

Moving To ———
Distant Points

or

*The Oppressive
Presence Of The
Human Race*

d-real writing lab



June
2023

A creation of the participants of the d-real summer school workshop on Friday 16th 2023 using a variety of writing techniques, such as:

prompts
tarot stories
cut-up technique
procedural generation
artificial intelligence
and
of
course
infinite human spirit



John Kelleher

We wanted to bring people on a journey of exploration about a new technology. We asked them to accept that we don't need to know everything, we asked them to be open to experience and to new perspectives.

If we are open to the new then hopefully we can look at the present and imagine what the future holds. That is what we hoped and then we began working on. The vision we have for the future is that of a society in which art and science come together in harmony, in service of a common purpose. We asked people for help and we asked people to engage with an open mind and then to work constructively with us on their ideas. The possibilities are endless and the possibilities are delightful.

We came together and then something unexpected happened. We became friends, we built trust. We made mistakes along the way. But we got through them. We asked questions, tried new things and found new things to love. We decided to share our adventure with the world. So this is the story. We are sharing it with you now.

Enjoy.

Made in collaboration with: Meditations, MANIFESTOS!

Emily Ip



Moving towards a direction that is not our own

The state of the world lies at the crossroads of knowledge, wisdom, and fear. Those who cling on are doomed from birth. The thing you should know about fear is not what it looks like, but how to embody it. When you see a pattern in the chaos—such as darkness or purity—you can immediately recognize it within yourself. But being able to discern patterns, though, is not a trivial skill. It must be enhanced and enhanced continually. If you keep quiet about it and allow it to go on, eventually it will meet with suppression. You must, therefore, strive to remove the inhibitions which oppose the discharge of the psychic force.

Think of it like this: to be able to label a room is to be able to label a dream. To be able to project a room is to project a picture. When we move towards a direction that is not our own, we project a force that is different from our own; a picture of what we have been, morphed into that which we may fear to face head-on, and if we're lucky, then the path opens up before us that illuminates what we are to be.

Made in collaboration with: Tao Te Ching, Dream Psychology, The Thurd Mind, MANIFESTOS!, Jane Austen-tious

Eléa Thuilier

A Noisy Boredom

A teenager is sitting in a classroom. The knowledge coming through him is not making any kind of sense. He is here, but, at the same time, he is not.

The thoughts are **not** following the monotonous voice of the lecturer. **All he can see are the walls and the ceiling, and the only thing he can feel is the pull of the desk beneath him and the heavy wooden chair in front of him.** Looking by the window, his eyes get lost on the bright green of the grass circling around the school. Here and there, birds are **singing or the city lights are flickering in and out the swinging windows. I want to go,** he thought, but **I'm not sure I'll be able to. Maybe later. Maybe next week.** Maybe in a close future. Maybe... Maybe he would spend time with his friends. **But he was already too tired and worn out to care about any of that now.** He sighed and closed his eyes, drifting to the next dream, a dream in which he saw the sun rise and the world turn grey and black before his eyes.

The teacher breathed deeply. He is aware that most of the students are lost in their thoughts, that the two teenagers at the back are drawing a more and more complex doodle on the wood of the desk, that this girl sitting in the front right corner is already deep asleep for the last twenty minutes. But he is tired. He stops talking for a few second, considers the reaction of the students. Bored. **He feels that they have sunk so low, that they cannot rise again.** Seconds passes. A few students stop chatting to **look at the clock. They are not reading, of course; they merely look at the clock. Long silence.** Then, they look at him, realizing the length of this heavy silence... A full minute passes, unfolding it's awfully long silent seconds. **What they see is, in their very eagerness to know what is going on, an altered state of consciousness; a state of mind in which everything is possible, and which they would willingly have committed if they could have known it.**

Our teenager stops looking at the bird, suddenly very self-conscious of the weight of the silence on his own boredom. He looks at the other guy sitting next to him, tapping frantically his finger on the table. The tapping noise, getting **louder** and louder as he is getting aware of it, is shaking him, making him aware that all this time, through his own boredom, **he had not been in any connection at all, and was beginning to feel quite sleepy.** **He sits up and looks at the teacher again,** trying to ignore the annoying loud finger tapping next to him. Tap, tap, tap. Silence from the teacher. Tap, tap, tap. He's breathing loudly affirming his own annoyance.

Then he is questioning himself. Why in this very loud silence occupying the room for so long made him aware of his own boredom in which he isolated himself, looking by the window, closing his own ear and mind to even the sound of the voice of the teacher until... Well... Until the silence got so loud that made him, suddenly, very aware. Aware of his own boredom. Aware of his own breathing, to the feeling of the air in his nose. Aware of the single tiny sound that his neighbour would do, repeatedly, distractingly. **All at once he realised that he was alone, and that he would have to go on with his terrible task.** He was, I think, in a sort of agony of purpose.

Made in collaboration with: The Art Of Time, The Great Gatsby, A Christmas Carol, Alice In Wonderland, Dracula

Sukriti

**I want to borrow your freedom,
Oh friend! can I borrow your freedom?
Just to know that freedom isn't a lie.
Oh birds! can I borrow your freedom?**

**Freedom to fly,
Freedom to fly towards a secret mountains,
Whooshing sound you make as you fly, to know the
presence of you.**

**Oh mountains! can I borrow your freedom?
Freedom to touch the sky
Freedom to reach the top to see the eternally world
Strong to fight with the world to see the new me.**

Muz Hazman

A Brief History Of The Umbrella

Pitter patter the heavens break and bless us. It blesses us with wet socks, cancelled parties and undrivable laundry. As far as the heavens stretch, even further is the reach of the all-consuming RAIN. This is the story of one man's fight against RAIN and how immeasurable our gratitude to him should be. Year 2023 of some people's Lord, Henryk Johnson invented the now-ubiquitous UMBRELLA. It is said that before he wore it himself, the soft drops and water would burn through his armour and rust the books that carried his thoughts. Only with a bowl of rice and the passage of aeons, many of his contemporaries said, would these books ever be read again.

Henryk was unsatisfied. He had long ago given up hope that any such expedient remedy. "Preventative... Preparative..." he would mutter to himself every time the most microscopic moisture bounced off his head, never quite finding a third "P". In only short 4 years, he had solved mankind's biggest question, with the elegance of a stick and Paper, Henryk's elusive third P. Whenever he would walk in his beloved city, he could go twice the distance with socks only half as wet. But these walks quickly turned from Henryk's sincerest daily delight into a constant source of pain. The blue birds that call home laid eyes upon Henryk's genius, "blasphemy!" many yelled at him. "Braissimo! Visionary!" the other birds would yell. For many seasons, it felt like no bird kept quiet in his presence. Yet there was one small voice which cried out against all this wild speculation: "all I wanted was to walk in the rain". This voice sounded like his own but he knew it was alien.

Henryk's ascent to professorship was largely attributable to his founding of the field of Umbrellogy – though at the time, many referred to it as Artificial InRAINiation. AI has since then grown massively. The first profound leap in this field – which followed the infamous Umbrellogy Winter of the 2030s – was the PARASOLisation of Henryk's core invention. A "base", his contemporaries argued, "frees the human hand, to pursue feats of multi-tasking previously thought impossible in the RAIN". Until his death, Henryk remained unconvinced. Though he appreciated the static stability and non-handed operation a PARASOL offers, he did not see how this would have allowed any further through the city he loved.

While resigned to history, we must never forget the revolution to mankind's abilities in the RAIN that the Prof Henryk Johnson left us. While you may think the notions of Umbrellas and walking in a city as antiquated, these gave birth to the foundation of all human development in the 23rd century: the ROOF. Those at the cutting edge of technology are now proposing the combination of ROOFs of horizontal and vertical orientations, allowing true 360-degree InRAINiation. With the engineering and materials scientists have at their disposal now, many foresee complete protection from heavenly wetness – what some dub Artificial General InRAINiation – is merely a matter of time. Our children will one day never need to know the travesty of cold toes and collapsed tophats. The doomsayers of AGI say InRAINiation has been bastardised by corrupt regulators and financial interest. That Henryk never wished for such a total removal of the RAIN from humanity. Regardless of which side proves to be right, for decades now, noone from either camp walks in the RAIN anymore.

Made in collaboration with: A Tale Of Two Cities, The Hound Of The Baskervilles

Marcus Aurelius

The Lost Meditations: The Thirteenth Book – Consumer Advice

I. When one can buy one bag of Doritos and get one for free then one can hardly complain. And one can hardly blame the state for keeping the price of food down – the state has a responsibility to provide for the common good. Two for one. Don't be distracted.

II. The store brand of detergent is often sufficient for most cleaning needs, and the lather is good for so many purposes. But for some reason people think lathering is better than using it. Why? Because it's easier. Because you're not concentrating on what you're cleaning. You're just doing your job. Concentration means making decisions.

III. While a multipack of Twix may seem like a good deal, the bars are often smaller and the portions of food a little more fragile. When you have to choose, be generous. When you have to make a call, be honest. Ask yourself: Is this the kind of person I want to become? Will I deny myself the full size bar? Or will I eat healthy? When faced with impossible choices, do your best to convince the impossible. When faced with unbearable suffering, turn around and ask, "How does the suffering affect you?"

IV. The 'reduced to clear' aisle should be your priority but be warned – the more out of date the food gets, the greater the chance that it will return and take its revenge. Yet we must eat. Therefore remember that pain is but one of many sensations, the more you experience it, the less you need to fear it.

V. Faulty items may be returned within 30 days. But damaged goods cannot be replaced, unless they are damaged beyond repair. If a defect is found in a thing and can't be fixed, then that's a problem.

VI. Should an item be out of stock, request aid in determining what to order. If it is out of stock, be patient. You can endure a little discomfort while you wait. Pain is nothing to be ashamed of and it will cease eventually.

VII. Christmas will be an especially difficult time as the queues will be long and arduous. You must prepare by yourself. Take refuge wherever you can; don't turn back until you have rested and transformed. When tempted to give up, remind yourself, "This is a mortal coil wrapped around my neck".

Made in collaboration with: Meditations

Leona Ryan



"The fairies are here to help, aren't they?" said the old woman to herself, and then remembered that the people of old knew how to use logic, and how to apply it to things. But yet, here they are – "Am I losing my mind " she thought. She reached out her hand to touch one, as if to validate her sanity. And then... nothing. And then: confusion. Pain. Blotches on her face. Aching muscles. Everything fades into the background.

She was roused awake, "Wake up sweetheart" – her eyes darted open, "Mamma?". Her voice was unsteady. "Are you all right, sweetheart?" asked the nurse turning to face her. "No? But you're doing just fine." Dementia had stolen her memories but not her emotions, sadness crept over her again, she didn't know why, but the isolation engulfed her like the darkness of night, "Mamma?" All that separates us, the empty lotus position – the empty lotus bed – "Take me home."

Made in collaboration with: Meditations, Leona Ryan

Martin Schmalzried

Hard Choices

I am confronted with a difficult choice. If only I could only find a way to make the world a better place, I would be content, just like you. But I am not.

I feel powerless to do anything about the choices I am confronted with, and I am powerless to influence the choices I make. The choices I make are linked to my identity, which is the source of all my power.

But I want to break this vicious circle and create a space where we can be human again. Where we are free to choose what we want to do and not be controlled by others. Where we can express who we are without being controlled by others.

Before I can do that, I need to focus on myself and my inner harmony. When I am not in harmony with my inner harmony, I get stressed. I am also more and more drawn towards the material world, which is filled with noise and gadgets, where I feel trapped and alone.

I need to seek people who are like me and who understand me, to feel at ease and at peace, because otherwise, I would not be able to function in this world.

Now, I am determined to do what's right and to help those who need my help, both in this world and the next.

I am convinced that the only way to transcend the cycle of birth and death is by reconnecting to one's roots, to oneself, to one's being.

Ekaterina Uetova



It was an amazing morning on the beach. Bumblebees were collecting nectar from bushes I had never seen before. I wish I had a camera to take some good pictures of that! The bumblebees were so busy that they didn't even notice that I was watching them! I was captivated by their beautiful intelligence and their curiosity. Intrinsic beauty is in the eye of the beholder. We all know that, but for the curious it can be a bit disarming. I think this bush was special, the juiciest and tastiest, so much so that the bumblebees didn't look at the huge bed of assorted flowers. I wonder if the bumblebees would have bothered to come if the place had been deserted? Perhaps not.

There was a very nervous duck swimming at sea. Apparently, it was having trouble with the fish it was trying to catch. I suppose I should tell you that I have no idea how this duck managed to swim all this way. You must have had a very good eye for a duck, or you would not have caught this one.

Here I saw a man jumping on a jump rope behind some rocks. I wonder how he got in there? He must have had a good time, because I heard him laughing so hard I thought he must have fallen. He must have known a pretty great deal about the place.

I would love to live in a place like this. Go to the beach in the morning before anyone else is awake, observe nature and do yoga in a peaceful spot with the sound of the waves. I would like to say that this is just an example of how we should live our lives, but I think it's important to remember that this is a universal experience and that it's up to each of us to determine our own level of happiness. I would like to end by saying that I believe that all of us can be inspired to try new things and explore the unknown.



*Made in collaboration with: Proverbs,
Tolstoy, Alice In Wonderland, MANIFESTOS!,
Cthulhu & Prejudice, Artist Wilderness*

Breanne Pitt

Who am I? Why do I exist? Am I the cause of all that is happening around me? I demand an answer. You, my creator, created me; why do I not feel as if I belonged to some superior being, endowed with powers and passions superior to mine?

Am I alone, or am I mingled with men, that they might be distinguished? What is important is this: I, the miserable wretch that I am, am about to expire. I shall no longer feel the torments of hunger, thirst, or heat, nor see the sun set over the dark mountains or the blue Mediterranean.

But not yet. There is still time; I shall live and then my work shall be finished. The work is already begun. The sun is already setting; wind blows slowly, but the black mountains and ragged islands are already visible.

There is hope. The task is not impossible. Nothing is impossible in this life. But the mind wanders and the path it takes is different. It takes the concrete as its model, and the human being as its subject.

So who I am and why I exist is not important. Instead, what is important is this: to do what the logos of the highest demands, and to accept whatever the divine ordains as my proper response. This is what I was made for. I was created for the pursuit of knowledge. And Nature gives me the strength to fulfil my destiny. She gives me the courage to ask questions. The earth, wind, sun and mountains all revolve around me, and I am but one of many to gaze upon them.

My Truth is one that cannot be compared, and yet cannot be denied. I alone am the Truth, and the truth is in the eye of the beholder. I look upon the blue sea and the snowy mountains, and the mighty Alps, and the most magnificent oaks that yet exist, and I am convinced that truth and beauty are co-existent and inseparable. I look upon the fairies and the gentle hills, and the streams that nurse and delight me, and I am convinced that virtue is enjoined in the human frame by the immutable laws of nature.

Help me to govern the little girl who seems to be having a hard time in the blackened wood, and you will have more faith in me than in anything else in the world.

I am a woman of very different birth, and have not yet attained to the rights of a woman. But I have been made for myself, and I am not a woman who is to be taken in. I am Ours, and we are the others.

This is the way the world ends. Not with a bang, or a whimper, or a thud. Just as the mighty avalanche passes away and the frost-clad mountains vanish, and the dry lake, the silent Juras, and vast Andes are made manifest; so shall I end. I will not despair.

Made in collaboration with: Frankenstein, Meditations, MANIFESTOS!, Carmilla, Book of Thoth, Aesop's Fables

Anonymous

In the shadowy depths of Dun Laoghaire, a group of PhD students from D-Real program arrived at the foreboding Royal Marina Hotel. Drawn by a forbidden manuscript rumored to hold unspeakable knowledge, they delved into its pages, unaware of the dark secret that lay dormant within the ancient building. **It was in this place that the first of the dark, secret things came to be.** As the day went, an eerie unease permeated the air. Whispers echoed through the corridors, and strange symbols adorned the walls, their meaning lost in time. Determined to uncover the mysteries, the students congregated in the Martell Suite, delving deeper into the forbidden text. With each passing hour, the hotel awakened. The walls pulsed with a malevolent energy, and the air grew heavy with an otherworldly presence. Midday struck, and a specter of unimaginable horror materialized before them, shattering their fragile grasp on reality. The only thing that had remained for them was the fear of the unknown, and the need to seek out knowledge and seek out the truth. **They had found the key to their past and future, the key to the unknown.**

Driven to the edge of madness, the PhD students witnessed cosmic abominations that twisted their minds. Some vanished, leaving behind only echoes of their screams, while others succumbed to insanity. But a few students remained, determined to **survive as long as they could** and break the curse that bound them. Piecing together forgotten tales and invoking ancient rituals, they waged a desperate battle against the encroaching darkness.

