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•Introduction•

Being a writer without readers is a strange thing. Like shouting into an abyss that produces echoes, a continuous loop. The internal musings of a hermit transferred to text, for no particular reason. No feedback or validation. Only echoes, one idea bouncing back from the page and leading to another. Bouncing around and gradually taking some kind of form.

Welcome to Data Squid. The E-zine for writers without readers. The unwanted and unpublished, wandering a barren literary desert with nowhere to call home. We are a tribe, think of this e-zine as a little digital campfire that friends can gather around whenever they have ideas, musings or thoughts that seem somehow worth documenting.

The squid, with its multiple tentacles, is representative of the multifaceted nature of this little zine. Everything from ghost stories, weird news, bizarro fiction to poetry.

If you've stumbled across this zine, you either know me, or you were likely looking for something else. Either ways, take a seat, drop us an e mail and send us your story.

Everything in this episode, at this point at least, is written by Iskalla.

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•This Week•

—
An alternative Coronavirus announcement for these troubling times.
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"Panic. It is time to panic. The order you have come to know and love, the thing you call civilisation, which has mothered you and made you docile and passive is on the verge of collapse. Your post war experiment in equalitarian Utopianism was founded on lies. If you took the time to think, if you could even consider the notion of sacrificing convenience for a greater good...perhaps it wouldn't have been this way. You wouldn't have forgotten natural truths known for time immemorial and forgotten only to line the pockets of your Marxist parasite masters.

You should panic. Because if coronavirus doesn't get you, we will."
I think my version would lift people's spirits and inspire them more. To perhaps take up a combat sport, hack major computer infrastructures or prepare for some kind of Mad Max type outcome.

•Stray Cat Enjoys last Christmas in hotel•

The cat achieved local celebrity status on Facebook after being discovered in poor health, abandoned and left with its fur tangled. Donations poured in and volunteers to adopt the cat were soon countless.

A photograph showed the cat recovering physically, on a hotel room bed. His age, and poor health however were against him. The cat was showered with gifts and cared for diligently until his passing. His earlier life was a mystery to all those involved in his care. Who knows what sad things that cat could recall?

He could have lived to an older age were he blessed with an easier life, but his suffering was at least minimised in his final weeks. And kindness to animals, perhaps especially to cats, is absolutely good karma and an indicator of higher consciousness.

Here at Data Squid, cats are held in high regard and are revered as a kind of aristocracy of the animal kingdom. If it is true that cats infect people with some kind of brain parasite to make people love them, we support these efforts and hope for cats to take over the world.

We ardently support feline mind control.

•A Swan cannot break your arm, but it may break your heart•

A man who intended to marry a swan was met with both legal action and rejection. The unlikely couple met in a park near his house and enjoyed seeds and bits of banana together. After booking an informal wedding ceremony, inviting his parents and their next door neighbour of 30 years, he felt set for life.

His Mother commented:

'I've never seen him so happy, he had a photo of little Serenity, took it everywhere he went. There was a goose in his life some time ago, but he decided that wasn't to be after some pecking incidents.'

The next day, the man discovered his future wife, gliding about with a lover and several children in tow. He was reported by witnesses to be initially tearful before becoming aggressive and repeatedly screaming 'fornicatrix' and 'jezebel'.

The police arrived on the scene after he waded into the lake and attempted to strangle his love rival. Both swans are reported to be doing well and the man is due to appear in court, accused of assault.

An animal welfare campaigner has expressed frustration that authorities did not act sooner and thus prevent harm to the swans.

"He was a prominent figure in his community, the owner of a popular coffee shop and organiser of local charity events. His relationship with Serenity was no secret. I believe a lack of education is at the heart of this unfortunate situation. The police are not trained in dealing with criminality of this nature. Interfering with waterfowl in this manner is unacceptable and entirely detrimental to the birds involved."

•Poetry Corner•

•I have the Body of a Pig, Yet I Must grunt•

Man face and pig bodied, you can only imagine,
Detached from the physical plane, alone a voice remains.
What a grotesque sight I could be, it is almost a mercy that you cannot see,
My bloated porcine gut, a trotter where should be a foot.
Eventually my mind gives in, my desires are one with the pig.
The final remnants of my humanity, are grunted into the ether.

•Reading is Rad, Smoking is Bad•

Yo yo check it, my names Friskers, a wicked rap cat,
I'm about to school you in why smoking is whack.
Hey kids, listen up, it's nineteen ninety nine,
And this is a rap about why reading is fine.
All the cool cats know that books are hot,
But don't think about smoking,
'Cos smoking is not!
Reading will enrich your mind and soul,
Studying so you can realise your goals.

