

INSOMNIA

A modern mythology of the Sleep god

The nights grew longer and longer until there was no day in between them.

Even the oldest among us have no idea what the word Sleep even means.

In the dark charcoal cityscapes of this ancient gotham, very few do. Perpetual darkness has ruled the black ruins for hundreds of years, and it isn't letting up.

No one Sleeps because no one knows what it is.

The groovy god of Sleep departed in a flash of technicolor dreams, never again to grace the mind of his unconscious worshippers. Most gods will never leave earth, at least not while there are disciples around to make them feel like the gods they are, for without worship, a god is a purposeless thing. A god is a security blanket to the one who devises it. Not a supernatural being. Sleep was different. Sleep's worshippers never knew that they were worshipping, thus without the conscious intent of a prayer, there was no actual faith in the power of Sleep. So when the Big Righteous in the Sky asked him to come party with him in the land of endless summer and the occasional rainy nostalgia, who was Sleep to say no? Did it matter to him that the people of earth would miss him? Probably not, no. Ever since he left, the populace has become a communal brainless organism, the entire whole of society spending their time watching "The Late Show" and sitcom reruns. Reading expired Vanity Fairs.

Drinking a Bottomless glass of Dunkin' Donut's coffee in the ten millionth polystyrene cup.

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People watch the skies, sometimes, hoping for a glimpse of early dawn sunlight meaning that maybe this curse was over. The whole race doomed to a painful exile from the necessary mental nutrition of subconscious indulgence. You'd think they would have stopped being hopeful by now.

Zombies.

Watching the sky, they notice this with dull dissent: the moon frozen forever in it's last inch of wane, smiling down on the dark planet like a scornful cheshire, mocking the human inability to change the fundamental environment in which they had been placed by a cruel twist of fate...

In the dank streets of the global capital, sleep propaganda is prosecuted to extreme measures. Torture is a word that makes light work of the things the military industry will do to you if you find an ancient Lunesta brochure in the basement of some ruined townhouse, keeping company with the skeletons of it's senior inhabitants. It doesn't matter to them what you do with these things, it's just bad enough that you know. That's why the things that our little club does are so dangerous. We put people to sleep. Everything started just five months ago in an attic in a bad neighborhood. After all the mystery, after Jack Mason, the convict, convinced all of us to meet there without telling us why. What he showed us changed us, scared us, and set our brains afire with all of the possibilities of the old standard of mental health. Everything became so simple and

manageable with the promise of sleep at the end of every twelve hours. Jack had unearthed an ancient Pharmacy on the northwest coast of North America on one of his personally funded digs, rooting around in the dirt like a group of highly sophisticated swine, Jack had found his truffle. With an attic full of sleeping pills in an abandoned factory, there was no limit to the peace of mind we could acquire. So we built a shrine and we prayed. We prayed for Sleep.

We sat there looking at each other apprehensively. None of us had ever been this excited. It was like waiting for a bomb to go off in a crowded tenement. We had each taken two of the rosy seconals. Then it hit us, and we knew that Sleep was present. He was standing in dim glow of the single shrouded window up there, garbed in cargo shorts, a used car salesman button up shirt that was too big, a beat pair of sandals. On his head were three distinct things: a shiny yellow vinyl weather cap, a tremendous bushy-white beard, and a pair of von zipper sunglasses. The combination of the dramatic backlight and his apparel made him look like a casual messiah, or like Hemmingway would look if he had retired and moved to Florida. He coughed as his lungs rejected the attic dust and he said: "Yeah. whaddaya want?" I felt like I had been punched with an extremely soft and slow acting fist, my tongue was heavy in my mouth and my eyes wouldn't stay open. My breathing grew heavier. "You're Sleep?" said Pete from the other side of the room. "Name's Dan, and i'm havin' a good day, thanks for asking. Did your manners die with your subconscious mind? Fuck you, I'm giving you nightmares you ungrateful little jerkoff." "Hey, man, I'm sorry, i just expected something, y'know, grander." he looked at each of us in turn, i was having a hard time focusing... then he said, as my vision was fading to black: "Oh it's grand all right." out of the corner of my eye, I saw Alex's bulky figure make it's slow descent down the wall, already defeated by the holy substance in his system. he surveyed us again with a twinkle in his eye. "Once you close your eyes for that last time and you really drift off... well then you'll know what you've been missing." In a matter of seconds I was lost in a dream.