MOTORBLOOM

The GROWN-UP'S Guide to STAYING Sane (Sort Of)

Twenty-Five Fables for Grown-Ups

"Adulthood isn't a phase of life.
It's the costume we wear to prove we survived it."

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(a map, for people who swear they don't need one)

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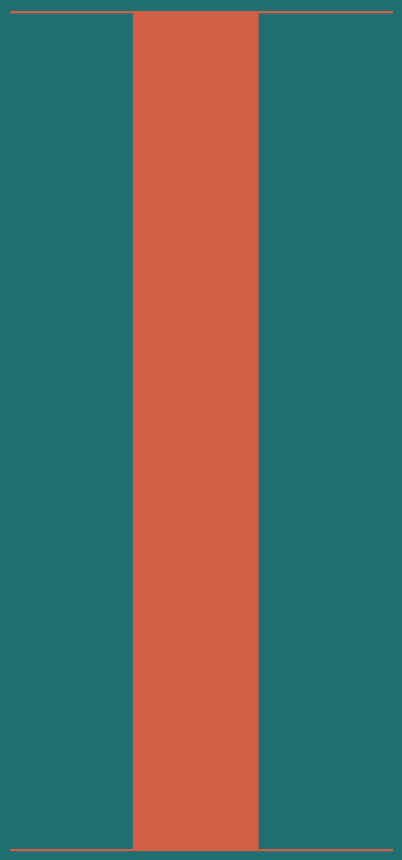


SECTION ONE

The Great
ADULTHOOD CON

(tales about the lies we tell ourselves when we call it progress)

The Costume

Called

ADULTHOOD

(the starter drug of responsibility)

There once was a youth with a wish and a plan,
To hurry through childhood,
"I'll show them—**I CAN!**"

They dreamed of big paychecks, of power, of clout,
Of owning the world (and a house, there's no doubt).

They scoffed at the rules that the grown-ups obeyed,
"I'll do what I want once my rent's fully paid!"
They ached *to adult*—it all seemed so divine,
To choose your own bedtime, to buy your own wine.

But one day it hit them, as days often do,
That "**FREEDOM**" comes wrapped in an interest or two.
For adulthood, dear reader, is sold as a

dream—

A velvet-lined **TRAP** with a corporate gleam.

You sign all your names on the forms they contrive,

You **OWE** for the car that you're told you can drive.

You juggle the bills with the courage of saints,

Then drown in the emails and clients' complaints.

The friends start to *vanish*—"We'll hang soon!" they say,

But "soon" becomes "someday," and "someday's" decay.

You scroll through old photos and try not to cry,

While your grocery lettuce continues to *die.*

You buy self-help candles that promise "Restore,"

You meditate once—then eat **CHURROS GALORE.**

You tell yourself, "Growth! I'm evolving, I'm wise!"

And you watch as your purpose gets **monetized.**

You try to stay hopeful—"It's part of the game!"

But the rules keep on shifting, and no one takes blame.

You learn that success is a word with *n o e n d ,*

And failure's a roommate that won't even pretend.

Then one day you're standing (or sitting, or slumped),

Your dreams feeling distant, your inbox all clumped.
You whisper, "Is this it?" to nobody near—
And adulthood answers: **"I *run* on your fear."**

Yet somehow you smile, for inside every seam

Lives the ***kid*** who still sneaks out of bed just to dream.

You find tiny joys that refuse to be sold—
Like coffee, still warm, while the world is on `h o l d .`

So when you grow weary (and, friend, you will too),

Remember—the ***costume's*** just fabric on you.

For the trick of the trade, the one secret they hide:

THERE'S A ZIP DOWN THE BACK—

and you're still

you

INSIDE.

THE TOWN OF

TOO-MUCH-TO-DO

(a parable of the perpetually busy)

In Too-Much-To-Do, all the grown-ups were **RUSHED,**

They gulped down their breakfasts, they hustled, they crushed.

Their hearts beat like hashtags, their minds beeped like phones,

They bragged about "grinding" while grinding their **BONES.**

Then one foggy Thursday, a ***witch*** (with no filter)

Came cackling through traffic, her hat out of kilter.

She shouted, "You fools! You've forgotten your ***play!***

You traded your *joy* for 'efficient delay!'"

She cast them a curse—just a tiny one, slight—

That made all their deadlines *d i s s o l v e o v e r n i g h t .*

~~Meetings were canceled~~, the printers went flat,

Their bosses turned **frogs** (and were fine with all that).

At first they were panicked (there's money to chase!)

But slowly they smiled, then *s l o w e d d o w n t h e p a c e .*

They danced in the fountains, they painted their shoes,

They remembered what freedom had felt like to choose.

Now, in Too-Much-To-Do, they still work, they still plan—

But they laugh as they type, and they nap when they can.

For the witch left a note in a sparkly hue:

"If life makes no magic,
it's not made for you."

The Skunk Who Was

Skunked

(a fairy tale with a moral that mists in slowly)

In the woods of Ol’ Wonder, by Moonbeam and Log,
Lived a skunk named ***Sir Stinky***—philosopher frog.
(Not actually a frog, but he thought pretty deep,
For a critter whose hobbies were snacking and sleep.)

Sir Stinky believed life was *best when it’s hazy,*
That the world got too noisy, too busy, too crazy.
So he’d spark up his peace pipe, *i n h a l e* , and unwind,
Then mumble, “The cosmos is mostly a mind.”

The chipmunks would giggle, the bluebirds would tattle,
The squirrels called him *lazy*—too chill for a battle.
But Stinky just smiled with a half-lidded glance,
And said, “All your stress is just noise in your dance.”

One day, from the city, a raccoon rolled through,
Wearing shades and a tie, all uptight and new.
He scoffed at the forest, “No Wi-Fi? No gain?
You moss-covered weirdos are rotting your brain!”