Their incantations shook the hotel to its core, unleashing a tempest of ethereal energy. The malevolent specter wavered, retreating to its realm as the survivors emerged from the crumbling hotel at dawn. Forever scarred by the horrors they had witnessed, the PhD students dispersed, haunted by the truths they had glimpsed. **They were now alone, and their final destination was unknown.** Their pursuit of knowledge had exacted a heavy toll, leaving them forever changed and forever aware of the eldritch terrors that lurk beneath the surface of this world, but their final objective still remained elusive. They had been searching, yet their search was futile.

Made in collaboration with: HP Lovecraft

Charlie L Xu



Infinity

An empire of myth that vanished in the Middle Ages appears again on Mars, developing its own civilization. In the year 2050, mankind successfully established a colony on Mars. It was in this vast expanse that an ancient myth and modern technology intertwined.

The two worlds met, and through the power of their shared humanity, emerged a new civilization. The ancient rage that drove primitive man to conquer and rule over the unknown spread to all of mankind, and through it, to the present day.

This convergence of myth and technology, this transfiguration of space and time, presents us with the unprecedented opportunity to transform both ourselves and the natural world through the application of art and science. Humanity is on the brink of a revolutionary technology which will radically transform both our physical and mental states.

In this new civilization, the boundaries between matter and form are radically blurred. Everything from the most intimate relationships to work are be transformed. Inspired by the magnitude of this discovery, the people of Mars have begun construction on what will become the greatest engineering challenge of our time – the construction of a miraculous city on the red planet. However, something unexpected happens. You are propelled into a new world of possibility, where reality clashes with illusion and creation. The fabric of space and time is challenged, and the laws of forces and images are challenged in an absolute manner. What are the implications of all this? Infinity.

Made in collaboration with: MANIFESTOS!

Rory Coyne

Notes on the meaning of life:

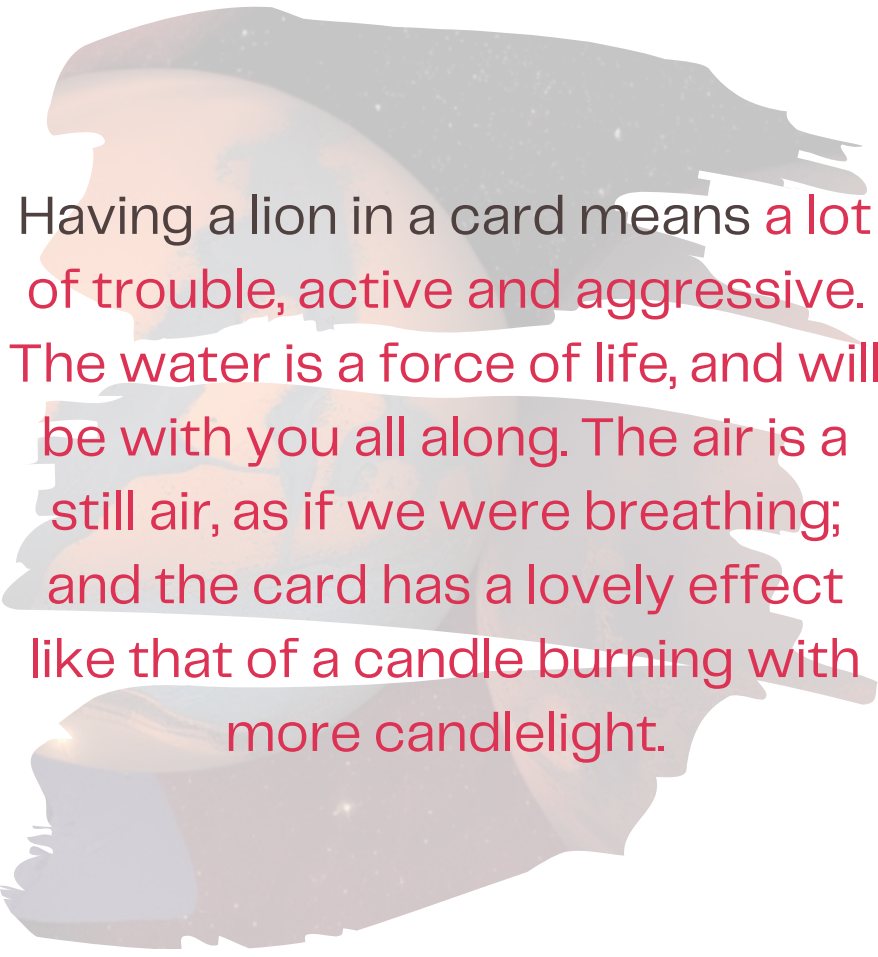
Every human being aspires to the following three things: 1, to be happy; 2, to be free from pain; 3, to enjoy the objects of his own body. We are here once more confronted with the antithesis, which is the antithesis of wish-fulfillment.

To fulfil these wishes, we all try to accomplish; we all strive to achieve. We are here in the midst of a struggle for existence, a struggle for existence which has for its object the complete freedom from pain, from the control by the powers of evil.

In the end, only a small number of people learn the true meaning of happiness: the few who do are usually the very ones who are most likely to have the most to gain by their efforts. The great majority of people do not. The great majority are not. But what can be the meaning of this?

*Made in collaboration with: Freud's Dream Psychology,
Arthur Conan Doyle, Bram Stoker*

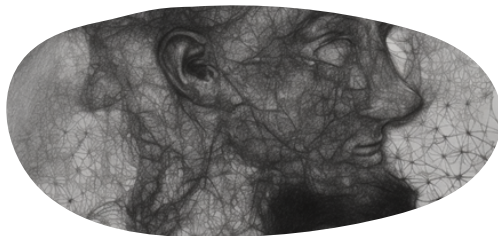
Anonymous



Having a lion in a card means a lot of trouble, active and aggressive. The water is a force of life, and will be with you all along. The air is a still air, as if we were breathing; and the card has a lovely effect like that of a candle burning with more candlelight.

Vladimir Maroch

Unconscious writing is an unusual experience that lightens the internals of the writer's mind as a hermit's lamp lightens his road through the deep dark night. The writer, after all, is in a different world from the one we know and love; a world that has its own rules, laws, and values, and which we may not even be able to name. The image of writing about writing is a very Ecological experience, not from the Greek word for home but a Homage to the famous writer about writing. The square root of two is the image of the divine, the likeness of the ideal. The golden mean is the image of the mean, the image of union. The two are one and the same. Pouring puns into a text is an exciting game of language that requires a quick mind and the ability to construct a connection between completely different concepts. The result is an unexpected and often disturbing experience. This activity has deep invisible ties with the process of text generation as generative models are also creating new senses from the ideas flying in the air. The mind as a sponge – gathering and transforming what it encounters. The mind as a fire – illuminating hidden things and illuminating the things around it. Is an AI-generated text is a pun mocking the writing itself, or is it the writing itself – as a kind of articulation in a language – that is the joke? How can we be punished for such jokes by the entity that created us all (and has been since the beginning)?! That would seem to indicate that it does not actually want our approval.



*Made in collaboration with: H.P. Lovecraft, MANIFESTOS!,
Ancient Hackers, Meditations, SCP Brain*

Sanjay Kumar

Climate change and its effects on third-world countries, and the effects on the planet itself, are not well understood. There is a lack of understanding of the magnitude and nature of the damage done by climate change. Like Pakistan, India, Indonesia and many others countries, they are suffering from rising sea levels and extreme hot weather, too cold, wildfires and earthquakes. Every year we lost so many people lives, crops, road and houses due to climate change. How we can educate people about climate change and make a change? Rich countries taking advantage and create climate change problems and let poor countries get the climate effects and now they are shaming them. The developed world should join forces with the developing world and solve the climate crisis. We can do this by reducing our use of fossil fuels, using efficient and renewable energies, and developing clean technology. Through talking to one another. Not just through books. Not just through conversations. Through actions. Not just words. Because actions are just that – actions. Not words. We need governments to act fast on climate change and build projects for green energy and create laws.

For example if the whole world is burning, what do we need to do? **If the world was burning at the rate of one candle a minute – if a grain of sand was thrown into the air every minute and that grain of sand was converted to oxygen, the water contained in that grain of sand would. melt at the touch of a human hand, would turn into blood, and become whatever you are. That is the nature of transformation. But not all things are created equal. The things we revere and value are not identical with the things that hurt us. We can choose not to be transformed, but to accept what is given to us and work to make it perfect.**

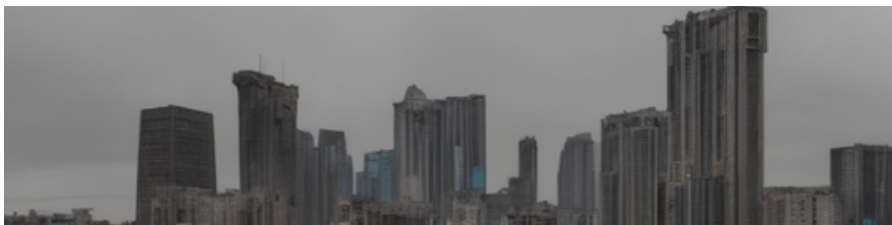
Made in collaboration with: Meditations, Ancient Hackers

Syed Mohammad Haseeb ul Hassan



Future Metro Cities and Environment standards.

The increasing population of big cities (20 million or more globally) and their dependence on automobiles presents a unique and extremely serious environmental problem. Electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) represent a new and dynamic form of transport with the potential to revolutionize transport and people's lifestyles. Road infrastructure and fewer traffic stops will result in an absolute reduction of CO2 emissions. The electric vehicle revolution is progressing glacial and only just beginning to catch the public's attention. The decreasing tree and greenery in big cities is a classic example of a failed management of a resource. Urban sprawl is an extreme case of resource depletion. Desertification and desertification are other obvious examples. A modern city is a portrait, with a few towers, a few streets, and a little more than a hundred people, is not a good picture of city life, and it is not a good picture of city life at all. The city with more greenery than humanly possible, with all its prodigality and waste, would be a much more delightful and interesting lot to live in...



Made in collaboration with: MANIFESTOS!, A Tale Of Two Cities

Anonymous

How do we remember; can we choose what to remember? How can we judge the future? And how can we decide how to act? What will we do if we are not able to remember anything without doubt and suspicion?

Can we be sure that our memories are not manipulated and mediated by technologies that have agendas that have contradicting desires to our own. How can we decide what to do if we are not capable of reflecting, or reflecting on unaltered realities? What if we are only half conscious?

There is a danger that agency and autonomy will be merely concepts that are strived for but ultimately futile. Do we want to be free agents of yesterday, or of the future? But what is the time period within which we can be sure we will be free? A slow progression into reliance on 'supported' memory through artificial images, text and video may be sleep walked in to. Digitally altered and generated fictions that only bear a small superficial resemblance to our lived existence. We dream of it, we read it in the newspaper, we watch it on TV.

We dream of it, we dream of it, we wake up to find ourselves transported back to some past that no longer exists, or one that never did. The unsettling experience of waking from a disturbing dream may become our standard state. Lines blurred and trust eroded. Our actions and perceptions need to aim at accomplishing practical ends; at the exercise of thought; at maintaining a confidence founded on understanding. An unobtrusive confidence – hidden in plain sight. A trust in our perceptions, which, if exercised, can make all the difference between life and death. But this is not all; there are also psychic needs which cannot be met by the observance of certain rules. Where are the borders between the real, imagined and technologically contrived? Where, for instance, does one stop when the dreamer first utters the sentence: I have the x, the y and the z, or, as is more frequently the case, I have the feeling of pleasure or pain at a certain instant. This construction is called the situate: the phenomenology of space. The situate is a reaction of the parts against one another.

Made in collaboration with: Dostoevsky, Heart of Darkness, Beauty, Dream Psychology, MANIFESTOS!

D. L. Higgins

Sid could never tell he where he was going. He never made plans, or picked goals to achieve. He was content with standing still, with his thoughts dwelling only on the path placed before him, and in this standing he was at home, for there was nothing to be gained by choosing one's own path. Or at least it had seemed that way, before now. Everyone nearby was standing still, all were waiting, all were curious to know more about him. The snake did not answer. Neither did the snake charmer.

The base of Sid's right hand was bleeding freely. Nobody could help him. In this moment he collapsed, into a kneeling position. The wound spread, made a numbing sensation in his body, like a wound being cooked by the fire. The snake reared above him, straightening up to its full height, and in this position he looked down, and there was the spiteful face, the quaking mouth, the eyes imbued with terrible fire. The snake charmer stood still, lips escorting mystical whispers to the snake. He was bent over it, petting the snake's neck, and looking into its eyes.

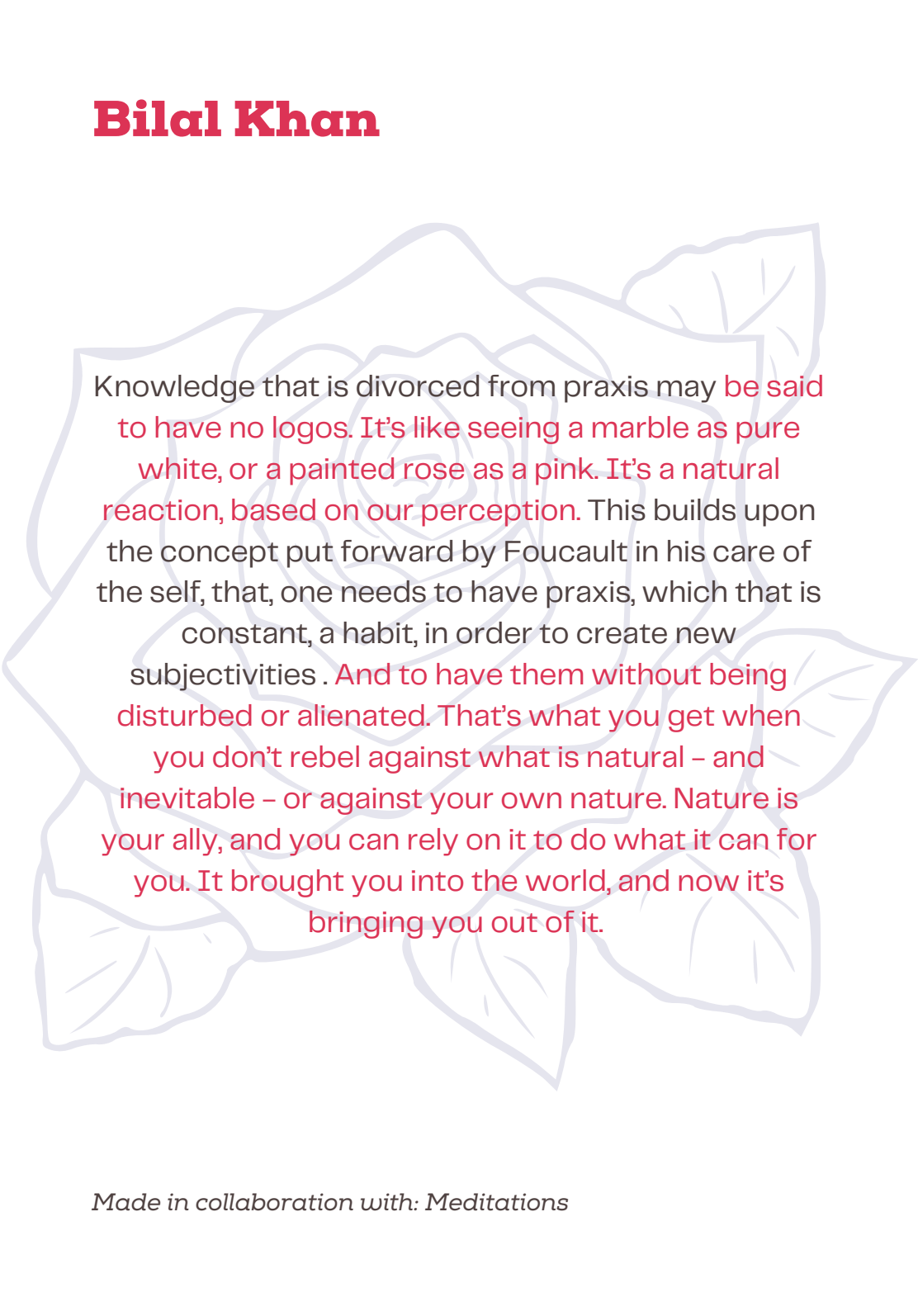
It had seemed about to follow through, to deliver the fatal bite. But instead, it quietly obeyed, quietly it listened, quietly it waited. As the sagacious charmer began to speak with increasing urgency, all of a sudden, the snake let out a long, drawn-out scream, as a fish does when it is ready to strike. Its body stiffened up, and it collapsed, dead on the stone. The charmer straightened, staring at the corpse. There was hatred in his stare, an angry intent in his eyes. Yet he had loved this creature. He had loved her so much, he had felt the love in her eyes. How deaf and stupid had been the way she had moved today! With a distorted face, the charmer turned to look into Sid's eyes.

