

James Terault

Daydreaming

A light beamed down on my head. My wrists, bound to a chair, stung. I looked around the darkness, seeing nothing beyond the small cone of light that encapsulated me. I began to sweat, a worried expression most likely painting across my face. I was enveloped in silence, till suddenly I could hear the crackling of a voice, attempting to say something to me. I could barely understand it, so I tried leaning to where I thought it was coming from in the darkness. Slowly, I registered what it was saying; or, more so, asking.

“Tell me...” it whispered. Tell you? Tell you what I would shout back at it. “Tell me... about yourself.”

Me? I don’t know, I don’t think there’s much to talk about.

“Nonsense,” it warbled, “there has to be... something to say about yourself.”

You’re asking a lot of me you know. How am I supposed to tell you anything about myself when I don’t even pay attention to what I do? I just am. I’m just a normal guy.

“I’m just a normal guy,” I said plainly.

An older man, with graying hair, tapped his pen on a notebook. On his wrist bobbed a leather watch. I stared at it. I wondered why he needed it. There was already a clock on the wall by the door I had walked through. And the rest of the room was awful, nowhere close to my style. Weird posters of motivational cats ordained the walls, some hanging on for dear life against some sort of stick, others sipping coffee or looking out windows. What

they said, who cares. The man tapped his foot. He must have noticed my attention was drifting, again. I hoped it would continue. Maybe this time I would end up in the Amazon! Then he cleared his throat. I guess I should give him some attention.

“Listen,” he stated, attempting to make it seem as though this was important, followed by my name. “If we want these sessions to be productive, then I need you to be willing to open up to me.”

“Open up? That’s all I’ve been doing Doc!” I pleaded. Was it really that hard to believe I could’ve been a normal person? He said something, but whatever it was must’ve not been important because I still can’t even remember it. I looked around the room some more, this annoying complex room, with objects here and some bookshelf there. The window was nice though, with a good view of a pond around the back of this office. I wondered what it would feel like to throw the Doc’s notebook into the pond, what kind of noise it would make. Suddenly I realized he was looking at me, expecting an answer for something. Well damn, not really sure what to say. Why don’t you help me here?

Hm, not a bad choice, I’ll take it.

“I’m not a big fan of blueberries.”

The Doc looked up from his notes slowly, squinting his eyes at me. He struggled to understand what I just said, and strains out a desperate “What?”

“You asked me to talk about myself, to open up,” I explained. “So, there you go, I don’t really enjoy blueberries.”

He rubbed the bridge of his nose under his glasses, sighing. Is this him angry?

Then, he began to slowly stand up from his couch. He suddenly threw his notebook to the other side of the room and snapped the pencil he had been using in half. He untightened his tie, clasped his fist into his open palm, and cracked his knuckles.

“Fine then.” His voice had gotten deeper, and way more gruff, closer to that of a wrestler. “Since you won’t tell me about yourself, I’ll beat it out of you.”

I shot up out of my chair and took a fighting stance; loose, but controlled, strong. “I’d like to see you try old man.” We circled around each other, creating a ring in the center of the room. In cultures beyond, they called this “The ring of Death”. Someone was going to die here. The Doc kicked over a coffee table that had been sitting next to my chair, sending it careening into the wall, smashing on impact into a thousand shards of wood. He looked at me dead in the eyes, like a lion to a zebra. He was sizing me up. Finally, he stopped, and so did I. He took up a brawler’s stance and charged at me. He threw a hard right jab. This guy’s an amateur. I easily slip between his guard, deflecting his jab with my left hand, before wrapping my right arm around his arm pit, pulling his whole body forward and using his momentum against him, sending him flying over me. I threw him to the ground with a resounding thump, and as he lay there, I raised my foot and sent it sailing down into his face.

I chuckled to myself, seeing I had won the fight. The Doc, however, decided to interrupt me. “You seem to space out a lot.”

I thought about that assessment a bit. Do I really? I feel as though I only do it when I'm bored. Like everyone else. "Not any more than you would," I said.

"What were you thinking about?" He leaned in closer.

"Oh, nothing really, you wouldn't want to know."

"It is my job to know." Wow, real snarky. "The reason you're even here is for me to get to know what you're thinking. That way you can get better."

"Get *better*?" I used air quotes for that, "There is nothing wrong with me. The only reason I'm here is because that ass hat-"

The Doc raised his hand, signaling for me to stop while I was ahead. He was right; I was about to say something I would regret. I eased back into my seat.

"Why don't we just end today's session? I don't want you to become aggravated." He clasped his hands together and gave me a condoling look. Was I really that pitiful? "There is clearly something deeper here that I hope we can explore next time. How does next week, say, Wednesday sound?"

I agreed to this contract. I stood up and made my way to the door.