

Corporate America

Hell on Earth

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14 October 2005

News of Departure for Los Angeles

You may know me for my published books and my work in television and films, not under the name Mycroft Holmes of course, but this is the only way I can actually write in English about my experiences in Los Angeles without getting into any trouble at work.

Up until now I mostly wrote in French and thankfully none of you appear to understand French. However writing in French has never got me anywhere despite my many published books, since there is no market. So I had to find a new name, as it is anyway the fashion for any aspiring actor in Hollywood, though I am more like an aspiring scriptwriter.

A bit more than just aspiring, since I have written many books and already worked on several series and films. It does not matter in L.A., it is always like a first time, until the next big project. They are rare, so when they come by, you need to be ready to drop everything and follow it through. It is always a new beginning since you are only as good as your next project, and even then.

So I will land in L.A. at the end of this month. Hoping to restart this career from the very beginning, as if nothing came before me, as if I had never written any book or film script before.

Knowing my real name would not change anything to you, I never got credited for anything I worked on, though I was paid on all produced projects. I guess it compensates for all those long nights I spent writing when I had to go to work the next day. I have no doubt that if you are good at searching on the Internet, I will probably leave you enough clues as to who I am, and probably you would find me out easy. What is important, really, is that no one searching on my name or the projects I worked on should find this blog, it is the only way for me to be truly honest and have all the freedom to say what I want, what needs to be said.

I don't intend to be that negative, unless it turns out that I will go through hell whilst in L.A. Most of what I have written has been very dark up until now, very depressing. Some people said they wanted to commit suicide after reading certain of my books. I wish to change that, I wish to become a positive force in this world, to create the universe people would love to live in. It is about time too, I turn 33 tomorrow.

If I had to continue being so unhappy and miserable, there is really no point in continuing this boring existence. If nothing great happens to me in L.A., enough to make this blog any worthwhile or even interesting, then I will simply give up. Because if it does not happen in L.A., where the hell could it happen? Nowhere, even though I feel I have already achieved quite a lot being outside the Promised Land.

So I have high expectations for my moving into L.A. Of course I intend to work like crazy. However I have learnt that it is useless to work without a contract, without the guarantee that it will go somewhere, or even in the big hope that it will happen.

I have learnt that much, that wasting time is very easy. Any project could gobble up six months of your life and you would have nothing to show for it afterwards since even the rights are not yours. This is over, never again. And to arrive in Hollywood having learnt that much is promising, I won't waste a few years hoping

to get somewhere, I have done enough now to hope to work on real projects, not theory and conjecture.

God, two more weeks, and I will land in California. I'm not even sure if this is what I want, after wanting it so badly for so long. I'm just afraid nothing will work, that I will not go anywhere, that it will all be waste and disappointment. I have become realistic in time, too much I guess. Dreams and miracles do happen, I have experienced it too many times to deny it.

Without too much expectation, you cannot be too disappointed. And at the very least I will have this blog at the end of it. If it is just to complain that nothing happens, I will eventually just delete it and never give it another thought. So let's see what destiny has in store for me. Let's move to L.A. and start building this dream.

Blog – 20 October 2005

Changing my future, hoping for success, one week before departure to LA

I'm in such a mess, and it is all psychological. Counting the minutes before my departure for L.A., thinking I won't have the time to do anything. I am now thinking I will just wake up that morning, throw a few things in a suitcase and go. Instead of this impossible task I have set myself, to go through all my stuff, page by page, until I can find and bring with me all my single last remaining important papers, the ones which have followed me in all the five countries I have lived in my life.

Perhaps it is time that I truly break with my past, and leave everything behind but the essential. I have lost so many things in my life, because of these airplane regulations which oblige you to have only two suitcases every time you move country. I know people who will ship dozens of crates, even their cars, must cost a fortune, I can't afford it.

Every time I need to move out of a country, everyone and everything turn into a nightmare, a place which in the end, I am happy to leave behind. It happened in Ottawa, in Paris, in Brussels and now London. Is it that I have changed my perspective about these cities and I now see everything that annoys me terribly

and I feel I won't have to put with that any longer in a week? Or is it destiny which makes it easier for me to want to leave?

At work we enter agreements nightmare which could lead to court. Two more agreements need to be negotiated, another thing which could take a few months of torment. I could not even do anything about my last conference which was supposed to be finished by the time I leave. As it stands, I have not even started. The new cat we bought shits and pees everywhere every day, it seems the five other cats decided that it was now permissible to do the same, so we live in a shit hole. I can't wait to get out.

I have no more time to think about philosophy of life, and anyway, I was going to try to avoid talking about this here. Why? Well, people think I am already crazy, no need to confirm it so they can act upon it and put me into a mental institution.

I was recently contacted by someone who said he could change the future just by concentrating a lot and convincing himself that what he wished for would definitely happen. I came to the realization five years ago that I could do the same, and out of it I got contracts to work in cinema and television when there was nothing really to suggest I was ever going to end up working for that medium.

At the time I had written only one film script, it was 10 years ago and it was an adaptation from a book. I had forgotten about trying to change my future for the better, but I tried again two months ago and my life went wild. My conferences which were flops suddenly became successful overnight. My partner who was in deep trouble and was going to lose his driving license and his job won in court. And I am now leaving for Los Angeles to pursue my dreams. That is what I call results.

However I am not certain if I was ready for such a roller coaster, like, on the very next day that I would try to change my destiny. I had more in mind something simple, just to make me happy, and now it is happening on a massive scale. I am only talking about this now because I don't want to forget that once in L.A., I will need to continue to try changing my future. Because moving there is only the first step, it could easily be all there is to it, waking up in L.A., but working in conferences instead of films.

I'm not afraid of hard work, even though I feel like a zombie right now, but hard work is not enough in Hollywood. Talent is also required, and luck is essential. At least I know the three main ingredients, hard work, talent and luck. Well, luck I can take care of it, I will wish myself a great destiny once I'm there. Hard work, I have a great capacity to write 50 pages in virtually one night. Only talent is still puzzling. I feel I am good, however it is a question of taste and opinion. In the final analysis, however, it does appear that with great luck, you don't necessarily need talent in L.A.. So one way or another, I might still make it big.

I know success is not an ingredient for happiness. In fact, people who are driven as much as me, who dedicate their life to succeeding, and spend all their energy, sacrificing everything and everyone along the way to become famous, are the world's worst sufferers. Because these things take time, it is heartless, and you are left with a feeling of having missed something quite huge once you succeed, or even worse, once you accept that you will never succeed.

As a consequence, most people who succeed on a massive scale are not happy and are unable to enjoy their success. So they either need to succeed again and again, or somehow they realize that and work now at becoming happier people, even if sometimes it means getting away from it all.

This is not exactly encouraging to be thinking about this stuff right now, I should get back to my big idea that I will rock the boat in a spectacular way once I land in California. Talent is not required, and with a bit of luck, hard work might also not be necessary. It might just fall from the sky, like this moving to L.A. appears to be, effortless. I did not even have to try, it happened. So, what if I don't even need luck? I will then definitely succeed.

That's what logic does to you, it makes you say stupid things that one day will prove without a doubt that you're worth nothing, that you were just crazy to begin with.

Blog - 22 October 2005

Surviving management and change at work, how to live an exciting destiny good enough to write a book

It is Saturday, exactly one week before I leave London for a long time, I hope. Since the only thing that could keep me away from London, is if I succeed in Hollywood and work in films, or if I realize my big dream of moving in the South of France, on the Canal du Midi, isolated from my fellow human beings. Otherwise, it is back to London, the only other bearable city that exists on this planet, after perhaps Los Angeles.

However, I was truly disappointed with Paris, it is quite probable that Los Angeles will be a nightmare for me. Let's assume I don't succeed in films, which is quite probable, will I be happy in this conference job? No conference job ever brought me happiness, it has always been hell from the start. I don't quite see right now how this job could be different.

Unless I was truly good at it, which I believe after one year in London in my actual job, I have reached that point. They truly feel like they cannot lose me, even though I have felt for a long time to be quite inadequate. I believe I now understand that perhaps anyone else in that position might have done a much worse job than I did. It is also a factor of being appreciated and recognized for your capacities and abilities. It took a year in my last job, this is a frightening thought.

So I have to wish that within weeks I can reach that same point with my new employers, and if they are as disorganized as a company as I was led to believe in the interview, I may actually be the expert who will save their company. I have ten years of experience on the subject, surely I have something of interest to communicate to them?

The only remaining problem is that change takes a long time. Nothing can happen overnight. Dissatisfied employees will definitely leave, even though they might have been the best. They are always the first ones to go, they know they can succeed elsewhere without having to complicate their lives with new processes which suddenly make their life a living hell, by preventing them from doing what they are good at, producing, selling.

It has been one year and a half in my last job since change has started, you could easily say that nothing has really changed yet. Another frightening thought. How long does it take for results to finally appear? Well, it took me a year to achieve my goal. Now I need to put this knowledge to good work, whatever it is that I am

going to do, we need to see tangible results within six months. Who am I kidding? It cannot take less than a year.

The worst part is that I don't even know yet what it is that I have been hired for. At the beginning I was told they were looking for a simple Conference Producer. Their website was claiming to be looking for a Conference Manager, and my immigration papers are stating that I was hired as a Management Consultant to turn around their business and open new offices worldwide. Was it just for immigration purposes, or am I to become this management figure finally controlling a few bugs that I will be at a liberty to crush whenever I feel like it?

I'm joking. My idea of management is moral and ethical, much more than everything I have observed up until now in my short career. I am mister new management, compassionate but at the same time looking for results. A mix of what a male Director or Manager could be, compared with a Female Director or Manager. Being gay, I have the best of both worlds. I am balanced. And I won't freak out anyone, either the monsters in higher management or the bugs under me.

I could not even see myself taking out the "kill-fly" to wipe one of these bugs. Perhaps I am too much like women, I should keep perspective here, I might need to squash a few of these bugs if it becomes necessary, if I feel I am justified, if I feel there is no other solution in sight. I would hate it, but I am prepared and ready for it.

Thankfully nobody can bullshit me in this business, I have done everything for so many years, every single position, I will know if someone is playing with me and I will lose all respect. I will have to crush a few bugs, hopefully I will always act in a moral and ethical manner, and for the right reasons.

Personal clash of personalities is not good enough, no pettiness can get between me and the bugs. Like I hope management won't act like that with the bug that I will be in their eyes. Otherwise this is when and where I will be thinking seriously about the mistake it was to move to L.A. Oh God, I hope for so much, for so much which I have never witnessed in my short life, a job that I would actually love, with people I can actually bear!

Incidentally, today I have met both my old bosses from one of my previous jobs. We met at the Pets at Home center, so they could give me the last reference letter I needed for immigration. God she was lovely, she looked great. A real American woman living some sort of great destiny, but stuck with a stubborn British husband who started a conference company in London.

He looked frozen, could not say a thing apart from that they were now planning conferences in China. But he is OK, he was a fine boss I have to say. His Director was the problem, being rude for no good reason, making our lives impossible, for the German girl and me. One bad apple was enough to make us both fly away, and probably the others who came after us, from what I have heard.

Luckily the ones who came after me were all incompetent, which is why today they appreciate me, and were kind enough to write that great reference letter for me. They're leaving for Budapest in two days time, gosh, that reminds me the terrible trip I had there with them less than a week after I started. Still Budapest brings me great memories, even if I remember writing the darkest entry in my diary ever after the first day.

I believe I talked lengthily about suicide, I had problems with the employees. The very next day I stayed home and almost told them I was resigning. I came back the day after and we found a solution. The solution was simple, I was their boss, of the two bugs in sales who were the problem. I tell them what to do, they do not tell me what to do. It was an arrangement I could live with. And of all of us, they came out as the bad guys, they felt bad about it, and I never had any trouble with them afterwards.

That I was ready to sacrifice my career over this at the time, is probably something they never thought I would do. It caused maximum impact, they were reprimanded and probably threatened with their jobs. At the time I thought it was not very ethical for me to do this, to bring it all to such an extreme, but I have lived enough in this life that I am not going to put up with any kind of shit, especially for a job. And they quickly got back in line. Great management skills! This is exactly what I need to avoid in L.A.

When I left my two previous bosses today, I told them that we never know what the future is preparing for us. And the man said: exactly. We were on the same wavelength, he thought and I thought, that one day I will be working for them

again. I would love that, I would love to open their Chinese office, or whatever else they may have in their plans. But it is over now, it is old history. I need to move on.

However her son lives in L.A., and he will be in contact with me. He is a policeman. And I was trying to convince Stephen, my partner, that L.A. had nothing to do with these cop programs he watches all the time. Everyone believes that I am going to L.A. to be shot by some immigrant, as my family back in Canada believes I am in London now just waiting to be blown up by a terrorist bomb, when this is so unlikely. Well, let's see what the future reserves for me. Every possibility is still open, anything can happen. Let's just not destroy any bridge behind us.

Bush will become my President, something I never ever considered before. While this madman was actually deciding for people I had nothing to do with, it was ok, whatever the power he has over this world. But now it is an entirely different story. This crazy man, religious, fanatic, openly anti-gay, who believes he answers to God, and that God speaks to him, will actually have quite a strong influence over my life. Especially that California is crowned with one of his cronies, Arnold Schwarzenegger. I sincerely hope I won't have to become political. So far I succeeded in avoiding it, even if my last book is very much about British politics. But then again I had no choice, I worked in Parliament Square.

So far so good, my partner can come to the U.S., on the basis that we are lovers, even if he will not be allowed to work, our main obstacle. So far it does not look like the U.S. is a backward country like Egypt, when it comes to this domain. I would hate to have to confirm afterwards that I was wrong, especially that my new employer did not even flinch when I announced to her: what about my boyfriend? We're getting there, slowly, but we're getting there.

My actual Manager, who I called Master Bitch of Westminster in my last book, says that I am so right for L.A., it is a match made in heaven. Why? Because I am vegetarian, I am gay, I am particular about everything, I want to go on the Atkins diet as soon as I set foot there, and what else... I had already assessed L.A. as the best ever city for me, for these reasons and others, she was quite right.

I have fears that perhaps this will not turn out to be true. I fear rejection, like what I have experienced in Richmond upon Thames. A town filled with overbearing bastards who feel they have reached the top of the world because they played a small part in the cinema industry in England. Big deal, makes me want to puke all over the place. Especially that I must have already reached better heights, my work is passing on NBC, Fox Kids, Channel 4, ITV and all around the world, so fuck off!

They are so insignificant compared to what I hope to achieve, and I would never act like they do no matter the degree of success or failure I achieve. A small part of me wish to succeed so I can go back to that fucking pub called Richmond's Arms, and tell them all to get lost!

It is more important to me than I would like to admit. They certainly played a big part in my decision to move out to L.A. to see what destiny has in store for me. I know I will never go back there and be able to gloat, however internally, psychologically, this is one more motivation I have to succeed in L.A.

And I need all the motivation possible, since there is not much else left to motivate me in succeeding in L.A. Not fame, success or money can convince me that this is worth it. Not even the feeling that I was the main part in a big film being made. I had that feeling before, I have seen on TV what I thought of, what I said, what I created. I have achieved that, so it is certainly not a strong motivation, it has changed nothing to my core being. Revenge is a nice concept. Even though I have a hard time believing what I am saying here.

What are my motivations? What is it that I wish to accomplish in L.A.? If it is not fame, success or money, what is it then? Certainly not sex. Gosh, I don't know, and this is worrying. What are my goals? Is it just freedom? The freedom to finally do whatever I want whenever I want? Being able to work from anywhere as a writer, isolated from the rest of the planet, and still being able to move around and go anywhere as I feel?

Surely there must be other ways for me to achieve that freedom? I have been searching all my life, and I have assessed that perhaps succeeding as a writer must be my best shot at reaching freedom. Which is certainly odd, since the probabilities that I will ever succeed as a writer are so slim. I might as well wish to win a million at the lottery. However, this is all that I have left. I will live out of

writing and I will earn enough to do whatever I want whenever I want. Do my job anywhere on this planet at any given time.

And then I hope to be happy. Giving me the chance to study and write more important stuff, like philosophy and theoretical physics. I guess that is my ultimate goal. My only goal. Anything could give me that chance, I only need money falling from the sky.

Why do I feel that my only way out is to succeed in Hollywood? It is a mystery to me. I must be quite desperate for any kind of solution. Must be destiny. Then I will definitely succeed. But not quite. I am way ahead of you. It is quite possible that I will never succeed in L.A. as a scriptwriter. It is quite possible that what destiny had in mind for me, was to write what you are reading now. That all my fortune will come one day from writing this long diary of mine which has now become a blog. A word I have learned to respect, even though it means that I am no better than any other blogger out there.

My life has to be more exciting and interesting than the average block, if I wish to stand any chance to be read. I would not be talking like this if I had not written already more than 20 books, you can rest assured. I stand some chance to be remembered, at least in Québec, where I come from. Though they are barely aware of my last two published books, since distribution has mainly been in France, Belgium, Switzerland, Africa and Middle East, don't ask me why.

I feel my destiny so far has been distinctly different from any of my colleague writers. And I feel I am about to experience the ultimate life in Hollywood. With that experience I can finally die, I would have done enough. Or live for a long time from the money this unique experience might bring me.

So my success in L.A. is not that important from a destiny point of view, it could all be about my diary, my books, and nothing to do with my success in films. And I am quite prepared to accept that, no problem.

As long as I live through enough bullshit to write about it, either in French or in English, nothing else is important. It can all come from the famous conference world as far as I am concerned, whether it is in China, Denver, London or Toronto.

Oh dear, I have now mentioned the word Toronto. I'll be back. I just vomited a large bucket worth of whatever was in my insides. If I ever end up in Toronto, please shoot me. I would not survive it anyway. Don't mention Canada to me, it is the last place I will ever want to live. I feel most of the people working in Hollywood feel the same, even though so many productions are now moved to Canada in order to save money. Not me, not the writers, they usually never leave L.A. Or do they?

The fact is, I have no idea where I will end up doing in my life. Is there a reason for me being shipped to L.A. right now in my life? Anyone with any bit of intelligence would put 2 and 2 together and assume that he or she must follow some sort of destiny. For two years I did not work in conferences, I worked at writing film scripts and synopses. I built a very promising website containing all these ideas and scripts, and then my lack of money made me go back into conferences for a year. And then, this experience got me the dream job in L.A., of all places. If this is not destiny, what is?

I have not work at all on my scripts in the last year, not even one line. My websites were not updated at all, even if I wrote two books in that year. Let's see, what can one surmise from this? Well, assuming that none of the two books I have written will ever go anywhere, which is what is most probable since I won't bother sending them to publishers from a lack of time and money, and they are not in the field or language of what my actual publishers publish, then there must be a more logical reason to all this.

Working in conferences is a mean for me to achieve some sort of ultimate goal, which must be accomplished in Los Angeles since this is where I am being shipped. And since I dedicated two years of my life at bankrupting myself whilst writing film scripts and building that website, it must necessarily be related.

How could I not now believe in destiny? In some sort of higher power, be it God or deterministic laws of nature, leading me somewhere? Could it not be related to the film industry? Could it be something entirely different? Am I to believe that I am sent to L.A. to write about how I wish to succeed and then fail spectacularly, just to write about it and discourage a whole generation of people to not abandon everything, sacrificing their life in the process, in order to avoid the only town in this world which could make their dreams come true, but would ultimately

destroy them completely to the point where only suicide remains? Better that than going back home, wherever home is.

No, I feel I am destined to something much larger, with a much higher purpose. And I am reading right now what it is that would qualify as what it is that I wish to achieve with my life. It is called Rama. Four books written by Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee (but keep the first one for the end, since it is the least interesting books of the four). If I can write something like that before I die, then I feel all will be ok. However, if I do not feel I can reach out like Arthur C. Clarke can, then it will be a failure.

I do not write for a few thousand people, not even a million. I want to write for the masses. I want to have a deep impact. I want to change the ways of a whole nation, of a whole country, how they think. I have no small ambition, otherwise I am ready to die right here right now. It does not matter whether I live or die.

However, in the 20 books or so I have written until now, I do not feel I have reached my goals. I have not yet written my Rama series. And would it be sufficient anyway? Rama is not considered like the best work of Arthur C. Clarke, we barely hear about it. But God, there could not be a better series in science fiction to help you understand what this world is all about. What we, as human beings, are actually doing which will definitely lead to our ultimate destruction. Reading that series, I am ashamed of being a human being, I really am. I feel powerless to change this world. Do I have to do something to change it for the better, changing people's mind, activating something in their brain? What a goal.

Perhaps I should be killed now, before I have to think too much about how I will ever achieve that impossible task. I wouldn't mind, death has always been welcomed in my lair. Ultimate freedom, liberty, even if it is just about turning the machine off. I would love it more than you will ever understand.

What possesses me to continue and have these weird passions about achieving something grand and universal, is beyond my comprehension. Perhaps we all have a role to play in this existence, in the destiny of human kind. And even though it is not simple, we still have to play the game. And I will play it, to a certain extent, but it better happen soon or else I will lose patience.

I am tired, I am fed up, I better get myself somewhere quickly, I better see that big scheme in action, which I suspect, or else I will lose faith, abandon everything and never look back. Or can I? Perhaps not. Must be in my genes, in my nature.

There is no escape, and that is what this higher power or these laws of nature know, that I don't. I don't even have the freedom to kill myself or retire somewhere alone in a forest. I just can't. I am moving to L.A., living my destiny all planned out for me. It better be good, motivating and rewarding. At the very least. Can I even hope it will bring me happiness, or is it too much to ask?

All that I have said in the last paragraph assumed that I believe in some sort of higher power or some sort of deterministic laws of physics. It would not be completely true to say that these are my beliefs. I do think I had a strong part to play in everything that is happening to me right now. I wished for it and then it happened. No matter if somehow it happened completely out of my conscious control.

I did not apply for a job in L.A., I got one. It is possible that unconsciously I made this happen. Like if somehow I thought this was necessary to my development, like if I had some sort of power over my destiny. Like if, for example, in this reality there was only me and no one else, like if I dreamt up everyone else and they only existed for me, from my own point of view, my own frame of reference. (And I wrote about that and it was published way before The Matrix came out, so stop thinking what you're thinking. This goes for anything I might say in the future which goes along the path of The Matrix. These ideas are not new.)

In that case I would have certainly planned for myself a few interesting experiences in L.A., especially in the film industry, enough at least to learn something from it and spit it back in my books.

Sometimes I think that I think too much about the significance of everything in one's life. At this time I feel justified, because it is too weird, too impossible. I have beaten the odds, it must be significant, it must mean something. It could lead to an understanding of what the mechanisms of existence are all about. Is there a structure regulating what one must live?

Nothing has ever been enough for me, I always needed more, it is beyond comprehension. If I don't succeed at anything, changing irrevocably what we are

as a race, then my life is just not worth it. It makes no sense, I don't understand where this comes from. Could it come from the fact that I feel everything is wrong in this world? That everything could be much better and that somehow I can contribute to this massive shift in thinking and behavior? Can I?

Through fantasy perhaps, science fiction, like Arthur C. Clarke? How could we measure the impact of that one man on human's destiny? Quite high, he has inspired Nasa and everyone working there. He has inspired every single sci-fi movie I have seen so far. He has changed lives, he has given us some sort of background information for us to act and react. It is possible to have a large impact via fiction, via science fiction. He is a big influence on this world. If everyone were to read his books, they would think completely differently and think twice before going to war and changing this world irremediably.

So I could at least reach that level, it is within my powers to change something on a massive scale, even via fiction. I have an empire to build then, as big as the one of Arthur C. Clarke. And I feel I have the right disposition mentally and philosophically to lead us all to a better and happier place.

That is also quite important, since I am no stranger to wild ideas like perhaps the destruction or annihilation of the whole human race is the best solution, before we destroy the whole universe by inadvertence. Got to get back on earth, think in simpler terms. How can I best achieve my goals? Got to forget all my extreme ideas, got to think some more. I have a mission, I have to accomplish it somehow. No small mission.

It is sad that it is only in a few decades that I will be able to assess if I have succeeded in my mission. I might even be dead by the time I have any impact. And it does not matter, as long as I stop talking and start acting. And L.A., the strongest sphere of influence on this planet, might just be the platform I need. A mean to reach the masses, through fiction. Most of my books in French are not fictional. Most of my fictional work has been written in English, when I was writing film scripts and synopses for possible films.

So there I am, fiction, science fiction, is to be my life, to make the world understand that we need to find peace and happiness somehow, whatever the costs. No small destiny, I'm certainly pretentious enough to succeed. How could

you anyway achieve great things if you did not even believe you could achieve them in the first place? This is why I am going to L.A.

Who am I kidding? I must be drunk again. Do I believe any of that stuff? It would be nice if it was true, in any way. Or perhaps I am just building myself a great destiny where I am somehow a prince and another prince will save me from my misery. Could be true, and it might never happen, however the coincidence is too impressive to ignore. I am going to L.A., and anything can happen.

Mycroft Holmes in L.A. blog 24 October 2005

Four last days of work in London, six days before my departure.

I have been playing so hard recently at reorganizing my life, using my pseudo-technique of changing my future, and convincing myself that what I wanted was actually already a reality, that every time I walk on Westminster bridge to go to the pub on my lunch hour, I am questioning what is real and what is not. I fear that I dreamt up this whole business of moving to L.A. and that any day now I will wake up in a different timeline where I might have never heard of this job in Los Angeles.

It seems a bit too convenient to wish something and get it almost right away, no matter how huge is the dream. I have problems to adapt to the fact that I can actually achieve what I want just by wishing it and believing it without any doubt. It really puts a twist on this reality, it feels much more like I am in some sort of Matrix, and any day now I will be contacted by Morpheus.

I am also worried that I might just be completely mad and ready for the asylum. I feel this is not real, none of it, nothing in this life. It is just like a dream, a real one, and I am in control. However it would be easy to start doubting and lose it all. Get back to something I don't particularly want.

That's how I feel, I am questioning reality, and at the same time I feel like I am reaching a new understanding of the mechanisms of existence, which have nothing to do with how I interpreted existence for the first 30 years of my life.

There are a set of values and reasons to exist that I had built up in my mind which was my personal philosophy of life, which is now due to be rethought

completely in light of the facts that I can change my future and make it the exact way I want.

What does this say about my role and the role of each human being in this universe? How can I now picture this world we live in? Am I just making the best of some natural laws of physics, am I tapping into some sort of ESP power that many mediums on this planet have been exploiting for centuries without being able to express and identify what was exactly happening, since just about every scientific mind just reject whatever it is that they can actually achieve?

Is this why I don't consider these possibilities, because it is just crazy and impossible in the first place? How can I doubt it now? When everything I wished for in the last few months became a reality? Except perhaps winning at the lottery, however I admit that I was unable to believe that I would win, since the probabilities seemed too impossible for my poor mind. So I do have limits, I truly need to believe that whatever I want can actually happen. And if it is that easy to believe, it is also very easy to doubt at the last minute and lose it all.

So I have to believe that this reality is very much a virtual one, that matter and energy can be interchanged at will, that I have enough brain power to change the configuration of this world, or at the very least, I can switch between parallel universes or realities at will. And whatever I can think of, whatever I can dream up, can easily become the reality I will be evolving in.

Do I still have things to learn then? Obstacles to overcome just so I can acquire some sort of experience I would perhaps have set myself at a subconscious level? I am not sure anymore. What about karma, and what you do comes around? Not so sure anymore. You could still be a bad person and be happy and succeed beyond any hope. There would not be any punishment. The consequences are after all just virtual and ultimately affect only one person, myself.

No one else is actually real, I can switch it all, change it all, in one day. It could only truly affect me if I believed in some sort of moral and ethical code and I was actually adhering to it. Because then, doing something bad would make me depressed, when in fact there is no need to and I could get away with murder without even giving it a second thought. Not that I intend anyway to change my way of thinking morally and ethically, on the contrary. However I do not believe anymore in a system of punishment, or should I?

Perhaps this is all bullsh*t and it does not change anything if suddenly I can change my future or not. Perhaps it was always there, I just never believed it in the first place, and my success rate was near to zero, when now it is at 90%. I cannot ignore this anymore, it took me five years to get back at working at changing my future, I cannot stop again. I have to get somewhere, and then I will see what I can do, what I should do. Because this also escapes me.

Maybe I should think in terms of what it is that I want to do, and then do it, instead of these terms of what I am supposed to be doing and trying to figure that out. Perhaps nothing is planned after all, perhaps the only destiny that exists, is the one we build for ourselves.

Is life just a game? Or has it got some sort of higher purpose? I have absolutely no answer, not even a clue. I had the time to build myself a philosophy of life using bits and pieces found everywhere, from every philosophy and religion, and now I guess it is time to throw all that away.

Only simple observations of where I am and what my potential is, need to be considered. Take it one day at a time, and reassess every day what is going on, what this life could all be about or could lead me. Perhaps my existence has more in store for me, to surprise me and excite me. I certainly need any kind of motivation, just to remain alive and continue to work for no apparent good reason. Will L.A. bring me all the answers, or at least a bit more of the answers I am looking for?

Mycroft Holmes in L.A. blog 27 October 2005

Last day in London, conferences, LA expectations, freedom

This is my last day working in Westminster. How do I feel? Like a zombie, even though I went to bed early the last two nights. I have this strange feeling that I am leaving into a space ship to go across the solar system and even perhaps outside of it, maybe in the direction of Tau Ceti.

I have said before that I was ready for such a destiny, that I was waiting to get out of the solar system as quickly as the technology would permit, and that I

would invent it if necessary. Well, going to L.A. is probably the closest I will ever get to such a voyage.

It is certainly on the other side of the planet as far as London is concerned, it is also the heaviest place psychologically where someone can land. The archetype over that city is simply huge, out of proportion. Probably because in itself it is a city which has been built mostly on ideas, like a virtual city.

I'm sure L.A. is completely different from what these films and books have brought us. Reality will be hard to accept once I discover that my life there will be as miserable as it has been in Paris, London or Brussels. I just hope it won't reach the bottom level I felt in Toronto. However it is unlikely.

I can no longer deny that my life has been to produce conferences. It has now been ten full years in London, doing just that. This is how I have been able to survive, to buy all my gadgets, and it is now the reason why I am leaving for L.A. Was it just a mean to get somewhere else, to finally escape the event horizon?

This hate-love affair is far from being over, since I just signed a contract with a company who want a career man. And it is not excluded in my mind that this is it. My very last career move might be this company I will be with for the next 10 years, instead of the usual 1 to 2 years. It would mean that I finally found the right job, management, where apart from thinking and writing reports, I won't have to actually produce conferences. Oh irony.

My last day! This is the last time I am in Putney, on my way to London Waterloo. Tonight it will be Waterloo to Putney to Isleworth, for perhaps the last time, at the very least for a long time. I have seen it enough in the last decade to not feel sad about it.

I feel so weird this morning, and we're going to the pub at lunch time for a farewell drink, I hope I won't do anything stupid. I certainly feel right now like climbing on the roof of the train to sing and dance all the energy contained in my little body. It would be my luck to just faint and fall on the track two days before my liberation, my escape, my revolution. As it is how I perceive this move to L.A.

Clapham Junction, for the very last time. If Canada were my destination on Saturday, I would feel devastated for losing this feeling of reaching that busiest

station in Europe. As it stands, I'll be glad to forget all the transfers I did here on my way to Victoria in my first two years in London. Now I really feel like dancing and shouting at the top of my lungs: L.A. here I come! No matter the costs, no matter the consequences.

I fear I will very much look like an alien in L.A. I have nothing like the stars' look. My clothes are more like the ones of a poor poet who never actually connected with reality in the first place. I have no clue about society, certainly not the high society of Hollywood. Even English for me is a problem, and I miss the meaning of most expressions. Anyway, I would be lucky to even meet this sort of society, I never did in Paris or in London, what can I hope for in L.A.?

I must trust that destiny is leading me somewhere and that I will get there eventually. But it has to move fast, I need to move fast, everything needs to happen within weeks, not months and years. I need my way out of conferences, I need my freedom, and unfortunately this means success and money. I can't think of anything else which could bring me the sort of freedom that I wish for.

29 October 2005

Over the Atlantic, emotions, US customs, visa

That is it, I am now flying over the Atlantic, on my way to Los Angeles via Toronto. Apparently there is no more difference between the U.S. and Canadian customs, and therefore I will actually enter both Canada and the U.S. once in Toronto, all at the same time.

I was not sure what to think, to rejoice that one major step will now be eliminated, and I will only have to suffer the pain of being frightened at the customs only once, or if I should start to worry that perhaps my dear Mr. Bush has decided to take over the Canadian borders and, Canadians being so nice for no good reason, being in their nature, have let Bush take over. My only hope is that it will make it much simpler for me to get my visa.

Although everything is completely legal, you never know what will happen, when the law is still in the hands of people who enjoy wrecking entire lives just to prove to themselves they have a little power in this world. Their doubts is all they need to stop you right there from accomplishing your destiny. However, after years of

experience dealing with European democracy and immigration, I am not afraid anymore.

Twice in the plane I had a panic attack, finally having a glimpse of what it is that I have done. It seems to me that I never had the chance to think this through, to understand the implications. Hell, I had not even started to pack last night at 9 pm. As a result I did not sleep last night and at the moment I am like suspended in time, since we are going back in time at the right speed for time to stop.

So God knows how I will survive the day until we reach Los Angeles. I have become so emotional, this morning before we left I picked up the Myrmicat, squeezed her and could not stop crying. It was so embarrassing, because of the taxi driver. Stephen appeared quite pleased at my reaction, it was like a proof that I actually love them, and was not just abandoning them without caring.

You work and work without ever stopping, five days a week, three hours of travel a day. And on the weekend you are rushing all these things you feel you need to do to make this life worthwhile, otherwise there would only be work and sleep, and then, in these conditions, death would be most welcomed. So at the end of your seven days, you realize that you never even took one minute to think about what you were actually doing. You just went over all the obstacles as if they were just little hurdles, and everything would be better afterwards. But then I woke up yesterday and realized I had to abandon my life after 10 years, the person I love and my cats, to go and live somewhere alone, in a place I know nothing about!

Is it a mistake? I just can't believe it, it was so easy, it really fell from the sky. And if in a few hours I get my visa, then really it was so effortless, you wonder what happened to the concept of adventure.

And I want it to be painless, in the end it makes no difference to what you learn in life if you are just confronted by walls, after walls. There are other things that need to be learned, some other goals which need to be reached. Useless to spend your life worrying about immigration, writing about it as if it was your whole life and nothing else ever existed. You might as well go home then, since it would definitely not be worth it.

There are other things I can learn in L.A., and I hope I will learn them without it being too painful. After all, I am there to write and reach out. Perhaps I am the one who has an experience to communicate, and L.A., as I was saying before, will give me that chance.

Though at the moment it does look hopeless, stuck working for a conference company. It is at any rate much better than being a waiter. Or is it? I could not even be a waiter if I wanted to now. Only high profile and high paying jobs can keep me in the United States, since it is the only way for me to get a visa.

31 October, 5 am

My first day in LA

I made it! I am right now at the dawn of something, not sure what yet, and it is a bit frightening. I would not say that I am scared, but close to it. I am on my balcony right now, it is 5 am, I am right in the Valley, though I have no idea which valley this is or where I am exactly. The stars offer quite a sight, even if I know that only a few can be seen in a city as large as Los Angeles. My first day at work in a few hours, I am ready to explode!

If I was afraid of rejection, my first day has been quite successful. Already in the lobby of the hotel-apartment complex where I live, a woman came to me and told me her life story in no less than two hours. Offering me dreams and opportunities like moving to France with her and start a business, anything, and then offering me to build a glass house on her land in the north of California so I could write all day without having to worry about a job.

Now, how likely is it that any of that would actually happen? Close to zero. Some people would offer you anything just to have friendship, and I know that these friendships are too demanding for any human being. Somehow she got from me my room number and the address where I will work. I'm sure I have not heard the last of her, and Stephen is freaking out about it.

And then I went to Ralphs to buy some food. Everyone was over nice, talking to me like if a huge earthquake just happened and they were suddenly so desperate to talk to someone about it, that even strangers would do. Well, it is what would

be required for anyone in England to even talk to you, they don't even say sorry when they cut you in the grocery store, like they do here.

I don't know what is wrong with these Americans, they are so opened, so willing to meet new people, it is madness. I feel a strong sense of community, I suddenly feel part of something larger than just my small person. I am no longer this individual lost amongst millions, but a component of some greater family called the human race.

Somehow I feel this is only temporary, that it is a false sort of feeling that usually happens when you first move somewhere. Every time I moved into a new country, I always met helpful people ready to do anything for me, without anything in return, and in time this subsides and it is life as normal. As if destiny knew I needed help, and all these possibilities were suddenly falling on my doorstep.

I have to be careful though, not to fall into any trap or friendship I don't want. Not to believe anything anyone says, because it is likely that they won't deliver even on their friendship. It could easily become a nightmare. At the same time, I need to have some wisdom, and be able to understand when people are genuine and have a lot to offer. Obviously I feel I have a lot to offer, however I know certain friendships are doomed from the start. I need to give myself some time to let anything else happen, and take it from there.

I am now more worried about my first day at work. Can I deliver on all the promises I have made? Am I this genius guy who will sort them out through my past experience? I have met yesterday at the Airport one of the girls I will be working with, along with her wonderful and peaceful new husband of two weeks. God she is nice, strong personality, these are people I would love to have as friends. Her husband works in the music industry, in the licensing I believe, and probably about the use of music in films. I see no opportunity there except for good friendship, and this is good.

Perhaps all my dreams and expectations about succeeding in the movie industry have also subsided since my arrival. I am not sure if it is because I feel that being here or in London makes no difference to my success. And I just have to continue slowly to work on my projects in my little corner, and hope for other

extraordinary events in my life to happen, which most likely would come from my inbox by emails than meeting the right people.

Or perhaps it is that I have other worries right now, like this new job and finding a new apartment. Both are huge tasks to accomplish, and I am hopeful that I will succeed in being happy. I am not certain if my budget will allow me something nice close to where I will be working. And I know I will need a car, because just walking to the grocery store took me 30 minutes, and I had to come back in a taxi. However the taxi driver was a Canadian woman from Toronto and she was, as expected, very talkative and helpful.

I just don't know what to expect next. I have to get ready to go to work.

2 November 2005

One bastard identified at work, inexistent public transport, prison type apartments

Do I deserve so much attention? So much niceties? A company going the next 100 extra miles to help me and even my boyfriend to move to L.A. forever and ever? I feel guilty, so much effort put into my happiness here. I have not exactly been used to that with any of my previous employers, I was more treated like shit in any of the jobs I ever had. What is it that they think they will get in return? Am I worth it? That is the frightening thought, the idea that I might not be worth all the effort.

So far so good, I think they think they're getting their money's worth. It is not exactly what their number one employee thought though, and yesterday I lost patience with him. He crossed the line with me, and I was ready to go back to London without even giving it a second thought. Los Angeles is not the end of the world as far as I am concerned, and I have not one single idea about how and why my career in cinema and television could go any further now that I am here.

Anyway, he was freaking out because I knew nothing about the financial world, especially in America. And he was panicking more and more, and went into some sort of crisis every time he understood that I did not have a clue about what was a private equity, a venture capitalist or project management financial plan. I

almost shouted at him back that: "no, I don't know anything about that American capitalist crap, and I have no desire to learn it either!".

So, what he did after his lunch break, is exactly what I expected he would do. He went back to all the bosses, trying very hard to convince them that I was not only ignorant of everything, but on top of it, I was quite insubordinate. It must have thrown him into a spin, this office is filled with Yes Sir/Yes Madam type of employees. The anarchist ones like me must have left a long time ago, I thought.

So he tried, he then kind of disappeared for the rest of the afternoon, and I was expecting at any time to be put on the side by one of my bosses to let me know I had been out of line and that it was not acceptable. And I was ready to tell them that once again a damn employer had hired an employee without giving him any clue about what he would actually be doing. And that is simply not acceptable. And that if they felt they had made a mistake with me, I would gladly go back to London. And all it would have cost them is a plane ticket, one month accommodation and an immigration lawyer.

The very next morning I had a new best friend, who came back to me sheepishly talking to me with a big smile. In fact I had a two hour meeting with him where he could only speak while laughing. Must have been difficult to appear as appreciative as that, when I know for a fact that an old tree like him must have hated every second of it. He was defeated, I had won. Somehow I doubt this is the end of the problem. Why, oh why, is there always a fucking bastard in every single job I ever had? The one who will work very hard at destroying me at every corner? Why can't it be simple for once?

Well, he came back saying jokingly that I must be the one person in the world who has worked for every single big conference company in the world, and that I must be unique, that no one else must have that much experience. Could he truly suddenly believe this? Or was he trying to dig again, saying that I simply cannot keep a job? Try to keep a job in conferences for years, in this industry filled with bastards and backstabbers. Oh yeah, I had the extraordinary opportunity to have known them all, to the point where suicide was my only way out. Not counting that a job in conferences is so stressful, rare are the new employees who will remain after six months. They are either sacked because of a lack of results, or they leave because they can't stand it anymore.

He had finally been told who I was and why it is that I had been imported from the UK to work here. I just hope that his sudden change of heart is sincere, that he now understands the potential that his bosses see in me, and why they are bending over to help me like crazy. Oh god, I hope he is not hopeless and will not play these mind games with me. I am quite prepared to forget this and appreciate him for the man that he appears to be. A good man at heart, with whom I feel I could work with. Somehow, they never change, it can only get worse.

The only other possible bitch, and somehow there is always one in every company, is the woman in charge of admin, payroll and HR. She could easily turn into a monster, she is also in charge of finding out who's late and who's sick, and who's leaving early (30 minutes after the normal hour is considered too early). So far she has been very nice to me, over nice in fact, I could almost believe that she will not turn out to be a bitch. I know better.

I will have to break my back for them, I know that much, and thankfully I do intend to break my back for them. It pays off when you are working for a family instead of a corporation who does not even know who you are and what you do for them, even after years of success. So it might just work.

We went for a perfect lunch with my bosses, Stephen and I. It was to present them my baby, and they were impressed. They want to employ him, perhaps because he made it clear that he would not come to L.A. if he could not work.

He told them that he was quite traumatized by the US custom guy in Toronto. I had to balance that. I said that I could not believe that, despite the hell of the questioning, never in my life of living in all these weird countries and dealing with their immigration bureaucracy, had I got a visa within 20 minutes. I felt it was almost too easy. Of course, this was so only for two reasons: first I did not care if I did not get the visa, I was happy to go back. Second, I knew my case was too perfect despite what he was saying, he would have had no choice but to let me go in the end. He did not frighten me with his directness, lack of respect, patronizing tone, treating me like scum.

I knew the game. It is the game of the prisoner or the patient with a psychologist, who needs to convince the authority that he is a changed man in order to gain his freedom, when in fact he is probably worst for it, for having

gone through that process from hell. And if he was not ready before to annihilate the world, he certainly is now, disgusted as he must be for so much crap.

So I was quite calm while the custom officer was getting excited. I had the perfect answer every time. So I got the visa. End of story. However it seems to have convinced Stephen that he will never get his own visa, so he almost decided to not even try.

The true reason however is his six cats, his three tortoises, his 30 fish and crabs, and his two snakes. Add to this his flat that he will need to rent to some lodger, and that is just too much for him.

Also that he is not impressed by Los Angeles, there is nothing here apart from me to motivate him to sacrifice everything at home. He is also convinced that both his parents could die within the next six months. That certainly does not help my case.

I think he will never make the jump. He did not appear that overwhelmed when I told him today that his sort of job interview at lunch time with my bosses had been successful. That they saw him as the new head of the future telemarketing department. God, we are so not ambitious, it is ridiculous, almost a shame in the society we are living in.

So what do I think of Los Angeles so far? Nothing. I have been stuck in my little block in the Valley for five days now, it might as well have been anywhere else on the planet, it would have made no difference.

No car means that we cannot go anywhere. The bus system sucks so much, one passes every hour, if it passes at all, and it never goes anywhere. There are not even cabs in sight, you need to call them, they take 30 minutes to arrive.

Los Angeles must be the only large city in the world without a proper public transport system, and somehow they even got rid of the cabs by preventing the companies from getting licenses. As a consequence everyone bought a car, must be a way to get the economy running.

Finding an apartment is not easy either. The place is either like a fortress and costs a fortune, or it is filled with foreigners and there is so much violence, like

random shooting on the streets, that only a desperate person would ever rent a flat there.

Well, I am not that desperate, I have a \$60,000 a year salary for god's sake, I am not about to be shot for no good reason, even though there would be a nice poetic justice to this, considering my state of mind in the last few years.

I would not mind dying on the streets of Los Angeles. However, with my luck it would probably be beatings and robberies, and they would leave me there for dead when I would still be alive and depressed.

So I guess I will have to live in one of these prisons where they charge a fortune for an unfurnished little living room with a bed coming down from the wall.

10 November 2005

Problems with my Manager/Director and other management issues

I have destroyed it now. A second argument, in that many weeks. How many more can we have before I give up and decide to go back to London? What are my options? What are his options? It is clear that by now he has identified me as a real problem, and he told my bosses. Another damn Manager with whom I simply just cannot work with. And it is my entire fault. Though he can probably also take some of the blame.

What went wrong? What is it that does not click between us? He said so himself, he is easy going, everyone loves working with him, he looks like a nice guy. Is it just me? Am I unable to accept any kind of authority and criticism?

I am certain that if I were to do a search on the Internet under statistics, survey and Managers, I would discover that it is the same story for a large portion of the population, when it comes to their wonderful relationship with their direct line Manager. However there are ways to deal with this, and I am just unable to deal with this kind of shit.

It was clear on my face that I was disgusted, ready to pack my bags and get out. Only \$5,000 down the drain, but I would feel justified, personality conflict with

my manager. I just don't like him, his deep cavernous voice in the background makes all my body hair stand.

Is there something that I don't know? Something eating him and I am just suffering the consequences as a by-product? Or have I succeeded in alienating him completely with my own behavior? Let's review this, so I can understand it better.

Last week... I can't remember what it was last week. It was so stupid, so unimportant, that I have already forgotten. However I am very much living with the consequences now. I basically spotted the problem on the very first day, if I remember correctly. Even if I still have no idea what the problem was, but there was something. He was annoyed with me from the first minute I walked into that office. I'm sure it was not his decision to hire me, as it was not the one of my boss either. It was his wife.

