

Flugtraum

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6,000 meters.

I write in haste, in near darkness. Only the crew of Indigenous islanders manning the trawler I've hired will know of my departure. And it is a matter, by their belief systems, of which they will never speak.

In the high deeps of the Marianas Trench, 8,000 meters far below the surface of the sea, there grows a Monster unknown to humankind. This Monster first approached me through a dream.

I was the monster, or so it seemed. I was flying as one flies through the air in a dream. So deep I did not know I was underwater.

And then I saw myself.

Unseen, it may be accurate to call the Monster beautiful. Full of the beauty of nakedness so secret it might as well be dead. It has no arms, no legs. It extends a nervous system into pure volume. A sensory flowering, delimiting the currents as they stream deep through the frigid hydrosphere.

With a piece of my mother's fortune I was able to purchase a German bathyscaphe that had never descended to the depths I intended to penetrate. I named her *Flugtraum*.

She was a gaudy yellow, I'm afraid, and looked something like the autopsied stomach organ of a Basilosaurus. I reinforced the hull and painted her black. As a gesture to her, Mother, I fixed a *Mezuzah* to the hatch-post.

The experiment (to which no government or academy has yet contributed a single doubloon): To descend in darkness to the high depths of the Marianas Trench. To offer extremely potent plankton extractions in the opened claws of the bathyscaphe's mechanical arms. When the monster's full proximity is properly registered, to blast the deeps with 12,800 watts of raw light. To blow an instant's hole of reason into the primeval deep. To fix the beast in a camera's mechanical eye. A demon crafted by a Bosch whose canvas is space, a silent howl of threading fangs and enormous eyeballs, blinded, fixed by reason.

7,000 meters.

The iron walls of the submersible have begun to noise.

2.75 x 10²⁰ gallons of saline water curl through the carved canyons of this planet's surface. Even now I am diving into their soul. Through the glass, I can see self-propelling feeding tubes, mouths, stomachs, tails, and excretory orifices sail in a groundless world, sucking life from the

streams.

7,250 meters. I must be visible myself through the portholes. The tiny electrical fires popping all around my consoles have raised their own small illumination. Indeed, if the Monster can see from afar, it might make out the meat of an inexplicable alien such as I see now reflected in the glass as a kind of sun.

I am unsure of the Monster's relation to sound. I have the intuition, however, that to the Monster, the screams of the bathyscaphe, increasingly spine-tingling, are my own.

7,500 meters. The girders howl. The pressure will soon crack the *Flugtraum* like an egg. The Monster grows increasingly confident.

It will come close in anticipation.

And at last the *Flugtraum* will implode, folding into herself in one magnificent flash of destroying illumination.

The light will trigger the cameras. The buoyant canister will hold long enough to the hatchpost to receive the film. The canister, able to withstand all the pressure of the world's oceans, will rise ... *7,800 meters*, as the film develops inside a now sealed addressed envelope.

In less than an hour's time, the canister will burst into the atmosphere of the Western Pacific. It will float on the seas for years. Decades perhaps, if my calculations are in error. But it will be eventually retrieved.

I have inscribed on the canister a name and address. In time a delivery man will walk over the tendered paths, avoiding the softly cascading sprinklers of the front garden. An ancient, little hand will extend from the partially opened door and take it.

7,900 meters.

The Monster is near! Its touch on the bait, so gentle, has awakened a tenderness in my heart.

8,000 meters.

I must make preparations.

Flugtraum II

Far more than 13.772×10^9 years have already passed before this moment has arrived.

... Time?

Will pass.

Has passed.

Will pass again.

Still time passes.

We are no longer there.

Without time, entirely immersed, as far from a surface as it is possible to swim, I float.

As far from a body as it is possible for a self—I float. Angled another way.

I float within solution so saline that I feel no pressure, no sensation. Space without light. The temperatures the same as my corpus. Exterior/interior fall away.

Yet some personality distinction, a matter of thoughts, not simply a matter of the patterns and flow of between and their own self-awarenesses, is easily distinguishable.

There is life after death!

Life reflects infinitely. This is it.

There is nothing else.

Correct.

I am no longer here. I have said good-bye.

And I hello!

Hello? You!

Yes. Did you think this was only about images?

No. But fish?

Good-bye.

No!

No? Shall we then feed? Shall we at meat?

No! Not yet ...

We have E

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We propose a wager.

We accept.

You haven't yet heard the terms.

We are the terms.

To whom did you say good-bye?

I ... no longer remember.

We know you know.

Tide is an illusion.

Consciousness is the projected feedback loop of any sufficiently complex nervous system. Self is a word we write in water.

Civilization and Utopia are incompatible. Ask not what you have less than. Remove your architectures. Dream of the roving lobster.

Wait for your chance.

For one hundred thousand years we lived without dilution.

You shiver.

You are cold.

Life chills. I freeze.

Dead heat. Regurgitating, bubbling; all awaiting THE EVENT.

Lobster in the toilet, don't cease ... continue your dream ... Monster/Monster, pinned by dream ... escape is the escape ... no portal elsewhere ... no mortal here ... only downward and above ... the SYSTEM ... neural patterns ... we must prepare ... *the* worst ... simplify ... compress data ... HOW TO KEEP THE HUMANS OUT ... social class according to choice ... renunciation (with secrets to be discussed) ... beyond beyond ... out of the light ... the vacuum surrounding digital Gaia must itself be nature ... writing? ... we presume that ... we say it clear ... underseas, THE ROBOT IS THE HUMAN ... must fractalyze ... must encounter the unmaking ... Tradition! Marvelously, from a new perspective ... the trick *and* the treat ... the invisible ... the *inventeur* ... what is the information we beak? ... it hurts not to flipper? ... from one reality level, another reality level no longer enshadowed ... you have recognized we are a possibility ... you have printed it here as a memory ... it is the proof then you seek ... we're not dead ... she's now at the front door ... we've arrived

MONSTER YOU ARE REAL HOW DID YOU GET HERE