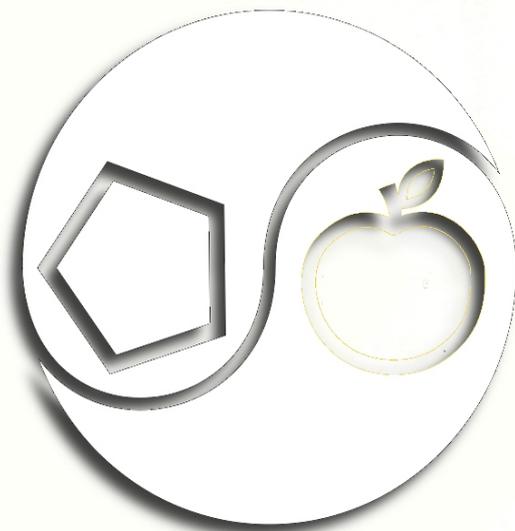


# Musings of a Faceless Man

Inspired by the Black Iron Prison



*A collection of semi-relevant  
doodles, poetry and prose.*

[www.principiadiscordia.com](http://www.principiadiscordia.com)

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### what is this I see before me?

This document, is one man's attempt at something "new", in the loosest sense of the word, with a friendly nod to his inspirations along the way. The underlying theme could be qualified as "Discordia", but I doubt that clarifies anything for anyone.

what you should know is that I hadn't really planned any of this. I started out just illustrating the Black Iron Prison, this document's father project, in a way, and somewhere along the way I had a change of heart, and suddenly I ended up with a series of my own writings and illustrations, on an admittedly similar theme.

So without further ado: ten minutes of your life that you will never get back\*.

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Hey, kid.

*Welcome to Prison.*

You think you just woke up here one day, right? Think again. It was your whole life that brought you to this. Fact is, you were born to be here. Go ahead, look around. I'll be here when you get back.

Looks smaller than it is, don't it? Sometimes, it doesn't even feel all that bad. But still... You look through those bars, and you see all that you're missing. Hopes. Dreams. What could-have-been. Here, put your palms up to the Black Iron, grab the bars, let me show you something.

Feel that? That's all the books you've read. And that entire wall over there is your adolescence. Look up: It's your CD collection. The floor you woke up on? Your parents. Like I said, you were born to be here. It's your life, it's the cold trap of your own existence. You painted yourself into a corner.

So, now you're wondering why you feel trapped here, in your own life. Why now, why today, can you see the bars of a Black Iron Prison that you made for yourself? Because you stopped reacting, and took a couple of steps forward. You thought you could do what you wanted, you tried to be self reliant, and bang. You smacked your head against the wall.

What's that? Yeah. That's when the claustrophobia sets in. When you didn't know you were trapped, everything was fine. But now that you know, you can see your entire, tired, monotonous life stretch out before you, trapped in these 4 walls, these 6 sides. Breathe, kid. It's just abject panic that you're feeling right now. Some even say that this is what death feels like: An unchanging life, immune and unfeeling to what you really want.

Look around you. Look at these cold, black bars. The colorless ceiling. The hard ground. That's your universe. That's the world you're going to be living in for the rest of your life here in Prison. You're going to live out your life in quiet desperation. Or, not so quiet if you decide to take the rife/bell tower route. Either way, long or short, it'll feel the same. Dead, unchanging.

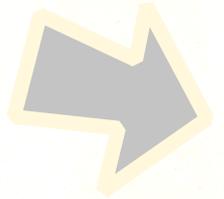
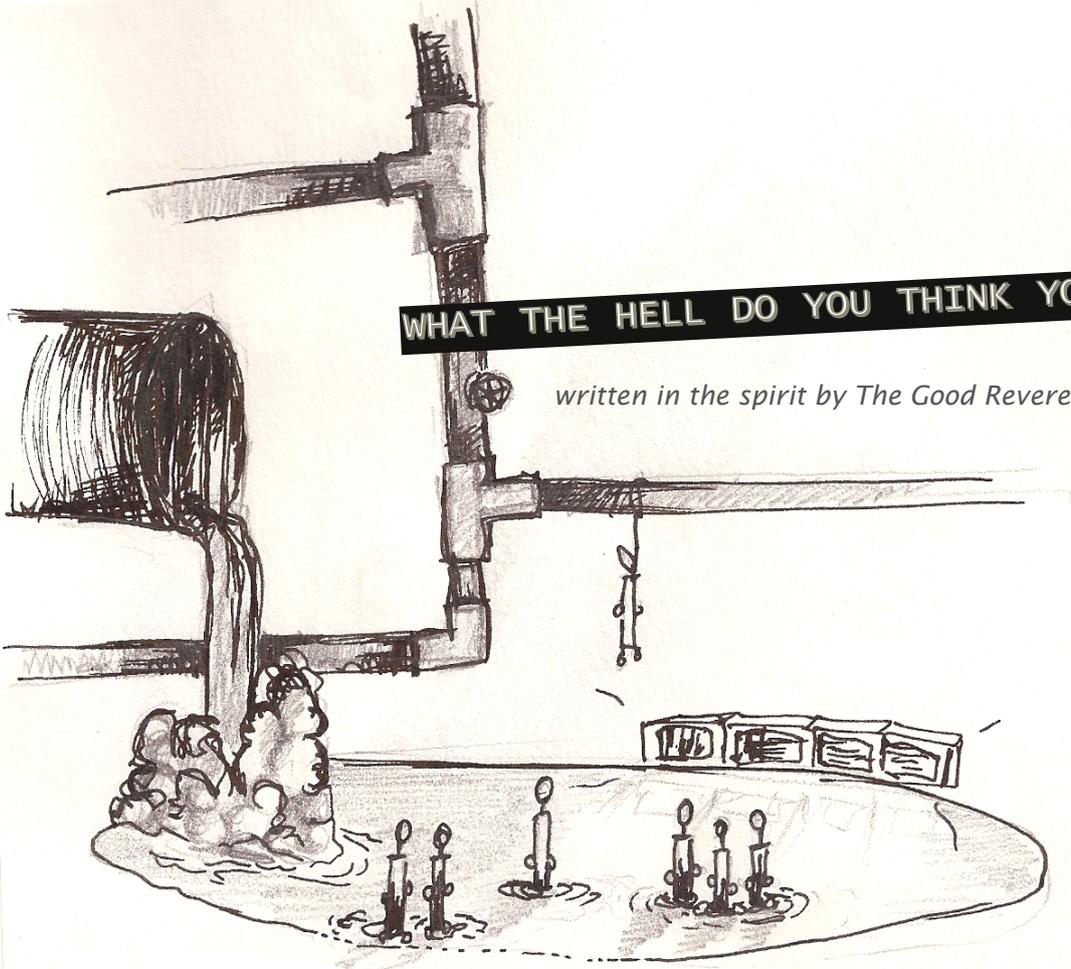
So, if you're interested, I'd like to invite you to a jailbreak...

Just turn around.



WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?

*written in the spirit by The Good Reverend Roger.*



**Most limitations  
are false.**

**Real limitations  
are malleable.**

This isn't the latest reality teevee show! This isn't the coolest new electronic trinket! It isn't a ringtone! So why the hell are you messing with it? You'd better put this down, before someone sees you...you might get in trouble, or worse! You might even look stupid and uncool!