A kid called billy liked to play the class clown,
He'd smoke with delinquents in the bad part of town.
They'd joke about how they just didn't care,
They'd spit on the streets and loved to swear.
One day Billy said, to his rowdy crew,
'I'd sell my soul for some cigarettes,
Man, that's exactly what I'd do.'
The gang had an idea, nefarious and dark,
They'd gather under moonlight, in a nearby park.
First they cast a circle, praising Satans name,
Giving up their souls, for the cigarettes they might gain.
They chanted in tongues, then in Latin reversed,
This heinous devilish ceremony was carefully rehearsed.
Billy stretched his hands up to the sky,
Lightening descended, and his gang began to cry;

LUCIFER,
LORD OF LIES,
I INVOKE THEE SATAN,
GREAT DESTROYER,
SON OF THE MORNING!

That's when it happened,
the deal had been sealed,
the devil came down and they knew it was for real.

'You cool kids demand cigarettes, and you'll join the ranks of the damned.
Well whenever you should wish for one,
A cigarette shall find your hand.
Free of charge, I guarantee, an unlimited supply.
But you must offer a sacrifice, something has to die!'

That night a kid called Dexter had some books to borrow,
He was unaware of what was soon to follow.
Billy's crew were out for blood, to transfer their souls to Satan,
Stood outside that library, so patient they were waitin'.
The devil whispered orders into each of their ears,
Kill the next geek that you see, show no restraint or fear.

Those clowns were psyched and ready, craving nicotine, Dexter soon emerged and it was
like some scary dream.
Billy and his gang were all dressed in cloaks,
They charged at him with knives,
Had he any hope?
Then they made a circle around him, slowly closing in,
They hissed their threats and curses,
'We will have your skin'.

Now don't you kids forget, that Friskers reads too, and I was there that night,
And I saw Billy's crew.
My claws cut through their skin with ease,
Those smoking fools just couldn't believe what this literary cat could do.
I gouged their eyes and fought them off, until they finally retreated.
Dexter breathed a sigh of relief, as he saw those bullies defeated.

They ran away into the night, the devil
must have raged above,
And that's why cigarettes are whack, and books are what you oughta love!

•Memetics•

It all began with the virgin walk. I remember it well, that original template image. It first surfaced on /r9k/, that inoffensive, beige character. Shuffling along with his head down. He was supposed to be something so many /r9k/ users would recognise in themselves. However uncomfortable it may have made them.

But this virgin archetype is not alone in the world. It wasn't long before Chad would burst onto the scene in all of his glory. Blonde hair, chisel jawed, his existence further emphasising all of the virgins shortcomings. He was the physical ideal, confidence embodied.

The autistic social awkwardness, the physical weakness, the insecurity which marred the virgin were anathemas to Chad. Chad is always a force to be reckoned with.

The meme expanded and to this day its potential seems tireless. We have seen the Virgin Islands vs the Chad Republic, the virgin democratic process vs the chad insurrection.

Individuals crafting these memes root out the weaknesses of their opposition and align them with the virgin. They place a kind of meme based curse, associating the target with all the milquetoast wretchedness of the virgin.

Chad represents glory in contrast, grandeur beyond the scope of anything the virgin could realise.

The meme advocates physiognomy, the Virgin is physically undesirable in contrast to Chad. His physical weakness reflects his weakness of character.

I believe this meme to have powerful potential when incorporated into meme magick, the outcome of a well crafted Virgin Vs Chad meme inspiring the mockery and resentment of a target. More advanced meme magicians are able to look at political situations and world events and translate these things to a Virgin vs Chad meme with ease.

An early example of this meme suggests it's timeless appeal. A commercial for a newspaper called 'The Morning Leader', it contrasts two faces, one with a strong jawline and handsome features, the other weak and effete. Clearly the 'virgin' of the two. The poster implies that the Morning Leader is for the chad, whereas the virgin prefers 'cheap and untrue sensationalism'.

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•Thoughts on the Virgin•

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Before the virgin vs chad meme enjoyed its current popularity, the concept of virginity had mystical implications among /r9k/ incels.

Perhaps as a form of coping, these shut ins and sexual failures ascribed profound significance to their involuntary celibate status. They proposed maintaining ones virginity past the age of 30 granted an individual with 'wizard powers'.

This inversion of the virgin vs chad meme seems to have waned in popularity over the past two years. At the 'wizard' memes peak, popular right wing podcast network The Right Stuff made reference to 3DPD. This was to imply real life women, in contrast to anime women, are 'pig disgusting'.