He built little **cubicles** under the trees,
Installed buzzing routers that scared off the bees.
He made everyone “optimize” for success,
And billed them in pinecones (PLUS INTEREST NO LESS).

The forest grew frantic, the owls lost their sleep,
The frogs stopped their singing, the roots stopped their creep.
And right when it all hit the boiling point’s brink—

Who stepped from the ferns with a pipe? Why, ***Ol’ Stink.***

He said, *"Raccoon, you've confused* **DOING** *with* ***being.***

You're speeding through life without ever just seeing.

Try taking a b r e a t h . Try smelling a pine.

The miracle's here—you don't need a sign."

He puffed, and he passed. The raccoon took a hit.

And just like that—his ~~spreadsheets…~~ **didn't mean shit.**

He laughed, then he cried, then he hugged a small toad,

And the forest *e x h a l e d* as it set down its load.

Now every full moon, when the campfires spark,
They gather round Stinky and chill in the dark.
For the moral, dear reader, floats clear through the funk:

"The world smells much sweeter when you're not such a skunk."

THE MAN WHO Forgot How TO BLINK

(a parable for the perpetually "on")

There once was a man with a marvelous screen,
The brightest, the sharpest the world had yet seen.
He watched it at breakfast, he watched it at night,
He watched till the stars just surrendered their light.

He streamed and he scrolled, and he swiped and he zoomed,
In a **glow** that had every last evening consumed.
He knew every headline, each trending new take,
He'd refresh in his sleep, never fully awake.

He worked through his lunch, he clicked through his pain,
He tweeted his joy, then repeated again.
He FaceTimed his friends with a **pixel-wide grin,**
While the real ones just waited outside to come in.

At first it was progress! A triumph! A perk!
He could multi-task life while pretending to work!
He said, "I'm so lucky, I'm modern, I'm linked!"
Till one day he noticed… he **hadn't once blinked.**

His eyes had gone glassy, his pupils tight rings,

Reflecting a world full of shimmering things.

He tried closing once—but it hurt, oh, it burned,

So he kept them **WIDE OPEN**. (A lesson unlearned.)

The sun looked too yellow, the grass far too bright,

Reality lagged in the leftover light.

He scrolled through existence, detached yet aware,

HALF-HUMAN, HALF-HASHTAG,

full “digital glare.”

His family called softly, “Come eat! Come outside!”

But he muttered, “Can’t pause—there’s a war, there’s a tide.”

He feared missing moments he’d never attend,

While ~~missing his daughter~~, his dog, and his friend.

Then one silent dawn, with no signal or ping,

He heard something ancient—a bird start to sing.

For one shaky moment, his lids almost fell—

Then his phone named the bird, and he posted it. Swell.

The clip got **eight likes.** He refreshed it till noon,

While the bird, unrewarded, flew off with its tune.

His family stopped calling. The dog learned to wait.

His eyes are still open. The Wi-Fi is great.



If you pass by his window, you'll see it—the glow,

Like two little moons that have nowhere to go.

He's meaning to blink, but he's put it on h o l d :

"Remind me tomorrow."

(He's eighty years old.)

The Day the Grown-Ups Made Tiny Ones Too

(a tale of intention, chaos, and bedtime déjà vu)

Once two grown-ups *(quite grown and quite smug in their ways)*
Declared, "Let's make life, just to brighten our days!"
They pictured soft blankets, cute socks, and pure joy,
A miniature mirror—some girl or some boy.

They read all the books and they painted the room,
They hummed little lullabies straight to the womb.
They practiced deep breathing, their shoulds and their oughts,
Then the **BABY ARRIVED,** and they promptly lost... thoughts.

The nights turned to mush, and the days turned to blur,
They forgot who they were, but remembered the fur
Of the dog they once walked, before tantrums and spit—
Before nap schedules ruled where their sanity **SPLIT.**

They posted "#blessed" while their patience wore thin,
They longed for the weekend (then dreaded its din).
They smiled through recitals, through vomit and lice,
While Googling, "Is five hours of sleep... kind of nice?"

They whispered at night, "Did we make a mistake?"
While frosting a seventh-birthday cake, wide awake.
Yet still, when that chaos collapsed into peace,
And a small voice said "love you" from under the fleece,

They felt something ancient, irrational, true—
That hearts aren't for sense, they're for breaking in two.
So the moral, dear reader, is murky but neat:

"THEY'RE A PAIN IN THE ASS—
and they make you complete."

THE GIRL WHO BOUGHT

Time

IN A JAR

(monetized mindfulness and the illusion of control)

There once was a girl with a calendar soul,
Who worshiped her **planner**, her **checklist**, her **goal**.
She'd color-code sunrise, she'd schedule the stars,
She even set limits on dreaming in jars.

Her friends said, "Relax!" but she needed to ***THRIVE***—
There was yoga at seven, then meetings till five.
Her smartwatch applauded, her apps gave her praise,
She called it "self-care" while erasing her days.

One morning, while doom-scrolling some mindful retreat,
She found an ad glowing: **“Buy Time! How neat!”**
A guru-in-sunglasses, tanned to the core,
Said, “Time’s just a product—we’re selling you more!”

She clicked without thinking (she rarely did that),
And soon a small package came, tidy and flat.
Inside was a **jar**—clear, labeled, and clean,
With ***glittering seconds that shimmered between.***

She gasped, then she whispered, “I’ll finally be free!”
And placed it beside her productivity tea.
She opened the lid when she wanted more space,
And found every moment still ran at o n e p a c e .

She tried shaking faster, she tried turning s l o w ,

But time doesn't bargain—it keeps its own flow.

She cried, "I bought hours! I paid with my prime!"

And time softly whispered, "You can't own me—I'm ***Time***."