Listen, genius...the powers that be work very hard to insure that you have all the information and entertainment that they think you need. And THIS is how you thank them? By reading some subversive flyer that was probably left here by some America-hating freak? Huh? well, that's gratitude for you.

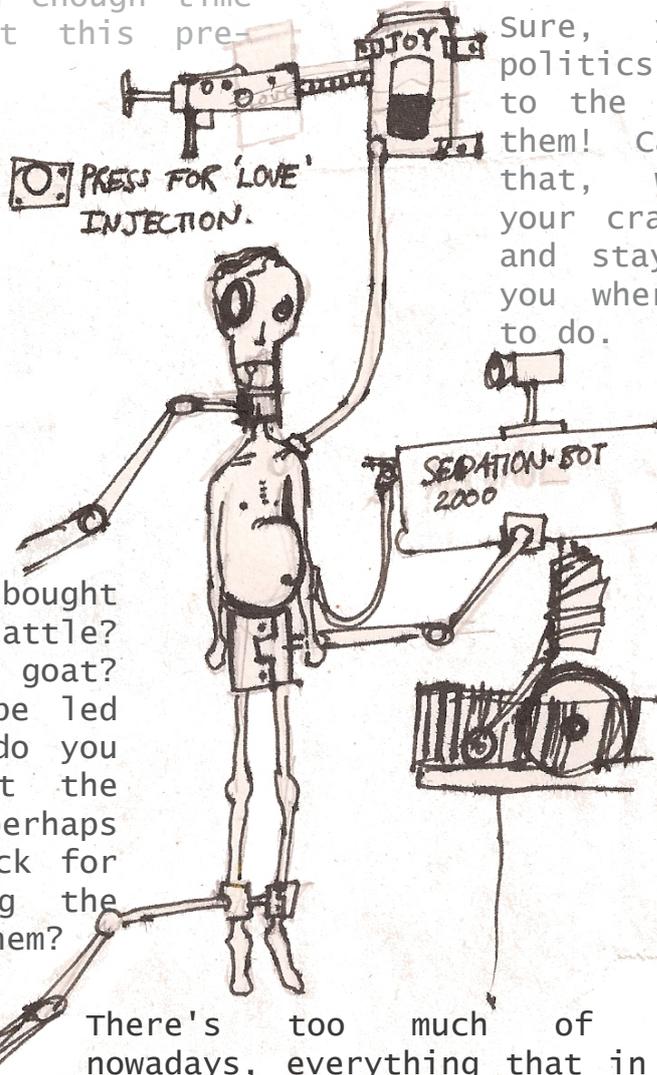
Shouldn't you just put this down, and go turn on the television? You're probably missing something that you just can't live without. What's gonna happen during your 20 minute lunch break, when everyone's talking about American Idol, and you missed it? What then? You'll be a pariah. Your coworkers will laugh at you behind your back, and you'll be "off the team". Good luck with that next promotion, Bubba!

So, look...just put this down quick, before anyone notices you reading it, and we'll pretend this never happened, okay? Now, get back to work, and pay attention to what you are supposed to be paying attention to!

Or kill me.

Haven't you had enough yet?  
Are you getting sick of it  
all? You should be. Sickness  
is your way of life. Take  
this pill, do this job, but  
we won't give you enough time  
to cook, so eat this pre-  
made meal.

Hey, it may kill  
you...eventually, but  
think of the poor starving  
children in Ethiopia.  
Sure, your apathy over  
politics helped contribute  
to the mess, but think of  
them! Care for this, eat  
that, watch this, take  
your crap, drink your beer  
and stay smiling. We tell  
you where to go and what  
to do.



Tired of being bought  
and sold like cattle?  
Are you sheep or goat?  
Do you want to be led  
by the nose or do you  
want to headbutt the  
herders, then perhaps  
run amok the flock for  
a while, scaring the  
bejeezus out of them?

There's too much of everything  
nowadays, everything that in a special  
way is nothing. Keeping up with the  
neighbors and the fashions while  
trying to keep up with the bills while  
having your attention distracted by  
vacuous twits on the idiot box. It  
drains you to the point that caring  
becomes too much of a hassle and the  
depressives of society become an  
attractive choice to make.

And that's exactly how we want it! Tired little sheep kept running by the faithful hounds all day long until they are too tired and submit, they break. Who are we? Nowadays, practically everyone...your boss, your leaders, the media at large, the people responsible for American Idol/X-Factor/fill-in-pointless waste of music reality-TV program here....a huge faceless confederacy constantly trying to sway you this way and that, turn you into a follower of anything.

But you can be free. You can sign your very own Declaration of Independence today, turn the tables on this alliance of idiot leaders who would take you for all you have! How? By ignoring us and taking your own road. Yes, it's that simple. What has paying them attention ever done, other than distract and depress you? Until you do that, you cannot own yourself, despite having every material need in the world fulfilled. You can live the safe, numbing 'life' of a servant or you can live it how it was meant to be:

exciting,

terrifying,

and ultimately

**F R E E**

Here endeth the Black Iron Prison, the Springboard.  
Now for the Dive.

# Ordinary

In the city there is only one constant: confinement. We are confined by the walls around us, the concrete paths that we are shoe-horned into by some uncaring higher authority. Every option is pre-determined, beyond our control. Every idea is pre-meditated.



But people still want to be free, people still find ways to subvert and re-appropriate their environment, quietly changing it into something they prefer. Every generation has a way of redefining the urban environment, but ultimately, they are all looking for the same experience, the same overwhelming feeling of being "in the moment". Of flowing in their environment. Of being free.

Of course, this state (dubbed "Flow") is not actually being free, it is just feeling free. Then again, all we really do is feel, and react, so "feeling" free and "being" free are fair approximations of each other, in some sense. Flow is often found in athletic endeavour, and is a concept referenced often in the extreme sports world. Here the utter concentration on every muscular movement, and dedication to one goal can cause one to experience this peaceful sense of flow, or freedom. Why?

Because in that moment you are completely alone.

Only the moment mattered, for a few seconds you can reach a state of focus where all of the false limitations placed on us by our government and our peers melt away. For a moment, the only limits are the laws of physics. In that brief time, all illusion evaporate, because you don't care about them anymore, you're eyes aren't drawn away by the smoke and mirrors, because you no longer care for smoke and mirrors. There is only you. And within yourself you are free.

Physical focus, however, is not the only path.

I found this sanctuary from oppression on the roof, with the cold slate against my back, feet pressed against the hard stone gutter and toes curled over the edge to stop me slipping. I can watch the sunset from here, in a peaceful place, high above, once again gloriously separated from ordinary expectations and all at once connected to every ordinary life there ever was. Here I can bask in the extravagances of the everyday experience that have affected mankind since its birth. Billions of eyes have watched the same sun set, and billions have felt the breeze across their skin. Here I find myself, connected through the ordinary, as an insignificant footnote in an ever expanding history. I found it comforting to think that as an individual, briefly emancipated from civilisation, as a free primal self, I did not matter.

Down in the world, as a student, as a co-worker, as friend, in whatever role I chose a situation was created in which I was bound by responsibility for my actions.

But here on the rooftop, I am a solitary nothing.

And I am free.

The Student asked the wise Man,

"How can I be Free?"