Last week I thought it was my lack of knowledge in the topic of their conferences and his impatience with me. This week, it is that I appear to have been doing everything else except what he asked me to do. I also take forever to do anything, because I have so many other things on the side to sort out. He wants me 150% right away, it is just impossible, not after what I have just been through. For God's sake, I have been here less than two weeks and I am far from being sorted out.

Feeling somehow guilty because my bosses appear to see so much potential in me, whilst they are perhaps completely mistaken, I worked so fucking hard writing them four more long reports about my past experience. And these reports, they did not specifically ask for them, but they did indirectly, with their questions and their desire to know more.

I thought they would have been over the moon by now. I have not heard a single word about my six reports of an average of twelve pages each (I have written them a book!). It is like if I had never written them. Perhaps I have freaked them out by giving them sensitive files from the competitors, even if Telecoms is not related at all with what they are doing, and these files are between 5 to 10 years old. Maybe they feel I will eventually do the same with their files, who knows. I did not give them a competitor's database, I would never. Too late now to go

back. They certainly asked for such files in my first reports, and it was a direct request.

So I spent Monday and Tuesday writing these reports, because I did not have enough of the weekend to do so. I had already spent 6 hours this weekend finishing the work that the Manager asked of me. This also went over their heads. It seems that they can believe this can be done in two hours, when it took me days. I am sorry, either they had exemplary employees and they worked very hard and very quickly, which I doubt, or they have careless employees who are quite happy to do a half job at every turn.

So now it looks as if I am wasting time, when in fact I am just being thorough. It is in my nature, but I am learning right now to forgo my nature and become a careless employee as well, as long as I can finish the job within two hours instead of two days. The secret must be to give them just enough to be able to pretend I have done a thorough job when in fact I would certainly not base any business decisions on that botched work.

When I told the Manager that in the last two days I was writing reports for my bosses, he checked, and unfortunately my bosses did not support me. They told him that they had not asked me to write these reports. So twice now he tried to tell me that I was bullshitting him. Of course, I was hoping my reports would be well received and that they would defend me. It has not happen, I think they felt my reports were useless.

I also think that it was a ridiculous thought that I could have believed for one second that a company hiring a Management Consultant would change anything of how they are conducting their business. If it works, why would you change anything? In fact, why would you even hire a Management Consultant with a high salary? It is so puzzling, I am losing sleep over this. I cannot make head or tail of my situation.

My Manager, who is in fact a Director, has no experience whatsoever about the type of events I am working on. In fact, the only person who has any sort of experience about this is my good friend sitting next to me, the one who welcomed me at LAX airport (my valley girl). She is just a Manager but was recently told that she was the Director of her events, because of what I wrote in one of my early reports.

This perhaps has killed the faith of my Line Director. He was one of two Directors before, now he is afraid that they will all soon be called Directors, and it is my fault. He told me today to not listen to her, to not even discuss my event with her, since he may want to do everything differently. Except, he has no clue about how to go about it, and she does. It is a big dilemma for me, since I will have to do that damn event which will take me six months to do, just that. This is how complicated they are.

He is an old tree, and he fights back any kind of change whatsoever. Only my first two reports had an impact so far, slight changes, and it might already be too much for him. He must be dreading the new decisions which could be made because of my reports, so he is certainly not happy that I concentrate on that instead of his ridiculous lists I need to research on the Internet all day.

Everything I have done so far should have been done by an assistant they could have paid almost nothing. Especially that this company is based on people who have assistants, half the company has the word Assistant in their job title. Something I have always suggested they change for Executives, since it would help them in their job.

It is sad when someone has so much potential, so many good ideas, and the experience to back it up, but is prevented in doing anything because change is a frightening thought. So their Management Consultant will actually be a Conference Producer instead, and just an assistant at that. Which is fine by me, with that kind of salary, in a country where the standard of living goes through the roof. However I would have liked to have been told that I would only be an assistant, I wish I could be told now so I would know where I stand.

I can adapt to that, no problems. I feel there is a conflict at the moment in the management lair, and I am powerless to do anything about it. I just suffer the wrath of their Director and, since I cannot just let it go down my back like water on a duck, the situation might just explode.

I certainly have no experience as a Management Consultant. The only thing I know now, is that the second job title of a Management Consultant should be Executive Director, so he or she would have the power to crush the little people who cannot accept any change.

I am sure it also fries him that despite my young age compared to him, I have perhaps as much experience if not more than him in the world of conferences. And not only that, it is an experience from just about every large competitor they have. So my bosses appear to have told him that the little moron that I am has more experience than the old tree that he is, since he came to me once shouting: so you think you have more experience than me!? That statement alone tells it all.

Of course, he can only see me as someone without any experience whatsoever, called upon to make all the wrong decisions when he knows it all himself, and he is probably the one who should have changed his title to Management Consultant. However, his experience is limited to the one company he has worked for, for perhaps 10 years, and I'm not even sure if it has been that long.

So you can understand my problem, and I am starting to understand it better myself. Perhaps I had just not realized that I would be perceived as a threat. And now that I have realized that, I will be more amused by his little panic attacks. I just wished that I was certain that my own analysis of the situation was right.

At the moment I can only see that this week I have taken the piss, working on reports to satisfy my bosses, when I should have been trying to please my Line Director. I did assess that situation at the beginning of this week, I quickly surmised that it was more important for me to show my bosses I was indispensable, instead of searching the Internet all day for the Director.

And somehow something tells me that it will pay off. The mitigated reaction of my bosses must have been to calm him down, to keep the right balance. Secretly I am sure they are reading every single word I have written and that soon they will not only appreciate me, they will change everything.

Oh, I feel so much better now! I just hope I am right. And if I am right, I am glad that I am learning so quickly. Something which would not have been possible if I had not written it all down tonight, after drinking three beers in a row.

I feel like I have acquired some sort of wisdom now. What was on my mind when I walked back from work was more like: I am unmanageable, a crisis will develop, I am useless, I just can't work with anyone, etc.

I need to start my own business or else I will just be going from job to job, suffering with my line Manager for six months to a year, before I leave right after the whole thing crumbles to dust behind me. Now, instead of panicking back at my panicking Director, I can just sit back, relax, and look at him destroy himself.

Don't get me wrong, I would like it to be different, I am certain he is the best employee they ever had and will ever have. It is important that he stays. His reaction can only be explained by the fact that they did not include him in any of the real management discussions. As a result he now feels as if all this change is not necessary and superfluous. And to be honest, I feel that he is right.

However I have been hired to tell my own experience, analyze it and propose solutions. So I am doing what I am being paid for. It is their decisions to apply my suggestions or not. And the old tree is completely right if he states: what the fuck does he know about this business? Completely right, I am sure he knows more than I will ever do. But I don't care, I have to fulfill my role and somehow I feel I will appreciate that role, even if heads will have to roll over.

No one gives me shit, or else I am leaving. I don't care if it is after two hours on the job. But now it is not as simple. I am asking for trouble with a title like Management Consultant. I represent a real danger. So I have to adapt my attitude and behavior. Ultimately the other employees should always lose over me. Otherwise, why hire a Management Consultant, if not to implement changes?

And old trees, if they cannot accept the changes, it is written in the book, they will need to go. Let's try to save them, by all means, but if they become unmanageable, recalcitrant, what can we do? Here is the door my friend. Start your own business if you feel that you have all the knowledge in the world to do so.

And this is exactly how I feel right now. I feel I know so much about the conference world, especially after writing so many reports in the last year, that it is a waste that I should tell people what to do. I should do it myself. However, let's not forget that I just declared bankruptcy. For whatever the reasons. But who cares? Getting money to finance projects, is what all our conferences are about right now. And all these people have no money, just a promising product or service which cannot fail (though in most cases it fails miserably).

And my company could not fail either, because I know what failed and what succeeded all over the damn place, all over the world, in virtually all the main conference companies there are. Just a shame that I could not care less about the conference world and I am still trying very hard to free myself from it. Somehow I thought L.A. would help me achieve that dream, so let's not destroy everything before it actually happens.

What is also funny, is that if it was my own business, I would not follow most of my suggestions, I would do everything differently. This is something I have recently realized, it is never the same when it is not your own company. If it was your own, you would act and behave differently. Because then, you would actually care. Something no employee ever has been able to do. We just don't give a shit, we're just employees trying to survive our day, to get a pay check, and somehow try to still have a life outside of work, if possible.

And this is something most employers cannot understand and I'm not certain if there is a solution to that problem. Unless the employees somehow also could own parts of the company and it was actually worth it for them to work harder. Otherwise, good old generous bonus schemes might do the trick.

11 November 2005

Backstabbing and mind games at work

I came in the office this morning and it was the hardest thing I had done in quite a while, harder than passing through customs. I was so afraid and worried, I felt I really did not belong there. Or that no one really wanted me there. I have tried hard to succeed, to impress them in my first two weeks, and perhaps I have just failed somehow (isn't that amazing after all that I have written?).

I worked on my director's stuff last weekend, I will also work on it this weekend. It might not be enough. This time I will not escape my fate, something will happen. My boss just asked me to come into his office, however I have to wait until another guy leaves it. What is it that he wants to talk about? Is it related to the director's impatience with me? Can I be blamed for all this somehow?

What's the worse that he could tell me? That I am quite insubordinate, unresponsive, working on other things that I should not be working on? I think it will also be about my general attitude, being incapable of being a Yes Sir type of guy, when someone accuses me of incompetence.

It is going to require all my restraints not to tell him that I quit, in a minute, if he goes into attack mode. Because then, I would have nothing to lose, it would be clear that I would have alienated both the director and the boss. What chance do I stand to survive in such a company?

It was already so difficult to survive the first two weeks, I did not even dare go to the toilet or go get a coffee unless I was desperate. Today I can't even talk anymore, I want to disappear at my desk. What will it be today and next week after my conversation with the boss?

I really need my weekend now, three days off would be even better. Stephen did it today, but I can't do that after only two weeks. I have so many things to sort out, it was a crazy idea to start working almost the very next day I arrived in a new country. I never had the time to breathe, I have barely took my stuff out of my suitcases.

Just had my meeting. The director told my boss that I said that I was only here to be a consultant, and not do anything else. I told my boss that I made it clear to the director that I was quite happy to work on anything that I was asked to do (and in fact, I certainly don't mind even if they ask me to clean the toilets). So that was his angle. My boss told me that I was also hired to do menial things way below my skills, and I should accept it. So I reassured him, that I did not mind about that at all and the director misunderstood me (yeah, what a backstabber!).

And now I will have something else to do. The director will contact me from his home (he works from home on Friday) so I can contact a few companies for another event, which will prevent me from doing the other stuff I need to do, so I will have to work on this over the weekend.

I seem to have survived the second round, though this time I was called into the office. I am pretty certain that I won't survive a third round, so I really have to disappear and work hard like crazy. And I think it is clear now that my reports had no impact on them, they are not pleased I worked on this for two days this

week. So it is important I prove to them that I can be the best conference assistant there is.

I went to the toilet, and then I went to buy some chips, but then I bought my first egg sandwich downstairs. The girl was very nice, however I went through such a panic state because I was away from my desk for over 12 minutes, I bitterly regretted having decided to go to the toilet. And now I am in desperate need to go again, but I can't, I am under observation.

I think I have been identified already as a bad employee since my director has been working very hard, as I thought he would, at reporting back as much negative stuff about me as he could to my boss. I'm pretty sure by now they regret having hired me, and I feel bad about all this.

You should only allow a company to import you if you are completely convinced that you can truly help that company and that you are the best. Well, I may have thought that, and at the time I feel it was all justified to come, but I also have to realize now that finally the company might not require my skills.

If I could go back in time, I would have decided to stay in London instead. Then, I would not have learned these new experiences, which basically are that this world is still filled with a bunch of bastards who are ready to spend all their energy to destroy you for no apparent good reason. Great, this is just perfect.

These people have no credibility whatsoever, and probably no social life either outside of work. Or else, why would they spend their days trying to prove that a total stranger and new employee, who has done nothing so far, is just not right for this company or capable to do anything worthwhile? As it stands, I never had the chance yet to prove anything about my capacities and my potential. I was judged the very first minute I arrived.

I just received a call from the director, about what I need to do next for him. And I have been told that it needs to be done in five minutes, when in fact, again, it should take hours if not days. He spent more time telling me what to do than it would have taken him to do it himself. I think it is a game, to see how low I am willing to sink before exploding. What he does not know is that I don't mind doing it and I will work hard to do it as fast as I can.

He acted as if he had not backstabbed me to the boss, as if now I was back in the rank and all ready to listen to him and obey his orders. I am far from that point, and I guess we will just have to wait until the third round, probably next week. I am pretty sure now that it is unavoidable.

13 November 2005

What to do on a Sunday when in Los Angeles (barricade yourself indoors)

I have been freaked out all weekend. Moreover, I was unable to explain why. It is a familiar feeling however, I felt it when I just arrived in Paris, in London, in Brussels, in Toronto and New York.

In most places however I had friends or other people to relate to and to make me forget this weird state of mind. Even though I still had Stephen when I moved out of his apartment to go and live in a hotel room in Victoria (at the very beginning of our relationship), I could not stop feeling this sense of lost and perhaps even depression.

Usually it would subside, though I am certain it would never have subsided in Victoria, my room was too sad. I could not do anything, like at the moment. I become some sort of vegetable and creativity abandons me.

Yesterday, Saturday, I was in some sort of panic because I thought I needed to work on the files of my director, do research and find the companies' websites, CEOs, CFOs and contact details. I worked 8 hours straight on it and I still feel I have not done enough.

He will again think that I am not very efficient, as I seem to be taking forever to do anything, and he expects it done instantly. I can't do more than that anyway, so he will and I will have to live with it. I finally decided that today I would not do any more research. Work will be done at work from now on, I will just have to not waste my time and be as efficient as I can be.

My main other worry was to find an apartment, as it has become clear that I won't have one next door, since no one has given their 30 day notice yet. So I took the time to go to reception of my apartment building to find out information about remaining here. Though it is quite expensive, it is also not as expensive as

I thought, once you decide to rent unfurnished. It is also most practical. It is the closest I could be from my work, so I would not need a car immediately.

Electricity, water, phone, Internet and Cable are all included, otherwise I would have to contact all these utility companies and they would want to do credit checks. Unfortunately, Canada being another American State, they could find out that I am no longer paying for my studies and credit card, and that I entered this sort of bankruptcy plan.

There is also that Stephen might or might not join me, and I need a lease of maximum four months, which is possible here. Unfurnished also means that I keep the stove, fridge, bed, sofa, chairs and lamps. All I could have hoped for anywhere else was perhaps a fridge. Though next door I would have had the same, but with the utilities to be added, the price would have been similar.

So the apartment is kind of sorted, and I worked on my research yesterday, and I now have a mobile phone. I found a way to unlock it today on the Internet, my special Mobile Pocket PC phone works here, thank god, pay as you go as well, even better.

Now, all I have to do is to write that letter to my finance advisors, and hope my plans will be acceptable to them, since they are controlling my life from afar. I don't have to pay my due for the next three months, and that was not easy, because they freaked out completely when they found out that I was in Los Angeles, but now they have calmed down and I have faith it will be fine.

So why am I still feeling so bad and lost? It is Sunday after all, and tomorrow is back to nightmare time with my director. I can already hear him say my name, and again it gives me the shiver.

When I started my other job in London a year ago, I needed something to make me forget this reality. I need a similar escape now. I don't have to take the train to go to work, so I cannot read Sherlock Holmes on my way there. I cannot either disappear in the toilets to read for 15 minutes like I used to in London. There is no escape, my mind is completely focused at all time on that director, my bosses, the uncomfortable situation that I am in and my apparent lack of abilities.

I am also very much alone, despite being in the best place on Earth. You should have seen the sunshine this afternoon, the palm trees and the atmosphere. I should be inspired like hell, am I driven to despair instead.

There is this great out there outside of my apartment, but I am stuck in my studio all day, unable to decide to go anywhere on my own. There is a Disney World in town, can you believe. This is the last place I would go from fears that seeing all the Disney characters walking around, might be all that I need to tip me over the edge and convince me to kill myself right there on the spot.

I still wish to go to the observatory, Universal City and Paramount Studios. I might even wish to visit the zoo eventually. At the moment it seems impossible, without a car. And I lack the motivation.

I could go to the beach, Venice Beach, Laguna Beach, but until I decide to go there once, it is like it does not exist yet in my mind. And what would I do once I would be there? Look at all these great bodies and feel even more inadequate, alone and depressed? There is a pool here, I should go, can't even get myself to do that.

It reminds me when I was going to all these great European cities for conferences, and remaining in my room instead of visiting, while I had the chance. Cannes, Barcelona, Prague, Budapest, Paris, Rome, Amsterdam, etc. If I wanted to live between four walls all my life, I could have remained in Canada. In winter we don't do anything else anyway, and the great thing is that we don't feel guilty about it. It's cold outside, you stay where it is warm.

Still, I might change my mind and my disposition, it has been only two weeks after all. Change is never easy, especially on that kind of scale. It is not everyday that you move to the United States, to Los Angeles, right in the middle of it all.

You need a lot of imagination however to convince yourself that you are in the middle of it all, when you are not part of any of it. I am like an observer observing the low life forms of Los Angeles, and the misery of an office job. Nothing more.

17 November 2005

Performing miracles at work and succeeding in Hollywood without getting into debts

One more day and it is the weekend. I can hardly wait. Thanks to thanksgiving, next week I only work three days. I will have four days to get out of here and visit L.A. again. Not sure yet what I will do, perhaps nothing. I intend to write, to start writing anything, just to feel that I am still alive and that moving here was not all wasted.

My director is not back at work tomorrow, Friday he works from home. Nothing happened this week, only kind words have been exchanged. My bosses made sure of it, I worked on some other research instead. I think everyone knew that a third time in a third week would have been the end of my employment there.

I still feel quite pressured though, I think my boss is trying to assess how quickly I can come up with a whole competitive research in the markets, and he is awaiting reports within hours instead of days. I'm pretty sure they are wondering if I am slow, and unfortunately I am. I cannot within one day and a half do a whole search of all competitive events, learn everything there is to know about business partnerships between the public and the private sectors in construction and transportation, and come back with the perfect idea for a congress which will not flop, but will make a few thousand dollars instead.

I thought I was quick and clever, I guess they had other expectations. They thought I would be some sort of magician capable of performing miracles. It is clear my knowledge and experience is simply not required, only my abilities to produce an event in two days, when it takes months.

This is a sad story and I am not very proud of myself. I could work at night, but I am so tired and I have so many other things to do, it is just impossible. I don't like the idea either to be working all Saturday just so they feel I am capable. I would actually prefer to have a life.

Everyone here wish one thing, to make it in the film industry. And many people are working within it, it must be their biggest industry. The girl who welcomed me at LAX, who was a new Director but has reverted back to her title of Manager (and she told me lies about it, as if I would believe that she feels she does not deserve the title so she decided to abandon it), she was in commercials when she

was young. She claims she hated it, I believe she tried everything to move into movies or television and it never came true.

Her husband worked in documentaries, and wasted two years of his life trying to succeed, he was never paid. He now has \$20,000 in debts. Sounds very familiar, it is perhaps what I have added to my debt in my two years of working full time in television and cinema. He finally decided to move into the music licensing field, where it actually pays. He used to be responsible for the marketing at the Universal Studios. Impressive. I wonder why he is no longer working there.

Another of my colleagues, the one I suspect is gay, lives in Hollywood. He came here hoping to live out of his writing, in 10 years he has gone nowhere. This is not exactly encouraging.

But perhaps no one has any great talent, I just don't know. My colleague said that it is all about who you know, so I guess I will have to eventually meet the right people. Maybe those untalented colleagues have the contacts, and these contacts have written them off because of a lack of talent. Who knows? They appeared impressed by what I have achieved so far, I don't really know why, especially that I can't do it again, well, not yet anyway.

20 November 2005

Got to start writing that film script

I am in some sort of existential crisis. Woken up on this Sunday morning at 4 am, and wondering why it is that I exist and if it is worth it. I have no more motivation for anything, I don't want to do anything, and I spend most of my time worrying about that research I need to do at work. In an ideal world, I would be spending most of the day working on it. I have some sort of report to write, and if I don't do it, my boss will definitely think I was not worth bringing over from England.

I miss London as well, very much. I miss my babies (my cats) and Stephen. He may drive me crazy most of the time, but when he is not around, I suffer. Probably because being alone is not exactly wonderful.

This is mad, being in L.A., where all that is on offer in the world is probably just a few miles away from me, my destiny and all, and yet, I spend most of my time writing reports, doing research, and not leaving my apartment from a lack of energy and motivation.

What could I do? Where could I go? Who could be my new friend or friends? I will have lunch sometimes next week with my colleague from West Hollywood who's been trying to succeed as a writer without success. I am hoping he could become a friend, show me the way, motivate me to write some more, encourage me about what I have already written, tell me that he knows how to sell these ideas and that they are great ideas. I'd rather spend my life writing fiction for films than researching conferences. Especially if you already live in Los Angeles and that Hollywood is around the corner, at the end of my road actually.

So far nothing happened, I have not written one line, I have not modified my website, I have not tried to meet the right people. I have done nothing. When will I get into gear? Should destiny happen on its own and I should just be patient? Will it again just fall from the sky, without me having to work hard to make it happen?

I can see I am not going to work hard and that I don't have what it takes to storm into the studios asking for work. Perhaps I need to meet new people, I have no clue about where I could meet them. Maybe I should go to the Alcoholic Anonymous meeting, or the Drug Addicts meeting, I guess this is where most important people spend their days these days, especially in Hollywood.

I feel that I am building a hole for myself at work. I'm not sure if they appreciate my personality. Especially that valley girl next to me. I don't think she likes me and I should not worry too much about it. God, I am already thinking about my way out of this company, when my whole life at the moment depends on this job. Without it, it is time for radical changes on a massive scale, return to England without a job, and I have payments to make every month.

I don't like this situation. Before anything, what should be falling from the sky, is enough money to give me the freedom I need to write all day. And I am in the one place on the planet where this could be possible, but only if I can prove myself first. Which means working a lot without being paid. Something I refuse to do.

I think I will just go back to bed. Tomorrow is another day where nothing will happen, just work on this report. Great way to spend a Sunday in California!

22 November 2005

I failed big time at work with my last report, my days are numbered

I worked like crazy all weekend on my report and research about this conference I am working on. I was motivated by the impression I have that my bosses are not very impressed with anything I have done so far in my three weeks in L.A. I never thought I would say such a thing, but sometimes any kind of encouragement would go a long way to make me feel better. I am in a constant state of flux, thinking they will turn around any minute to tell me that I need to go back to England because I am inadequate.

I felt great last night once I sent my research and report, I thought I would go to work the next day happy for once, with my head high. I knew I would not come back as some sort of miracle worker, but at least I might have shaken this bad taste they have so far of my performance.

However I entered the office as a ghost, and when my boss called me in his office an hour later, he sounded as if he was very disappointed with me and almost ready to tell me that I needed to get into gear and get him some results about all this.

I understood then that he never actually opened his emails this morning and did not know I worked hard all weekend. No wonder why I felt like a ghost for the first hour. And the main problem is that even after he reads all that, I will still feel like a ghost, because it will not have made him happy or he won't show any kind of reaction or emotion. So I will never know if he truly appreciates my work or not, and in doubt, of course I will feel like I am totally incompetent.

I really feel bad, I feel embarrassed to look at any of my bosses and my director. I have no idea what they think of me, and despite all my efforts, I don't seem to be getting myself anywhere. Is it going to be another one of these jobs where you work like crazy seven days a week while still being incapable to satisfy

anyone, whilst feeling under-appreciated? I had the perfect job once where I was considered a miracle worker and fully appreciated. I guess it could not last.

They are discussing something in their office right now, I have no idea what it is about, but I'm paranoid enough to think that it is about me. I have three days to survive this week, and then four days off. Let's try to survive this, and then we will reassess the situation after Thanksgiving.

I just spoke with the Mexican girl in the kitchen. She works in telemarketing but hates it, and says so openly. She even said she did not like the term telemarketing, I suggested telesales then, she almost puked.

She was happy today, I asked her why. She was happy that God gave her the chance to have this job, that he somehow motivated her to do it so she could have the money to pay her bills. Gosh, we sure come from a different planet.

She needs that job to survive and is content to even earn any money. I'm more sort of fed up and cannot appreciate what I have. I could not stay in a job where I knew I was not adequate, they would sack me anyway. She is obviously not very successful at her job and has not confirmed one single delegate in three weeks. I'm surprised that she is still here to be honest and I am sorry for her, for what is to come. Not sure if she will be thanking God soon. Still, I have learnt quite a lesson talking to her this morning, even though I am not quite sure what it is, and I am not sure if I wish to know.

There is also here a Black guy that the bosses appear to hold in high esteem. I'm pretty sure it is well deserved and that he is very competent. He has been with them a long time and will have his own office once we get the larger offices next month.

His job is to watch over us, to make sure we don't steal any files, whatever, things like that. He also works on the website and other IT stuff. I would not be surprised if he was reading what I am writing now, and reporting it back to my bosses. I understand they need to take precautions, they after all had someone in the past stealing their database and starting his own company.

They don't need to be worried about me, I don't intend to steal anything from their organization, no files or database whatsoever. I would not know what to do

with it and I have enough files from all my previous jobs to last me a lifetime. I don't even have the time to go through them. I have databases from previous jobs, but I never gave them to anyone and of course I would/could never use them. So what is the point?

If ever I start my own conference company, it will have to be about subjects for which I have a passion, so I will be motivated to get up in the morning to work: literature, theoretical physics, science fiction, space science and paranormal stuff.

I'm pretty sure conferences are where people meet to go on to accomplish great things. I believe that this company in L.A. had a great impact on so many start up companies in the U.S., this is something to be proud of (even if it was achieved in the name of profit). So conferences might help get things moving in the world, I just wished I could convince myself of that.

That's it, I'm fried. I did not have my meeting yet with my boss, but a new file has appeared on the network with two dozen more events, which I have missed in my hurried research, since last week he was insisting that I finish this on the same afternoon that he asked me. I would expect now to be told that my research was not very good, and that perhaps I was wasting my time.

The truth is that if two persons had done the same research independently and in parallel, they would both have come up with a different list of events. So hopefully they won't draw big conclusions out of this, or put me on the spot about these events I appear to have missed. Of course it does not make me feel any better. It is going to be a long three days!

It was horrible! The meeting went like this: thank you for your preliminary report that was indeed preliminary, it is all wrong since we found many similar events in the U.S. Well, perhaps he should not have asked me an instant report last week then! I have been able to elongate the timeline to Monday, so I would have the weekend to invent something, anything.

Unfortunately they don't trust me (thankfully for them), so his wife did the same research in parallel. And now they both know I am incompetent. Though I can justify myself quite easily, ask anyone to write a report instantly without knowing anything about the subject, and ask him this report without any proper research, and this is what you get.

And the events she found, I found them all myself. I just did not include them from a lack of time, or they were in Europe or Africa, or they were workshops or training courses. I was told by the director to not include any of these in my last research. I did not even have the courage to tell him that. I took the shovel on my head like a good boy, I did not say anything, I was thinking of my survival. Surviving my three days before thanksgiving, that's it.

Anyway, most of the conferences she found were completely off topic. That made me feel better, but I am apparently the only one who realizes that, because I am the only one who read them all.

Still, how could have I been so wrong? In just about all my conclusions? Is it possible that all that I have written, all those reports, are also completely wrong and based solely on what I think instead of facts? This is worrying. I failed like I never did before in my entire career in conferences.

If they had doubts about me before, now they have the full confirmation. I was the wrong guy, and it is more difficult to get rid of me now since I came all the way from London at their expense.

Perhaps I should make it easy for them. If I fail again, I will tell them that I'm going back. In the meantime, I will retain my check for the apartment until the very last day of the month, which is, unfortunately, next week. I have until then to make a complete fool of myself again, the sooner the better.

I would leave without regrets. This whole enterprise has been paved with mistakes from the start. I just simply cannot keep up with what they are asking. I need time, and time is not in abundance. I will again make a mistake. And I feel I have already past the point of no return.

Oh well, my month in L.A. has been very nice, now it's time to seriously consider going home. And I won't hesitate one second. If I lose one month on my lodging to break the contract, I will just have to lose it. And perhaps remain another month here writing full time, instead of working night and days in conferences.

And I swear, I will endeavor to never have another boss again. No more social hierarchy, I'm just not cut up for this. I will somehow have to find a way to be my own boss. Another impossible idea.

22 November 2005

Los Angeles, Film Industry, Depeche Mode Concert

It seems like a lifetime has passed since yesterday. I plugged myself onto the new Depeche Mode album this morning, on my phone, and I have been listening to it all day whenever I was not sitting at my desk.

I desperately needed some sort of escape to fight being alienated by this reality. And while I was walking in the sun in the Valley, looking at all the mountains around and listening to Nothing's Impossible over and over again, I thought this is perfect, it could not be better.

I spent the rest of the night after work trying to figure out a way to go see Depeche Mode in concert at the Staples Center. Could not find a ticket on craigslist under \$100, which was well located for me to go get it. I contacted a few people, they have not contacted me back. I finally decided to take the bus and buy a ticket from a tout.

After being unable to figure out how to use the transport system in Los Angeles (have I really lost that many brain cells since my arrival in L.A. that I can't even conceptualize how to take a damn bus?), and after understanding that I would arrive an hour and a half late at the concert, I had to abandon the idea. It would have been so nice.

So I spent the night watching Depeche Mode videos and debating with an Indian in India why I think the speed of light is relative and not constant, and why I believe we could go faster than the speed of light. One of my most un-famous reports about theoretical physics, still one of my most visited page though. I wasted my time explaining that there are no real barriers and that many things are already going faster than the speed of light from our point of view. How geeky and sad can you get?

And considering how wrong I had been two days ago with my report, I was suddenly convinced that all my theories were off the mark. His questions were hard, but ultimately I spent the time to think about why I thought these things, and thankfully I still think the same.

It has been ten years now, with over 300 correspondents and perhaps 3,000 emails, all designed to convince me that I was wrong, and I am still convinced that I am right. At least no one was able to do a little research on the Internet, find a few more events I had missed, and destroy all my findings and conclusions in less than five minutes. Maybe it was an isolated incident and I should not think about it anymore.

I did tell my boyfriend though that I was ready to come back, and that before paying my rent, I will be talking to the woman who hired me. In an instant in his mind I was already back in England. I know I will go over these hurdles and things will eventually stabilize. I hope anyway, that's the plan.

However again today I found a way to not shine so much. I took the whole day to print over 2,000 pages of all these events found on the Internet. My boss did say to print only the relevant ones, but which ones are they? I don't know! They all looked very relevant to me. So I printed them all and wasted the whole day. We were supposed to have our meeting at 7 am this morning (well 8 am since that is the time I arrive in the office, unlike everyone else there). I'm sure tomorrow will be as bad.

At the end of the day my boss was peeing in the public toilet, in one of those awkward moments, and I was splashing water over my face... I left without saying a word. Gosh, right there you had the perfect picture to describe my life since I arrived in Los Angeles.

And now, after watching all those Depeche Mode videos, I feel like writing a whole successful and inspired album. But hey, I am a writer, and writing film scripts or novels or blogs, does not seem to me to be so adequate.

I will not be transporting anyone anywhere else, I will not touch them in an emotional way. I cannot have any impact on anyone whatsoever, not even myself when I read my things. And this is becoming more than frustrating. I wish I could take a life off and learn music and do something for a change.

The closest I have been to music is with my poetry, which I have been told by some grand-ma that it has caused a few suicides. Oh, so I can reach people emotionally then, great news! I should get back to what I can do, poetry.

I'm not so motivated now, but I would have certainly written a few dark pages tonight, the darkest ones in a long time. On my way back from work, walking around the Valley, I wanted to scream out what had been contained under pressure inside of me for the last few days and weeks. I thought I was going to split and that a nuclear bomb was about to explode. I would have loved Los Angeles then, I tell you.

I have not started my usual fictional book that I am always writing in parallel to my journal/blog. I'm getting tired, I have written so many now, and still only one of them has been published, and the worst thing is that it was quite a success. No other publishers can see that, I have not told anyone, not sent any other books to publishers. Never had the time, the money, the energy.

No more of these books published, means no motivation to write another one. I should at least put my last one online, it is still too soon after my last job, many people could recognize themselves.

Still, I wonder what I would have written tonight if I had started another one of those dark poetry books. I should start thinking about a title, it is always a great help. The last one was great, if I may say so myself. Working in Westminster, Intelligence not Required. No one has ever read it yet, I finished it less than a week before I moved out of Westminster and London, less than a month ago.

I investigated tonight where I could put this blog, found Wil Wheaton's blog and LA Blog. They don't recruit. I cannot use any of my other websites, I could be too easily retraced. Not that I am saying much anyway, but I could hurt the people around me and change my working relationship with them beyond saving. I can't afford it, everything at the moment depends on these relationships, which are going down the toilet anyway on their own.

I will have to investigate free websites. Which reminds me, someone wishes to buy my main website, not sure if he wants the content as well or just the URL. Fascinating how quickly I was happy to sell it. I would accept peanuts for it, I

want to get rid of it. I can no longer be associated with anarchists, I never was anyway except via the title of my website. You understand now why I wish to remain anonymous. I do reach out, unfortunately.

Any search with a French word in it leads straight to my website, as many of my previous managers found out in time. Funny, their names never highlighted any web page. It's like none of them ever existed. Someone one day in a thousand years will look at all the crap published on the Internet, and would not find one single reference to any of the people I worked with in my whole life. I guess we cannot all be filled with vanity and have an Ego the size of a small planet. Fortunately.

So finally a lot happened today. What else? A woman called, from where I live, she is part of the management. I thought she was calling to let me know that I could not rent this studio, that my name was blacklisted by an obscure bank lost in the North of Canada (practically in North Pole). And since Canada is just another American State, as I said before, they had access to it.

Thankfully she just wanted to convince me to rent my studio for much longer, to which I answered that I had already signed the papers to do so. Great communication. I should have known that in the U.S., when they call, it is to sell you something, even the very thing you just bought. That could revolutionize capitalism actually, great concept. It could save America.

My publisher contacted me, to tell me I was his hero because I was in L.A. Nice how powerful the imagination can be, when in fact I am just about to die of boredom in between my four walls.

I did go see a movie yesterday though, and not any movie, a preview for free, so we can tell them it's crap just before they release it anyway. It is true that last time I went to see such a movie in London, a few years ago, we destroyed it so badly, they never released it. Rosanna Arquette as Marylyn Monroe, no wonder it was never released.

Yesterday it was Juliet Lewis and the actress from Alias, a boring story, but I was in the right frame of mind for it, I was desperate for anything that could change my mind from my recent nightmare. So I said it was excellent, they did not keep

me after the film so I could destroy it better, like they did in London. Anyway, I had nothing to say.

I wonder how many movies are never released every year. Maybe actors work harder than I initially thought. Must be frustrating to have worked a few months on a film which will never see the light of day. I guess you then have no right to say you appeared in that movie, since it actually never existed.

Many people who worked on the film were there in the cinema, including directors, producers, etc. One of them was fat and annoying, he looked like a bastard, and reminded me a bit of my actual boss, though my boss comes across as a nice guy.

It drove me insane that this could be the type of people I would work with in the movie industry. People with no imagination, permanently in a bad mood. We should call them life and creativity destroyers. And why would these people have anything to do with films? It is a mystery to me. I admit that I could be wrong, maybe he is a teddy bear and he is responsible for most great movies I have seen recently. I doubt it.

One of the actors was also in the room, but I don't know his name. I remember his face though from other films. Here in L.A., everyone know the name of every actor, they have seen every single film on the market and every television series. You can talk about all these things as if they had a life of their own. It is after all their main industry, perhaps their only one. So this is serious business.

They all seem to be or have been involved in that industry, except my two bosses. They are an anomaly. I don't understand why they have started a business in L.A. which was not related to cinema or television. I guess the odd one will always exist. They must be the only conference company in town, in the whole state of California in fact. Still, I'm here because of them.

Perhaps I dreamt them up in my wish to move here and they did not exist before my arrival. It would explain the mystery. I wished to move here, I created that company and it became reality. However, why would have I created so many problems and less than ideal conditions? Because then, I would not have anything to blog about, I guess. It was certainly done on a subconscious level, that's for sure.

I forgot to tell you something quite interesting about the idea that I might have created this whole reality in order to move here. And how my creation could be as limited as a film. It is like in the movie Thirteenth Floor (if you live in L.A., I know you have seen this film), when the guy reaches the end of his world at the end of a road, and suddenly the walls are electronics, like on a holodeck in Star Trek. He suddenly realizes that his reality is not real, it is a virtual world.

Well, when I rented that car and decided to follow Sherman Way all the way to the end, something strange happened, something so unexpected, I thought I was actually in a bad movie. One where people are in a car and the background image is a loop, and the same things come back over and over again.

Every block had the same shops and restaurants, and I could never tell if I was going anywhere or if somehow I was stuck in a time loop, covering the same block over and over again. It was astonishing.

I had never experienced such a thing, it must be the most boring street in the world, except for a part where there are palm trees on each side of the road. But then again, it goes on forever and the apartments at the back all look similar from one block to another. There was no personality, interesting architecture or character anywhere on that street which seemed to go on forever.

I'm sorry if I insult a few people here, but come on, I lived in Paris and London for far too long to not be stunned by such an artificial way of building a city. These straight roads forming a perfect battleship grid, are heartless and sad. Especially when there is no character, no architecture, nothing to make it different from the next block or other area of the city. All right, perhaps this is the suburb after all, you can't expect too much from the suburbs, but my, even the suburbs in Prague don't look so clinical, aseptic and devoid of life.

I really reached a point in my mind of a deep sense of disorientation, wondering if this was life, existence, the same shops and restaurants and gas stations over and over again, multiplied to the infinity to satisfy our needs. Funny how I don't need much these days to go into a spin and reach complete existential crisis mode. I must be more fragile than I thought.

Then the whole concept of art and design made so much sense in my mind, and this idea of regeneration of areas which appear to have lost their will to live and to be distinctive and different.

We should bomb Sherman Way, and build something else which would go in all directions, like this blog, like my brain. Of course, you don't have to do that right now, it is just a suggestion, you can dismiss it, I will just have to avoid Sherman Way. I'll take the 101 instead in the future, if I want to reach North Hollywood.

I think Los Angeles needs a bit more anarchy in its town planning and architecture. Funny, I'm working on a conference about PPP, something which probably is meaningless to you. It is however something Bush has talked about many times, guess you only listen to him when he talks about wars or elections.

PPP means Public-Private Partnership. It is a way for governments to let the private sector build everything which would normally be paid for by the people. In return, the private investors get millions and billions in the long term via rent, tolls, other financial benefits.

They always get much more than what it would have actually cost if the government had put the money to build it in the first place. However the government does not need money to get the program or project going, and since Bush has no money for that, then PPP is very popular.

It should have one great advantage though, hopefully the private sector will finally build some interesting infrastructures, something we might actually want to look at, instead of making us feel like running away to Europe whenever we wish to see anything worth looking at.

Sorry for saying it, but I think London is a much better city to live in than Los Angeles. However, don't worry, Los Angeles is a much better city to live in than any city in Canada.

Of course, I did not have the time to start living in L.A. yet, I've been stuck in the Valley for a month now. And my failure to get out of it tonight to go to a Depeche Mode concert makes it even worse. In time, maybe I will get to appreciate L.A. as most others do, I hope I get the chance.

23 November 2005

Last day in the office before thanksgiving and my chance to visit L.A.

I am back at work for my third day before thanksgiving. I thought I would not have survived it, however so far so good. It is 9h14, my boss has not jumped on me yet, has not told me that everything I had done took forever and was all wrong, and he has not asked me to do something else within an unrealistic time frame.

I am pretty sure he is brewing at the moment and any second now all of what I was hoping was not going to happen today will suddenly happen and ruin my last day in the office before the holiday.

I found a way at work to write in English without being detected. I usually pick an Excel file I always use, save it under the same name but with mh at the end for Mycroft Holmes, and I write in the column DZ, row 500. I don't even make the column or the row wider, I mainly write at the top where we should be inserting equations.

If ever they were to look at my files, there is no way they would be able to spot the few words they could see in column DZ row 500. And then I move the file to a floppy disk, so the file is never being deleted on my system. There is a copy however in my History, and I need to delete it as soon as I finish working on the file. I also need to remember to close the file whilst the cursor is back at A1, since these Excel files remember where you were last time you saved them.

At 9h I went downstairs to the Café to buy a toasted egg sandwich from the little Chinese woman. The sandwiches are not as good as in London where I used to work, however it reminds me of my old daily routine in London every morning for the past year. The sandwich is also three times more expensive, but I don't mind. She is nice and we need to support her and her shop.

I never took the time in the last 4 weeks to go and buy a sandwich, only three times in fact I did so. Because I was so on edge at work, or working so hard in total panic mode to try to do something as quickly as humanly possible... I am always frightened that either the director or my boss will come around and ask

me to go in their office. No one should live like that and I wonder if this will change or not in time.

It is weird that he has not called me in the office yet, I am starting to feel guilty. I might go and see him in 20 minutes to ask if I should start calling people, maybe I should go now. It would not surprise me if he were to say at some point today: what, you have not started to call all these people yet? What have you done all day?

In fact, what I have done this morning is to read about the Trans-Texas Corridor, and what that is goes something like this: "The Trans-Texas Corridor (TTC) is a proposed multi-use, statewide network of transportation routes in Texas that will incorporate existing and new highways, railways and utility right-of-ways."

And as if that was not boring enough, I went on to read the 824 pages document of SAFETEA-LU, which means: "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users." It is the Public Law 109–59, 109th Congress, to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

If I did not feel like shooting myself before, I certainly do now!

Last night I was in such a mood, I drank myself to death and could not sleep until 4 am. I was feeling bad for having abandoned Stephen and the cats, and how they appear to suffer terribly now that I am gone. I also cried, and I have to stop myself right now. I sincerely hope he will be able to work here and that we will be happy in this company, or else eventually I will have to go back to London, and I hope that it won't be too late then.

I truly feel like I love him, even after 10 years together, which is quite amazing. I really miss him and suffer more from his sufferings than my own. It is not the first time I do this to him, I left for Brussels a long time ago. History definitely repeats itself in my case, however maybe this time around it will actually lead me somewhere interesting, with happiness at the end of the tunnel.

This morning I thought that if anything was going to happen to me in this lifetime, it will be in L.A. Not only that, I thought that I could not possibly have lived this life without having lived in Los Angeles for a while. I need to integrate

this in my experience, use it in my books. Even if this is just for my own satisfaction that I led an interesting life, beyond anything I was even dreaming of when I was just a teenager.

Now, what I don't understand is why I still have the same feeling of wishing to be hit by a car? I think it is all down to the people I have to deal with on a daily basis. Since forever I have always been unlucky and had to survive quite a huge bunch of horrible people making my life a misery.

Not sure if there is something I need to learn about this repeating pattern, to love the devil perhaps, learn to not be frightened of the dark side, but I sure failed at every level and I will again. Meaning that I will be stuck repeating this pattern over and over again until I die. At least the scenery changes after each five to ten years, now I am in L.A. How nice to suffer like hell in so nice a city! It makes it almost bearable.

24 November 2005

Racism and homophobia at work or just personality conflict?

It has been hard this week. I am on holiday for four days, I miss my baby very much. We could go around town together, at the moment I don't feel like going on my own. I'm sorry I'm responsible for making him suffer, I suffer too, and I wish we could be together. I would love to take him in my arms. I hope he will find ways to forget suffering about me being here.

It is ridiculous, it has been only three weeks, but it seems like forever when he is not around, and that I am all alone. Maybe Isabella will become my friend, I would like that. She is very funny.

I went to McDonald with Isabella and her son yesterday after work, the girl from San Salvador, the one who baby sits my bosses' children. Apparently everyone is given too much work and are questioned when it is not done. It appears to be a management trick to get people to work harder. I suspected that much, I feel better now that it has been confirmed.

It means that they only pretend to be disappointed and to be expecting more in order to throw us into panic mode so we work harder and harder, even at home. I

also believe that even if they were impressed or happy with my work, they would not say so, so you never really feel like that now you can relax, you worked well.

I felt right into their trap, letting it get to me and allowing it to emotionally kill me. Unfortunately these mind games, even though they are as old as capitalism, are still working fine, and I can't just cure myself from this stress. I still feel like I am not good enough for them.

If I knew that my reports were appreciated (except the last one), it would make me feel better. I need to read that last report again, maybe it was not that far from the truth after all. I just hope in time they will agree.

I think I can continue with this job, not sure if I will have a talk with my bosses on Monday before signing for and paying my apartment and hence confirming that I will be staying in L.A. for at least four more months.

Isabella's brother studied cinema, the whole thing. He can direct, produce, edit, author DVD, etc. What a surprise, another one. I'm sorry he was sacked, and I know now that it was a conflict with my valley girl who just could not stand him. I've got to be careful, or the same thing will happen to me.

Isabella said that when her brother started to work there, no one liked him, contrarily to the other Mexican which everyone loves, including my famous director. The fact that they like the other Mexican guy can be justified by his great personality, I like him very much myself. There is nothing in him that is threatening, and he is a great "Yes Sir" type of person.

Isabella said that it was typical of this director to either like you or loath you, and he was rude to her brother, as he is rude to me. She said that she could feel how patronizing he was with me, so it was not in my imagination.

She blames it on the fact that we are foreigners, so I guess to be French-Canadian, as far as my director is concerned, is like being a Mexican or someone from Central America. Great, racism, and perhaps also homophobia, which certainly does not help my case.

I never suffered discrimination for being French, it is the first time I would suffer from racism that I am aware of. Well, there have been a couple of instances in the past where I did suffer from racism, but I won't get into that now.

I guess when you are flooded with Mexicans (when in fact I feel that this town belongs to Mexicans and it is the Americans who are flooding it), French-Canadians can be put in the same bag. Mix it all up together, add some onions and make a nice salad with it that you can eat at lunch time.

I don't know if it is racism or homophobia, or the threat that I represent for being young, having that much experience, with a title like Management Consultant. It must be difficult in court to justify racism, unless some specific events happened, and in this case he never mentioned anything that could suppose racism or homophobia.