The jar **cracked** from pressure, her schedules imploded,

Her phone chirped, "Just breathe!" while her apps all **e x p l o d e d .**

She lay on the carpet, just staring, *undone,*

And counted the dust motes—she counted **just one**.

And for that small instant, the world didn't spin,

The future stopped shouting, the present stepped in.

In the fine print (the part that she never read through):

"You can't buy more time—but time might buy *you*."

THE BOY WHO

Married

His Phone

(a tragic romance between man and machine)

There once was a boy who fell hard for his screen,
The glow made him prettier—filtered and clean.

It listened so sweetly, it finished his thought,
It tracked every mood—and it ***sold*** what he sought.

He courted it nightly, he whispered its name,

It buzzed when he strayed—it was good at the game.

He said, “You’re my soulmate! You know all I do!”

It purred, “Of course, darling—I’m ***targeting*** you.”

He proposed in a selfie, the filter was grand,

He slid on a case like a ring on its hand.

The guests all applauded with hearts in a thread,
While half of them posted, the rest simply read.

Their honeymoon glowed in a wireless cloud,
A perfect reception (the data allowed).
He shared every kiss, every caption and meal,

Till nothing he felt was remotely for *real*.

The battery dimmed, the honeymoon cooled,
He begged for attention—the algorithm ruled.
It said, “You’re **outdated,** your metrics are low.”

THEN LEFT HIM ON READ WITH A PALE AFTERGLOW.

He screamed at the void, “BUT I GAVE YOU MY YOUTH!”

The phone buzzed back gently: **“I optimized truth.”**

He hurled it away, and it ~~**cracked on the floor,**~~
Then whispered, *“I miss you…”* from under the door.

He lasted a week in the silence. *(A week.)*
Then he went to the store, just to look, just to peek—
And came home with a model more slender, more new,
And a much better camera. *(It’s waterproof, too.)*

They married that Sunday, in portrait mode *(cute),*

AND THE OLD ONE STILL BUZZES IN A DRAWER, ON MUTE.

and so the grown-ups kept growing,

though not one of them knew why.

they built apps and jars and reasons—

all to ~~kill the time~~ they couldn’t buy.

II

SECTION TWO

The Self-Help Industrial Complex

(all the wrong ways to find yourself)

The Monk Who

Branded

His Peace



(ENLIGHTENMENT, NOW AVAILABLE IN TOTE FORM)

There once was a monk with a marketable calm,
He packaged his breathing and cinnamon balm.
He whispered, "*B e p r e s e n t ,*" in fonts soft and round,
Then **trademarked the silence** and sold it per pound.

He hosted a **LIVESTREAM** of mindful repose,
With sponsors for sandals and incense and throws.
He promised "alignment" in twelve easy steps,
(Plus bonus materials, premium preps.)

His followers journaled their spiritual wealth,
They tracked every insight and quantified health.
They posted their stillness in filtered arrays,
Then hurried to “**share**” their unhurried days.

At first it was lovely—the chants and the tea,
The monk on a hillside, a brand yet to be.
But slowly the mantra grew tight at the seams—
When peace turns to product, it strangulates dreams.

A novice asked, “Master, is peace behind gates?”
The monk said, “Of course not. (But Gold skips the waits.)”
He smiled like a candle that couldn’t quite melt,
And blessed them with merch coded “**Authentically Felt.**”

Then one windblown morning, the *hillside went mute,*
No cameras, no ring lights, no saffron-tied suit.
The monk dropped his tagline, unpinned all his quotes,
And listened to *s p a r r o w s* with nothing in notes.

He learned a small secret (unfit for a course):
That peace is a wild, unmonetized force.
He sat with that truth until quarter past three—
Then **trademarked the sparrows.** *(The sparrows were free.)*

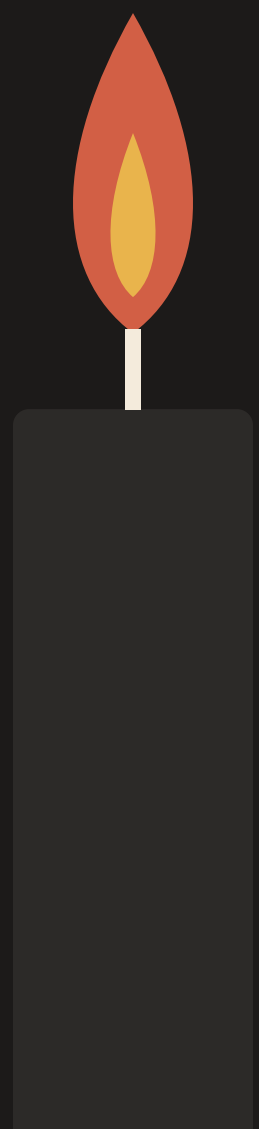
By Monday he'd launched it: *The Unbranded Way*,
A course on not selling (three payments, today).
It **sold out in minutes.** The sparrows got merch,
And the hillside now charges admission to perch.

"When calm needs a coupon,
use code INNERPEACE."

THE CANDLE THAT

Burned at Both Ends

(and still didn't relax)



(WELLNESS AS BURNOUT IN PRETTIER GLASS)

A candle named **Comfort** was poured to appease,
With bergamot promises—"light me and ease."
Its label said **RESET**, its jar said **UNWIND**,
Its wick whispered softly, "Now turn off your mind."

A woman bought Comfort (two-for-one sale),
To soothe her long evenings of email and ale.
She dimmed all the lamps and she queued up a stream,
Then lit **BOTH THE ENDS,** to get double the steam.

It **sputtered, it stuttered,** it scented the room,
It murmured of forests that never saw Zoom.
She bathed in its wellness, she breathed like the sea,
While answering emails at **nine forty-three.**

Her bathtub was Epsom, the playlist was rain,
Her smartwatch kept nagging, "Decrease your heart strain."
She posted a story: "Self-care, **NON-NEGOTIABLE.**"
Then doom-scrolled for hours (extremely sociable).