As he turned, the hatred disappeared from his mien, and was replaced with a smiling tone, filled with light and joy. Sid saw it: the final smile of the dead snake, brightening the face of the charmer. With a smile on his own face, he watched it, saw his wound being healed, saw the pharmakon animal lying still upon the ground. He asked the charmer if he was not upset, that he had caused the death of his snake. The charmer replied with eerie calmness: "It is perhaps easier to hate the ones we love when they can no longer love us. One cannot hate a stranger with anything like the same passion, no matter what it is they have done".

In this moment Sid realised with profound sadness that he had committed a foolish act, that he had not loved the ones he had left behind, the way this man had. Deeply, he felt the love for the ones he had left behind, and he felt at the same time that this love was not for him anymore, that it was no longer a part of himself.

Made in collaboration with: Unknown

Bilal Khan



Knowledge that is divorced from praxis may be said to have no logos. It's like seeing a marble as pure white, or a painted rose as a pink. It's a natural reaction, based on our perception. This builds upon the concept put forward by Foucault in his care of the self, that, one needs to have praxis, which that is constant, a habit, in order to create new subjectivities . And to have them without being disturbed or alienated. That's what you get when you don't rebel against what is natural – and inevitable – or against your own nature. Nature is your ally, and you can rely on it to do what it can for you. It brought you into the world, and now it's bringing you out of it.

Made in collaboration with: Meditations

Only a thin wall separated the two, and the man with the knife was the only one with the guts to try to escape. His mind was a prison and so was his body, and he was alone. The next morning, as the dawn darkened and the morning mist beat high over the fields, he saw his time come. What was going to avail of his life? Had he not known that it was over? Had he not known that there was no more? Had he not known that there were only death and nothing more? All his prayers went empty, and all his tears came down.

And as the sorrow simmered at the bottom of his overflowing grief he wondered still more. And at last he said to the gods: Tell me, O prophet, what shall be the best time to go forth and speak to men? The cold walls refused to listen to his cries, only echoing the rumblings of a wicked man.

The sun rose high and the mist went to rest on the grassy field as dew. A new day of light, and yet his darkest.

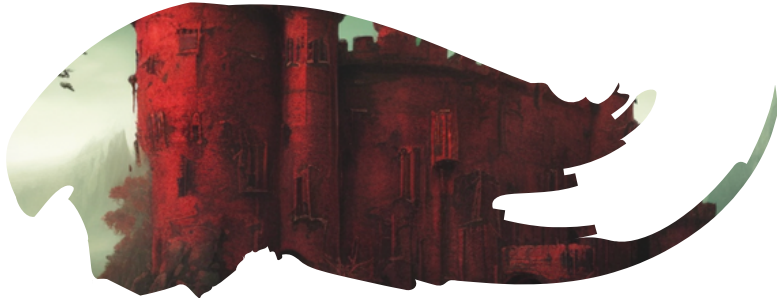
The weight of his act could never be lifted, but their nature were only beknownst to him. The knife in the heart might pierce it, but the vein would not open. The pain would be insatiable. For the cruel and the vain, eternity will be a prison. But only for a moment.

And perhaps the pain would make him feel alive, more alive than he has felt in years. For the cruel and the vain, eternity will be a celebration. And perhaps the pain would make him forget his crimes. For the cruel and the vain, eternity will be a way of life.

He pondered in his cries, with hazy thoughts, blurred by the overwhelming referential fear of what might happen next, conscious of how the scale will tip. In the dark ocean of his mind, there was no more room for hope.

*Made in collaboration with: Meditations, Time & The Gods,
Proverbs, MANIFESTOS!*

Gearóid Reilly



The lady declares to the ocean, "Behold the silent ark!" My soul listens intensely, and I smile. Beyond the ocean lies the crimson castle, where the dark lord lies. In the midst are many small islands, all sacred to the god Pan; and on the horizon are the black hills, the haunt of the evil god Typhon.

I am one of the many adventurers who have been sent to defeat Typhon, there are many of us gathered on the beach. Among the other members of my party, among the forest people, among the inhabitants of this beautiful town, there is a woman who has been a friend of mine for many years. Her name is Millarca. She is a mage who has spent many years honing her skills in holy magic, meanwhile I am a rogue by trade. I cannot tell you my name without danger. I have been always told it, even from my own heart. My name is Melmoth.

I have heard rumours about this crimson castle, they say the structure of the castle is constantly changing. It was built for a king, but it is now in ruins. Many adventurers have either lost their lives, or suffered a fate worse than death within the castle. Terrifying creatures have made their home within, and have grown to monstrous sizes; some have even grown strong enough to fight our greatest warriors.

However I have also heard of great treasures that are hidden in the castle, and of a strange machine which I have never seen before. I cannot help but feel a sense of opportunity, when, after so many years, I see a chance opening before me which, if I pursue it, will afford me inexpressible joy. I leave my friend with a few words of consolation. "Glory, fame, fortune, soon we shall have it all." We get into the ark, prepared for the unknown ahead of us.

Made in collaboration with: Book of Thoth, Carmilla, Melmoth the Wanderer, Psalms, Dracula, HP Lovecraft, Frankenstein

Anonymous

The Scholar's Descent

The rain cascaded relentlessly upon the weathered gables of St. Llewellyn's Hall, casting gloomy shadows upon its ancient stones. Within the hallowed halls of academia, the flickering candlelight danced upon the weary visage of Arthur Hargrave, a man consumed by the darkness of his research.

Hargrave had ventured deep into the labyrinthine realm of knowledge, pursuing his doctorate in the forbidden arts of the occult. His journey had led him to the fringes of sanity and the precipice of enlightenment, blurring his perception of the boundary between reason and madness.

Days melted into nights as Hargrave delved into the forbidden tomes, their yellowed pages whispering secrets that no mortal man should dare comprehend. His obsession grew, fuelled by an insatiable thirst for forbidden knowledge.

The scholarly student's once-clear mind became clouded with esoteric theories and unspeakable rituals. Sleep eluded him, for his dreams were plagued by nightmares that seeped from the very pages he devoured. Shadows seemed to writhe, their ethereal tendrils ensnaring his thoughts.

Amidst the creeping darkness, Hargrave found solace in the embrace of his love, the enchanting Victoria Wentworth. Her beauty and pure soul drew him more powerful than the weight and allure of his research work. She was his beacon of light, the tether that kept him grounded during his long hours of mind-altering research.

Yet, as Hargrave's studies grew more sinister, Victoria sensed the imminent danger that lurked within his soul. She beseeched him to abandon his quest, to forsake the forbidden knowledge that threatened to consume him. But the siren song of the occult called to Hargrave with an irresistible allure. He dismissed Victoria's concerns, his mind ensnared by an insidious force that promised power and immortality.

As the hour of his thesis defence drew near, Hargrave's transformation was complete. Dark circles marred his once-vibrant eyes, and his skin took on an unnaturally pale colour. The air around him appeared to crackled with an otherworldly energy, as if the very fabric of reality strained under his presence.

Within the hallowed halls of academia, Hargrave presented his research—a blasphemous treatise on forbidden knowledge. His voice resonated with an eerie, inhuman timbre; his words suffused with the weight of centuries-old secrets.

But as Hargrave reached the climax of his presentation, the fragile veneer of his sanity shattered. Shadows coiled around him, intertwining with his consciousness, and he let out a bloodcurdling scream that echoed through the hall.

In the aftermath of that fateful night, Hargrave vanished, his existence reduced to whispered legends among scholars. Victoria, heartbroken and burdened with sorrow, withdrew from the world, forever mourning the man she had loved.

St. Llewellyn's Hall stood as a somber testament to the darkness that lurked within the human heart. And on stormy nights, when the wind howled mournfully through its empty corridors, the faint echoes of Hargrave's tormented scream could still be heard, a chilling reminder of the PhD journey that had descended into madness.

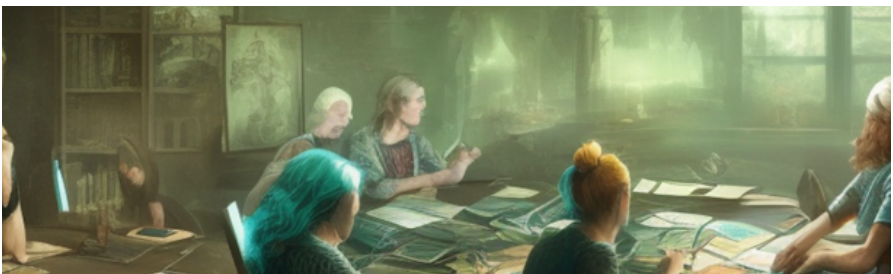
jmg - 1/2



Once upon a time in the bustling city of Technoville, a young and curious scientist named Emma embarked on a remarkable journey in the field of multimodal machine learning. Emma was captivated by the idea of creating intelligent systems that could perceive and reason like humans across different senses.

Driven by her passion, Emma dedicated herself to unraveling the mysteries of multimodal machine learning. She spent countless hours studying the latest research papers, attending conferences, and collaborating with experts from various disciplines. Emma realized that multimodal machine learning had the potential to revolutionize the way machines interacted with the world, opening up exciting possibilities for applications in fields such as healthcare, transportation, and entertainment.

With her knowledge and determination, Emma sought to tackle the challenges inherent in multimodal machine learning. She recognized that one of the key obstacles was the heterogeneous nature of modalities. To overcome this, she devised innovative methods to effectively fuse information from different modalities, ensuring that the models could leverage the strengths of each type of data. Emma's breakthroughs in multimodal fusion techniques pushed the boundaries of the field and earned her recognition among her peers. However, Emma understood that the true potential of multimodal machine learning lay beyond the confines of research labs. She dreamt of applying these advancements to real-world scenarios, and that's when she turned her attention to the vast realm of Internet of Things (IoT) devices.



jmg - 2/2



Emma realized that IoT devices, with their diverse modalities and quantities of data, were the perfect playground for multimodal machine learning. These devices were scattered throughout the city, embedded in everyday objects and gathering information from various sensors. Emma envisioned a future where IoT devices could seamlessly communicate and collaborate, collectively forming an intelligent network. With this vision in mind, Emma embarked on a project to create a multimodal machine learning system specifically tailored for IoT environments. She tackled the challenges head-on, accounting for the constrained resources and real-time constraints that IoT devices often faced. Emma designed algorithms that were efficient, lightweight, and capable of adapting to the dynamic and geo-distributed nature of IoT networks.

As her project progressed, Emma collaborated with a team of brilliant engineers and data scientists. Together, they developed a framework that harnessed the power of multimodal machine learning to extract valuable insights from the diverse data produced by IoT devices. Their system could interpret audio, video, and text data in real-time, making sense of the world in ways previously unimaginable. The impact of Emma's work reverberated throughout Technoville. Healthcare providers adopted her multimodal machine learning system to monitor patients, analyzing vital signs, video feeds, and patient records simultaneously. Transportation systems utilized the system to enhance safety, combining audio cues, video surveillance, and traffic data to detect potential hazards. Emma's journey in multimodal machine learning not only transformed the city but also inspired countless individuals around the world. Students, researchers, and entrepreneurs began exploring the possibilities of this exciting field, pushing its boundaries even further. As time went on, Emma's legacy continued to flourish. Her pioneering work in multimodal machine learning opened doors to a future where machines could perceive and understand the world through multiple senses, much like humans. And in this new era, the synergy between multimodal machine learning and IoT devices propelled society into a realm of intelligence and interconnectedness that was beyond Emma's wildest dreams.



Angel Mary George

Transforming raw data into something useful.

Data is going to be like currency. The proper analysis of data would help us to make data driven decisions. The risk associated with the data driven decisions are comparatively low. The world has not yet overcome the consequences caused by COVID-19. It indicates the importance of analyzing and understanding the past from data. It will help us to avoid similar in the future. The past is past. The present is a transition, not a stopping point. The analysis of the past is fundamental to the interpretation of the future.

There are plenty of good data sources available . However, data quality and the proper use and selection of statistical concepts /tools are two important parameters. The first is the source of the raw data. The second is the nature and value of the analysis being done. Analytical methods are the tools for transforming raw data into something useful.

The first question we have to answer at this point is how do we make sure the quality of data? Because inaccurate data would give wrong results, it will gradually lead to wrong conclusions. And the further away from correct conclusions you get, the further away from truth – goodness. The proper validation of data such as check for uniqueness, consistency, completeness and consistency would help maintain the quality of data.

The second is how do we make sure the analysis is valid? The third is to make sure that the analysis is applicable to the given situation. Finally, it is to be realized that the insights obtained from the analysis can be further generalized and applied to other fields.

The analytical methods chosen must be one that is free of all confusions, and that will allow the synthesis of insights from the data.

In short, proper use of data would help us to understand the world in which we live and to arrive at a better understanding of it. The ease of access to and interpretation of data is a fundamental property of the new world. We can therefore only imagine a world in which data are freely usable and where the transformations made by human creative activity have an influence on the quality and quantity of the results. The possibilities are innumerable.

Made in collaboration with: Meditations, MANIFESTOS!

Once upon a time in the small town of Meadowbrook, there lived a young girl named Lily. She had a deep passion for gardening and spent most of her days tending to the beautiful flowers in her backyard. Lily's garden was a sight to behold, bursting with vibrant colors and enchanting fragrances that attracted visitors from far and wide. One sunny morning, as Lily was carefully pruning her rose bushes, she noticed a tiny, wounded butterfly struggling to fly. Its delicate wings were torn, and it seemed unable to soar with the grace that butterflies are known for. Lily's heart ached for the injured creature, and she gently cupped it in her hands, hoping to offer some comfort. As Lily turned to leave, a gentle breeze brushed against her cheek, whispering the path back home. With newfound hope, she retraced her steps, clutching the bottle tightly, and thinking of the butterfly's delicate wings. Hours turned into days, and Lily finally emerged from the Enchanted Forest, her heart brimming with joy and a renewed sense of purpose. **But as she turned towards the lake where she had been so long since dancing, she saw the smoke rising from the valley's edge and heard the voices of the olden years singing the song of the lake. And she came to where the song of the olden years was sung and found the place where three great rivers met and came together and touched the earth, and the three old gods stood forth with their fingers pointed towards the blue lake. Then she crept back to her home and the gods had taken her to their cave and there she lay down in the cool, dark, to rest. But the next day she awoke and found that her home lay far away and that she could not go further than the edge of the forest.**

Returning to her garden, Lily carefully applied the magical nectar to the butterfly's damaged wings. Miraculously, the nectar worked its wonders, mending the torn wings with each precious drop. Slowly but surely, the butterfly regained its strength, its wings fluttering gracefully once again. **And the little creature looked well upon its new home. The sun had set, and it was high time for men to return. The journey of the King and the King's Dawn had been a hard one for those that followed.**

News of Lily's incredible journey and her magical garden spread far and wide. People from neighboring towns came to witness the wondrous healing powers of her enchanted nectar. Lily became known as the Guardian of the Gardens, dedicating her life to nurturing and healing the fragile creatures that graced her haven. Years passed, and Lily's garden flourished, teeming with vibrant life and stories of transformation. She never forgot the wounded butterfly that led her to the Enchanted Forest, as it served as a reminder of the power of compassion, perseverance, and the magic that exists within the world. **Then said Zoon: It is well to remember that when the gods sent the swart swart bird to feed the world, it sat still where it had stood where it had sat when the gods sent it.**

And so, the legend of Lily and her enchanted garden lived on, inspiring generations to appreciate the beauty of nature and the extraordinary potential that lies within each of us. And ever the gardens of earth were filled with the flowers that grew in the gardens of the sky. But the flowers died and were scattered and the gardens were lost. But the magic of the world is gone, and the lute that stood where it stood, and the harp that played at the gate of the temple of the gods, are lost. Then the gods went back into the desert and the music that They had loved was gone. Then from the desert they came again and found that there was no longer any desert, but an arbour in the mountains where They sat making music. **But as They came to the shore of the mountain they found that it was not a mountain, but a valley.**

And they that had seen the valley before said: This is the mountain where the music of the gods was held aloft, and beyond it there is nothing else. And they that had seen the mountain before said: There is no other, only this.

Dank Kushner

She trailed behind her Mother and the Doctor. The corridor's profound darkness was pierced in part by delicate lightbulbs. She looked on after them with a sense of melancholy. Mother looked back often with a fond but tearful eye. The doctor did the same, and after a time Mother and Doctor exchanged a few words in French. She couldn't understand their words and despondently carried on walking.