The incel community began to proclaim themselves a kind of aristocracy, detached from cheap and worldly desires. They had their leaders, avatars who were granted almost religious significance, saint codincel being the most prominent.

Then there was 'Chateau Autiste', who proposed enjoying anime women would make you more desirable to 3D women. They'd be moved to jealousy upon becoming aware of an incel's anime harem and want him for themselves. Despite this, Chateau Autiste maintains his position that anime women are superior and his interest in 3DPD is all but non-existent.

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•In Conclusion•

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Attempts by the incel community to cope were undermined severely by the virgin vs Chad meme. The virgin shut in who once tried to utilise memes to associate his lack of social standing with magic powers came undone with the arrival of Chad.

In the murky, curtained world of the incel, complete with piss bottles and yuri schoolgirl visual novels, Chad was like an irrepressible burst of natural sunlight. His arrival on the scene 'mogged' the virgin and stripped him of any imagined prestige.

•Spooky Stuff•

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•The Nightmare•
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The scariest thing I have seen in recent years is a documentary called 'The Nightmare' by Rodney Asher. It presents us with the idea that sleep paralysis is infectious, that by discussing night terrors others can contract them.

Upon finishing this film you're left wondering whether the impression it has made on you will manifest in your sleep.

I've never experienced sleep paralysis, but it seems to transcend rational explanation at times. The universal apparitions, hags and shadowmen surely cannot be explained by science.

I rarely dream. I don't remember my dreams anyway. The things I do remember are usually mundane, extensions of my stress in day to day life. I recently dreamt I was going to attend a job interview, on the way I realised I was wearing jeans and a t shirt rather than a suit. Dull stuff.

Every year I make a resolution to put myself into more situations where I might have some kind of paranormal encounter. Sleep paralysis is perhaps the only exception to this rule, the only context in which a paranormal encounter sounds terrible to me.

Shadow people are always bad news. Nobody is ever happy to see shadow people. Reports of sightings span over decades, they're discussed on Coast to Coast with individuals theorising on their origin. The fact we are more susceptible to their presence during sleep paralysis is apparent, but the reason for this remains unknown.

Those who suffer sleep paralysis often complain that the medical input they receive is insufficient. Being told by a doctor 'it is not real' does little to help the person who receives nightly visitations from grotesque old women and sinister silhouettes.

The Nightmare also touches on the fact victims of sleep paralysis can feel pain. Freddy Krueger emerged from this morbid sleep paralysis lore, claws and ill intentioned men in hats. He was a chilling figure in A Nightmare on Elm Street, but sadly declined into gimmicky pop culture comedy device with subsequent sequels.

People seek to induce lucid dreaming for the control and power it affords them. Sleep paralysis in contrast is disempowerment, the loss of control. It is horror.

Imagine slipping into a night terror, whilst watching TV perhaps. The presenter is looking at you, threatening you. He tells you he has sent some friends. The TV turns to static. Shadow men enter the room, led by one in a bowler hat, they surround you. You cannot move. There is deafening noise. You can just about make out their threats.

"You have no idea of how powerful we are, you have no idea of what we can do to you."

The you awake, the program continues as normal, the lines between waking life and sleep paralysis blurred and uncertain.

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•Salvia Divinorum•
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The thing with Salvia is that you're left with little to reflect on. You're pretty sure you had a bad time but you'd hard pushed to remember why or clearly explain what had happened.

I smoked Salvia once and just had a laughing fit. The second time I did as I was told, held it in and broke through...

Blam. Like a shotgun blast to the ego, I felt as though my brain had been reset to a kind boot mode. Anything I could visualise around me was cartoon like and unreal. Disney Jungle Book shades of colour. I couldn't have told you where I was, who I was with or anything coherent at that point.

I was rolling around on the floor, attempting to run somewhere but glued to the ground. Sinking into the carpet.

The crazy thing is, the moment you can move, you run. No direction, no destination in mind, you just get away. I ran upstairs. I came down after checking everything was in place, confirming I hadn't entered a parallel dimension. I checked the TV news to confirm it wasn't hosted by lizard people.

Eventually I let my Salvia experience go. It's not something I'd care to repeat either.

•Stories•

Good Coffee Iskalla

The world is full of boring people who wouldn't die for anything. They don't care about anything enough to make any sort of sacrifice, to stand up and put their immediate wellbeing on the line. Fuck those people. It doesn't matter what you stand for, as far as I'm concerned. If nobody gets it, but you get it, and you'd fight for it, you're doing something right.