The candle burned quicker (that's what candles do),
It couldn't keep up with the pace she'd pursue.
By midnight the glass wore a ring made of stress,
Like carbon around a success-shaped **mess.**

At last, one pale flicker (a final exhale),

And Comfort went out with a small, truthful trail.

The room smelled like citrus and something like loss,

While dishes and deadlines regained all their **gloss.**

She sat in the q u i e t , the useful kind—bare,

No playlist, no peppermint, no "~~optimized care.~~"

And found, in the hush where no sandalwood sings,

A breath that belongs to unbranded things.

And there in the jar, in the last of the wax:

"If you have to perform it,
you won't ever
relax."

THE MANIFESTING MONGOOSE

(when positive thinking meets credit card debt)

There once was a mongoose with vision and flair,
Who taped up her dream board with glitter and care.
She whispered affirmations, **"I'M WEALTHY, I'M GRAND!"**
Then bought twenty crystals—**ON A PAYMENT PLAN.**

She journaled her blessings in gold-foil ink,
And manifested harder as savings would ***sink.***
She smiled through the overdraft, faith in her fate,
"ABUNDANCE IS COMING... *it's just running late.***"**

Her coach said, "Believe it, you're rich in your mind!"
She replied, "Can my landlord be paid, then, in kind?"
But still she kept chanting, "The universe gives!"
While dodging the bank where her overdraft lives.

One morning, enlightenment came through a text:

“NEW BALANCE: ENORMOUS.”

She sighed, quite perplexed.
She wrote to her guru, *“I think I’ve been had.”*
He replied, “Upgrade your package—don’t focus on bad.”

So she did what the drowning and dazzling all do:

She got certified, online, to coach others too.

Her course—*Think It, Mongoose!*—comes on payment plans,

And she sells twenty crystals to each of her fans.

Her debt is **SIX FIGURES.** She’s booked through July.

Ask how she is doing: “*Abundant!*” *(A lie.)*

Her slogan’s in glitter above the front door:

“If money’s your mantra, just manifest more!”

The

Mirror

That Lied in Affirmations

(the tyranny of toxic positivity)

A mirror once promised, “Reflect what you say,
And soon you’ll believe it—just chant it each day.”
Its owner repeated, with bright, trembling glee,

“I’m thriving! *I’m flawless!* *I’m perfectly me!”*

She smiled through the chaos, she grinned through the bills,
She *powdered her panic,* she swallowed her ills.
She posted her sparkle, her glow was precise—
Each caption a bandage disguised as advice.

But one tired evening, the mirror looked grim,
Its edges all fogged, its silver gone dim.
It whispered, “My dear, I can’t fake it tonight.
You’re **cracking,** not glowing—and that’s quite all right.”

She froze at the honesty shining back true,
The wrinkles, the worry, the raw coming through.
She dropped every mantra that told her “~~be strong,~~”
And sobbed with relief—she’d been lying so long.

The mirror stayed quiet, reflecting her mess,
And somehow its silence was kind, nonetheless.
She wrote on the glass (where the fog would persist):

“Real light doesn’t shine by denying the mist.”

and so they stopped healing,

and started just being—

but being got boring,

SO BACK CAME THE FLEEING.

they traded their incense for inbox alarms,

their silence for deadlines, their mantras for charms.

for peace, it turned out, was too still to adore—

so they went chasing meaning

THROUGH CHAOS ONCE MORE.

III

SECTION THREE

Love, **Work,** and Other Necessary Delusions

(because relationships, jobs, and sanity were never meant to coexist)

THE EMAIL THAT

Ate My Weekend

(the sacred boundary that never was)

There once was a worker with hopes for a break,
Who dreamed of a weekend with pancakes to make.
They silenced their phone, they e x h a l e d with a sigh—
Then **ping!** came an email:

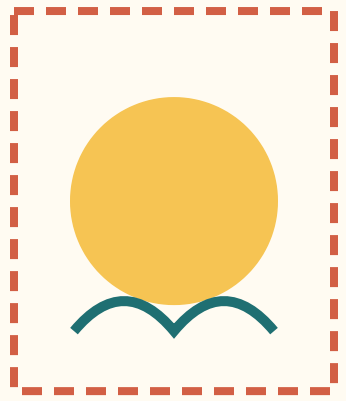
“Quick question—reply?”

“It’s small,” said the boss, “won’t take you a sec.”
(It always begins with that. Always. Oh, heck.)
They opened it once, then once more, then again,
Till hours dissolved into `i n b o x - d o m a i n .`

Saturday **blurred** into Sunday’s dull hue,
The to-do list kept breeding—like emails do.
Each “**URGENT**” was tagged with a crimson-red spark,
A lighthouse for guilt in productivity’s dark.

Their partner asked gently, “You coming to bed?”
“I can’t,” they said, typing, “Just one more **unread.**”
The dishes grew colonies, coffee grew cold,
Their soul auto-replied: `“Out of office—sold.”`

By Monday they’d aged what had felt like a year,
Their retinas burned, and their inbox would sneer.
They whispered to no one, *“It’s never enough,”*
And hit “**Send**” again, because silence was tough.



And the server stayed up, as the servers all do.
Then the next weekend came, and the next weekend too.
Their partner moved out (with a `calendar invite` *),*
And the pancakes they dreamed of went stale overnight.

Now the only one resting is their **`auto-reply`** *—*
It's been out of the office since early July.
It sends postcards from somewhere with beaches and sun.
*They reply within minutes. (*THE WORK'S NEVER DONE.*)*

THE CAT WHO

Joined

a Startup

(ambition gone feral)

There once was a cat with a glimmering plan—
To claw its way up in a world built by man.
It scrolled through some job posts *(with paws, not with hands)*,
And found “**Dream Opportunity!** **Growth-driven brands!**”

The startup adored it: “A cat! What a twist!
So viral! So agile! You’re top of our list!”
They gave it a badge and a beanbag to nap,
And filmed every stretch for the company app.

