



Your perversity was unmatched. Laying in my bed, I think of everyone else who's been here, how many lovers and friends, friends of lovers, their lover's lovers, have slept in this, my bed. My dreams, strange in the past few years. I wonder who has left their dreams in my bed, and why they are visiting me now. Gripped constantly by ennui, I am far away from the ocean and even further from the sea. Time seems to fold over itself and look at me. I tell you that I'm thinking about these things, I'm thinking about dreams and friction and sublimation and how these big words have come to govern my life. The time when insight fails and motive goes blank and you cannot see. Taking away one subject matter to allow the appearance of another: say, for example, to talk about fisting in order not to talk about missing you. To talk about carving a space in which to luxuriate in refusal, as if the flaps of time were folded wrong. To talk about looking in the eye of the object of your desire, as if on the way to another world altogether. You are already, you're always already in the thing that you call for and that calls you.¹



Details from: Fritz Pauli:
Kind und Masken. oel,
1945. 90 x 120 cm

¹ The Undercommons:
Fugitive Planning &
Black Study, Stefano
Harney and Fred Moten

“CAN U DEFINE YOURSELF IN RELATION TO THIS REFUSAL”



Yesterday, I woke up around 8:30am and took 300mg of bupropion, 100 mg of Gabapentin, 10mg of Cyclobenzaprine, 0.5mg of Clonazepam, and just for good measure, 400mg of ibuprofen, all swallowed in one gulp of coffee. A few hours later, I took 20 mg of adderall. Only then was I able to write this paragraph. A sharp pain in my body has governed my life for the past few months. I am on a regimen of medication that does nothing but ensure the illusion of care. A numbing protocol prescribed through nothing more than sheer guesstimation. You come over and make of my dream a little séance. I am enchanted, I tell you when wrapped up in your hoodie, you know how to make this sexy. We try to figure out a maneuver: how much can you take in today and where to rub the salve to avoid contamination. We try to figure out: my whole fist. The logistics are casual. It's all easy. Slippery. I think of friction vs suction. The incomparable incomprehensible pleasure of taking me all in. Talk about desire and erotics and the fact that it is hard to allow myself to miss you, even when the pain comes back. Our pain doesn't get smaller, our lives just get bigger. You say a body is never present for itself, for what it is. I tell you to ask the universe three times. Obedience is immediate, complete, and without challenge.



FRITZ PAULI
TEAR

Inscription at the bottom
lefthand corner of the
print. Found in The New
York Public Library
Pictures Collection.

In order to turn friction from a static concept to a tangible experience, something has to rub against something else. Two surfaces, ideas, geographic realms, flesh belonging to different bodies, rubbing against each other. So, i am talking about contact. a brief moment in time, a jolt of electric rush that momentarily polarizes. The force created when two surfaces touch. To cross a threshold one must come in contact with two separate geographic realities, two separate mental states, two rooms, two worlds, a border. To sublime, one must yield into contact, or as a consequence of contact. In physics, sublimation is the conversion of a substance from the solid state to the gaseous state without becoming liquid. In other words, it is some form of bypassing. Like dreaming and waking: you wait for things to come into form and sometimes they don't.

I know, i know. You need me to stop circling around the subject and actually get to the point. But the point is that having that experience gets confused with love or something fleeting or trivial when really it's the desire, the liminal distance between what we want and what we don't want to have. The concept of "having," of ownership, strange and unyielding. What i really want to talk about is weeping and catharsis. A "desire" to weep, to cathart, to sublime. To sublime something is to pull it out of its customary meaning but refuse to let it settle into a new meaning, we are unable to carry its thought through to a conclusion, we are unable to rid ourselves of it or take leave of it, the sublimated word becomes unsubstitutable. We sublime desire for sex, love for grief. Wait, no. i want to talk about touching, you, touching others, i want to talk about missing a feeling, a sensation in the body. When was the last time you felt joy? Like true deep forget-you-have-a-body joy? Was it in the arms of your lover? Was it punctured by a clock? A need to piss? Your thoughts entering your mind again? Maybe i want to talk about grief. To sublime grief into productivity, into forgiveness. in order for forgiveness to happen something has to die. "I was extractive with you. I just needed so much." we press ourselves further down into the ground. Walking around with our abandonment wounds. RAPTURE! SOLITARY SEX! DEATH! A POSSIBLE FUTURE!

It is the second month of 2025, I find myself at the Picture Collection at the New York Public Library. She is sitting next to me and when I look at her, something strange happens to my experience of time. it stretches and dips and i am left suspended not knowing what time day year it is. Sometimes I want to slip into this fold and stay there forever. I am looking at images of fear and fortune telling, she is looking at moss. I find images of Baalbek. I quickly and with some trepidation show her The City Of The Sun, once home to one of the world's largest and last remaining Roman

temples, next to it the Temple of Jupiter, 3,000ft above sea level. My body is momentarily there, but I am investing in this presence that we share. You are already, you're always already in the thing that you call for and that calls you. I am on my bike, it is August 2023 i am zapping down myrtle avenue:

*"in the dream, i know we are all gone, our language is gone, our art is gone, our cities and machines are gone [...] I know i get kind of hallmark sometimes when i'm in the mood to be pleased by an abstract idea of the human, or the human in humans, the inhuman humans, but would you believe it for a second after i heard we were all gonna die it was your face that filled my mind's eye, and all the sticky complications, all the jealousies and resentments, all of the professional and personal, seemed like a rebuke to the entropy of everything."*²

there was a beginning to this there was a form there was something i needed to tell you tell you i need to see you tell you i need you to see me a form of living currency conditions of possibility

² Quote from Hannah Black reading in the backyard of Happy Fun Hideaway as part of the Desperate Living Reading Series.

when one is undone by the other the tracing of anger as the beginning of critical thought sites of intensity there is something like a want something like a desire i bury my head between legs and something washes over me something like a primal figuration of an organism that knows nothing besides being here, being in with / in around the space of filled to the brim of sending masses into motion of the labor of contamination i move in and around in circles there is a hand and it is on my head it plays with my hair there is an idea that we inherit something that is unchosen but are still responsible for it there is a desire to be compromised and complicit a desire to be here gushing there is something i need to tell you there is something you need to know about the conditions of possibility the other already constitutes the self you have to be ready and when it washes over you when you are bathed in the overflow of pleasure something like indecisiveness an incapacity to be / with / in around the space of filled to the brim of there is only one way out you are already, you're always already in the thing that you call for and that calls you.

SAHAR KHRAIBANI's book, *Anatomy of a Refusal* is forthcoming from 1080PRESS.

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