To which the wise Man replied,

"Simply recognise,  
that your mind is your own,  
your world is your own,  
and you can do with it what you wish."

So the Student rushed off into his world  
and proceeded to do away with all  
he felt threatened by.

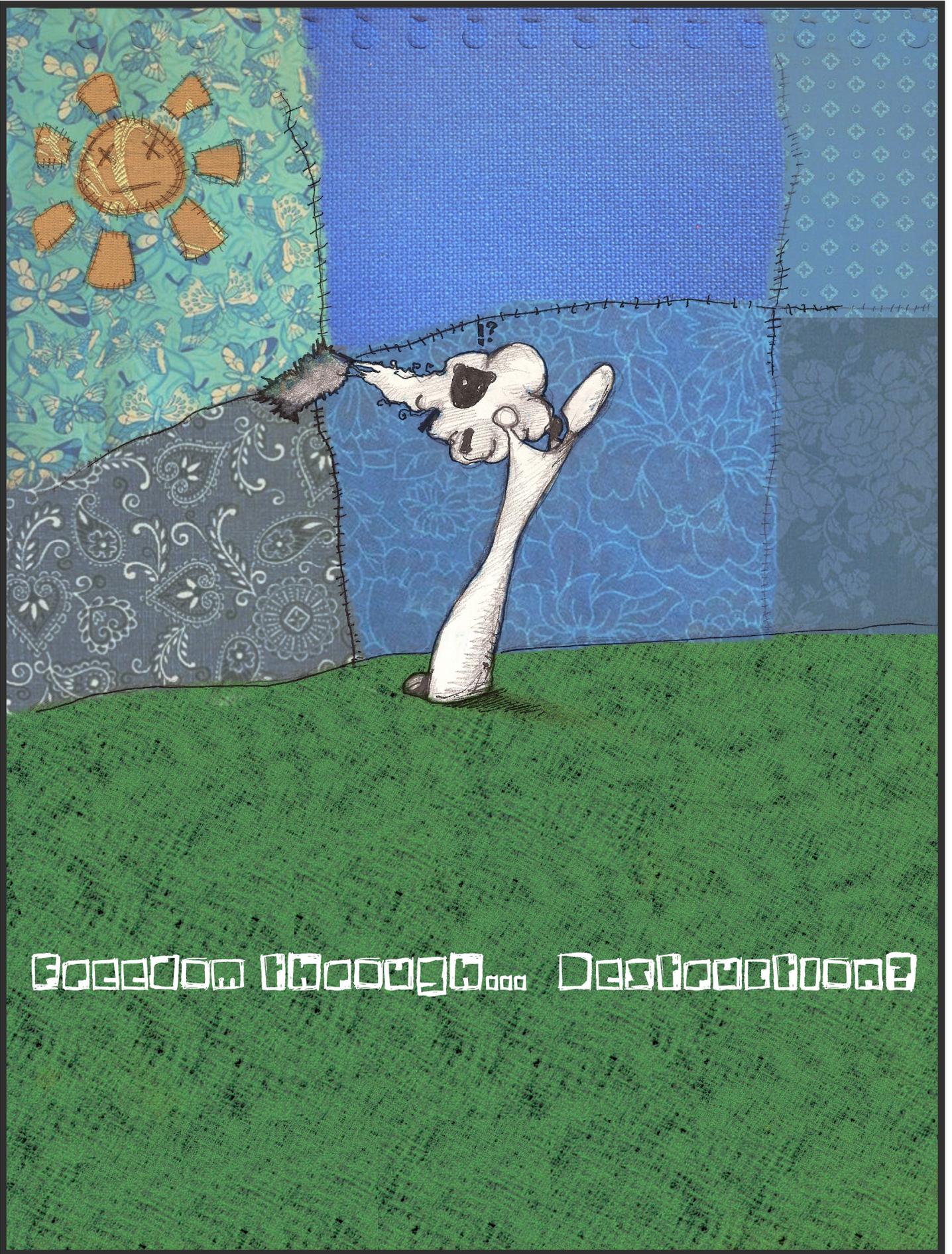
He tore the helpless flocks of clouds  
from the patchwork sky  
so he could bask forever  
in the glorious rays of hand-sewn sunshine.

He threw all his troubles away,  
he mercilessly disposed of the the moral guidance  
of his peers,  
he polluted the rivers of aquired knowledge with  
petroleum,  
he cackled manically as he set ablaze  
all that had once defined him.

He had found "freedom" by destroying everything  
that created him.

"So, what are you now?", asked the wise Man.

"I'm... uh... fnord.", replied the Student,  
drooling.



FREEDOM THROUGH... DESTRUCTION?

## A Cloudless Sky

When we grew up, the sky was empty. So we looked down, we looked at the mud and the grass and the streams that cut across our countries, like a shattered pane of glass. We studied them like they were the most wonderful things the world had to offer. And we always had wonder.

We looked down with such fascination that as we approached adulthood we developed a hunched back, and as we obsessed more and more over what was below us, the mud we walked on every day, our imaginations developed a hunched back too. We could never imagine anything beyond the world that our we had in front of us, we tried, but we couldn't even imagine looking up any more. Who would ever want to look at that plain, empty sky, anyway?

We were so fascinated we began to dig. We tore big chunks out of the Earth, always looking for something deeper. For some deeper meaning, than to look down at the mud in front of us. And the Earth bled for our fascination.

As we grew old, the world grew tired and spat out her spirit, a lonesome cloud floating across an empty sky. One young boy looked up in wonder, while the rest of us stared at the ground, with sullen tired eyes, a silent betrayal of our boredom.

He chased that lonely spirit until the Earth bled out.

## More Daisies, Hatter.

I thought about growing up (something I never intend to do), and growing old (something I don't have a choice in). I wondered whether it was always the case that as time goes by, you always give more and more and get less and less back. I guess until you die, which is probably when you give everything, and get nothing back.

Maybe it's that society does its very best to make us grow up, maybe the Machine™ is just eating away at all our childish energy from the moment of our birth. "Those not busy being born are busy dying" afterall, but maybe not just in body, in spirit too.

Now, I don't know about you, but that just don't seem fair to me, and I know life isn't fair, but it could sure as hell be fairer.

So I guess I'll make a pact, or an Old Year's resolution, to make life a little fairer, so that when the time comes for me to give my last, I'll take something back too.

with force, if necessary.

**Life is too short to rush**



## It's a funny thing, gravity.

It's not something that I normally think about, but its always dragging you down, sounds obvious right? You know you get shorter over the course of day? That gravity compresses your spine without you even noticing. Can you imagine what would happen if you were to stand up for any serious length of time? It would probably crush you, and you wouldn't even notice, until you've got gravel in your teeth that is.

Gravity's a clever git you see, its quiet, you think its just keeping itself to itself, but everytime you stand up, everytime you vie for a little more freedom it starts wearing you down, it wants you for itself you see, it wants to wrap its soft tentacles around your skull and bring you crashing into the fold. It wants your soul. It wants to say that you belong to gravity. That you are its slave.

So what are you gonna do? You just gonna stand there and wait until you melt into the ground? Maybe try and be like a bird, fly away and pretend to be free. The birds aren't free you see, eventually they land, eventually gravity wears them down, and traps them, a drags them into the ground.