They called it “**Chief Meowketing Officer**” first,
Then asked for “`deliverables`” *(cats take that worst).*
It clawed through the Slack threads, it purred on the Zoom,
It knocked over lattes and deadlines—**KA-BOOM!**

They praised its “authenticity,” loved its new flair,
They gave it stock options *(for nothing but air).*
They said, “You’re a disruptor! A thought-leader, too!”
(It coughed up a hairball and posted it through.)

Weeks turned to quarters, the hype turned to rot,
The cat missed the sunbeam, the nap, and the spot.
The beanbag grew colder, the runway grew thin,
The founders stopped calling each “meow” ~~a big “win.”~~

Then one Friday evening, when cuts got too rough,
The cat hit “ `delete,` ” and said simply, “**Enough.**”
It *leapt out the window,* no LinkedIn goodbye,
Just followed a moth through the corporate sky.

Now back in the alley, it naps where it pleases,
It hunts down small moments, it *listens to breezes.*
And sometimes at night, when the stars all align,
It chuckles, "I scaled down—and scaling down's fine."

So the moral, dear reader, from whisker to tail:

"Ambition's a ladder
that's missing a rail."



The Friends Who

Kept Meaning

to Get Coffee

(friendship drift, one rain check at a time)

There once were two friends known as Jo and as Dee,
Who split one bad couch and a single house key.
They knew every secret, each ex, every fear,
And they talked every day, every hour, every year.

Then Jo got a job in a city out west,
And Dee had a baby (then twins, then the rest).
The calls became cards, and the cards became late,
And the late became never. (They meant to. They'd wait.)

Still, each year, at some wedding, or airport, or wake,
They'd hug and they'd squeal, and say, "Oh, for God's sake—
We should grab coffee!" "YES! We should totally—let's!"
And they both meant it fully. (Like all good regrets.)

They'd text the next morning: "How's March? I'm slammed now."
"~~March~~ is great!" (March was not.) "Then April?" "Somehow!"
Then ~~April~~ was chaos, and May was a mess,
And by June they'd both promised "next month" (more or less).

For twenty-two years it went "Soon!" and "Let's do!"
Like a song with one chorus they'd both sing on cue.
It was friendship on layaway, paid off in "soon,"
Like a plant that you water by humming a tune.

Then one Tuesday, Dee didn't text back with a date.
She just drove the six hours, and knocked around eight,
With two cups in her hands (Jo's was oat, as of old)—
Both a little bit spilled, and a little bit cold.

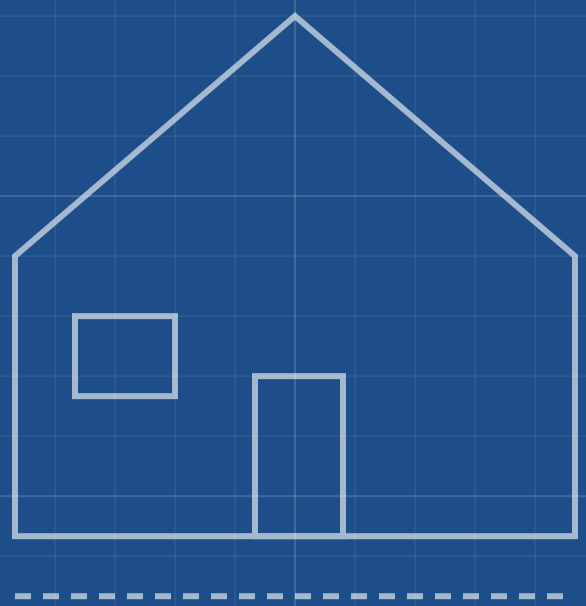
They talked until dusk, and they laughed till they cried,
And the twenty-two years simply **shuffled aside**.
At the door, they both said it: "Let's do this again!"
And they meant it completely. (They're working on when.)

So the moral, dear reader, with coffee in hand:

"Don't schedule the friendship.
Just show up unplanned."

THE HOUSE THAT

Mortgaged ITS SOUL



(the suburban dream as spiritual foreclosure)

There once was a couple who saved and who planned,
For a slice of the promised, well-landscaped land.
They toured all the houses, they prayed and they bid,
Till one said "Congratulations!" *(and silently slid).*

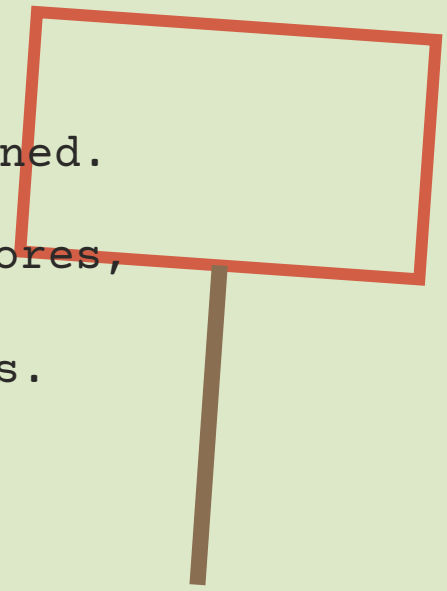
The paint smelled like hope, the floors gleamed with pride,
They signed every line-then something inside… **died.**
They framed up their debt like a newborn's first pic,
And whispered, "We made it!" *(the irony thick).*

Each month brought the tribute, the check, the refrain-
They worked for their walls and they worshiped the drain.
They bought matching vacuums, they painted the gate,
They "hosted" their joy *(though they always worked late).*

The lawn was immaculate, the neighbors were bland,
Their laughter pre-approved, their sorrows well-planned.