So I am not ready to say Isabella is right, and the first impression I had of her brother was not that he could become a great friend, I have to admit. But at the time he had been under intense pressure for over two months, and he was sacked within two days of my arrival.

I think it is simpler than that with the director. Our personalities just don't match, he just did not like me from the start. And I think he would not have even if he had known nothing about me. One good look was enough for him to judge me, before I even spoke.

And Isabella confirmed it, he either like you or he doesn't. Unfortunately he had the time to do a lot of damage, he has succeeded in destroying my credibility to my bosses, just as the valley girl did with Isabella's brother. And I did not help myself afterwards either, with my string of mistakes.

Dear me, I was unaware that this place would be so cut throat and that my head would no longer stand on my shoulder within one day of my arrival. Not sure how I will survive this, but with Isabella on my side, I may stand a chance.

25 November 2005

Finding happiness and being a positive force of nature

I would like to apologize to my readers, I have been obsessed with this director's business and it seems that it is all I've been able to talk about. It is also a problem I had in certain of my books. Thankfully my fictional stuff is not about me.

My father, my biggest fan, told me that sometimes he could not bear it anymore, my long speeches about how terrible people can be at work and how none of them appears to have read the right books about great management skills.

And the other half of these books is about my inner misery which is a direct consequence of the first problem, which makes my sister not want to read me anymore, as she says death comes back at every page.

I wanted to become positive, happy people, but I guess that if I am not happy in my professional life, I cannot pretend that life is some sort of utopia where living is just breathtaking.

I think I don't know how to have fun anymore, I'm not sure I ever did. I read some other blogs about how these people used to go out all the time, take drugs with their friends from college, and have the best time in the world.

I don't remember any of the parties I have been to, not sure if I have gone to any parties. Well, I suffered a lot at some parties anyway and I could not wait to get out. And I certainly never took drug. No wonder I've become an old maid before my time.

I should have just jumped on coke or heroine, just like everyone else around here. Though it is in their past for most of them, I guess it was a necessary rite of passage before reaching adulthood and happiness.

I would imagine there are a lot of these cocaine parties in Hollywood every night. Or other soirées filled with actors and directors and producers. I know some people who would be willing to kill to go to such parties. I don't, I'm actually afraid I may be asked one day to attend one. Worst, I could be obliged to go.

It would look too much like a conference where you need to be on your best behavior, and that, when you are the producer, is the most boring place on earth.

Hell, I even refused to go on tour or speak at conferences to promote my books, though right now I would welcome that if I did not have a full time job in parallel.

Which brings me to the great existential question which is: what is it that could actually make me happy? I sometimes play this game of asking myself: if you could choose right now anywhere in the world where you would like to be, and the perfect and ideal circumstances you would like, what would it be? I asked myself these questions many times, and the odd and only answer is that I would not want to be anywhere else with any ideal circumstances.

I must have lost the will to live. And no success or being famous could change that, I'm afraid. I had a taste of it with my published books, even if none of them made it to the bestsellers lists. I still have many fans around the world and receive emails from them. I just now take it for granted and it has no impact on my happiness.

Dear me, I have done so much already, I am published, I have been produced, I've lived in Europe for eleven years, I have a great boyfriend of ten years (even if we don't have as much sex as I would like), I am now in L.A. with a good salary, what the hell is missing? What is it that will make me happy?

To isolate myself alone on a mountain somewhere, I thought it would be the solution. However it would not make me happy, it will just stop me from having to put up with all these people every day that I just cannot stand. It would be more like a relief. So it is not really a solution to happiness.

Now, how could someone who thinks like that ever write positive and wonderful things? How could I free myself from this negativity and start being impressed with nature and everything surrounding me? How could I ever make other people happy when I am myself ready to pull the plug? I will never, I am doomed.

I wish I could identify why it is that I feel this way. Is it because I am gay, different, marginal? Have I suffered most of my years in high school, being bullied, to the point that it destroyed my will to be alive? Is it because I have started to write like a machine when I was ten years old and it took nearly fifteen years before I was finally published (of course, existential crisis is not your usual topic for a bestseller)? Is it because my parents separated many times and eventually divorced? Is it a mix of all of that?

I feel I was born this way. Like being gay. I was destined to live an unhappy life, in deep existential crisis. And it is more philosophical than anything else. I don't understand who we are, what is our place in this world. I cannot comprehend this universe we're living in, or if there is a purpose to our existence.

I had long a time to think about it, to write about it, to talk about it, to read about it, and I'm still nowhere near an answer. Just as I predicted, Los Angeles will not be my salvation.

28 November 2005

Should I stay or should I go? Can such a question be asked about L.A.?

I'm back at work after thanksgiving. I feel better than last week, but I still need to somehow speak with my bosses about if they feel I should continue or if I should just go back to London before it becomes too complicated for me to do so. At the moment Stephen is still there in London, the flat is still there, my old job is still there as it was confirmed this morning by my ex-Manager.

I did not contact my old employer to find out if my job was still available, they contacted me. A message about a speaker on my conference, the Minister tried to get out of speaking at the event and pretended I never confirmed her. I had a letter signed by her own hand that she was glad to speak at this event. If I wanted a proof that politicians cannot be trusted, here it is.

My ex-Manager was asking at the end how it was here in L.A., so I told her I was not too sure if it had been the right decision. I did not mention my mistakes, my personality conflict, and that perhaps they would be happy to see me go back to England.

I was walking to work this morning thinking, I could lose all that. I was wondering however what it is that I would lose, but again I did not have the chance to visit too much and in fact, I don't know what it is that I would lose by leaving now. On the opposite side, I was thinking about being back in London, taking the train every morning with the same people. Going to Westminster and work in Parliament Square, and you know what, it did not feel like it would be so bad.

And not only that, I would appreciate it fully now, because before I had no idea how somewhere else it could be worse. But yeah, it is the lesser of two evils.

Despite all that, going back to London would not be right. I cannot see from my destiny's point of view what I would have gained by coming here for a month. It is obvious that what it is that I need to experience has not yet happened, unless what I had to learn was here where I am working, and that I have already learned it. This could have been learned anywhere in the world including London, so why L.A.? There is something else I need to experience, other people I need to meet, something will happen soon, I just have to be patient.

And now, I still need to have a conversation with my bosses to find out if they wish me to stay, because of course it is not only my decision. They would probably be surprised to hear that I was considering going back. I'm sure for them my month has just been business as usual, while for me it was quite an eye opener. Then again, every time I tried to understand what was going on here and what was to be expected of me, I have been wrong. So I should not presume to know best.

It is 8h53, I know my boss is working on my file, so I don't have to worry too much if he does not come to tell me what to do yet. He will soon. I will have to call the industry and get some feedback from them. I also need to record them on tapes and transcribe everything that is being said. I just hope I can do that fast enough, sounds like another task which could take me forever. I think I will go and buy myself an egg sandwich in a minute, since I have to wait anyway. I will have to be quick though.

This weekend I went to Universal Studios, only because it was actually the closest tourist attraction. I just had to jump on the Orange Line, and at North Hollywood I had one more Metro station to go. The whole thing took me one hour, it would probably have taken me 20 minutes with a car. I think it could have been worse, without the Orange Line.

This surface metro line has opened on the exact day that I have arrived in Los Angeles and barely just reaches me. It is quite a coincidence. Without it, getting to downtown Los Angeles would take me two full hours if not more, instead of one hour and thirty minutes. So they are getting there, they are trying to sort

themselves out. Distances are simply considerable compared to a place like London or Paris where everything is concentrated in the same area.

Well, I got an annual pass at Universal since it was the same price as a normal ticket. Without it I would not have gone in, because I was too late and it would not have been worth paying that much. I did the usual stuff, Terminator, Waterworld, Back to the Future, Van Helsing, Shriek. The most interesting stuff, and new stuff in my case, would have been below, but it was too cold and windy for me to go anywhere, especially visit the back lot. I ran from attraction to attraction and I left quickly, I was freezing.

On my way back in the shuttle there was a family from around here who came to visit L.A. during Thanksgiving. They said they spent three days at Disney Land and one day at Universal Studios. I could not believe it. What do you do for three days in a row at Disney Land? You queue for hours everywhere and end up doing nothing of your day? They have so many attraction parks here, I don't know if I feel like visiting them all. We'll see.

I'm not sure how I will succeed in speaking about my situation in this office with my bosses. The wife's boss is definitely avoiding me, it is embarrassing. Why? Why would she avoid me? I can understand, considering what happened last week, however I have no clue about what is going on in her mind.

Is she avoiding me because she feels she did a research and contradicted my findings, and now she thinks I could feel bad about it and she does not wish to speak about that? Or that she would hope I would go back to England and does not know how to say so? In which case, I really have to speak to her soon, before I pay for my apartment. I just don't know how to approach this and who to speak to exactly, her or her husband?

I am also falling asleep at my desk, and really there is no reason to, I went to bed at 10 pm last night, I had 9 hours sleep. I find it frustrating that even after drinking a whole pot of coffee, I just cannot wake up! I feel like hitting myself in the face until I get out of my dream state.

A door just slammed, I am not sure who did it and why. There could be other things going on that I am unaware. The second most senior conference manager

did not look very happy today in the kitchen. I admired him for his nice personality where nothing appears to be able to reach him.

Well, he admitted today that he perhaps did some mistakes and he will have to deal with it today. I said he would survive, he said he would one way or another. I wonder what he meant by that and I wonder how serious the situations he created, as he puts it, are serious. Maybe here anything can be used against you and any report you write can become the biggest blunder of your life, when in fact it is not that serious. Another management trick?

I went to get the key for the toilet, and there she was in front of me, my boss, she froze as if she did not know what to do or where to go. We have not said good morning or anything. I hate it, having to go in her office every time I want the key for the toilets. One day at lunch time I will go and get a double of that key made, so I don't have to advertise it so much when I go for a pee.

Stephen is so much better than me in these awkward situations. He would have told everyone good morning and would not be afraid of confronting any of these people, no matter what. I wish I was more like that. But looking at them, embarrassed as they are, I am probably normal, and Stephen is the exception.

I have not done anything this morning apart from preparing that letter requesting a meeting. I feel bad about it. I could not go and see my boss, I know he is working on that file. He will come to me once he finishes and we can move on with this.

Now I understand she was busy, she had to go and collect the kids in school, and they have other worries like the renovations of the second office, etc. So I should not read too much into the fact that we will only meet tomorrow morning. However I wonder if she simply wishes to talk about this further with her husband tonight? It is quite possible. They had a one hour meeting together immediately after I sent my email to her, however they could have been talking about anything else.

I am wondering, is there any way they could turn around and tell me: thank you for your reports and services, and have a nice life back in London? It seems so improbable, that I really wonder why I requested this meeting. As Stephen

suggested, he thought I wanted out, and it was my way to announce it to them. Which is not the case either.

So what is it? Just reassurance? Why? Because I feel a bit uncomfortable, because I am in the dark, I don't know what they are expecting of me? The problems with the director, has it developed into a massive mountain or is it forgotten?

I guess the meeting is still a good idea. And you never know, maybe they think they have made a mistake with me and will be thankful for me to give them the chance to stop it all before it goes any further. It would be surprising, but it is possible. Tomorrow could be my last day not only in the office, but also in Los Angeles.

I just went to get myself a coffee in the kitchen. The Black guy kind of asked me weirdly if I was OK, the same thing the wife's boss asked me before she left. I had something in my eye when she came to me and I hope she does not think I was sort of emotional about all this. It would look very bad indeed. It would also mean that all emails I send to my bosses are being read by that guy, and he is also being told about everything that is happening in this office.

I would not be surprised either if the woman in charge of HR, payroll, etc., also has access to all exchanged e-mails. I might never know about that for quite a while. It would make sense, since if both bosses are out of the office, someone would need to answer urgent messages. So not only it is not possible to speak in this office because we are all sitting over each other, but on top of it sending an e-mail to anyone is like copying half the company. So I've got to be careful, no secret can be kept here.

29 November 2005

Destiny is re-organizing my life out of my control, for the best

Once again I feel quite weird in the office this morning. I know I will meet my boss and I don't know how the meeting will turn out. She might have decided certain things after speaking with my director and her husband. I'm sure the director would not have told her that they should keep me. And her husband could have decided just like that, that it was perhaps preferable that I leave.

Ultimately she does not need their word, apparently she is quite the business woman and could decide on her own that it was a mistake.

The director was not here yesterday, he's back today with his deep voice. I'm glad I'm not working with him right now, I know I will work with him in the future, I know he will be patronizing and there will be conflict, that alone convinces me that it would not be a bad idea if I were to go back to London.

And then, right after saying that, he followed me in the kitchen and tried to be nice. I was a bit ashamed to tell him that I went to Universal Studios during Thanksgiving, and he made it clear he disapproved of it. He appears to be kind of anti-tourist or commercial himself, and wrote books about the old history of Los Angeles. I think he mentioned that before, but I had the time to forget. As if I am so freaked out, I am unable to retain anything anyone tells me.

So we discussed Vincent Van Gogh, which really could not have been better since I really feel a special connection with this painter. I went to St. Remy de Provence in France twice in my life since I have a friend there, and this is where he was interned in a mental institution and painted most of his great paintings. He also lived in my town in England, Isleworth, and there is a blue plate to remind us. He was not painting yet at that time however. Not sure if talking about Vincent might have changed his opinion about me.

I thought he had a discussion with my boss today about the meeting, and that he was doing an extra effort today to be nice since I am after all considering going back to London. And I would certainly do so if in any way my boss tells me she feels she has made a mistake. However I have not seen her this morning. I thought I had heard her voice but I must have been dreaming.

Today I am having lunch with my valley girl. Tomorrow it will be the West Hollywood guy. I might learn more right there that I have ever learned in my one month alone in my corner.

We are under such surveillance here, we cannot exchange one word without having our nice black guy following up within seconds to make sure nothing negative is said. A way to feel like a Big Brother state, without the need for cameras and monitoring devices. He checks our computers, as mine had been left on all Thanksgiving when I arrived yesterday, which means someone checked out

my files. I would prefer cameras because then you can at least forget that they exist and take a bit more freedom. With a human overlooking you at all time, it is more difficult.

Anyway, I will meet with my colleagues and I would expect them to tell me how they feel. They will probably tell me they feel like me and then I will understand that what I have gone through this last month is completely normal and I was not an isolated case. And then it will make me feel better and I will be happy to continue working here for at least four more months. Once my rent ends, I will reconsider my situation.

It is also possible that they are quite happy and have not experienced any of what I have gone through. Especially the West Hollywood guy, he seems to be the perfect employee, always smiling and happy, never in any trouble. I look forward to hearing his story. Might come late though to have an impact on my staying here or not, as I might get my check for the rent this lunch time, and even if I were to wait until tomorrow, we will go to lunch after I got the check.

I am in some sort of dilemma, go and see my boss to ask him for something to do, instead of wasting my time searching the Internet to learn more about Texas and transportation, or wait until his wife arrive and have my meeting with her. It would be sensible, especially that today could be my last day after all.

So I am going to wait, and write, even if it makes me feel quite guilty.

Merde! I'm trying to reach Stephen, but he appears to be on the Internet, he does not answer his mobile phone or read his SMS messages, and he does not appear to be reading his e-mails either. In this day and age, I just cannot reach him!

I have ten minutes before going to lunch with the valley girl. I need to talk to him about my meeting with my boss (his wife was not in today so he invited me in for a chat). So I cannot go to the bank, I could not speak to him! And I am in a terrible mood about it. I'm so annoyed with him! What the fuck is he doing online on the Internet, in the last ten years the guy never even spent two minutes online. It is killing me. The most urgent moment of all, to sort myself out!

There is no more time, in 6 minutes I have to go to lunch. I could not even speak with him if he were to call. I cannot go to the bank, I'll have to wait until tomorrow. And it complicates things so much!

First of all I need to assess if I should continue to write this blog as I have been, meaning for myself and not caring too much about any eventual reader, or if now that I have put it online and received already a few comments about it, I should try to adapt it to make it more interesting, meaning changing the topics as often as possible. I don't think I want to write this for anyone else but me, and if it interests anyone else, then fine. If it bores them, they can go and read another blog, of the exact type they wish to read. As simple as that.

Now that I have that out of the way, there are three things I need to discuss which ultimately brings me to one main question. The question is, should I get out of Los Angeles while I can, or should I stay for another four months and see how it goes? At the risk of destroying my relationship, losing my job in Parliament Square, losing the apartment in London if Stephen comes over, etc.

There are many risks, and neither my conversation with my boss, my colleague the valley girl or my phone call to Stephen helped me establish the answer to my question. On the contrary, everything is telling me: get out of here while you can, before everything crumbles in front of your eyes while you are powerless to save it!

So my boss repeated to me that he was not impressed with my report and the fact that perhaps he cannot trust my judgment. I had to defend myself and tell him that I read that report again today, and I feel I was quite correct and his conclusions were perhaps biased. It was not really the place to try to save my neck, so I did not insist, the damage has been done anyway. The important is that they don't think it was a mistake to hire me, that they hope to eventually see my potential in action, hence, they want me to stay and discover where our working relationship could lead.

So this is encouraging, even though it is not really. I have confirmed that he did not have much time to look at my reports. He feels they will be interesting to read once he has more time or develop something more specific about what they are about. So of course all this hard work was not exactly appreciated. They

sacked too many people recently and he now has to do everything himself, especially marketing.

So he apologized for having left me alone in my corner for the last two days, and to be honest I don't really mind. However now I need to come up with the names and contact details of people I will need to contact to gather intelligence. He gave me that to do since he does not have the time to work on this.

He did not speak about my problems with my director, and perhaps I should have. It was impossible since he spoke mainly about that conference we were working on. It was difficult to bring him back to the subject at hand, which was what he expects of me and Stephen in the future.

Well, me being a conference manager with some report writing when it is the right time, is what is still on the table, as I expected it to be. For Stephen though it is not as we thought. He was supposed to be responsible for their new telemarketing department, but of course, only once they decide to hire more people.

So for quite a while, god knows for how long, what he will be doing is basically telesales, cold calling people all day to convince them to attend conferences. I would not do that myself, how can I expect Stephen to do it? However he did not react when I told him, he was too busy complaining about the whole thing in general, reminding me it was a crazy idea and that he would only come for me, and he would sacrifice everything and the cats, and his mother does not speak to him anymore, etc.

This whole business has turn sour indeed. And yet, I have to remain here, I have to continue, I need to find out where it may lead me. I was not exactly encouraged by my valley girl, who told me, after a while, and only after I had compromised myself enough by telling her everything I really thought, she finally told me what her experience is.

It took her forever but she finally thought I was on her side and she told me exactly what I thought myself, about the director, with whom she too had a lot of trouble with at the beginning. With the bosses as well, who make her feel terrible, incompetent and never encourage her whatsoever. She said she was on their black list.

She did not want to tell me about all these people who appear to have left quickly, some of them lying (one said he had to go back to South Africa, but he was spotted in the Valley twice, so he lied to get out of here) and the numerous people who seem to have been sacked. I would like to know why, so I could at least be reassured that it was justified and it won't happen to me by inadvertence. But no one will speak about it, and I know my boss is lying when he tells me why they left.

So I am pretty much at the same point I was. I have confirmation that my reports were half read because of a lack of time, so I know they did not help establish my potential. I know I won't be able to impress them, they will not admit to work well done. I can only achieve what is expected if I work very hard. As long as they don't call me in the office to spit on me and my work, then I can assume I am in the clear. So it is not going to be easy, I never thought it would be, I just did not expect it to be so bad so soon. My honeymoon was over after 5 minutes.

Now, I am not a wimp, despite what someone could think reading my complaints, and I can go through this, I will survive it. I just have to get on with the job, and perhaps it would be a good idea to stop blogging at work. There are still three hours before the end of the day, God knows how I will survive it.

It has been hard again this week, even though it was more emotional and psychological. Hard decisions to make, depending on certain events requiring full analysis on my part, etc. I just want to go home and relax, especially that yesterday I did not, having to buy that bicycle for \$80, which was supposed to be new, but I don't think it is and I had to spend another \$46 in tools and lock for it, which means I shopped until 9 pm yesterday. I should have perhaps bought a new bicycle, it would have cost me the same and at least it would have worked fine.

The wife of my boss is here this afternoon. I wonder if she stayed at home this morning in order to avoid meeting me today. Is she still embarrassed somehow, avoiding me? In which case I am not out of the woods yet. Something my valley girl said, she hopes to learn to speak to the bosses, as if somehow communications was a bit like a train wreck.

I think we are very similar, we both worry a lot about nothing, we are both highly sensitive and we take everything very personal. As a consequence we almost become dysfunctional people. And she said it, we are the perfect employees, because one word is sufficient to hurt us, bring us into a higher gear and work all night. They just need to say: have you done this yet? And then we work like crazy and then when we come back to them with the results, they are happy indeed that it worked fine, but never say so.

My Spanish friend, the one in telesales, is actually from El Salvador, from the main city San Salvador. She is however not related to Isabella also from that city. Apparently there are many of them out here, and she said that not everyone was as Patriotic as some people from El Salvador.

I don't know what she meant by that, but I suspect that her country is a place where the revolution has been going on for many years, and probably a tyrant has been at the head of that country for years, and America must have supported him because somehow they had some commercial advantages to all that, and what else. It must be the typical story. I do intend to do some research and find out more about it though. I could be completely wrong.

Something was a bit weird this morning in the meeting. Though I know my boss is intelligent, sometimes I wonder. He said to me I had to answer all the questions he put on a sheet, there were about 40 questions altogether. I had to answer all these questions for all the most relevant events. And that was at a time when none of us had established yet a list of all events, and certainly not established which ones were the relevant ones. And of course, only he would have known which events were relevant, since only he had in his mind what he wanted to do with this event.

For example, he wishes to keep it very specific, to one particular project. This is something I learned quite late, after I gave him my report. So today again he accused me of not having answered his questions, and he acts very stunned and surprised that I could go away like that, work two days trying to achieve this research, and come back with not having answered his questions. And he again mentioned that he could not believe that I did not do a thorough research, enough to find all the (irrelevant) events his wife found.

Now, I'm sorry to say, but the guy perhaps is not that intelligent. First he would know I did not have enough time at the time to first do an exhaustive research of the market, two, not enough time to write the report, and three, that my report was actually trying to answer the questions on his guide. Now, why would he decide to be so blind and not see what is evident? I told him today but his answer was that in which case I need to be clearer and to the point, he does not have the time to find my answers in my 4 page report. Fair enough.

At the same time, he wanted me to answer all these questions for all relevant events. In the end he identified ten. What he really was asking was actually more like a report of 100 pages, and he wanted that in two days. This is so unrealistic. I understand now that these are management tricks, however you still need to be logical in what you are asking, and reasonable, otherwise we will just disconnect and learn to not take it personally as my valley girl said and does.

Poor her, actually she was not responsible for one person being sacked, but two. Her two assistants, whom she convinced everyone were incapable of doing anything. At the same time she was told she was incompetent and tells me she is on their black list, especially after this wedding of hers which took forever to prepare and was taking most of her time. The wedding cost so much, if they had decided to forgo it, they could have bought a house instead. And now she regrets not having bought one instead.

I don't think I have mentioned yet the guy responsible for sales. Probably because he is such a nice guy, until I guess he finds out I'm gay. I'm pretty sure it won't sit well with him, he is so much into sports and pushing his kids into football and baseball, etc.

Just saw photos, very nice family. Somehow I feel he could be gay, or is it just that he reminds me so much of my first boyfriend, with his manners and expressions. Quite possible, and yet he is so tactile, especially with the girls around here, he needs to touch them all the time.

He used to drop me home on his way back home at 5 pm, but now I have a bicycle, so it won't happen again. I feel he will eventually invite me to some sport event or ask me to actually take part in sports, but he has not done so yet in the last month. He mentioned that we should go for a bicycle ride, I'm not sure yet if

I will accept. He has two nice sons, and perhaps his second wife has daughters, or I don't quite understand who are all these people in the photos he showed me.

And now I feel terribly guilty that I have been writing all day instead of working. Even though it is clear my boss just gave me anything to do until he finishes what he is doing and can again concentrate on our project. He said: take a few days to identify the main persons we need to contact. Something for once that I actually could do in two hours! So I guess the question would be, what I would be doing if I was not writing right now, wondering how long the last hour and forty minutes would actually seem to last, five hours more like it.

I would like to go and buy myself a toasted egg sandwich, but she only sells them in the morning, and I'm not sure why. This is ridiculous, what we eat for breakfast these days is so heavy and diversified, especially in the U.S., that we should no longer make any distinction between what we are supposed to eat for breakfast or for lunch. And she is losing business, because I am not going to buy one of her three layers sandwich which cannot fit into my mouth, with chips on the side which are not barbecue, my favorite.

Merde, I have just sent another e-mail again with a spelling mistake. I am so terrible at this now, I don't read myself again and I used to depend on Word as my editor for the emails I send. However at the moment I am a bit stuck, because I cannot use Word as my editor, my version of Word is too old. I cannot either set the spelling check, and hyperlinks just don't work.

So in essence this whole computer is basically completely out of date and I can't even download anything because I don't have administrator's privilege. As a consequence the whole thing is bugged, because I have applications requesting updates, which will no longer work unless I download these updates, and ultimately my computer is broken and I am powerless to change anything since I am locked out of it.

It is like teasing me. Here is a computer, but don't dream of using it, this is a privilege for the administrator, whoever that is. I don't know who came up with this great idea of creating user accounts and an administrator, but we should shoot the guy. Thank you for locking us all out of our computers and render them completely useless. At this rate, I might consider an Apple, as long as it is impossible to lock us out!

You can tell this is the end of the day, and that I am forcing myself to write just so the last 20 minutes might pass faster. I'm so bored and tired, I need to get out of here. All my bosses are still here, usually the director and the wife leave at 3 pm and my main boss would still be here by the time I leave at 5 pm.

They must be struggling for real with the marketing of that conference. I bet I could help them a lot, however they are not asking for my help and my success rate recently has not been that great, as he reminded me today in our meeting. So I guess I should let them play with the database, and stand far from anything that they are doing. I should soon enough start working like crazy again, you'll see.

Now that I have a bicycle, and that I will be home almost instantly, perhaps I should stop at Taco Time or McDonalds. Especially since I know I will get my check tomorrow and that I will have access to the money instantly. Now I am not so poor, and I will be able to use my pay check to pay for my apartment, instead of using my debit card from England, which was complicating things.

In fact, being unable to reach Stephen at lunch time is the reason why I will now deal with this cashier check for my rent tomorrow instead of today. And I only realized later today that this was great since I will receive my pay check tomorrow anyway and I would have had to go to the bank a second time, and complicate my life to get the money via London today. Well, there must be some destiny involved, it will not even allow me to make a mistake, it will force the events to make sure everything is maximized in my life.

My only mistake was to lose patience over this impossibility to reach Stephen when it was supposed to be like that. Where does this leave free will? God knows, and I don't care, time to go home.

30 November 2005

Shut up! Don't be a wimp, you are here now, for quite a while, just accept it and move on with your life

C'est étrange. It is strange what happened yesterday after my meeting. I thought it was the end of it, my boss told me what he had to say. He basically told me

hang in there and I will find you something to do, let's forget the past mistakes. And I kind of went through a second honeymoon which lasted since yesterday and will probably finish today.

They paid me for the Thanksgiving holiday, when I should not have for the first month, and now my boss smiles to me again and she talked to me about paying her to get her car, some sort of huge SUV Lincoln, that my ex-boyfriend in Ottawa told me on the phone yesterday to forget about it.

And the woman in HR is nice again. I can usually tell what the weather is by how her good morning sounds like. If she smiles, then the bosses like me, and if she barely says hi, I know something is wrong. And she has been dark lately, but since yesterday 3 pm, she is nice again. So it is nice to be in their good grace again, even though I have not done anything to deserve this.

It is more that perhaps they realized yesterday that I was ready to go back to London and that, until I had paid for my apartment, for me it was relatively risk free to leave now. I must have frightened them, it must have looked like a threat, which was not my intention. I only wanted to offer them the chance to correct their mistake if they had thought for one second that it was one.

I wonder now if requesting this meeting was necessary or just a waste of time, and god knows the consequences of frightening them like that. I think they thought I was so committed already that their aggressive management style would work fine on me. I'm stuck here after all from their point of view.

I think they suddenly realized that I could leave and go back to London at any time, even, I was kind of considering it right now. It was a wake up call, and they moved from putting pressure on me to work harder, to being nice again and wanting to help me get a car without having to go through a credit check and all that stuff. They will probably feel safe again once I have paid for my studio apartment, but once again they should realize that I don't mind losing \$2,000, and that if it becomes necessary to move back to London, I will at any time.

I am also a bit worried about paying a certain amount of money every month just for a car, when I could spend \$2,000 right now for an old one and not have to worry about it except perhaps getting it fixed once it breaks down, which will be soon I suppose. You get what you pay for and I should have learnt my lesson

with the bicycle, I should have bought a new one. Well, my salesman here at work told me that at \$80, I could not go wrong. So perhaps it was worth it.

I kind of again feel uncomfortable at work, I'm not sure why. This feeling that I don't have something clear to do. Well, I should be identifying the right people to call, but I have trouble doing that, it is difficult for me to start. I'm just afraid that suddenly something will happen, I don't know. It is weird.

I hope I will get into gear and forget to worry about everything. It would be nice for a change. It is all a state of mind. And this morning when I cycled here, suddenly that question of if I really wanted to live here came back to me, if it was a mistake and all, and I told myself quite firmly: shut up, don't be a wimp, you are here now, for quite a while, just accept it and move on with your life. And that second voice at the back of my mind was so powerful, that I think I will listen to it right now and get back to work.

I'm afraid that my ingenious plan to hide what I am writing might not be adequate. I just re-opened the Excel sheet and it opened right where I was writing, Column DZ, Row 503. Not only that, if the Black guys knows about this, from the beginning, then I am definitely giving away everything I am writing. And I have had very vague hints that it may be so.

I am also worried that when I delete certain files from my history, it might be going into the Recycle Bin. And I don't have access to the Recycle Bin, so I cannot delete them for real. However I'm sure the Administrator has access to that bin and can quickly see what are these files that I am deleting, which are obviously the files I don't want them to have access to. At the same time, it is possible that I am really attracting attention to them by deleting them.

I am becoming obsessed with these Big Brothers measures (I used to write in French in my files, and it was less worrying), and I now really hate Microsoft for having made it so easy to spy on us like that. I am going to do a huge research on the Internet, I want to know everything there is to know about how employers can spy on their employees and how I can go around it. So for now I will also hide the columns. He might not think of that one and not realize that some columns have disappeared.

No matter how much you are trying to plan your day, as soon as it depends on other people, it can all change. I almost walked here this morning instead of taking my bicycle, thinking I would be dropped home by one of my colleagues after seeing the preview film with Jodie Foster tonight. She is sick, so now I'm not so sure if I want to go alone. I was supposed to have lunch with the West Hollywood guy, but I just had to mention having to go to the bank and he reported everything to tomorrow. I wonder if he too will have a lot to say about management, like my valley girl. Especially that he is right under the director, and also has meeting with the boss.

He does not look affected by anything, he looks all right and happy. And for once I would like it if he were to tell me that everything is fine and that he loves it here. However he always says that he is very busy and he has no time to do anything, and this is why he has reported lunch many times already. So he must be under pressure, that he does not even go to lunch. I look forward hearing his story, I wished I would have heard it today, but I guess it will have to wait until tomorrow.

3 December 2005

I am in a free fall! God Bless America!

I woke up this Saturday morning, and once again I acted like I did not know where I was. After a while, after realizing where I was and what I had done by coming here to Los Angeles, I still felt freaked out. It took me a while to understand why, but I think it might have something to do with the fact that I spent over \$800 in the last two days to furnish my studio-apartment and I have not even bought the car or the TV yet. I am in a free fall!

Oh, and I don't have an iron board, but I have the iron. I bought everything in Sears because it was the closest shop. I found everything, I bought the cheapest of all appliances, towels and bed linen. I never realized that you could buy a coffee maker, an electric can opener, utensils and dishes, all for 10 dollars each. I never thought I would say this but, God bless America! Pure capitalism has brought us choice and cheap prices. Never mind that everything will have broken down before the new year, at least at the moment I am all set up.

Everything I did not buy in Sears, I bought from this lovely Indian couple living in the building next door. They are going back to Canada after a short time in L.A., they don't like it here. Their children have been screaming to go back to Ottawa, but there must be something wrong with them, perhaps they have forgotten that Ottawa in December is like a freezer. I have to admit that Ottawa, where I lived four years of my life, is a very nice city. Underrated. They should film movies there.

Anyway, I bought most of the stuff they themselves bought in Sears. Everyone at work told me that Sears was a big no-no, to not buy anything there. My parents always shopped in Sears in the 70s and 80s, everyone in Canada did. They were the only shops of that kind with Woolco/Woolcrest/Woolworth.

And if Sears is a big no-no, I guess Woolworth cannot even reach the scale for being judged as a proper place to shop. And if I had not gone to Sears, where else should I have gone? Wal-Mart perhaps? Targets, which I have been told is an up-market Wal-Mart?

Well, I guess they will need to open even more Targets and Wal-Marts in America, because one mile away from me is too far without a car. We need a Wal-Mart in every square half mile, I would reckon. What do you think? (I hope you can read that I am being ironic here, I better remind you, some of my readers have been total spaz in the last few years. Most of what I say goes right over their head.)

The problem with Sears in Canada in the last 50 years, has been that everyone in the country bought the same stuff. You went to your worst enemy's house, and discovered they had the same fridge and oven as you, that you had the same lifestyle. I bet everyone in my building has bought the same dishes as me, and when asked, they will tell you they bought that in some up-market Wal-Mart. Wonderful!

I called Stephen this morning, it had been a few days since I spoke to him and I was starting to wonder if he still existed or if the last ten years with him were just a figment of my imagination. I found a nice picture of him of when we were in Arkansas. He is standing in shorts with his skinny legs, pointing at a metallic crocodile on the floor. God he is cute! I missed him, until at least I gave him a call.

He went on and on about what I should do about buying a car and the questions I needed to ask. In the end I know I won't do any of this, and probably just get taken for a ride by the seller. Anyway, he brought me back to reality, it is his way to make me forget to worry about my problems, filling my head with unimportant comments about what I should be doing.

Some days I wish I was a bit more gay, I'm sure I would be clued up about what to do and where to buy. How are these extremely gay people, who know everything, cope with switching countries? I guess they link up with people of their kind and do a data transfer about all this stuff I don't know about and that by being gay I should have been born with.

Not sure if extremely gay people would have been able to plug two computers together, bought some cheap speakers, and concoct a television with a DVD player on one portable computer, while the other one is free to write on and get emails.

I'm sure most gay people would never have bought towels for \$2.38 each in Sears, and now I bitterly regret having done so. They had something like 10 different sorts of white towels, all identical, but with price tags ranging from \$2 to \$20 each. What's the difference I thought?

Well, my whole studio is full of fluffy white thingies, and my clothes that were washed with them, and myself. Just great! I guess this is how most gay people learn, through experience. Somehow I feel they would have known better right from the start. Buy expensive things, and you will never have to worry about fluff thingies.

So I better speak about my lunch with the West Hollywood guy. He is officially gay, as if I could have doubted it. I bet he knows what kind of towels to buy, though I'm not sure he can afford them. My salary is probably three times his, even though I feel I have been his assistant for the last month, finding the contact details of the potential speakers he is now contacting daily.

He wrote some musical recently which is produced somewhere, and it is now going onto a DVD. However it is not connected with any big studio or distributor, and hence they will sell 20 copies at most. Maybe 40, if the three guys who wrote

that stuff have a big family able to afford a DVD. Maybe 20, family and friends usually don't buy your books or DVDs.

Still, I only had to speak about my own projects, throw in NBC and PBS, and that was it, shallow people are so predictable. He is some sort of an artificial person. He has a radio phonic voice and speaks like a machine. I told him, he agreed. I feel the poor guy is smiling at all time, but inside it is crumbling and shaking, and he just wants to get out and scream!

I have a hard time describing him, apart from the fact that I thought I was fat (when I'm not that bad really), and three of me would fit in his clothes. He seems young, even though all his hair is of a bright white. How old is he then? 40 something I would venture to say. I could never kiss him, I would die first.

As a friend however, you could not hope for better. I believe he will be my ally in this office, with the valley girl, now that I had lunch with them and told them that I had a small problem with the management. I'm on their side, and that is important.

However, he is so perfect at work, like a robot, he loves the director. I'm glad someone enjoys that job, that makes one. It is in a way reassuring to find out that it is possible to be happy there. If one employee is fine, then perhaps two can be. And this is how I felt this week.

I actually had an intelligent conversation with my boss on Friday. We spoke like equals, passionately, about the most boring subject you could ever find on this planet. Finance and politics. For once, there was not even a hint that he was my boss. We looked like two kids planning a new event, which could be very successful.

And then, oh surprise, the more we research the subject, the more all my wild guesses got verified. It turns out that I was right all along! So ten years in conferences has not scrambled my brain. My report done instantly, was actually right! And that is what we are going to do. God, give me the energy and motivation!

8 December 2005

Weird days in Los Angeles

Today was a weird day. My first weird one since I've been in L.A. Some days, everything goes wrong. And I mean every single detail. And today of all days was it.

I am no longer under my boss, I'm back under the director. Now he has to get back to speed on everything I have done so far to figure out what it is that I am doing. He hopes to do that tonight. Good luck!

I have also learned that the research period was over, we're moving on with the event. I'm going to start doing this thing, and I feel quite confident about it since I have never researched an event that much in my life. I know more about the topic than I do about my own life, that says it all.

But then I got home, I got drunk, I dropped my beer on my new General Electric phone and now it is broken. I'll bring it back to Best Buy tomorrow or the next day, pretending I don't know why this phone does not work.

And then I dropped my beer and my glass of water on my computers. Don't ask me how I managed that, it was a weird day. Almost destroyed both my computers in one night (destroyed one actually), and both my phones. I hate it when it happens, it would not have been the first time. I was so enraged, I almost destroyed everything there was in my studio.

Losing my phone prompted me to call somewhere. But then, having a stupid T-Mobile phone, none of my cards from any of the three countries they are from, could add stupid credits on it either online or on the phone. So I went out, completely drunk, to try to buy credits for that mobile phone.

My Seven Eleven was shut! At 9h43 pm! For god's sake! Most Seven Eleven are now 24h! Not mine apparently, they close before 11h pm. So I had to go two miles away, to another Seven Eleven.

Over there, an Indian guy. But this one is not your average Indian guy, he's from Hounslow in England. The very place I come from. He also has a T-Mobile phone from the UK and he's not happy about it. I knew there was a reason why I had to go four miles return, to go to that lost Seven Eleven on the other side of the 101.

So we talked, I asked him what he was doing here, he appeared lost, so in the end I said: big mistake coming here, wasn't it? He said yes. Just what I needed to hear, on this weird day! Thank god there was that Californian woman in the queue. She asked me how long I had been here. I said one month, and still wondering if it was a mistake. And she said: Los Angeles is a great city, you will love it here. And now I wonder if you need to be born in the valley to affirm something like that.

Everyone else I meet who's not from here, truly wonder why they are here and regret coming here in the first place. And that Indian guy, probably does not have any dream to succeed in Hollywood in the film industry. So why did he come here in the first place? Just because he watched too many movies and he thought he would find some sort of freedom here? Working in a Seven Eleven? What a misery.

And then I thought, gosh, I wish I was working in a Seven Eleven alone at night. Reminds me of my long days at Heathrow Airport working at WHSmith. They have so little stock, and sell so little, I would fill all these shelves in a minute. And then just watch the clock until I can find my new found freedom again. No need to think, just count the minutes. It would be great!

These days are over. Now I am dealing with bureaucracy and social hierarchy. The psychology of it anyway. No time to think about work, that's for sure. Just the misery of having to answer to bosses and justify myself at every single second of the day.

And I must be very drunk to talk like this in my blog. But hey, are you reading blogs to get the truth or what? Otherwise watch the news, it's filled with all the lies you will ever need, to feel comfy in your little home filled with stuff bought in Sears. Just don't admit to any of it. Especially the channel you watch the news from. In America, I hear, it means a lot. Are you watching Fox? Then this is not the news, I hear, it is fiction. Oh well, who cares? Not me, that's for sure.

I'm so drunk now! I'm sure it would not sit well with the DMV of California. The whatever Motor Vehicle thingy. For which I have to pass the test tomorrow, and I have not revised for the test. I don't care to fail again, a seventh time, over three countries, over a 20 year period.

I have three driving licenses! Which one do you need? Which insurance policy? Whatever else? I don't care anymore. I'm fed up with all this and your zero tolerance for just about everything that is worth it in this miserable existence. Get a life! And leave me alone!

Apparently the UK passed a new law this week, I can now marry Stephen legally. Shame it came too late. Shame that it will now cause a lot of trouble. Unless we are married, they will not give us any of the rights we have been used to without being married. Shame. It's too late anyway, I pressed the self destruct button a long time ago. Was it not inevitable? The minute I decided to move here in L.A.? That's what I think anyway. I hope to still be wrong.

I just finished my White Zinfandel huge bottle of rosé wine from California. It is almost midnight. I guess I should go to bed. But I don't feel like it. It is one of these nights where, if I had a gun (and it is legal here so I might just buy one) I would not see the sunshine the next day.

What a shame it would be not to see the sunshine the next day, since the South Californian sunshine is so nice, even on a 8th of December. The thing is, you can only fully appreciate it if you are a lost cause and don't need to work for a living, for whatever reason. It is not my case, so to hell the Californian sunshine! It won't help me with my conference which is not going anywhere anytime soon. Dear me...

They've hired a real Management Consultant at work this week, he starts next Monday. I guess this is a clear message to me: I'm the fake one. I'm only a Management Consultant by title, by law, for immigration purposes. Not a real one, silly me. How could have I thought otherwise? Was it not evident from the start? I guess these things need to be spelt out. Can't believe I'm thinking about that now, that's just too much. I'm going to bed...

God I'm lost. Not only because I am in a strange country, in a strange city... I'm just completely lost. What I am doing here? Why I am still here on this planet? I wish I could end it all tonight. I'm so tired. I'm so tired. I'm so tired...

10 December 2005

Nothing's Impossible in L.A.

That song Nothing's Impossible on the new Depeche Mode album, it depresses me. As it used to do, their albums, when I was 12. I only realized that when my valley girl at work said that her parents were freaking out because she was listening to Depeche Mode, and that was the kind of music they thought would make her commit suicide.

It is true that I have been very much inspired in writing my best work listening to Depeche Mode and The Cure, and now I understand that it is very depressing music. It is also very addictive, it brings you somewhere else altogether, perhaps what drugs would do to someone, however I don't have much experience in that domain.

How could Martin Gore still be depressed after all these millions and success, enough to write a song like Nothing's Impossible? Apparently he is in the middle of a divorce. His wife, as it the oldest fashion of all times, is bringing him to the cleaners, and will probably keep the money and the kids and everything. Worth making millions and getting married, just to see it all crumble to dust when it is divorce time! And that time always come.

At the beginning I listened to it while walking to work, looking at the palm trees and big mountains in the background, and it was breathtaking. I was listening to it with my own interpretation, as I did most of my life in the case of Depeche Mode, since I barely understood English all the early years I was listening to their albums. And it was much better that way. It left everything to my imagination.

Some lines were applicable to me being lost alone in L.A. with the problems with my bosses:

Just give me a reason, some kind of sign
I'll need a miracle to help me this time
I heard what you said, and I feel the same
I know in my heart that I'll have to change

That was so perfect. And this was me and Stephen lost in London while I'm in Los Angeles:

How did we get to be this far apart?

How did we get to be this far apart?
I want to be with you, something to share
I want to be near you, sometimes I care

And at some place he says "How did we get to be so far gone", and he repeats it twice, and the second time the voice is like cavernous, as if he was about to lose consciousness. This really gets to me.

I see the stars every night on my balcony, and I'm trying to convince myself that Nothing's impossible, that I can go through this, that it may be my dreams coming reality though I cannot see that right now:

Even the stars look brighter tonight
Nothing's impossible

How you can connect so much with a song is a mystery. And as I said before, I wish I could achieve that in literature. Seems impossible. But nothing's impossible, Dave Gahan said it, and he is well placed to know.

Dear me! Just read an interview about the new album "Playing the Angel", and Martin Gore states as a joke, that the album was taking a direction like:

Anything that appealed to dysfunctional people!

And that's it, I'm just dysfunctional and I have always been. Terrible thing to say. I'm a freak! As long as I enjoy it, I don't mind being dysfunctional. Better than having a normal life, no nervosa, no problems, and of course, no personality and nothing to say. You might just enjoy not existing then. I feel the pain, "the pain that I'm used to".

I just had a flash, listening to Nothing's Impossible. The building where I work right now, the walk with the mountains in the San Fernando Valley, the cleanliness of it all, my apartment, the building, the car park of the shopping center, everything.

This is the kind of flash I get years later, once I have left the place and listen to the music I was listening to then. And it was a nice flash, great memories which will last me a lifetime. I think I will get to like the place.

Which brings the question, you know, what place will this book I am writing right now will have in all the stuff I have written in my life? Because, you know, I have few of these books already published and they were sort of popular. And since I'm not going to stop writing any time soon, eventually they might get known in Québec and finally be appreciated.

That's the plan anyway. And a book about the youngster arriving in L.A., I would think, just by the sheer concept of it, might erase my books about my arrival in Paris and London, or at the very least put all of that in the shadow.

This could be my most important book ever. The one I could be remember for if ever I get more known and break that barrier and finally sell more copies. I had not thought about this up until now. Even though, of course, it has always been at the back of my mind. The only reason I'm here, is because of this book I'm writing now and perhaps the fictional one I will write in parallel (and of course, the film scripts).

It just occurs to me now that it was perhaps more than just moving into a new city, a new life, writing a couple of books, and get out. It could be it, it could be the most important thing. And I am babbling like crazy about the most stupid details and emotions I am experiencing. Nothing grandiose, as grand as the new DepMod album.

But that's it, this is what I'm known for, this is what I do. It is the only content I can get in here. I even made the decision earlier on, that this would be written for me, and not for anyone else. Otherwise I would not speak of my emotions, my fears, how a wimp I can be sometimes.

