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•Introduction•

The further you decline into escapism, the more compulsive and obsessive it becomes. You call your parents to tell them you've quit your job to focus on writing, you fritter away a year, terrified that you'll have nothing to show for your life. No ideas. Writers block. A few pages, you read them the next day and throw them away.

In the end you break down, take out a loan and start a video store. See if somebody will pay you to rent a copy of Critters 3 on VHS. Run a customer database on a Windows 95 system, make up customers when nobody shows up. The crippling debt means nothing as the world ends outside.

Board up the windows, listen to some sports 3000 or 猫シcorp and imagine all that could have been. Cool, successful, accomplished, or at least happy. Flying business class to the great shopping mall in the sky, sipping a Crystal Pepsi, pager switched off as you get away.

Work doesn't have to wait until the office. You open your laptop computer and trade business cards with the passenger beside you, after he tells you how impressed he is with your set up. Some easy listening pop muzak plays on your built in flight earphones as you get back to work.

But here you are, faded old band t shirt you picked up off eBay twelve years ago and never threw away. Some cheap jeans and a pile of videos you'll likely never get to watch.

They're banging on the door, fighting to get in. Now they're interested in the strange little VHS rental they laughed at just weeks before. Smoking cigarettes, supply of doritos running low, end of the world imminent.

You reach for a copy of 'Valley Girl' with Nicholas Cage, let the bastards eat each other. The 90's will never end in here.

Sometimes you ponder, perhaps it would have been better if the millennium bug had wiped us out. The Y2K computer apocalypse at least sounds like a cooler way to go than this. Little space invaders style computer aliens multiplying and flashing on screens before the machine breaks down.

There are sirens, flashing lights, explosions. Perhaps when it passes, if your little video rental survives the night, you'll wander the bombed out cityscape, try to find some food that isn't popcorn, sharing bags of m&m's or marshmallows.

Cage is so awesome in this movie. When you realise life will never be as good as Valley Girl, you feel almost indifferent to the ruins. Let it all burn.

Time stops here. And this episode of Datasquid is written from that VHS rental at the end of the world.

•This Week•

•Ronacore rivalry escalates•

Following the shooting death of Dirt Illest, his associate DrugStore has declared he is now collaborating with several other rappers and producers who have contracted the virus. The collective which is known as 'Wuhan Clan' believe themselves to be the pioneers and first and foremost representatives of the ronavirus genre.

DrugStore commented in an interview with The Guardian, UK:

'It's like this. Me and my boy Lil Woozy got together after Dirt passed on. We knew we gotta keep his vision and genius alive. We come together to stop imitators and fake bitches from rearranging ronacore. We got pussy ass fucks with some minor cold symptoms pretending they're ronacore. We the final say in the rona community, we will cut a bitch open if they challenge us. I'm puking and struggling to breath right now. We got real rona virus.'

Suspect Lil Covid, real name LeJosheaya Simpson was arrested shortly after the murder of Dirt Illest, having bragged about carrying out the shooting on Twitter.

Lil Covid tweeted;

'Mane I killed that bitch Dirt, talking bout i only got common flu. My rona is real bitch'

Dirt Illest has been described by friends and family as a 'beautiful soul' and his unfulfilled potential as being a tragic loss to the world. There have also been death threats made by Wuhan Clan supporters against Lil Covid and his manager Cold Sweatz.

Lil Covid's viral breakthrough single 'Sicker than u know' hit eight hundred million views only months after its YouTube upload. The rapper boasts of 'coughin' in the club and fuckin' bad sluts' in the infectious chorus.

•Humourless power electronics artist cuts set short•

Belgian Power Electronics artist DahmerYouth took to the stage in an Antwerp basement bar to play to seventeen appreciative fans. The artist emerged in a trench coat and balaclava and proceeded to play a loop of static white noise, occasionally striking a detuned bass guitar connected to a series of distortion pedals.

Around ten minutes into the set a young man drinking at the bar began to dance in front of the stage. Upon disrupting the performance fans requested him to sit on the floor like everybody else, or stand in one of the rooms dark corners.

