ago. An illegal stand had been set up just before the entrance to “The Office”. He traded 10 dollars for a twenty pack of winfield blues and a BIC lighter. Today, he decided to pick up smoking.

On his desk a pile of unimportant and menial paperwork lay messily. He ignored it and ignited the end of his cigarette. Coughing lightly, he exhaled. The smoke danced and swirled in the fluorescent lights, eventually combining with the stagnant smog above. His boss, Eugene Cambell, was a stubborn man. He was built like a stubbie, which aptly fit on the account of his constant fictitious pub anecdotes. During morning briefs he proudly spread his lies with a hearty chuckle, adding “but don’t tell my wife!” to finish his narrative. The only thing he found interesting was the fact Mr.Campbell’s wife had divorced him five years ago. Mr.Cambell was a one dimensional character within his life, as were most of the people he knew. Mr. Campbell was simply Mr. Campbell CEO, an usually angry and dumb man, nothing more. Mr. Campbell permitted his workers to smoke inside, despite the law established two years prior prohibiting it. Like a valorant general he gathered all his soldiers on the day of the law’s passing, “I am an Honest man! A hard working Man! And you are hard working men! It is proven that smoking improves efficiency. Who is the government to tell me how to run my business? The unions will not accept this authoritarian control! Neither will I! This idiotic law will soon be overturned. You wait. Until then... smoke your hearts out!”. Of course the man was wrong. Mr. Campbell’s brother was a higher-up in NSW Health, a stout believer in... “freedom” . He has saved his brother from his own idiocy on many occasions.