Maybe just make yourself a teenage cliché, throw yourself off something high and see if you can at least make a dent in the crust, unlikely, but you never know, you could always bring some friends, then you got a better chance right? Or at least its more hassle to clean up.

how about a slingshot? Get yourself some propulsion, swing around this rock and fire yourself into outta space, outta time if you get lucky. Whatever happens, just remember to smile and tell everyone your having a great time through those gritted teeth. Don't let anyone forget you're still determined.

But its a funny thing, gravity, in the end, it always wins.

## Gonna walk on water.

Look how still it is. It's like glass, or a dead baby. You'll see, I'll just step out.

I'm gonna walk on water.. This Messiah shit is overrated honey, I mean, sure they'll forgive your sins, but whats the point in a perfect soul anyway? Just so you get a guaranteed spot on the Pearly Gates guestlist? That don't count for shit. That's not what life is about. Life is about walking on water. It's about embracing every beautifully imperfect moment that our fleeting existence has to offer, there's no such thing as an ordinary moment you see, and don't you forget it. It's never your time to die. Why do you even care? You wasted life why wouldn't you waste death? There are plenty of saviours going round anyway, pick your favourite.

Hey Lucy, are you there honey? I need a hand, I'm gonna walk on water, yeh I knew you'd say I'm crazy, don't worry, you can have my heart and soul, I'll always come back to you but you gotta help me out baby, I'm trying to prove a point here. I'm gonna walk on water, remember?

Hell, any beardy fucker can pull that old trick huh? How about we make things interesting, just to show how easy this Messiah shit really is yeh? Let's make it a challenge. I'll just tie these weights round my waist, now ain't that a little bit of tongue twister? Try saying it fast after half a litre of vodka honey, you just try it, I'll tighten the knot. Did your fuckin' Messiah ever pull this shit on you? Bet he didn't, the fuckin' pansy.

C'mon Lucy I need this...

I'm gonna walk in water baby, you'll see. I'll just step over edge. I'll still be smiling at the bottom.

OUR WORLD  
IS SO DARK.

THE LIGHT  
IS  
TRAPPED  
BELOW US



*Do you love God?*

Of course not, how can I love something I don't even believe in?

*Do you love the Sea?*

uhh... yes.

*Then you love God.*

Oh... are you sure?

*yup.*

Um... How?

*Well. Even if you don't believe in God he's still there. God is what makes a moment amazing, He's what fills you with awe and wonder. God isn't a thing He's a feeling.*

Right. But... can't I just you know... like the sea?

*That's the same as liking God.*

Do I have to call it God?

*Hmm... no not really.*

Okay.

*Also, God is a Giant Squid.*

Maybe all this isn't really worth it.  
This Thinking for Yourself business.  
Sometimes I think its just too much  
effort. That really we should just lie  
down and give in, we should stop biting  
the hand that feeds.

where does it get us? in the end?

I know what you'll say. That life is  
meaningless, but we can give ourselves  
meaning, and there might be some worth  
in that. Isn't there worth in someone  
else giving your life meaning? Maybe  
its better to just roll with the punches.

Give up. Lie Down. You are a  
disillusioned mouse, still pretending to  
be a man. Lie Down and Suffer like the  
rest of humanity. We are not special.  
We are not above the rest. Since when  
do we deserve the privilage, of thinking  
for ourselves, schmuck?

Give up.

**People can get used to anything.**

THAT DOESN'T  
MEAN THEY SHOULD.

Maybe I'm Doing it

Wrong.

THERE'S

# SOMETHING CHASING ME...



It's the Strangest Beast. It looks like a man, and he's always smiling, but his face is made of cogs and gears, and his heart is clockwork, and he ticks away at the back of your mind, counting down the seconds till his grin gets wider, and the tick-tock of his bodyclock speeds up. And he crushes you underfoot.

He's the one that makes you rush to work, he controls the cogs tied to your wrist, and he controls the cogs tied to your house. He even controls the the electric cogs in your alarm clock. And he makes all those funny numbers and shapes mean something. He dreams that those numbers are important, because he controls the numbers, and we are all trapped in his dream, so we have to believe that they are important too. Otherwise we get chewed up by that infernal machine, spat out and forgotten.

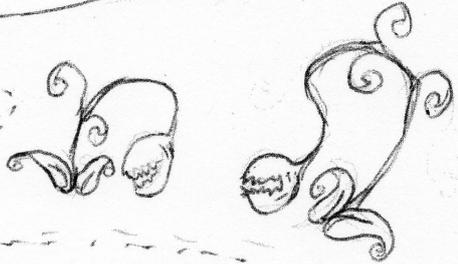
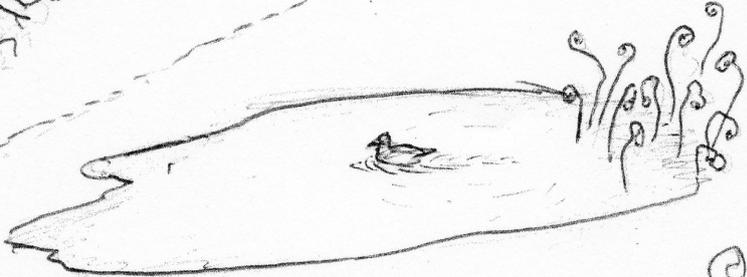
That clockwork man has a heart of gold, and not in the metaphorical sense. He needs money like we need oxygen, and he'll take your money, and he will own you. You will only ever hear the tick-tock, you might even pretend that its music. When he owns you all you will feel is the steady wheeze of his machinery, and the taint of his stale metallic breath.

You'll know, as you start to choke,  
its not the people or the places,  
**It's the fresh air you'll miss the most.**

X-marks

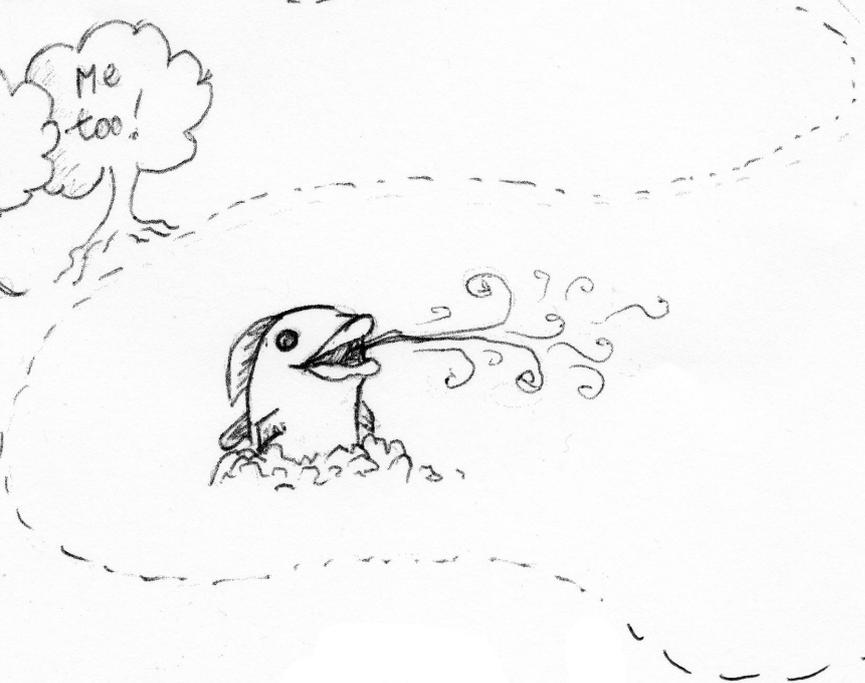
~~the further explanation of an overused metaphor.~~

