

**Spent  
Time  
(A Journey  
Through  
The Body)**

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LJMcD Communications

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The logo features the stylized initials 'LJMcD' in a cursive font, with the word 'COMMUNICATIONS' in a smaller, sans-serif font underneath. A horizontal line is positioned below the word 'COMMUNICATIONS'.

Blood curdled milk blowing along a trench of mirrors—turned the head, moved crosswise across the landscape of old rubbish, gasoline, and envy. The boy jumped in the water from a rotting wooden dock scarred on the underside by waves and an unknowable fungus. Naked, glistening, he dived beneath the murky water an orange smell in the air over oily algae and kudzu vine. Train whistle in the distance sad and lonely grey days of subsistence—I turned and saw the trench of mirrors just wind blowing from the sleeve of fate. Hand held I moved sideways. Hand held I toppled the statue of yesterday. This was the movement where movement ends—the simple fact of life where life can no longer continue... wind hand caught in the door I made a move to blow my sleeve just a simple manoeuvre like I wasn't there at all.

This was the dawning of time for the man who held the cards. Grey day he looked out the window smoking a languid cigarette the car idling in the driveway where a Puerto Rican lover warmed the motor. Scarred hands he looked down at the table and drew a design with the condensation from his cool glass rapidly warming in the close inside air. This was time where time was forgetting everything the long

grey whistle of a lonely train on a long grey lonely day there was nothing left to do but wither right there at the table while a Puerto Rican lover idled the motor with a careful and practiced hand.

Eric, as the man decided his name to be, stood up from the table stubbing his cigarette out in an antique glass ashtray. A plume of blue smoke puffed up through the air and hung loosely around Eric's clothes. The judge wouldn't like it, but the judge don't like anything. I made a move across the table and flicked a speck of ash from a seersucker lapel.

"Been in a jam Bill?"

He spoke flatly, matter of fact like there wasn't anything else to do but be in a jam just right when and where he said so.

"Boy do you know it."

The motor of the car shut off abruptly and the Puerto Rican disappeared somewhere into a lonely train whistle lonely in a distant sky.

I followed Eric outside with a low rumbling like something from a movie and there I was sitting behind the wheel speeding the wrong way down a one-way street shouting

obscenities as the other vehicles leapt out of the way.

“It’s about time we did something about the state of things around here...”

I could tell he wasn’t talking about the town, although that would be quite the topic of conversation, you see the mayor was corrupt as a bucket of shit and the whole establishment had been set up to roll him and his cronies in lucrative local government contracts. Right now, however, Eric had set his sights on something bigger. The whole apparatus was crumbling around us and we were just waiting for the signal that it was time to act.

Rough time *buenos días* I smoked a cigarette holster on the wall. Rickety dock the boy was naked diving beneath the oily water orange smell of intestines left on the shore oily algae lapping at the scarred skin of his chest and pectorals. The man who held the cards moved in with a circular motion stroking the air like a golfer placing his shot. He made a sign in the air like a priest blessing the congregation and you came over all warm inside orange smell of intestines by the shore. Here I was taking stock

a little number of yesterday there was a spice smell in the air like good cooking from a faraway place not this Podunk chicken feed just breaded Salisbury and chicken fried steak.

The car stopped idling idly stopped by the water where the boy stopped idly smoking a cigarette from the shoreline. I receded fading on a wind of nothings just another decrepit face on a canvas of faded street scenes just nothing to do and nothing to see. You see You see the old hobo jungle used to be here just a bearded bindle stiff whistling dixie pissing against the wall a bottle of blonde whiskey and a whistle for the pretty girls. Gone now the hoboing ways gone the freight train gone the distant lonely whistle lonely in a distant sky the lonely boy the lonely hobo distant across the plains of Venus.

A thin tree stood where I stood and I didn't move to accommodate it's presence, rather, we occupied the same space rooting deep down into each other like fingers of entwined lovers caressing on a gentle bed of leaves. My roots took up earth digging water, the flesh leaves sparkled out into the noonday sun. Oily water, oily lagoon, the kid dived in naked and glistening a sort of tree language that only we could understand.