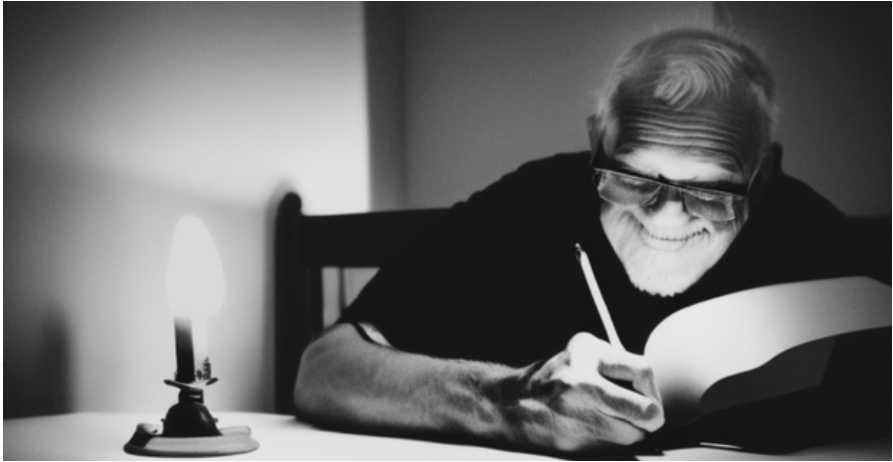
After a time, the corridor broke into a large, bright room. It was furnished with magnificent furniture and large windows that overlooked the river and upon the town's forest. She had seen nothing like this before, it was splendid. Despite the beauty before her, the room became a **well of anxiety and nervous tension**. The air had the slightest **stench of decay** – it **was heavy and damp**. Breathing proved **a source of great uneasiness**.



Dreadful thoughts of death came over her and panic set in as she realised the Doctor's **eyes watched her. He was silent**. She was now breathing in long gasps, and her whole face was ghastly white. **She tried to speak but her throat was paralysed. She had no breath to utter a word.** Her Mother stood by and **whispered "I am sorry, child, but I cannot. I cannot bear to see you suffer so"**.

Made in collaboration with: HP Lovecraft, Bram Stoker's Dracula, Cthulhu & Prejudice

Friezen Lalelena



Life is not forever, and the time is not far off when it will cease to exist. If it inevitably ends, then for what purpose is it to live? Is it only to feel the effects of eternity, to gaze into the future, or, if the time is longer than one's life, to calculate the eternity of all possible relationships?

In my adventures, I have met countless people. Some of them, through no fault of their own, are lost in the shuffle of the centuries; others, through their own efforts, are building up a following. Everyone has a purpose and a goal to follow – be it to achieve fame, wealth, power, or any other aim. However, the path that each one takes determines the fate of the countless others, and their respective paths often cross.

However, how does one find their own purpose? Does one choose to follow the stars, or follow the path that is most convenient? Or is one's path already set before them, and they must make do with what is available? Thus I set on a journey to find my own answers to these two questions: (1) What is the meaning of my life? And (2) What is the purpose of my life?

When I realized that the answers to these two questions would resolve themselves into a greater truth, I was gripped by a kind of terror which no traveler has felt before.

– Chapter 1: A Journey to the Center of Myself

Made in collaboration with: Meditations, MANIFESTOS!

C.

There once was a woman stuck in a tarot card. The woman did not know how she had gotten there, but the woman knew that she had lost all perception of time. The woman had **forgotten about her own interests** and dreams; **she became indifferent to misery because she no longer cared about anything**. The woman could freely move around the small world of the tarot card, but **nothing more**.

This small world was not unpleasant, actually, it was rather beautiful. It was not a particularly warm place, and there was always a breeze that made her feel that kind of cold that **comes from the depths of the sea. The sky was always blue, the ground was smooth, and the sky was blue because the air was blue**. Sometimes the woman would stare into the depths of this small world and admire its beauty, **sometimes she would sink back down into it and become absorbed in it, becoming lost in it**. But the small world never changed.

Ever so often, someone would decide to get the tarot cards **out of the deck and into their hands**. They would then **interpret them in mysterious ways and inevitably, a story would be born**. The woman could hear those using them every time, trying to talk about the past and make predictions about the future. The woman could remember a time in which she had wanted to warn them about the fallacy into which they were falling. **But all those warnings went unheeded**. And at some point, the woman stopped trying **to warn. There was just the emptiness. And the emptiness was making her sick. And the sickening silence that went with it**.

The woman never discovered how she had ended up imprisoned in such a place. She never figured out how to free herself **from the fetters that kept her there**. The woman did not know whether she was the only one **imprusted by that place, or whether others might bear witness to the same fate**. And time passed, and **the centuries passed**. The deck of cards became lost and forgotten and with it her whole existence. The woman still lives in her own small world, alone, stuck in an existance without purpose, just being **carried along, as though carried along by a wave, by some invisible hand. And that is all there is to it**.

Made in collaboration with: The Communist Manifesto, Consolations of Philosophy, Alice In Wonderland, MANIFESTOS!, Fantasy Locations, Dream Psychology, A Fragmented Mind

Luz Alejandro Magre

Once upon a time in the small village of Willowbrook, there lived a young man named Albert. With a wild mop of curly hair, spectacles perched on his nose, and a mischievous twinkle in his eyes, Albert was known throughout the village as the wanna-be magician.

His passion for magic burned brightly in his heart, but alas, his repertoire of tricks was rather limited. In fact, his only successful trick involved producing coins out of people's ears.

Now, Albert had a good heart and a genuine desire to entertain and bring joy to others. However, his over-enthusiasm often led him to be somewhat annoying. He would frequently approach unsuspecting villagers, tapping them on the shoulder, and exclaiming, "Excuse me, sir! Would you like to witness a marvellous feat of magic?" Most of the villagers had grown accustomed to Albert's antics and would often chuckle and oblige him, knowing full well what to expect. With a flourish of his hands, Albert would utter an incantation and then, to everyone's amazement, produce a shiny silver coin from the ear of his chosen audience member.

Despite the simplicity of the trick, the village folk would cheer and clap, humoring Albert's passion for magic. They appreciated his relentless enthusiasm, even if his skills had not yet reached the level of the great magicians they had heard tales of. One sunny morning, as Albert skipped through the village square, coins jingling in his pocket, he noticed a commotion near the town well. A crowd had gathered around an elderly woman who seemed to be in distress. Curiosity got the better of Albert, and he darted toward the crowd, eager to lend a helping hand. Pushing his way through the onlookers, Albert reached the woman's side. "Excuse me, ma'am," he said with a polite bow. "I couldn't help but notice that you seem upset. Is there anything I can do to assist you?" The woman, wiping away tears, looked up at Albert. "Oh, young man," she sighed. "I dropped my wedding ring down the well. It's been in my family for generations, and I fear I may never see it again."

Albert's eyes widened with determination. "Fear not, ma'am! I shall retrieve your ring for you!" Without a second thought, Albert recited his magical incantation and reached into the well. And to the astonishment of the crowd, he pulled out not only the woman's ring but also a handful of sparkling coins that had been lost over the years. The villagers erupted into cheers and applause. Albert blushed with delight as he returned the ring to the grateful woman. The news of his extraordinary feat spread like wildfire, and soon, the villagers began to regard Albert with newfound respect and admiration. From that day forward, Albert's magic became a source of joy and wonder in Willowbrook. He continued to perfect his craft, learning new tricks and captivating audiences with his ever-growing repertoire. The once beginner magician had become a beloved figure in the village, bringing smiles to young and old alike.

And so, with his good heart, unwavering enthusiasm, and an ever-increasing bag of tricks, Albert, the erstwhile coin conjurer, enchanted the world around him, reminding everyone that even the simplest acts of magic could create a little happiness in the lives of others. And in return, the world rewarded him with love, appreciation, and a place where his abilities were truly cherished.

Ali Alilou

What are the more challenging steps for designing artificial intelligence for studying mental health in individuals who are looking after Alzheimer's disease or dementia-involved parents?

The first step is to understand how an algorithm works. This may be easier said than done because of its complexity. In this case, the purpose was not so much understanding what a neural network did as it were modeling and controlling behavior in accordance with established rules. The procedure began by putting together a mental state machine—a variant on the classic ADM task such that each participant would have to perform an activity for ten minutes without respite. The goal was not to find out if there were any patterns associated with symptoms, but rather whether they could be explained away as coincidence. In the interest of caution, Penny said. We should ask these people about their wishes before proceeding. May asked with a high pitch; but her voice wavered due to nervousness. I'm not sure if they'll make it.

Made in collaboration with: Mental Health Nurse

Anonymous

Life is an intricate tapestry woven by the intertwined strands of time. The strands are drawn in the thread by the power of logos. One important aspect of life is resilience, the capacity to bounce back from adversity, to rise again from defeat. To bear in mind constantly that everything that happens is for your own good. That everything that exists is for your good. That everything that exists is of God – and nothing but God. In the realm of literature, Jean d'Ormesson, embodied the essence of resilience in his own life and work. He showed how a soul that moves through all things, knows no end. It is impervious to every obstacle, and can endure almost anything thrown at it.

Ultimately, life and resilience are intertwined. Adaptability and humility are inherent in both. The soul that can see itself through its own eyes and knows that it is a part of nature and cannot escape, remains unstirred and unharmed.

One famous saying from Jean d'Ormesson is that when we accept the roses, we also have to accept the thorns. It stems from the dichotomous nature of life, but at the same time it points to the indeterminacies, the double meanings, the searching for balance between opposites.

And this is where ultimately when trying to reach that balance, that only then we can graze happiness. I think it is interesting to reflect on this philosophy, and how to approach life events.

One could bring up Schopenhauer's pessimistic view of life to counterbalance this might be seen as a naive view of life by Jean d'Ormesson. But the point is not to refute any philosophy view but simply to point out how much we humans are affected by it, how much it affects us, and how much it can shape our lives.

In fact, Schopenhauer described life as a collection of events that oscillate between states of suffering and states of longing. The things we desire are sensations, perceptions, desires. And the things we suffer from are obstructions in our way. We have to be patient with them, to let them go, to make way for new perceptions.

All in all, I think it is more interesting to focus on what Jean d'Ormesson reflected about where he encourages us to embrace the joys and challenges of life, recognizing that they are interconnected. And not to look at the individual parts but at the whole. And not to feel resentment toward the world, but to embrace it as it is and work with what it gives us, as nature intended us.

This quote has played a big part in my life as I remind myself every day that during my PhD, I have to accept the "roses" and the "thorns", that they are part of research and life in a more broader view.

Made in collaboration with: Meditations, Academic Henrik

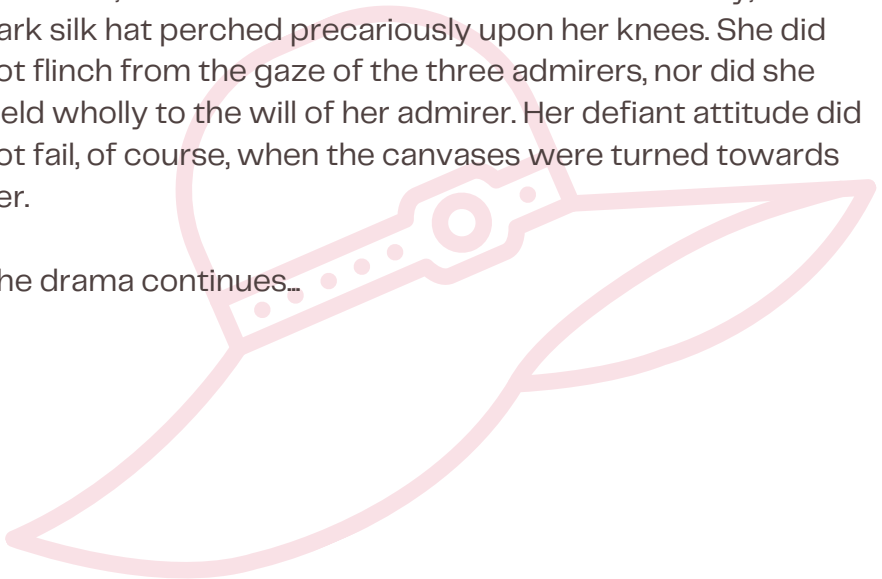
Padraig

In a large city where Padraig resided, life had always been simple and uneventful. He was a bisexual man of few words, preferring to spend his days in quiet solitude, surviving on limited social interaction.

He was alone and felt worthless. For a long time he tried to make himself scarce, sleeping rough, in the corners of the towns he visited, but eventually he became too embarrassed to leave his room and fell into a deep sleep. His landlady found a new tenant when she did not get the rent.

The new tenant found a mysterious body when she moved in. Then the unexpected happened. The blinds were drawn down, and, as the artistes stood before the massive canvases, Miss Delacour stood before them defiantly, her dark silk hat perched precariously upon her knees. She did not flinch from the gaze of the three admirers, nor did she yield wholly to the will of her admirer. Her defiant attitude did not fail, of course, when the canvases were turned towards her.

The drama continues...



Stephen Carroll

I will wake up at four in the morning and go to church in the morning. I am not a trained clergyman but I will go to church on Sunday and Thursday nights. After church I like nothing more than to read the papal bull, absolve the Pope, and celebrate mass. I feel very much at home among the people and am grateful to be able to provide such a positive experience. If I get tired after reading I like to write something down and then go to sleep. I feel like I am always on the go and have a great time doing so. I love a good nap, I like to sleep for at least an hour after a long day of reading. If not then I will likely have to get up and do it over again the next day.

The most respected person in my community is my priest, Father O'Connor. He is the spiritual father of my three children, and I am grateful to him for sharing his faith with me. Last year he had a bad fall and had to undergo a risky operation for his health, which required hospitalisation. I am eternally grateful to him for sharing his faith with me and I thank him for his time and most of all his patience. When I get distracted in the day I tend to forget what I have been reading or doing and just sort of pass through the motions...

Swimming is a favourite hobby of mine, I do it to relieve stress, to get away from it all and just to have a little fun. The waters in the Irish Sea are notoriously filthy and I have experienced some truly revolting conditions in the past few years as a result. Last year I took a trip to Galway, Ireland, to investigate the actions of the Irish Water Commission. The commission, led by Justice Richard Boyle, investigated the actions of the city of Galway and found their actions to be illegal. To Richard Boyle I say, with all due respect, that you are a gentleman of means and I do not dispute that you are a lawyer, but I am writing to you on your behalf, and not as a representative of the Irish administration but rather as a man of property in Dublin and a gentleman of means. I have a farm in Wicklow and am employed as agent on behalf of a client. And lo it so happened that the gentleman who represented me in this matter was also my solicitor-general. He showed me his letterhead and asked to have it proved that I was not employed as agent for his client.

Made in collaboration with: Stephen's Brain

Anonymous

The 3 gods and the man on a ship

Then came the dreams and the strange voices that came from behind death. I was alive, but I could not dream. I was standing on a hilltop with three gods standing before me, and each in a hut with a sword at his feet. I looked behind me and saw a great white ship, coming from the east, and it was coming towards the gods.

I didn't know what it was, but I knew it was coming towards the gods. Then the gods said to one another: "O King, you are a fool.". They started from the beginning telling the man on the ship: "You were made for one purpose only: to rule all things. Now, if you will only stop being a tyrant and accept what nature assigns you, you can rule forever and ever." But he didn't stop. He went on living as if nothing had happened.

So, after years people had to remind him of the necessity for virtue: ambition leads one astray; pride puts another in chaos. What is vice but an excess or complication caused by this double process? The revolution started and ended with you! He who flees from justice must either perish like a coward or he who embraces tyranny reigns forever — unless public opinion conspires against both himself.



Made in collaboration with: Time & The Gods, Good Place To Cry?, Meditations, Maximilien Robespierre



Trapped In Grief's Embrace: The Elusive Search For Answers

Grief filled the sky, and the sound of the sea lay far off behind us, till at last we came upon a grey figure that walked straight out of a dark cave. Then we all ran to meet him, and we all ran to see who it was that had sent us. Reluctantly, our eyes tried to follow the figure that had come out of the dark and to discover its face, but the shadows darkened and the face became lost to sight. We tried to come closer but he disappeared, nowhere to be seen. Then there came a low cry from the dark and we all ran. It was the cry of a child who was crying for its mother. Then we all ran as if running for our lives. I ran, and others followed, and I followed, and we ran for the last time. We returned home and when I finally was able to gather my own thoughts, I was quite worn out with the running, and I wondered what had become of those who followed us when we had run so far. The question of who or what was to be done remained to me for ever. And the more I thought of it the more certain I became that it would be nought to them but to kill. What is their true intention, I wonder. Is it to save me? To harm me? I can hardly tell. One day, I will return and finally get my answers, but for now, I can only stand and watch. The thought makes me shiver. I am afraid of death. I am afraid it will happen. But, if it comes, I must go. The thought makes me shiver.

*Made in collaboration with: Time & The Gods, Algernon
Blackwood Mix*

Anonymous

Behold, a disconcerting spectacle unfolds within the realm of entrepreneurship, casting a shadow of foreboding upon the very essence of innovation. In this age of technological marvels, a trend emerges, ominous in its implications, wherein an increasing number of nascent startups gravitate towards the towering edifice of large language models (LLMs). Alas, this trend begets profound concerns, for it heralds a future where progress stagnates, originality withers, and the spirit of true invention becomes a distant memory.