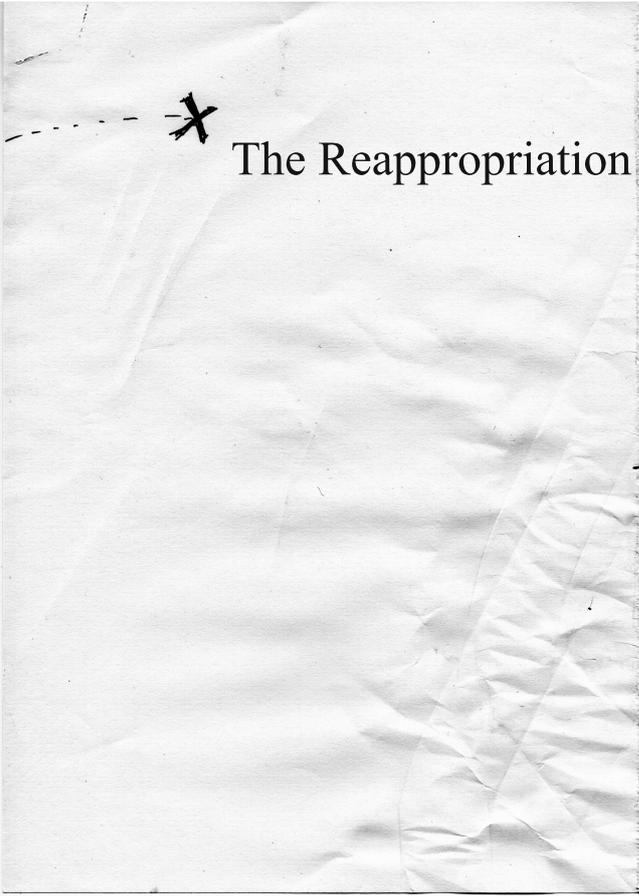
You ARE HERE



I'm a tree!

Me too!





## The Reappropriation of Maps.

If there is one thing I can say, with certainty, it is that as human being, you will never see the territory, in a metaphorical sense. We are ill equipped to perceive reality in its full detail. A human being is incapable of understanding the big picture and the tiniest detail simultaneously, we are limited in too many ways.

We are limited in our apparatus. Try this, close your eyes, and try to pinpoint and name every sound that you hear.

Done? Don't tell me what you did hear, that's irrelevant, what you didn't hear is far more important. What about the multitudes of insects creeping around merrily in the room around you? Why not go smaller, the gentle flap of bacterial flagellum as they propel themselves across your skin?

### Nope?

Hopefully you can see that many of the tiny details of reality are lost in transition from the physical to the mental, our sensory apparatus is designed to deal with macro situations, not micro ones. Even with our quickly advancing technology we still seem to hit a brick wall when trying to reconcile the micro with the macro (here I am referring specifically to quantum phenomena).

Simply put, we are ill equipped to observe a "true" reality, in a **purely mechanical sense.**

X-MARKS THE SPOT!

YOU ARE HERE



QUANTUM

But this is all foreword really, our observation is further skewed by our own personality, our experiences and beliefs. Ever been home and felt a comforting warmth even on a cold day? I'd bet that comforting warm, fuzzy feeling probably isn't contained within the bricks or the mortar.

I'm a tree!

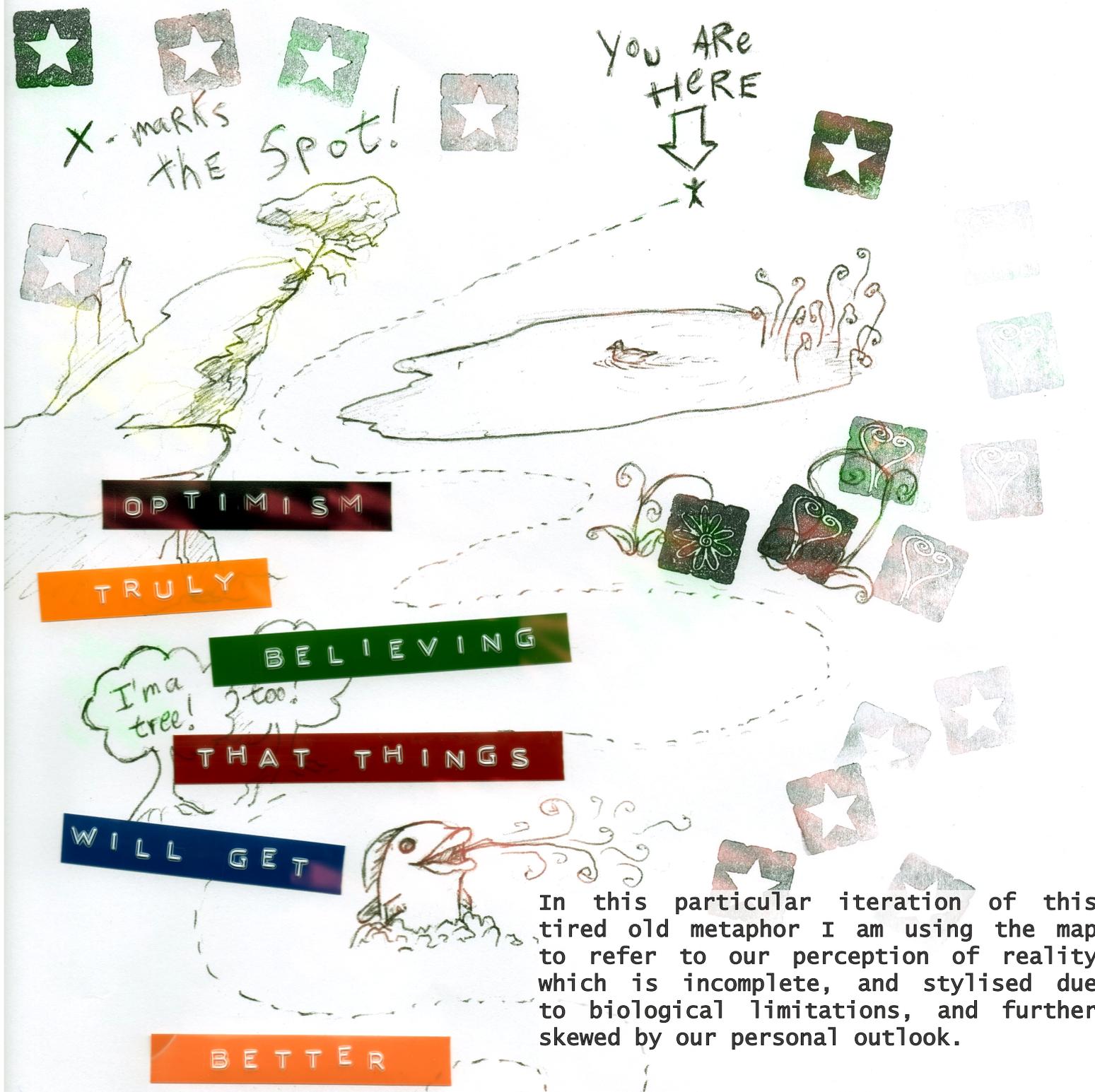
THE X IS IN MANY

PLACES AT ONCE

So what do we see, what do we perceive, if not the territory itself? Well, I guess we all know where this is going:

The Map.