One fan, who was drinking a glass of tap water during the DahmerYouth set expressed his frustration;

'This bastard, this idiot belongs at a fucking Justin Bieber show, are you kidding me?'

As he persisted in mockingly dancing to the rhythmless performance, DahmerYouth shut his laptop down and reached for his mic;

'This is bullshit, I cannot play in this atmosphere.'

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The dancing man responded with further mockery;

'Put that back on, I was enjoying that.'

DahmerYouth spent the rest of the night sat at the bar talking to friends, after a brief argument with an events organiser.

Most of the fans remained to listen to a second set performed by Terminal Rape, a Finnish power electronics artist who stated after the incident;

'The power electronics experience is one of violation, not enjoyment.'

Terminal Rape played for forty minutes, using a combination of VLC media player and a touch pad synthesiser connected to an overdrive pedal.

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•Poetry Corner•

•I am Cat•

Solitude comes naturally to felines,
When Friskers visits he does so alone.
I envy his leisurely summer days,
Slinking, collapsing, his company grass,
Each blade gently grazing his midnight fur,
The white of his paws like two little stars.
Finally I don my leather collar,
All fours, making my delicate approach.
The lone cat gazes indifferently,
Whilst neighbours prepare to call the police.
Friskers stretches to a stand, departing,
This my territory, I am Cat.

•Craigslislist•

Room to rent by the hour,
420 and a shower.
Slave for hire, spit on me,
Buy a box of DVD's.
Write a haiku, exchange porn,
Hire somebody to mow your lawn.
Looking for a handyman,
19m for horny nan.
Anyone selling underwear?
Sissy sub seeks older bear.
Cat for sale, dog for swap,
I'm the bottom to your top.
Erotic massage by European,
Need a van man? Contact Ian.

•Dogscape•

The Dogscape creepypasta series is probably one of the best representations of Internet horror. It has elements of science fiction, grotesque surrealism and tremendous scope to be expanded on. Having completed a series of dog scape stories, told from different perspectives, I will share instalments here.

Let us visit that strange, canine terrain once more and relive its horrors anew.

•The Dogscape Logs•

The breadth between here and beyond, as alive as the dogscape we dream of abandoning. What little beauty remains is all the more profound for how rare it is. The mountains they say were for the most part engulfed by dogflesh. There are deserts of scorched, blackened dog hair. Home to ticks and scorpions. Leeches, which swarm the puppy waters.

But we still have the ocean and the stars. Those who were lucky enough to have crossed the breadth may have stumbled upon remnants of the old world on their journey. There is talk among tribes of a new world emerging from the biting, freezing Northern regions. Our leader warns we must appease the dogscape rather than resist, keeping those baying, mangy dog heads content. They grow out of trees and emerge from the ground. Howling. Their behaviour a solemn reminder of their noble ancestors.

Sometimes, as I look out over the sea, waves crashing, stars blazing and shooting about the sky, those howls send chills down my spine. I wonder how the dogscape perceives itself. If it feels as unbearably trapped as we do.

We created tents, elaborate structures out of dogflesh canvas, dyes and fabrics from puppyflesh trees. At the centre of our village a looming monument made out of what looked like millions of dog teeth. A vast, dogskull, made entirely of carved teeth. Toys, ornaments and trinkets made of dogteeth made life that little less unbearable. So long as once didn't reflect to often on their grim origin.

My name is Elisa, a name from the old world which I chose for myself. My dogscape name, still used by my parents and the Tribe, I'd prefer not to mention. My brother, who I call Felix, believes the dogscape is a kind of punishment for the ill treatment of dogs in the old world.

He would show me picture books and read stories about heroic, loyal and good natured dogs. They would remain faithful to their masters even as they passed, waiting patiently beside a grave, as though expecting their master to emerge from the ground and embrace them.

I wasn't so sure. I always felt dogs hated this place too. Hadn't they been punished enough? The tribal politics, the talk of Aduke and other dogscape origins, and rumours of far away tribes who would sacrifice young girls like me to the dogscape...none of that interested me. I hated the dogscape and wanted to escape, not adapt.