I would describe to you some sort of paradise filled with actors and actresses and the whole L.A. experience we have been told existed somewhere around here. I would just have to buy a few magazines, talk about what it says, and it would get you the vibe. The Beach Boy vibe. I'm not going to do that. It is perhaps a mistake, I understand now.

For my most important book, which would be in any case, whatever the content or what I might say. Because what sells, it is the concept, the marketing, the idea. Not the content or the style. I know that now.

The young writer leaving everything behind, London no less, to go and succeed in Hollywood. I don't even need to succeed, a major flop, career wise, would still make a great book. Because one sentence will make people buy it, will make them dream that nothing's impossible. When we all know that when it comes to our lives, everything's impossible and is just the worst nightmare. Even though you could be rich and famous with palm trees all around and a bright sun and summer on 10 December, makes no difference.

Am I making history here with these few babblings without realizing it? Am I putting the last nail on my coffin as a writer? Nothing after that will top this book? Another irony, is that it is the first one I actually write in English. None of my fans so far appears to be able to read English. So unless it is translated (and I won't translate it, you can be certain of that), this will be the one book they will never read, but wish they could.

So I guess they will do like I did for so many years listening to Depeche Mode, they will imagine for themselves what it is that I'm talking about here. And it might be just as well. The mystery will remain, and they will imagine something greater than what it is. A boring blog from just another blogger in L.A.

And now, I certainly will go to bed and forget I just said that. Tomorrow, one way or another, I'm buying a convertible Mustang. It is not my style, it is not my personality, but I have to do it. I have to get the ceiling down and go to Santa Barbara by the beach, and experience that thing we always see in the movies.

And if that does not do it, then I might as well just pack my bags and go back to London. Somehow I have the feeling that it might just work. Because humans are so imbeciles and it is all so psychological. Feel like you are living a dream, and who knows, you might actually live that dream.

13 December 2005

Driving in a convertible Mustang under an L.A. Sun

For the last two days I have been in bed with the flu. Missed two days of work so far, not sure about tomorrow, the day I'm supposed to pass my behind the wheel driving test since I passed my written one on Friday with only one wrong answer. I don't think I could do the test, which means I don't think I can go to work.

How is this going to sit with my bosses? God knows. I've seen people in there dragging themselves to work even when they were sick, one even puked on his desk and yet continued to work. It would probably be the first time in their 19 years history that an employee is sick three days in a row.

However, I have no energy, I just fall in my bed and sleep all day. And at the moment they are doing asphalt outside and they are making so much noise! And now I have started to cough. I feel bad about all this and I'm sure there will be great consequences with my boss, who could not even let me go to a driving test too far away if it meant two more hours away from work.

I did not buy the Mustang, I went to a retailer, the guy was not very nice, and the car appeared to be older than what they stated. I was so disgusted by all this that I will not buy a Mustang anymore. It is a Ford after all, it would probably cost me a fortune in repairs. And this one sounded like it needed a lot of repairs, even with only 60,000 miles on the counter. So now I'll be looking for a convertible that I can buy cash, and I will wait until I get paid at the end of the month.

Stephen just called from London. As usual our phone call was a nightmare. He just got back from Scotland driving a car for his work, he was arrested again by the police for doing 92 miles an hour and zigzagging on the motorway, the very same reason that almost lost him his driving license three months ago, and this time he got away with it.

The cats in the background were causing havoc, he was speaking very fast about unimportant things, and suddenly, right after he finished speaking, it was time to finish the phone call because he was afraid of the phone bill.

I wonder if he realizes that this is building a canyon between us, that I cannot even find support and reassurance talking with him. The ocean separating us is now both physical and psychological. It does not make me feel like I miss him or London anymore.

And I admit it could all be part of the design, my destiny, to help me accept my life here. If everything back home sounded like a brilliant Christmas celebration around a tree, I would feel bad now for being here.

Neither of us knows yet if he will come or if I will go back for Christmas. Christmas falling on a Saturday, none of us has much holiday this year. He has a lot compared with me, but does not have the money. I could buy his ticket, and this would be taken from the money for the car... we'll see.

14 December 2005

Wonderful Corporate America

I feel guilty today for not going to work again. I feel OK this morning, but I did the last two days just before falling into a coma for the rest of the day. I just don't know if today will be different and if I will be able to survive the whole day without being sick again, or if I will require another 24 hours sleep like in the last two days. If I need more sleep, I would know I did not need to go to work and then I will feel less guilty. If I don't need sleep then I am fine and I should have gone to work.

Tomorrow I have to go back, and it will be very difficult indeed to face the people and my bosses. I hope they will not think for one second that I was faking it. It did happen conveniently, just when I was put back under the Director. Hopefully they will not draw any conclusions.

I would love to go back home for Christmas, but how can I now negotiate the extra days off I would need to do so, after being sick for three days? Oh dear, I just read my contract sent to me long ago. I have 7.5 days paid holidays the first year, and only three sick days the first year. This must be the worst contract I have ever signed. Surely this is illegal? Wonderful Corporate America.

I guess my pay check will be cut this month, and I can forget going to London. My first two months will not be enough to give me one day holiday. I just have to hope that I could still go to London if I were to not be paid for my holiday. And I will have to wait next week before asking.

15 December 2005

Passing my third driving license test in California, after my Canada and UK ones... should be a piece of cake?

I am at work right now. Strangely I would have thought my Director would have had the time to read all about my conference by now and would have thanked me to have given him the time to do so by being sick for three days. He pretty much seems to have put everything on hold and now I'm not sure what to do until he has the time to read it all.

I could continue to make phone calls, but this is dangerous. I'm not sure how much more I would learn. Every new person contradicts the last one, and it could take me three days and some overtime at home to transcribe one hour conversation in a file. So I guess I will wait and soon enough my Director will get back to me.

I understand why he did not feel like reading anything. Both my boss and I dropped over five thousand sheets on his desk and virtually told him: there, read all that in a day. So today I took it all back under his advisement and came back with three small folders to read, with the third one not being particularly important.

I suppose I could now write a new report about this event and how I feel we should go about it, however I find myself in the situation that I would rewrite the same report I did before, which was qualified as completely off the mark. So I guess I will stand far from writing reports from now on, you never know how it could turn out.

I just asked the whole office if someone could come with me to do my behind the wheel driving test. Hopefully one will say yes. Otherwise I am not certain what I will do. I will have to rent a car and get my new writer friend to come with me. Unless I buy a car this weekend, and then I would still need him to come since I am not technically allowed to drive in California right now.

Who would have thought it was so complicated to pass a driving test. Already that I was supposed to do it yesterday in Simi Valley, which I now understand is too far from here. 45 minutes drive. But I could pass it tomorrow in Simi Valley instead of Monday in Winnetka. That would be a result.

Dear me, I just spoke with my boss and she sorted me out. I will use her husband's car for the test, she will order Isabella to come with me, and I will be

insured to pass the test tomorrow in Simi Valley. It is better tomorrow since early next week the bosses won't be here. Wonderful! This is so nice and unexpected.

And still part of my idea that from now on everything will be great at work, I will work hard and projects will move on. Of course, now I only need my Director to get back to me to let me know when and where we start. He is about to leave for the day, so not sure what I will do for the last hour and a half. Read probably about the topic of my conference.

I have to call the daughter of my boss tonight to ask her about what the test will be about. That's nice. She ordered me something though, she said I needed to pass the first time around. And she added: so no pressure! Of course, this was as a joke, however I do understand that it would be extremely inconvenient not to pass the first time.

I am being judged on so many insignificant details, I could easily fail, even with my 18 years experience as a driver and my already two confirmed driving licenses from two different countries, where they don't even drive on the same right of the road. So I have to be careful here to pass, and I am not certain how I will manage that. Better start thinking positive and convince myself that I will pass. I won't get a second chance.

What is also exciting, is that the wall between our actual office and the one next door goes down this weekend. So sometimes next week perhaps we will have a much larger office and we will no longer be sitting over each other listening to each other phone calls.

And I will no longer hopefully be right in front of my boss where he can at every single second see what it is that I am doing. This is not nice to feel over watched like this, because I can't even turn around to check if he is in his office or not, he would see me. So I have to assume he is always in there looking at me and my computer screen.

They have also hired a few more people, and this is always good to shift the attention towards them instead of me. Especially if they are not too competent, since suddenly they can see that I am.

I remember my third job in conferences, they really thought I was bad and they were overlooking everything I did, until they suddenly had to hire four new producers without any experience. Overnight I had them off my back forever. It was amazing.

I am at work right now, strangely I would have thought my Director would have had the time to read all about my conference by now and would have thanked me to have given him the time to do so by being sick for three days. He pretty much seems to have put everything on hold and now I'm not sure what to do until he has the time to read it all. I could continue to make phone calls, but this is dangerous. I'm not sure how much more I would learn, every new person contradicts the last one, and it could take me three days and overtime at home to transcribe one hour conversation in a file. So I guess I will wait and soon enough my Director will get back to me. I understand why he did not feel like reading anything. Both my boss and I dropped over five thousand sheets on his desk and virtually told him: there, read all that in a day. So today I took it all back under his advisement and came back with three small folders to read, with the third one not being particularly important. I suppose I could now write a new report about this event and how I feel we should go about it, however I find myself in the situation that I would rewrite the same report I did before, which was qualified as completely off the mark. So I guess I will stand far from reports from now, you never know how it could turn out. I just asked the whole office if someone could come with me to do my behind the wheel driving test. Hopefully one will say yes. Otherwise I am not certain what I will do. I will have to rent a car and get my new writer friend to come with me. Unless I buy a car this weekend, and then I would still need him to come since I am not technically allowed to drive in California right now. Who would have thought it was so complicated to pass a driving test. Already that I was supposed to do it yesterday in Simi Valley, which I now understand is too far from here. 45 minutes drive. But I could pass it tomorrow instead of Monday. That would be a result.

Ici ici problem – repeat of the same paragraph, see page 90

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I remember my third job in conferences, they really thought I was bad and they were overlooking everything I did, until they suddenly had to hire four new producers without any experience. Overnight I had them off my back forever. It was wonderful.

16 December 2005

Pyramidal Schemes. God damned America!

I failed my behind the wheel driving test. I did not fail it once, but at least 6 times, since I have made that many mistakes. Well, two definitely that would have got me a total failure as a result. And a few others which might have led to

failure, if the two serious ones did not put them in the shadow. I am now wondering if I will pass it the second time around, since it seems so simple to make a mistake, when I would have thought myself that I did none.

Then my boss offered me to go to a car place this weekend with her to look at cars, since she needs to sell hers and I don't want it. But then she changed her mind and said it would not be convenient. Then she offered that I keep her husband's car this weekend, to help me shop for cars. But then again, she kind of changed her mind, on the spot.

Perhaps these helpful ideas are coming to her too quickly and she realizes afterwards that maybe her husband might not like the idea that much, because it is a bit inconvenient. All of this has been a bit embarrassing today and on top of it, I failed that damn exam, and I am a bit discouraged now about it all.

I finally just got the key for the toilet (and also of the front door so I can come and work over the weekend, like if I would!). It took me only a month and a half to get that famous key, and I think it is more because they got tired of seeing me go to their office and get the key. Also that all the new temps are males, and so probably want the key the second I myself go to the toilet. As in these matters, luck is always against you and we all need to go to the toilet at the same time.

That is a result, I now have full access to the toilet, which is just astonishing. I don't need to advertise it when I need a pee. And also, when I leave for lunch or go buy a sandwich, it will be less obvious since I could be going to the toilet instead. At the moment, they know I am not going to the toilet if I don't go and get the key first.

The new guys who started are the weirdest looking thing ever, and if I had to judge them on look alone, I would never have hired them. So perhaps they have a brain after all, I'm just not sure.

The first guy has many earrings, in both ears and a few in the nose. He is very short and is the splitting image of Jack Osbourne. Poor kid, I feel pity for him. He sits there without saying a word, I almost wonder if he has any personality. He started two days ago or something, so I can understand that he is in a frozen state and might like to disappear in the floor.

It made me appreciate the other people in the office who have a lot of personality and intelligence, and perhaps even style. Though I'm not sure yet if I would venture that far as to say so. They think they have style, I just need to compare with the rest of L.A.

The other new guy looks very weird, almost like a fish. Well his mouth definitely is in the shape of a fish's mouth. He is from South Korea, but when I asked, he said Korea. So I asked him if it was from the North or the South. He said from the South, since the ones in the North are completely locked in, none of them would ever go out of their country except if they were diplomats. So I wondered out loud if they actually existed, how would we know if they are still alive? I don't think he thought I was being very funny. Another boring day at work...

He has two jobs, another miserable one. I think he washes dishes in a restaurant, well, he definitely also works in a restaurant, on top of his 30 hours here. He says that when he is not here, he is at the restaurant, and he did not mention sleeping at all.

Funny enough, you would have guessed, he is an actor. Not even an aspiring actor, a real actor as he states. Even though he only appeared in two commercials and he is a South Korean guy who looks like a fish. Please someone tell me, how in hell is this guy ever going to succeed at being an actor here in Hollywood?

And I bet you it will take him a few years to let go of his dreams, perhaps he will never let go. It is very sad. He decided also to turn writer. He worked as an accountant on a popular show and wrote a part for himself for the show that he sent to the producer/writer.

He keeps calling the guy but the guy is not answering. I wonder why, and I wonder how many of those lunatics are trying to contact him on a daily basis with their own writings and uninteresting written parts.

Come on, who would want in his popular series, a South Korean who had a prostitute for a mother who eventually died, and now tries to find his father somewhere in the U.S.? Is that not already the topic of a popular musical anyway?

And if you thought you had heard everything, check that next one. My wonderful and nice colleague in Sales, who sits next to me, the nice guy, frightened me today. He tried not to assault me sexually, no, that I would have been able to deal with (I would have jumped in his half opened shirt right there on the spot (yeah, I'm getting desperate!)). He tried to recruit me in some sort of secret society or cult.

Well, that was what it sounded like from the very first minute that he told me about his business venture on which he has been working on for almost two years, and will eventually leave his job to be working full time on it.

The way he presented this to me was just too much. And paranoid as I am, I thought there was something beyond the coincidence that was actually frightening. I will tell you all from the beginning, since I have plenty of time to kill this afternoon, since my director did not get back to me with anything to do and I am running out of ideas about what I should be doing next...

Well, I am now writing this at 2h32 am. I did not have the chance to tell you that story at work. As if they were reading what I was writing, almost instantly, my boss put me on a third conference to research. Great, never mind, I much prefer to do many half jobs on different topics than actually doing anything concrete.

So now I can tell you how sad my colleague is, and brainwashed into some sort of pyramidal scheme which is doomed to failure. And he knows it, he told me that there was a lot of negative stuff on the net about what he was about to jump in. But he chooses to ignore it, convinced somehow that he is making the right decision.

If you do a quick search on Google under the name of the company "World Financial Group Scam", you will completely understand what he is getting into. Otherwise, just do a search on "Herbal Life" without the word "scam", and it will lead you to the same result. Scam, no money in there for sure, how to mortgage your life instantly, make the biggest mistake of your life, etc.

And I felt so powerless! He is such a nice guy! Who struggled in court with his first wife who liquidated him as most wives do (it is in their title, nature, etc.). And he has two wonderful sons, and a new wife, and everything is fine, and he is

about to destroy it all again, to leave his paying job in conferences, for that scam thing which will lead to disaster!

I understood right there that he was beyond saving. He is just not intelligent enough, and he is already completely brainwashed. It was like a religion to him. Simple minded folks, beyond hope, beyond saving. While I was trying to convince him to not abandon his family and sons for that scam, he was actually trying to sell me insurances, and insisting upon it. It was beyond hope.

For a second there, I thought the only way I could save him, was to help destroy that scam company which should be judged illegal anyway. Where would I find the time? It is a destiny thing, and my destiny is somewhat reserved for some higher purpose. Succeeding as a scriptwriter in L.A., not annihilating a scam company when, anyway, it is so obvious what it is, that you would have to have no brain at all not to see it. How it hurts when it gets to people you care about!

Poor guy. There is nothing I can do. He told me not to tell the bosses about his business venture. I asked him, sincerely, why would he tell me then? I'm the new guy? How could he ever trust me? Simple, the will to sell me insurance was stronger than the will to make sure the bosses won't learn about this. And he already told half the office about it, hoping to sell them insurances the day he actually becomes allowed to sell them, as he still needs to follow some courses and get a license or something.

I told him, look, when you are gay, you only need to tell one person in the office before all six floors of the office and even the sub-offices all around town, know all about it the very next day. It is not possible to keep a secret at work, even if you tell only one person. As soon as you did that mistake, and I know it, everyone knows.

So the bosses know all about his stupid scheme by now, and they also understand it will be the mistake of his life. But can't do anything about it since it would be admitting that they are spying on us, which they do! Even this could not get into his brain. But who cares at this point, he is too far gone.

The worrying thing was how this whole thing was presented to me by him. It sorts of told me that these people would actually use methods that go far beyond

the call of duty to recruit new people they thought would be great salesmen, as my colleague is, despite his shortcomings.

He had a friend, he came home to do a presentation, his wife was so impressed, she said: you need to get into this, you need to become one of them! And then they forgot all about it. Until a 27 year old girl bought a house next door for 750,000 dollars. When he went to meet her, he found out she was working for the World Financial Group, the same company his friend had supposedly created with another guy.

Then there was a party at the girl's house. There, he met the partner of his friend, who conveniently arrived in a black limousine. That partner immediately knew who my colleague was, and affirmed that his friend was talking about him everywhere all the time (which is so unlikely!).

And since then, my colleague has been working for them for a year and a half without making a penny. He attends these big meetings twice a week, recruiting new people for the bottom of the pyramid, the ones actually doing selling, and now there are probably too many, working for a company with a mortgaged name, as it is getting known now that it is a scam.

I am amazed by all this, and frightened by the extent of what they have done to get to him. And I completely understand why he has been so charmed by all of this, I would have as well. And not only that, he would be their best salesman, and probably would make them a lot of money, and perhaps do some in the process. And we are not talking about herbal life, these deals bring a lot of money in. No wonder he is blind, he thinks he can make a lot of money.

In the end, it is a pyramidal scheme, it is doomed to failure. The days of that company are numbered, not counting that their reputation has already gone down the drain. Bad mistake, bad judgment, unacceptable for a father of two sons who has already done so many mistakes. You need security, stability, not more life mistakes!

It is now my mission to make him understand that, to make sure he keeps his job where I work. Not sure how I will do this. Perhaps it was the whole reason for me being in L.A. after all, and it had nothing to do with anything else.

I will save that poor guy who does not have enough intelligence to see through the greed of others. And it will be damn difficult, because in the process I will have to lose a friend, and will have to suffer being sold insurance that I don't need on a daily basis.

God damned America!

19 December 2005

Breakthrough with my Director! And changing this world on a massive scale

I could not believe it! Twice today I got compliments from my Director, and hopefully this will mark the end of his non-respect towards me and my aptitudes.

Today he finally took the time to read all the interviews I did on the phone in the past few weeks. And when we discussed it, I said that some of them did not know what they were talking about.

He was so impressed by that simple sentence, he commended me for realizing so quickly that many of these people we call know even less than us on the subjects we are trying to find answers about. He mentioned that other researchers in the company before were misled in believing everything they hear.

And then, less than an hour later, he stopped to tell me that what I had done so far was excellent and that I was very good with the interviews in order to find out the exact information we needed.

In fact, though my bosses will never admit to this, I believe they suddenly thought that I could be an asset to this organization. This is probably why they have changed their perception of me, are much nicer now and I got the car of my boss for almost a full week to go around town and pass my driving license.

Hopefully I will have that damn license tomorrow. I have to go for a second time for the behind the wheel test, in Winnetka this time. With my luck, I'll probably run over an old woman, or even better, a woman with her kid.

Other news, I won't be going back to London at Christmas and my baby is not coming here either. Which brings the question, should I take two days off and go

see my parents, my sister and her daughter whom I have never seen yet for the New Year?

I feel I should, I asked Stephen what he thought about this. It would be nice to see them even for five days, I have not seen them in five years. So they don't forget about me and that I am no stranger to my new niece who is now two years old and already speaks! Usually no one remembers anything before the age of three, so at this time it makes no difference if I see her now or next year.

However it is my sister's baby and I remember that I felt bad a few years ago about my two new cousins not knowing me very much. We have a small family on my mother's side, it is important to keep contact. And on my father's side, the family is so large, that it does not matter if I don't see any of them for the rest of my lifetime.

I just spoke with my mom, and because they are sending me 500 dollars that I should receive tomorrow, they feel it would be criminal to come and see them over Christmas, since this money is to help me set myself up in Los Angeles. So that is now also sorted. I will be spending Christmas alone.

Someone asked me if I talk as much as I write. Yes I do. Though I have learned in time to speak less and listen more. If I'm drunk, it would be advisable to stay away from me. I have a tendency to say all that I think. I could be even more open and honest in this blog, I have to say. But I'm afraid, here, this is all you will get.

I can at least tell you that Stephen is in the process of getting a visa to come and live with me here in Los Angeles. That is why going back to London for me right now is not the most obvious option. He will be working with me in that company. He will also bring with him our two baby cats that I love so much. After that, perhaps there will be nothing calling me back to London for quite a while.

I have been very much alone since I have arrived in Los Angeles. I have only one friend, and I have seen him only twice. He is also the friend who might open me all the doors to Hollywood for me to write full time on big budget films, as he has very interesting contacts and should present me to these friends in the near future. That part of my blog is 20 more pages so far. It is nice to let you all know that on that side, things are happening faster than I was expecting.

Stephen does not offer me much at the moment in terms of emotional support, unfortunately. He is also very good at driving me crazy. He has a hard drug addiction, not counting that he is an alcoholic, and sex has become a stranger in our relationship. Which is very unfortunate. But I'm willing to continue this relationship at this time. We have decided today to remain where we are this Christmas, to save money for when, and if, he makes the big jump and joins me here in Los Angeles.

He was here though, he arrived with me almost two months ago and remained here for one week. At the end of that one week, before I brought him to LAX airport, we had sex. He was so cute naked on my bed with, and it was so nice to be in his arms one last time, I will cherish this memory for quite a while.

I have not yet explored the gay life in California. I have heard there were about four bars on Santa Monica Boulevard. I have not even taken the time to go there and I have no plans at the moment to explore this side of L.A. I must be getting old indeed!

I am back with my own thoughts. Wondering where I am, where I am heading, what's happening, etc. It is Christmas in less than five days. I will be very much alone, and I actually prefer that anyway. I'll just drink myself to death and probably write an interesting few pages for my blog. I will probably be depressed, as I always am around Christmas every year. I might meet a friend, though somehow I think it won't materialize.

Sometimes it is nice to be alone, like tonight. As someone said, I do juggle with a lot at the moment. No wonder I wrote nearly 100 pages in the last two months, and from experience, this is over 200 pages of a normal book once published.

And yet, nothing significant happened. This is just the introduction. My God, this blog will have 1000 pages by the end of my first ten months in L.A. Surely this means something? Or will everything just calm down and routine will take over?

I have important meetings soon, if they come true, and I might start to work in films in science-fiction, even if at the beginning it will solely be as a science consultant or technical adviser. Eventually my own film scripts and synopses

could attract attention, and they already did somehow. Nothing and everything could happen any day. To make this whole pilgrim to L.A. worthwhile.

I'm sure that from the point of view of my destiny, something huge must happen soon. No such amount of energy should or could have been spent otherwise. Everything has a meaning, or in other words, it is not possible to accomplish such a radical change in one's life without experiencing a string of consequences that eventually will make it all worthwhile.

I am saying this from experience. It may not look like it, from reading this blog, and poor souls or lucky souls reading this right now, have no idea of everything else I have written in my life, of all my different moves in the last 15 years in five different countries.

It is not the first time I listen to the cry of adventure, and decides to leave everything behind. It is not even the first time that I abandon my boyfriend of many years to change country to pursue my dreams.

I left my first boyfriend to go and study in Paris in La Sorbonne 12 years ago. He joined me in the end, and together we moved to London. However he was not faithful, I suffered terribly and ultimately it brought about our destruction.

I have gone through so much in my life, that I can assure you that the eight or nine autobiographical books I have written so far, and they are big bricks I can tell you, are quite filled with all of this that I have experienced and all that happened to me in the last 12 years.

It is perhaps a shame to have written so much about my own little person, when I could have been spending my time writing fiction instead, or even better, about how to change this world for the better.

I understand now that it is perhaps more important from the point of view of a credible author, or from the point of view of contribution to the literary world. I can't really complain though, my last two published books were autobiographical and have been a good success in the French speaking countries, relatively speaking of course, for what an average book could expect to sell, from an author who is not writing bestsellers.

Maybe all this will change soon. Maybe I will be writing fictional bestsellers soon. If my film scripts don't go anywhere, I will turn them into short stories. And I have spent so much time imagining the perfect stories, that this book of short stories could be impressive indeed. From a point of view of the paranormal, that is. So this is untouched ground really, not much is about the paranormal world these days. Love and infidelity is what they bang us on the head with. And half funny comedies which almost become dramas, since they are so boring and insignificant.

I might never get the chance to write full time, I might never finally break that barrier of having serious journalists speaking about my work. I am just invisible to them, despite all there is to say about my career and my books so far.

Stupid, I got more publicity out of the bombings in London that I ever did in my lifetime as an author. I finally appeared on the French television all over Canada and everyone saw it, and many articles in important newspapers as well.

The French-Canadian author living in London, avoiding the bombs on his way to work to Parliament Square in Westminster, and who saw the blood and the human being pieces being blown out everywhere on the street of Russell Square.

This is how it was presented to the people, and my mom crying over me for all Canada to see. I was nowhere near any bomb. And I have never said the things that they made me say after a crafty editing job. You would have thought I saw it all, I saw nothing. You would have thought it was one of the most terrible moments in human history, and it certainly was not.

This is the wonderful world of journalism, they lie through their teeth, to make it look much worse than it is. And they serve the purpose of terrorism very well, my own interviews certainly frightened me out of my wits. Until I stopped to think and remembered what it is that I actually stated on there.

And yet, after all that, I'm sure there was no surge of visitors on my websites. And yet, I have more than one million of them visiting my pages every year. And yet, I am still nowhere.

It is because I am ambitious, I am pretentious, it is one billion people I want to reach every year. I need to change this world on a massive scale. I had about

five Indians from India contacting me in the last two weeks, about my theories of the universe and relativity, a link to my website must have appeared somewhere on the Net. It is millions of Indians that I need to reach, and Hollywood is the only medium that could give me the chance to do just that.

Reading this blog, you might wonder what it is that I could actually say to change this world on a massive scale. It does not look like I could, and I agree, nothing of what you have read so far could convince you that I am worth it. But I feel I am somehow, and you could agree with me if you were to read some of my French non-autobiographical books.

And if everything goes according to plans, you will read them one day in your own language. And the world will be a better place, or perhaps a worst one, since you might also understand from my books that this is an ugly world.

It could make you feel better though, to understand that you are not alone thinking about all that. Unless of course you are living the perfect love affair, and don't see anything wrong with this world. As most people do anyway.

This world is not going anywhere anytime soon. I talk a lot about my own destiny, what about the destiny of this world? Does it not have a great destiny? Radical changes in sight? Some revolutions coming, in just about every single domain of society?

Is it not the time for a full revolution of how we think and manage this world? Is it not time for a great revolution in Physics which would irremediably change all our technology and greatness?

Is it not time to change our whole political system worldwide and especially legal system to the point of non-recognition? Is there not something better than socialism or capitalism that we have not yet explored?

Is it not time for the paranormal to make a comeback with some proofs from science to make it accessible to everyone? Is it not time to understand this afterlife phenomenon, get some real answers, and change our way to picture this universe? Is it not time to take this U.F.O. and alien phenomenon a bit more seriously and understand the consequences of it?

Is there not a way in this world to actually find happiness instead of this misery of the terrible corporate world? What are the problems, what are the solutions, and can we apply them globally and change this world forever?

Is it too much to ask to desire happiness? Is this an impossibility on this world? Are we incapable to make this place livable? Are we only capable of destruction and annihilation of the human race? Is this where we are leading humanity?

I think that if I believe that I have a great destiny, the world must have one too. We will overcome all these questions, all these problems, and radical changes will be required around here.

And I will work very hard to make it all happen, to be an element of this global change. And I won't tell you to recycle, I haven't since I have arrived in L.A., and I find it liberating.

The changes I am talking about are on a much larger scale. And my God, we are ready for that radical change, and we are seriously overdue!

21 December 2005

Decisions, decisions, decisions. Work, Christmas and Car

I feel weird today, but what is new. It could be Christmas, the fact that I am not going back to London, the idea of not sacrificing \$1,500 for this, even though every fiber in my body tells me it is worth it.

I can sort my car at lunch time, then that settles it, I can't go since I won't have the money. I'm trying to buy a silver Mustang convertible for \$12,000. I had to get back to the idea of a Mustang since they are the cheapest convertibles you can buy in L.A.

Of course, I have spotted the car I would like, the new Nissan 350Z Roadster convertible, only because they look like the Smart Cars Roadsters that Mercedes sell only in Europe. However at \$35,000 I don't think I could afford the payments.

I can't believe I am talking so much about cars, I have zero interest in these machines. It took me 28 years to have my first car despite my three driving licenses.

I first had the oldest car on the road, a Volvo, then a Renault 5, and now it could be a Mustang. If I can't get the finance, since I have no credit history here, then I'll have either an old banger in the New Year once I get paid, or I might just accept this offer of the Lincoln of my boss.

It is a SUV, the car everyone is disgusted about, and this SUV is probably the largest one of all. It is also a Ford. I dare not imagine how much it would cost to fix it once it breaks down. Like my friend's Dodge, probably \$9,000.

However it is kind of luxurious, it is not very old, it works fine even if finding a parking space large enough for it is kind of difficult, and no need for credit history. I could also have it instantly, almost. Not sure if I would only get it in the New Year.

You know, when life throws at you something like a car, and it looks too easy, and you wonder why you should take it, if it is still \$20,000 and you never really wanted a huge Ford SUV, still, you should take it. It is obvious that this is all that destiny was able to throw in your way, as it was before with my Renault 5. I practically inherited it as a result of a trade-in where Stephen works.

And I fought it, and I wasted many months without a car, and in the end, since I won't be able to get credit and that I don't want to end up with a very old banger which will need repair almost instantly, I will just take the offer. I should have seen before-hand that I would eventually own a Lincoln. However I checked the Kelly Blue Book, and it is still worth \$30,000. At that price, I would prefer my Nissan 350Z. We'll have to see.

I had a chance yesterday to speak for the first time to the real Management Consultant. The poor guy might have a lot of experience doing what he does, and he might have worked as he said for the three biggest companies around, doing what he intends to do here, but he has no clue about the conference world, which I am sure has nothing to do with any kind of company he laid his teeth into. So in the end I am not certain how he will be able to have such an input into making

things better here, and prepare us for the big expansion that we were told would happen soon.

However I am sure that somehow he has learned a way to just gobble everything everyone has to say and propose solutions which I'm sure will make sense. Somehow he will succeed in presenting something, anything, and as a result, things might change. He must know what he is doing, I'm sure he costs a lot of money to the company.

The thing is, he is a very nice old man and he is obviously highly interested in everything I have to say, because I'm pretty sure he has no clue about how the main conference companies have evolved in time.

I told him I wrote many reports, of course he was highly interested. I told him he would need to ask my boss before I can give them to him, since perhaps they wanted a totally independent analysis from him, and see what he would come up with on his own.

So finally yesterday we sent him all my reports, and this is when I discovered that my main report about their main competitor, never reached the inbox of my boss. And the other main report I wrote which is about their second biggest competitor, she had received it but never opened it.

They were not joking when they said they never had the time to go over them, and no wonder I never got any feedback. And no wonder the Director freaked out completely, since the first two days that I was supposed to work with him, from his perspective, I was writing reports which never reached my bosses.

So of course they never said to him to bear with me, since in my eyes I was working on something quite important, but they did not know about it. Important enough anyway that they are willing to hire an expensive professional to look into this.

I hope for the Management Consultant that he does not intend to do like me, write reports and send them to my bosses. Because then, he might never get any feedback, they might never read them, and the whole thing would have been expensive indeed.

So now I understand why my reports never had any impact. And I was so proud of myself for having written so much and to have been able to actually do it. And all I succeeded in doing at that time was to alienate them all.

Now I actually have the perfect person to be highly interested in all my reports, the real Management Consultant. Who must have been reading all this since yesterday, and hopefully realizes now, how much easier all of this will make his job.

With a bit of luck, he'll tell my bosses what an amazing amount of work that was, and how helpful it was to him. In the final analysis, whether someone tells your boss that you are worth something, or whether he or she finds out on his or her own, makes no difference. So all this work might finally pay off in the end, in the New Year.

If somehow I have a car at Christmas or the New Year, and that I am about to pass it alone for my three days off on each occasion, I will definitely just go and explore California at the very least.

Maybe it is time I went to visit that Grand Canyon. Or I won't plan anything, I'll just go and get lost in California. Find a desert somewhere, perhaps reach Nevada and Texas. I should be working on this conference now, I don't feel like it, but I will, as soon as I run out of inspiration here.

This morning I woke up and I thought, another one of these days. Sounded very much like, for the first time, I felt this whole thing was becoming routine. You know, when you reach a point when every day is so much the same that you cannot remember if something happened that Monday, Wednesday or last week. All those days look the same anyway and you are stuck in a time loop, repeating it over and over again.

However this is crazy that I could feel this is routine, so many things everyday are happening, I got my boss' car, yesterday I got my driving license, today I might buy a car, I never work on the same conference each week, and now the Management Consultant has brought a new dimension to all my work.

So I think that, what I really meant to say this morning when I woke up, was, oh no, not another one of these days from hell where I will be rushing around to

accomplish huge tasks about setting myself up in L.A. Like buying a car, or finally buying a TV and DVD Recorder, etc. These things take time, require a lot of energy, and I am running out of steam.

I am pretty sure now that the Black guy is reading this. I am not certain how he can figure out all my tricks about hiding this from him, or if he can just see the files that I delete or save at odd places, or if he only knows that I am writing but does not know what.

He asked me how I felt today, and you don't normally ask that kind of question unless you think something might be going wrong. And as far as he can tell, there is nothing that could be going wrong with me.

I'm not worried with the new Management Consultant, I look forward working with him and together perhaps we will get somewhere. He could have thought this could have affected me, however I don't think so. I had heated discussions with the Director this week, but only a sort of passion about work, getting somewhere with this event, we did not have any problem.

Remains only that he might have saw that I was writing (he certainly does watch over us), or does he knows for certain and reads this? Difficult to know.

If he reads what I am writing, I might as well, just in case, let him know something that obviously he could not know about all this. There is nothing to worry about me writing my thoughts down here.

People think all the time and I guess it is unfortunate for bosses to be unable yet to spy on our thoughts. What I think at the moment I write it, and I usually forget all about it five minutes later, and may even think something different not long after.

And despite everything I wrote that could be considered like complaints or worries about this new job, I have to say that what I have written in the past about my other jobs was much darker, and then I was not very nice in my description of who they were and what they were doing.

So at the moment everything here is pretty positive, I know so, compared with my previous jobs. And so, there is no need to worry about my babblings.

22 December 2005

Christmas? What Christmas? I'll be working!

Of course, my successful track record at work could not last very long. I was called in the office after my lunch break, and my boss really went into it. I had to go to the toilets afterwards, and there and then I was convinced that coming to L.A. was a huge mistake.

This obsession of people to want commitments on apartments, cars, jobs, etc., is the only reason I cannot go back to London right now. I would have, definitely. And I'm still thinking about my earliest way out without it being too costly.

I was at work all week, I did work on the other project I was assigned to, and as I understood it, the new one was only until the director had finished reading my stuff and so we could continue on that first project. Wrong! I was supposed to work overtime every night of the week, to make sure that both projects went somewhere.

And of course, my director backstabbed me again, saying that I had not spent that much time on our project, and I should have had the chance to get the other one somewhere.

So the conversation was quite horrid, in which my boss said that I had already been sick three days the previous week, and this week it had been four days and I still had nothing to show about that damn conference. And that was another \$1000 for him down the drain. I now understand that he appears to be counting how much it costs him by the day, if not the hour.

I had to point out that my three sick days at the very least did not cost him anything since I was not going to be paid, as I was told by the woman in HR. He was under the impression that it was another \$1000 he lost on me. He did not like to be reminded.

So I proposed to work on that huge research of his, which will take me forever, all over the Christmas holiday. And he said yes, that I had to, as it was not acceptable for him to lose \$1000 like that. So now, not only I will be spending

Christmas alone, I will also be working like crazy. And that is just the thing that makes it all not worthwhile.

This is the decisive argument that convinced me that this job is not for me, that I needed a way out as quickly as possible. I am not going to mortgage my life for any company or for anyone.

If he asks me to work over Christmas, then that's it, it's over. Simple. And I won't regret letting them down eventually when I will announce to them that I am leaving, despite all that they supposedly did for me.

There are mind games, management tricks, and there is crossing the line. He came back from wherever he was for the last few days, and he called everyone in his office one by one to destroy them psychologically one day before Christmas.

Everyone was in hyper drive today, everyone was freaked out. My valley girl did not go to lunch, and she spent at least 30 minutes with the Chinese girl in the kitchen repeating how unfair the boss was. She spent the day calling over 100 companies and sending them e-mails to boost them to act. And she was not happy about it.

This morning it was the sales guy, he too got a bollocking by the boss and came out quite shaken, and also had to speak with the valley girl to calm down. And there is the environmentalist guy, who spent his day calling people, when I am pretty certain that, one day before his holiday started, was the last thing he wanted to do. Even his comments over the phone were telling that he called these people very reluctantly.

I could not tell anyone about my nightmare, but they could tell by my sudden seriousness. I was not speaking anymore, I left exactly at 5 pm on the dot, I did not say goodbye.

The cool Spanish guy tried to get something out of me, he even wanted me to write it in French since he can understand that language. I could not tell him anything, my boss is watching me every second of the day, he can see me all the time. Speaking with colleagues is just not allowed, or would be too obvious.

I'm afraid to admit, despite all the jobs from hell that I ever had, these kinds of meetings are so difficult to bear, and it throws you into such a state afterwards...

And though the direct consequence is that I will be working the whole holiday, to be honest, the direct consequence in my mind is that I'll find my way out. It could have been instant without that stupid rent I have to pay until March. And it destroys something valuable in the mind of the employees, loyalty.

I cannot be loyal to someone who holds a meeting to tell me that kind of thing. Because for me it is like turning on a switch in my brain and it reaches a point of no return. It is telling me basically that it was a mistake to hire me, and if this is so, let's just go our own ways. I don't need that crap, I don't need that job, I don't need you. If you don't need me, then I won't stay, why should I?

Of course for him it is just a trick, or is it? When I said that he crossed the magic line, it means in my mind that perhaps in my case it was going beyond the mind games. It was clearly telling me that he was just paying me too much for what I was capable of doing during normal office hours. He is result driven, yes, but results take time, especially when you are juggling with three different projects at once.

This said, yes, I have wasted my time this week. Not a lot, but a bit. I admit that. I was not motivated by the sheer size of that research I need to do, which will require on my part something like a full week of work, including overtime. I also cannot find any information, I can only find bits and pieces here and there, and that is why the size of the research has no boundary, it is infinite.

So I did deviate from my hard work, I thought working on the previous project would save me. There is no such thing as an excuse. I was caught, I was reprimanded quite harshly, now I need to work over Christmas and I better bring him results soon.

The only results I could bring him now, is by calling the industry, which means days of transcribing all that from tapes to files. And of course, everyone else is on holiday, I cannot reach anyone now, or even next week (I will be working four days between Christmas and the New Year).

So I am already destined to fail, I will not bring him any result before the New Year. I might as well give up, since obviously this will not be a good excuse, since there is no valid excuse for anything in that job.

I'd rather be dead than continue in that job full time with overtime. I'd rather go back to London and resume my previous job, now that I have proven how great I was at it, and they have the proof now. They can also recognize good work, for a change.

Though I have to say, at the end of the meeting, he said something positive. He admitted, and something tells me that it was difficult for him to do so, that the director had also admitted that he was impressed with my work on the other project. Must have been difficult for the director to tell my boss such a thing. But he did, and so there is hope for him, he is not completely out to get me.

So there could be better days on the horizon, days where I will not be called in the office for a bollocking. However these better days can only last for as long as I work 80 hours a week.

This is something I am not prepared to do, unless it was for something that I actually enjoy doing, like writing film scripts. So we will have to part company very soon. And I will now actively look for my way out. Obviously it means going back to London.

I just need the time to meet some people here. Make some contact, people I can work with in films. I have not done anything so far to meet anyone. This has to change. I need to work all the holiday in trying to meet them. But how could I, now that I will have to work on that massive research? I can't!

I'm desperate, and this means that I'm ready for desperate measures. Somehow I need to make this work. Somehow I need to make this whole thing worthwhile. I cannot go back to London empty handed. It is not acceptable from the point of view of my destiny.

And if all I have to show at the end of this, is that stupid blog, then it is not enough. It will be classified as my worst failure ever, my missed opportunity of a lifetime. I could not live with that.

Something has got to happen, and somehow I need to be the instigator of these events. I can no longer wait until it falls from the sky, there is a sense of urgency. I will have to take risks, I will have to act, I will have to do something, anything, to make things happen.

Which means, I'm afraid to say, that we are the ones who make the life we have. There is no destiny all planned out that we are following. We build our own destiny. And I sure will build mine.

That research of is will be on the back burner over the Christmas holiday. I have some more pressing duties awaiting me. And it starts tonight. And I don't care what time I'll go to bed, I won't sleep if necessary. Just like in the old days.

Maybe I became too comfortable as I grew older in these jobs that I am not destined to do. It is easy to forget that we have dreams to pursue and to actually spend the time pursuing them. Let it be a lesson to me, I have been reminded that everyday counts, that every hour of work is important and could lead somewhere.

There is no rest for the driven people, sleeping or watching TV is just not acceptable, they have to work all the possible hours of the day in trying to reach their goals. And I will reach my goals, I have not gone that far to get comfy in a stupid conference job. I'm so close to it all, it is now up to me to get somewhere real fast.

I still don't have a car, I can't get the loan I have learned today. I still don't have a TV and DVD recorder. Who cares? I don't need these things, those ties to this job I don't want.

I'm finished spending my money or committing myself to spending even more every month. I have goals, and I need to reach them by any means at my disposal. I have been reminded, there is no going back.

24 December 2005

Being depressed on Christmas day...

I feel great today! I just opened a beer, I just finished watching (again) the story of that 33 year old spinster (like me) called Bridget Jones (The Edge of Reason). And now I somehow feel electrified.

I feel like one of those nights when I would drink myself to death and write all night long. And often, writing the best things I ever did. I'm not in the mood today to write, except this blog, however...

Actually, the buzz of that film is now over, and my second beer seems to be killing me instead.

Oh God I'm depressed... I need a lot of Sherlock Holmes now with Jeremy Brett to get back to some sort of normality.

For one full minute there I thought I would actually be happy on Christmas day, well Christmas Eve anyway. I am alone today, so far, by choice. A friend wanted to see me, I don't think so. I don't feel like it.

And my baby in London feels the same. He told me that since I left, he has become so depressed, he is not doing anything anymore. The cats are left to themselves, the fish are dying, the letters and bills remain unopened on the counter and he does not eat anymore. God it hurts to hear this.

My baby is a hard worker, and every one of his bosses in time learned to appreciate it. However there is a big turn over of staff where he works and he never has the same boss for more than six months. And every time he has to start all over again. They hate him at the beginning and then he has to gain their trust by working hard.

This time he has a new Manager and he just won't see it. He is trying very hard to get my baby fired or to leave, and unfortunately for him, upper management said no, that Stephen was the best employee they ever had. The Manager is not happy about this and now he makes the life of my baby a misery.

So I guess it is universal, Corporate America gone wild has now spread everywhere, like a disease. And whole nations live unhappily and stressed out to the point that pharmaceutical companies never had it better.

I told Stephen of my episode at work this week, and how, if I could have, I would have been back in London the very next day. And I told him that it was impossible for me to work for that company even for a year. That I am basically giving myself three more months before returning to London, the time it will take for my contract for my rent to be over.

By then, if nothing happened on the writing side, if I am still not working in films or at least met interesting people, then I'm leaving. I also told him that the idea of him coming here to work for that company, and his visa they are trying to get him, might be something we should forget about.

I would not want both of us working for a bastard. We are still going through getting the visa, it will take time, but let's say that now we are observing the events and we have made no decision. So either he comes over here eventually or I'm going back. Three months is the limit for us to be reunited.

All this cheered him up. He was complaining that he was alone for Christmas, like me, and that many people invited him over, but that he had lost the will to live and could not do anything. So he is simply depressed while everything crumbles around him. I almost cried, again.

I was reading today some stuff I wrote while in my last job, how I was unhappy there and how I wrote reports that were completely wrong, how I wanted a way out and that anything would have done the trick. And then I realized that this blog is almost identical to the book I wrote about it in French last year.

Do you want more proof that I am stuck in a time loop and that I just cannot get out of it? Whether it is in London or Los Angeles, it is the same thing, and I am writing the same thing about it. What is it that I need to learn that I am not? Where is it that I am failing to understand, to change all that and break out of that loop?

All I got out of this are a few books that are just the most depressing things ever, and as a consequence probably will never be published. So I've got nothing out of these nightmares. Maybe there is just no meaning to all of this. I am starting to believe that I do not have any destiny at all and there is no destination that I am trying to reach at the end of the road.

I'm like on a small boat in the middle of the ocean with rows, fighting to get somewhere when I should have realized a long time ago that even with rows, I could never reach the shore. So I am going over these huge waves for nothing, because in the end I will most certainly die and all my efforts simply could never have helped me escape this fate.

27 December 2005

A sign of genius lurking ahead...

I was not expecting both my bosses to be at work today. I would have thought, after such a fright, that it was to make sure we would work while they were not there between Christmas and the New Year. They are dedicated, I'll give them that.

I had a miserable Christmas because of our conversation just before Christmas. When I walked out of the apartment, finally, to see if I could buy a TV and a DVD recorder on Boxing Day, I could barely breath because of the stress. I was worried because I still had not done any research by then.