DISCOVERY CAUSES COLLAPSE



In this particular iteration of this tired old metaphor I am using the map to refer to our perception of reality which is incomplete, and stylised due to biological limitations, and further skewed by our personal outlook.

what is the purpose of the map then? well, simply put, the map allows us to function. If we truly perceived every detail of reality simultaneously we would be overwhelmed by its chaotic complexity.

Somewhere along the line, humans started to play round with the map, we started reappropriating. We took our simple little maps that once upon a time just helped us function and stay alive, and we started to embellish them.

This is the nature of belief.



A belief, or subjective view point, is a way of altering your personal map, to (hopefully) something more helpful or more appealing. Of course there are some beliefs that simply do not work, why? Because all beliefs are built on the map, so if they alter the map so much it no longer reflects a stylised version of reality we begin to have trouble functioning.



wait... None of this is real?

WELL NOW,

LET'S NOT  
MAKE ANY

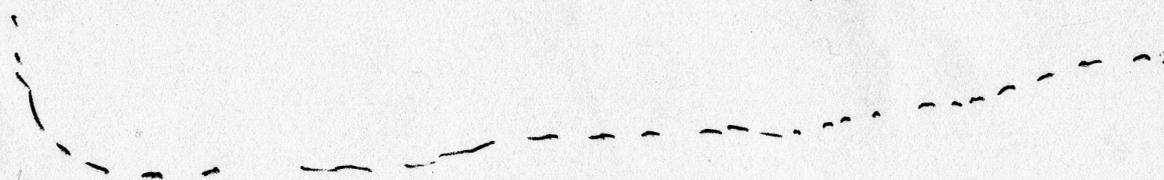


So what makes a successful belief?

One that enhances the map, adds detail in areas that are lacking, removes unnessecary detail, or just makes it more appealing. You can cover the map in pretty stars if thats what floats your boat but there's no point in replacing a lake with a mountain, that's just going to get you into trouble.

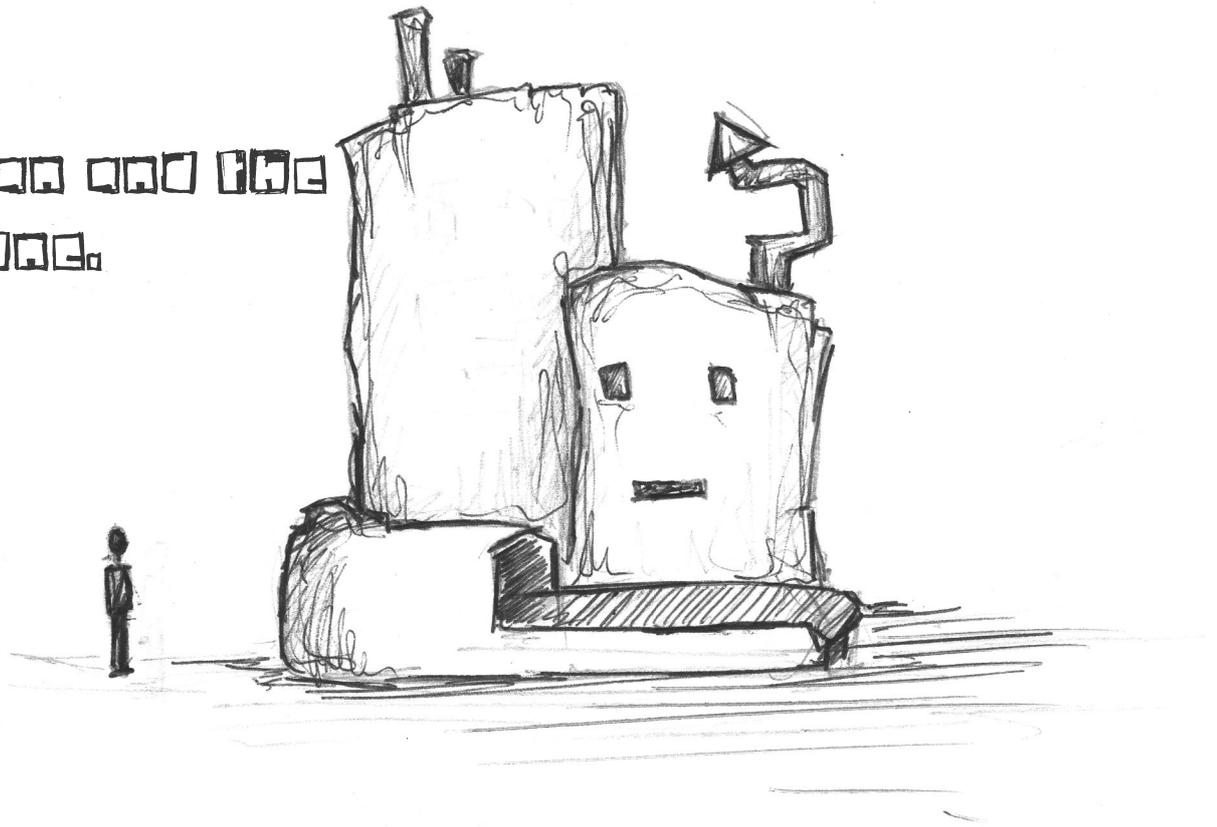
**In conclusion,** I find that beliefs have very little to do with true or false, and surprisingly little to do with right or wrong, but a hell of a lot to do with finding a personal niche.

finding a PERFECT map.





# THE MAN AND THE MACHINE.



In my head there is a man, and a machine.

A little man talking to a giant machine, a giant machine all encased in steel. Who knows what's going on inside the machine, who knows what it keeps in there, who knows how it works? All I know is what it makes.

The little man talks a lot, but he talks in straight lines, follows thoughts around like a child following a paper trail. He pretends to have all the answers, long before he's got to the end.

He talks all the time that he's searching, and the machine listens, silently, sometimes it whirrs, then it goes back to sleep. Sometimes the man mumbles, and the machine sparks into like, there are crashes and bangs from within, there is the grinding of metal on metal. A conveyor belt brings out something new for the man to consider.

The man bitches about the world.  
The machine makes puppies.



The machine does not think in straight lines.

Sometimes the machine makes a Bad Thing™. Sometimes the man mumbles and the machine reminds him of things from a long time ago. Things forgotten. Things that had been Dealt with.

And the man screams at the machine. He shouts at the top of his lungs, demanding to know why the machine has made this memento, searching desperately for any reason at all, longing to know what is in the machine.



He screams until he is coughing up blood.

The machine is silent.



plant your  
DREAMS.

## Plant your dreams.

They dreamed my dream into real.

It all started before I was dead though. Once upon a time, I looked inside my head. It was bright in there, and there was energy, and heat. But the world was a barren wasteland. All the buildings, crumbled. All the life mutated. All the roads went to the wrong places, or they went nowhere at all.

Maybe this is why my Thinks are Stranged.

There was beauty in this destruction. In the sky, my dreams swam like beautiful fish, made of delicate strands of silver light. You can tell that dreams are happy, when you see them in their natural state.