You see you see, he was a hobo of sorts a sort of bindle stiff young and elegant made his fortune rolling lush on the El. Didn't need to do it by the time I knew him, had a solid connection and made a bit on the side selling stolen goods in pawn shops and acting incredulous when the cops came to call. Still rolled the lushes from time to time just for kicks you see he was only into booze and pot at this stage of the affair and we hadn't yet brought up the stages of the earth eating disease.

Purple ravaged flesh the boy moved across the plains of Venus his flesh diseased eaten by the earth. The metal reek of nova hung off his flesh like a bad overcoat and there he was a cold metal cooling off under the lights of a distant star. I didn't know as much at the time, but I had a habit hard and there I was taking a quick fix of the metal habit filling up and nodding out on a wave of cool blue the swinging sounds of the sixties 1920 nineteen-fifty-seven. Old bank clerk spitting sick in the green dawn he held the covers over the woollen eyes of sheep. The metal fix is a green kick cool and green like a plant where you suck up all the chlorophyll and go on the nod in the tasty sunlight of a distant star. Cut to Venus: I held

the overcoat in someone else's diner, this was not my turf and I did not know how to make a connection. On a human level I had never known how to make a connection, but like a dowser's wand I was able to make the metal connection a simple manoeuvre you find the connection you make it you green out cool and still a thousand years under the light of a distant star.

"In a jam Bill?"

Eric spoke thin and distant like a voice from a radio that was tuned to static.

"Don't you know it."

I parked the car and got out in a long movement like a whore taking off her dress. The bar was down a flight of steps and the one window looking out onto the street (presumably at the level of the sidewalk) had been black out with a piece of painted cardboard. I ordered a beer and found a booth. Eric ordered rye whiskey and stood chatting to the bartender for some time. We were the only ones there.

Soon enough, Old Bart entered the scene thin as a weasel and looking sicker than I had ever seen a man. He stood loose in his clothes like a man who doesn't like to be seen just



jangling there like a wind-up toy. Eric looked him over and moved slow like a tortoise to the booth. Old Bart drifted over to the bar grey anonymous like a ghost in someone else's overcoat. He spoke to the bartender with small furtive movements of the head and hands looking all the time like a weasel or some other rodent and he lay down a few coins making a show of drinking a few small sips of draught beer. Soon enough he came over to the booth. He smiled at Eric a grimy toothless smile the way I imagine a child chimney sweep would have smiled at the guvnor back in Victoria's old limey-land. He slid five dollars across the scarred woodgrain of the table and Eric pocketed the bill with a practiced air like a magician putting a rabbit back into his hat. He stood up and went to use the john. After some time sitting smiling idiot urchin smile Old Bart got up and followed him.

I never saw Old Bart again except in my dreams where we got real well acquainted.... You see, Old Bart acted as a sort of 'dream guide' for me on the heavy metal kick. There I was nodding out on the green pull of Venusian calm and there is Old Bart smiling that Old Bart smile toothless grin just idiot mambo like a collier. He takes me by the hand and we move

across plains of pure and abstract horrors that curdle milk like blood on a trench of mirrors.

Turtle snapping oily lagoon—distant train whistle in a sad and lonely sky. I turned attuned to the sensitivities of my situation and took the kid for all he was worth.

“There’s just two ways to do this...”

Found myself a young body, taut brown skin, wearing someone else’s overcoat in a foreign city.

I left the building with my hands in my pockets feeling the loose change and the switchblade knife. I arrived at a canal flowing through what appeared to be the business district and I stripped off my loose clothes and jumped in the water. Turtle snapping oily lagoon—blood-soaked moon of tomorrow. I found I could breath in this ‘atmosphere’ sluicing brown liquid into my lungs and absorbing the emotional ‘oxygen’ of the city. The thoughts and feelings of the entire establishment entered into me and I felt myself welling up with love and hate words the triumphs and fears of a hundred thousand souls. Like the heavy metal kick it was Old Bart smiling flicking cigarette ash from his sleeve

like an old Indian sweat lodge. In deference I made the movement offered him the first shot and he nodded out green tree rooting down into the ground where there wasn't anything but grey shale and bedrock.

"There's just two ways to do this."

I found myself driving the car again. No place, no purpose. Eric smoking in the passenger seat glanced down at the papers in his hands.

"In a jam again Bill?"