I bought a TV and a DVD Recorder with a hard drive, and I felt so guilty for spending \$500, I almost brought them back to Circuit City. I saved \$100 altogether, that's why I bought them. I now realize that I probably paid the normal price. Well, I bought an opened box Panasonic DVD recorder, so right there I saved \$80, and so far it works fine. I don't regret buying it now, not sure if it will work in the UK when I go back, but it is leaving with me.

Unfortunately, the damn machine, which states that it can play every sort of DVD, cannot play any of the thousand I brought with me from the UK. I'm not happy about that, I will have to buy another DVD player somehow at some point.

At the moment I can still watch them on my computers, so it is not so bad. I did not think though that I would still be watching my computer instead of the TV and DVD after spending so much money... not sure when I will get around to using them, since I have no time to myself.

So, last night at 9 pm I finally decided to get on with the research for my conference. I worked 4 hours on it. And I thought, dear me, my boss will again

bite my head off. However he waited until 5 pm today, the time I was supposed to leave, to ask me what was happening with my research. Typical, so I left 30 minutes later than I was supposed to, and I certainly would have left on time, as I can't stand the office at the moment.

When he asked me a feedback, I said quite rudely: give me a minute. I regret now, but it had the advantage to set the tone of the meeting. He was nice, I think he gathered that I was about to explode at anything he might have said. Because I sincerely think he exaggerated. And the first thing I told him was that I worked all over the Christmas period. And sure enough, in my day of work and 4 hours yesterday, I was able to bring him something quite tangible.

He is convinced I worked hard all weekend. Thank god! I have been lucky, I tell you. It is almost a miracle. The thing is, he never actually saw everything I had already done, he just assumed I had not done anything. So it looked quite impressive today, when I gave him my usual pile of sheets, 1000 at least.

And now he tells me we will not be doing this conference. Someone told him that it would be a flop. Great! I can stop doing that damn research. And get back to the previous project, or the one before, or the new one he already told me everything about today in his office.

Something about semi-conductors, and billions of dollars of investment needed from capital investors, and private equity. He still explains all that bollocks to me as if I did not understand anything. I did my research, I know a lot about it now, I understand what he is talking about. Gosh, I even know what Shale Gas is, I learned that today, so I would not look like a fool ever again before him.

So there is hope for me. With a minimum of effort, I managed to convince him that I worked hard, and he thanked me for it. So now he thinks he did not waste a thousand dollars on me last week.

But I am train wrecked now, and I feel very bad. A truck passed on the street, the whole building was shaking, and that was it, I was frozen on my seat, completely freaked out. I don't know exactly what it is that I was expecting, something terrible I supposed. And that would have been nice at any rate.

And my valley girl, lucky her, got a temp today who was supposed to come back the next two days, but she assessed that he did not know Excel and was not very good, so she called the agency and told them to send another one tomorrow.

When she told him at the end of the day, he was so gutted, he exploded in the office, unfortunately in front of my boss' wife. He said he knew Excel and that he was not happy. I was again frozen on my seat, panicked at any sort of crisis going on around me. God, they turned me into such a wimp.

If that had happened to me, if I had freaked out a temp like she did, tonight I would be drinking beers to forget all about it, because it would have shaken me a lot. For her, as she stated many times afterwards, it was just another day in the office.

I know tonight she will be freaking out about it, I know her, she's like me. She just hides it very well. Something I haven't learnt to do just yet, and not sure if I will ever learn.

Oh well, just another day in the office, I guess.

I'm very pleased with my cheap TV, a Polaroid actually. I did not even know Polaroid decided to make TVs at some point. The image is certainly terrible, TVs here have twice less pixels than in Europe. Even my portable VAIO computer has got a better definition than that. I can't believe that Americans and Canadians have put up with such a bad standard for so long.

They have just discovered HDTV, supposed to finally correct that. The only problem is that the high definition TV must cost a fortune, and only a few channels are HDTV, which I think I don't get here.

Whatever. Morrissey still looks good on my Polaroid bad definition TV, go figure, that DVD works on my DVD recorder. The first one in 10 that I have tried. Perhaps because originally that DVD was an import from the US, I don't know.

I feel guilty again, I should be working on my conference. I am already too drunk, and I don't care anymore. I feel like writing. But of course, I feel like writing something inspired, not that blog.

However I would have needed to start a new book in order to write something inspired tonight. Perhaps I should start writing a new fictional book tonight.

Oh dear, now the big questions. What book? Which style? What about? In French or in English? That is not a bad idea, perhaps I should start writing a new book tonight. You know, this is how it always starts. One night you are inspired, and that's it, you write a few pages, and you continue day after day. I really should. What about then? What style? Which language? Can I answer these questions and start it?

It would have to be completely wild. Out of this world. Something new that has never been done before. And I am very good at doing just that, and all those books are not the ones published right now. But who cares?

I should only write for myself, especially from now on. Inspired literature cannot be ordered, it does not work like that. It comes from the heart, from deep down, on a subconscious level. And listening to The Smiths tonight certainly helps a great deal. I might just start a new book tonight.

If my life was empty, and if I was still living in Québec City, I might dream up a story about a kid moving from Québec to Los Angeles, and imagine a great destiny. However, I am already living that dream, and that dream is a nightmare.

I will have to think something much better, much higher. Esoteric then, mystic. Out of this world. Cos there's nothing real or worth it outside of L.A. anyway. So, what can be better?

I just opened my seventh beer, I'm ready to listen to Duran Duran now, The Chauffeur. I better start writing before I lose all inspiration and fall asleep.

Not another one of those complicated books that no one understands? I hear my fans say. True, none of my fans appear to have appreciated my most obscure books. I guess I never met the right fans. The right ones would probably never contact me in the first place, I guess. They just get inspired and create on their own, in their corner.

And I know I have inspired great people, the greatest in the French world, both in literature and films. I have all the proof I need and I can prove it. They don't hide

their inspiration very well. Perhaps they never intended to. They ignore my messages all the same, probably from fears of being sued, stupid of them... I feel so honored, I would never sue in a million years.

It's not that I feel like being pretentious tonight, not here, not now. Here I am honest with myself. I did inspire great people, and it makes me feel good inside, you know. That I could have reached out so much, even underground, on an individual basis.

It is one good thing, for having sacrificed everything for my literature, that everyone around me thought was the biggest waste of time ever. I even agree with them, I just could not help it. I have to write, not for a living, but to survive. To also understand myself, but mostly to survive.

It is my most basic need, to write. I can go without eating or drinking for days, as long as I can write. I can be in prison and suffer the worst fate, as long as I can write, I will be all right.

And this statement alone, does not make any sense, I know. And perhaps alcohol and cigarettes would be a plus, and music, in my venture. But I can do without.

If I was given carte blanche to do my own indie films, my god, it would be weird. It would be incomprehensible. But I think it would be art. And we all know that art can only exist as long as it is independent. And that's ok, I'll be independent soon enough, as soon as I succeed in the mainstream. If ever I succeed in the mainstream, that's the problem.

I am already very much underground, I'm afraid to say, to admit. I'm like The Smiths and Depeche Mode, and yet, they do reach out and have the most loyal fans ever, who makes it all worthwhile. I may have reached that point myself, with my pseudo-fans. I'm just not sure. And I just don't care to be honest.

Fans are not on my mind when I write. How quickly we forget that they do exist and have needs and demands. I'm ignoring them completely. Otherwise, I could not do anything, or I would write something completely against my nature.

You are supposed to write what you can, what you are supposed to write. You cannot let yourself being dictated by a fan, a publisher or a producer. You do

what you feel is right, and that's it. Never mind if it means the end of your career or those relationships.

That is how I can only see my art. And I tell you, I never referred to it as art until tonight. I see it more as my own existential crisis, my answer to life and this universe we cannot understand. Philosophy perhaps, something beyond all that crap, anyway.

I don't mind sacrificing everything, even my existence. That is what I have been good at, all my life. Sacrificing everything for a land which appeared greener. And never mind that no land has ever been greener, I still got all my inspiration from it.

I am still writing, I am still producing something, creating. That is a result. I cannot deny it, hell brings inspiration. Happiness might just shut me up. Though I'm not sure, I never found happiness. Not sure if it is possible to find happiness.

The pursuit of happiness, good title... maybe I'm ready to write that new book after all. Other nice title: Something impossible, like finding happiness. But what if I were to say instead: I have finally found happiness? And write accordingly? I would lie, but maybe it would be a good start. God knows.

I'm brain dead, that's what I have been, since I have arrived in Los Angeles. I cannot write anything, I could not even think of starting a new book. Let alone a film script which probably would not go anywhere and would be a waste of time. You don't get inspired here, you get depressed.

Maybe if I were to find a rich and old boyfriend, ready to accept me in his home with one command only: write all day long! Then maybe I would get somewhere. At the moment I am just completely out of it.

It is not in Los Angeles that I will write my best work, I'm afraid. I can only wait and hope to be shipped somewhere else, with nothing else to do but write all day long. I cannot see how it could happen.

Maybe writing is not that important. Living is. How I wish I could at least live in Los Angeles. It could inspire me later on, once I'm gone. I've seen it now, I lived it now. There's nothing more to say.

God, am I already ready to move on? Have I learned everything I was supposed to learn here? I don't feel like I have lived or learned anything. Then again, it is maybe afterwards, in my literature, that it will all come out. And yes, you don't know everything that has happened to me since I am in Los Angeles. I have a separate blog, and it is not here for you to read. That's all I will say for now.

Apparently this year the time worldwide will change by one second. We will gain one second. A woman newsreader in Los Angeles suggested we use that second to drink some more alcohol. I was astonished.

I thought I was the only one drinking in L.A., since everybody else seems to be so perfect, that drinking does not appear in their vocabulary. I guess I lived in England for too long, as drinking myself to death on a regular basis is quite normal to me.

So, your woman newsreader invited us all to do so. So I guess, this is exactly what I will do next weekend. On that extra second we will gain, I'll be drinking myself to death. And maybe write one more word to this blog. Which word should it be? Sex? Good idea. Perfect word. Maybe I'll have sex then on that extra second we will gain on the New Year. I doubt it, but it would be nice.

And now you know, by how down the drain this blog has gone, that I have drank ten beers tonight. Sorry, I've been in London 10 years, what do you expect? At least I'll be going to bed early, and I would not have eaten anything, so I will still lose weight tonight.

I have lost weight since I am here. I did not want to, it just happened. Stress, hell, feeling of being lost, whatever. Eating is the last thing on mind at the moment. And I look much better for it, so I can't complain.

It seems that I am determined to meet another mister right, here in Los Angeles, despite my lover being in London and being very depressed about it. I might as well try harder, and meet that mister right for real. Maybe it is just a fantasy of mine, but it is a nice one, one I can live with.

Especially at the turning of my 33rd year. I am getting old... one step closer to death. Realizing that we are mortal, is, I think, a wonderful thing. Unfortunately,

I don't have any disease that will speed up the process, and I am not willing to get one either. So again, death will have to fall from the sky. Cheer up, I might get run over by a car tomorrow morning on my way to work.

Merde, I should have worked on my conference tonight. Tomorrow I will pay the price. I am a prisoner of that job. I should try to find a way out, and still remain in L.A. somehow.

That would be the first step to my freedom. And it is ultimately what I am looking for. The freedom to write all day, whatever I want and feel like writing. That day will never come. Being in Hollywood does not change that fact.

There is no solution to my problem. Maybe if I stop eating all together for another few weeks, I will be good looking enough to attract a sugar daddy. I had many of them turning around me when I was younger, and I was too stupid then to accept their offers. I know better now... where is my sugar daddy? I'm ready!!! And beware, I'll be wild in bed, because I'm so desperate anyway, that I could sleep with a dog.

I am listening right now to the song How soon is now, by The Smiths. And the video. There was never a better song written on this planet, and a better video to go with it. It is killing me that someone was able to reach what I consider to be perfection.

And what I still don't understand is that none of the songs or the videos from that particular album where the song came from, sound or look like that song and video.

It is a fluke. Out of working hard, out of genius, suddenly something divine came out, something that no one ever will be able to top. Not even Depeche Mode was able to reach that point, I guess they were just not depressed enough.

I wish I had lived such a moment of genius in my life, that in three minutes I could make you listen and see something so perfect, that it would live and survive forever as perfection. God I wish I was capable of doing just that. I could die happily after that, all would be accomplished.

When I listen to How soon is now, I forget everything. I live somewhere, beyond my daily job, and my miserable existence. I reach some sort of new world where I am beyond all that.

It is the ultimate song and the ultimate video. Now, how could I ever write the ultimate book? Tell me? Or the ultimate short story, lasting three minutes, where I could have the same impact worldwide on everyone? It is just not possible.

I am wasting my time in the wrong medium. I don't need to write books, I need to write songs! I need to learn music, I need time, I need to achieve that perfection! I am wasting my time. It is frustrating, it is killing me.

Somehow, I should be able to reach the same result through my books. I have to, that is all I have to make any sort of impact. And I think I have reached that point before, in my unpublished books, but I guess it had no impact whatsoever.

So I have to do it again, and this time, revolutionize literature in the process. Which means going beyond everything I have written so far, being even more extreme.

I have been so extreme, I don't think I could go any further. I also think that I am beyond that now. So I guess I will have to live in the hope that one day some people will get back to these extreme books that I wrote, and see them for what they are.

And they are all my earlier work, my first books ever. After that I got lost, I tried to write to be published, and I was. What a mistake that was. I hope I have learned my lesson, and that from now on I will write what my heart tells me to write.

My best work must be ahead of me, I'm sure of it. Just give me the chance, and I will lay that perfect egg, the one which has been dying to get out for years, but never had the chance.

And it better come soon, before I shoot myself, because life is pretty depressing at the moment, and I just don't know what to do to cling to it. I need another salvation, another savior, or anything, to save me from this hell... that conference job, those people.

Oh dear... is there a way out? I sincerely hope so.

30 December 2005

Dreaming of York and England. When will I be famous?

I was so tired tonight, I went to bed as soon as I arrived from work. I woke up at 1 in the morning, and now I don't know what to do. Tomorrow is my last day before the New Year, but considering that it means only three days off, it is not exactly the most exciting thing ever. I'm not sure what I will do, however I am determined to do something at least on one of the days.

My baby went to Yorkshire this week, and it was snowing heavily apparently. He brought with him our baby cat, Mr. Weber, even though it is a female. She is called like that in memory of my old boss when I was working in WHSmith at Heathrow Airport 10 years ago. This is where I met Stephen.

This is where I started in London, at the very bottom, when I could not even understand what the customers wanted. You could say I went on to become successful in my jobs, in less than 10 years I quadrupled my salary. However it was directly proportional to my unhappiness and lack of freedom.

I cherish these old days when I did not have to worry about anything, and could barely survive. Strange enough, I am still at the same point financially, I can barely survive. So money does not change anything.

England did, and I learned to appreciate it even more as the time passed. It is hard to conceptualize when you are living there for many years. It is when you leave the U.K. that you can fully understand what you left behind and how wonderful a place it is.

These little villages by the sea side, filled with little cottages with roofs made of straw, and a few shops somewhere in the middle, with all the country side all around of a beauty to help poets no end, this is all true. It does exist. And it becomes normal to you until you move back to America.

Yorkshire for me, it is York, the most beautiful larger town in the world, I would venture to say. And it does look a lot like Québec City with their medieval type of walls all around, and ruins here in there.

I have met a very nice shop owner there, of a bookstore called the Worm Hole, and it was magical. It inspired me a film script, and gosh I would die to film that there. It is also one of the most haunted town in England, ghosts there are just normal. You see them and hear them everyday, and they do exploit it with all those tours. They have an infinite amount of stories to tell about it.

And the most interesting one is at the heart of my film. A story about a little girl who lost the keys to the city, of the main door of the town. Her dad lost his job as the main guardian, and now her ghost goes around searching for those keys that she will never find.

When you add to this that this is the town that gave its name to New York, and just about all the York towns there are around the world, you get a sense of the power and energy that could emanate from this small place in the north of England.

Today I was outside at work, looking at the huge mountain in the background, and the palm trees all over in front of it. I was going through some sort of dilemma, would I like to be going to York right now, have the chance to go at any time like I did one day after a fight with Stephen?

I just got into my Renault 5 and left for York. Stayed in a haunted hotel for the night, filmed interesting stuff, and then came back home the next day after visiting the old castle, the haunted places like the main gate and the museum. Came back with the loveliest story for a film. Perfect weekend.

Would I like to go there again? Or do I prefer now, after ten years, to experience something new, something equally huge psychologically, like Los Angeles? Was it not time for a change, to get to know America better, to learn to appreciate Los Angeles?

The real question I asked myself today, is that I would miss Los Angeles terribly. I just cannot see it right now. I have to give it a chance, and a good one. I would

need to live here for years, get to know all there is to know, visit all the places around. And first, reach that mountain as soon as I have a car. I need to explore.

We don't live very long, not sure how many more decades I have in front of me, and if I will be able to still make huge life decisions like going back to England if I stay here too long. I fear I might lose it, even though it would always be there I would imagine.

I cannot limit myself to one place, I still have to experience adventure, leave just like I did, get to know new people and new places. Live in my memories for the rest, for my nostalgia.

I don't miss Paris, I don't miss the South of France that I truly enjoyed, I can go back on holiday and that is acceptable. I truly miss England, as if I belong there. At work they talk to me as if I was British, I translate to them their weird British expressions, I understand that language, they don't.

I feel more British than French-Canadian. And anyway, who's interested in a French-Canadian in Los Angeles? No one. The odd province who is just as Americanized as the rest, except that they speak French and could give you a sense of France in America. I'm sure it has its appeal, but not to me, and not to the people I have met so far.

I am more British than French-Canadian, even with my thick French accent which would not fool anyone. When I leave Los Angeles one day, I'm going back to England, it is my home.

I would hope to be in L.A. for a few years, get to know it, get to love it, as equally as I love England. And I wonder if it is possible, and that is what I was wondering about today.

I have to give it a chance. Especially if one day I work full time in films, I will then have to be here a lot, it is a place I will be connected to one way or another. And this is what I am building here, the relationships that will connect me to Hollywood for years to come. There is nothing like being in the place and meeting the people, a website or an e-mail from a stranger on the other side of the planet just won't do.

Most successful British now live in Los Angeles or New York. A lot of successful Americans now live in London, or at least have a second or third house there. There is a special connection between Los Angeles and London, they are always the two main town you would mention with New York, when you wish to convey some sense of what this world we live in is all about.

And just as French-Canadian are popular in France at the moment, British also earned a soft spot in all American souls. I'm afraid to admit that it is because of those terrorists, and how America and the United Kingdom confronted the rest of the world to clean up some countries, where unfortunately the U.N. failed miserably and shows no signs of ever being able to sort out this world.

A major reform of the U.N. would be necessary first, and a change of mandate. It should be stronger at the very least and its measures more far reaching. And then, the U.N. could become another danger to our civilization, so you can never have it both ways.

I am more philosophical tonight that I thought I would be. It is the end of the year after all. Time to reflect on the past year, to assess where I am, where the world is, and what is to come and if it is worth continuing on the same path.

I lack too much data to even think about assessing my own situation, let alone the one of the world. The truth is, I don't know what is going to happen next in my life, and I don't know where this world of ours is going.

I'd like to think that it is not annihilation as my friend in L.A. likes to repeat, I'm not such an extremist in my thoughts. There is hope for this world, even annihilation would leave a few survivors and that would be enough, and perhaps better, even if my lovely England would have disappeared in the process.

So there must be some sort of future for me too, even if I cannot imagine any of it. At least it is not at the past that I am looking, I have assumed my decisions, I have accepted my new life, and now I am sitting here hoping for the best, for the future.

This is exactly where America and England should be now. We have done things we may regret, we can debate it for years to come, ultimately it is to the future that we need to look now.

What is that big destiny we are living? Where is it that we are going? What is the future has in store for us? Will we be happier or more miserable? Will we be hit again by terrorists or Corporate America, can we make anyone happy by our actions, or can only alienate everyone crossing our path?

Will York still stand at the end of this war? York is very close to Scotland, it has been conquered and destroyed many times by the Scottish. Despite it all, it still stands proudly, full of its history and ruins. It is a great example to us all, that today it lives in peace and another war with Scotland is almost unthinkable.

Almost, since we never know what to expect of the future. Nothing is carved in stone, especially our rights and liberties which have been rewritten recently. And these new terror laws are about to become permanent. And I have heard no one scream about this. I tried to scream, of course, I was not heard. We will just have to live with it, I guess.

America as we knew it no longer exists, until at least we get a new President, and then, with all this playing with the voters' ballots, I'm not sure if we can. Democracy has also gone out the window. Something else we will need to learn to live with.

We might as well have an actor from Austria as Governor, at least it makes politics more interesting, as it is so booring, it could send anyone to sleep instantly.

At the moment I am more worried about the fact that it is 3 am, that I am on my third beer, and that I still have one day to go before the long weekend. I'm just hoping to be able to survive it without another call in the office to let me know how incompetent I am in my new job.

I was again given two projects to do at the same time, and of course, not enough time to do any of them. So I have done one, and I tell you, I had to be highly creative to get results in less then four hours, when I was given half an hour, and it would have taken me three days normally.

And tomorrow somehow I need to accomplish another miracle. I need to get in contact with the Governor of Alaska, no less, one day before the New Year. I wish

to discuss gas pipelines please, dear me. I might just as well try to contact an alien species somewhere in the Delta quadrant, and ask them about weird rock formations on some lost planet. I could do that easy in a script.

In the sixty channels I have between my TV and my DVD Recorder, somehow my TV got stuck on the channel C-Span2 for the last few days. No wonder my brain is no longer working properly. Yesterday a woman told the whole of America that she was particularly interested in how we could kick out a senator from the senate. I regret now not having listened to the answer, I gather it is probably near impossible to do so. Whatever.

They have a senate in this country? Is more likely the question I would be asking if I were to call C-Span2. No, I haven't learned how the political American system works, well I did, but I had the time to forget in time you see.

America is not the center of the world you know, we don't know all there is to know about it. And sometimes, against our will, we get to know more about it than most Americans who just appear to love to bury their head under the sand, like an Ostrich would do.

Ignorance is a privilege these days, and the more ignorant I can remain, the better I feel. Filling my head with all that crap, brings me to the brink of insanity. Because so many people are just insane in America. Nowhere else in the world would you find so many people stating things that defy logic and reason, and find many supporters to state the same thing.

Maybe this kind of madness happens when your country has 300 million people, you will always find a few to support any crazy idea, and a few rich ones willing to spend millions and stake their life on it. I guess I am more idealistic than I would like to admit.

Should I get more local then? We have a powerful mayor in the Valley, who from what I have read so far, seems to approach despotism. He is definitely on some sort of power trip that went to his head, even though all I have read so far is on the front page of the newspaper of the valley.

I read it when I eat my toasted egg sandwich in the morning. I don't know, maybe he is cleaning up the corruption around here, though this is not the impression I got.

The impression I got was that he has the newspaper on his side and if he farts, they report it on the first page the next day. Now, that cannot be healthy, surely... to control the media like that. I would imagine he does most of his politics in the newspaper office. That says it all. One step closer to propaganda.

I did not want to become political, especially that I am so ignorant about it (thank god!). So let's talk about something else. Music. On my SD card right now I have some Depeche Mode, Gorillaz, Charlatans UK, Goldfrapp, Sinead O'Connor (no wonder I feel all screwed up) and some Suzanne Vega.

I'm afraid, once it is on my SD card in my phone, that is all I listen to for weeks and months. Because it takes me forever to decide to change the MP3s on my player. Suzanne Vega is the only artist I have seen in concert more than once, apart from Depeche Mode. I saw her in London in Shepherd's Bush, and once in my region in the North of Québec years ago.

It is so special when someone so big comes to such a remote place as my region in the North of Canada. I loved every second of it, I felt in love right there with her. She is also a proof that somehow both my region and London are connected, as she must be the only person in this world who like me went to both these places in her lifetime.

I have to try hard to remember anything that happened to me whilst I was living in the North of Québec, it is like another lifetime to me, a past life. I can barely remember anything after Ottawa, Paris, Brussels, Toronto, New York, London and now Los Angeles.

It is like I would love to forget where I come from, as if it had never existed. However this is difficult, since all my family still live there. I am being brought back there all the time, even if I did not show up once in the last 5 years, and on my last visit, it had been five years since I put my foot there.

I hate it. I hate Québec, Canada, everything about it. Sure, better be from there than Africa or some weird Eastern European country, but this is not how I imagined I would live this life.

Would it not be better to say that I was born in the desert of Nevada? Or somewhere in Texas where they are building their huge Trans-Texas Corridor superhighway? Should I not have been born in the Los Angeles Valley? Or in York, England? Even the Canal du Midi in France or Paris would have done the trick. Then I would have been a nobody, who might have succeeded at some point, with nothing else to say about it.

Being a French-Canadian, you cannot exist outside of Québec. You can have some success in France, be recognized for it in Québec, pass on TV, and then that's it. I don't want that, I don't want to be limited to one lost province of a lost country.

I want to be from everywhere, I want to live everywhere, I want to speak for the whole world, I want to be universal. It is just as well that so far I had more success everywhere else in the world than in Québec, who still don't know who I am. I could not bare it anyway, I hate small minded people. And they certainly are.

I was born with the idea that I could never achieve anything in life. That I would be lucky to even get heard in Montreal. And such a great achievement would be necessary in order to do so, that it was more in the realm of the dreams than reality to reach that stage.

I am glad I skipped that step altogether and was recognized in France before anything remotely related to Québec. I am even glad that I connected to Hollywood and worked for the NBC before, and in England for Channel 4 (and the PBS).

I am from my time. I could have been born in the Nevada desert as far as anyone is concerned. I don't have any background in Québec, I just don't exist there. And if my family was living somewhere else, I would not talk about it, I would not go there anymore.

And yet, after all is done, it is probably the only place on the planet where they will not forget me, my books, my life. Because I belong there, I belong to them. There is no denying it. At least they are proud of their peers succeeding outside of the province, the country. It makes them dream that they could too reach out like this.

If ever all I have written in my life will help me survive, as some sort of pension, it will be because all the students in Québec will have to buy my books every year to read them and analyze them. I cannot say I don't like this idea. It would be consecration. As I'm sure, this would never happened in France in my case. But then, what do I know about my future life as an author? Nothing, I cannot conceptualize it. Good, there is no limit then.

And that is the problem. Limits. Hard for someone to create anything, and for it to go beyond the borders of where he was born. Why is this so? I was born with the idea that I could never reach out to the world, that no one would ever read me outside of my province.

So little authors made it to France from Québec, it was not possible to think I could do it. But I did! Without even being recognized in Québec. And I love it. This is how small minded you become when you are born in a small and insignificant place which means nothing to anyone else on this planet.

I'm afraid to admit, once again, it does mean something to me. I'm dying to be recognized in Québec. They are 8 million of them after all, almost as big as Belgium. I have skip a step, and like many other authors before, I was recognized first in France, and then usually they get recognized even more so in Québec.

It has not happened yet, but I know it will one day. It should, though it might never happened. Maybe I am the odd one, who will never be recognized in his own land. And just about every article about me so far in my home land has been about that, that no one is a prophet in his own country, or something like that anyway.

They do know me though, a lot have heard of me. I am known there, I know that. But it is not enough. Again, I am ambitious, I need to conquer places, I need to be heard without any doubt. I want to become the most important author that ever lived in Québec. That is secretly what I want, and now openly, since I

am drunk enough to say so in my blog. Then again, this is in English, none of them will read this, so I feel safe talking like this here.

And the thing is, I have written enough already that I could become that now, or in time, without writing another word. It is great when at 33 you feel like you have done everything, written anything that you feel needed to be written. That whatever else you might do would be just a waste of time and unnecessary.

You can also decide that all that was a waste of time and that everything great and wonderful, your best work, is still ahead of you. It gives you a second chance at life, the hope to get somewhere, a drive to start that great destiny. And I chose that view. That everything great was ahead of me, not in the past.

So I have a lot of work to do. I don't even know where to start. I need to break up with my past, with everything I have done so far. It is not a continuation, it is starting from nothing. I am in Los Angeles now, in a different medium, everything is to be built. Better get started soon, even if my motivation is at zero right now.

Meeting the right people might change all that. Let's keep the hope, let's keep dreaming, let's see what will happen next. Let's just go over the end of this year, and start anew.

The New Year should be my most promising year ever, and sure enough, every year in the last ten years has been better than the previous one. And I am at the right place, at the right time, to make that New Year my best ever.

I will get somewhere.

10 January 2006

I feel sick today, I do not feel very motivated. I am also tired. I worked hard on that film script, but now really in the last two days. I think I am just permanently tired and I don't know what to do to get out of my lethargy. Sleep I guess, a luxury I have not known for the past 33 years.

I am also, and I don't care if he is reading this right now, I am also exceedingly tired of feeling observed and watched and spied upon by the Black guy at work. I am tired that when I go downstairs to buy a sandwich, he comes out of the lift.

That every times I am not working or that I am talking, here he goes in the background. That every time I go to the kitchen, he comes in the kitchen too. For god's sake!

Just leave me alone! And when I am late, that's it, he is just to not be sitting on my chair to find out at the time I will be arriving. And you just know that all these he records somewhere and reports back to my bosses. I am the only one who is paranoid about him, since no one else were told by Isabella (the San Salvadorian girl), that the Black guy was watching over us. So as soon as the bosses disappear, everyone starts talking to each other, even if the Black guy is there. He must be reporting a lot of misbehavior then... my valley girl is certainly an expert at going around the office and gossiping for hours.

My boss' wife is going back to Canada for a while, meaning Montreal. That's nice, so she still has family there. I wish I could go to Canada myself, or London, even though at the moment working on that film script is the most important thing, even though I know this is a big waste of time and will never go anywhere.

12 January 2006

Desperate for a way out... of conferences

It is fitting that just at the end of last year, a few days ago, I was saying that this New Year would be my best ever. I was of course talking about my potential success in Hollywood. However, the single first idea that seems to have taken shape in my mind on the first day of the year had nothing to do with Hollywood.

What has been on my mind is that I am ready. I am ready to start my own business. And funny enough, it is that I have worked in L.A., and learned about how they do things here, also in my last job where I learned everything about what I will need for my business plan, that I am now ready to start my own conference business.

It is perfect, this is what I need to free myself from any obligations at any time. And in time I will be able to hire someone to do what I am supposed to do in that conference business, and if it becomes necessary for me to work on a film script for a month, it should not be a problem.

It is also after researching a whole conference about venture capital and private equity at work, that I realized that many people out there have more money than they know what to do with it, and are dying to invest in just about any crazy idea out there. And the beauty of it is, that to start a company, you don't need any money. You just need a good idea and a good business plan.

So I have downloaded the perfect application to help me do just that, and it has been brewing in my mind for quite a while now, even if it has only been a few days. The fact that I have to start working on my first conference at work, and that I would do anything not to start working on that conference, has fueled me into working on my own business plan.

Of course, I think I am as intelligent as my bosses, so why should I be a slave to them, when they made something like a million dollar last year, when I can do the same and have my own slaves?

Obviously I am not taken the easy route. I won't be doing business or corporate conferences, which would ensure a lot of revenue. I am heading towards the mass market, the paranormal, the new age stuff, psychics and theoretical physics. I could seriously fail in my venture. But being my own boss of a company I care nothing about is not my idea of fun.

I have to contribute to something I believe in, that motivates me. I don't want to fall asleep in the conference rooms of my own events. I want to be passionate about what it is all about. This has nothing to do with making money, it is about having the freedom I want and make enough to survive whilst still doing what I want to do in life.

I will not be able to charge \$3,000 per delegate, like most companies I worked for. And many times, we barely broke even and get back our investment. I will need to charge as little as possible, and still manage to make a profit. I feel that I might then get more people than just the magic 100 delegates we have always been reaching for, to cover our cost. I will need at least 200 delegates to get back my money, but then I am counting on exhibitors and sponsors to make a profit.

I need to start slowly, only Stephen and I will work on this at the beginning so it does not cost me \$60,000 per conference. And eventually, as we get more

money, I will hire telesales and sponsorship people. I can take care of everything else with Stephen.

And this means that this business will be based in England, though I am dying to host an event in Los Angeles and Las Vegas. Even Paris. That will be my playing field, which is quite large actually, considering that I will start with no database whatsoever.

I will need a good marketing budget, £12,000 at least per event. I am even considering not printing anything and not posting any flyers. I wonder if everything can be done electronically, and advertisement with associations' members and magazines.

To be safe, I need a budget of £40,000 per conference, and I need enough money to do three conferences in the first year. All sensibly related to the same subject, so I don't have to triple my costs in all areas. Working on one event will be like working on all three at the same time.

One conference, the big one, will take place in London. The second, more ghosts oriented, will be in York, and the third one, I don't know yet. Maybe Manchester or Brighton. Maybe even in Dublin or Wales. Oh, that's it, Edinburgh! Yes, Edinburgh in Scotland. And I will arrange for a visit to the catacombs for all my delegates. Like in London I will plan a night out in some haunted place, preferably in the unused tunnels of the Underground. And York, simply a visit of all the haunted place, tours are already in place.

I am so excited about all this, I can barely wait to write the conference programs. And this is a first for me, because in the last ten years, I always did everything else but write my conference agenda. And the thing is, it would have made my life so much easier to forget everything else and concentrate on the program from the start. Human nature, I hate writing conference programs on subjects I care nothing about, when the profit goes to someone else.

So I need £200,000 to start my business. And within a year I need to have gotten back that money with my three conferences. Seems unrealistic, I will have to cut corners. If I don't provide food, and I should not be expected to do so when charging so little to attend, I might get away with costs of £30,000 per conference.

I could do it all for £120,000, the extra £30,000 would be to pay the rent, cars, our own food and bills. But I want to be on the safe side, so I will need £200,000 just in case. And keep the extra money for the fourth event.

Once again my blog (and writing my books) helps me to figure out important stuff. Sounds like a plan. And now I am dying to write that business plan and go back to England to start working on this project.

It would be reassuring to know that I can count on my credit rate in the U.K., but it is zero. It would also reassure me to know that I could count on family, but either they don't have the money or they have rated me as some crazy person a long time ago and would certainly not trust any of my decisions.

Even Stephen at the beginning will not even leave his job, I will be all alone to work on this. I feel that somehow I will make it come true and make a nice profit. That's the difference between being a slave, or your own boss with the need to survive.

I will tell the bank that I need three years to make my first profit, so it will give me some time to get this company somewhere without too much stress. It is well known that it is in the second and third year running for any event to become huge. And that is what I plan to build in time. The most important conferences on any of the subjects that I will take on.

And I don't care about competition, I have produced too many conferences in my lifetime which had sensibly the same program and speakers than a dozen other conferences in the same town, and yet, we made a good profit. Perhaps we did not have the same delegates, but we certainly had the same sponsors and exhibitors, and those want as many conferences on the subjects they are interested in as can be.

So, in retrospect, my ten years working in conferences might not be wasted after all. I am 33 years old, still quite young. It is very much worth diving into the unknown of having my own business. I could be working another 37 years for others if I don't do something and if I have to retire at 70, as it seems very likely now. And if my great topics for conferences don't work very well, I can change

instantly to better and more profitable areas, even if I dislike the topics, and then I will insure my future.

The only thing that could stop me now, is the film script I am working on. If somehow that gets sold, it would certainly change my life and I can forget about conferences forever. I am in Hollywood, and I am connected, so it could get sold. But at the moment I cannot wait to find out, I need to plan my way out, I need to build my future.

And I already have the name of my future company: The Marginal Conferences. It has a nice ring to it, don't you think? And I will film the conferences and publish books about what will be said at the events. So the ultimate name will be The Marginal Productions, and there will be The Marginal Films and The Marginal Publishing. And eventually, perhaps, who knows, The Marginal Grocery Store and the Marginal Bank, but these will be non-profit organizations to help the planet. One can dream!

If I was a bit more adventurous, my company would be called The Crowned Anarchist Productions Company, and The Crowned Anarchist Conferences. But somehow too many squeamish people would be stopped by that. So I can't afford it for my business. Oh well, who cares anyway? It might never see the light of day.

21 January 2006

Going back to work on Monday, makes you wish for an earthquake

Now I think I am going to bed. I'm going to try to forget this day. And tomorrow I won't do anything, so perhaps the day will seem long, and going back to work on Monday will not come so fast. Another week there might be just what I need to tip me over the edge. When the valley girl will open her mouth to shout with her nasal voice, as she always does, I will have to contain myself to prevent me from hitting her in the face. Because I am reaching my limit of annoyance.

The same with the Chinese girl who has the most annoying and loud voice, while thinking the world of herself, and being so condescending about everyone else. She needs to get back on earth. I don't know what she has to prove, what she

has gone through in her life to reach that point, but she seems blind to the fact that she has turned into a monster and I just can't bear it anymore.

I will also have to work with the Senior Conference Producer, who is becoming more patronizing by the day with me, when I have as much experience as him, and my conference programs have always looked ten times more elaborate than his, and I worked on them alone.

And yet I am helping him to produce that crap event. And not only that, he also has another Chinese girl working for him on this. What the heck has he done on that conference apart from writing two miserable and meaningless pages that I can't even understand? It makes no sense, and yet it will bring a hundred delegates because... whatever, the subject is of interest to the people who will attend. Even if they will have to go to Utah for this.

Right, I will need at least one full day to prepare myself mentally to go back there for a whole week. Makes you wish that an earthquake, a hurricane or even bird flu will hit Los Angeles next week, to prevent me from doing so... knowing my boss though, it would not stop him from expecting that conference to be finished within two days instead of a month.

22 January 2006

Could my baby have met someone else in London?

Funny, I woke up today and I tried to reach Stephen. Yesterday he was not there, and today it seems that he is somewhere else again. I was wondering if what I thought would never happen, could have actually happened. Could he have met someone in London?

It would only be fair, considering what I did in L.A., even if it has been a disaster. And now I am ready to be faithful again, even if that means no sex for three months. First because I owe it to him, and also because I understand now that I love him more than I could love anyone else. And I know now that we will get back together one day, whilst when I moved here I considered that this might mark the end of our relationship.

For the last two days he has not been home, and he had a few gay people buzzing around him at work, even though he would never say anymore than that to me. Is it possible that he found someone else? He might have gone to these gay bars, talk with a few people, god knows, it is certainly possible.

Well, good luck for the guy who will end up with him: heroine addiction, crazy behaviors, virtually no sex for weeks if not months without first begging, suffering someone with a verbal diarrhea problem, with more debts than England. Have I covered everything? You can only love someone like that after spending ten years with them and found out about all these little trifles along the way.

At the same time, I have to admit, that if he was to tell me that he has met someone, it would in a way force the issue. It would liberate me from the return to England option. I would not go back there to start a new life, I already have one in Los Angeles. I would feel as lost there than here. And suddenly that great huge house in the Malibu or Santa Monica State Park would not appear so crazy after all. My whole life could change forever and I could be determined to succeed here in Hollywood.

You will note that I am no longer in crisis this morning, I keep a great memory of my little trip of yesterday around town, I'm back to normal. Even if I am still a bit freaked out and that I am not certain what I will do today.

I slept 12 hours. Again I had those weird dreams about my father and my sister. It's been three days in a row now, never mind the phone bill, I think I will call them both today, something might be going on over there in the North of Canada, and of course if I don't call, I'll be the last one to know in six months time when they decide to call.

23 January 2006

I can be sacked at one minute's notice

George is finally gone, just like that. He is supposed to come back to help a bit with sales, but he is no longer working here. I have to say, it is one thing to have contracts that can be terminated at one minute's notice, it is another to leave someone in the hole like that, especially when they have a family and children.

This impossibility to plan your life ahead at least one month in advance, is quite disturbing. Moreover that the guy has been working here for at least 6 years. Unbelievable that after all that, he had no security whatsoever, because apparently he was working on a contract basis.

Well, I have to say that I don't find that very inspiring and I should be prepared any day to be told that I have been sacked. And at that point I am not certain what I will be able to do to pay my apartment and plane ticket, I would just hope that it would come at a time right after I get paid or close to being paid. I have absolutely no motivation today after what I just heard. I feel I will be sacked as well any day now.

However I think that in his case there was more than what we have been told, obviously. I won't be the one to hear about the gossip, that's for sure. I guess the bosses did not know after all that he was developing his business plan for the last two years about that pyramidal scheme of insurance selling. I guess they did not see clearly through his game, they would have realized that he would never have made it in that scheme. Never made any money and probably would never have made the jump.

According to my valley girl, this had nothing to do with him being laid off. And apparently he will get unemployment insurance. And apparently any employer can sack any of their employees at 5 minutes notice without giving real good explanation or justifying it. The employees can do the same.

So I guess that if as an employer you prefer to make sure you can get rid of your employees fast, and don't really care if you lose any of your best employees fast as well, than America is the perfect place for business. I presume it is quite convenient for employers, and I should have known that there would be some sort of capitalist way of doing business here which would be more logical than what Canadians and Europeans have been used to in their cozy little safe jobs.

In those countries, employers often have a damn hard time getting rid of people they don't want or who are useless. And that is why they play this hard game with the personal department where they eventually find a way to make your life so impossible, that you will either leave or they will eventually be able to get rid of you on a stupidity or something.

In a way the American system, even if it leaves you in the shit and does not give you the time to find another job, it certainly spare you the psychological nightmare of going through the long process of being sacked via 3 warnings and multiple hard meetings, etc.

America does not really care about its people, that much is obvious. They would not provide adequate health system, social securities, any sort of security at work or in life, and yet it does collect a high percentage of taxes, and employees still have to pay for their health and dental insurance every month, quite a lot of money actually.

America only cares for what can make money, to make it more successful, the key successful point to be profitable as a whole. They have pushed the ideals of capitalism to the limits, where only companies now have any rights and liberties. And that way they produced a very successful and rich country, with more rich people than anywhere else in the world. They also created a comfortable middle class which profits from all this richness, but are most likely to be slaves to their jobs and living near the depression.

And finally, America has left a lot of people living in such poverty, that there are probably as many people in this country who are hungry right now than what you would find in Africa.

I think it is interesting from the point of view of history to have at least one country that has pushed the idea of capitalism to its limits, and I would not have seen this for myself if I had not come here in the first place. Let's see where all of this will lead them to. Who knows who is right in the end?

Phew, now I can I speak. Before I was at work, so I had to sound nice just in case the Black guy could read. I am so disgusted that he was sacked like that, such a nice guy. I hope he was ready for his new job in that pyramidal thing, even if it is temporary. Hopefully he will make some money there. If he is that successful, perhaps they will give him great potential contracts. Of course, this is if they still believe in his potential, considering that he was sacked.

Bof, I don't feel like talking anymore. Stephen just called. I was worried for no reason this weekend. He still loves me very much and he is still faithful. And I

believe him, at least that's one person who does not lie to me, so I hope. One person I can actually trust for a change.

Who should have been sacked, it is those two girls, the valley girl and the Chinese one. Who have cost the jobs of so many before through their own incompetence. They successfully blamed their inadequacy on the ones under them. I had quite a conversation with Isabella about them today, she can't stand them. They sound nice, but they stab her all the time, especially the valley girl.

There is always a bitch in any conference office that will always keep track of everyone's movement, and will love to make a big deal of if you disappear for five minutes when you were not supposed to. The valley girl is like that. If you go to lunch for too long, she will find a reason to be looking for you and will go and ask everyone in the company where you are and why you are not at your desk, and that you were gone for two hours, etc. I have met them all my life, there is always one like that. And of course, when they are late, no problems, no one is there to do the same to them.

And my valley girl is always late at the moment, she seems to have problems getting to work. And every time, being so perfect, she calls the office to let them know she will be one hour late. And every time we receive an email saying she will be late. I must have 30 of them by now, so she should worry about her own schedule instead of trying to denounce everyone else for the little freedom they try to take back from the company.

I did not have to tell Isabella that I found their voice annoying, that's the first thing she said. And she even does a great imitation of the valley girl. Isabella did say that the valley girl could be helpful at times, and very nice, and this is also true, I have to admit. She just appears to be incapable of thinking before she speaks, it comes out naturally automatically, and sometimes she can be very rude or insulting. I'm glad I'm not under her, I would have been sacked by now.

One more thing, the lost of our salesman had a horrific effect on all of us. We have all been promoted to salesmen as well. Now I will have to sell sponsorship deals and exhibitor's space. Something I am certainly not enjoying. Cold calling, asking for money, being hung up on the phone. Not counting how long that will take, considering what we already have to do to finish these conferences in no time.

The one positive thing about this is that I will finally learn the only thing I had not learned in my 10 years in conferences. Sales of SPEX. After that I would guess that I will not be afraid to pick up the phone and ask for money. I might learn a thing or two that will be useful for my future company.

And obviously, all that news today made me want to go home and work on my own business. The only thing that stopped me is Stephen, saying that neither of us will be able to get the money to start that business. Me because of my so-called bankruptcy, and him because, if he puts the apartment for collateral, his parents will never forgive him and will disinherit him. Not counting that his mother had enough of me, and would probably hope by now that I will remain here and Stephen in London.

I have been there before, my first boyfriend and his mother, freaking out when I left for Paris and brought along her son to Paris and London. Her wish was realized, our relationship was over before we came back. But she regretted, me no longer being here. Sebastian slept with something like 50 people and was still depressed, and then met a drug addict that made his life a misery for two years, before finally getting back to normal with someone who looked just like me.

What Stephen's mother does not know, is that if our relationship ends, Stephen will die of an overdose. And without me in his life for the past 11 years, he would certainly be dead by now. I should have told her that before I left. As it stands, I was hiding in the toilets when she last visited, I could not confront her. I wanted to say goodbye, but she left too quickly. And Stephen was not pleased about that.

I will still do my business plan, you never know.

29 January 2006 (2)

One cousin in prison, the other in hospital

My mom just called, my cousin is in prison and my other cousin is in hospital, she almost died. One of the other passengers who were in the car accident has many broken things, and the other one, as my cousin who is now in prison, have nothing.

Apparently there was ice on the road. It is so common these car accidents in my region in the North of Québec, it is amazing that we are still all alive today. I myself had quite an accident once, and I thought I was going to die.

What is less usual, well not exactly, but my cousin was three or four times over the alcohol limit, and everyone else in the car were also completely drunk and were only 15 years old.