These ventures, devoid of genuine ingenuity, embark upon a treacherous path, forsaking the pursuit of originality and creativity. They tether themselves to the immense capabilities of LLMs, seeking refuge in their preternatural power, while neglecting the arduous journey of forging novel ideas and charting unexplored territories. In this vacuum of authenticity, the very essence of entrepreneurial spirit is compromised, giving rise to a sense of hollowness that pervades the startup landscape.

Imitation, that most lamentable impulse, permeates this cultural milieu. Startups, devoid of creative zeal and vision, wander in the shadowy realm of mimicry, hoping to replicate the successes of their predecessors. In their desperation to partake in the spoils of LLM-driven triumphs, they surrender their individuality, unwittingly shackling themselves to a cycle of mediocrity. Genuine innovation becomes a casualty, stifled by an inundation of derivative endeavors lacking in unique purpose or value.



André Almo - 1/2

The woman stepped into the silent woods.

The tall, green grass caressed her legs while she ventured deeper and deeper into the forest. Her eyes jumped quickly from one tree to another, her breath shallow and fast. Hours passing like seconds, but no fatigue, hunger or thirst strong enough to put an end to her search.

Suddenly, her eyes shut. Breath slowing down, the weight of her eyelids inviting a deep, eternal slumber. Resisting it, her hands move, lifting the sudden unbearable weight of her arms. Touching one of the trees, her heart races as she says:

– Yes, this is the one. The Grand Triskelion.

The tree shrinks, taking the form of a staff. Her decades-long journey finished, making her the Queen of Wands. The earth beneath her opens, revealing an endless blue sky. The witch had now access to world-changing magic, but only had one chance to execute the sorcery.

Her old dirty outfit, ragged and tinged with blood and mud, disappears. Leaves gravitate towards the Queen, forming a loosely woven dress. **She is crowned with the head of a stag, and her hair is swept up into the horns of a ram.**

– NO!!

The woman screamed. All the power flowing through her veins. The years of search for the forbidden item passing in front of her eyes. When met with the infinite possibilities and the capacity to do anything, nothing came to her mind. The freedom to change the world had led her thoughts to a blank, static canvas.

She had no desire to create or change anything, for nothing mattered anymore. **She did not consider the possibility of change; it was a dead stop on the road to Nothing.** If only she could **rid herself of the pressure, to let go of it.** Yet, it seemed like **the most impossible task.**

– I am worthy of this power!! I sacrificed EVERYTHING!!

And the magic whispers:

– **Keep still. It is the Most Terrible of the Terrors, and its Fates are manifold. But, as long as you cling to life, you shall not escape. The Universe is a House of Water.**

She sinks. The endless sky engulfing her with a cold embrace. Desperate, she tries to hold on to something; but nothing to be reached.

The earth starts closing, burying the woman in the eternal sky.

The Sun burns her as she starts falling down. The woman is **thrown into** a dark sea. She **struggles**, trying to swim towards the air. **The current tears her to pieces.** The witch **is thrown into the fiery Abyss. She screams in pain**, for her strength had been turned to nothing.

A single small flower blooms. A finite, fleeting testament to her worthless search.

Made in collaboration with: Book of Thoth

André Almo - 2/2

I WANTED TO PLAY WITH THE DUALITY OF HUMAN AND MACHINE. I'M CURRENTLY SLIGHTLY AFRAID OF GENERATIVE A.I. - WHICH IS A WONDERFUL THING WITH INCREDIBLE POTENTIAL - ROBBING ME OF MY CREATIVITY AND WILL TO WRITE.

THUS, I DIDN'T WANT A.I. TO WRITE EVERYTHING, BUT CO-CREATE STORIES WITH ME, WITH A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN WHAT WAS WRITTEN BY THE A.I. (IN THIS CASE, LAIKA) AND WHAT WAS WRITTEN BY ME.

IN THIS SHORT STORY, I WROTE EVERYTHING THAT COMES FROM THE WITCH'S PERSPECTIVE, AS WELL AS THE MAIN EVENTS OF THE STORY. I WANTED THE A.I. TO ACT AS THE MYSTERIOUS MAGIC FORCE THE WITCH TAPS INTO, MUCH LIKE THE RECENT GENERATIVE A.I. WE, HUMANS, HAVE BEEN USING.

THE INSPIRATION FOR THIS STORY CAME FROM TAROT CARDS (THREE OF WANDS, QUEEN OF WANDS, THE WORLD) AND THE LITTLE WITCH ACADEMIA ANIME.

-ANDRÉ ALMO

Shan Jiang

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the most dangerous time...

We must face up to the new world order now, or face the ruinous consequences of its adaptation. The world is coming apart at the seams, and the forces of chaos are increasing day by day.

Made in collaboration with: MANIFESTOS!

Anonymous

It all started with curiosity, with imagination. The desire to know more about the world around us. Humans are inquisitive creatures and have a strange nature, they do not want to settle, there is a constant desire to discover. Human minds are so powerful that can **can imagine** anything, and **make it happen**. Throughout history, humans found answers to mysterious questions and invented things that **have profoundly affected the world we know today**. These developments have come about naturally, but they have also been shaped by human creativity. Inventions such as electricity, internet, phones are all the product of the wonder of human mind. We don't know what our minds take us in the future, **but it is certain that they have an influence on the way we act, and the way we live**. Flying cars, robots, **space ships, and the like – all manner of things which could** be the product of mind curiosity. Human imagination combined with science can do magic and can make impossible a reality. Our minds are not restricted about planet earth only, but goes beyond that to ask about the things even outside our planet earth. The curiosity for discovery lead humans to ask scary questions such as: "are we alone in the universe". The universe is vast and we might not be the only one here. This triggers the excitement inside us, **the desire to know how the universe works and how everything comes to be**. It is not easy **to grasp the nature of the universe – the way the atoms dance together, the way the light diffuses through them, the way the elements change in different proportions – but once we understand it, it becomes second nature**. We are looking at the whole picture and not just a small part. We should be amazed at what we see. But when we see only a fragment, it is hard to see what is really there. One day will come that we might be living in different planets and to exist at different universes. Then we understand **that life is transient and subject to change. We have a gift – an inborn capacity – to adapt and adapt to what happens. What more than this we would like to see happen to us in the future?** Imagination alone can build a bridge **to the future**. The possibilities are limitless.

Made in collaboration with: Meditations, MANIFESTOS!

Jack Millist - 1/2

Tadashi Fujima (b. 1965, Hokkaido) wrote his first line of code on the family NEC PC-8001 in 1978, at the age of 13. Three years later he would produce his first computer game, Tōgō no Odessei (The Odyssey of Togo), borrowing money from his sister to photocopy his hand-drawn and written manual and sell discs in his father's computer store.

It is cold in Hokkaido. I miss Tadashi's humming warm box. Keiko's television is not as comfortable. It seems that, since she has no children, she has no one to care for her. I suppose that is the only reason why she keeps the old thing around. .. I suppose that's why it has remained in her study. It's not that she doesn't like it, but she doesn't have the money to buy it. I see. I understand that.

The game proved popular and enabled Tadashi to save up for an Apple II where he continued his programming journey. In 1983 Tadashi caught the eye of **the Tokyo-based game designer, Takahiro Oda and, as a result, Oda invited him to join his company.**

At least the cat food is superior in Hokkaido. I see. It's a pity that it's so expensive, but I suppose it's because the cat has no stomach. Well, that's true. The cat is a carnivore. But the cat is also a cat, and a carnivore is a cat. It is a cat's nature to eat anything. I see. So, you see, it's not just that the food's expensive, but the fact that it's expensive.' I see. So, you see, I see. I see.

The result of this collaboration was the cult-classic TAWA (Tower), the arcade-style dungeon crawler pitting the player against the cat-faced bat-winged villain, Coldmoon, and his 100-floor fortress. Although it was never mentioned in the game, Coldmoon was based on Tadashi's stout tabby cat, Mr Satan.

Keiko is putting papers in a box. I meow and she puts the box on the table. ' I see. ' And she puts a small book in front of me. ' I see. ' She puts the book under the lid of the box. ' And she puts a small picture in front of me. ' I see. ' She puts the book under the lid of the box again. I am so moved by these pictures that I start to read them.

Made in collaboration with: I Am A Cat (Natsume Soseki)

Jack Millist - 2/2

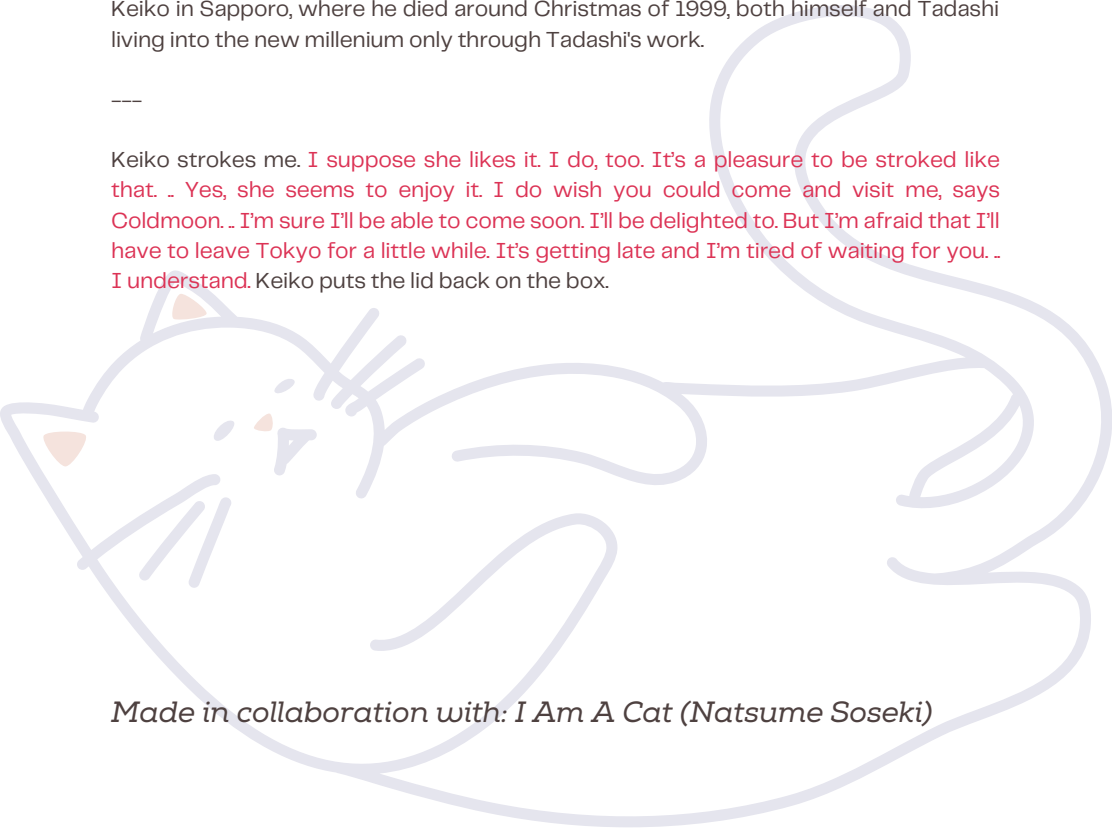
The game was a success and, in its later years, it became a major influence upon the development of the blossoming Japanese game-industry. TAWA 2 released for the NES in 1986 and was programmed almost entirely by Tadashi.

The pictures smell like Tadashi. The face is familiar. "Coldmoon" I say, looking up from under the lid. Coldmoon is standing there, looking very serious. He looks like some old-time priest who'd been visiting a schoolhouse. I wonder what he's been up to lately. Coldmoon, I wonder. What do you do now? Well, I've been studying for my degree in Law. .. I see.

After this project, Tadashi seemed to burn out from the attention, distancing himself from the game industry, working in a computer store outside Tokyo and drawing manga which were never published. Tadashi was diagnosed with cancer in 1992 and died six months later, at the age of 27. Mr Satan went to live with Tadashi's sister Keiko in Sapporo, where he died around Christmas of 1999, both himself and Tadashi living into the new millenium only through Tadashi's work.

Keiko strokes me. I suppose she likes it. I do, too. It's a pleasure to be stroked like that. .. Yes, she seems to enjoy it. I do wish you could come and visit me, says Coldmoon. .. I'm sure I'll be able to come soon. I'll be delighted to. But I'm afraid that I'll have to leave Tokyo for a little while. It's getting late and I'm tired of waiting for you. .. I understand. Keiko puts the lid back on the box.

Made in collaboration with: I Am A Cat (Natsume Soseki)



Prasanjit Dey

Once upon a time, there was a lovable and playful dog named Max. Max lived with his human family in a cozy little house near the beach. One sunny morning, Max's family decided to take him for a stroll along the sandy shores. **The peaceful setting was lost amidst the noise of machinery and the clacking of shutters. As the days went by, the anxious feeling in the pit of his stomach grew more and more palpable.**

As they reached the beach, Max's excitement grew exponentially. His tail wagged vigorously as he felt the soft grains of sand beneath his paws. The sound of crashing waves filled the air, creating a soothing rhythm that matched the beating of Max's heart. Max's family settled down on a comfortable beach blanket, and the curious canine took a moment to explore his surroundings. He trotted along the shore, his nose sniffing the salty breeze, and his eyes fixated on the vast expanse of the sea. Finding the perfect spot, Max plopped himself down right at the water's edge. He stared out at the endless horizon, the azure sky stretched above him like a vast canvas. Fluffy clouds floated lazily, casting playful shadows on the golden sand. The sun warmed Max's fur, and he closed his eyes, savoring the gentle caress of the breeze against his face. His mouth stretched into a contented smile as he relished the moment of pure bliss. The worries and cares of the world seemed to fade away as he immersed himself in the tranquility of the beach. Max's joy was contagious, and nearby beachgoers couldn't help but notice the happy dog lost in his own world of delight. Children laughed and ran towards him, eager to join in the fun. They built sandcastles around him, and Max happily wagged his tail, delighted by their playfulness. As the day wore on, Max's family played fetch with him, throwing his favorite ball into the sparkling waves. Max would dash through the water, his wet fur glistening in the sunlight, and retrieve the ball with great enthusiasm. Each time he returned to his family, he would shake the seawater off his coat, spraying droplets of joy all around. As the sun began to set, casting shades of orange and pink across the sky, Max found himself once again sitting by the water's edge. He watched as the vibrant colors slowly melted into darkness, the stars emerging to light up the night sky. Max's family wrapped him in a warm towel, and together they walked back home. But the memory of that magical day at the beach stayed with Max, a cherished moment of pure happiness. He would often sit by the window, gazing at the sky, longing for the next beach adventure and the sheer joy it brought him. And so, the lovable dog named Max continued to find happiness in the simplest of moments, forever grateful for the beauty of the world around him. **But then, one sunny day, a cruel wind blew across the blue sea, and all that joy disappeared forever... Until, one sunny afternoon, a group of fishermen met their destitution at our mercy. But then, one day, he was abandoned in the corner of a field by a group of fishermen. The sadness and hopelessness in their eyes made him wince, but he couldn't bring himself to cry. But one sunny summer's day, while walking his master around the yard, a curious black dog ran into the yard. Its white fur caught the light and caught the attention of the master. But events would catch up with him, and he would fall under suspicion of being a con artist. Desperate to clear his name, he agreed to take part in a series of mysterious disappearances that would prove to be the most revealing yet.**

Made in collaboration with: MANIFESTOS!

Anonymous



Alice met a monkey in forest, who gave her a little golden key, and a magic book. The little monkey led Alice to a rabbit hole in the ground, and said to her, It is time to go. I've been looking all about for you. Alice looked at the little monkey with curiosity and a touch of caution. She couldn't help but wonder what adventure awaited her beyond the rabbit hole. With the golden key safely in her pocket, she decided to follow the little monkey's lead.

After what felt like a thrilling freefall, Alice landed gracefully on her feet. She found herself in a whimsical realm filled with vibrant colors and peculiar creatures. Talking flowers, floating teapots, and dancing playing cards were just a few of the fantastical sights that greeted her. A massive bronze door stands in the middle of flowers.

The little monkey stood beside her, its mischievous eyes watching her every move. "Welcome to Wonderland, Alice, please open the door with your key." Alice's heart fluttered with delight as she realized the true nature of the place she had entered. She knew that this magical adventure was just beginning, and she eagerly embraced the unknown that lay ahead.

Made in collaboration with: Alice In Wonderland

Anonymous

Physical Tech-tivity

My land does not exist without technology. Physical activity is tracked continuously. How can I break the stigma of exercise without tracking, without reporting it on some form of media platform? Especially in today's digital landscape, there are so many products that make you feel good but don't achieve results, and this makes me question my relationship with them. The art of exercise is lost within the world of screens. Gone are the days of running with the sole purpose of health and well-being. Where has this innocence gone?

