

I & I : A Mixed Metaphor¹

I, a being born in a place: my parents led lives before I did, and decided when to create. Created a skin of a certain color. Hair with a certain texture. They bore me into a religion—which they would deny, leaving me thankfully free to invent one. But they still cut my foreskin off without asking me whether I wanted it or not. I didn't. Throw it away.

I, a being first stared into Lacan's mirror: I remember the event. I breathed the glass. I needed the mirror not to see my whole self, but only to understand the feel of electricity coursing down my spine, down my arm, my fist clenching. I did not yet know that I would not be a revolutionary. I ate the mirror, became it. As I grew older, it became a camera in my belly. Then a camcorder. Then a projector. Now I consume movies, and project them inward.

I grew between my legs, finally becoming too heavy to carry through the everyday swirl of humanity on the sidewalks. Only fully encapsulated vehicles can kill me if I cross their path, mere men cannot. So I cling to the sidewalk, only occasionally wandering into the black expanse of asphalt, for the thrill of defying the law most immediately at hand.

Although logical progressions may exist, they are artificial. Given, in the name of meaning, after-the-fact. By the left-to-right flow of myself.

I became a being without before I became within, I saw myself through other's words, other's desires. Because I am, and always have been, myself, as only everyone knows. Walking down fluorescent hallways from class to class, I inhabited a political being, I saw the structures in place, and saw my place in them: to destroy them. Because America thrives on destroying itself, I saw the most vital element of society in the dissident. I saw my privilege and sought to undermine it. I sought the underclass, and looked inside to see if it was under my skin. It wasn't. I taught the underclass, the words that had spoken to me, I spoke to them. I tried to find the goodness in my blessed life through the giving of myself, and I could not give all, because I am all that I am.

I grew in the tightly choreographed American Tango. I believe in natural Cheetos. Because they exist. They lack the curve and neon color of original Cheetos, but they preserve the Dangerous Cheese. I believe in movies with names like "Let's go to Prison" and "Snakes on a MuthaFuckin' Plane."

I drink your fat and it becomes my own. Indelible preservatives pickling my formaldehyde insides.

I consume movies. The laser licks the shiny underbellies of DVDs, stealing their essences. The player software caresses the selfsame digitations, hurl them upon the eagerly waiting screen. And my eyes thirsty-slurp the luminous information.

¹ Perhaps a metaphor with a mixed subject

I consume movies in solitude. In my darkened bedroom on week-nights. In these moments, I exist and you don't. I influence the screen, directors ask me for advice. I feel the cameraman's crane sweeping over my reality, I can hear him hovering above me, watching me watch my screen.

They lie in tightly coiled data points deep within an unimaginable hard drive, just beyond the glowing white space of Microsoft Word that I am staring into. Their existence is illegal. The first frame in each of them is a kindly warning from the FBI not to unauthorized-copy them². If only the government could hire a private contractor to build a massive militarized fence around my computer, maybe we could stop the horrendous influx of illegal movies into my house. Nonsense: I am white, empty before the law, locked in my own system which I cannot rage against.

My head rests on a cloud which rests on my neck. I am ankle deep in soil, and I feel my toes questing downward for nutrients. My mouth thirsts for alcohol, my tongue thirsts for loud ink. My eyes see in pixels.

I was born pixellated into the age of light, pregnant with ones and zeroes.³

I am my empty eyes, drinking projected light, mirroring myself. My time gave me the power of light tamed and imprisoned in underground cables, delivering packets of data. My time gave me omniscience⁴. The entire output of humanity under my dirty fingernails. And now that everything is everywhere else at once, I drown in the sea of worthlessness and sleaze that is the human mind; canals of tamed light polluted by the giant mass of the depravity of desires twisted by walls of empty sight—perverted by dirty streets, flooded with words, ravaged by nihilism and poured onto sewers of data.

(The cables of light that lie beneath the asphalt are like rubber bands, vibrating expectantly when plucked, swerving around sewers, shuttling images instantaneously into my greedy fingers and my empty eyes.)

I relate least of all to my own actions in the world. Decisions are made elsewhere, motions are taken by my limbs, I crawl around the city-blocks of my life. I think I know what I must do. Only in the empty moments—the awkward ten minutes when events wait to happen, only then do I feel autonomous. I dread these moments. I check my mailbox, my inbox, looking for someone else's words to enter my life. My only life.

My private isolation, my greyness, is justifiable because it is political. I can, at least, market it as such. I am an American. I share my bedroom, my grocery store, my manicured public park, with no other breathing soul. The only space I am truly alone is the only space where I ever am.

² \$250,000 fine and/or 5 years in prison

³ *"Love me, One. Love me, Zero"*—Sir Tyler Henry

⁴ the internet

My apartment inhabits me, as any created habitat must. My kitchen inhabits my crotch, which is the best way for cooks to get to my heart. Large pots of organic energy bubble on my gas flame; they lend me their gas when I eat.

I taught my eyes to shield themselves internally, with soft plastic lenses, enabling my reality to remain crisp, edges well defined. They do not change the outside color of my eyes.

A camera cannot see the distancing of objects, but it makes objects distant. The lens is a dark phallus that forces the world to be as it is. It the black hole at the center of perception, from which there is no escape. The white screen which receives the projection on the other end, the white space around my belensed eyes, are the womb of light, the nurturing placenta of information.

I look at my own hands that only have meaning flying across a keyboard, the solidity of pen and ink are foreign to my creation. If I had one wish, it would be to install a desktop in my brain, a cpu, synapse keyboard, to constantly write within myself, and print through my fingertips.

Still blank men march past me on the streets. Women whose faces are their clothes soar unmoving above me on escalators. The march of machinery moves through me. I am the green light which consumes the used grooved stairs at the top of the escalator.

My green grass settles over the pregnant earth, stirring itself into trees and undergrowth. I settle over America and grow into Cheetos naturally, settle flatly onto streets and become clean black asphalt.

There is only one possible outcome of this constant urination and defecation. To rot. Perhaps I will rejoin my trashed foreskin.