I loved the sea. And every night I was glad I could come out here and take in the sounds and scents of that vast expanse. Imagining what lay beyond the horizon, the black sky and moonlight casting a blue glow over the breadth, the unconquered distance between here and beyond.

Some nights I'd swim. I'd push a little further than I was comfortable with, letting the waves carry me. Further from the dogscape. The sound of the sea drowning out but never quite silencing those incessant, melancholy howls. The night would come, sooner or later, when I'd simply swim out into the nothingness leaving the dogscape behind me forever.

--

Aduke, powerful beyond our comprehension. We are clad in fabrics woven from your furs, we drink the cool water of your streams. Your followers are many, we gather on the plains of Doberman and remember our early rites upon the valley of Weimaraner. You took everything for reasons we know not, but now we exist to serve your ever expanding hyper consciousness.

Our encampments are places of worship and sacrifice, where we teach living in accord and in line with the dogscape. We teach adherence to the Aduke, who replaced the old world and began it anew. Those who fall foul of the dogscape, we see them consumed by ticks, riddled with fleas, sunk into the dogflesh.

We build with teeth and bones, eating what the dogscape gives forth. Rejecting that which is not of the dogscape. The aquatic life of the old world is not of us. Those who fled, certainly they have wronged themselves. They'll lose their minds in the desolation and nothingness of the vast waters. Nothing beyond.

I know without proper guidance, hierarchy and authority we'd decline. We'd cease to construct, develop and further evolve to adapt to the dogscape. We sacrifice and for a while the dogscape ceases to howl, undulate and struggle to consume us. We feed the dogscape so that it may favour us.

Sacrifices are rarely willing. Luckily bandits, thieves and lowlives thrive here and provide an ample source of offerings. The establishment of the dogcult of Aduke has also contributed to stability among peoples in this region of the dogscape, those who stray from this path make the most powerful of sacrifices.

Some have fled to research ways to destroy the dogscape. None have ever succeeded. The dogscape perseveres and grows. They only anger the terrain in their efforts to dig, sever dog heads and sail into the unknown.

--

Kaff and Rex ascended the steep concrete steps, narrow and dank towards the entrance to New Age Broadcasting. Both wore light dog robes and carried small bone daggers in pouches. The establishment of radio communications was already transforming the dogscape.

They received broadcasts from the northern regions. Hope for the future. Greenhouses. The cultivation of food and clean water. It was unknown how much of this was true, but the speakers would issue forth stories of a better world in locations throughout the city, installed around the apartment blocks, enclosed in dogflesh.

Tribes would occasionally post threatening letters, scrawled in dog ink across parchment. They were accusing the station of misleading and confusing the populace.

'There was another world, before the dogscape there was a world abundant in colours, rich in life and resources. The dogscape has only taken. The dogscape gives not. And when we feed it, it takes more.'

'It is our belief that the dogscape emerged from some kind of failed experimentation. Human error. To apply a creation myth to this monstrosity...this only serves to hinder us, to distract us from destroying what is essentially a disease, a parasitic infestation.'

Kaff sat back and lit a cigarette. Rationed from the old world. They were limited in availability, and soon would disappear altogether. His fingernails were dirty from clawing through dogbark, which was then piled into a fireplace to keep them warm through the nights broadcast.

Rex began,

'Reports on hunters. We've had several this week. Shadowy figures seen throughout the local dogscape, in different towns and villages. We believe they are visitors from other dimensions, harvesting the grim resources of our nightmarish dystopia.

Perhaps they are responsible for releasing the spores, planting the seeds that led to our current predicament. This is their farm, and we are like spider lice, infesting their produce. God knows...then again, sometimes I wonder if he can comprehend all this.'

Kaff lit his cigarette and feared the day he'd be down to his last. Greasy black hair down past his shoulders.

'The studio band will be in tonight, playing songs from the old world.'

Instruments recovered from the old world had been collected here, and friends of the studio who had learnt from books and sheet music would play against the howls of the dogscape. Satie's gnossienne five was a favorite. Superstitious tribespeople would block their ears, whilst romantic couples who dreamed of another world huddled beneath loudspeakers.

The sky full of stars, the melancholy piano carried on the breeze, alien and yet somehow strikingly familiar to all those who listened.