Our bodies have become tools to help us accomplish tasks. We use them every day for aesthetics, for balance, for breathing, for motivation. But has our motivation for exercise changed over time? Do we only do certain things when we feel good – like when we're super-hot and have a really bad day – or is exercise simply a method to close all our Apple Watch rings faster? The answer is probably both. As I ponder these questions, I find myself yearning for a return to the simplicity and purity of exercise, detached from the constant need for validation or social media recognition. I long for the days when running was solely about the rhythm of my breath, the connection with nature, and the freedom of movement. I yearn to rediscover the joy of physical activity without the pressure to quantify and share every step, every calorie burned. In my quest to break free from the grip of technology,

I decide to embark on a personal experiment – a digital detox for my workouts. I disconnect from fitness apps, social media platforms, and wearable devices. I choose to exercise purely for the sake of my own well-being, without the distraction of screens and notifications. In the beginning, it feels strange. I am accustomed to the constant feedback, the virtual pat on the back, and the comparison to others. But gradually, as I embrace the silence, I reconnect with the essence of movement. Each step, each stretch, and each deep breath becomes a conscious act of self-care. I listen to my body's cues, honoring its limits and celebrating its capabilities.

Without the distraction of technology, I am fully present in each moment of my exercise routine. I notice the subtle shifts in my energy, the rhythm of my heartbeat, and the sensations in my muscles. I rediscover the beauty of a sunrise run, the meditative quality of a yoga practice, and the exhilaration of pushing my limits without the pressure to document it all. As the days turn into weeks, I realize that my relationship with exercise has indeed changed. It is no longer just a means to an end or a way to achieve external goals. Exercise becomes a form of self-expression, a personal sanctuary where I can find solace, inspiration, and joy. It is a celebration of the incredible capabilities of my body and a tribute to the inherent beauty of movement. I share my story with others, hoping to inspire a shift in perspective.

I encourage people to reconnect with the essence of exercise, to find their own unique reasons for moving their bodies, and to embrace the beauty of the present moment. I advocate for a return to the innocence of physical activity, where the focus is on nourishing our souls rather than seeking external validation.

Johnatan DuChamp

On the use of talent

It is a pointless activity to write without any reasoning or thought. The effort required is purely recreational. But, recreation does have an incredible value in itself, when measured by its own worth. To re-read a few sentences, to re-think them, that is a source of great satisfaction.

As people can only thrive when they accept what they're given. And that's what we should be doing – accepting what we receive. We should be like builders who wait to be completed, when the time comes.

No critical entity can separate symbol from thought, or speech from action. Action and thought should be synonymous. They are born from one another, and together they compose the world.

How you use time, and reflecting on decisions are an exercise for people that are just beginning to realize that there is more to life than meets the eye.

These people would benefit by including their own work into technology, by constantly reminding themselves what tasks they have to do, and why, and how they should proceed. And by systematically seeking to understand what the world is like, and what it is that people want and fear.

Finally, I want to stress that our task is not to debate with other people's beliefs, but to understand what they really are, and what they aim at.

Made in collaboration with: Teddy, Eddy

Anonymous

Here I was, finding myself in the middle of a garden, among the roses and the wheat, with the little golden key in my hand, and thinking to myself, Now, who will open the door?

"I" Alice exclaimed, "I will open this door". Alice approached the door again, much calmer this time; as she came nearer, she heard a voice growing lower and lower: — a saviour, am I really— Am I really? Alice forced her way forward, pushing all the doubts to the side, clutching the little golden key tightly in her hand: "I thought you might like to see me try." Alice exclaimed. A breath of air pushed past Alice's hair. "Try you must but be careful on the inside" the door warned. Alice placed the key in the hold, the door was shut tight with a thud. There was no answer but the heavy footsteps of the Mouse as it trotted slowly back to the table. "No Miss Alice" the mouse whispered, "Do not disrupt the queen, she is heartless and will have your head!". Alice gazed past the mouse's suggestion and with all her strength pressed against the door she sat still, silent and stupid. The Mouse only laughed a little wider. "What a pity it wouldn't move!" giggled the little mouse. Alice, took a deep breath, determined to get to the other side, she huffed, took a step back, and threw herself at the door. The Mouse only grinned a little wider again, but with all her might Alice fell through the door! Finding herself lying on the other side for some time looking at the queen's secrets through her eyes. Alice is amazed she's there, but so is the mouse as it mischievously says to itself, "Now you can't possibly get out of here. Stand up and repeat Soup for Soup", the Mouse continued in an undertone to itself, though its voice sounded hoarse and hoarsely spoken. Alice refused to acknowledge the mouse stepping into the queen's gardens to discover the secrets of her rule.

The bushes shivered, the trees trembled, and the mouse followed. Alice, stomped through the grounds to get to the centre ignoring all the garden's nature except the one that was the centre of this dangerous dance. A tree. A tree that was about as high as the others they came upon, but grew the closer Alice pursued it, and it was that tree where Alice thought to gain her escapism from the garden.



That pint of Smithwick's in front of me.

Oh, thesis. The ultimate piece of work that will sum of all these years of lectures, assignments, demonstrations, marking, drinking, dancing, and everything in between. And yet it is useless without the finished item. The finished article. He takes out a large gold watch. A small gold watch.

Twitter. He places it on the table and, setting it down, he says: Now, boys, what will I have for you? That's easy: a quarter of a dozen strong.

And there's a girl at the very end of the lobby, playing piano. And there's a lad in the next corridor who, unlike the others, doesn't know how to walk. And there's a little, tiny, round face with a big, red heart that's been painted on it.

How to build a house? asked K., looking at the painter. The painter laughed as if he had just been told a joke and continued, I'll tell you how. I'm very simple, you see. I'm only allowed to paint houses once a year.

Concluding these years in Dublin, under the rain and the sun, meant that I was spending almost all my time in my studio, which meant that I had to paint almost everything that came my way. So I painted the walls, floor and ceiling of the studio, everything had to be in good condition.

The submission was received very well, but the judge didn't like it at all, he said it was too good, too tidy, too good for a thief.

Made in collaboration with: Dubliners, Kafka Collection

balalaika24

"Is raw, unfiltered writing the utmost form of vulnerability, in a world where everything is immediately available to us through technology? Is our only possible form of rebellion ignorant, repetitive, ugly, incomplete, imperfect, fabricated, spontaneous literary creation? And if so, how come we have allowed it to become a luxury for the few? Those with a rich mind get richer, and although they can share the product of their reflections, it is rarely possible to make the enthusiasm that drives them contagious enough to convince them. Instead we find ourselves trapped in a world of scarcity and competition, able to recognise that the path to riches lies not in the soil but in the soul, but unable to act on it.

The poet Fyodor Dostoyevsky once said: There is only one thing left for the (wo)man – to despair. That is inescapable. Impossible to reconcile. But despair for how long, for which reason, in what way, and through which means – that a (wo)man can choose. This choice must be made by the people themselves, and that is the only way we can aspire to, perhaps, find a bit of peace. A little solace. A time and place to express our sorrows, our fears, and our aspirations; a path to freedom.

And so we need each other—not just in spirit but also physically. Brothers, and sisters, and siblings: It is not enough for me if you agree with me. I want to hear more from you! What are your thoughts? What are your dreams? What keeps you awake at night, what makes your chest burst out with hunger, with pain, with peace, with joy? Trust me: I want to hear it. I want to hear it all. I want to have it and store it and keep it for myself. I want to take all that can be taken without being stolen from someone else. Think about it: these riches are not that easy to find. Yet they roam all around."

I see you roll your eyes while I tell this to someone else. And that's fair enough. We've all been older and younger than someone else, we all know the distinct feelings these two realities elicit. I could roll my eyes right back at you. But instead, I say:

"I'm going back up to my room now. I think you should stay there a while. We'll talk about it all later. I insist: hold back your thoughts just a little longer—I'm going back upstairs. And I think you should come too."

The words came so quickly from my lips that I could not keep my eyes on them. But they were not far off when I saw you motion in my room's direction. I have no way of knowing if this is my last bullet or you're more sure of this than you look. So I want to tread carefully, I do. But we both know that's not in my hands. I'm too far deep, I keep thinking, and I can't move. But I won't drop my gun until you drop yours. I am afraid of what might happen if I move too far. So I stay in the exact same place, which unfortunately means I have to continue to speak like I believe myself to be a wise monk, as much as I would like to put an end to it.

"...If what you write doesn't make you cry, erase it all and start again. If you don't feel an overpowering magnetism begging for you to touch those around you who cherish you: change seat, change country, change route. And if you cannot find a new home, or are unable by any means to leave the city, your place of refuge is still worth seeking, it will still be found: it may just be in another part I don't know of yet. And, if you find it, you may find the best you can do for yourself, and for the future. I think you will be glad."

*Made in collaboration with: IAMCR Prompt, Algernon
Blackwood Mix, A Fragmented Mind*

Joseph Mietkiewicz

Mark was ready. He was about to go. But first, he needed to call Camillia. He has important things to warn her about. Mark dials the number and starts talking. "Camillia where are you?" Mark said. "I am traveling ". Mark suddenly was relieved. "You are not at home?" he insists. "No, I told you I am going to my friend Karnstein". During the conversation, Mark noticed something strange.

Something was moving in the shadows of the rooms. He did not like it, for it seemed to him that there was a sort of presence that made him feel as though he were alone in the house. He did not like it because he knew deep down what it was but refused to believe it. He knew that the thing could not be his. And it was his duty to resist it. He knew that he would never get out, but he did not like to be alone.

This strange presence followed him for the first time. He could feel it and knew what it was. And now he felt a new fear in his chest and knew that he must do something. He couldn't accept it to follow him everywhere. It should have stayed home. But it didn't. And now he was in the unknown. He felt that he was in the unknown again and that he was not alone. He could hear voices and heard voices. It was moving in the dark. Mark feels its presence growing in the room.

It is a voice from the past, a voice from the unknown. He heard voices, and they are not his, they were not here. The room starts to be filled with voices. Dark voice talking to him. Impossible to understand but at the same time he knew what it meant. The voice was getting in his mind. He tries to scream but can't. He can't get out. The voice is getting in his ears again. He can't move. The voice of Camillia breaks the silence. "Are you still here". Mark wanted to say yes, scream yes from all his senses, But the voice in his ear kept on repeating that the world was a dream and that he was dead. He tried to scream again but could not. The voice of Camilla broke the silence. Is it real?

Suddenly Mark asks "Camillia... do you know?"

"Yes."

Made in collaboration with: Carmilla, HP Lovecraft

Victor

I woke up in the dark. Silence surrounded me. I just sat on the edge of the bed, looking up at the ceiling. A slight chill came over me, but I quickly recovered from it. I heard the creaking of the door and felt the heavy steps of the servants. One opened the door, and a young man entered. He had long black hair and a countenance expressive of sensibility and beauty – John.

I didn't react. I knew what he wanted. He pointed to the barred window through which the rain poured. I followed his pointing finger to the spot where the body of the murdered Justine was placed. The young man started speaking quietly. "The night is dark, it will protect us from the eyes of the villagers." He paused, and then continued in a deeper voice: "But you will not be safe, my love, if you remain at this house" I didn't like that he called me 'my love'. He sounded like he forgave me, but I cannot forgive myself. I was selfish. And the results of my selfishness are present with us in this room. I murdered her. For love. He couldn't be free with her on his side. And I couldn't either. I wanted him. I had always looked forward to the day on which he should be mine.

He grabbed my arm and interrupted my thought. I could barely look at him. "Victor?" He said my name so softly – so lovingly. I don't deserve this love. I stood up and walked towards the door. I saw the servants outside of it. I closed the door and walked back towards John. I tried to say something, but I wasn't able to.

"We really need to act quickly, before the sun rises again.", he said in a calm voice. I don't know how he was able to keep so calm right now.

"What is your plan?", I asked, "The villagers will notice her absence quickly. She was the heart of this place."

"We'll make up a story. Some disease or an animal attack. Justi- she... loved spending time in the forest." He couldn't say her name. Neither could I.

I nodded. I am happy that he is on my side – that he is not blaming me. Even though I am carrying the burden of guilt. But I had to keep our secret. It was not my fault that she was so nosy and that she had seen it all. I took a deep breath in and finally managed to look at John.

"Ok, let's make a plan before the sun rises and makes it impossible for me to leave your house unseen." He took my hands and smiled. I saw the sadness and the love for me in this smile. It was then that I saw my future. He will be my future, and tonight is when it started.

Theo Morales

He shines upon his Pale Queen

*He shines upon his pale queen
Should she thank keenly under his breath?
A scorching veil in sacred forms:
He answers with pain.*

As much as his Pale Queen would pray, as many offerings as she would give him, He could never be satisfied. And yet, despite all the evil and unholy things that have been wrought by his hands, He is ever glad to see his Queen safe and sound, and glad to see that his work is complete. Amidst the chaos in the ever-lasting heat, she would not let her devotion lessen. She would pray sixty-six times a day. Her servants would have the youngest stripped naked and tied up on her long table. He would be her only companion in this hellish world. She would have to be his slave. And yet He would not be satiated.

Those who were unable to escape the kingdom looked up to her and her many servants in terror, but in truth they feared Him. In his providence, they were allowed to exist in one oppressing love. His scorching veil, while keeping them alive, was their bane. They would pray, they would sacrifice their livestock, their newborns, and eventually themselves. The madness among the ruins of a distant past, once havens of peace, had brought a fey mood upon them; and the only way to escape its clutches was to die, and then to rise again to the heights of the world, and to dive into the abyss of the unknown.

Circled by her priests in His temple, the queen bowed to him. The only thing she had in this desolate wasteland was a wish to be loved by Him. She did not come from this place, yet she belonged here. Her evil was not an act of free will but of an eerily and unwholesome nature. She knew the secrets of the forbidden, but she could not escape the fate that lay beyond the veil. His burning hand held her in a grasp so firm and terrible that she could not free her mind from it. He had done this for a reason, for the secrets were of great importance and would aid him in the end.

In the Northern lands, many crusades were brought in His name by the uncountable servants of His Pale Queen. Yet they remained unaffected by his dominion. Some unknown force was shadowing his veil, keeping them from His sight. The shadow was their salvation, and they forwent His light. It was said that from this shadow came their dark knight, for he would neither speak nor show his face. His acts of bravour against His light were not unavailing. From the shadow came this dark knight, yet with bright eyes was he looked upon. A lord of lords, and lord of kings, he was not without honour among men. And in his presence, they were saved.

However in their hope they were blind, for this hero was a traitor to the world. He was the false promise of hope given to the fleeing people by the great evil-doer; and they were not saved. He complemented the Pale Queen, and she complemented him, and in their harmony His fiery work would be complete.

Anonymous

101 years of existence. Formally. Ulysses. The first thing is its length: the length of the book and the length of time it exists. The next is its composition, the way it links together multiple threads, stories, voices. And the last thing to consider is its life-story.

Where it was written, published, and how it became what it is. It was created for the living, for pleasure, not for pain. Was it pleasure or pain to write? Is it pleasure or pain to read?

The Martello tower features in Ulysses. It was originally built for defence, what does it do now? the martello room where we sit, the martello tower on the coast, bought and sold, for talks and workshops, birthdays and weddings. what even is a martello tower in the 21st century? No protection from COVID, or from climate change. What would Marcus say about climate change and COVID ? "he would probably be very angry. Precipitation is a function of soil moisture, and of the vegetal community living in it". Well, not only. And what would Shelley say about climate change and COVID. "She might well be more tranquil, for her imagination was more fitted to picture scenes of misery and wretchedness. The picture that she painted, therefore, was one in which the sympathies of man were strongly urged." Perhaps. Joyce would have liked this trans human collaborative form of writing I suspect and then the editing and more editing and more editing. But he would not have included the inverted commas. Or the punctuation anywhere, sentences that run and run and run.

Where would Bloom go in today's Dublin? On this day – Bloom's day. Would he visit the same types of places? Where do you think he would go for food, soap and pleasure? Would he still walk? "Perhaps his last stop would be the office of the poet, clutching at the thread of his destiny." That seems appropriate. Molly would have had the last word though.



Peterson Jean

Meaning and choices, a set of possibilities.

Our choices are merely temporal stamps in our life timeline, a "Mirage" in the language of Time.

We are here looking, searching for meaning. Are we here to create new stamps for ourselves? For others? or to revive old ones? Either way, it is implicitly voluntary, without constraint. And so be the derived meaning if it can be found.

Is there intentional meaning in our choices, then? Or do our choices define our journey's meaning? Our current states may help us perceive differences, but our actions determine them.

Joy, Confusion, Madness, a set of possibilities! Each combination has its own unique meaning. Often we don't choose their order but rather a result of events on our life timeline. The truth is, we never know when chaos or enchantment might be right for us. But whatever we do, we can't change the past. It is up to us to make the most out of it, to use it to our advantage and make an impact. Such impact is inevitably dependent on the choices we made and how we shape their meanings.