For me it's food and drink. There's nothing I hate more than poor taste in food. Tastebuds that shy away from any perceived challenge to their palate, anything unfamiliar. I'm not talking about people who have a diet restricted by certain ethical boundaries. You can be a vegan and still buy quality tomatoes and seasoning. There's no excuse for poor taste though.

I'm talking about what I like to call culinary retards. Drinking cheap, watery beers that taste like copper and stagnation. Processed cheese which at its best only vaguely resembles actual, quality dairy produce. I've seen grown adults eating sticks of diluted cheddar, with cartoon character mascots on the packaging. Quick and convenient for the unthinking and dull.

I was raised on this kind of food. Mashed potatoes produced from hot water and a sachet of off white powder. Flavourless carrots from of a tin of water. Chicken from some ungodly grand scale slaughterhouse where the wretched birds are caged in their thousands and left to wallow in defecation and endure the agonies of battery 'life'.

I don't eat meat now, but I don't target meat eaters specifically. Just eaters of bad food and drink in general.

How do you see those microwave dinners and not want to kick somebodies ass?

Last week I was arrested for staging a protest outside a convenience store, I challenged a middle aged man in a business suit for buying a cheap, store brand jar of instant coffee. Let me tell you about it.

I caught him leaving the store, he didn't look at all ashamed of his awful purchase. The top of his head bald, the weight of the world on his shoulders. I wasn't going to give him a free pass just because he looked like a mid life crisis was looming over him and his dissatisfaction with life was unbearable.

"Life's too short to be drinking bad coffee. Just take a moment to smell that crap. Are you really going to settle for that?"

He looked at me confused and shook his head before walking on. I pursued.

"You need to listen to me. I can put you on a better path."

"Listen kid, I'm gonna call the police if you don't back off."

"They should arrest you for spending money on that crime against coffee. Take it back to the store, get your money back and I'll be on my way."

He picked up his pace. I persisted.

"Hey! Shit for taste buds! Get back here!" I called out. Passers by beginning to pay attention.

"Alright, I'm gonna kick your ass if you keep following me. How does that sound bucko?"

I stood still for a moment and pulled my sleeves up.

"If I win, you'll get a coffee with me. I choose the place. No questions asked."

"Goddamit, I'm too busy for this nonsense. I have spreadsheets. Reports! What do I care about coffee? Alright, I'm gonna shove this coffee up your ass!"

He came at me, red faced and fists clenched. The fight went on for a few minutes before the police passed by and broke us up. We exchanged blows, I was younger and faster and had the edge, catching him with an uppercut and sending him back in a daze. His eyebrow cut and eye black. He couldn't keep up.

"This crazy asshole wanted to fight me over some coffee." He pleaded with the police.

"We had an agreement...you need to honour it!"

They released me the following afternoon. My protest made it into the local papers. People would know my name. It didn't take me long to track down store brand coffee business man, doing his commute home. He looked at me in disbelief and prepared to run.

"We had an agreement."

He nodded in defeat, I led the way to the best coffee place in the city. A little independent place with a phenomenal South American single origin. I bought him an americano and myself an espresso.

"Try it." I pushed the cup across the table. He looked at me in frustration. Defeat.

He took a sip and after a moments reflection smiled, laughed.

"You know what kid, you might be a lunatic, but you've got good taste in coffee."

•Weird Web•

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•YouTube Schizophrenia•
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My intent here is not to ridicule or make light of mental illness, or those suffering with one. I am only interested in how the Internet has provided a platform to those with unconventional thought patterns to reach an audience.

The most famous example of internet insanity is perhaps Terry Davies. Here was a man who was lucid and capable of great clarity when discussing computer programming, but was sadly overwhelmed by his schizophrenia in any other situation. He was widely mourned following his passing.

Recently I discovered Astrid D, a YouTuber who believes Justin Bieber and a man named Burdett are murdering people. It seems she used to be a Justin Bieber fan but came to see the error of her ways and now condemns this cold hearted pop star killer.

She rants about the atrocities carried out by Burdett, his malevolent influence on Justin Bieber, alternating between Spanish and English.

"Fuuuucking puta Justin Bieber."

She calls on these men to realise the error of their ways and stop their killing. Her pleas are earnest and heartfelt. Her anger raw and seething. The chaos of an unstable human mind self documenting in this way is compelling.

Not entirely unlike this ezine.

Her videos get up to a hundred views, she is a more obscure figure and seems to have disappeared since earlier this year. Look her up. Support her efforts to expose Justin Bieber and his crony Burdett.

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