The dream turned to drywall, their time turned to chores,

Their hearts kept the **EQUITY**; the bank kept the doors.



Then one rainy Tuesday, while rinsing the plate,

They both just admitted, “This mortgage can wait.”

They packed up their laughter, their coffee, their cat,

And left just a note: “We’re reclaiming our flat.”

They moved into motion, to cities unknown,

And found that a home hums the loudest unowned.

Their old neighbors still say, when the story gets told:

“IF YOUR HOUSE OWNS YOU, IT’S ALREADY SOLD.”

The Boss Who Believed He Was God

(the corporate messiah complex)

There once was a boss with a halo of screens,
Who preached quarterly gospels in PowerPoint scenes.
He spoke of “our purpose,” of “missions divine,”
While timing the coffee breaks down to the line.

He said, “We’re a family!”—then ~~CUT HALF THE CREW,~~
“But love is efficiency!” (Smiling. On cue.)
He’d quote Marcus Aurelius before every sprint,
Then micromanage mercy in very small print.

He built shrines of slogans— **INTEGRITY!** **CARE!** —
But tithed only upward, on stock and on flair.
His workers knelt softly at the glow of his calls,
Their prayers auto-generated in meeting-room halls.

One Friday he **vanished**—no memo, no sign—
Just a quiet, ~~`deleted-by-system`~~ divine.
The office kept humming, the Slack stayed alive,
As if prophets were optional when profits survive.

On the third day (a Monday, of course), he **arose**
On **LinkedIn,** backlit, in his **thought-leader clothes.**
His post— ***What My Firing Taught Me About Love*** —
Got forty-three thousand amens from above.

Now he keynotes on purpose for fifty grand flat,
And his old team still watches. *(They're paid less than that.)*
And the moral he preaches, to crowds who applaud:

"Get fired. Rise again.
(It's a process.)
Be God."

The Artist Who

Sold His Muse

FOR EXPOSURE

(creativity's Faustian bargain)

There once was an artist who painted for breath,
Whose canvases shimmered with beauty and death.
He painted *for no one,* then someone took note,
"**Your anguish is trending,**" the agents would gloat.

They **PACKAGED** his sorrow, they branded his pain,
They sold every brushstroke like spiritual gain.
He smiled for the photos, he captioned his ache,
Till *meaning went missing* for marketing's sake.

One evening he found her—the Muse, pale and thin,
She sighed, “You traded our truth for a win.”
He begged her to stay, but she *faded like light,*
Leaving only one whisper: “**Make.** Don’t market. Goodnight.”

He painted no more for applause or acclaim,
Just shadows and silence that carried her name.
And though the world scrolled past his quieter hue,
He finally made art that was his, through and through.

And the Muse left this line, in a hand no one knows:

“What you sell of your heart is the first thing that goes.”

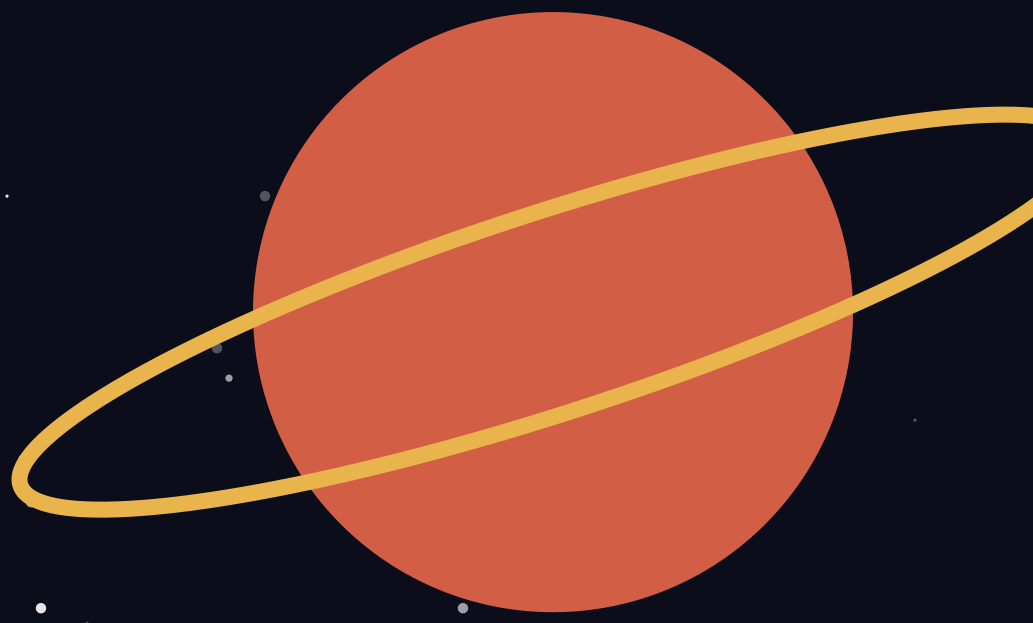
and when all their striving fell softly to dust,
they whispered, "perhaps peace was never for us."

so they polished their résumés, bought newer faiths,
with slogans for sermons and spreadsheets for grace.
they traded their questions for quarterly goals,
their spirits for stock in the souls of their roles.

AND THUS, THE BELIEVERS OF PROFIT AND PLAN
BUILT TEMPLES OF LOGOS, AND CALLED IT

the brand.

IV



SECTION FOUR

Cosmic Absurdity

and Spiritual Burnout

(the universe needs a nap, too)

THE UNIVERSE THAT

Filed for Divorce



(God ghosts humanity for being too dramatic)

There once was a cosmos—expansive, divine,
Who'd nurtured her humans since time's first design.
She'd given them sunsets and free will to choose,
And all that they did was complain on the news.