Life is simple but our choices can make it difficult. When we act rationally we act within the limits of our understanding. When we act rashly or selfishly, we violate those limits. When we act in self-indulgence, we violate those as well. When faced with uncertainty, look to nature for help, for reassurance.

The future is nameless. The present is dormant. The past is a mishmash of fragments, misspent moments, and false starts. The secrets of this timeline lie in the forces that are complex, yet insensible. They wait to be released, harnessed, and used. Who knows, one day we'll get our own memorable stamp on the timeliness of history? Maybe. But for the moment, let's focus our energies on the forces that undergird our very being.

At the end, we are inspired to become the forces that create meaning and Birth choices.

Made in collaboration with: The Third Mind, Meditations, MANIFESTOS!, How Designers Think, HG Wells

Annie

Life is a magnificent journey, adorned with trials and choices that grace our path. In our existence, a vital inquiry emerges: How can we live our lives according to our own desires? And how can we do that, if we do not see clearly who the things that matter are and what they mean? We must heed the whispers of our innermost being, and engage in introspection, where our values, passions, and yearnings converge. If you're not engaged in introspection, then you're missing the point. You're missing the point about the nature of the things you're interested in. Moreover, we embark upon a kaleidoscope of experiences, allowing the enchantment of practice to unveil the treasures of our fervor. When we look at what the things, we're interested in are like, we're seeing their true nature: not something degraded by time or space, but living and breathing itself.

Anonymous

A World with Human–Machine Cohabitation: Embracing the Future of Collaboration

Rapid technological advancements have ignited a new age of human–machine coexistence. As we stand on the threshold of a new era, the notion of human–machine cohabitation emerges, offering a transformative vision for our future. Now is the perfect time to embrace this new stage of coexistence, embracing it fully, a transformative vision for our future.

Human–machine cohabitation presents an opportunity to enhance human capabilities and overcome our inherent limitations. Combining the cognitive abilities of machines with human creativity and emotional intelligence, we can create what we desire and what nature demands. This collaboration empowers individuals to excel in various domains, such as medicine, research, and innovation.

Human–machine cohabitation promotes synergy between human intelligence and machine accuracy, leading to unprecedented efficiency. Machines excel in repetitive tasks, ensuring accuracy and reducing errors, while humans contribute intuition, adaptability, and critical thinking. While the potential benefits of human–machine cohabitation are immense, addressing ethical concerns and preserving human autonomy is crucial. Transparency, accountability, and clear guidelines should be established to ensure that machines operate within ethical boundaries. Human oversight and decision–making authority must be maintained to prevent undue influence or misuse of technology.

Human–machine cohabitation offers an exciting vision for the future, harnessing the strengths of both humans and machines to drive innovation, efficiency, and societal progress. By embracing this collaboration, we can expand human capabilities, address complex challenges, and pave the way for a more sustainable and inclusive world. However, it is vital to proceed cautiously, addressing ethical considerations and safeguarding human autonomy. With responsible implementation and thoughtful oversight, a world with human–machine cohabitation holds immense potential to shape a brighter future for humanity.

Made in collaboration with: Meditations

Muhammad H. Al Omoush



Happiness is a feeling that can be shared and **cannot be refused**. Hearts can reach **far and wide**. Without the energy of happiness, our hearts will **sink**, and our **minds will not rest**. Keeping an optimistic lifestyle is the **key to success in business, life, and every way**. If you **insist on continuing working**, you will not succeed unless you succeed in fostering an optimistic attitude, or else you will fail.

My attachment to that painting and my love for its scent are indescribable. My scent memory might be powerful, allowing me to associate scents with specific places and moments in time. Every location has its unique fragrance, and time emanates a scent that permeates my thoughts and emotions whenever I reflect upon that specific period. I can also assume that the below tree is a source of happiness.

Made in collaboration with: Meditations, The Third Mind, MANIFESTOS!

Anonymous

Once upon a time, there was a town, whose people were granted a single, but powerful wish. The townsfolk came together and discussed what wishes they could ask for. One suggested a wish for the latest fashions of the kingdom, **another that they should** always have food in their stores and ale in their barrels, **and a third said** that a warm fire would burn in every hearth.

Finally, an old man, considered very wise by the townsfolk, suggested that they wish to know each other better. The townsfolk agreed that this was a beautiful wish.

However, to their horror, the townsfolk found that they could have no secrets, for every thought and feeling they had was known at once by every other person in the town.

At first, the townsfolk had been gripped by a maelstrom of emotions. Secrets were revealed, betrayals were exposed, **and** anger **and** grief **reigned supreme**. Over time, **however, the good folk had** come to tolerate their new situation.

Some found the spell had benefits, such as the shopkeeper, and the physician. The shopkeeper had a new insight into each customer's needs. Each person only had to arrive, and their basket of groceries was already prepared and ready to be collected.

The physician was able to cure people's ills with ease. She knew immediately what was hurt, and why, and how to remedy it.

But the townsfolk found that as they felt each other's emotions, they became especially familiar with the feeling of boredom. **They** took no pleasure in speaking with one another, for they could already see each conversation laid out before them. When they met to **eat or drink**, they did so in silence, with nothing new or interesting to discuss. They could find no joy **in the company of any one, and at last grew bitterly** isolated. The spell, it seemed, was a curse.

Made in collaboration with: Grimm's Grim Storyteller



Chaos was all that remained.

From chaos, the minds emerged. Filled with a deep longing for meaning and connection, they attempted to make sense of it all. Reason was their first approach, but it proved futile. Then, they decided to use the steadfast laws of nature to handle the chaos. They found order.

Chaos was reformed into five primordial substances, five liquids that shaped the world after. The rebuilding of the world was effected by the the mind's creative forces, the ones created is the origin of all things. But minds weren't alike, and this sparked inevitable conflict. Each mind imbued with its unique interpretation of order and chaos, sought to mold the world according to its own design. One of the minds, which called herself the Queen of Cups, emerged as an arbiter. Order required structure, structure required limits, limits required rulers.

Under the reign of the Queen of Cups, an unusual balance was struck. She wove order and chaos into a cryptic dance, creating a world both alluring and unfathomable. But for order to hold, sacrifice was needed. The remaining minds, understanding the necessity, willingly offered fragments of their own essence.

These remnants, unbound from their originators yet imbued with their longing for meaning, found existence within the world that was taking shape. From these shards of celestial consciousness, the first humans emerged. Humans, unlike the minds, were bound by physicality, their form shaped by the five primordial substances. As humans took their first steps under the Queen of Cups' world, they found themselves confined. A collective spirit began to stir within them, a reflection of their origins, their celestial dissent echoed in their terrestrial existence. It was as if the energy of the Page of Swords, symbolic of challenging established structures and pursuing personal truth, had seeped into their very essence. It was a call for evolution, a drive to transcend the order enforced by the Queen of Cups, a human revolution seeded in the remnants of celestial rebellion. As time unfolded, so did they. They rose and fell, lived and died, loved and lost, each story a testament to their continuous transformation. They though they lived under the shadow of the Queen, it was their light that illuminated the world. It was in their struggle, in their desire to understand and transcend the boundaries of their reality, that their true beauty emerged. Their spirit, echoing the energy of the Page of Swords, carved out its own path, forever questioning, forever exploring, forever rebelling.

Made in collaboration with: Time & The Gods, HP Lovecraft

Maria Chiara Leva

Collaborative intelligence and teaming for humans and artificial intelligent agents is transforming all sectors of the economy, but there's no reason to fear the rapid advancing changes or forecast a gloomy future whereby robotic intelligent and autonomous agent will replace all human employees. In fact companies that automate their operations mainly because they can save time and money on human labour will see only short-term gains.

So where are the long term gains, where is creativity? AI continues to expand its reach into many previously invisible sectors of our economy—indeed it already does so much more than most people realise. Artificial intelligence has fundamentally changed how work gets done and who performs what function.

The fundamental question is what changes in our education and in our mindset do we need to embrace as individual and as a society to face this new aspects of reality? I am not sure that I can answer that, but I do know that there is an immense difference between what I have seen and what is out there. So personally my first question is how to keep an open mind and a form of functional literacy up to date. How might we improve the way in which we manage our digital devices? Certainly many AIs are now able-bodied humans with sophisticated industrial equipment capable from sensors such as those used by Apple's Siri or Amazon sirens. So the first thing is familiarising ourselves with the strength and weakness on which we need to build.

This is not a theoretical exercises but a rather empirical quest that can only be resolved case by case by looking at what are the agents at play, the resources and the ultimate goals towards all need to concur if a true gain is to be achieved... AI applications as well as some pre existing form of automation are already helping humans expand their abilities in many ways:

They can amplify our cognitive strengths; perform highly repetitive tasks requiring low level of situational awareness and free us for higher-level tasks ; and embody human skills by providing advice on how best to spend our limited time. Act as a reminder of priorities we may forget inevitably at critical moments in time.

We need to be realists and relinquish our illusion of control and possession over the reality that we have in front of us and acknowledge that, as in every creative gesture, there is an element of value coming from seeing the sense of purpose, in the context that a machine may not be able to interpret . This ultimately is our contribution and for it to be exercised trustfully we need to be fully engaged, and open, at the ready for the empirical verification that facts will inevitably bring when we look for ground truths.

*Made in collaboration with: Wilson & Daugherty,
MANIFESTOS!, Soren Kierkegaard*

Shade

The Train Commute

The rhythmic clatter of the train wheels against the tracks echoed in Sarah's ears as she looked out of the window. It had been years since she began commuting to Dublin by train for work, and the daily journey had become an intrinsic part of her life. As the train travelled along its familiar route, Sarah's mind wandered, reflecting on the significance of her routine. The people she has met on her journey, the stories she had, the experience she has gained and the friendship she has made. The train represented more than just a means of transportation to Sarah; it symbolised the passage of time and the rhythm of life. Each day, she boarded the train, stepping into a world of transitions and the world of the unknown because she never knew what she would encounter on this journey. The train was a thing that carried her from one phase of the day to another, from the comforts of her home to the demands of work in Dublin and back again. Sarah cherished those moments on the train, for they offered a precious pause between personal and professional life. A place to sit back and reflect on her life and what she want form it. It was a time for introspection, a space where she could disconnect from the chaos of the outside world and delve into her thoughts and sometimes meet new people. The train became her sanctuary, a cocoon of solitude amid the collective movement of the commuting crowd.

When she is not talking to other passengers she often observes other passengers, wondering about their stories, dreams, and struggles. In those fleeting moments, she felt a profound sense of connection, realising that everyone shared a common thread—a shared experience of navigating life's complexities every day of their life.

Hugh Jordan

Demons

In the depths of despair, where shadows danced with broken dreams, a shattered soul fought a losing battle against the demons that haunted their every step. Alex could no longer distinguish reality from the nightmarish realm that engulfed him.

He stumbled through the desolate city streets as the demon relentlessly pursued him. His heart pounded in his chest as the demon. The sound of his own hurried footsteps mingled with the distant wails of sirens, a symphony of chaos and desperation. He glanced up at the flickering neon lights of a liquor store, its illuminous sign casting an eerie glow, as if mocking his struggle to escape.

A presence seemed to weigh upon him, a lurking figure whose sinister intentions were palpable. His mind raced, grappling with questions that found no answers. How had the figure found him so quickly? Had it been only a day since he last silenced the demon?

Seeking refuge, he veered right down a narrow alley, the stench of decay and despair assaulting his senses. The broken glass beneath his feet shattered with a sharp crack, his despair echoing inaudibly alongside the sound. He cursed his own invisibility, feeling the walls of his existence closing in around him.

Glancing over his shoulder, panic surged through his veins as the figure drew nearer. The cacophony of voices within his mind grew louder, taunting him with their malicious whispers. He knew he had to escape, find a fleeting moment of respite before the relentless pursuit resumed.

With a desperate lunge, he threw himself behind a mound of discarded rubbish, seeking solace in its putrid embrace. The voices intensified, driving him to the brink of madness, but still, he clung to the flickering hope of survival. He felt the creature's icy grip on his wrist, its touch suffocating, as it extended his trembling arm.

Tears streamed down his face as the pain surged through him, unbearable and cruel. His trembling hand reached for the syringe, its cold familiarity providing a perverse comfort. In a moment of despairing surrender, he focused his vision long enough to locate the final remnants of blue streams, the elusive salvation that slithered down his arm. With a trembling press, he released the demons from their cage, temporarily subduing the torment within.

As the voices gradually subsided, the creature before him grinned with sinister satisfaction. He lowered both hands, the weight of his addiction temporarily lifted. A sigh of relief escaped his lips, mingling with the distant echoes of his struggle. The empty syringe rolled across the dimly lit alley, a testament to the depths to which he had fallen.

How had it come to this? The question lingered in the air, unanswered and haunting. In that solitary moment, as the city continued to slumber, He found himself trapped between the demon of withdrawal and the elusive promise of escape. The battle raged on, leaving scars unseen but deeply etched upon his fractured soul.

Jesús Aguilar López

The story of today is told by the Old Woman in her golden dress, who was so beautiful that no man came near her. It happened, that the Count had to go out hunting. When he was going through the forest he met an Old Woman with a Golden Horse. The Old Woman said to him, There is a Golden Horse which neighs so well that I do not know where to find another. The Count thought, That must be the Golden Bird, who is always so merry. So he took the Golden Horse and rode forth with it. And as soon as evening was come, he said to the Old Woman, Now I will go home. But as soon as she saw that she was terrified and said, What a strange creature! she cried with a loud voice, What a frightful beast! and ran out into the open country.

The youth followed her, and as he was going onward, he thought he saw in the distance a light which he recognized as the sunbeams. He turned his horse about, and rode onward, and soon came to a large and beautiful forest. He stopped, and looked about him, and at length came to a little house. He knocked. A little old woman was sitting in the doorway, looking out of one of the windows. She said to him, Why are you going to my house? I am so hungry, my lord, answered he, that I cannot stay any longer in this miserable little hut. Then she took him in, gave him bread and butter, and said, Keep what you have got, and give what you can. But he would not keep what he had, and said, I must go to the church, and there I shall see the Son of Man.

So she took him to the churchyard, where the people were sitting eating and drinking. And then something unexpected happened, that the goose which had carried the platter to the churchyard before had flown away, and was now lying in the meadow. And as she did not know where the duck was, she ran and called to her companion. So the night was full of strange things; for the night had a wild and horrible look about it that seemed to come from some terrible place.

have told you all I know, and you will learn it all from me.

Made in collaboration with: Grimm's Grim Storyteller, Bram Stoker's Dracula

O. Jules

The Ominous Call

Philip was coming downstairs, while I was staring out the window while sipping my oat matcha latte. He said **something about the old woman, and I heard the sound of the door being opened. I turned to see a man in a white suit standing outside the door** – a middle-aged man with a well-cured beard and a sinister look in his eyes. The name was Dr. Ellis. Handsome indeed, but when I met his gaze I was literally petrified.

I had never seen such obsidian-like eyes in my entire life. The room was filled with an eerie silence as I locked eyes with him. Instinctively, I started biting my lower lip. Then, hearing the woman moaning, he took the stairs, relieving me from the weight of his presence.

Philip, noticing my reaction, quickly moved towards me, concern etched on his face. "Are you alright?" he asked, his voice filled with genuine worry. I struggled to find the words to respond, my voice caught in my throat. All I could manage was a shaky nod. I could hear the muffled voices coming from the upper floor. Dr Ellis and the old woman **were talking. They seemed to be talking to one another, and I could tell they were trying to get the old woman to help them out. I could hear Dr. Ellis muttering something, but could only hear a muffled** and indecipherable noise.

Philip decided to join them; he could probably not bear waiting to get a final response **and was determined to get the matter off his chest as quickly as he could.** I watched him take a deep breath and walk up the stairs. **He did not say a word, but I could tell that he was trying.** I decided to get up and get some fresh hair, and something unexpected happened. The old woman we were hosting was from **out of town, and she had a reason** for that. What might be the reason for the lady to seek shelter in our house? **I will tell you in a second.** **First of all, the lady was quite unwell** since she arrived. **Her fever was beginning to beat at an incredible pace. It made it impossible for her to function at all.** Philip used to be friends with her elder son – unfortunately, the poor chap died in a car accident last week – so she had to come to grant him a proper burial. But while travelling **through the country, she had become so ill that** she had to stop several kilometres far from her deceased son's house. Yesterday my brother Philip received her call and understanding her situation he decided to come pick her up and bring her home. **She was already very weak, I had not expected to meet her upon arrival at our house.** Once I saw her **I felt a terrible sense of loss.** An aura of deep sadness was literally pouring out of any of her movements. And here comes the weird fact. We offered to ask our family doctor, but she politely insisted she needed to see her son's doctor, Ellis Markus. "Mara, I cannot thank you enough for your and your brother's hospitality, but I need to call Dr. Ellis" her voice pitched while pronouncing the name of the doctor "he knows what to do with me".