I then called my sister, who will have her new baby in less than 11 days. She was so hyperactive, in the end she hung up the phone on me, despite the fact that I was quite laid back. I could not believe it. I then called my father, but he was not there. I spoke with his wife, and she said that with pregnant women, it was normal to be freaked out for no reason. She said to call my sister one week after she had her baby to congratulate her, and everything will be forgotten.

Perhaps, but I call my sister once every six months, if she is lucky. I must have called her less than 10 times in the last 15 years. I can assure you that it will be a very long time before I call her again. Even if we love each other very much and are usually very close.

All of this was quite a shock, but I am watching *Ship in a Bottle* now, *Star Trek the Next Generation*, the episode about Sherlock Holmes and James Moriarty. I thought how great an actor Daniel Davis is, and how perfect he would be in the film script I am working on. And then I did a little bit of research and realized that he was in the TV series *The Nanny*. I wonder if he could still be the right actor now, if he is going to be recognized as that butler. I would certainly hire him if I could, and if this film is ever made.

So sad that my cousin is in prison now, and the other one is dying in the hospital. My mom was saying that a lot can happen in one day, even in one hour. She is certainly right there. And yet, nothing has happened in my life in the last three months. It is just as well, the only big life changing events that happen overnight, are usually the most destructive ones. The productive events in your life seem to take months if not years to come to any conclusion.

30 January 2006 (2)

The Cool Spanish Guy I am working with, a Metrosexual?

And after all this, which was just an appetizer, let me talk about that little Hispanic guy at work. The cool Spanish guy, as described before. I think I have been flirting a bit too much with him, only because he let it happen. So how straight is he then? Today I had to fight Isabella twice, she was suggesting out loud that I was interested in him. I had to hit her a bit and call her some names out loud. Hopefully she will calm down.

Well, at least now the cool Spanish guy knows I am interested. It is most probably a tired long running joke in my back at work that I fancy him. I even think that the Director is involved, as at one point some days ago he said that he needed some sunlight, and he went to the Spanish guy and acted weird. As if the Spanish guy was some sort of illumination or positive force. And somehow, I feel this is all down to the fact that I feel it could be that way, and everyone knows.

I certainly like to look at him, he is the only thing that makes this whole job bearable. He usually wears sandals, he has big feet, and a nice face. He seems so pure and innocent, and childish, despite his 28 years. As I said before, there is nothing threatening in his eyes, he is totally genuine. And intelligent and quick. He comes to me to correct his English, can you believe, when his English must be twice better than mine.

I can just imagine what it would be like to be in his arms for one long big night. The Earth will stop turning, that's for sure. Love would be written all over this special event. But before I get carried away, he is most probably straight, even if I have my doubts.

First he is too comfortable with my flirting, he had girlfriends before, and apparently he had a date last week with one of them. That does not look like someone incapable of accepting his homosexuality, it sounds more like a Metrosexual. Someone who is comfortable with the thought that men could be attracted to them, but ultimately would never go any further than flirting on the edge.

So I don't know what to do about it. I don't want either to become the clown of the office, by going for a lunch with him, whilst the only purpose would be to get back to the office to tell everyone whatever I might have implied.

He took two photos of me today, why? What was the purpose of this? Again, I am reading too much into this. It means nothing. But his interest in me seems to have gone higher since I started to wear my black jeans, and black polo shirts, and especially my black shoes. He seemed to think that I can be cool as well. And what he does not know, is that I am light years more cool than he is, so I think anyway.

He is 28 years old, he has nothing to show for it. He is definitely two dimensional. I think I have lived enough on this earth, and in so many countries, and written so much, that I am living in at least 10 dimensions.

Which means that I will have much more to give to him than he will ever have to give back in return. It would most likely be a one way relationship, I will give, he will take. This is how empty I see him. I could be wrong, but I doubt it. A man who's only friends are the three insignificant girls surrounding me, cannot be that cool. Unless somehow these girls were more specials than I first assessed. Which I doubt very much.

The truth is that he could enjoy this flirtation for months, when I would actually act upon it. That makes a big difference. It means that he is someone who's not mature enough, despite his 28 years. Nothing will ever happen between us, I know that. It is a game for him. And I play it because I'm so bored in that office.

The difference is, that if he is gay at all, he's lost. He will definitely fall in love with me as if he had never lived before, a bit like Leonardo, even though Leonardo is much more complex and had some sort of background. And it would not be certain that I will fall in love with him. Though he is so charming and cute, it would be very difficult to resist.

But one thing that being older and mature bring, is that I can stop myself from loving someone. I can understand that it will lead to disaster before it even begins. The head is controlling the body, not the other way around. It may be sad, but this is where I am at in my life.

I have a life, I have a destiny. It spawns many lifetimes, many relationships, many countries. I am going somewhere and nothing will get in the way of that destiny. I might not know where I am going, but I don't care. I know what I

want, I know what's good for me. I know where I will be in five years time, because it will be exactly where I want to be.

He's got no clue of who he is and what he represents. He does not even believe he has any kind of potential. I don't even think he has any dream or goals in life. I asked him if he could write conference programs, for a report I was writing, suggesting that he should, instead of being the slave of that Chinese girl. He interpreted it as if I did not believe he could. He felt the need to prove to me that he was capable, saying that I doubted he was even intelligent. How cool is that, I ask you?

I had to tell him that I sincerely thought he could be responsible for his own conferences, and get rid of being a slave, an assistant. I don't think it registered in his brain what I was talking about. He has no idea that I am writing reports for the bosses, on how this whole company should be. I can't tell them either. The bosses have hired these expensive consultants to change it all, and in the end they will all agree that my suggestions are the way to go. Because I have seen the perfect way to achieve what they are trying to achieve, in many companies I worked for before.

They are not asking for my reports, I write them on my spare time. They obviously did not trust my judgment, my experience. They need to pay big money to have it confirmed to them. I don't mind, I am beyond caring, since my single idea is to get out of this job. And yet, everything I have written in my reports so far, seems to have been observed. Even before I started. I am only realizing now that they have changed a lot before I arrived, based on my reports.

And now they are addicted, they want more from professional sources. Without understanding that it could only come from someone with the specific experience that they are in. They were not crazy when they decided to get me there in the first place. They knew I could help them change, the way they wanted. They are just incapable of admitting great work when it is there, something echoed by my Valley Girl.

Sad that I will have left them by the time they realize what they had. Sad that they will be powerless to prevent me from leaving when I do, as at that point they would want to say how helpful I have been, and how all my reports were on the dot and will lead to happiness and success. It will be too late then. I did not

feel appreciated, I was pressured, I was pushed out. I am leaving with a smile on my face, feeling liberated from that nightmare.

I don't even think that in the next two months they will be able to change my mind, that place is not a nice place to work. If people maintained themselves for so long, it must be out of necessity, good paying jobs they could not so easily abandon from fears of looking like useless people to the people they're living with. And a lack of guts to get out there and find a better job.

These small minded people make me sick. I would have thought to meet them in Arkansas or Oklahoma, not in Los Angeles.

1 February 2006

Like a young actor who has not made it yet in Hollywood

Oh, what a day. Nothing of any significance happened, and yet I am dead. I spent last night helping Leonardo, my new friend in L.A., figuring out his piano (for god's sake, he has that piano since 1997, and he still knows nothing about it). After that I helped him sending me the film script we are working on, even though he does that almost every day, 24 hours is enough for him to forget how to do this. And then I tried to help him sort out his antivirus. By the time we had finished, it was past 1 am.

I took two hours for lunch, but I still managed to work 30 minutes more tonight, to send many emails that should have been sent days ago. So it looks good.

I also got the chance to ask the Spanish guy, who has been flirting with me for weeks now, if he was gay or not. He said that he is as straight as they come. I find that hard to believe, however I believe it. So that is at least sorted.

The last two days he came at work dressing like some sort of young actor who has not made it yet. Funky, shorts, bubble hat, whatever. I asked him if he had a date or if it was for us that he decided to dress like that. For us apparently. And the Valley Girl had another one of her comments to make, she asked: what have you decided to wear today? Ah, you're wearing everything!

He knows he is kind of cute, and he will take any flirting from anyone, even men. At the same time, the guy is fatter than me, so he can't brag too much! Well, I'm not that fat, and he is not either, so he still has his sex appeal.

Today he referred again to the fact that he knew everything about me, that everyone knew. As if somehow they were aware of my blog and were all reading it. It made me freak out. I probed him, and he mentioned the word blog, about other of my readers having blogs about me (I did show him I think some people blogging about my books in Paris).

I think he realized he said too much and at that point he would have had to tell me that they were all reading my blog at work. At that moment, I would have deleted it. So he concocted that other excuse, that he was talking about others talking about me.

I believe he might have been talking about what the Black guy can read in the files I am sending myself home sometimes. That's also possible. God knows.

Well, if they are all reading this blog, let's give them something to chew on. All the girls at work are quite fat, and they are all buzzing around him, probably in love, but he is not interested. Yet, he loves the attention, he needs them to feel better about himself. And now he is exercising to lose weight. I wonder why, something must have changed, perhaps he is interested in someone after all, but not me, that's for sure.

The only girls who are not fat in the office are the two Chinese girls and the wife of my boss. One of the Chinese girls is so annoying and rude, it does not really matter if she is not fat, she kinds of cancel the fact that she is not fat by her behavior.

The other one is so lovely, I could take her as my wife quite easily. At least she could become a friend, but I just don't know how to make friends anymore, especially in a work environment. Anyway, I don't have enough time for friends. Leonardo is already stretching me to the limits. And I have to remind him when it is just too much.

Oh God, I'm bored, I'm sick, I have to go to bed, it is merely 8 pm. I only live to work, I don't write, I don't read, I had only a beer, and a full plate of god knows

what, thinking it would make me feel better, but now I'm ready to puke everywhere. What a sad unproductive life. Please someone just shoot me in the head!

I don't even look forward to the weekend. I used to be so excited to regain my freedom, but my weekends are so boring, they have become as routine as my daily job in conferences.

Something has got to happen soon, before they find me dead drunk in my flat, weighting over 15 stones. Because I would have eaten and drunk myself to death for leading such an uninspiring life.

Just shoot me.

2 February 2006

A big spamming machine, here are our broochuuurres

Today lot's of stress at work. I think the Spanish guy went around all the girls at work to let them know that I asked if he was gay yesterday, and obviously he is not. I think they all had a good laugh about it. I can't blame them, life is so boring in this office at the moment, despite all the background action from all these consultants they hired.

Maybe something will happen to change it all, and somehow I don't think it will be for the better. Change is seldom for the better, which is why following changes in any office, many people leave right after. Especially if they have been there for years and were used to do their job a certain way that worked for them.

Today, despite sleeping for 9 hours yesterday, I could not stand the Chinese girl speaking, to even hear her say the word Broochuuure with her accent is just too much for me. So you can imagine I was not in the mood to listen to the valley girl either.

And I managed to insult her badly, as everyone else in the office. When I told them about Bush cutting 40 billions in the social services area, and wanting to make the Terror Laws (Patriot Act) permanent. When I understood that the valley girl found all that very much acceptable, I said no wonder this country is going

down the drain. I did not really thought that, it was meant as some sort of joke, but obviously it came out as a huge insult to all the Americans in the office.

So there were tensions, after the valley girl said that she will not discuss these things at work. I did not even feel guilt for saying such a thing, I felt disgusted and tired of this life. I don't know what else to invent to get back on the train, to be motivated to accomplish anything. I would need at least three days off, not a weekend. Two days is just enough to decompress me and then I have to go back to work.

Dear me, I have to go back to work. Sending emails and call people for money. A woman called this morning to let me know that we were sending them too many emails and broochuuuures. Which reminds me, that is what I will create with my conference company, a big spamming machine that will bother everyone that will have the misfortune to end up in my database.

I refused to spam people about my literary website, and now I will have to do so for my company. This thought only came to me recently, and I don't really like it. I'll become one more big spammer on the net. I guess there are ways around this, that could make it a little bit more acceptable. Giving them the chance instantly to be out of my database, but will that be enough? I receive so much spam, if I were to want get out of all these databases it would be impossible. Especially that when you do request that, instead you confirm your email address and suddenly you are added to 20 more lists.

Real spammers have destroyed it for everyone. Not sure how I will live with all this, my conscience, bothering people, in the name of making a few bucks. Ah, if only I was selling such a great service that everyone would just flock to me. But that does not exist without great visibility. And that means marketing, telesales, publicity, other concepts I just hate and would gladly live without.

3 February 2006

Los Angeles is a paradise, like a virtual world in 3D

I don't know what the temperature reached today in Woodland Hills in the San Fernando Valley, but it must have been 35 degree Celsius, something like 90

Fahrenheit. I slept only four hours last night and so I did not do anything today at work.

I left the office at 16h (4 pm) and I simply feel electrified. A surge of electron cloud bursts filling my body. I feel like I just got out of hibernation and I could scream and dance and sing all night long.

It is not a sexual burst, it is a creative Big Bang. I am ready to write some great stuff, accomplish something huge, anything. I even forgo doing my laundry, I am already on the beers, I have plugged myself onto the Eurhythmics Greatest Hits full blast, I am ready for all the inspiration in the world to fill me in.

It is not the choice that is lacking, I can work on my theoretical physics ideas, a new film script, my blog, even on the long overdue update of my websites. I could also work on my poetry like book that I started some time ago but kind of forgot in the last few weeks. Dear, I could even start writing a novel! Oh, I am even ready to work on my own conferences, my future company. But I'm afraid, I might already be too drunk to care about that.

Gosh, I need to plug the computer directly to my brain, maybe some of those IEEE 1394 cables would do the trick, it needs to be an instant transfer!

But the day did not start like that. For the first time ever this morning, I so not could stand hearing the voice of the Valley Girl in full bloom, that I had to leave the office at least three times. She was also feeling the burst from the Sun, she too did not do anything, she went from person to person and talked all day.

The Chinese girl gave me some looks that told me all, she really does not like me. She can't even hide it, and there is nothing I can do about it. Yesterday she attacked me for the first time, saying that one of my jokes was not funny. She was defending the Valley Girl.

They are closer together than I thought, even if everything about their personality tells me they should clash like water and fire. They are essentially the only two Conference Managers, and what the Valley Girl worked on the previous years, the Chinese girl is now in charge of. They both feel ostracized by too much management over their head, and not enough control on anything they are working on.

And the Spanish guy who is just the assistant of the Chinese girl, appears to give himself more credit than he deserves. He calls his Manager's conferences his. And he could almost be right there, since apart from writing the conference program, he did about just everything else. Which makes me wonder what is it exactly that the Chinese girl has done in those last five events they produced together.

Give me an assistant any day, and that's it, I will never do anything again at work! I will simply make the hard decisions, the decisions I have made all my life whilst doing my conferences, and then tell someone else to do everything else.

Well, all that might change soon. My last report states quite clearly that assistants should be something from the past. They should produce their own events, including writing the programs. That would please the Spanish guy, he wants to own these conferences, he does not understand yet the hell that comes with that. I would not be surprised if he were to leave after three months, the time I guess it would take him to have to write three conference programs. Careful what you wish for, it is a bastard of a job.

I stopped myself from telling them to forget about the huge fairs they are organizing, because it monopolizes the Valley Girl and two assistants for over six months, so basically she can walk around doing nothing all day, and it seems completely acceptable.

I just love my little reports I have written for that company in Los Angeles. Twelve so far I believe. All very insightful of my deep and felt experience in the world of conferences. I could turn them into a book, for a very niche market. They are a piece of art now, and they had a measurable impact on that company, even if for a while I could not see that.

Enough talk about work. I have two days to decompress and do something significant. It depresses me to watch Eurhythmics videos, so much greatness, reminding me that I am not out there making things come true. Just watched the video "You Have Place a Chill in my Heart", and it was the Californian desert and mountains of the Valley. Even a Ralphs grocery store. It is the first time I notice that they filmed that in L.A., and it fills me once again with energy.

And "I'd love to listen to Beethoven" and "I Need a Man" have always been my favorite videos ever, and great songs and words to back it up. These three videos are building a wonderful story, and I don't tire of watching it. Is there a woman more powerful on the planet than Annie Lennox? I don't think so.

God knows what we would talk about if I were to ever meet her. I fear I would disappoint. She is to me what Elvis or the Beatles can be to people from the older generation. And that they were British made me think they were reachable to me, but of course, they never were and will never be. I used to work in a café just under of where Dave Stewart lives, in Covent Gardens. Same building!

Genius in action, that song "1984 Sex Crime", it is huge, it is the crossing in time of George Orwell genius work and one of the best songs and videos ever on the music side. Sometimes events can just reach perfection, and it is one of those times.

Wooah, killing me. I need to be doing that, I need to go down in history, I need to produce things, write things, write songs. Which brings me back to Leonardo. He can make it all come true, he can place me in a position to get my songs out, I need to concentrate on that as well.

I sent him all my potential songs, but he never had the time to read any of it. I can understand, it was 250 pages long, and that was only what I thought could do great songs. I could have sent him 1000 pages worth of songs. And yet, I am at zero on that point. I need to restart from the beginning. Sit down and write the perfect new songs that will revolutionize everything.

Even if I need to lose 2 stones and sing them myself with my French accent, even if I have to figure out his Roland piano synthesizer for him in the process. These pianos are such bad technology, even the instruction manuals don't make sense. And compatibility and connectivity with computers leaves a lot to be desired.

I am now watching the R.E.M. videos from the DVD "Pop!". Another string of well thought stuff. Killing me. Will I become someone thinking and talking more about creating things, than actually working at producing things?

I am all over the place now, and I am just a writer. Books, films, theatre, theoretical physics, TV, music, videos, conferences... and what else? If I had been

as talented as two of my ex-boyfriends, and my best friend in Montreal, it would be even worse. I might have thought then that I had some future in painting, drawing, filming, gardening, landscape design, cooking, and many other creative stuff as well.

At least I am only talented in one domain, writing. Not my fault if it reaches so many different kinds of media. Just need to concentrate on what might have a huge impact. And at this time, I just don't know from where it will first spill unto the world.

Yes, I am already recognized, yes, it is out there, yes I have fans from every corner of the world, but that is far from being enough. It is the world's attention I need to catch. Change on a massive scale, that's what I want. And less for me than for the impact that it may have, that it will have.

I have dreams of changing the world, you see. No small challenge. So don't be surprised to read my politico-philosophical treaty one day about revolutionizing politics and justice. This has already been on my mind for over 15 years. I might just write a film script about it.

And being stuck in the South-West of America with Bush as President, is feeding me just the right thing. If the Republicans win the next elections, I'll be ready to write the book about what not to do in politics and how the system has to change to prevent such corruption. Oh, I can see I am already ready. Just add it to the list of things I have to write tonight. I might get there eventually.

Time for another beer! I'll definitely need it. Because somehow this will need all the inspiration in the world that I can get. I might as well open a pack of cigarette at the same time. And god knows, are they now selling these cans of oil from Texas ready to drink, shipped directly from the George Bush Airport? I will need a few of those too... a keg would do nicely, thank you very much.

I understood today what it is that I like about Los Angeles. It is that it does not appear to be a real world. It is like a computer game, a graphic adventure, the ones that I have been playing for years. It makes me feel like opening up my old CDs and live in those magnificent and sunny places with palm trees and orange trees, that I have been used to dream about to escape my terrible reality.

Los Angeles is that virtual world I have always been searching for. My freedom to a better world that, until now, only existed on my computer. I finally live in one of those paradises I have been dreaming about and living in virtually for many years.

I did not even think that orange, lemon and grapefruit trees really existed, and yet last night at Leonardo's place, I picked up some juicy fruits from his garden. Unbelievable! Orange and lemon trees are something, but juicy grapefruits? Surely they are too heavy to grow on trees? I have them on my counter now, they smell good. I just cut into the lemon to put in my Budweiser, and dear me, it is a dream come true.

In the morning, on my way to work, I have been so not observant. It took me weeks to see my first orange tree. And now I have spotted over 12 trees bearing gorgeous oranges, lemons and grapefruits. It is amazing, something that you would only see in a virtual world in your own computer. With the weather to match it. No need to dream of a better world anymore, of better days, it is right there in your garden, on your way to work, on your lunch hour when you walk at the back of your office. In January and February no less. That tells it all.

It is going to be hard to leave this place, I should really try harder to get my baby from London here. But how? America is so closed on itself, it is a miracle that I am here at all. My ex-Line Manager in London has tried all her life to move to America, and she never succeeded to this day.

I don't think I can leave. It is anyway so much easier to stay. I was miserable in London, for over 10 years, I have to remember that. Oh please, I have written over 10 books on the subject, shouldn't it be clear to me by now? I am in paradise, why can't I see it? Why can't I understand this?

I have nowhere else to go, I have reached my destination, my long search for the perfect sunny and virtual world, Los Angeles. Any moment now I will meet some virtual characters telling me some bollocks, and it will be my game to play, my choice to make, to go somewhere on the beach to find some old treasure buried there for millennia. I have a 100% score to reach, many magical objects to find, many virtual characters to talk to, many places to visit to find some clues, and solve the puzzles.

I have reached my ultimate destination. I cannot let love stop me, annihilate this dream come true. I just can't. It's over. My simple life in the Valley is what I have been looking for all my life. My little most expensive studio is just perfect. Not enough money to finish the month, but who cares? It is paradise.

So much to see, so much to get to know, standing in the Topanga Canyon is all I need to feel the inspiration coming in. The thousand different scenarios for the perfect story along Mulholland Drive, all the way to Malibu. That's around the corner, how about that?

Santa Barbara a few miles down, even if I don't have a car yet to reach it. Leonardo has, and will bring me there tomorrow. Not sure why he is dying to bring me there, I personally only want to reach the gate of Michael Jackson's house. But perhaps he feel there is much more to inspire me there than MJ.

Mmh, the Sun in February, hitting so hard, the weird way those palm trees grow, the red bugs with some design on their carapace I observe at lunch time. I even saw an escargot today, this is just too much for my poor mind. Everything should be dead at the beginning of February, even I feel alive. Which is a first in my case.

Tomorrow I need to get lost in the mountains, a lake, Malibou Lake if necessary, but I'll get lost believe me. I want to walk all over these mountains of the Californian desert. I want to disappear alone for one full day in the canyons. I don't want to show up at work on Monday, I want to die there. And haunt the place forever and ever. That is my dream, and I might just reach it, as I am so close to that perfect video game graphic adventure world. Available on PC worldwide very soon! My PC-110 Sony DV camera will insure that, believe me.

I have never, never, ever, smell grapefruits and lemons like that before. What the hell are those distribution companies do to our fruits before they reach the grocery stores worldwide? Freeze them to death, until no smell or taste remain? I could live on grapefruits now, I tell you, and I might actually do just that, since the next Ralphs is one mile away from me.

No need to be idealistic anymore when you live in L.A., you can now turn to the frivolities of life, write mindless comedies... I might just do that. Life has finally reached perfection.

I knew it! Tears for Fears are British! I knew it! And yet, for a second there I was afraid they were from New Mexico. I could not have loved a band so much, if they had not been from the UK. I'm watching their greatest hits videos now, like I was ten years ago, and I'm glad they reunited. This is not mindless stuff, it is real. Already I have forgotten all about the Topanga Canyon. I'm back on track, with the virtual world far behind.

Disturbing nonetheless. That neither Roland or Curt could find success on their own, like Simon and Garfunkel never repeated their greatest songs on their own. Dear me, am I linked to Leonardo until I die? Even before we have any of our ideas out there? Is it possible that sometimes genius only exist when two great minds collide? But on their own cannot go anywhere? Why is that? Oh God!

Just spoke with Leonardo. He's supposed to read the first batch of supposed songs I sent to him. Right now. And if he is inspired, his instructions are to write music, melody, whatever.

So I started to read what it is that he is supposed to read now. I had to stop on page 4, I was already crying more than I thought I could. How sad I have become. Some girl I know would say I'm a pussy. Somehow this should inspire me quite a poem. Maybe I should get on with it right now.

7 February 2006 (2)

A writing career is not compatible with a full time job in the corporate world

It is now the morning, just got up, it is 7h30. I woke up not knowing where I was, thinking it was Saturday, and then the reality hit me that it was only Tuesday and I had to go to work for another four days.

I could not stand the idea, I called in sick. A four day week is more what I can sustain in my life at the moment, with all the other projects I am working on, film scripts, blogs, other books I am writing, that conference business I want to start, etc.

In London it was easier to be sick, or to miss a day, or to work from home once in a while. Poor Americans, here it is impossible to miss a day even when you are

sick. I will lose \$250 for not going to work today, it is a lot of money, and I will suffer next month because of it. But it is well worth it.

I have been working like a dog for months, five days a week, the longest hours I have ever done, lots of overtime during the weekends, no holiday over Christmas to speak of. And meeting Leonardo for one day over the weekend, is like another day of work. So I always find myself in a situation where I have only one day to decompress and hence I end up not doing any work on my own projects.

And the thing is, I feel sick today. It is not the salad that I blamed to the girl I just spoke to at work, it is those Molson Canadian beers I bought yesterday. I do like the taste, but it always takes me a while to get use to Canadian beers after a long time passed without drinking any. I've got 24 of those things, not sure how I will go through them. My stomach better get use to it fast.

So, if I am to lose that much money today, I better make sure I use my time wisely. I will sleep this morning as long as I can. I won't watch any Star Trek or TV, I will either work on my latest film script or my conference business. I will not be able to use that excuse that I don't feel like it because I am too tired, that I'd rather just die on my bed doing nothing. Tuesday is too close to the weekend for that, I decompressed on Sunday.

Today I should be fine. Even if I am sick. God, I'm going back to bed. Perhaps today I should stay in bed all day, contemplate the ceiling for hours. Maybe read a few Sherlock Holmes stories. I think I would need a whole week off to decompress from all that I went through the last few months.

It is so nice to take a day off. I was awakened by two Mexicans who wanted to test the smoke detector and change the filters of the air conditioning. Good thing I was here, I don't like to have people in my apartment as if this was a hotel. And I would have forgotten to turn the switch so they could come in in the first place. Though I'm sure they would have been able to get in anyway, as they did when it was time to take all my domestic appliances when I switched from fully furnished to semi-furnished at the end of my first month here.

I am still very tired. I might go to bed again. It is so nice to have a day off without the guilt. I cannot feel guilty if I am not getting paid. I feel I have the right to take a day off whenever I want if I am willing to lose money for it.

Money is not everything, and it is useless at any rate if you are working all the time and cannot enjoy it. But yeah, for the first time in my life I took a day off work when I could have gone in, and I don't feel any guilt at all. It is a great feeling.

The thing is, sometimes you need a day off for your own mental or psychological stability. When you are so wired into all these similar days, and at some point cannot see the end of the tunnel, a way out. It is a lot of pressure on your mind, and your mind can be as sick as your body. And a day off is all that is required sometimes to calm you down. Help you continue with this routine the next day. Because you feel you had a break, you changed your mind.

And it is a wonderful day! If I were not supposed to be sick, I might consider going for a swim. But it is too dangerous, my boss' wife plays tennis here sometimes, she could see me, freak out and sack me instantly. I would not want that now, would I?

It is now 7h37 pm. I slept all day. Perhaps I was sick after all, huge headache, surely it cannot be the three Molson Canadian I drank yesterday. Could it be a lack of sleep? I slept a lot on Sunday, in fact I did very much then what I did today.

So there you are, I did nothing today, no writing whatsoever, even if for one minute there I thought I was going to work on my theoretical physics theories.

This just confirmed what I was saying, that working full time in conferences is something I cannot mix with anything else. I can only work my 40 hours, do my overtime when it is needed, and then forget everything else. Writing is something I cannot even do in my spare time, because that spare time is spent sleeping and decompressing, if not getting ready to go back to work the next day.

I hope there will be better times for my writing career, because it is just about to get back to zero for a while. Until such time when I can work on it full time. I fear sometimes that it might never happen. I am killing myself right now over this, my health is deteriorating. I have headaches, I am a zombie at work, I feel overworked and stressed. Working on my way out is something I simply don't have the time for. And it is sad.

8 February 2006

Should I tell the truth to my boss? How I really feel?

Time to go back to work. It is 5h39 in the morning. Already I am in a panic state. And I have done nothing in my full day off apart from writing this blog. It is certainly not my most interesting entry either. If I had gone to work, crisis might have brought an interesting entry, but I'm glad that if any crisis was awaiting me yesterday, I skipped that altogether.

But now, crisis might be what awaits me. That conference I'm working on is late. I know my boss is counting the minutes I am working in the office, one day off must bring him to a state of sheer horror. He'll probably jump on me at the first opportunity and say: come in the office please. And then I better have a good explanation for not showing up yesterday.

Should I tell him the truth? That I just can't stand the office anymore and the people in it? That I was dead tired of having him sitting in my back, observing me all day to see if I am working or not? That the voice of the Director alone was enough for me to throw up everywhere? And that now I work with the Senior Manager and it is getting worse because he sits with us, and therefore always knows when I am not working? And what about your little spy, the Black guy, always, always walking behind me looking at my computer screen.

Should I tell him that the thought of going back yesterday was just too much and that I would have preferred anything else but one more day with them calling everywhere to ask for money? I had enough! I needed a day off from all this! I needed a day off from you! I could not face seeing your face again, it's making me sick. That's why I took a day off. And I feel the same today, but I have come, so you should be grateful.

Or else I'll do like the other girl did last Friday, leave you at one minute's notice. In fact she is the one who has encouraged me to take a day off. If this job is just too much for her, despite the fact that she was quite strong and intelligent, than it is by no mean an easy or nice job. And one day off won't kill anyone, and might prevent me from reaching the point she reached when she decided just like that, that she had enough.

And then, I think they hired another guy, and one good look at him told me that this guy was not right, that he would never last a day. And he did not. I have not seen him after that. They are so bad at choosing the right employees. And their main problem, compared with London, is that there are no other conference companies in town, and so no one has any experience in this job. Not a clue about what it means. And so, they get that job, they thank God for the money, and then realize that it is the Devil that sent them there. And once they understand their misery, poof!, they're gone.

I don't see what they could do to correct the problem. Choose their employees better I guess for a start. People who are desperate enough to keep their job, if they have a house, cars, kids, whatever. Or suffer from discrimination and can't find a job somewhere else. If I start my own business one day, I will be facing that exact problem. But I don't want to think about that right now. I'll take a bath, I'll eat something, I'll try not to be late for once, and I'll go and face the music.

The work day is over now. It is becoming alarming how I just cannot stand the office anymore, and especially the Director who now supervises me contacting those sponsors, while he does not understand that dealing with the speakers and the brochure is already taking a lot of my time.

I showed a lot of impatience, especially when he asked me in his office at 30 seconds notice to discuss the sponsorship situation. Well, I needed to print my files first, and I told him quite rudely. I had 130 calls to make today, sales cold calling calls, and I did less than 20, because I had to deal with the speakers first.

He came to me in the afternoon, three hours later, while there was lunch in between, to ask me how many calls I'd made. Well, five. He was not happy, and he said: don't bother calling them, it is too late now! And then he realized that my calls were not for the East coast, but the West coast, and he kind of wanted to apologize, and he came around to speak to Isabella, trying to be nice, and I just left the office for 10 minutes, hoping he would be gone by the time I came back. I think he got the message loud and clear.

I am beyond caring now. If they wish to sack me, fine, I don't care. I am seriously considering letting them know in exactly 20 days that I am out of here

one month later, at the same time that I will tell the apartment people that I am not renewing my rent at the end of March.

It is very tempting to leave the company in 20 days, and remain here for one more month just writing and getting ready to start my own conference business. At least, when I will make a call to a potential sponsor, I will get the \$7,000 all for myself, to be reinvested in my future events, my own company.

It is ridiculous, at the moment I am the producer, the marketer, the salesman, the sponsorship guy, the list finder, brochure designer, everything! The only thing I am not doing is emailing the people in the database or finding the contact details of the lists I find. And emailing the database would only take me a minute, so in the end, I'm doing everything. I might as well do it for myself.

Well, I don't know if I could make more than \$60,000 a year if I were to produce my own events, especially in the first few years, but I think it is worth the risk.

I will lose Los Angeles forever, but I have to be realistic. Nothing will happen here, I never even had the courage to try to meet people apart from Leonardo. And that might be it, all there is to it. Maybe he was the only person I needed to meet and eventually it will bear fruits.

In the meantime, I don't think I would have understood that I could start my own business without coming to L.A. This is something they taught me, convinced me that it was time for me to take the plunge, and for that I should be grateful, and this trip of a few months here will not be in vain.

I am ready to go back to London in two months time, but not to get my old job back, but to start my own business. And that is exciting. The only question remaining is, should I play it safe and produce those same corporate events charging twice less than my competitors? Or should I go for not much money, the risky world of paranormal? Maybe I can do both?

God, and then it will be to decide which events to choose from, if I am about to do this for money instead of for fun. Telecoms? Pharmaceutical? Should I try to identify domains that have not yet been exploited? That will take forever... a lot of market research indeed. And every time I would hop into another field, that would mean hours of research for database building and identifying sponsors. The

truth is that I would feel much safer with a good loan and hiring people to do the dirty work. But I have to start slowly, doing everything myself, without any loans.

It is not going to be easy with that financial company overlooking all my money entries and expenses, because of my bankruptcy. They will have a heart attack when I tell them that I am leaving my job. They certainly did when I told them I was leaving for Los Angeles. Only the fact that my salary was much higher dampened their crisis. How am I going to do this? I don't know. But I have to, somehow.

Oh dear, I would need a real miracle now to prevent me from going back to London and keep me in Los Angeles. A real one. And I don't see what could happen in the next 20 days to change that, well, in the next 50 days to be more precise. The thing is, I love Los Angeles, I would love to remain longer. But not at the price of a job from hell. What a failure! Nothing new here!

11 February 2006

I don't see the point of writing anymore

I don't see the point of writing this anymore. I left a comment in someone else's blog, and two feedbacks were quite negative. I realize that I will never please everyone, not even sure if I can please anyone with my writings. Have I come to Los Angeles to finally understand that it was time for me to abandon writing altogether?

I know why it took me so long to start a new book of my poetry kind of things. I did not see the point then, and now that I have started it, I think I will abandon it. I will most probably continue to write this blog, but I don't think I will continue to put it online. That is how I feel right now, I will make a decision in a few weeks, perhaps days.

I am not certain if I wish to have another book published. I certainly don't want to read critics or stupid comments about how screwed up I am anymore. It is too destructive and saps all my small remaining energy and motivation. In fact, I am really struggling to find a reason to even continue living.

I don't like this world, I don't like the people in it, I don't like what I have to do to survive, to pay for my rent and food, I don't like this life. Leonardo asked me yesterday if I would lose my wish to die if I were to become rich overnight. Maybe, because then I could isolate myself completely from everyone else, this world, and I would no longer have to work 9 to 5 in a job I hate. Then maybe I could live a better life in my total ignorance.

But then, what would happen when I sit at my computer? I'm not sure if suddenly I would start liking life. I could very well be as depressed. Maybe it is time I start considering taking these pills that would put a plastic smile on my face. Help me pretend that life is wonderful and love is the glue that links everyone together. I'd rather die.

I am exhausted. Dead tired. I cannot do anything anymore. I spoke with Stephen today and he agreed that I should remain one more month in L.A. than originally planned. So I am here for two more months and 20 days. He also said that it was time I got my ass into gear, and start contacting people. Something I have been dreading, and I don't even know where to start.

What is the point of coming to Los Angeles when no one knows I'm here. I'm so convinced that rejection is what awaits me everywhere, that I don't even want to bother trying. I don't want to be a wannabe writer in Hollywood. I think I must have landed here by accident. It could have been Denver or Cleveland, it is Los Angeles. And that is all there is to it.

Sounds improbable, and yet, it seems to be the only conclusion. Unless something happens before I leave, a miracle, falling from the sky, since it is unlikely that I will try to meet anyone or try to sell my ideas and scripts.

Well, now I have met Leonardo, God knows, maybe that is enough. And I got the determination to start my own conference company. If any of these projects go ahead in time, then it would not have been wasted.

However I can't stop thinking that there was something more that was supposed to happen to me in Los Angeles. A firm contract or the beginning of something huge that should be instant and concrete. Not "possibly something might happen in years to come". No. It makes no sense.

I know I have at least this blog, but then again, this will not be published. It might end up on my website one day, when I feel the people concerned are too far away from me in time and place to affect them or me. Was it worth coming to L.A. just to write a diary about it, for nothing in the end but hurt the people I have met?

14 February 2006

Human nature is so predictable

It is no longer a choice that I have, how long I will remain in Los Angeles. It is really how long it will take them to get rid of me. Could be before the end of the month.

I am now definitely on the black list of the Chinese girl, and she really went for it. At this time she is going around the whole office to tell everyone how bad I have been, and accusatory as she said. And her voice must be quite strong to have been able to get the sponsorship guy sacked overnight after six years, despite the fact that he was excellent at his job. I have no doubt I have not heard the end of this little altercation between us.

And all I did was to point out that the sponsor I am trying to sign right now, sponsored one of her conferences, and unfortunately after all this time their blurb and logo are still not online on our website. If they find out, they will quickly realize that what they paid for, we did not do it, and hence, why would they want to sponsor again, or perhaps they will want a freebee.

My god, the consequences of pointing out that a logo was not online... if I had known, I would have kept my mouth shut. Of course, now the Valley Girl is also involved, and took her defense, when there was no need to. I have no doubt what it is that they will be talking about at lunch time. How big a monster I am, a threat, and how quickly I need to be eliminated. Pretty sure that if they don't verbally come to a plan to achieve that, it will be implicit and as strong. They will both work against me from now on, they'll try to get me sacked.

Unfortunately for them, I am not working for them, or on their events, even if I am going to San Francisco to work on the Valley Girl's event at the end of this month. I am pretty sure she will find a way to get back in the office afterwards

with the most negative feedback about me. I will have to do everything she wants me to do without question.

Anyway, they might succeed in getting me sacked before then, who knows. They don't waste time. They are so on edge, they have so much work to do, that the smallest hint that they could be incompetent brings the war on. And they have ammunitions, yesterday I add more problems with the Director, even if I can't remember what it was about.

I have ammunitions too, she is explosive. I'm not the first one she was rude to, I was not the first one facing the sack because of her, the same for the Valley Girl. Surely by now the bosses will understand that they are the problem? Not the rest of the planet? Somehow I cannot count on that, a superior is always right, never the assistants or the ones working for the Managers and Directors. The low life ones, as I am right now from their point of view, are always the ones to go.

I'm surprised that the Hispanic guy is still working with us, being right under the Chinese girl. It is a tribute to his qualities, being not threatening at all, very laid back, nice guy, hard working and, yeah, a yes mam, yes sir type of person, which I'm afraid to say, I am not.

Let's see how far she can go with this, when all I did was to point out that one of the sponsors did not have its logo and company profile online, and could lead to losing a sponsorship deal. Somehow I'm sure she will succeed at making quite a story out of this.

I wonder how fast it will happen, how quickly I will be called in the office. This afternoon? Tomorrow morning? I'm ready for it, I feel safe about it, I hope she will destroy herself in the process and free her assistant and any future ones from suffering her temper and behavior.

There is no denying that she is excellent at her job, and this is why she won over the sponsorship guy who just could not stand her anymore and must have exploded at some point, even if no one told me about it, I only heard some rumors. But eventually, if we have to sack half the company for those two managers, as it has been so far since I have arrived three months ago, then being excellent and under pressure is no longer an excuse.

At the very least, if the bosses still want them there, they will understand that I am right in this matter, and she is just continuing her little game of getting everyone sacked as soon as someone crosses her even for one long minute, which is enough to create a story as large as a two hour film. And unfortunately, it will certainly not inspire me a film script. It would be the most common and boring story ever, happening every day all over corporate America.

I don't feel like going back to work this afternoon, that much is certain. I did not need that stress today. When she talked to me, accusing me of something that was still unclear, I hurt terribly. I remained silent. I went back to my seat and understood that I played with the devil and was now in a terrible situation.

I saw it all before with the sponsorship guy, I saw him doing the exact same thing after he spoke to her and she lashed into him. I thought this could not happen to me since I am not working with her, I was wrong.

Maybe this time around I will get out of it unscathed. They will all talk about it, feel pity for her, see me as the big monster, since she is the one going around destroying me, whilst I am very much passive in all of this. It is not my style to try to get people sacked for banalities. But the next time around, that's it, I'm finished. This is the joy of having a full time job that everyone hates, working with people who simply just cannot stand each other.

Maybe I am the problem, after all, I always had trouble with everyone I worked with in the past. That is why I need to start my own company, it is clear that I am just incapable of bending, be a yes sir type of person. Shut up and just do my job. Again it is leading me into trouble, and I feel powerless because it is unlikely I could ever change my personality.

I'm back from work now. When I left at lunch time to go back, I was already thinking that I had to apologize to her, even if really I did not have to. If anything, she is the one who should apologize to me, I thought. But this is not how it works, you apologize for an easy life and you do not expect an apology.

The only problem, I was thinking, is that I was apologizing way too late, she probably already had the time to destroy me completely in the hour I went for lunch. The damage had been done.

When I arrived at my desk, she was really active about the sponsors on that particular conference, as if suddenly she had been told to look into it. Of course, all that meant was she went to her assistant and told him everything he had to do.

She was kind of close to me while she spoke to him, and that reminded me of the Director when he felt guilty, and suddenly was going to Isabella hoping to get me in the conversation and show me that he could also be nice. So I could still think he was not a bastard about the fact that he shouted at me that it was too late to call the sponsors now, when he was wrong.

I was right, she was trying to speak to me. I was not interested. And for a second there I was wondering if it would be appropriate to apologize, it could make things worse. I kind of lost my guts and I thought that perhaps the best way would be to forget all about it. But not me, I set myself to go and apologize, and I did.

She was creamy and nice. She apologized herself for over-reacting. I could barely believe my ears. I was not expecting that. She thanked me for letting her know that this sponsor did not have its logo online and that I should always tell her in the future if I find such a problem. She only said that I could have been a bit more discreet and just come to her and let her know. Fair enough.

I was so amazed, I thought, my god, the girl is really something to be able just like that to understand that she was wrong and apologize to me. I've been used to people who would suddenly turn against you and would never give up until you were sacked.

Even the Valley Girl, her accomplice, who that morning told me quite rudely that I had to book my own flight to San Francisco at the end of the month, because she did not have the time since it was too complicated now that I had decided to remain there for the weekend, changed her mind in the afternoon and decided to book that flight for me.

Wonderful, these girls have a conscience. When I left for lunch as soon as I could, 11 am, they noticed and felt bad. They probably believed I was sulking. And then they took pity and changed their mind, and decided to be nice for a change.

That was my initial thought. But I'm not stupid. I know what really happened whilst I was at lunch. They both got together, they pumped each other against me, they went to see everyone in the company to let them know how bad I had been, and to get everyone against me. And when they reached the top management, they were met by a brick wall.

The bosses can only think in terms of money, and identifying that a sponsor's logo was not online after weeks, especially when they were too late to even be in the brochure, means losing a lot of money. Not only we would have to reimburse them for that conference, but we would lose the deal on my conference, and God only knows how much money we would have lost with that company over the years.

In the eyes of any obsessed money grabbing person in the upper management, I was so right to point it out, they did not even want to hear her out. They must have told her that she was very incompetent and should make sure that all her sponsors are looked after. That is why she was suddenly feeling defeated and was making sure everything was done when I came back.

And why they were both creamy with me, must also be because they were told to be. They must have gone in there asking for my head, and they must have been told that it is their head that would be on a platter if they did not go back to work and did not realize that I was damn right to point it out.

Just as I predicted, she has destroyed herself in the process. This time, I knew they would not listen to her, even if I was not completely sure. Bosses sometimes can be so unpredictable and unfair, or blind. Not when it comes to money though. And the Valley Girl was just a bonus. She is always snooping around and getting mixed up in all sort of problems, creating them when it is not necessary, and she was also burnt. And then she became nice.

The way I described all this, you probably think that I enjoyed all that. It is not true. I had no idea she would freak out like that when I told her about the missing logo. That she would feel attacked and try to destroy me in the process. I know she is volatile, I knew she would be trouble one day, I did not think this would do it. Which means, she does not need much to go overboard and create a crisis.

And now that I remember it, the crisis with the salesman, that I thought I had not been told about, I think never happened. It was not a crisis, it was him responding back to her when she was freaking out. I was there, and to be honest, almost nothing happened. And it was enough to get him sacked.

I did not enjoy it, it was more stress than I needed. And it is far from being over. Now I am definitely on their black list. I won, but that is all there is to it. Now they will love to hate me. They will not miss a chance to cause me trouble. I knew from the beginning that it was inevitable, because I know how they are, and I knew I would not let myself be walked all over by them.

Less than a minute after I apologized to her, in hope that it would gain me a few days of peace before the big war, she was already talking to the Black guy to let him know everything that had just happened. He too was much nicer after that. He strikes me as a fair person, but he still must be quite strong. I don't see him ever coming to me to tell me something, he will instead tell everything to the bosses and they will talk to me.

I don't know if he was on their side. The fact that the Chinese girl went to him, is because it was to him that she first told the whole story. She made it sound like it was not only her that I was accusing of incompetence, but him also, because it was his responsibility to put that online. And when she told me how angry she was at my behavior, she also defended the Black guy, saying they were both very busy and could not care less about me and what I said.

So it is not him who calmed the girls down. If anything, he is the one who went to report it to the bosses immediately after she spoke to him. So for a moment there, I'm pretty sure she was able to get him against me. Until, that is, my apology.

As he is fair, for him it was a nice conclusion and I think the fact that he was overnice afterwards probably did not mean that he will hold it against me. I hope I am not wrong here. I cannot afford to not have him on my side, even if I am trying to avoid him and hide from him.

What do you think? Do you think my assessment of all that happen in my back for the hour I went to lunch sounds like it could very well be what happened? Of course, you would need to have heard everything they said that was hinting to all

that, and I have not here told you all. I think I am very close to the truth. I have seen that kind of behavior way too many times in my past jobs to be blind to how far people are willing to go to get you sacked or destroy you in the eyes of others. This is human nature.