Rex looked out the window, across the grim, barren dogscape. Towers, trees, monuments, all suffocated by this disease, this monstrosity somehow inflicted upon the world. He sipped some fermented puppy fruit liquor, it tasted excessively sweet but he had become accustomed to the taste and was starting to tremble as he approached sobriety. Drink up.

The numbing warmth of liquor, cigarettes, ways to be handle the insanity of this nightmare.

--

Dogscape research facility, catering department. The day starts early and the work never really stops. Using hydroponic technology and DNA manipulation we have been able to produce tomatoes, potatoes, lentils and chickpeas, not to mention a range of herbs.

Another 5am start. Every day is exactly the same. Despite this repetition, there is no sense of security and there is a constant unease that seems to prevail. We are always warned this could come undone, and it could be our fault. Protocols and procedures are drilled into our heads, from how we stand, speak and dress, to the order in which we pick and retrieve vegetables.

Sat in the kitchen, cleaning plates. A colleague, she's talking about strange flying machines in the sky. She believes we are being watched, that we have been subject to some kind of experiment.

'Whoever, or whatever did this to the planet...maybe they wanted to see how humans coped. It was some kind of experiment. If they see we're not taking part, they might just get rid of us.'

She spoke matter of factly as she washed out a cup. I willed on this act of destruction from outer space...just end it. Please. Finish it all.

'We've developed technologies which exceed those of the old world. We'll only get away with this for so long. Then some alien will think, hey they're getting too big for their boots, and blam, boom, over.'

She didn't look at me as she spoke, intently scrubbing away at a sauce stain on a plate.

Work hours were extended arbitrarily, we could never be sure when we were finished or when work would start again. 5am to 9pm was a good day. Our leaders believed this approach to work would instill in us a sense of readiness, where even during down time we could be kicked back into action without any kind of delay.

'What scares me is that they seem freer out there. I mean, sure, it's hell on earth, but do we have it much better here. I suppose we either have the research facility think for us here, or we lose our minds out there.'

My stomach was in knots, anxiety persisted.

'What a time to be alive.'

•Spooky Stuff•

Asuba bawana. The words bounce off the tongue, bearing no meaning to the Western speaker who has just been introduced to them. It could be an incantation, a curse, or a South East Asian curry dish. It sounds pretty cool either ways.

Asuba Bawana is a Buddhist practice, fringe in the same way studying the Dead Sea scrolls and Book of Judas would be for a Christian. Slightly gnostic in the manner in which it promotes a revulsion towards worldly things. Specifically the human body. As an advocate for the Crowley school of thought which balances universal truths with the personal subjectivity of 'true will', I feel mostly disdain towards the concept of asuba bawana. Although I cannot condemn it entirely, as there is some possibility it may benefit some.

Fear, or encouraged repulsion towards the human body goes against the grain of our universal nature. In the same way the gnostic, or jihadist for that matter, rejects worldly things in favour of the hereafter, practitioners of asuba bawana reduce sex to a mere sensory distraction.

Historic jihadist scholars would prepare arguments against worldly things to seduce the listener into willingness to lay down their life. For example, the Afghan Ibn Nuhaas states in his 'Book of Jihad';

'If you say it does not appease my soul, departing from my beautiful wife...

Give it that your wife is the most attractive of women and the most beautiful of the people of her time, is not her beginning a despised drop? Her last a foul corpse?'

What is this if not asuba bawana? Invoking the image of a corpse to negate the beauty of woman. Their ends are different, but the overlap in means is fascinating.

We are moved by the worlds capacity for beauty and strive to exalt the best among us. We love life when it is healthy, in accord with the sound and timeless laws of nature. And the more we strive to beautify the here and now, to aspire to golden age ideals, the greater the karmic investment.

The potential for magick in a sexual context is too profoundly apparent for it to be conflated with the decomposition of corpses. Life and death, in their own place, in their own domain, should be respected accordingly.

When asuba bawana gained popularity online, Internet users were discouraged from searching it. The words began to carry a sinister aura. Photographs of mangled, decaying bodies were weaponised to discourage Buddhist students from being distracted by sexual desire. This push to contrive impotency captured the imagination of those who encountered the term.