I thought the world needed more dreams. I knew the world needed more dreams. So I plucked those beings of light, from that desolate land and I wrapped them up, all together. A little parcel of fantasy. A seed of hope.

I planted my dreams, deep in the heart of this cold, dark earth. There they lay, a delicate silver spore in the dark earth. There my dreams stayed, for a long time. I dreamed new dreams, but I kept them with me. Life went on. Then I died, as we all do sometimes.

Time passed, the world kept on spinning, there was conquest and defeat, there was war. There were bombs dropped.

The world was a barren wasteland.

But people still dreamed. The dreamed my dream and my dream stirred, in the dark depths, my dream took root. My dream grew into a giant silver tree, that reached so gracefully high above the rotting stumps of ruined buildings.

The tree bore fruit, that grew large and filled the sky with gossamer clouds, that swam carefree through the air. The world was filled with light.

They dreamed my dream into real.

An abstract artwork featuring a white background heavily splattered with red ink. Overlaid on this are various black ink lines, some of which form a rough, sketchy outline of a human figure. The red splatters are dense and chaotic, creating a sense of movement and intensity. The black lines are more deliberate, though still somewhat gestural, and they intersect with the red splatters.

There is something to be said for  
lighting a fuse

Sometimes it takes a moment of madness to  
bring a plan to fruition

Sometimes you don't even realise you're  
part of the process

An abstract artwork featuring a light blue background with a dense, chaotic pattern of red and black splatters and brushstrokes. The red splatters are prominent, with some large, dark red blotches and many smaller, fine red specks scattered throughout. Black ink is used for expressive, gestural strokes, some of which are thick and dark, while others are thin and wispy. The overall composition is dynamic and energetic, with a sense of movement and intensity.

Sometimes you are all too aware of what is  
going to happen

when Death smiles at you  
with a bomb in one hand

All you can do is  
light the fuse and

Get ready for change

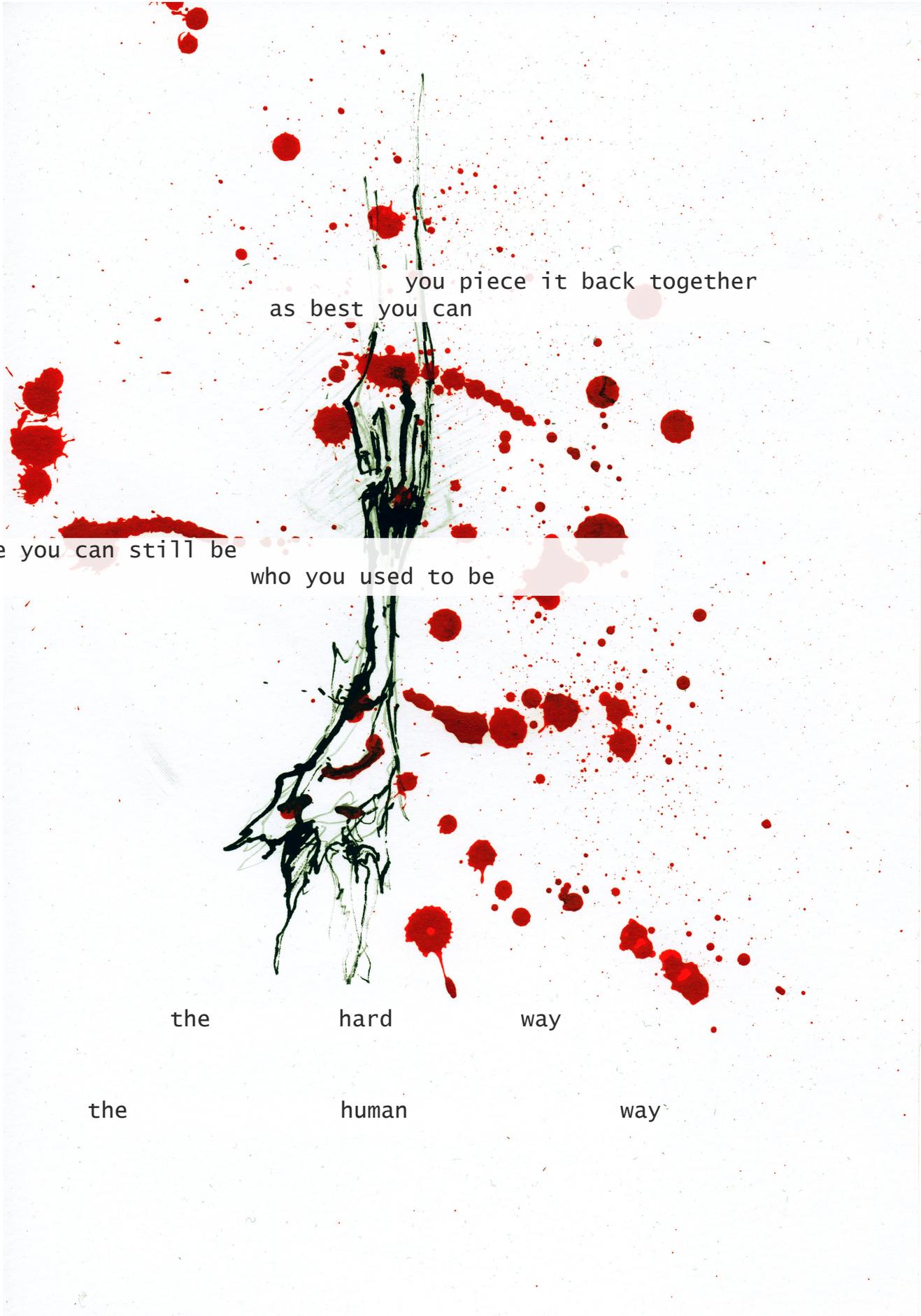
Change is what defines us, whether it be  
gradual or catastrophic

A human develops

A bang is necessary

maybe you get your face burned off





you piece it back together  
as best you can

Hope you can still be

who you used to be

the hard way

the human way

a n a t o m y

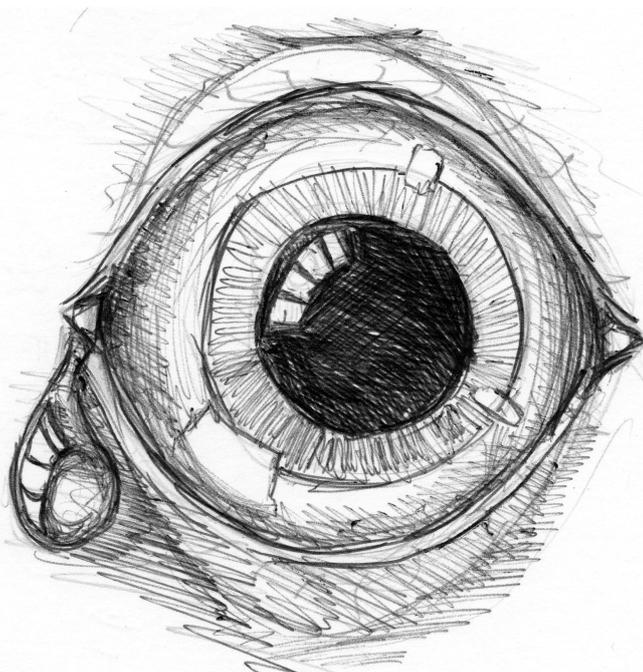
o f a

j a i l b r e a k

# r e a l i s a t i o n

In which the subject notices the prison for the first time. Symptoms include panicking, breathlessness, feelings of helplessness and possibly severe paranoia.