I can only thank myself for not being like that. If there is a way to turn my enemies into friends, I will always choose that way. If I can make sure any problem does not escalate any further, I will do everything in my power to make it so. And then, I will always forgive and not hold it against them if I can see they regret and want to be my friend. In this case, they don't want to be my friend. They will now work very hard to make my life hell. Human nature, once again.

And now you understand why I can't stand working with people in an office environment, why I can't stand that job, it is always like that. Whether you are in Canada, in France, in Belgium, in England or in the United States. We are all the same, there is really only one personality for everyone on this planet.

That was only one situation that I described, many happens like that every day, and each day it is with someone else. And it does not only happen to me, it happens also between them all the time. Sometimes it is serious, other times it is not so important, and yet, it is enough to build a canyon between all of us. To the point that we are now going to work simply to get paid, and meanwhile we are trying to survive as long as we can before someone pushes us over the edge. And most of the time we are powerless to stop it.

Oh God, what will it be tomorrow?

16 February 2006

More tension at work

Tension has been terrible at work all week. And today was perhaps the worst of all, luckily I was not involved in any of it. A new guy starts on Monday, perhaps the one who never came back after his first day, the one I thought was badly chosen. Well, he may be the one starting on Monday with a salary of \$50,000 a year.

He is already dead, I know that much. I give him one month. Why? Because the Valley Girl was so pissed off today, she talked about it all day with the Chinese girl. And at the end of day, she could no longer contain herself and she shouted that not only he is very young, but on top of it he has no experience, and has the same salary as her. Even though she will be his boss.

I was amazed she would so openly state that loud, in front of me (and the Chinese girl), how dissatisfied she was with that situation. It is clear to me that she will do everything she can to get rid of him as quickly as possible. And now I believe that the last one, the one who left two weeks ago because she had enough of the office, might actually have left because she was under the Valley Girl and she must have made her life a misery.

The future will tell us if I am right, it is clear that the newbie won't last. And then, I have proof that it would be a direct consequence of what the Valley Girl said today.

And the interesting stuff does not end there. My boss' wife came to the Valley Girl, and she said to her that she had to work him hard, because he was young and inexperienced, and she had to make sure he would be doing something. Considering his salary, I can understand.

I could not sleep at night if I had 20 employees with salaries ranging from \$30,000 to \$60,000 a year, and I thought that for one second they would not be pulling their weight. Then again, I had another proof that management plays mind games with us, and she is close enough to the Valley Girl to let her know: work him to death. Never mind if he leaves within a month.

There were many other problems today, of course I was not privy to it. When my boss' wife left, she said to the accountant: I hope tomorrow I will find you with a better attitude! Or perhaps she was talking about someone else in the office, I'm not sure.

I had only one problem yesterday, with the Senior Manager. He freaked out because I did not stop everything once his latest brochure needed to be proof-read, and that a few hours later I still had not read it. So he made a big speech about it for five interminable minutes, in front of everyone else. I felt very humiliated, and I just said: OK.

Again, if I had pushed that one, and if it had gone further, to upper management, as I'm sure he reported me already, my bosses would have understood that instead of reading his brochure, I was in fact contacting one last time all my sponsors before my brochure went to print. Again I would have won. But it never reached that stage, because I did not argue. I said OK. That was the end of it.

It was the first time he felt the need to freak out about me. So I cannot really say that he is that terrible. I did not take it personally, he is a good person. He just felt that it was important that I read his brochure. Then again, he could have just said so very nicely, as he usually does when he tells me something that I still don't know about the company and how we do things around here.

This panic attack from him suggested to me that the story was more serious than usual, and had already been reported to the bosses. And this is how negative stuff goes back to upper management, and positive things never get reported. And this is how your bosses get to feel that you are incompetent even when you work your ass off.

But who cares, this week this has been the least of my problems. I have a bigger one to confront tomorrow. I should have read my brochure and reported all the changes to be made already. Unfortunately I did not have the time yet. And I should have worked on that tonight. But Leonardo came here to pick up the film script and the DVD of the film I worked on, and hence, I did not do anything. Tomorrow will be again a big free for all.

I am also very unlucky, because the woman who did the design of my brochure, she had never done one before. And so everything is so wrong, it looks nothing like all the other brochures we have. I had to write 12 pages of comments to try to see how she could make it better, and I have not even yet fully read the first page! What a waste of time and money, for each brochure we get designed.

That is why that when I will start my own company, I will have a template, and I will use it every time, and I will do all the design of my brochures. And if I have to get my employees to do it, they will use my template, and it will look nice and it will take no time to produce those brochures, because I will show them how to do it.

I also noticed today that the two managers were getting closer to me. The two girls were trying to get me in their conversation, to include me, to get me to become their friend. Though it is nice that perhaps I have misjudged them, I had to work on my brochure, so I could not indulge. And anyway, it looked artificial and forced. So I went to the toilet, and when I came back they had disappeared.

It may be that, out of what happened this week, they will respect me a bit more. If it is the case, I am truly happy and surprised. We'll have to see what happens in the next weeks to confirm or deny this new theory.

Oh, I also have to say, that after reading that brochure of my Senior Manager, I felt revolted. It had no sponsor, no supporting organizations, and it was so badly written, it was the worst conference program I had ever read in my entire life. I truly wondered who in hell would want to attend that conference. I did not say anything, I just observed and learned.

It is not his fault if the program is so bad. They don't expect from him the big events that I am doing. From him they want as many as possible, as quickly as possible. When they claim that we produce 50 conferences a year, well, he writes at least half of them, and then he gets his assistants (which I have also become), to do the rest.

The result is a series of terrible events that no one will ever want to attend. I would be ashamed to have written a conference program like that. Considering that English is my second language, I have assessed that I was writing programs like this 10 years ago, when I started. No research has been made, I'm not sure if he knows what he is talking about, and most of his programs are made of bits and pieces of other conference programs, including his.

The language used, the expressions, it sounds very much like all the other conferences out there. It is the vocabulary and style that all newbie needs to learn when they first need to write a program. They read many agendas, and hop, they write something similar on a different topic. That is what I am trying to avoid. I want to make it interesting and more human, less mechanical and boring.

They put me on the worst conference program of all today. It was also badly written, it had no content, and it flopped many times the previous years. We still

produce it because we have one main sponsor putting \$25,000 on the table every year for it. And I saw the contract today.

I told the Director, when he asked me if I had already invited the speakers, that it was the first time I heard the full title of that event today. And jokingly I said that I guess they were waiting to have confirmed \$100,000 worth of sponsorship on it before finally giving it to me.

Though I said it as a joke, I think I made myself clear: don't expect to have contacted all the potential sponsors in the database already, and then get me to do all these cold calls to chase them up. If I am not going to get my bonus for these sponsorship deals, then I am not going to call any of them. You do it!

I said in his office, innocently: so I guess I can concentrate on the speakers for that one, I don't have to contact sponsors. Within an hour the conference had been cancelled. I guess they realized that it was a touchy conference. The bonus scheme has not been implemented yet. I don't even know if all my hard work with the sponsors on my actual conference will pay me a dime, since the Director closed all the deals, even if I had done all the hard work. They appear to have discussed that all afternoon, in my boss' office. I guess I did not have to say much to make them understand how I felt. Good.

I have to say, I never thought for one second that the conference would be cancelled. Not after seeing a \$25,000 contract on my desk. I don't know what happened there. Things that probably they have not told me. Obviously the boss did not hear my own suggestions about this event, otherwise we would be going ahead with that conference now.

I suggested that we should research the subject, bin the agenda the Senior Manager had written at lunch time, and do a proper conference with this. With well identified topics. Of course, by saying that, I was in fact insulting the Senior Manager. So it did not go anywhere.

Now they want me to produce their first ever European conference, based on their biggest conference ever they have in the US. I have to say, I love the idea. And I love even more what the Director said about it. He said that I can tell him all about how to produce conferences in Europe, since this is where my

experience lay. I told him that it was the same as here, but he said that it was not so.

Well, I hope he is not expecting any magic tricks from me, because producing conferences in Europe is like producing them in the US. Language is not even a problem, we do everything in English. No European database however is a troubling situation. It might very well flop. We'll have to see.

I will propose to them to do two conferences at the same time. One in London in English, the same one in French in France. We can do a double bubble and confirm our sponsors twice at the same time. Let's see what will happen then. Of course, I still have to do a lot of research, and many phone calls. So it is not going to be easy. I look forward to that challenge however. It might be finally what will make me appreciate that job.

Think about it. If we start producing conferences in Europe, it means opening an office there eventually. If I were to remain in that job for a long time, and manage to get my baby to move here and work with me, then we would open that office in Europe together. At the very least, all my reports must prove to them that I am capable. No one else in the company would want to move to London, they all have houses and family here.

I'm afraid I might have left them by the time the idea even goes anywhere. If they have anything planned for me, as they led me to believe when they lured me here, I suggest they tell me now or before the end of next month. Because then, it will be too late.

18 February 2006

More stress at work

So, the conference that I thought was cancelled, with \$25,000 already confirmed in sponsorship, which could reach \$100,000 altogether in the end, despite that no delegate wants to attend, has just been moved to the autumn. Most probably I won't be the one working on it, too much sponsorship involved. And my great conference in Europe has also been moved, and so I am not going to work on that anytime soon.

My next project is even more disheartening than the other two. It is the exact same event I just worked on, but instead of being for the West coast, it is now for the East coast. And the agenda is as bad as the previous one. And the sponsors I need to contact, the ones I have harassed non stop for the last few weeks, are also the same ones. So I need to go back and harass them all, all over again. It should be a lot of fun!

Because of that designer who cannot do her job, poor girl, most likely because she was not trained in the first place, I will have to work all weekend to write another 20 pages of comments to make my brochure acceptable. Same for the Valley Girl who is working with the same designer, her booklet should have been finished last week, and now she will work all weekend on it. And she made sure she told the whole office that she will work on it this weekend. How sad.

I also met the Accountant Director in the elevator, I remembered what the boss' wife said last night when she left, about coming the next day with a better attitude. I asked her if she was OK. She said no. I said: well, I don't suppose I can ask you why. She said no. I told her I will ask again in six months and maybe then she will tell me. It was a weird thing to say, but the answer was worth it. She said that I will find out much sooner the consequences of all of this.

Now, that is interesting. I don't think it has anything to do with me. She either will be sacked as well, or she is already thinking about leaving the company. Funny, I had first assessed her as someone I would have trouble with, and for once, I was wrong. She has been nothing but nice to me, she likes me for some reason.

I would feel bad to see her go. And I'm pretty sure she is the most competent person we have in that office, she is a pillar. I'm not sure who could replace her, unless the girl who was helping her will now be promoted to that position. Somehow I doubt it, they will have to take someone from outside.

The Senior Manager said something nice to me last night when he left, and obviously, this time, not in front of everyone. He was pleased with my work on that conference and confirmed that it was great to work with people who knew what they were doing, someone with experience.

Considering that I am about to start my own conference company, I'm glad he was at least able to see that I could do the job very well, and that I had experience. I have to say, he might have not noticed, since I am doing exactly what his assistant with a miserable salary is doing. They have no clue what I am capable of doing. So far they put me on confirming speakers and sponsors on someone else's programs. Great. Anyway, that's encouraging, at least.

23 February 2006

Management Consultant My Ass

When I started working for this conference company in Los Angeles almost four months ago, I was hired as a Management Consultant. However I am only 33 years old, I look younger, and I don't have a diploma in Management Consulting or anything related.

So I wrote all my reports, a lot of it has been implemented, but none of the radical changes I suggested were. For that the company went to real high paid professionals, and now I know they are all charlatans.

Today we were finally told about the great changes which are supposed to build teamwork, make the employees happier and make more money for the bosses. I have to say, I was not prepared for what I have heard, I was certain my role and incentive report would have a huge impact on their decisions.

In fact, they decided on the complete opposite and even went further underground. I have no doubt it will fail miserably. This is the Dilbert Principle all over again, I think I need to buy them the book: *The Dilbert Principle : Cubicle's-Eye View of Bosses, Meetings, Management Fads, and Other Workplace Afflictions*, and hope they will read it.

I'm sure that consultant helped tremendously in defining that book, since he claims to have worked for many years in his field, with the greatest corporations out there. Well, these corporations must have been in Utah, and not even in Salt Lake City, but in the suburbs where people have no choice but work in the only company around.

Because the only way I will ever see a bonus, will be if I can keep that job for more than a year. And to be honest, with a turn over of staff like the one I have observed since I have started, this bonus scheme will so obviously failed, you would need to be blind or not want to implement one in the first place, to not see it.

In all, it is all very subjective. I may get a bonus at the end of the year if my Manager feels like it. Well, knowing me and my relationships with all my previous managers, I can already tell you that I won't get a bonus at the end of the year. So why should I even try?

All I can hope for is a maximum of \$2,500 before tax, out of a salary of \$60,000 before tax. Do you think I will go out of my way and break my back for \$1,250 more after tax at the end of the year, that my Manager might decide I don't deserve? Are you joking?

I tried to explain to them that a quarterly bonus scheme would be a mistake. It needs to be monthly, especially when over a dozen employees have been sacked or have left since I started. Just to give you a good picture, this company only has 16 employees right now. No one will do any effort to make more money. We are too busy wondering about when we will get the sack, and questioning if perhaps it would not be a good idea to jump ship before then.

So now, all my hard work at selling sponsorship deals, and worrying about who would get the bonus, just went out the window. I am starting a new conference tomorrow, I am supposed to contact 30 potential sponsors. Somehow I think I will forget to call them every day next week, as I am supposed and expected to do. They can lick my ass, I am much more motivated in finding the speakers, get the brochure designed and move on with the next event.

And it gets worse. Not only a huge percentage of my salary goes into taxes, but on top of it something like \$500 a month goes into health and dental care insurance. Now there are pushing me to spend another \$400 a month on more insurance, because my \$500 a month barely covers anything.

As if that was not enough, they have finally implemented a new great scheme supposed to make this company more attractive, that will cost me another God knows how much every month, probably \$400. A pension!

I don't need a pension for a job that I am unlikely to keep for more than a few months, if I am not laid off before I decide to go. I am so crippled with all those social securities that I need to pay, that anyway being Canadian I will never be able to benefit from, that I think I will be lucky if I have any money left to survive at the end of the month.

And to assess if we deserve a bonus at the end of the year, they implemented a wonderful little process that the consultant claims invariably makes the employees happier. Appraisals! Quarterly appraisals!

Apparently communications between you and your Manager is important, it helps build a bond and teamwork. I say appraisals are the tools Managers use to get you sack. The Valley Girl will certainly use it well. They are meetings where they can destroy you and tell you how incompetent you are, and that you don't deserve your bonus.

Appraisals not only take a lot of time in writing reports and all, time that could be better spent producing events, but on top of it the results are definitely to destroy any remaining relationship you might have with management. It is painful and it does not help. It is like officially filed reports about how bad an employee you are, and will definitely be used against you one day when they no longer require your services. It de-motivates the employees.

By all means, communication is important. Meetings to discuss business are important. But not appraisals, where your Manager ask you how bad you have been, and if you are not honest, he will tell you how bad you are and how you could increase your productivity.

Simple, the only way I could increase my productivity would be to tell me: work on your conferences on week nights and on weekends. This is after all the only way I could work harder, because I certainly cannot squeeze more in a day of work than I am already doing. They have me under so much pressure, I am already stressed to death and work twice harder than I ever did in any other job I had.

The bosses are greedy. They don't want to give any bonus, that much is obvious. They will only hurt themselves in the end, because by not rewarding me on the

money I directly bring them from my extra efforts, I won't make any extra effort on top of my actual duties to confirm one more sponsor.

It makes no difference to me if there are \$20,000 or \$100,000 in sponsorship on my event, it only means more work to coordinate all these sponsors and exhibition stands before and at the event.

For my own company, I will be willing to lose 15% to 20% in revenue on any sponsorship deal or delegate people will confirm for me. Otherwise, there won't be any deal or delegate to speak of. Of course, this is assuming that they would be mostly commission based. Otherwise 7% for sure.

And what kills me about this Management Consultant, is that he came twice, talked with us for one hour, talked with my bosses for a few hours, made us fill a non-anonymous report about how we felt (like if we were to tell the truth in there), and then came back with stupid slides of a PowerPoint presentation that he already had and used in all these other companies he worked for before.

So in the end, not only he costs a lot of money, but on top of it he is laughing at us, since it is obvious that his questionnaire was useless and the talk he had with us was equally useless. He was not interested in any of it, he just came back with what you could find in any management book on the market. And only a few excerpts.

I thought I was incompetent as a Management Consultant, I understand now that I was more than competent. I actually did something, I wrote a dozen long reports, based on my real experience in conference companies. The other consultant did not even write a report, he discussed with the bosses for a few hours. He did not do any research in our company to try to understand it, and he certainly did not gauge the pulse of the office with his questionnaire. He was useless.

And yet, it is his recommendations which will be implemented. And it will take my bosses just a year to understand the failure of it all. Then they will listen to me, to my reports. So I guess it was not wasted after all, even if I will be miles away by then on the other side of the ocean.

In the meantime, I will resume my role of assistant for the Manager, despite my ten years experience in conferences at managing teams and whole departments. I won't do anything to confirm sponsors and I won't do any more overtime. They have succeeded in de-motivating me completely. Complete success!

In the meantime, the Valley Girl is working hard at getting rid of the new guy. She has repeated today how unhappy she is with him, how he creates more work for her instead of helping her. And what she had to say about him for when we will go at her conference next week in San Francisco, she could have said about me too. She did not, so it shows how unfair she is to him.

Things don't change. That's one employee, that new guy, who certainly won't see any bonus in his lifetime. He does not even know it yet, how hard the Valley Girl is working at destroying him.

The funny thing is, he is ambitious. Listening to him, he wants to become Director within a year. He took the job because he thought there was place for advancement and promotion. He is only 22 years old, he never really worked before. You can see the problem.

He still thinks that people keep their job for life and become Director in no time. We never get the chance, we are sacked faster than any promotion could ever come. And incentives only create more work with no real and tangible reward. So in the end, they have the opposite effect of what they were intended for in the first place.

27 February 2006

I thought after four months in Los Angeles I was strong and that I got over the initial crisis of being separated from my family, which is Stephen in London, my five cats, my three tortoises, my two snakes and my 2 dozen marine fish, star fish and other weird specimen including the marvelous Killer Shrimp.

However I had a dream about my cats last Wednesday night and I drank many beers and half of a huge bottle of Porto on Thursday night, and that was it, I cried like I never did for hours. I know someone who would say I was a pussy... bitch. I just could not help it.

I went to bed at 3h30 am and the next day I was a real zombie with eyes that were completely swollen. I looked terrible and everyone notices at work. They must have thought I took weird drugs the night before, I just said I went to bed late because I was writing. Which prompted many questions about what it is that I was actually writing, but I managed to avoid their inquisition, somehow.

I feel better today, I know now that I will be leaving Los Angeles in two months time. I have accepted that, and I am enjoying my remaining days here whilst it lasts. It is still possible that my meetings with this great actor and other main Hollywood writer might change my actual decision, if somehow it changes my life, but it is quite improbable and so I am pretty sure that I will be leaving.

Still, I had a productive weekend for once. I did write a lot in different areas of my playing fields, and I bought some magazines about scriptwriters, movies and independent films. I already had a look, I know now where to start to get noticed in L.A.

I was thinking about sending one of my film scripts to these competition, but I changed my mind. They charge \$35 to \$65 to enter, I would need to print copies and post it them, and I noticed that the winners of these competitions do not appear to be selling their scripts anyway and are trying hard, claiming to have won many awards, to get somewhere. So it must be some sort of trap for newbie to spend money with no result to expect in the end.

There is also an interesting conference in April with a line up of speakers who seem to have succeeded in Hollywood, however, I produced too many conferences in my life time to be duped and to be lured there. God knows anyway what I would do once at that conference to be noticed. The thought is kind of killing me.

I have done nothing but feel guilty since I have arrived in Los Angeles. For not taking the subway to get downtown and visit a bit, for not contacting people about my film scripts, agents for example, everything. I no longer want to feel guilty, it is acceptable if I don't do anything and just go back to London with no results from my six months stay in Los Angeles.

I also had another boost this weekend when a well known magazine in France contacted me to publish one of my preface to one of my books, plus an interview

and author portrait. They are doing a special issue on Québec and I will be the author representing my province. That is quite encouraging, God only knows the impact such articles will have on my career. I can dream, at least.

I have also been contacted by my publisher to write a preface for the book of another French-Canadian author who is about to publish. This book has great potential and might be a best-seller of that publishing company, so writing a preface about it is quite an honor. Second good news this weekend. It is rare I get any, but sometimes there is a rush like that which makes it all worthwhile.

I have to work on changing my attitude, to be more positive, to convince myself that great things will happen to me in the next few weeks. This is an essential ingredient of actually succeeding, to change your future for the best. This is how I ended up in L.A. after all. I need to concentrate on making a reality my dreams, imagining them as already realized, and it will happen. Leonardo reminded me of that and he is right.

At work I am rushing to send all my invites today, since it will be my only day in the office this week. They will give me a mobile phone to contact all these people once I am in San Francisco for the rest of the week for that conference. So far everything looks good for that trip, however I will need to make sure to do all that the Valley Girl will ask of me without complain, and always be available to help even when not required. The last thing I need right now is a negative feedback once we return in the office next week.

I decided to remain in San Francisco after the conference, but I did not realize how long I am going to stay there. I will be gone for six days, and I have to pay a hotel for four nights. At a discount of course, it will cost me only \$55 a night for a four or five star hotel, because we rented the whole place for our conference.

However, what am I going to do in San Francisco alone for five days? After I visited Alcatraz and the port, not sure what else I can do. Especially that I am not interested in going to the gay bars and clubs. I might just remain in my hotel room and write or something. And I should not feel guilty about it either.

I did not have any trouble at work recently, which is a nice change, the only puzzling thing is how the Black guy, who is the third in command, is behaving towards me. He is very tactile, and over nice. I will put his hand on my back and

stroke me. I don't want to read too much into this, it is unlikely that he is gay and is trying to show me some interest. So, how should I interpret this?

I think he learned somewhere that gay people can have AIDS and that it is hard to catch even if he were to suck my dick and kiss me like a crazy. So he is trying to show that he is not afraid of touching me like that, even if I am gay. I don't know. Perhaps we should tell him that I am not dying of some weird disease.

It is also possible that he thinks I am kind of fragile and could react badly to anything he says or do. It would probably come from he had read so far from my files I was sending to myself, where I quite clearly freaked out one day and wrote that I could not stand having him on my back and spying on me all the time. I noticed that he kind of backed off since then, so he must have been reading my stuff. And now he could be trying to make amends. To treat me with kids glove. I don't know and I don't care.

I'm back from work now. I came that close to destroying the Senior Manager today, I might have done. Our nice and cozy little working relationship might have come to an end today. I could not remain silent, my name is all over his conference programs, and now I realized that both conference programs I worked on are completely identical to two other conference programs of our main competitor in the US. I mean, even when I started in conferences, I knew we were all copying each other from company to company, even if I always made sure I was not, but blatant rip-off like this, same number of panel discussions, same subjects, same speakers, come on, there is a limit. I might as well tell our competitor: hey, I am stealing all your hard work, here is my name in neon light, come and sue me!

So I asked him by email, if it was wise and if we thought we could get away with copying so obviously our competitors programs? I got back quite a dry answer, a lot of bollocks, justification without real arguments. I also told the Valley Girl about it tonight, while she pent an hour slashing the company and everyone in it, and God knows how she can get away with it. Which means, in less than a day everyone will know the Senior Manager has just been stealing programs from our competitors, and now I understand how he was able to write programs in one hour. He never needed to do any research. And somehow I believe he has the blessing of my bosses, and they must know, and they must not care.

I also understand now why we could not send the program featuring the invited speakers, because then it would have been obvious we copied our competitors' agendas. All of this is making me very uneasy, it is not right. I don't really want to put my name to any of this. Heck, I did not even want to put my name to content I thought was bad enough, and now I discovered it was stolen and everyone knows in the industry. I am even ashamed to send the agenda to potential speakers and sponsors, I wish I could write in bold that I did not write the program, I'm just an assistant.

I really don't know right now if pointing it out will get me into trouble, I'm sure the Senior Manager is not pleased with my discovery. He was kind of hiding the brochures or our competitors, many times I had to ask for them so I could see potential new speakers and sponsors to invite. He always refused, or ignored me. So he did try to hide it from me.

The truth is, even if the bosses did not know about this, if there is one thing you can be certain of, is that in any company, no one cares about what you do, and no one knows. They would not read our conference programs, can you imagine them starting to read our competitors' brochures? You could get away with it easily. And I'm not sure where we would stand legally about all this. Usually, if you are to copy others, you would not make it so obvious. You are definitely asking for trouble at some point. Not sure how he or we get away with it.

And now I am wondering to which extent we are simply blindly stealing from our competitors. Maybe this is the law of capitalism, corporate America, who knows. Hollywood has been stealing blindly for years, I feel that many of my film script ideas on my website have been copied, even if I cannot prove it, even if they were intelligent in the way they went about it. They obviously have an army of lawyers to make sure they cannot be sued, which we don't have right now.

At some point today I did not mind telling him, I needed to know if it was known, if the bosses thought it was acceptable, if we should really do this. I was ready to resign if that got me into trouble, because I am an ethical person, I have morals, I have integrity. And I refuse to get into trouble because I pointed that out. Even if obviously I am just asking for trouble by denouncing it. I'll have to continue, try to wash my hands from this, but it is not going to be easy, I tell you.

I also finally understood today what the Valley Girl meant by the statement that the people working there were anti Corporate America. In my mind, where I am working, is corporate America. But not so, apparently. For a start we can go to work in jeans and T-shirts. And she says it is also much less stressful than working for a big corporation. I find that hard to believe. She also said that we pay the price for the little bit of freedom we have. We have much less benefits and security. I feel it might be a hard price to pay, just so we can wear jeans at work.

Somehow these Californian hippies, Greenpeace and all, who hate wearing suits and ties, have convinced themselves that the hell we are in, is freedom, compared to their past lives in the real corporate world of America. Well, I guess I cannot judge, since I never worked for these corporations, my experience is limited to Canada, Belgium and especially London. And somehow I feel I must have a pretty good idea already, or is it really that worse in the US?

1 March 2006

Finally, something more tangible that you can put your teeth into. After four months, and one day at an event, if I still did not managed to gain the trust of my co-worker, it would mean that I had been and will remain forever an outcast.

As the Valley Girl said, I am rough around the edges, but I am still a likable person. I feel she trusts me now, it would be hard not to, I have been chanting her praises for days now. To gain her trust, yes, but also because I am beginning to appreciate her for who she is. A likable person, and I was not lying when I thought she would be a great actress in one of my future film scripts, at least on paper, if it never goes to screen.

I don't understand these Americans who have been living in L.A. for generations, still trying to convince us that they are Europeans. German, Irish, Italians, British and even French ancestors, when really, they are so typically Americans, it almost annoying how they fit the stereotypes we have of them.

I had some confessions, from the Valley Girl at least, nothing that interesting to report, even what she expressively told me not to write about in my book. She asked if she could tell me something that I could be able to keep for myself, not even talking about my co-workers, but specifically not talk about in my books.

And yet, it was so insignificant, even though for her it seems it means a great deal, that I already forgotten what it is that she told me not to talk about. Some alcoholism in her parents, they kept her loans that they got for her to study, she did not go to private schools due to not enough money in a divorced family, can't remember now, but there could be drug addiction in there somewhere. Big deal, must be the story of every family in America. It certainly match what Leonardo told me about his parents, and it certainly matches my own family. Big deal.

There is no denying that me and the Valley Girl, we share a lot of the same history, tastes, experiences, etc. We are very much the same, I have to say. We are both neurotic, a professional conscience which does not match our treatment at work, a bit of a lack of confidence in ourselves and abilities, when really, we are probably much better at our jobs than millions of people out there in similar positions. And yet, we are full of doubts, because we believe the lies of management.

She really opened up to me tonight, even though we did not have much time, except for three cigarettes outside after our 16 hours day. I paid her only compliments, and I did everything she asked. The only freedom I afforded myself, and it was probably my only big mistake, is that I disappeared many times for 20 minutes into my room, to freshen up. I'm sure I will hear all about it in the near future, but I'm sorry, 16 hours straight for me, cannot be done with at least one good hour spent in my room splashing water over my face and time to myself to think a bit. I would have my own company, and I would still take that freedom.

Of course, it does not help that every single time that I disappear, everything goes wrong, that I am not there to help, and my absence become a crisis to the point that I am being blamed for the acts of God. Today it was that the minute I got into my room, the electricity went down, and that means going back to every break out rooms to make sure the equipment goes back online as soon as the electricity is back. And just my luck, there was a change in the rooms whilst I was sitting on the bog, and of course, without me there, they forgot all about it. I was pretty much the one who kept everything together today, keeping track of time and everything we had to do. If I disappear, everything goes wrong and I am blamed for not being there.

And they all passed their little comment, including the Black Guy, and I had to say: dear me, I did not know that every second I was not there was accounted for and reported back to the bosses. Hopefully that will calm them down for doing just that, going back to the office to say that I was not there every second of each 16 hours day.

I had a lot to say about the hotel. Everything about it is wrong, not even counting that we have lost electricity at least four times today and that no one in the whole building was able to connect to the Internet all day. Think about it, our delegates are the richest people in the world, most of them have close to one billion dollars to their name. And yet, this hotel in San Francisco must deserve two stars at most, only because they have done nothing to renovate it since the 70's. The carpet alone gives me a headache, there is nothing vegetarian on their menu, and even though I am on the third floor, my room looks like I am in the basement without a window. I guess I have been spoilt with five stars hotels all around Europe in the last decade. And yet, I can't blame my bosses, it costs us \$25,000 dollars instead of \$50,000, and instead of meeting a brick wall of a contract filled with unreasonable demands from the hotel, the kind of demands which will make us spend \$50,000 no matter if we manage to only confirm 3 delegates, we actually enjoy people who will do anything to get our business. It just does not fit the profile of our delegates, the richest people on the planet, who have been used to the seven stars treatment, in five stars hotels. Something not many people get to know about in their lifetime.

I have to be commended for being able to still lie through my teeth, and pay all sorts of compliments to the Valley Girl about how she managed the whole thing, despite being drunk at the end of the cocktail party. No wonder I bonded with the girl to the point that she shared her own insecurity with me. No small feat, I tell you, to gain the trust of people who did not like you first hand at the beginning because of your rough edges.

I did not manage to get many confessions from the Black guy, except that he is happily married and has two children. That much I learnt from him. What I learnt from the Valley Girl, is that he is very religious and has faith in some God or other. Perhaps this is what I felt when I said that I thought he was a fair person. Not sure though if he is fulfilling the watch of God himself, hen he spies on us like I never had anyone spying on me before. It has been difficult, since he has this tendency to hide in the next room to listen to what we say, and then to report it

all back to the Los Angeles headquarters, to the bosses. So I always had to be on my best behavior, and yet, for me, this is near impossible, since I don't care for consequences of my actions.

What else, his father was an alcoholic, and because of that, he does not drink at all. What does it mean? He was beaten up? I will never be close enough to him to find out about it. Other feature, he loves his cheeseburgers and is a private man. He would rather spend the night in his room alone, order his usual cheeseburger like Elvis Presley, and... pray I guess. What a great life...

Something is even more disturbing. It is that when you are in a hotel at a conference, you cannot really tell in which city or which country you are in. They are all the same, whether you are in Paris, London, Prague, Rome, Budapest, Amsterdam, Cannes or San Francisco. And it is always a nightmare. I wonder if I would get to love it the day they are my own events, for my own company. Things would be different then, I'm sure. I will see dollar sign on the forehead of each delegate, for once, that should motivate me, as the capitalist monster that I would then be.

Life is so simple when you are not making thousands of dollars for someone else, or a faceless corporation. When you are not working for making other richer, but work instead at your own survival. You might get more stress and worries when everything goes wrong, which invariably happens at conferences, but at least your stress is not about how your boss will kill you for your own incompetence, when everything happens pretty much out of your control no matter how carefully you plan your events.

Conference is a heartless job, and it is certainly not easy. As a proof, none of the people I ever worked with, could even begin to earn that much money for any other job they could have. No other job would give you that much of a salary without any proper and adequate study to back up your competence. It can only mean one thing: we know it is hell, we know you cannot stand it, but here is three times the salary you would get somewhere else, please, continue a bit more and hopefully you will get used to it, or put yourself in such a situation financially, that your only choice will be to stuck with us for the rest of your life from fears of not being able to pay your mortgage or your car. They quickly get us by the bollocks, because of course we spend and live at the level of our salary, we think

this will remain forever, when in truth, it will require quite a change in the standard of living we have been used to, to lose that job.

If you are close to the \$100,000 mark a year than zero, it only means one thing: you're in hell, you do not possess your soul anymore, and you do not have happiness. And yet you are successful and people envy you. Makes no sense. Yes, you do travel around, go around the world, you do like I did tonight, order enough food to your room for a party of five, when stress will only let you eat half of what a normal person would eat. The company pays, why not order for 20 people? We deserve it! Despite all that, we are all on a diet, and we are all running towards becoming the fattest people on the planet. Viva America! Bring in the millions, to make it all worthwhile!

And these conferences make it look so damn easy. You go to these conferences filled with venture capitalists with a simple and stupid little idea supposedly able to revolutionize a certain field somewhere, you ask for a billion dollar hoping there are some private equity people in the room, you promise a return of investment of 3,000%, you get your money, and the worse thing is that you actually do deliver on your lies and hopes. So easy! Give me a billion tomorrow morning, I will turn it into a trillion within a year. If I can believe all their lies, that is.

Makes you wish you had invented the next step in the production of efficient computer chips oh wait, no need to invent it, you just need to invest in it, and it becomes your invention. Everyone will collect their millions, so everyone is beyond pleased. So easy, you wonder why we waste our time becoming doctors and lawyers, when really, this is peanut compared with the wonderful world of finance. You don't even need to worry about the Stock Exchange anymore, we all know it was long dead even before 9/11, it is only bonus that we can now blame it on Osama Bin Laden, when we all knew it was not making any money to anyone for a long time, as a system that appeared to have reached the limits of its normal life. Really makes you wonder who is truly at the source of the destruction of the two towers, very convenient at any rate. And it only killed 5,000 people, nothing compared with the 20 millions the Belgium people killed in Congo not long ago for God only knows why. Is it less? Is it more? I don't know, and I don't care. These are crimes against humanity that I never heard the Belgium people apologize for. And that would not bring back the dead anyway. So who cares? Let's just order more food and more wine, so we can forget all about

it, and do it again, and again. In God we trust anyway, it is after all our logline printed on each dollar, makes it more acceptable to kill to get it, isn't it?

One million deaths is not enough to get me rich, a billion would make it worthwhile, if I get a dollar for each life, that is, the true value of life on this planet, one big American dollar. Of course, it will cost the rest of the people billions of dollars in warlike stuff, but that is of no consequence to me, as long as I get my billion dollars in return for a billion deaths that I directly caused. In God we trust, and don't you forget it the day I drop a bomb on your head.

2 March 2006

I had such a perfect day yesterday with the Valley Girl, no mistake whatsoever, we bonded together, she even liked me. Of course, it took me less than 24 hours to destroy it all.

The last three hours of the conference have been the most difficult ones of my entire stay in Los Angeles. The crisis I was so desperately trying to avoid, I walked right into it. And I guess I have only myself to blame.

I just mentioned that the huge conference we were organizing about financing the Internet was a big risk, since the dot.com era is over and just about everyone lost their investments. She exploded, she shouted that she could not believe that I would shit like that on other people's idea. I was not sure if it was her idea, though now that I think of it, it was perhaps obvious that it was. So of course, she spent the last three hours speaking against me to everyone, I had attacked her on her softest spot, her competence, once again.

She will go back in the office and destroy me, and there is nothing I can do about it. I'm beyond caring anyway. It is clear that it was unavoidable. I tried so hard, and yet, I have failed miserably. It was like, it had to happen, it was destiny. And now that event will flop completely, and she will blame me for it, because I pointed out the obvious.

She said I did not know what I was talking about. Perhaps she does not know that I have been producing conferences for six years in telecoms and the Internet. However, it is true that it has been 4 years since I read anything about it. However, somehow, I doubt very much that any venture capitalist will want to

invest millions in any Internet company, unless somehow they could convince us, as she said, that they will produce the next eBay or Amazon. And even then, who would be crazy enough to believe them? I hope it will succeed, even if it would mean that I did not know what I was talking about. Anything for an easy life.

I am now alone in my room, it is kind of creepy, and I am dead tired. I cannot even walk anymore, none of us could after three days like that. Putting together a conference is always a nightmare, it is going through hell. Every time it is the same story, just have to survive as unscathed as possible. And hope that once in the office, it will all be forgotten. What happens at a conference, we had a saying, must remain at the conference. I did not had the time to tell the Valley Girl that, and anyway, she is such a gossip, no matter what I could have said, and especially with the Black guy there, the spy who reports everything to the bosses, tomorrow morning everyone will know every single stupidity I have said in the last three days. Not sure how it will be on Monday, when I return. But as I said, I don't care anymore.

One thing I did like this time around though, was to think about when these will be my own events. It would be totally different, it could still be hell, but it would be my own hell. And it will change everything. It motivated me to go ahead and start that business. I have also learned there that it has to be something I care about, the content, the subjects, it cannot be corporate bollocks, or else, I will fall asleep in the room, and I don't want that. Well, let' just say that I did not care much for what these people had to say, it made me wonder what was the point of producing a conference like that, if not simply to make money. It should be more than just that, it has to be something that I truly want to learn about, my own motivations, a reflection of my own twisted personality, and it still gives me a lot of ground to maneuver in as I have many interests. We'll see.

I was very depressed an hour ago, I bought a bottle of wine for \$25, and after one glass I already feel much better. Sad that I will probably go to bed early, I could have been inspired to write some more tonight.

Tomorrow I would like to leave San Francisco and go to San José. I would like to visit the huge haunted house of Mrs. Winchester. I would love to have a conference there, I wonder if it is possible. But before I can organize conferences in the U.S., and figure out how a Canadian living in London can actually produce international events without falling into a bureaucratic nightmare, I better first

concentrate on London. I reckon I can find a cheap hotel around Heathrow Airport, around the corner of where I live.

I can't believe I am in San Francisco, and yet I don't feel like it. I don't want to go anywhere, I don't want to visit anything, I certainly don't want to go out to a club or a gat bar. I must feel very old with my 33 years to wish to remain home in the gay capital of the world. I'm so tired and depressed, maybe I should just go and throw myself off that bridge where everyone apparently jumping from every year. Is it from the Golden Gate that people commit suicide in San Francisco? Perhaps I should go and kill myself in Mrs. Winchester's house. After all, it has been constructed to accommodate ghosts, apparently. Sounds perfect to me.

I wish I could call my baby, I miss him so much. What I would give to be with him again, and start that business together. Always remaining at home with our family of animals. He bought a dog now, a terrier. I told him many times before that if he were to do that, I would leave him. But now I find it acceptable, because I have left him for over six months and he suffered a lot as well. I just hope she does not pee and shit everywhere and does not bark all the time. I could not stand that. Our flat is so small, and we already have five or six cats, a dog is just too much right now in that zoo of his.

Surprisingly, his mother was very pleased with the dog, it means for her that Stephen is definitely not moving to America. And anyway, I have no desire to remain here either. The sooner I am out of here, the better. I miss London too much. I miss my cozy life with Stephen and our zoo. I guess I needed to little trip to Los Angeles to finally understand what it is that I have. And I did not need to lose it all before understanding it. Which is a plus.

3 March 2006

Today was the birthday of Stephen, he is now 46, closer to 50. Soon he will have good reason not to have sex anymore, he will say that he is impotent or something, or too old for that. I woke him up when I called, he was sleeping with four cats and a dog, I guess he does not need me anymore, one of us is kept warm at night.

I just came back from downtown San Francisco. I stopped at Powell Station and walked around for two hours, visited China Town, met two French-Canadians now

living in Texas, and was again frightened by the number of beggars everywhere. Some of the old architecture is quite impressive, they are mostly inhabited by the richest corporations of America, which are undoubtedly banks, who have been making billions of dollars on our back since forever, and unfortunately there is no way to avoid dealing with them. It is one of my big dream projects one day, to start a real cooperative bank only to help people, a sort of non-profit organization. And somehow, I feel it will be ruled as illegal. I wish someone with the means would do it, I'll be their first customer in line.

There were a lot of pretty girls on the street, a few good men, and a sense of a big American metropolis. It kind of filled me with energy, but now that I am back to the hotel near the airport, I cannot walk anymore (because my shoes that I never wear, and that I was wearing at the conference, have destroyed the shape of my feet). I wonder how I will be able to go to Alcatraz tomorrow, but I have to. I did not visit it the first time I was here, and this time I won't miss it. On Sunday I will go to Mrs. Winchester in San José, using a CalTrain, and then it is my return to Los Angeles, my new home.

I tried to buy alcohol, but I was unable to. Just as well, I will go to bed early tonight and I already drank too much in the last couple of days. I am very pleased with myself, today I wrote a big chunk of my business plan, even if in the end it will serve no purpose, since I won't be able to borrow any money to start my conference business. You never know, if someone comes out of the woodwork and ask for it, I will have it ready.

It is unfortunate that I am not asking for a few millions, I have met just about every venture capitalist in town at the conference this week. They would not blink twice if they were to learn that I only need £120,000 to start my business. They would send me on my way and wish me good luck.

Sad also that I got myself in so much debts in the last three years in order to try to succeed in films and television, a field that definitely does not pay at all, filled with opportunistic people ready to manipulate you until you can bleed no more. I've met a lot of them in Hollywood, the industry has been taking the piss for years, and the associations to protect the writers and actors does not appear to be able to help, especially if you are not already a professional with a high salary, in which case, you cannot even joined them. Makes you wish the government would come in and regulate that industry, they have been so good at regulating

just about everything else to death when sometimes there was no need to. Well, not my concern anymore, it is unlikely that I will succeed in Hollywood in the next two months, and I certainly will never again work without a proper contract and assuring myself either some money, or the rights.

I have three conferences to prepare in the next two months, one about Paranormal Science, and the other two, I'm not sure yet. I thought it should be related, but I'm not so sure anymore. My business plan certainly had the advantage of opening my eyes to the fact that charging only £100 per attendee, will make it difficult to break even. I might want to work on other events for which I can at least charge £500 per place. But then I will have to provide lunch, and it will make it equally difficult to break even, since these hotels are very good at making money out of you. You can easily end up with a £50,000 bill just for the venue and lunch for a two day event. And that is without the marketing and sales budget. Got to be careful, I cannot fail with this business.

I need to establish a list of all national organizations and associations and pinpoint which industries have a lot of them, without having too many conferences on the subject. I also need to look at any emerging market, whether it is technology or space programs. I might end up producing events I care nothing about, and keep the ones I do care about as other events on the side. Who knows, in the end, you can never tell which will bring the most profit. It is also, I'm afraid to say, a business of hit and miss, and luck. We'll see.

And now, as unbelievable as this might seem, instead of clubbing all night and pick up a good looking fellow in San Francisco Gay Village, at midnight I am actually going to bed. Tomorrow I will be visiting Alcatraz, even though I cannot tell exactly why I want to see that old prison, except that it was reported as haunted, and somehow that will probably not be the trip to learn much about it.

4 March 2006

It looks like I will never visit Alcatraz in this lifetime, there was no more ticket for today. I could not either take a boat and go around the island, so it was a bit wasted. I saw the Fishers Warf, a big tourist trap if ever I saw one. I stopped for a pizza at Boudin, which is a nice shop/restaurant. I wanted to try their bread chowder, but naturally none were vegetarian. I ended up visiting the aquarium, which I thought was very small and cost a lot of money. I saw a few clown fish

however, and that made me happy, it reminded me of Stephen and our fish tank in London.

I went at the end of the pier, looking at Alcatraz, and I almost jump to swim to it, in my desperation to visit the island. Which is certainly the complete opposite of people who were imprisoned there and wanted to swim back to the shore.

I met a man who was one of the last prisoner in Alcatraz, for bank robbery, he wrote a book or something about his experience. I waited the right moment to ask him a single question, finally I asked if the place was haunted. He looked at me like if I was crazy. He suffered hell over there for 4 years, god knows how he was treated, threatened, and there I asked him the stupidest question ever. I'm sure in years to come he will mention it again. Well, I bet he would not have liked my second question, which was: how many times have you been fucked up the arse in Alcatraz and did you manage to enjoy it? He would have feel down his chair...

So I finally decided to take one of these cable carts to go to Castro, the gay village. No cable cart came though, and I had to take a normal bus with a driver who obviously was unable to drive a bus, we almost all died in there.

It was the second time I went to the village in San Francisco, the supposed worldwide Mecca of the gay world. And once again I was quite disappointed. I must not know exactly how large it is, because to me it looks small, and the bars have nothing special, neither the people in it. I drank two Coronas quickly in two different places and then I left as quickly as I came. Now I can say I went there, even if I was bored out of my mind. Must be because I was alone, and no one spoke to me. I was not expecting anyone to speak to me, but it might have been nice. I went to the bookstore, secretly hoping to come face to face with one of my own books, but of course, why would they stock French books? One day maybe they will stock one of my English books.

5 March 2006

This trip has been a real disaster. Did not see Alcatraz, did not see Mrs. Winchester's house, did not do anything, did not go anywhere. I was too late to go to San José today, and going back to downtown San Francisco might have been cutting it too short.

So I am stuck at the airport waiting all day for my flight. Two hours and a half more, I just had a big and disgusting pizza with French fries, two Sprite from leftovers of the conference, and now a large Mocha Coffee which cost me \$5, the most expensive coffee I ever had in my entire life.

Well, actually, I'm pretty sure the conversion from pounds to dollars makes it one of the cheapest coffee I have ever bought in recent years, however, it seemed expensive after the \$333 I spent at the hotel when I checked out. And that is nothing, I have more money to give back to the company, for I what I did not spend of the \$350 they gave me. So in all this little trip will have cost me close to \$600, and all I did was to go downtown and walk around. This is so sad... and now I just don't know how I will survive until the rest of the month.

Perhaps I should finally start a diet, but the problem is that Atkins is an expensive diet, not a cheap one. I have to buy low-carb products and they cost a fortune. Maybe I should stop drinking and smoking, I would save a lot of money that way. I might have to once I have calculated my budget.