The iPhone has done its bit to increase incel numbers, I imagine asuba bawana finishing the job. Orwell couldn't have conceived of this meeting of forces when he imagined the 'anti sex league'. Looking at death and decay via unlimited 4g, lest you slip back into pondering the human form.

So what is there to be said in defence of asuba bawana, and related religiously compelled pushes towards sexless salvation? I'm at a loss here, other than a principled position that another's will carries some merit, however alien it is to my own.

Our answer to asuba bawana is perhaps the coomer, although this meme deals specifically with pornography. All the same it strives to associate the grotesque with the alluring visuals of pornography. And thereby corroding an illusion and clearing the mind of sensory distraction.

My take, sex is like fire, in the way it can be channelled, controlled or used towards meditative and spiritual ends. It can also be destructive if misused or neglected. One does not need to consider the charred remains of an arson victim each time they light an altar candle.

Asuba bawana, whilst a fascinating piece of grisly Internet folklore (explored by YouTube investigators)is also a serious practice for a minority of Buddhists. Perhaps it has some scope for usage by the reddit nofap community, instead of motivational quotes and people advising them to hit the gym, they look at pictures of corpses. It's an idea.

•Stories•

•Golden Axe•

So you walk into a bar, it's a dive, some guy is falling asleep into his ale, two pm Wednesday afternoon. You spot me in the corner, perched on my usual stool, sleeveless blue denim jacket, Gwar t shirt, sipping a bud lite. That Neil Young song on the jukebox, I requested it. You think to yourself 'hey, that guy looks like he has some stories to tell,' and you wouldn't be far wrong.

Come on over kid, pull up a stool.

I'm an open guy. I don't hide the fact I served eighteen years in prison for murder. Please, take a stool, I'll buy the next round, just give me a beer. I'll tell you a story.

I have killed a man.

You look uneasy, don't worry, I'm not a bad guy. Do you want to know about it? I don't mind, I've got nothing to hide.

The barmaid is throwing me a glance isn't she, as though she wants me to stop...she warned me to zip it, to leave the customers alone. I'm not making you uncomfortable am I? We're all friends here.

You ever wanted to ask a man what it's like to kill? Well now you can. Go ahead, ask me, I'll tell you.

Have you ever played the game Golden Axe? It's pretty important you know a thing or two about Golden Axe before we carry on. There was a dwarf, I think he was called Gillius or something. A barbarian with a sword, a big SOB. And then a banging hot 90's video game babe with red hair and fire magic.

I jacked off to a picture of her in a video game magazine. Come on, we're both guys. It's nothing weird.

Me and my friends loved Golden Axe. So much so we said we'd throw a Golden Axe party every year. Dress up as the characters and beat the game, make a night of it. Problem was, there was four of us to begin with. I drew the short straw and had to come dressed as some asshole from Streets of Rage.

Hear me out here. My outfit was a white vest and a pair of jeans. I looked like a fucking wife beater. The barmaid looked again didn't she, I'll keep my voice down.

I'm digressing...luckily the other guy dropped out. I suggested he do so, politely of course. That left me as the tallest in the group. I wasn't strong or muscly or anything like that, I was just the biggest. So that's how it worked out. I was the barbarian.

Pat. Little hairy guy. He was the dwarf. That didn't take long to decide.

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But three guys and one of us had to be that firecracker, that bikini clad bodacious Mega Drive vixen. The other guy was kind of on the skinny side. Naturally androgynous. He argued he'd make a good barbarian but in the end we settled it with an arm wrestle. I won with ease. We had our chick.

'Some barbarian,' I said mockingly upon my decisive victory. I'll never forget the look on his face. Joey. Oh god Joey. Sweet Joey.

So yeah, Pat was the dwarf and Joey was the chick.

The first night we all got together for a Golden Axe party, it was at my place. Joey came over by taxi. Pat was swigging some cheap cider from a plastic drinking horn, my folks were out so we were just gonna get wasted, eat pizza and kick Death Adders ass. Just normal sixteen year old stuff.