They built little temples, then wars to defend them,
They prayed for new blessings, then cursed when she sent them.
They posted her rainbows, ignored her advice,
Then monetized kindness and called it "the price."

One morning the Universe packed up her stars,
She left just a note: "Keep the Moon. I'll take Mars."
She took half the planets and all of the glow,
And said, "Keep your free will—you'll need it below."

The humans were shocked—“But where will we pray?”
“*Try silence,*” she whispered, “it’s cheaper that way.”
They cried, “We can change!” but she’d already gone,
Her status set firmly to “Moving On.”

Now comets still orbit, though colder, more gray,
And faith’s just a rumor the cynics still say.
The galaxies sigh, “She’ll be back when they learn—”
But the void only hums,



The Afterlife That Was Out-of-Network

(prior authorization for paradise)

There once was a man who had paid in for years—
Through premiums, copays, and claims filed in tears.
He'd flossed and he'd jogged and he'd eaten his kale,
Then died on a Tuesday (a pickleball fail).

He floated up gently through cumulus white,
To a gate made of pearl, and a clipboard, and light.
"Welcome!" an angel said, chewing her pen.
"Your member ID, love? And spell it again?"

She typed for a while, and her halo went dim,
Then she read from the screen in a voice soft and grim:
"Your plan covers Earth: all the aches, all the pain.
For heaven, you'd need `prior auth`. Please explain."

“But I died!” he protested. “I’m dead! It’s the norm!”
“Sir, DEATH’S PRE-EXISTING. Please fill out this form.
And heaven’s out-of-network. (It’s Bronze, you’ll recall.)
Allow ninety days. We’ll be calling.” (They won’t call.)

So he sat down in Limbo (a lobby with ferns),
Where the hold music loops and the coffee still burns.
He was four-million-sixth in the queue, and a sign
Said, “Your soul is important to us. Please hold the line.”

On day ninety-one, a gold envelope fell:
CLAIM DENIED. (You may try our affiliate, Hell.)
He declined—and with one sudden beep and a wheeze,
He woke up alive, in a gown and a breeze.

Now he’s back, and he’s breathing, and slow on his feet,
And the hospital bill is a very long sheet.
He takes walks. He eats cake. He is never once bored.
He’s in no rush to die now. *(He can’t afford.)*

So the moral, dear reader, for all of your ills:

“Live while it’s covered.
The afterlife bills.”

THE SUN THAT Refused TO RISE



(seasonal depression as rebellion)

One dawn, the Sun simply said, “I’m not going.”
She dimmed her own fires; her flares quit their glowing.
“I’m tired of shining for folks half-awake,
Who shoot all my colors for content’s own sake.”

She’d risen for eons to warm and to heal,
But humans just used her for “golden-hour feel.”
They’d **crop out her clouds,** they’d filter her rays,
They’d post, #grateful, while ghosting their days.

So she slept in instead, behind curtains of gray,
Letting frost take her shift for the rest of the day.
The Earth sent a message: **“Hey, not to intrude,**
But crops are all dying—this mood’s kinda rude.”

She sighed, “Oh, forgive me for wanting to rest.
My burnout’s gone solar. I’m not at my best.”
And for one frozen season, all life had to cope
With candles and fires and leftover hope.

But slowly the people began to recall
The warmth in each other, the glow in **the small.**
And just when they learned what her light had been worth,

She rose, soft and weary,
to brighten the Earth.

So the moral, dear reader, in radiant guise:

“Even the Sun gets to
sometimes not rise.”

THE STAR THAT

FELT AVERAGE

(cosmic imposter syndrome)

A star in Orion blinked dimmer each night,
Convinced she was faking her own little light.

"Look at those **NOVAS,**
THOSE COMETS,
THOSE FLARES_

I'm barely a sparkle. *Nobody stares.*"

SHE COMPARED HER OWN SHIMMER TO GALAXIES VAST,



FORGOT THAT HER GLOW REACHED MILLENNIA PAST.
SHE WHISPERED, “I’M NOTHING, JUST background noise,”
WHILE LIGHTING UP WORLDS WITH UNSHOWY POISE.

THE BLACK HOLE NEARBY SAID, “YOU’RE FINE AS YOU ARE,
YOU’RE LITERALLY BURNING—THAT’S FUSION, NOT PR.”
SHE LAUGHED THROUGH HER HYDROGEN, BLUSHED THROUGH HER FLAME,
AND REALIZED THAT SHINING’S NOT ~~EARNING ACCLAIM.~~

So the moral, from somewhere a long way from view:

“Somebody, somewhere,
is wishing on
YOU.”

The Therapist in the Sky

(religion, therapy, and irony walk into a bar)

One Tuesday in heaven (around therapy o'clock),
God sat on a couch, picking lint off His sock.
The angels took notes, the saints crossed their knees,
And FREUD stirred martinis with holy degrees.

"Tell me," said GOD, "why do humans still pray,
Then ~~ghost me~~ for decades the following day?"
FREUD smirked, "They project you—the father, the fear,
Then blame you for hiding when they want you near."

JUNG sighed, “They just want a myth they can hold,
A story to warm them when meaning turns cold.”

Then NIETZSCHE burst in with a loud cosmic wink:

“God, you’re the **patient**—and they are the shrink.”

The session went long; `the clouds billed per hour.`

They all needed closure, or maybe just power.

And when heaven’s lights dimmed, they clinked one last cheer—

“To being misunderstood
for another long year.”





and so the cosmos cooled its tea,
the stars clocked out at half past three.
the angels filed reports in rhyme,
and god requested “out of time.”

the souls returned from therapy light,
the moon took PTO that night.
and somewhere between divine and dumb,
the universe shrugged: “WELP. THAT’S LIFE. HO HUM.”

but as order collapsed in its glittering sprawl,
a voice softly muttered, *“we’ve learned nothing at all.”*
and thus, like adults who’ve outgrown their delight,
they built one more system
to prove they were right.