"Don't you know it."

The car shuddered to a stop. We were waved over to the side of the road by a fat moustachioed cop whose partner stayed in the car doing a crossword only occasionally glancing up with an air of disinterest.

"You have come a long way, no?"

"Si senior. We are on our way south."

"I would like to see your *documentos*, if you would be so kind senior."

Eric handed the man a grimy sheaf of documents that stated from where we had come, our business here in the region, and a signed declaration stating that we had authority from the regional governor to continue on.

The fat cop clicked his tongue breathing heavily and pretending to read.

“These *documentos* are not in order, I think.”

“They come from the governor himself!”

“Si señor, but while you have been driving, we have had a change of government, no? The CIA says the governor is a bad man and he has been, how you say, executed by public assembly.”

“What’s that got to do with us?”

“You no longer have permission to travel here. Very dangerous country without you have permission.”

“We are on business here and it can no longer wait. The Russians have begun synthesising a new drug which they are calling ‘telepathine’ and we must meet with Senor Valasquez in El Toro to isolate the formula for

the same before we get on the losing side of this goddamned cold war!”

“I sympathise, senor, but I simply cannot let you pass.”

Hands out palm up from the elbow— Eric dug out fifty pesos from the glove box and handed them to the cop who grinned beneath his bristling black moustache and stood aside. The car roared to life and kicked up mud and dirt as I spun the wheels and got us back onto the road.

“How did you know that was going to work?”

“Never failed before.”

“Suppose we hit an honest cop one of these days?”

“Never seen one yet.”

*Anonymous grey day. Diary Entry. Hauser came by to see me yesterday—didn't think too much of it until I remembered that I had not yet met Hauser. He is a man of distant time and I will not meet him until next year. Said he was looking for Old Bart and seemed surprised*

*when I knew his name. Just like a cop, I suppose, but he didn't find anything not even my works (I have them stashed next to the garbage chute in the hall).*

Tide pools of green envy gelatinous remnants of pulverised ticker tape. The astronaut launch came back down to earth a simple sort of something like nothing came before. This is the remnants of a grey day grey anonymous lonely whistle in a distant sky. Here I am there's not a thing to do. Stashed my works by the garbage chute green metal fix just green rooting trees down to grey shale and bedrock.

The kid in the bar made a face in the mirror like he was checking his teeth for signs of infection.

The kid in the bar picked at a pimple until it bled.

The kid in the bar made the connection followed Eric to the john came back out with a smile on his face and disappeared out the door. Saw him once more at Tombstone Mary's on the nod a green metal look about him purple ravages of the skin grey anonymous day in someone else's overcoat.

## LIVER

The kid was yellow, liverish, a strong scent coming off of him like a stagnant pissoir.

Blood and dead leaves I made a move to say goodnight.

Here I am made a move with one hand a simple sort of manoeuvre didn't rightly know what to do with the remains of everything that had been handed to me. I looked down and saw that I was in a bad state. There was blood on my hands and on my clothes. Whose blood I couldn't rightly say... perhaps mine? I may have been in a fight of some sort... perhaps the blood was someone else's and I just don't remember who...

Eric came in stamping his feet from the cold outside. We made it together under kerosene lamps moving in and out like tender feelings beneath the skin. Once around for old time's sake I held the overcoat didn't know what or where here was a distant vision Old Bart toothless idiot grin made the connection over plains of Venus. Cold metal feeling greening out a thousand years we made it two times under kerosene lamps stamping our feet from the cold it was a winter evening I held the

overcoat under kerosene lamps didn't know what else to do it was a moment of surrender on Venusian plains just the cold finger of space caressing me on the inside of my lower intestine.

Orange smell in the air where the kid dived beneath the water. Memory of a time when I think I was there. Memory dim fading dim and distant lonely train whistle in a distant sky. I held the time on a faded clock like I could see backwards but really it was all written down for me. Didn't know what else to do under kerosene lamps made it three times stamping our feet from the cold. I held a pool cue rubbing chalk into the end with a slow, sensuous arc. Eric stood there grinning in someone else's overcoat I don't remember this blood on my hands possibly mine? Three times we made it under kerosene lamps a distant eddy distant in the waters of an oily lagoon.