Now, I don't know how to explain this, but it was like he'd undergone a transformation. Joey I mean. Holy shit. I mean, he shaved his legs, he had this perfume on. He threw his coat over the sofa when he came in, the big reveal. Pat was just laughing, but I couldn't say a thing. I mean it was a transformation. That wasn't Joey, it was the chick from Golden Axe. It was her in the flesh. Skin like milk, those fiery locks of hair.

I kept thinking about how i could wrap my hands around his waist, the curve of his back. Weird stuff like that. How flat his belly was.

I'm not gonna lie, it gave me some kind of complex. This was an issue for me. This was my buddy, my Joey, my main dude from high school. I don't get why he put so much effort in. Like he had these silicone things...Jesus...you just need to trust me on this, it was like he wasn't a dude. The hair and everything. It was too much. Why didn't he just wear some cheap party wig and throw on a goddamn outfit.

Don't worry, I'm getting to the point. The murder, I haven't forgotten. You need to hear this stuff though. It's important.

I'd forgotten all about it the next day, I made myself. It was like he took the outfit off and was just my bro Joey again. I stopped thinking about it, I mean I had to, it would have drove me insane otherwise. I'm not gay. That's something you need to know. I'm not gay.

I just stopped thinking about it. I tried jacking off to the Golden Axe advertisement in the magazine. I kept thinking about Joey so I screwed it up and threw it away. Stop thinking about it, I kept telling myself. Stop thinking about it!

Next year, next party...Joey had just turned 18. It was my suggestion that we throw another party, I just casually asked if Joey still had that outfit. I don't know why I was doing it to myself.

He couldn't remember if he still had the outfit. Goddamn, I remember my anxiety. It had to be just the same. Just once a year. That's all I needed. I kept asking him about it, where he'd last seen it, where did he get it from. I told him I'd buy him another.

He started to get pissed off with me, I worried he'd start working it out. I mean, it's not like there was anything to work out, I'm not gonna hit on my best friend. But I knew I had to back off a little. He was looking at me like something was off. Like I'd just asked if I could smell his shoes or something.

Turns out I had nothing to worry about, she rocked up like the year before, I mean he...Joey, my buddy Joey. Pat was getting his drink on, we were all just having a good time. Golden Axe 2 had been released by then. Joey was just lounging on the couch, you should have seen it man. You'd get it then, it's like he was a chick. He went to the kitchen and kind of swayed his hips. Ass like a peach.

You should have seen it man. That's a memory that got me through some lonely prison nights.

We were having a good night y'know, listening to some Cannibal Corpse, sharing pizza. It went on, y'know, it was getting late. I went for a smoke or something and when I got back Pat had his arm around Joey. He was hitting on him. Obviously. This was bullshit. It wasn't real, it was just a Golden Axe party thing. He was making it weird. He couldn't hit on Joey. That's just weird.

I told him 'HEY GET YOUR FUCKING HANDS OFF HER!'

Oh crap, the barmaid. I'll keep it down I swear.

Pat just looked confused as though nothing was happening. He was trying to convince me that I was crazy. I might be a lot of things but I'm not crazy. Do I look crazy to you? He kept saying I was imagining things. That even Joey thinks I'd been acting weird.

'Dude, Joey says you keep staring at him like a chick. The fucks wrong with you man? The fucks wrong with you? That's Joey. You used to wrestle together in the backyard and watch Thundercats after school.'

That was it. I saw red. I was stood in my barbarian outfit. Wig, some blue boxers with some fake fur attached. I had a sword though. A real sword. If it wasn't for that sword it might have been a very different night. Pat, the poor bastard had his little plastic axe and green helmet. That fake dwarf beard.

He was looking at me in disgust, eating chips. Shaking his fucking head. Joey was just kind of blushing. I swear he bit his lip. Oh god when he bit his lip. And then, Pat pulled Joeys wig off laughing, breaking the immaculate beauty of that moment.

'Hey, lemme try on the chick wig!' He said with that stupid fucking laugh.

'Get your hands off her hair, Pat! That's not fucking funny!'

I screamed. I became a barbarian. I lost control. No matter how many times...oh god...I'm sorry, I always cry. I'm crying now.

