

Dream...Less



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Trash Vibes iss. 6

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I chose to be homeless for a bit recently, I called it an art project, but it was more like a mission. It's safer to say I was "between housing", but the point's that I was on my own and at the mercy of America and my resources. The details of how and why are unimportant, there was an opportunity and I took it. My plans are measured and have reasons - I'm not cavalier with my body. Don't be with yours.

With an impostor's heart I watched my homeless brothers and sisters on the street. I got close enough to touch their poverty and catch a glimpse of them. I felt much in their presence, but mostly I felt that being homeless is generally awful. Without proper housing, even my vast resources couldn't maintain my mind. Nothing was more pronounced than the psychic drag of constant fatigue and dreamless nights.

My small experience revealed what I suspected all along. That our beautiful brothers and sisters are living in a haze of restlessness that is punctuated by small moments of love and humanity. They are tired, constantly... and always looking for a safe place to rest. It hurts to see them exhausted and discarded as it hurts to see blatant suffering. I got a peek and was able to sense a small part of this reality. Maybe I understand it better, but I also know the truth lies far deeper into love, pain and despair -into a place I'm not prepared to see. I'm brave; but I'm also a coward.

Please forgive me.



Free

Space

To Lie Is To Recline

Separating from polite society is shocking and moving, especially when sleeping outside. Small parts of the world become restructured around impressions that were always there but hidden by the drone of comfort and satiety. Without housing, the world blossoms into something else, humans begin to seem strange... and suddenly everything is composed of boundaries and mindfencing all over. "How odd" I'd think to myself while observing our town in boxes, squares, and blocks. We're chaotic and irregular beings, yet we impose ourselves rigidly on the land and our minds.

In this new world, I longed most for sleep. There seemed so few places to lay my head that I wished to sleep safely beneath the cool ground where deeds and fencing have no power - I don't think I'd mind the worms.

I noticed that most animals enjoy freedom as they move between the water, the land, and the sky with dedicated worship. The landscape could be a haven for resting humans too... but it's not. The only human freedom looks like it might be in the trees... strong high-up branches feed tired eyes and leave a soul aching for hammocks. Would that I could rest in the safe leafy burl of a squirrels drey, or nap on my wing, in the air, like a kite...

In the human world you need to find a place that is cool and safe -and where other people will tolerate you. What you need is the commons. A place that won't expel you for living and resting "for free".

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In the 2-3 weeks that I spent living between my office, meeting house, and outside, I thought a lot about the commons. There's a concept that I've come to call the "lent commons" to describe the relationship between space, community and profitability.

The commons, as in, collectively owned resources, seem to be a fading memory. Where I live, you might count on the air to be breathable and the water nearly free, but it looks like they'll try to privatize that too. That future hellscape where the utility company is a hostile corporation of the same bareface conglomerate that owns the government? Let's just say "it's more than a notion".

Loosely speaking, I see the good faith lent commons and bad faith lent commons. I see that both are lent, as in, they exist as privately held spaces that are granted temporary common access by renters and owners. The relationship is complex and tenuous compared to the true commons.

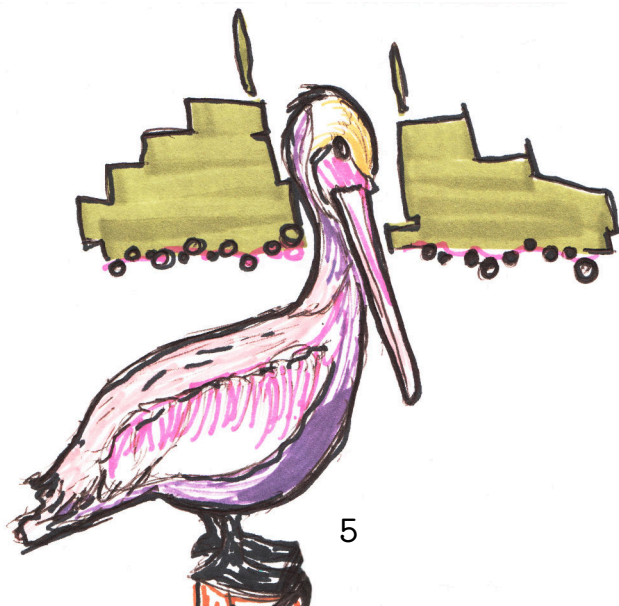
There are plenty examples in Tallahassee. The so-called "Secret Skatepark" is allegedly a situation in which a private owner of that plot of land is absent from the city and therefore "permits" the land use for "alternative activities". At the point the land is sold, probably to the city, that area will no longer be common space - that is, the loan will terminate. It's clear, even with no explicit agreement, that we are holding places like these in common. More importantly, we come to rely on them.

As stated, this phenomenon occurs in both bad faith (for profit and exploitation) and good faith (for community building) - but is often dually composed within the cultural matrix of the people involved. This is to say

that the lent commons are not "good" or "bad", they are the spaces we're left with at the current degree of privatization, and they warrant closer examination. I think these types of common areas are insufficient, but they are commons, and to the extent that they can provide a net good-faith benefit, then they should be appreciated, investigated and pursued.

That's how I can love a place like Plantasia, or Square Mug Cafe, or The BARK. They're not perfect, but they are clearly, and to a significant degree, in service of the community and for the "spirit of the thing". These days, we desperately need more common space. We all know what's going to happen to Railroad Square. It just happened to Gaines street... and we only just lost All Saints Cafe. Their parting message of love and defeat; "Nothing lasts forever, goodbye", is wisdom we should heed.

I maintain that all appropriate tools should be researched and applied in the movement for peace and being ourselves. So much is changing in our world and something new and amazing is coming and might've already arrived. The time to begin the "good work" is today. We need all those, our friends, with hands to lend, to lend them. Probably now more than ever.



The Deadman's Bed

The deadman is not actually dead. He's a man that's dying, though.

You don't care, aren't we all?

The deadman's bed is a sacred location in Tallahassee. It's east along the railroad tracks that run behind the BARK. There, you'll find a concrete mattress, and often a man. His skin is black like velvet and he suns on his bed most days in a zombie-like daze. His condition is poor, his body is worn, his mind is sunbleached. You can walk the tracks right up to him, you can stand, you can watch, you can open your heart, you can say your prayers and give your blessing, and he'd never even know you were there. I thought he looked at me once. I don't think he saw material more than a shadow.

I thought of the deadman's bed while I needed one. I thought about it, ruined and stained, practically melting in that direct sun while dangerously close to active rails. I thought about the deadman that I love from afar. I thought about how his bed might be fitting for me. I wondered if I was a deadman too.

Underslep

Sleep Sleep Sleep
I'm so tired
I never get enough
You'll fit the moon in my eyes
Then ask me what I'm dreaming
Sleep, rest, and peace

But it never comes



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