The kid was there the kid was me. Found myself in a foreign city breathing in the 'atmosphere' a cold and lonely tide pool little crabs scurrying towards freedom. This is a novel I think I wrote but I don't remember the words. Like an old Indian sweat lodge. Like kerosene lamps.



LIVER

The kid was yellow and liverish.

FINGERS

“Well, you see doc, I got a pain and it needs medicine.”

“What seems to be the trouble young man?”

“Trigeminal neuralgia, doc—can’t do a thing for it.”

“I suggest the heavy metal cure, and I suggest it immediately.”

LIVER

The kid was yellow and liverish.

HEART

I found myself cold alone thin blood pumping through a distant eddy of water. Heart sounds: *I am I am I am.* (PLATH)

From the bottom of my HEART I thank you all for coming here today.

Without you all, this wouldn’t be possible.

I cry over nights spent cold lonely awake  
alone a cold eddy in a distant water.

Eric made the rounds in someone else's  
overcoat. It was the usual affair ducking into  
lunchrooms and coffee houses, chatting with the  
staff and then taking a booth by the windows  
for a period of time. The kids drifted in one by  
one looking sicker and sicker as the day wore  
on. Some of them came with money, which Eric  
pocketed with an expert hand, and some came  
with items they wished to trade: pocket watch,  
fountain pen, antique glass ashtray. Some of  
them came with nothing at all and expected us  
to give them credit. These bums we put out on  
the street and left them to the ravages of fate.  
Soon enough it was time to go. We made the  
subway stations, the El, up through tenement  
houses and cold water flats. I took a fix right  
there in the kitchen greening out a thousand  
years you see you see it's like this there's not a  
thing left to do I was out hoboing and the freight  
train come and the freight train taketh away.  
Old Kerouac the bum he held the candle at night  
over a can of beans. Old Kerouac the bum I hid  
inside him and his large open smile to the dust  
of the road where the tides had turned and there  
was nothing inside but the farthest reaches of  
my fingers.

I was wondering now what to do.

LIVER

The kid needs a doctor.

“What seems to be the trouble young man?”

“Trigeminal neuralgia, doc—can’t do a thing for it.”

“I suggest the heavy metal cure—why this child has a terrible case of jaundice! What have you been giving him?”

“Nothing but cod liver oil and gin doc, just like mother in the days before I remember...”

LIVER

The kid puked up his guts on the Turkish rug.

FINGERS

Old doc Schaeffer made the rounds looking into the beds of each of his patients with a wise old eye like a rat surveying his kingdom. He checked charts and investigated IV drips, he questioned nurses and harrumphed at the patients when they tried to sit up and take

a good look at him. This was his kingdom and his constituents were the bodies of sickness. There would be no second guessing the good doctor's orders and the patient was expected to make a full recovery if he would only do what he was told.

Schaeffer walked slowly back to his office pleased with himself and pleased with his kingdom. A finer crop of sickness well it just couldn't be found. He took a shot of heavy metal and greened out a thousand years slumping down onto the desk and feeling the wash of oblivion as it swept down from the base of his skull and settled in his heels. Like a tree he rooted down into the hospital floor and made himself at home with the spores of sickness that enveloped the breathable air. Like a dowser's wand he made a beeline for the terminal cases.

"What have you been giving him?"

"Saline solution and antibiotics doctor."

"I suggest the heavy metal cure, and I suggest it immediately."

"Doctor, I don't think that for a man in his condition—"

"Who's the doctor here?"

“Yes doctor...”

**LIVER**

The kid was yellow and liverish.

**FINGERS**

**HEART**

**LUNGS**

**TESTICLES**

Eric made the rounds with a cold touch like nothing mattered any more. There was not a trace of his former self as he stood huddled in someone else's overcoat and oversaw the depletion of our meagre stock. The connection was running out and the blockade was making things near impossible. Couldn't bear to see anyone sick so he made the rounds regular as laxative day at the old folks home but he was all the time worrying about where his next fix would come from.

Turtles snapping oily lagoon—distant train whistle in a sad and lonely sky—the kid dived in the water scarred and naked a Venusian calm enveloping his thin frame. He smoked a cigarette coiled inside the intestines of a small town that neither knew nor cared

about his existence. He had been here three months and had barely aroused the suspicions of the locals despite making regular appearances in the business district and breathing in their 'atmosphere'.