I don't remember how it felt. I don't remember it happening. I just ran and jumped and bought my sword down with unbelievable, barbaric force. Like in the game. I hacked and slashed, Joey just ran for his life. This skinny little dude in a bikini running down the street probably screaming for anybody and everybody, crying for help.

You know what, if that outfit turned me into a real barbarian, is it such a leap to imagine that Joey was a real chick for at least a night?

I've made my peace. I don't mind telling my story. I'm not ashamed.

Anyway, you owe me a beer.

•Weird Web•

•NEET Simulator•

Neckbeard nests. We've all seen them. Horrific scenes of all consuming apathy and isolation. Images of some of the worst nests are deemed 'cursed' by viewers. The battle stations manned for hours on end by shut ins and NEETS. Whether they're levelling up, torrenting or streaming anime, the neckbeard does all his work from this stagnant space.

Overflowing ashtrays, the mountains of empty pizza boxes. You can almost smell it. The stagnation.

Imagine, waking at 2pm, you forgot to draw the curtains closed all the way. The light creeps across the room, dust visible in its invasive path, a pigeon lands at the window, walking around in circles with its chest puffed out. You pull the curtain shut, head aching, foggy brained.

'I need to piss...' you think to yourself, your irritation only increasing as you reach for an empty bottle. The first one you reach for is still half full with Mountain Dew. You find another with a little cigarette ash floating at the bottom before emptying your bladder.

Screw it shut, return it to the pile. You'll go downstairs later, possibly. Clear some of this trash out. Maybe.

The phone rings. Unknown number. Your stomach twists into knots, the outside world intruding puts you on edge. Let it ring out six times and turn it off. If it's important they'll call back again later.

Computer is still on from the night before. You move the mouse around and the monitor lights up, earphones in. There's a slice of pizza by the keyboard. Are you going to go downstairs and microwave it? It tastes better that way, reheated with chilli sauce. Somebody is still downstairs. Housemate as a friend around. Fuck sake, when are they going to leave? Why don't they just go out so you can heat up some pizza.

Every single day. Can't they just go out for once.

Fuck it. You'll just eat it cold. If they leave soon you'll wish you heated it up, but you're hungry now. Wash it down with some Mountain Dew, lukewarm and flat. There's a fresh bottle in the fridge. Maybe you'll have to go downstairs after all.

Put on an old t shirt, you bought it off eBay six years ago, faded black, a picture of spongebob in sunglasses. Some old sweatpants. Nearest things to the computer. Spray yourself down with deodorant. You brace yourself and weigh up whether or not you should go thirsty until the house is empty.

It's a girls voice. Your housemate has a girl around.

You can't remember the last time you talked to a girl. There was one in school you thought about asking out on a date. Then you found out she thought you were an 'oddball'. You looked at yourself in the mirror, long gangly arms, greasy skin, weak cheekbones. Socially awkward.

You went home that night and played Donkey Kong Country and forgot all about it. Curtains drawn. Easier to not think about it.

And as time went on, you just kept all the thoughts at bay with cartoons, junk food, cigarettes and video games.

You login into cytube and join a chatroom with a video stream on the side. They're watching an anime music video for some anime music video for some novelty pop song called 'Carlito'. You've watched it in this room before and join the others in typing out the lyrics as they're sang.

Open another tab, time to make a thread on the 4chan /r9k/ board. You search for an image of Pepe the Frog in a blanket, there's a few hundred variations in your 'comfy' folder.

'It's Monday. The wagies are slaving away. Feels good man.'

You hear the door close shut. Finally, they're both gone. You breathe a sigh of relief, head downstairs to make coffee and make a bowl of chocolate cereal. And a bag of chilli heatwave Doritos. By the time you've finished people are likely to have replied to your thread.

The rest of your day is yours.

You return to your neckbeard nest, replenished and ready to enjoy another day, free from the burdens of responsibility. Your 36gb My Little Pony mega pack should finish downloading soon. Until then you'll continue mindlessly browsing 4chan. There's a reply;

'Wagie wagie, get in your cagie.'

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(D) (A) (T) (A) (S) (Q) (U) (I) (D)
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