

"Home"

Hans Anderson

Most nebulously, the shutting down of civilization has created a transformation in perception; home is no longer a place I go after a long shift to sleep and recuperate for tomorrow's action; it is my sanctuary, my palace of darkness with its shuttered windows, tucked away from the pedestrians strolling in the street. Home is unperturbed, except by the most egregious of violations; its walls and its center the bulwark against the forces conspiring outside. It is my prison; it is my castle. Its armor no more impenetrable than my own. The foundation cracks run long, and worm their way into my thoughts, where they plant seeds of doubt and fear, and maybe kick up a touch of nearly imperceptible dust. What an unacceptable landing... If it were not for the crisis, how would I know anything? How would I be otherwise forced to come to terms with anything... I could just exist in an infinite world of possibilities only attached to me by the random nature of creativity of thought... of things that I suspected, but could not quite bring myself to contend. Isn't that the beauty of this?

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The layers are the worst part; I can always feel them wash over me, like a fortune teller, casting my fate one line at a time. They approach from near, coming suddenly up out of the well, until I am drenched, still standing motionless over the pit below, wondering just how far I am from the ledge, and just how deep the abyss is. Nothing is ever known with these things - it is both possible to overinterpret and underinterpret - to suffer a thousand fold more or less than what is absolutely required. It is the pity of unsettled fates; of dies waiting to be thrown; their destiny not yet established in the tapestry of the world.

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Time. Time has become meaningless. There are daylight hours and meetings and things that need to be done, but the clock no longer marches to the beat of its own drum as it had every moment before, in the din of medical school and lectures and small groups and clinic and OR and prerounding and rounding, and going home at night on the bus, waiting for it to arrive, always late. It's all washed away. Journaling is the only reason that I can perceive how long I've been in this state, the tide having long crept in and dragged the tick marks from the beach back into the sea off the coast of my deserted island. I'm going bored with my usual distractions, and the work drags pain into my spine from all the sitting I would never do. This lagoon is not one with a shipwreck I can fashion to set sail for civilization, but only the port of call for an absconded vessel.