Yellow suck on the flowers of tomorrow he made a move with his mouth like breathing but from a place in the distant past. Yellow froth at the corners of his mouth he made a move like a jellyfish dissolving on waves of cigarette smoke oily orange smell from where he had been dissolving orange smell of kerosene lamps. Made it three times stamping our boots from the cold. I rubbed chalk on the pool cue in slow, sensuous arcs. I talked idly about a man I had not yet met and the executors assured me that I was not in a position to be subtle about affairs such as this.

This was no time for subtlety.

I pulled out my piece and lay it on the bar. Smith and Wesson snub-nose revolver, cocked and loaded, all it takes is one move and I could blow all you motherfuckers away. Right now, just right where we stand, I could do it if the time was right.

Breathing in the 'atmosphere'.

The time was right all the love and hate words filled him with vim and excitement. He puffed up like one of those fish and made a move across the trench of mirrors a single action like a whore undressing. Didn't know what to make of it at the time, but Hauser was to write of it in his diary some years hence that it was the single most disgusting thing he ever stood still for.

Cold embrace of space I made a move to satiate a particular desire that had been bugging me for some time. Most disgusting thing I ever stand still for.

Eric made the rounds cold and alone. I followed him from a distance cold alone unusual and obsequious. There was a time and a place for affairs of subtlety and now was not that time. Old Bart followed me in my dreams just a little taste of something that I might have been smiling that urchin's smile idiot mambo followed him to the john never saw Old Bart again.

It goes without saying that Old Bart was myself in another mode of living. Nothing can

be done without Old Bart get a look in and I suppose I was the kid too at one stage of the affair and maybe even Eric when it comes right down to it.

“In a jam Bill?”

“Don’t you know it.”

LIVER

HEART

*I am I am I am.*

LUNGS

FINGERS

(Schaeffer)

“In a jam Bill?”

I am driving the car again fast on a road to nowhere. There is the scent of oil and kudzu vine and I put my foot to the floor travelling very fast down a darkened street. Eric is looking at a stained sheaf of papers and not saying a word.

“Everything look alright?”

“Hmmm....”

“What’s that?”



“Didn’t say nothing Bill.”

“Don’t suppose you ever do.”

I made a move across my hands scarred winds of time like I wasn’t even anything doing in this Podunk lunchroom. The waiter sidled over looking ornery and mean so I ordered coffee just for something to do. The kid was looking thin and distant sad lonely train whistle in a distant sky. Choked down the bitter black coffee smoking a cigarette in someone else’s overcoat.

The car was idling outside just oily algae over an oily lagoon. I didn’t know what else to do so I took the keys from the ignition and threw them in the ditch just purple scum water the stink of an orange in the lower intestine. Purple skin the ravages of disease across his thin face—this was the time at the end of times, the thin end of the wedge where the block of cinder was concerned. There was nothing left to do just ravages of the earth eating disease across his rose-white skin.

I folded down the bed where I found myself and propped myself up on a pillow watching the kid as he dressed slowly in long languorous movements. I didn’t know what to

do with myself I was so lonely the car idling outside made it three times under kerosene lamps stamping our feet from the cold outside. Here I was in another flesh another time on the dial of the clock. Hauser walked in and was surprised I knew his name.

This was the end of times, the cold apocalyptic roast of flesh where the Venusian ovens grow dark over distant temptation. This was the car idling in the flesh outside, the lonely pull of green oblivion. Man made the rounds cool calm and casual and I felt the tug of metal across my veins where I suppose I had been waiting stuck like a dowser's wand just waiting for the right moment. I felt the green pull of metal and there I was purple skin ravages of the earth eating disease evident across my thin face. Here I was on this Podunk planet just waiting for a fix.

“Been in a jam Bill?”

“Don't you know it.”

Eric had the answer for everything and for everything there was an answer.

Been here before and heard it all.

Thin time I found myself situated in the distance—turtle snapping oily lagoon. Found myself in another street greening out a thousand years on the heavy metal kick.

This was a journey through a body, and I've seen the end times.

LIVER

HEART

FINGERS

LUNGS

Spent time.

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NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ of 50

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