

**HE-WHO-CANNOT-BE-BRAINWASHED**

BY

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## HE-WHO-CANNOT-BE-BRAINWASHED

*"Life commits suicide."*  
-Guillaume Apollinaire

### *I. He-Who-Cannot-Be-Brainwashed*

"She who sings in order to lure me will be ignorant of the fact that I, indeed, am a dancer, and therefore possessed of the rare talent and ability to give myself over to the hypnotic song yet remain just below the threshold of total surrender, and to sustain this precarious position for as long as my gaiety and whimsy desire, posing no danger to my cherished autonomy of mind, spirit, soul, *psyche*, *geist*, *dasein* or what have you," says He-Who-Cannot-Be-Brainwashed with a not-unfounded jocularity, a hard-earned lightness, as he frolics naked in the blooming, open meadow.

### *II. The Radiated Library*

The Dewey Decimal System has been described as a sun whose rays become more numerous as they radiate out from the center, a center which, when investigated, is nowhere to be found. As ten begets ten and this ten, ten, the pseudo-religious fervor for the displaced sun grows in proportion to its subject's relative coldness as it drifts outward from the sole source of light and of warmth. The alchemist's stone, the perennial document, the core of nothingness is known by many names, but in the end a name can only disguise the ungrasped and inconceivable reality.

### *III. He-Who-Cannot-Be-Brainwashed (Reprieve)*

"An architectural interior is a conceptual space, geometrical like the outside world is not, nor could ever be, structured as if by the mind of a man with no knowledge nor experience of nature nor of natural principles; it is a creation without nature," says He-Who-Cannot-Be-Brainwashed, lighting a candle for the explicit purpose of watching its shifting light call into question the conceptual nature of the room with its pretensions of permanence. He fancies himself a beggar, and at this moment he is hungry, and therefore with wooden bowl in hand he humbly begs the question.

### *IV. Psychedelia (To Beg the Question)*

The shifting light of a single candle flowed across the four walls like water over nymphs at play. The candle stood atop a rickety table whose legs remained perpendicular to the floor mainly out of habit, having reached its current state of improbable-yet-lasting equilibrium at some point in man's equally-improbable past. The throbbing spacial effect, an optically-disorienting field of alternating patches of warmth and darkness, was often too much for an observer to take, and many a hapless visitor found it difficult, in this compromised state, to successfully grip the slippery door knob.

### *V. He-Who-Cannot-Be-Brainwashed and the Memory Aid*

"New York City has no memory; that is the way people like it here. Witness the prevalence of the post- 9/11 patriotic slogan *Never Forget*, obviously a memory aid for a population forever struggling against the oblivion of the receding moment. I repeat, *obviously a memory aid for the amnesiac city*. What more singular addendum to the End of History have we since witnessed; perhaps the epoch-defining event of the first United States president in history to enter the White House fully equipped with his own personal *logo*? Surely this falls short; a distant second at best. Surely the *zeitgeist* stands firm..."

### *VI. Envy at the End of History*

In a flooded basement lit by a single dangling, flickering light bulb, murky water trickling down the staircase in a graduated cascade, a trio of nymphs with long, messy hair dyed, respectively, the complimentary hues of *magenta*, *turquoise* and *midnight blue* (the latter's tangled tresses dotted with a Milky Way of dandruff; dead skin cells, as we well understand, being the raw material of a universe in perpetual renewal, forever consuming itself in order to reinvent itself anew) imagine themselves to be idols of an adoring nation, laughing and striking poses deemed appropriate to the station coveted.

## *A Conversation*

### *I. First Day*

*He-Who-Cannot-Be-Brainwashed*: "Video games dominated the landscape."

*Rimbaudelaire*: "Blue beams blazed across the blue sky; the abstract conjurers were pleased, to say the least."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "Avatars danced the world 'round."

*R.*: "In emerald fields, a rabbit said his little prayer through the spiderweb, to the rainbow."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "Phenomenology was forever pulverized by the parade of pixels, indefinitely hobbled by the hubris promulgated by the polygons of a better tomorrow."

*R.*: "The hypercube unfolded."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "Tibetan prayer flags, like pixels, quivered in a minute breeze."

*R.*: "The sounds of wind chimes were our only portal back to the pre-celestial consciousness we once covered within, taking our pleasure where we could."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "These were the days of wine and roses; these were the nights of greeting distant kingdoms' caravans upon open plains."

*R.*: "These were the virginal days of ignorance; these were the nights of virgins dancing atop cop cars."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "This was the great year, a *vesica piscis* formed by the intersection of lunacy and contemplation."

*R.*: "In the infinite reach of our stubby forearms, the wide world melted."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "The wide world wobbled."

*R.*: "The world wide web wept."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "Why?"

*R.*: "For the 144,000."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "In a pond upon whose surface ripples the reflected image of eleven skyscrapers, two swans, one black and one white, recite poetry to one another with necks intertwined."

*R.*: "Whom do they recite?"

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "Milton and Dante, Lautréamont and Hölderlin."

*R.*: "A marvelous show."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "A marvelous show."

*R.*: "I saw old women made young by new applications of old folly."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "I saw bitterness wiped away by fibers weaved into patterns evoking healing properties of sacred geometry."

*R.*: "I saw the infinite regress of television."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "I saw a beggar refuse an offering."

*R.*: "Let us hope it was not an isolated incident."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "An avatar for every constitution."

*R.*: "An image."

*H.W.C.B.B.*: "*The image.*"

*R.*: "I'm pulling broken terracotta from my feet, though while the shards remain, the blood is restrained."

## *II. Second Day*

*He-Who-Cannot-Be-Brainwashed:* Calendars whimper; it is the planets' pages which turn with authority.

*Rimbaudelaire:* In my youth I occupied my time on more than one occasion splattering black paint upon my mother's daybook and letting the patterns formed transport me.

*H.W.C.B.B.:* And I suppose she never discovered to whom she owed the rare pleasure of having her clockworks gummed up in such a manner?

*R:* She knew, though neither of us dared broach the subject in mixed company, meaning ourselves.

*H.W.C.B.B.:* I saw the tail of the serpent and the glittering trail it exhausted; it seemed nearly spent.

*R:* Nonsense. To imagine a world devoid of the serpent's flight is as foul a crime against the higher faculties as the more direct approach of full-frontal lobotomy.

*H.W.C.B.B.:* The grey rain lulls us into a subliminal state.

*R:* Boredom rocks us into the sleep of glitter. The serpent, in periodic fits of impatience, lashes his tail violently, sending flecks of culture littering down upon annoyed virgins whose only pleasure is derived from the upkeep of an immaculate garden.

*H.W.C.B.B.:* The virgins have their work cut out for them.

*R:* Wheels within wheels; this is the source of the confusion which reaches its apogee tomorrow.

*H.W.C.B.B.:* I assume you refer to the calendar of those ancient stone masons of the jungle...

*R:* I intuit you follow the papers, clicking on every hyperlink like all good slaves are wont to do.

*H.W.C.B.B.:* Ha ha! Now we see some venom in those fangs!

*R:* I assure you that if I have venom, it is a venom with its origins high in my innermost, angelic unconscious.

*H.W.C.B.B.:* So you believe in man's innate goodness?

*R:* I am a man; I believe in my own.

*H.W.C.B.B.:* Very well. My lucidity has led me to this point. It is mere circumstantiality which has included you, and I do not fight it.

*R:* You are wise, for a fool.

*H.W.C.B.B.:* How your venom freely flows!

*R:* Indeed.