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# Jamais Vu

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How does one pull a story from a dream? Especially when it is a memory skewed by time and the subconscious? Of course, time is never linear, though it is easy to think so. Fully awake in bed I am both here now and back then. My left eye feeling bedazzled as if it were shining in wavelengths of kaleidoscopic color. The fragments merge into an abstract dimension and the past forms a jumbled city precariously perched. Metal spires the rusted bones supporting the beautiful complexity of fading industry. All of it cloaked in an endless swath of fluorescent lights, blinking through the darker, heady days. So close to infinite, the city's boundaries are obscured by rain and soot. Yet I have prepared my escape/ I've already escaped, for the city does not encompass my being. I rise in the dream, I am by the window and now I pull on my clothes (sensation so vivid). Following the logic that dictates this reality/vice-versa, I've unnervingly become a tourist in my own universe. (I don't want to think this.)

Then...

Temporarily displaced, my sister enters. Her ghost is already besides me, her corporeal being "simply" follows its after-image while leaving its own. We converse and the dynamic is thus: the passionate bravado of my words upon her cynically uninterested ears. How could she see what I do, to see beyond this stark world bathed in silvery gray black light filled in with secret shadows? Hers is the floating world.

"She's gonna do alright," I say privately.

(Too self-absorbed to see, now, that her strength was of a different caliber.)

My world is half awake, standing either far above or deep beneath the Shimmering Street Lamps with the wind ever keening.

Pushing warm mechanical air. A single star blazing in the polluted night of my home.

Forever belonging to the world but always getting away from myself.

Now it is time to progress, a gravity well. The way a dream guides softly and I walk on my own. Not in the regular way of walking, I am shifting from space to space. An invisible tether that ends at the threshold of the kitchen. Here there is a sort of soft life, the way a weed pushes between the sidewalk cracks. No decay of My City, the room becomes lit with the color of dark red clay. (Awakening the feeling reminds me of a hearth centered in an antiquated home.) Even the smell of sulfuric ozone barely makes it in here.

He is my father, his face the clearest image. Hunched above his breakfast, deep lines cross-hatching a furrowed brow. Smog blue jumpsuit worn down from the fury of a nature wounded so terribly. I sit next to him. The silence profound, necessary, for my chest is full with the sense of myself. I could be no one else. (Who you are in a Dream is absolute/unquestionable and never insecure.) We do speak, and we have spoken before. But the dream is as silent as a true dream: ask anyone if they truly hear. Once more I explain my position, clear in my inchoate understanding of the world. So sure that, again, he does not perceive what I do. My own inner eye curled in Flames. The image of a Iron Box superimposed upon a Searing Blaze which presents my will. Yet, strong in my convictions, I

am petty. Working by his side? I give a misdirected response, overly complicated. Vague, for I truly fear this fate. His expression never changes. Much too kind to say anything else. Purely beautiful, tinged in sorrow.

I can feel it in my chest again even now. The duende stoking a tremendous fire. Everything is a flood. All those years he has lived and all the years I look forward to. It cannot be a circle for it is (feels to me) fresh. Yet there is an ancient similarity. Ongoing backwards and forwards.

Space folds and transitions.

Now once again I gaze outward (the window of a bus?). I see a dark shadow static against the heavy summer squall. It moves precisely, it is my father as he enters the car. Suddenly the houses begin to crowd around! The car moves forward as I pull away. His end of the street has become a maw and the buildings like ugly teeth jut into a ruined sky.



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