These symptoms can often be alleviated through gentle use of humour.



Subjects are often prone to fighting stage 1, there have been many reports of scepticism following Realisation, occasionally causing relapse into their previous unfulfilled and practically comatose state.

It appears that whatever conditioning the subjects are suffering from is causing a narrowing of mental appreciation, leading to the dogmatic protection of certain dangerous ideals.

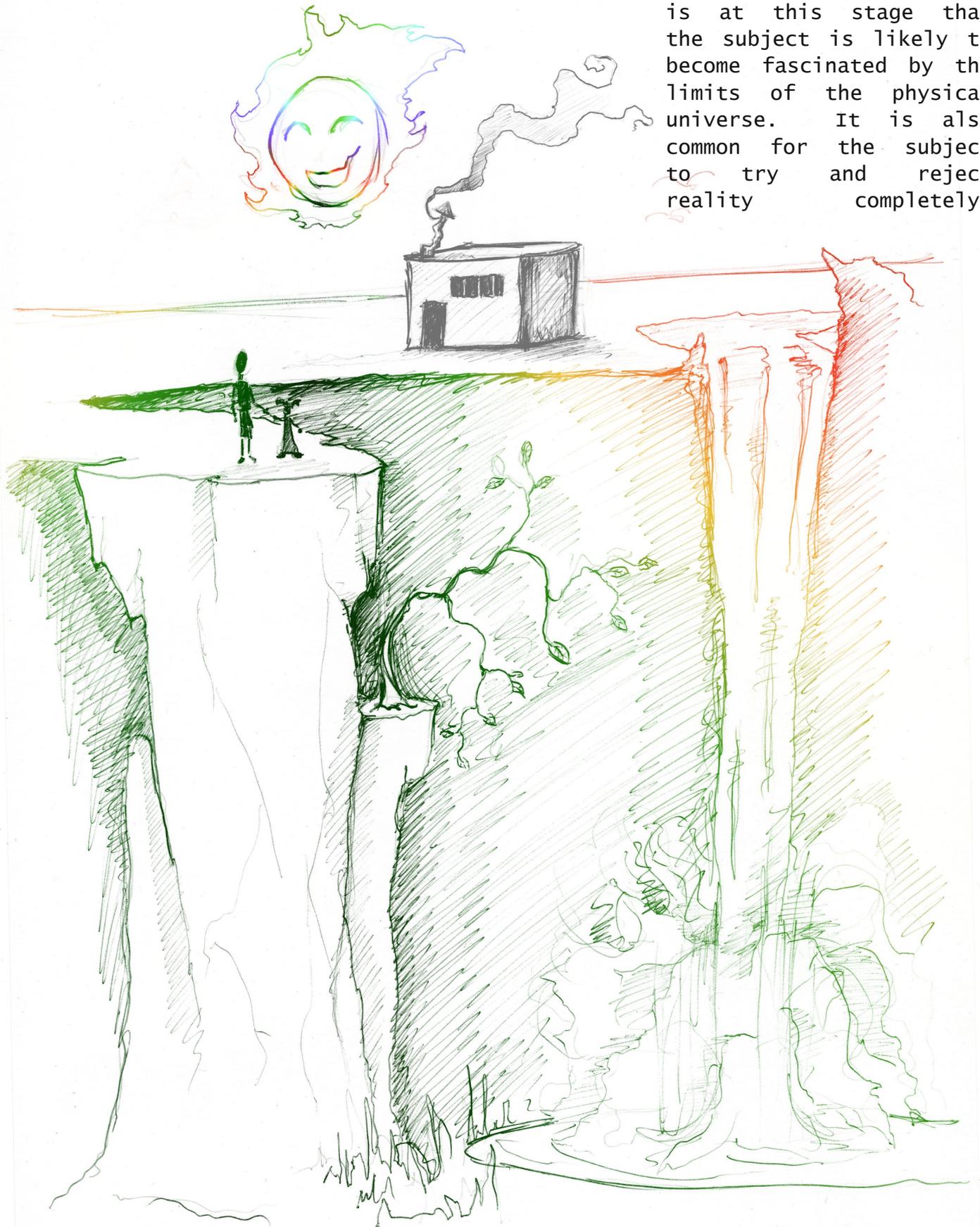
# i n s p i r a t i o n

In which someone or something causes the subject to begin to grasp the state he/she was previously living their lives in. Subject may suddenly discover a profound dislike of televisual entertainment and other forms of mass media. Subject may also begin questioning to an unbearable degree.

*NB: Monitor hormone levels carefully during this stage, if there is any indication of an overactive hate gland proceed with utmost caution.*

# a c t i o n

In which the subject finally begins to try and make decisions of his/her own accord. It is at this stage that the subject is likely to become fascinated by the limits of the physical universe. It is also common for the subject to try and reject reality completely.

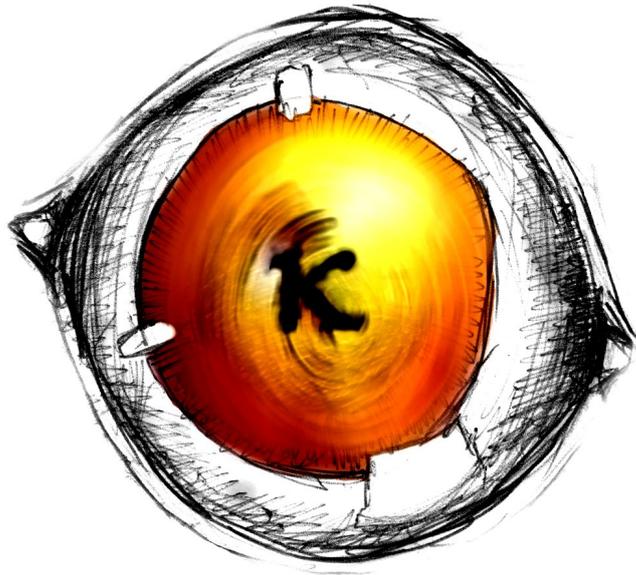


*NB: Keep subject away from barstools, for your own sanity and their own safety.*

# c o n c l u s i o n

In which the subject understands his/her true limitations, and areas in which there exists fals limitations. This is the final stage, success of this stage almost guarantees the subject will continue to question their world and act according to their own will indefinitely, no matter how dogmatic they may have seemed at the start.

*Thankfully,*



*every child is a child of Eris.*

## Special Thanks

- the original writers of the *Black Iron Prison*, especially *The Good Reverend Roger*, *LMNO* and *Cain*.
- that whole crazy bunch at [www.principiadiscordia.com](http://www.principiadiscordia.com), check it out!
- Greg and Kerry
- Alice, neo-situationist queen of DIY art booklets
- You! For bothering to even look at this :)

## Borrowed Writings:

"*Welcome to Prison*" by LMNO

"*What the Hell do you Think you're Doing?*" by TGRR

"*Touch of the Con*" by Cain\*

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Thanks for reading,

x

edd

\*A Touch of the Con spans pages 8-9, it is titleless in this iteration.