

Today

From the pessimistic viewpoint of a hangover, I found that I was cheated today. It was midway between the coffeepot and the shower when my hand stopped its subconscious scratching as I peered at the clock in the hall. Under the wicked rule of the DST, Americans were removed of the liberty of an hour, a time-shift that ricochets through their daily circadian cycles until affecting every facet of a person's life.

Today I am Pyrrhus. I've survived the night victorious, undaunted and unbroken by a midmorning rush to the bathroom, to awake expecting my sixty courageous minutes heralding my return. The alcohol in my system created a dull drone that ached when I turned my head to find them. I was alone, today, sixty fewer than the morning previous and only myself to blame.

In my futile efforts to return to the past I excised the fan from the window and quickly took its place. I plunged my torso, headfirst into the morning air and shook away the remnants of night. The drone burned on. The acrid churn of toxins in my blood bubbled through their journeys to purification on this Palm Sunday. The cold chill of April awakened my mind and I stared out at the passers-by in utter bewilderment.

Was it possible that they didn't know? How could one not realize they were robbed of an entire hour? If man is splayed to the earth with nothing but his will and his conception of time, would he not feel either being stripped away in the darkness? Wouldn't he, like a child to a blanket, entangle his existence with every shred of fabric to fight dearly for what was his?

"They're gone!" I yelled to the people on the sidewalk, shaking the birds from my fire escape and sending them flapping to other metal gymnasiums. "I'd expected them to be there and they weren't! I was cheated out of my sixty sweet sentries of dawn!"

The people below stared, not in terror, but with whim and annoyance. Their faces bore no scrap of sympathy as they trudged on through their daily routines of concrete and fluorescence. One shook his head in disdain, as though attempting to eradicate my pleas from his mind.

From above, another fan sought shelter. It was replaced by the charismatic face of many years, one that appeared to have seen many places and times. Barbados, I thought. Perhaps Trinidad.

"Boy, dey no gone!" She sang. Her voice was the gentle movement of a ladle, stirring a hearty smile.

"I expected them here when I awoke. I set my whole day by their arrival. They were ripped from me as I slept."

"Dey were lent to you," the woman said and then turned her eyes outward. "Dey will come back again, you'll see." She spoke to the crisp morning air. "Dey return when my begin to forget about dem. Dey always do."