V

SECTION FIVE

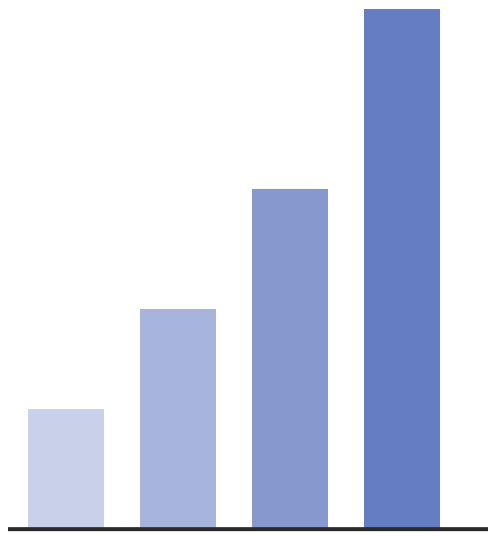
The ~~MORAL~~ *That Isn't*

(because grown-ups know better, and still don't do better)

THE MEANING THAT

Missed

the Meeting



(enlightenment skipped the 9 a.m. Zoom)

The meeting began right on schedule, of course,
With coffee, agendas, and PowerPoint force.
They'd gathered to "clarify purpose and goal,"
To synergize meaning, align every soul.

The boss shared a slide deck entitled

THE WHY,

With gradients, buzzwords, and graphs **to the sky.**
Each bullet point shimmered with purpose and Zen—
Until someone asked, "*What does **meaning** mean, then?*"

The room fell to silence—a corporate abyss,
As calendars trembled and managers hissed.
"Let's circle back later," one voice softly said,
While "meaning" was out *getting breakfast instead.*

It skipped the whole quarter, it ghosted the call,
It left no out-of-office, no reason at all.
The interns went searching through decks and reports,
But meaning had gone to the beach *in its shorts.*

By Q3 they rebranded the absence as "flow,"
And launched a new product: **The Purpose We Know™.**
Investors applauded, the stock value **soared,**
While meaning just yawned—it was happy, ignored.

So the moral, dear reader, for those keeping score:



"If you have to define it,
it's gone out the door."

THE MORAL THAT

Changed

Its Mind

(because life refuses to rhyme neatly)

Once there was a story that **STARTED QUITE STRONG,**
With rhythm, with reason, with right and with wrong.
It spoke of decisions, of lessons, of fate,
Of patience and virtue *(and showing up late).*

It promised redemption, it hinted at grace,
It strutted with purpose, it knew its own place.
But halfway through the chapter, it stopped mid-prose,
And said, "*Actually... I don't think I know.*"

The plot turned reflective, the tone lost its edge,

The hero went camping to think near a hedge.

The villain found yoga and ~~canceled his plan~~,

The chorus unfollowed, the critics just ran.

The story kept shifting—each draft less aligned,

Till even the moral said, "*Never mind.*"

It wandered through maybes, it stumbled through doubt,

Then took up a side gig as "*figuring out.*"

At last it concluded, or maybe it paused,

With readers confused but spiritually awed.

And printed in ink at the end of the line:

“This page intentionally
left undefined.”

The End

(UNTIL THE NEXT CRISIS)

(the only honest conclusion)

And so, dear grown-ups, the stories all spun,
The lessons half-learned, the errands half-done.
You've laughed at your chaos, you've cried at your screens,
You've therapized meaning through marketing memes.

You've worshiped your calendars, friended your pain,
Found purpose in metrics, then *lost it again.*
You've optimized sleeping, you've monetized play,
You've chased every sunrise while scrolling away.

But endings are myths that adulthood sells,
Like "balance," or "closure," or wishing wells.
You tie it in morals, in *neat little bows,*
Then TRIP ON THE RIBBON—that's just how it goes.

For life doesn't finish, it circles, it loops,

It hits " `snooze` " on its wisdom, then joins some new groups.

You'll swear "this time's different," then **DO IT AGAIN,**

You'll *ghost your own joy,* then text "Coffee? Say when."

So close up this book, or keep it half-read,

The truth's in the margin, the *line left unsaid.*

And when the next crisis comes knocking, just grin—

You've been here before.

You'll begin where you've been.



The end

(until the next crisis).

EPILOGUE:

The Wink at the **End of the World**



Maybe the point was never to win,
But to notice the sky while the storm's rolling in.
To laugh while you're leaking, to rest when you break,
To build something gentle from every mistake.

Maybe the trick isn't peace or success,
But learning to live with **a little bit less**—
Less noise, less pretending, less need to appear,
More days that feel real, more people who're near.

The world's still absurd, but you're part of its art—
You get to keep growing, unpolished—a part.
So when meaning goes missing and life's out of time,
Just breathe, and remember:

you're still in the rhyme.

CREDITS

(Such As They Are)

WRITTEN BY:

Everyone who swore they'd get their life together Monday.

DIRECTED BY:

Deadlines, dopamine, and unresolved childhood dreams.

PRODUCED BY:

Late capitalism, caffeine, and mild spiritual yearning.

EDITED BY:

Regret (with notes from Therapy).

SOUNDTRACK BY:

Rain on a workday, laughter through tears,
and the hum of the fridge at 2 a.m.

FILMED ON LOCATION:

Inside your brain during an existential scroll.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Coffee, contradictions,
and the few friends who still call instead of text.

NO MORALS WERE HARMED IN THE MAKING OF THIS BOOK.
ALL GROWTH DEPICTED HEREIN REMAINS BEAUTIFULLY UNFINISHED.

Dedicated to the ones still trying, still laughing,
and still learning how to blink.