

Writers Block?

By Neil J Hart

To be lost, whether at sea, amidst the hills, across a plain or deep below the surface of the earth, is to be alone. You may be surrounded by those you love, those you hate or those you have only just met, but the state of disorientation remains with you. The pull to venture in any direction from this point is yours and yours alone. No whim nor flight of fancy can determine your direction. The choice is completely with you and accountable to you for you must go alone.

You may travel in company, buried deep within a circle of friends who you trust and respect, or perhaps you wander among the enemy disguised as one of their kin, or perhaps you are simply alone beneath the sky.

From my viewpoint I can see nothing but the stillness of night and the gentle swaying of the shadows as they bend to and fro. Time passes and I grow older as I am physically alone in the gentle calm.

Inside I am nothing but calm...

My mind appears to me like a million TV sets on fast forward. Some of the images are of shows or films that I can recognise; others are a vague semblance of issues and outlines that I can assimilate as meaning; others are more personal and seem to display a past

history of events known to me and some are flashes of greys, blacks and whites that could be the state of things to come or events not yet written or dreamt or purely nonsense.

I want a remote control that can turn them all off. The noise is deafening to the point of inaudibility. It's too much. A grating fuzz of language and sound that bounces around my head and never dissipates.

There is some respite though...

I can see her. She appears momentarily, night by night, and I've always wanted to see who she really is. It's like a kaleidoscope when she comes. Pretty reds and blues mixed with a warm glow and the scent of woodland flowers. Could it be Impulse? The edges of my sight are blurred as I concentrate on her. She wears pure white. Long and flowing garments that stretch down from her neck to the floor. Her complexion takes my breath. Her hair hangs freely on her shoulder, drifting from one side to the other as she flicks her head. Her beauty seems to float across the TV screens from one end to the other and then she disappears. Is it because she's worth it or maybe it's Maybelline?

The confusion returns...

I'm so uncomfortable, unhinged and desperate that I begin to scream. This wakes me from my sleep and I gaze around the room. The sound of my screams are instantly

absorbed by the bitterness of reality and replaced by the numbness of 3am. The gentle shadows come back into focus and the LEDs from my bedside clock tinge them with a scarlet hue. This is more familiar. But I am not content.

I can't move. I could if I desired to but I simply can't face the cold floor or the lights that would be necessary to guide my way. It's difficult to live when you fear the events of real life. It's harder still when you fear the thought of going too far inside yourself that you might totally forget who you are and why you were put here in the first place. Could I live somewhere in between? In stasis? Comatosed? Without a dream? Without me? Without you?

My mind appears to me like a million books whose pages are flicking by at an incredible rate. I try to take the information in but the more I concentrate the more the words begin to blur. Some contain pictures that whizz by leaving only traces of what they portrayed. Others have thick headings, italicised text, hieroglyphics, serif and san serif fonts, bold, underlined and struck through. They pass too quickly to ascertain anything more than brief snippets.

I've accumulated this much...

I've gone to the sky, the core of the earth, the tops of the mountains, the bottom of the seas, the stars, the galaxy and beyond. I've crowned kings, invented the engine, discovered that the world is a cube, climbed K2 dressed in a toga whilst pushing a

shopping trolley and fought for the love of Eve in the Garden of Eden. I always come back to this bed though and I'm overcome with the acute awareness that I haven't been anywhere at all. Is this living or existing or merely passing time?

I'm back here again. Are you with me?

I'll bet you went somewhere too just now. To courts of kings long gone where banquet tables stretch the diameter of massive regal halls and the armour of famous knights line the walls; or did you visit huge industrial buildings filled with aluminium pipes that are being welded beneath plumes of orange flame; or to a vision of seas and continents boxed on six sides of a gigantic dice spinning in space; or to the biting chill of a breathtaking view from the pinnacle of the world wrapped in an Roman outer garment; or perhaps glanced upon the beauty of Eve as she stands amidst a rich and enchanting orchard with love blossoming in your heart. Did you go with me? Or did this overtly romanticised view of life, bore you to tears? Where did you really go? Can't remember – that's a shame.

I remain in the darkness staring up at the ceiling, which is warped and cracked like old face; staring back it seems to smile. No longer alone?

Always alone in the company of my own imagination. I can see things clearer this way. I can make my own rules, my own storylines, characters, struggles, pleasures and romances. Is it possible to fall in love with yourself? I believe you can fall in love with

your own creations, believing that somewhere in the world these things mean a great deal to someone else. Isn't that a really positive thought? It's something to cling onto I guess.

My fear of being lost is not on some boat stranded on the oceans beneath a crushing wave; nor wandering aimlessly upon grassy hills; nor trudging through the sands of a great plain; nor encased in the dark and cold of an almost airless cavern. I love these places, these adventures, these alternate realities. My fear is to be lost to myself. I wonder whom I really am and if I'll ever find myself. Am I just an amalgamation of TV advertising, heroes from storybooks, legends, folklore and love conceived on-line? Am I as inert as a vase or a bookshelf, condemned to my one flat-pack purpose-built task or is there a promise of motion and transformation within me?

I'll keep searching. What else is there to do?

Perhaps I'll Ask Jeeves!