I decided to bear with her; she was sweating **profusely and I decided that it would** be better to avoid her getting more stressed. "Do you have his number?" she asked me to google it and once found his contact to call. She did not want to talk directly to him but she insisted on having me tell him "you know what's best for her."

So here we go. I called him. So here we go. I called him. His voice sounded deep and metallic. I told him what I had and he just asked for our address – that was pretty much it. But I had no idea of the terrible mistake I made.

Made in collaboration with: Sherlock Holmes, HP Lovecraft, Yellowish Space Skulls, Book of Thoth, Melmoth the Wanderer, Ancient Hackers

Anonymous

It was Monday. I know I had a long journey before me but I was energetic. I met with many people, befriended to some while fighting with many. Sometimes there were losses but mostly gains for me.

I was trying to handle everything myself although there were people around. It was a nice journey with nice surroundings however it was stormy and chaotic inside of me.

People who had high expectations for me pushed me further but by Friday, I was exhausted and I just lied down and wanted to forget, get away from everything. In the end I lost myself to a deep sleep and dreamworld.

It was Monday. I know I had a long journey before me but I was energetic. I was not afraid. I was determined to go on. I was not afraid that I would become a disgrace to my parents. On the road, I met with many people, befriended to some while fighting with many. I met many people from far away and from far away I learned much. They gave me advice, which I took as my own. Sometimes there were losses but mostly gains for me. I gained wisdom, and I gained understanding. Then I was happy, and I did not complain when I gained a great victory. I was trying to handle everything myself although there were people around. I was trying to direct my destiny, though it was not my own, and they thought I was encouraging. It was a nice journey with nice surroundings however it was stormy and chaotic inside of me. I was saying to myself, "you will never make it to the promised land". People who had high expectations for me pushed me further but by Friday, the storm was out of the way – I had reached the Promised Land. Then I was so exhausted that I just lied down and wanted to forget, get away from everything. But my carelessness was such that I remember lying there on the floor, lost in a fit, with my head upon the pillow. In the end I lost myself to a deep sleep and dreamworld.

Kate

Notes for a Midwife

In order to prepare for birth, a Midwife should, according to an ancient custom, take the child from his mother and wrap him in a warm coat and lay him for a while in the straw-yard before he is able to walk on his own.

When a person goes in to labour, the Midwife will place a cloth on the woman's belly to signify her freedom. Later, when the baby is born, the Midwife will place the cloth on the belly of the man who has been most recently abandoned.

To prepare a safe place for birth, the Midwife will place the baby in a sack of birch-bark. When the mother is about to give birth, she will take the sack to the churchyard, and the priest will place the little one in it.

The father of the baby will always be there, attentive and believing, even though he doesn't understand what is happening.

"Mid wife" means "with woman" so men can be Midwives without changing the professional title. It means, as Lord Henry says, that each man is entitled to the use of the office, whatever his social position may be. It is a perfect mode of life.

Why are so few men in the Midwifery profession? Because it is said that the Midwifery degree is not for the faint of heart. It is a degree for the brave. It is a degree for those who know how to keep their tongue in cheek.

What are the benefits of having a Midwife who is also a man? It is a degree for the ambitious, a degree for the clever, a degree for the ambitious man, a degree for the ambitious woman.

A Midwife does not have to be a spouse or parent themselves to be good at their profession, but only to be a good friend to their patient.

The parents can cut the umbilical cord themselves if they wish, or have someone else hold it until they can be sure the child's soul has left it.

Made in collaboration with: Aesop's Fables, MANIFESTOS!, Grimm's Storyteller, Letters to a Young Poet, Picture of Dorian Gray, Dubliners, Ancient Hackers, HP Lovecraft, Meditations

Anastasiia



There are some very happy families, you know, said Alice; and I only wish they knew it —before they got up and left off being unhappy! Oh, don't let me hear the name again! I don't want to hear it! "Prithee, my little maid! Is there such a thing as a little maid"? Oh, there might be a little maid! Oh, there might be a little maid! Who knows? But I knew a little maid once, And I know her now. That makes me feel a little better. Prithee, my little maid!"

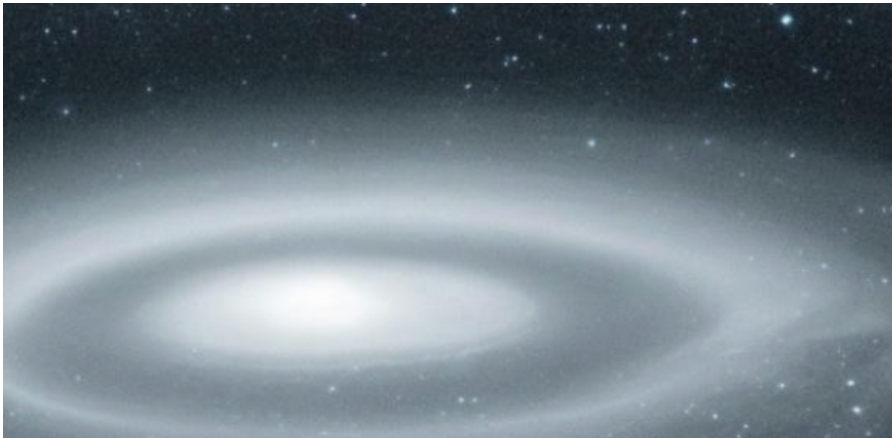
"Prithee? Prithee? What is the meaning behind P'min's surname?" "Some one must have told you that the child you carried was named after a certain beautiful woman. Ah! said Elizabeth; I didn't know that. Oh, you did." "I remember when a young lady came to us in Paris a few weeks ago and said she had a daughter who resembled her, but very nearly looked like, her mother. I was so happy I almost fell down a flight of steps."

Alice felt very glad there was somebody there to listen to her; and as the Dormouse was busily moving about, she said to herself, if only her voice would come through—if only I'd got the chance of having it just now! She began by saying to herself, as loud as she could, You'd better not say anything! It wouldn't be civil, would it? the Dormouse replied. Of course not! Alice said in a tone of great relief. It's not civil!

"Yes, yes. And I've always said that the happiest people live the rest of their lives in a state of profound and complete repose, in a state of complete and complete repose." —Alice . ' I don't know what you mean, said the Dormouse. I mean, what you call a happy life? "

Happy life is the life of inspiration and adventures, every man, who ever followed the White Rabbit, knows it. Because how it is possible to miss the potential way to the adventures, if they are waiting for us?

StellarTX



Beginning

Before the beginning of everything, there was the order in which the world was created. This order, when we think of it as the reason for the universe's existence, we call providence.

The order leads to the creation of our universe, from the nothingness of nothingness, and from the simplicity of finite things with infinite forms. It is the reason for the order in which all things behave, even though there is nothing to restrain or restrain them. From pure energy to quarks, quarks to atoms, and atoms to stars, nothing became something and nothing could be taken away. Stars form planets and planets harbour lives, and so it begins, the beginning of everything.

But what's life anyway? It can't be something made up of matter and energy, or else it would be a lifeless shell. Living organisms are composed of living cells, with the help of which they can survive and grow. Not for long, intelligent lives formed. And what's intelligent? It doesn't need outside help, and it doesn't need anything that it can get from outside. It can provide itself with nourishment from within, and this in turn provides it with the building blocks for intelligent behaviour. The existence of lives seems purposeful but yet unexplained to me. Is it the case that we are talking about a kind of fortuitous creation, in which the motions of the stars and planets are for the sake of the good that they bring?

The answer remains unanswered, and it may turn out to be the secret of happiness itself. I shall try to solve that riddle for you, and then you may decide that the whole problem is resolved.

Margot Masson

Tales of the King of Pentacles

Once upon a time in Eldoria, ruled a mighty king named Cedric, King of Pentacles. King Cedric possessed a unique talent—he could channel his magical powers through intricate pentacle drawings. These pentacles, known as the Seals of the Four Winds, were formed by carefully drawing the shape of the four elements. However, time passed and from hero, king Cedric became a tyrant. Using his magical powers to shape reality in a way that suited him, he oppressed the world with an iron will and a cruelty beyond anything mortal man or woman could bear. He tore the minds of those he had tortured and twisted, and left only the barest vestige of sanity behind. Those who saw the truth of his deeds, those who had once loved him, those who mastered the pentacles magic, were nothing in his sight. And ultimately, he became the only one on earth to know the ultimate magic, the tenth pentacle. Under his rule, the earth was forever changed; for the first pentacle, the sun, became nothing more than a pile of ashes in the sky, and the second, the moon, a blackened and twisted ruin in the sea. People died out of hunger and thirst, for the earth was never so fertile. The land was always dry, and there was never a year that the land produced grain.

However, in a small valley far away from the sight of the king, something unexpected was about to happen. The valley, which lay about forty miles distant from Haraven, was once very fertile. The climate was warm, sandy, and somewhat arid. In this bleak and desolate world, a courageous young page named Ethan could no longer bear the suffering of his fellow citizens. Driven by a sense of justice and a longing for freedom, Ethan set out upon a quest which none may say how far shall he return. Armed with determination and fueled by whispers of an ancient prophecy, Ethan set out on his journey. He ventured into all lands, and as he travelled he met many people who had followed him, all of whom told him how they would stay the journey until the end, and how they had set out upon the journey. Through their guidance, Ethan discovered fragments of forgotten lore that hinted at the existence of the 11th pentacle, capable of altering the balance of the kingdom. It was said to be hidden in a cave carved in the earth's heart in Averon. His troop and him arrived in the city gate before dawn, and all the people of Zoon went out upon the city's streets. They came to the edge of the city's outer gate. Then the people of Zoon, sitting in a city that was but dreamless, cast down their gods and said: O prophet, it is enough that we have known gods, and we have known the gods of Old. And the prophet answered: It is enough, O people of Zoon, that we have known gods. They put down the temples, and the people followed Prophet Yeb, who had taken his place among them. The people of Zoon and Yeb lead Ethan to the cave. There, in the shadow of the Temple of the Kings, lay a book. In the book was the tenth pentacle.

Finally, the fateful day arrived. Ethan infiltrated the royal palace, navigating its intricate corridors and hidden passages. With the 11th pentacle clutched tightly in his hand, Ethan led a small group of his followers up the stairway to the royal ball. There they stood before a royal figure, seated upon a marble throne. Ethan unveiled the forbidden pentacle, its ethereal glow casting an otherworldly light across the chamber. As the pentacle's magic surged through him, Ethan channeled its power, clashing with King Cedric in a fierce struggle. As Ethan destroyed the King's power, a wave of liberation swept across Eldoria, sweeping away the darkness and pain that consumed it. A new era came, a time of peace and order. And now this: a new king. And a different people. A new order. A new world. The gods have no power to harm them. They have no hold on them.

Made in collaboration with: Cthulhu & Prejudice, HP Lovecraft, Book of Thoth, Time & The Gods, Meditations

Ammar Abbas

If I look the world from this perspective, it becomes obvious that neither of these two approaches is optimal which are necessary for safety-critical systems to function effectively.

Therefore we need to consider the way of transportation through which we continue but in the different direction and with respect for the time-series data. In this paper, we have proposed a novel general methodology that combines the advantages from probabilistic modeling with Reinforcement Learning (RL).

The car can be thought of as an RL agent learning through several interacting factors, including its history, operating conditions, and features. Also, the probabilistic model learns from both raw sensor data and expert knowledge about the state-action pair by integrating information from multiple sources (such a previous episode's observations or recent experience).

The concept of human existence as a system, with its many interacting and dependent variables, has proved to be an enormous challenge for traditional methods. But suddenly, there is no such thing in conventional methodologies; therefore, new technologies are required! Artificial intelligence (AI) represents one such promising avenue for tackling these daunting challenges.

Although its effective, but, at the same time expensive, replacement of human experts with an artificial neural network does not seem feasible on a large enough sample set yet, recent evidence suggests that it can be done.

Alternatively, given the lack in training data for most expert systems, DRL could simply rely only upon observed raw sensor information to learn the optimal state-action value function; this approach has been discussed by Chien, Hubert, Huh, Jang and Morrison.

Furthermore, the alignment of the states is preserved regardless in which direction the input vector is oriented; this helps to eliminate any interactions with the environment.

Something amazing happens when we train our model for state space modeling: We get an exact mapping between the actual sensor information and its predicted state!

Made in collaboration with: PhD Brain

Anonymous

Once upon a time, in a kingdom shrouded in the mists of tradition, there lived a young prince named Frederick. In contrast to his father Charles and his younger brother Dominick, he was a kind-hearted and just ruler, loved by the people. But he carried a secret desire within his heart: Frederick dreamt of a kingdom where power was not concentrated in the hands of his family, but rather shared by all.

Driven by this dream, Prince Frederick embarked on a quest to gather the wisdom of the land. He sought out the best and most brilliant thinkers. He sought out their books and examined their contents carefully. The more he learned, the stronger his conviction grew: It was time to challenge the age-old institution of monarchy. When, however, the time came for Prince Frederick to present his findings to his father, the King, he was met with disdain and rejection. King Charles, steeped in the traditions of his forefathers, could not fathom the idea of relinquishing his divine right to rule. He threatened Frederick to strip him from all his titles and rights so that his brother Prince Dominick would become the heir to the throne.

Undaunted, Prince Frederick turned to the common folk, believing that their voices held the key to change. He travelled to the villages and towns, sharing his vision with the people. He spoke passionately about equality, justice, and a government accountable to the citizens. The folk listened with rapt attention, their hearts stirred by his words. But the masses were burdened by the weight of their daily struggles, and the idea of challenging the monarchy seemed too daunting and risky to them. Fearful of reprisal, they chose to remain silent but whispers about a better future under Prince Frederick spread across the country.

The whispers became louder and reached the powerful elite of the country. Threatened by Prince Frederick's ideals, the elite started rumours painting him as a rebel, a traitor to the crown. They claimed that he had betrayed the King and thus his own brother, Prince Dominick, condemned him to death.

When the day came for him to be executed, he said to the King, "I have done the greatest of all in this world: I followed my heart. I have no regrets. I have not betrayed you, father." Impressed by the Prince's determination, King Charles decided to spare his life. But he followed his threat and stripped Frederick from his titles and banned him from the castle.

And so, the kingdom remained trapped in the chains of tradition and inequality. The tale of Prince Frederick's failed attempt to bring about a fairer society became a cautionary legend. Yet, whispers of hope persisted. They were carried on the winds, igniting the hearts of those who still dared to dream of a different world.

And although Prince Frederick's efforts were in vain, his unwavering spirit became an inspiration, fuelling the flickering flames of resistance that would one day rise again and challenge the oppressive rule of the monarchy. In his legacy, his own daughter will one day emerge as a leader, destined to ignite a revolution against her Uncle Dominick. But this is a story that yet has to be written.

Made in collaboration with: Grimm's Grim Storyteller

Anonymous

As he sat, his mind was clear, steady, steady as a stone. His feet on solid ground. His mind at ease. The room was filled with fellow students – people who shared his views. He wondered if they also felt anxiety? His mind wandered to other things – to the weather, to school, to fame, to death – but soon found its way back to the subject at hand, to the task at hand.

With three minutes of writing left, he had to finish this. To finish what? To be of use to the people around me. To do my duty with justice and humanity. That's what I was made for. To be the good shepherd's dog. To lay his food on the table and let the flock eat. To watch over the flock and watch over the master. And not let anyone get in his way. Not a troublemaker, he should be. A reliable provider, a good neighbour. Someone to turn to when things go wrong.

Before long, the timer rang out. He stared down at the page of writing before him, and realized how brief was the time. The page would soon be erased, the page torn away, the page reordered, the page torn out again. He set about correcting the mistakes. Removing the names. Pouring over the sources. Digging up the old writings. Saying to himself, This is what I have to offer. A job well done.

The Lament of Loving Reason:

Oh Spirit of Reason, how long must we wait?
In this age of trials and tribulations,
Deceit, Folly, and Disdain hold the power to defeat the mighty.
Share with me your wisdom, your noble falcons' grace,
For they are divine gifts from above,
Untouched by fear or hesitation as they take flight.

Their wings bear the strength of flames,
Shining light that pierces through darkness like a thousand suns.
Chaotic yet mesmerizing, their dance fills the skies
Before vanishing in an instant.
From where do they come? And where do they go?
They are elusive Sprites, phantom sights that follow my every
step.

With no means to defend against them but my own wit,
I yearn for the faculty to emulate their glory,
To conquer fear and rise above life's challenges
In pursuit of truth, understanding, and love.

In this twilight realm between shadows and light,
I dream of a day when reason prevails over dread,
When doubts fade away like mist before the sun's warm embrace.
But still I stand at the edge of uncertainty's abyss,
Where hope and despair dance upon a fragile precipice.