Leonardo is going to be waiting for me at the airport in Los Angeles. He says he has great news for me, about the film script, however he did not want to elaborate. The only thing that could qualify as great news would be if he managed to either sell it or grab the attention of one of his powerful friends.

I immediately assumed it was that he spoke with his actor/producer friend and that after reading our script, he is so impressed, he wants to meet us. But when I asked him if he spoke to him, he said that he left a message, and was supposed to call him back the next day, blah blah blah... I've heard that before, too many times. So the actor/producer friend is no more interested than he was months ago. It is also probable that he never read anything that we sent him. Not sure if he watched the DVD of the film I worked on, which cost me a real fortune to order from the UK and took forever to arrive.

So I guess his great news can only be one thing: he wrote two more pages of the film script, or the book as he now calls it. If that is his good news, it will be really disappointing indeed. I can't see what else it could be, unless he actually write four pages instead of two. I guess that would be better, and yet, very

disappointing. He had a full week, I could have written the whole thing in that full week. Never mind.

Funny that you could be there at work and at home everyday for months, and nothing ever changes. But as soon as you disappear for a week or two, as if the people behind the scene were waiting for you to get out to change the decors, everything changes. It is also true that every time I said this out loud, after leaving for more than week, I came back to everything being the same.

I hope somehow everything has changed at work, just so it is not so boring, back to routine, etc. I'm not certain yet in how much trouble I am in and if I will be called into the office as a result of the Valley Girl destroying me because I dared to "shit all over her great idea" which cannot fail to flop miserably. I don't think she has much ammunition, but with this kind of woman, you never know what she could invent or lie about to get you into trouble.

She did when she got rid of that temp we had for a day, saying that he could not use Excel, when it was pretty obvious that he could. And since on hearing this my boss said she would not pay for a temp who worked all day, if he did not know how to use Excel, the Valley Girl had to push her lies further to convince the agency that the guy was really not adequate, and they would not pay anything for his work that day.

The guy was competent, he knew how to use Excel, I think there was a clash of personality between him and the Valley Girl, and now I'm sure he is no longer working for that agency, and that he was not paid anything for that day of work which must have been a misery, cold calling people all day. God knows what he did after that, if he got into trouble for being unable to pay for his flat, etc.

So, never underestimate the Valley Girl, if she wants me out of there, she will succeed as she has no morale or ethic. And I am not even sure if she does it all consciously. I think she gets to a point where she can convince herself of just about anything in order to look better and remain in total control.

Must be some sort of survival instinct, which makes her annihilate the smallest threat to her own person or her work. And then she goes in a higher gear, she does not think anymore, she lies through her teeth, and once it is over, she simply forget it all and goes back to her wonderful little husband, to live another

safe day. She will not be sacked this week, she is still worth something, she still deserves him.

So I was a bit worried when I had to take a place and pass the security. At least they are not asking for my passport, just my Californian driving license. But they are coming up with new machines everyday to check out if you are telling the truth or not, or if you are lying or not.

Hen I tried to pass, the woman must have identified me as some weird one, because she said: this one does not need to take his shoes off (thank God I thought), he will instead be used as our lab rat to test our new air machine (what?). What is an air machine?

When I came face to face wit the Air machine that I was to test, it felt like a suicide booth from the original Star Trek. The security guy must have read on my face that I was not willing to die just because Bush had become paranoid and that he would not hesitate to use new machines capable of reading our minds even if they kill you of radiation or cancer after only three uses.

He said that it was just air, seems harmless enough. It blows air on you quite powerfully and then it goes up in the machine and it can smell you. Not sure what it is supposed to smell, whether it is explosive, chemicals or drugs. I am just a bit worried for Stephen, that if these machines can now detect drugs better than dogs, then he's really going to have to stop, because he will not be able to get away with it any longer. We all knew that technology would one day bring the Big Brother state to a perfection, and now we simply cannot get away with anything, we have absolutely no more freedom. I guess we are lucky that it was not so for so many years. Our children won't have it easy, none of them will ever know what freedom or privacy meant. And these security people in the US, if no one stops them, they will eventually get you to pass in an incinerator before your flight. It would be practical, none of us would ever go anywhere else again. Wouldn't that be the perfect solution?

Oh God, I am so unlucky, somehow every time I take plane, something goes wrong and it is either very late or cancelled. Is it that planes are that unreliable and it is always like that? Or is it just that I am unlucky every time? It rains a bit, so as usual the whole State came to a stand still. I would not want to see them deal with snow storms like in Canada, they would quickly realize that rain is not

the end of the world and that planes can still fly through it. I just hope now that it will not be cancelled. And this is really putting me in a bad situation.

Leonardo is coming to pick me up at Burbank airport, and now I will arrive at 9h30. So I'll be home at 10h30 or 11h, and Leonardo will take forever to leave, and tomorrow I'll be dead at work. And if the flight is cancelled, and I am late to get to work tomorrow, you can bet this will be taking out my salary. Can't anything ever go right on this planet?

7 March 2006

It was a hard day today. It still is, it is 2 am, I am finishing my laundry in an hour, and I still have to go through my old CDs and DVDs to find information about printers and mailing house, and costs, that I have used in the past in Europe. Just that, and I'm working tomorrow morning.

I asked my boss' wife if I could leave one hour early to find this information (since obviously it would take me all night), but she ignored my message, so the answer was clear: work one more hour, search all night.

I have been debating if I should or not, I have such a headache. I guess I have to, no choice. And now, can you believe, I feel guilt for having asked to leave an hour earlier, I feel like I am a bad employee looking for any reason to leave early, when I worked until 4 am the day before we left for San Francisco, and the conference itself was days of 16 hours.

More guilt because I did not work on my conference today, instead I wrote another report about how to produce conferences in Europe, what is the difference, things to consider. I identified so many pitfalls, I bet they never thought of none of it. And yet, I feel that this report was badly received, because they asked my two innocent questions, and they hope for a two sentence answer. Like, what is the meaning of life in two words, please? (Fuck you?) So in their eyes I must have been wasting my time today, once again.

I don't know what the Valley Girl told them about my behavior and work in San Francisco, it is quite possible that at the moment they don't really have me high in their heart. She certainly tried to blame us for all her mistakes, today was her review or appraisal, she was in their office for hours. And as soon as she got out,

she started her round of gossip to complain about whatever, how dissatisfied she is, etc. And I cannot stand this anymore. I was so silent today, I got her worried. I said I was busy, and busy I was.

Even I can recognize when someone works hard and I will go out of my way to thank them for what they did, even if it is not directly for me. It seems to me that it is the first law of any boss, being capable of freaking out when something is not done, all right, but also be able to recognize hard work as well.

I am in limbo, I don't know where I stand, I never know if I still have my job in the morning when I get there. This is not a way to live. I won't feel guilty when I leave them. God I am tired.

And just to make everything perfect, I am now being sued by an agency in France who claims that what a few lines some people wrote about them in one of my forums is defamation. Great! No more freedom of speech either.

7 March 2006 – 7 pm

We received today, everyone in the office, an astonishing story about a donkey getting out of a well that a farmer was trying to bury in there because the donkey was now too old. At the end it said:

“The donkey later came back and bit the farmer who had tried to bury him. The gash from the bite got infected, and the farmer eventually died in agony from septic shock. When you do something wrong and try to cover your ass, it always comes back to bite you.”

This came from the Admin Director, or Accountant, or whatever it is she is. She is the woman I talked about before, the one who in the elevator said that I would soon know why she was angry, the one that my wife's boss said she wanted to find the next day with a better attitude.

Well, as it turns out, she has a death wish. She has crossed the line today, even I could see that. Either she has already been sacked and she does not care anymore, or else, she's beyond caring and then, they will have to get rid of her.

She is cracking, she's the one I thought was the most secure. The one in charge and frightening people in doing their job. She's got too much to do, she has been working too much overtime, she has a young daughter that she never sees. When she requested an assistant, my boss said: why should I get her an assistant, if she is willing to do all the overtime possible? That was reported all around the office by the Valley Girl who was within hearing distance when he said it. She is the trouble maker, and now she will cost the job of the best employee of the office.

Not only because of that email, which is directly a personal attack on my bosses, but because tonight when she left the building earlier than usual, the Valley Girl said: congratulation! When I asked why? The Admin Director sworn and freaked out completely. Neither the Valley Girl nor I understood what she said, her face was deformed with anger. We heard the "fucking" though, and that is enough for the Valley Girl. Tomorrow she will have a field day telling everyone, and that will be the last nail in the coffin for the Director. I would not be surprised if she were to be gone by the end of the day tomorrow.

The most horrifying part of this story, is how the Valley Girl was the confident of the Admin Director. How she trusted her by telling her all her problems, and how the Valley Girl seemed to be a nice good friend in this office, when in fact, she is the biggest gossip around and strive on highly negative things until everything crumbles around us.

Today at work it was a game between her and I, of rebuilding after the war. She tried to be nice, I tried to be nice, so we can pretend that we love each other and the problems in San Francisco never happened.

In the meantime today she managed to pick up a fight with the Chinese Girl. I'm not one to enjoy when everything goes wrong at the office, but this is a relationship that I don't like very much, because together they are very destructive.

The fight was again something very stupid. The Chinese girl is the only person in the office who actually recycles. She fills her bin up, she brings it home to recycle at a later time. The Valley Girl does not recycle, she said it costs much more in money and pollution to recycle than produce new stuff (god knows where she

read that, I thought of asking, but I realized that I would be up for another big fight and I would have been too easy a target at this fragile moment).

She also said that she loves her dog, but if a bill of \$500 comes in to save it, the dog will die, because she won't pay for that. I stopped myself from saying at this point that we just spent £1200 on one of our cats who seems to have been run over by car. I guess this dog business is another argument they had today.

Which again attacks her integrity as a person, it could be construed as her being a bad person in a world of perfection that we live in at work, with half the office being hippies who want to save the world, working in the corporate world and fighting to get their sponsorship bonuses. There is no contradiction here, might I remind you. You may still want to save the planet, and yet, you are still part of that system, you have to live, and so, it is not possible to be green in a world full of shit.

9 March 2006

I don't think I could sink lower in my career than I did today. The most embarrassing moment of my entire life. I was called in the office, mind you, I was expecting it since the Valley Girl and the Chinese Girl have been working so hard to get me sacked, no matter how nice I'm trying to be with them, and how hypocrite I am. I just did not know the angle they were going to use against me, I found out today, and I don't think my bosses told me about all the complaints against me, because frankly, the girls did not have much against me to begin with. However I have to give them credit, they have more imagination than I thought.

I was told by both my bosses today that they had received many complaints against me, and that there are people who are not comfortable with the fact that I am gay. So I have to shut up on that subject, to not talk about my sexuality at work.

They named one person who obviously complained louder than the others, the Cool Spanish Guy who was still asking at the beginning of the week excitedly if I was going to speak about him in my next book. Yes Sir, but no longer as the Cool Spanish Guy, but as the biggest backstabber and hypocrite I have ever known.

There is not even one hour that does not pass without him making a joke about my homosexuality and even his. And suddenly he goes to my bosses to officially complain that he is not comfortable with my sexuality? It is pure bollocks. The girls made him do it, they convinced him to go and complain. And he is too young and too stupid to have realized that he could have just come to me and told me in private.

He officially complained about me, in effect destroying me in the eyes of my bosses, and seriously compromising my position in this company. This is first class backstabbing. What the girls were unable to do without good arguments against me, other than just see me as a threat and not liking it, they were able to achieve with him.

There is no doubt that I would have been sacked today, if not for the fact that I am working so damn hard and my reports are highly appreciated. So the girls have failed again. But they haven't. I can no longer go in that office and be nice to them. I can no longer talk to any of them. Many people complained about me, and in all honesty I don't know who, it could have been anyone or all of them. Which means I cannot speak to any of them anymore. What a miserable life I can now expect in this job.

And they all knew what they did, they have been quiet in the last two days. Isabella even told me yesterday, and I was surprised as it seemed to come out of nowhere, that she would never complain against me. In retrospect, I understand that she knew about it, she knew it was coming. And since usually she is not in the loop of any gossip in that office, I can only assume that the whole office knew and were expecting that I would be laid off.

Now the most difficult will be to appear professional, not to be sulking in my corner, and yet avoid all their conversations and jokes about me that appear to be coming my way every hour. And yet you don't see me complain. From their standard, if I had kept a record of everything they said to me in the last four months, I would have enough to claim harassment on the basis of my sexual orientation and sue their ass off. And that is without what I heard today, that I had to stop talking about my sexuality at work, when to be honest, I barely talk about it, they are obsessed with it and talk about it all the time. Something that I will have to make understand that is no longer acceptable. It is going to be difficult to make them understand that I cannot be part of any of their little jokes

anymore and can no longer just chat with them for the heck of it. Many people complained about me, I think this is justification enough. And somehow I will need to make them understand to leave me alone without being direct. Because what I feel like telling the Valley Girl when she is coming to me all nice, is: you fucking bitch, don't pretend to be nice and be my friend, when I know very well that you are a fucking big backstabber and tried to get me sacked. Well bitch, it did not work, and I am not about to give you anymore arguments to continue your little dangerous game. So just leave me alone, pretend I don't exist, and everything might be fine.

And what I feel like telling the Fucking Spanish guy, next time he attacks me jokingly in the office, would go like this: I am deeply insulted by what you just said, let me go to the bosses to make an official complaint. Hopefully after three complaints, you will disappear from my life forever. Don't try to be cool and everything, it just does not suit you. Because what you did the other day to me, pretending that you were all fragile to the bosses and that I hurt your little feelings when this is what you do all day to all of us, just does not qualify as cool. You're an idiot who cannot understand anything about life, and now you will the consequences, because I am certainly not going to talk to you ever again. And you will feel that this is heavy. I cannot forgive you, and I will not forget.

Funny, my bosses spent a long time chanting my praises in the office before dropping the bomb. They said that they were highly satisfied with my performance, they know now that I am capable, they want to give me more responsibility, they have big plans for me, and they asked me if I was ready for it. I said yes, of course.

I don't have the slightest idea what they were talking about, what these big plans for me actually means, but if I ever become the boss of the little morons around me who see me now as the little assistant with no power whatsoever, they will have a hard time, because I know them all too well. Nothing will work with me, and I will never take them seriously. If I can, I'll get them all sacked, since obviously this is what they have been trying to do to me recently. I can play that game too, you'll see. Bastards.

No more Mr. Nice. Because this is all I have ever been. Nice to all of them, joke with them, help them when they needed it, save them when they were in trouble, never complained about anything, pretending that everything is perfect, like I did

again today in the office of my bosses. I am happy, everything is fine, we're working hard and it is producing results.

I even praised the Senior Manager, when they put him down in front of me today in the office. They kind of suggested that he was babbling a lot, talking a lot, wasting a lot of time. And now I understand why his speech impediment went from bad to worse in the last few days.

He seemed to be talking fine four months ago, but now he is no longer. He can't speak anymore, he is searching for his words, he repeats them all the time, he is even unable to look at me in the eyes. It is weird, I was wondering what was going on with him.

Perhaps it is guilt because he too might have complained against me. However it is unlikely, there is no way my bosses would be praising me right now if he had destroyed me in their eyes. He has trouble of his own, maybe he is facing the sack himself. What my bosses told me about him today, which I thought was completely unjustified, tells me a lot about the trouble he is in. And I don't even care to find out who has backstabbed him, the whole office no doubt, starting with the director.

I may be also indirectly responsible for his downfall. My conference is the only Energy conference to have reached over \$20,000 in sponsorship, and that is without the consideration that I confirmed five supporting organizations, which means a great deal in terms of marketing. None of his conference ever had one sponsor or one supporting organization, and it is clear that he must have told them that in the Energy area, that was not exactly popular. And now they must know he was bullshitting.

I am truly sorry if I have caused this. I heard the Valley Girl say about him that none of his conference had any sponsor, that his events were all crap. So at the root of his troubles, must again be the Valley Girl. I wish I could just go back in this office and tell my bosses: get rid of her. Or she will bring you down to your knees, she will destroy everything in her path until none of us can stand each other. She is a rotten apple causing trouble just for the heck of it. Can't you see it? How can you be so blind?

And I hear her say again at the conference in San Francisco that the bosses had not even a clue about the events she is working on. That they felt it should not take six months to do them because all events were the same in their eyes. You bet that I don't understand how you can spend six months recruiting 75 companies to say at the event: we want money! I reckon it would take me two months at most, without the two assistants she had on top of it to make these events come true. Which just shows that she is wasting her time. And she is, she is never at her desk working, she spends the day talking to everyone in the office or in the kitchen. And then she works some overtime later on to actually do her job she is not doing during the day, and it looks so good in the eyes of the bosses. And she certainly never fail to tell everyone that she worked until 7 the day before... it is such a sad story, I think she is sinking lower than anyone I had ever known. And I appear to be the only one to have found her out. Though the customer service girl did say to me in the car, while going at Burbank Airport, that all these people who have been sacked who were under her, looks very bad for her. Unfortunately, I doubt she is telling anyone else at work about that fact, and therefore the Valley Girl walks in there every morning as the Queen Bee of the office. I thought she would destroy herself in the process eventually, I'm not so sure anymore. She will still be there in ten years, a Director no less, and it will be chaos. And as the Director, she will always be right. How can they be so blind? Is probably because they choose to. Like me today, they should have sacked me, but I have proven to them that I was capable, that I had potential, and now they are ignoring all the complaints against me. Poor souls that I am working with, I had no idea I was corrupting them with my sexuality. Well perhaps it is because I have one, and they obviously have none. Let's see what I can do to spare them this hell. From now on, I will be the most silent employee they have ever seen. And when I will announce to them that I am leaving in less than a month, I will blame it all on the Valley Girl. I won't, but I wish I would.

I will not resist however doing a little speech next time they unanimously attack me, especially on the fact that I am gay. I will have to say that many of you complained about me to the bosses and that I was surprised I had not been sacked. That I now need to be professional, and I can no longer get involved in their discussions. So please ignore me, leave me alone, I have work to do. It will shut them up, it will be embarrassing to them, however I fear it will not in the slightest make them feel guilty. If anything they will spend the rest of the day talking about me in my back. Because so is their nature. I guess I can only blame myself for having got involved in their little jokes, that now they are blaming on

me, as if I was the instigator of all that crap, when I never was. What a bunch of hypocrites.

I thought I had seen it all, in my years working in conferences, but I was deeply mistaken. They are masters of childish mind games and behaviors, the least professional people I have ever worked with in my career. Why should I be surprised? We're in America. What everyone else is everywhere else, Americans are always more extreme in everything they think and do. They may ultimately be more successful, but the price to pay is very high. No wonder they invented the term clinical depression and burn out, it has nothing to do with the job at hand, it is the nightmare of suffering co-workers totally out of control.

Oh well, one more argument to justify my soon to happen disappearance. I still have no idea what these big plans my bosses have for me really means, but I doubt now that I will find out before I tell them that it is game over. I have to say, for the first time today they truly made an effort to tell me they appreciated me, which is a first. Unfortunately it comes too late. And all I was able to say, stupid as I am, is that I understood that if they were not talking to me, it meant that everything was fine. What they understood by that, and I did not mean to suggest it, was that every time they called me in the office was to tell me how dissatisfied they were with me, and to threaten me somehow. And even today was not exactly wonderful. I had to go walk outside to take in what I just heard. The injustice of what the Spanish guy dropped on me. If anything, everyone in the office could have made an official complaint against him for much worse than his own complaint against me. And I did not fail to mention it to my bosses. I don't think it sank in though, despite the liberties that the Spanish guy takes, he is still very much appreciated in that office. I would have loved to hear his complaint against me, since it seems so out of character for him. It is like if the biggest bastard ever, that everyone knew was the biggest bastard ever, came into the bosses' office one day to complain that the little Chinese girl who never says anything in her little corner, who is so sweet, is the biggest bastard of all.

I will appear to them as a destroyed man in the next few days. They have no idea how strong I am, as an observer of the corporate world, denouncing them back here. They have no idea how much shit I've gone through in my career and how I never cared enough for any job to let all these mind games get to me. If anything, I feel stronger now. They have confirmed everything I thought about them, that I predicted would happen.

You might think that I am asking for all of this, that my own behavior must be inviting these complaints. I assure you, I am nothing but nice and helpful at work. I work very hard and never cause any problem when there is no need to. I do not deserve any of what just happened, and as a proof I am not the only one who suffers. They are all facing the sack themselves because they are all backstabbing each other on a regular basis everyday. You only have my side of the story, I'm sure however that I am in much less trouble than everyone else working there. They have all destroyed each other, and I wonder what my bosses feel like when they go back home and think about it at night. They must be laughing real hard, at how stupid we all are, fighting to prove that we are better than the next one and deserve some sort of promotion and more money, while everyone else should be sacked. I hope so anyway, because if they are losing sleep over this, it would mean that no one on this planet will ever find peace or happiness.

10 March 2006

For me March has always been a terrible month, and I always thought, especially in Canada, that it was linked to the weather. The spring coming, but not quite, the winter that just will never end, and people in schools, colleges and university getting ready for exams or whatever, an explosive mix which makes everyone very tired and prompt to cause more problems than usual.

I would have thought that in L.A., with the permanent summer, this would not be the case. However this week has been frantic, everyone was out of control, for a while I thought a few people would get sacked, because they went too far, me included.

After I learnt about the complaints against me yesterday, today I have not said one word in the office, except when it was about business, and I kept it to a minimum. The backstabber Spanish guy has not looked at me once, and did not talk to me. So he knows what happened. Even the Valley Girl did not talk too much to me, but she is quite the bitch, she hurts in your back, indirectly, so she cannot be blamed, and then she goes back to you and she wants to hear how fed up you are and how much you suffer.

Good thing she did not speak to me, I could have exploded in her face, and tell her: don't be hypocrite, you know very well that all that is happening right now is your fault, that you complained against me too, don't pretend to be nice and to be my friend.

The Spanish guy might feel guilt now, I don't know. He was getting ready for his conference for next week, he won't be there until Wednesday or Thursday. Thank god. So he was under a lot of stress, he had a lot to do, and he was in a bad mood. Could have been the conference, could also have been the fact that the Chinese girl was not there today, one day before going to her own event. So it left the Spanish guy in the shit.

The real disappointment was for Isabella, as speaking Spanish too, she loves the Spanish guy, and she really likes me too. That he could have done that to me, is beyond comprehension to both of us, as it is certainly out of character, especially for someone who has crossed the line on a regular basis with everyone in the office. I could myself have complained against him so many times, of course I would never. I would first speak to him, before denouncing him officially and get him into trouble. That is more like a murder, a simple elimination of people you don't like at work. You do that when you want to get rid of them. That's why it was so surprising coming from him. If it had been that easy to get rid of me, he would definitely have been next, since anyone right now could complain against him, and I'm surprised nobody did, yet.

And now, if you thought these were real problems, wait until I tell you about the ones of Stephen in England. He too was under a new Manager who has sacked over 10 employees since he started. He tried very hard to get Stephen out, but it did not work because the big big boss likes Stephen, since he works so hard. So the Manager patiently waited until Stephen made a mistake, and of course he did.

He brought his new dog in a cage in a car he was delivering, he needed to go to the vet and it was well after working hours, and the customer complained. Stephen has now been suspended pending an investigation and a disciplinary meeting. So basically he has lost his job. The ten others have all been sacked on technicalities, and for much worse than having his dog in the car of a customer.

And then, even if he had not lost his job on that one, he was caught going too fast by a policewoman the very same day. He already has 12 points on his

license, he barely escaped losing his driving license six months ago for speed again. So he will anyway lose his driving license now, and therefore would have had to quit his job as a driver. So now, there is no money getting in. He is in deep trouble, and of course, that means I am also in deep trouble. It all happened on the same day, yesterday. The stars must have been badly placed for sure.

Crisis situations demand radical decisions. Now my conference business has become a necessity, and I need to start it as soon as possible. Which means I need to go back to London as early as I can, and we need to make money real quick. If everything go as planned, I might be back in London before the end of the month. However it is tricky. Though I have no doubt I can leave work at any time, I cannot leave this apartment until the end of April. They might let me go without all the penalties, hopefully, if not, well, I will have the time to get ready on my conferences from Los Angeles. Ready to sell as soon as I land in London.

None of us know exactly how we will pay our £1,500 a month we need to pay our bills, it would have been nice to have saved a bit for the rainy days ahead, but in this kind of society we're living in, this is just not possible. I could also resume my old job back in London, however doing so is a certainty that the conference business will never be started, and then Stephen would have to find a job somewhere else, and the dream of independence would be over.

This is an opportunity, we need to seize it. The only obstacle is no money whatsoever to start a new business, and none to be expected, and of course, his parents. They will have a heart attack, and they will not let Stephen borrow on his mortgage. Even a little bit so we can survive three months, so we can start this business and make money.

The other problem of course is my financial situation, the company controlling my life right now, this so-called bankruptcy. It will be difficult to let them know that I left my job and that I intend to start a new business, not even in my name, but in the name of Stephen, so in effect I would only be an employee, a badly paid one at that. Not sure how they will react to that, I really don't know what to expect.

And the worst thing now is the wait. To find out if Stephen has really lost his job, but never mind, he will anyway lose his driver license. So it is un fait accompli, and yet, we need to wait before making rash decisions or moving too fast. He has

not told his mom yet... and instead of helping him with the new business, she said in the past that she would actually disinherit him. So it should be a lot of fun.

All of this might lead to a greater good, but at this time, it is very hard to conceptualize. These are difficult times and I am not sure how we will get out of it. For now I should just try to decompress from this week of hell. I have two days to get back on my feet before another week of hell. And I even have to work on my conference this weekend. I have been given two days to finish it, when it would take another two weeks. Great! Wonderful! Especially when I could instead be working on my own business.

13 March 2006

I found it hard today at work. Continuing my silence policy, concentrating on my job, and not going anywhere fast with this conference. I worked all night yesterday on it, on a Sunday, and today I am reaping the reward as I confirmed many more people. However I still have only one sponsor that I did not find, and only two supporting organizations (though this is the fault of my Senior Manager who does not want to give 15% discount to the whole planet, so he kinds of tell me to not invite them, and I think it is crazy).

This morning the Valley Girl dared ask me how my weekend was, after the week from hell I had last week, most likely of her. I said: fine. And then she left. So I went to Isabella, and said very low that she was such a hypocrite. And then I think the Chinese Girl heard me, and she immediately left, and they talked somewhere outside the office for over 20 minutes before coming back in. I have no doubt now that this is war and that I am not likely to win it, since I cannot just go and gossip to my bosses against them, when it is obviously their favorite past time.

I don't feel like going back there, I am much more productive working from home, in that kind of state of mind I am in. I doubt my bosses would let me work from home though. I can't stand anyone at the moment at work, hearing their voices is simply making me lose my hard on for anything. I walk like a ghost without energy, ready to explode if anyone even dare speaking to me. I don't know where this is leading, I don't want to find out!

I have now returned from work. Gosh, this was another hard day, not because I had to suffer any bullshit, in fact the Valley Girl did not speak to me for the rest of the day, but because I am working so hard on this conference, and thankfully today I have achieved a miracle. I confirmed over 12 more panelists and the Senior Manager was impressed. If I had not worked last night from home, God only knows that today I would have been called in the office so they could have told me how incompetent I am. Conferences, as I always said, is just a string of miracles. This is what is required to succeed in the allocated time.

I have been thinking about my forum a lot recently, the one on one of my French websites. After that agency wanted to sue me, and after my forum went offline for god knows how long, I went back to read a bit what all those people are saying in there. After all, if I am responsible for everything they write, that I will be the one being sued and pay the price, I might as well keep an eye on what they are saying. I just understood that my whole website could go offline instantly overnight if one innocent person, without thinking, states something like: that company is stealing from its customers. It could be quite true, and yet, I would have to prove it myself in a court of law once they decide to sue me for defamation. Something I don't particularly wish to spend time and money in. So I censored my forum, I got rid of the supposed defamation, and now I am not certain if I feel better.

What made me feel better however is to understand how popular that forum is. Thousands of people are on there on my website every day writing about literature, science fiction, etc. I also discovered that it was packed with writers, published ones, and many teachers and professors. I have an army there waiting to be exploited, I should have taken advantage of them a long time ago, instead of just letting them causing trouble and discussing between them without interfering or even participating. I hate forums, you see, even my own.

When I was about to leave for work at lunch time, I was full of energy, I was ready to write a new novel, my first one in English. I could have worked on it all afternoon, and then, after it is started, I always finish it. But now, I am so dead, the thought of even starting it is far from my mind. And therefore, it will probably take me another year before I feel like beginning again. Perhaps never.

Sometimes you get a moment of clarity, and if you do not act upon it immediately, it is gone forever. However, in this case, it might not disappear so

quickly from my mind. Because the story is already pretty much all written already, the synopsis at the very least.

After reading all the books by Dan Brown, I was thinking that it was time I started to write a sci-fi novel in English. My first tentative for a novel in English was not that great, and I have never finished it. My English in those days was terrible, and I never really planned to make it good.

I'm not sure if my English is good enough today, I even considered writing this book in French. However, it is so unlikely to be published, and even if it was, I would sell so little copies and make so little money, that writing in French would be a big waste of time.

So I was wondering what great story I could come up with for my novel. I was thinking about Dan Brown and Arthur C. Clarke, and how much research they had to do to write their books, flying somewhere to make sure they described something the way it really is, etc. And then I realized that I have no time to read on any subject to come up with the perfect novel and idea. Thankfully I have already gone everywhere in Europe and in America, so perhaps I don't need to fly somewhere just so I can describe something the way it is. I will have to talk from memory, and just invent the rest.

And then I thought, well, you have how many synopses on your website for film scripts? Surely there is a good idea in there? Yeah, they are all good ideas, I don't want to waste my time on the wrong idea. I already did when I wrote the whole film script for *Déjà Vu*, funny enough the synopsis was great enough to attract six production companies, but once they read the script itself, they all walked away. Is it because the moment was gone, they had found something else to produce in the two months it took me to write it? Was the script so different from the synopsis? I will never know, but I don't want to waste any time anymore with the wrong story.

And then I thought, why not write short stories, from all the synopses I have? Sounds great, best idea so far, and then again, something was not right with this idea. Short stories? When have you heard of the latest best-sellers being a bunch of short stories? I never. So it is not quite what I need.

And then it hit me, and I thought of it before, but forgotten it as soon as I thought of it. Took me months to thin about it again, and then, this time, I am writing it down before my actual conference makes me forget again.

Many of my synopses are about paranormal phenomena, it struck me that they could all be linked together in a novel, if somehow the main character was always the same person. And then the title struck me as well: The Most Psychic Woman Alive!

She just turned 100 years old a few days ago, and decided it was time she came out of the closet (oh yeah, she's a lesbian after all). But coming out of the closet is more about finally telling to the world the kind of life she had to keep a secret. That she was so psychic and such weird things happened to her in her lifetime. She was never really happy anyway, and always moved from country to country until she hoped to finally find peace. Reminds you of someone?

I still don't know if I should write as if she is talking herself, or if I should have a narrator outside of her. It is a big decision, because if she speaks in the first person, nothing can ever happen outside of her, it will always be from her own point of view. I think I prefer that anyway. And the fact that I am a man (or so I think anyway), and she is a woman, it is obviously a novel.

I am all excited again, I wish I could take a year off to write it, that's not going to happen. I'm not Dan Brown, even with my 25 books already written and my six published, my seventh soon. Makes no difference in French, I'm afraid.

Another big advantage of having so much stock to write a book, that each chapter is filled with a totally new story and characters, is that I won't be wasting 50 pages, like in Dan Brown's book, just witnessing a damn murder in a church in Rome. I hate it when an author can spend hours in one place, describing everything, and nothing is happening. I hate descriptions in a book, or big physical, social and psychological portraits of my characters. Only the story and the conversations interest me. Not that Dan Brown's books are bad, on the contrary, they have been a big inspiration for me. But God, he certainly spent a long time in that Church in Rome where they find the first cardinal murdered. I thought I was going to die with him and remain forever in the demon's hole. I'm sure Dan Brown went to that church for real, and spent many long hours describing it to us. So in the end, perhaps he would have been better inventing all

of it, and spend less time there. He certainly learnt his lesson, the follow up was much shorter, too short in fact. I wish now he could release the 1000 page version he claims he has written originally.

Which reminds me, my first published book had over a thousand pages. It was a nightmare of an editing job to reduce it to 300 pages, I tell you. And thank God I had a friend in Paris to do this editing job for me, I don't I was objective enough to do it myself. I made all his changes, deleted all he said that should be deleted, I did not question his judgment. Otherwise I would still be editing that book today. I have after all spent 8 months correcting it! Using a crap piece of software which in those days was sooooo slow! Just because it was capable of finding one mistake every 20 pages. But my, it took me days to review and analyze 20 pages with that software. I don't regret it anyway, the book was published twice after all, at two different publishers. And would be my most popular if my poetry book, which was scandalous, had not surpassed all my other books. Though I'm not sure anymore which book has sold the most. All I know is that I could not survive on that. But in English, it could be different. And I only need one big success out of any of my books, to get all the other ones the attention they deserve. That's the plan anyway. One can dream!

While reading Dan Brown, in two of his books, for a while there I thought I could have inspired him. There were many disturbing parallel to what I have written before, however how could it be? I'm sure the guy can't read French, many of his French quotes in his books are just plainly wrong. Perhaps we read the same books, after all I have written a novel about secret societies, and I got most of my inspiration from books about Freemasons. French books however.

I know I have inspired many great people, both in Québec and in France. I won't say who here, perhaps I already did, I can't remember. Which means I should not deviate from who I am as a writer, I should remain true to myself. I am not here to just repeat a successful formula, I have to be cryptic, deep, offer many level of understanding. But never go too far so I just lose everyone, like I did in my earlier books. It is not going to be easy, but I have my own style, and I do not need to suddenly write something completely different than from my fans have been used to. Not that I care if I lose them, I might just reach the masses for once. There would be no pride is writing something that Dan Brown could have written, I need to be unique, different, to speak in multiple meanings and

languages. And I am not talking about a few Italian, French or Spanish here and there, like Brown.

The thing is, I really had I mind to write the easy novel, like Brown. But I can't afford it, I certainly cannot. I have to be respected, I have to talked about like one of those great French classics, or better, those German classics like Hermann Brock. Because the only French author I really admire is Antonin Artaud, and I am not sure if he was cryptic enough in his novels. Yes he was, in his journals, he was crazy then, and on some hard drugs. Hermann Brock is perfect, *The Death of Virgil*, and then I will be certain to be the biggest flop of all time! And yet, I need to be proud of what I am writing, so I will always chose the darkest path. Dear me, I have a lot more thinking to do before I can start this English novel. Maybe I should in French after all, the translation, if translated by my friend Sheila, will sound much better anyway. Her translation of my work is somewhat better than the original, I am ashamed to admit. Of course, she is such an author herself, no wonder she won the Ney York Best Seller Award. I'm just lucky to have met her and that she agreed to translate one of my books. Cost me dearly though, and as soon as I get more money, it will be: Sheila! I have work for you to do! Translate all this for me please! With your great Oxford English, as usual. Make me sound better than I am! How many authors can say that they actually gain in the translation? Not many, that's for sure. Though I'm sure that the translation of my first books would certainly lose a lot in the translation. Unless I am standing there over her shoulder while she translates, because she can easily not understand anything it is that I am saying, or not really saying. So far she only translated my poems, and there was not much there to interpret or be wrong about. Not my best body of work obviously, and yet, my most popular.

I feel so bad, every day, because my last 5 books are still not online on my websites, after two years at least. I should correct that mistake, I just cannot find the motivation. What if I have many important people waiting after this, wanting new stuff after so many years? What am I doing? Even this damn blog is not on my website, and will not be for a long time.

At least one of my last books could be published and make a lot of noise. It could be a success. What am I waiting for? I should send it to publishers. Ah, I just can't find the motivation anymore. I've reached a point in my life where it is more important to write than actually make sure I was read and published. I should give myself a mission, to put everything online next weekend, instead of wasting

it reading Dan Brown. You never know who reads your website, and I certainly proved in the past that important people are reading it. I should do something, stop wasting time, what's wrong with me? Got to get to it, got to do it! What's wrong with me! I need a good slap in the face, I need to act, to get it out there... and the worst part of it is, that it would take me less than an hour to do so. I cannot explain why I am hesitating. And to be honest, I don't really give a fuck.

I cannot be proud of any of my accomplishments. I cannot be proud of anything I have written. I used to drink myself to death many nights in a row, just reading what I wrote, and be in awe, wondering how I actually was able to write this. Wondering if I was the one who actually wrote this. Not anymore. A few negative critics in a sea of positive ones is all I needed to be completely destroyed. And see myself as a complete failure incapable of writing anything worth any attention. Damn it! Damn them all! It is only when I get back to reading what I wrote before that I understand that these few negative critics were wrong. They obviously read only a few pages of one of my books, and passed judgment. Dear me, how easily fooled we all are, even the author. I have written enough to start my own religion and have followers, and it would be a damn good one too! So fuck you! I should not be so easily influenced or discouraged. I know what I am worth, I know what I wrote, I know they don't know. So why should I care? I should only read the positive critics, take them in, dress myself with them. Get the motivation I need to continue. I will not be stopped! I am building something huge here, I will see it to the end. Does not seem concrete, does not seem like real art, but it is, very much concrete and provocative. It could change the world! It will change the world! Mark my word! I am confident enough tonight, with only a few beer, to know that what I have written will go down in history and will one day change the world. And men of little faith, blinded by whatever, who cannot take the time to read before criticizing, fuck you! One day it will outshine everything so hardly, you will be blinded by the light. And will not be able to comprehend how you could have missed it. There is a body of work here, not just one latest published book from which you will only read a few pages and then pass judgment. Give it some justice, at least! I would not claim this blog is extraordinary, after reading a few pages of it, you should not be allowed to judge everything else I have written. I am worth more than that. I deserve more than that. Bof, enough about that shite. Let's concentrate on what is coming next, that novel, and how I could be proud of it, the style which should still very much be me, my mark. It is not going to be easy, especially in English. Dear me... how am I going to achieve this? To do what I really want to do without destroying it in the

process? A lot of thinking is required before I start, that's for sure. I've got to be proud of it, I need to be able to read it 100 times without ever getting tired of reading, like some of my previous books. Not easy, when the only French novel I wrote, is not exactly the one book I would pick up when I am completely drunk and need to lose myself in what I previously wrote. I am proud of this novel, I did exactly what I wanted to do with it. It has many different meanings, there is a lot of symbols in it, even if nothing is obvious, and yet, it is my least interesting book I have ever written in my entire life, from my own point of view. If I did not need to be completely drunk to write it all completely, then the book is missing something, there is no poetry. No, it is not going to be easy, as I don't reckon I will need to be drunk at all to write that English novel, and this is worrying me. Perhaps I should forget about it, and write something else instead, something truly out of this world! Like I did so many times before. Of course, it never got me anywhere, it is way too different. Only crap got published. Of course, it does not help that most of what I have written in the last five years, I never put online or sent to publishers. I just don't care anymore. And now, if you will excuse me, I'm need to write stuff that is out of this world. I'm drunk enough.

So! I was all ready to write like crazy, I even wrote one of the best poems I did so far, called Where the Fuck am I? And that was only the first of a series of great ones, I might even have started writing my novel tonight... but what happened? My ex-boyfriend called from Kingston, Ontario. His boyfriend is with his parents in Sweden, you see. So he felt alone. Nice that when he is alone, he actually thinks of me.

So we spent four hours on the phone, reminiscing about the great time we had together in the five years we were together. When we lived in Paris, when we traveled all around France together, visiting every single Wine Castle, and when we moved together to London for six months, these were great times.

Little we knew at the time we went all around the Wine Castles in France, that he would end up having his own winery in Canada, and would eventually make him rich. It will take him a few years to get there, and I was all worried for him, wondering how he would survive until he can start selling wine, silly me, he made half a million dollar selling his house in Toronto, and probably at least \$250,000 from his company that he closed down. Plenty to survive a few years and going crazy about going to France and buying a used tractor for his business. And I thought I was the crazy one!

Hi parents also sold their land in the islands, and made more than a million dollars. As predicted, they bought a piece of land right next to where he lives, so he will still live around the corner from mommy! Which was one of the big argument that prevented him from coming with me to France and England at the time, how could he ever leave mommy!?

Fuck! If I had a million dollars to buy myself a winery, I would buy it in the South of France, never mind my parents dying in North Pole in the North of Canada!

Anyway, that boyfriend of his has got quite an easy ride, living with a millionaire. I could have made a good of a premature retirement with the best ever good looking millionaire there is. Unfortunately it was not to be in my case, I had to suffer like hell, or else, I might have wrote something beautiful and inspired, instead of the misery I am describing t every page. Death.

But, would I want that life? No. He's still not faithful, even living so isolated. He claimed tonight that where he is in the country side, there were plenty of gays, and he was even in a chat room, telling me a guy from Toronto needed a fuck. Toronto is still only a two hour drive from he is. Oh dear! I went to Toronto for two weeks, and I immediately understood that he was not faithful to his boyfriend. I'm glad I'm no longer with him, rich or not. I prefer my drug addict simple and poor actual boyfriend, who I know is faithful. Never mind that I have not been faithful in L.A., I was for many years in London with him, and I will be again when I return full time with him. I may have to oblige him to have more sex, but at least I'll be faithful and he will be in return.

I can't believe he complained for a whole five minutes that he was again the one who had to call me and pay for the international call. It is true that in the last ten years, every time we spoke he is this one who called, but then again, he is the millionaire one, what is he expecting? I won't be able to finish the month, I don't even have car, Stephen just lost his job, what is he thinking? God only knows.

For a moment there, he was afraid I was going to ask for money to start my own business. Poor him. I would never, I would die first. He always had five times more money than me, and yet in the five years we were together, I am the one who spent all my money for our survival. I spent more than he ever did. And all the money I borrowed from him, I paid it back, even when I was not working and

had no money. I'm pleased I did, I doubt he would still be speaking to me now if I had not.

Still, it is sad that this relationship is over. He was and still his the most beautiful and extraordinary guy I have ever met in my life. I could not believe he was actually gay, even if today he sounds like an old queen, from spending too much time in Toronto I guess. He was so good looking when naked, and we had such great sex, I will never experience that again in my lifetime. I kept telling him that once his boyfriend had enough of cultivating wine in the North, to give me a call and I will join him there. However, it is very unlikely if I am still with Stephen, because he is the one I love now. And I regret that he does, because if he didn't, I would remain in Los Angeles and be happy here for a long time. Love is going to stop me from accomplishing that dream come true, and I am accepting it. It is a sad story. But London is still better than Kingston Ontario with the greatest looking and cheating millionaire boyfriend there is. A real man, at least I can say I spent five years with him, he populates all my earlier books, so I will never forget him ever.

14 March 2006

I am now on my second full day of strike against talking in the office. I ignore anyone talking to me unless it is a bit direct, and then I answer with one word or one sentence. I had a lot of phone calls to do today, sales, so I did speak more than I wanted to. They have noticed that I'm not talking, unless it is business. I also look very preoccupied, and occupied. Tomorrow the Spanish guy comes back from his conference, and then I will have to be even more extreme.

I have become the perfect employee, I have become a machine. Today was not easy. Get up, get to work, not speak a word to anyone, just do my job all day long. Get out, then read, then bed. The next day, same thing. I'm not used at working so hard, when you don't stop even for a few minutes to talk to anyone, the day is suddenly much longer, and it comes a time in the afternoon or near the end, that you just collapse, you don't want to do anything anymore. Almost despair.

It is a bit childish, this strike. It is mind games. And yet, every time I think of getting out of that phase, I turn around, and I wonder. Who stitched me up? Who complained against me? Who almost got me sacked? And then, I understand that

I cannot speak to any of them, every thing I say is written down and used against me with the bosses.

I had a little argument today with the Senior Manager, just a little one, and yet, it was running through my mind that he will report me to the bosses. It is getting insane, I am working with a bunch of backstabbers reporting everything the second it happens, and of course, only the negative stuff. Even in terms of business, I can no longer speak to anyone, I get burnt every time just for speaking my mind or expressing an opinion, when I should really just shut up and do what I am told without discussion.

So I intend to remain completely silent for the rest of the week, three more long days. And then, next week, I will relax a bit and will restart to speak, but never to fool around or joking. Just talk simply, nothing of consequence, remain to myself in any case. And certainly, I will not allow anyone to make fun of me anymore, no stupid comment about the fact I am gay, because this is how it started, me talking about my sexuality, which seems to have traumatized those poor American, prudish, and religious souls who have obviously never heard or seen anything in their lives. You would have never thought that Hollywood was at the end of our road on one side, and on the other, on our own road and even in our building, most of the porn studios in the world are located. Funny how they are capable of closing their eyes and forget it. We're sitting in the porn capital of the world. That would do a good title for a book, not one I will write however.

Knowing the Valley Girl, and I can feel it, she feels guilt out of my strike of silence. Was it not what she wanted? Have I not heard her states not once, but twice, that some of my comments like the one when I said: "we're all gay" as a joke could be construed as sexual harassment? I can hear her saying in the office, the most ridiculous thing I ever heard. What a bitch.

I'm sure she's sweating right now, the new guy, with just a little bit more work than her, has been capable in a few weeks to do what she normally does in a few months, with assistants on top of it. I think my bosses are soon to discover how incompetent she is.

I think he is sweating even more, because she has to write a few paragraphs explaining what her event is about. Lucky her, she does not even have to write a whole conference program, her events are quite simplistic in nature, a few

paragraphs is all she will need to write. But she never did before, and now she has to, probably because I stated it clearly in at least two of my reports, that we should be writing our own stuff. In the end she had to ask the Chinese Girl to write it for her, and she was not happy with the results. Hey, hey, another proof of how incompetent she really is.

I'm afraid, there is only one way to confirm speakers, sponsors and attendees, you need to call all day. The only three persons calling all day in the office are the new guy, the gay guy and I. We are also the only ones capable of finishing anything in record time. I'm sorry I can't even trust the gay guy, even though everyone knows he is gay, because it is so obvious, he does not want anyone to know and he certainly does not want to hear about the subject. As far as I know, he could have complained against me, I saw him when the subject of being gay was out, he just disappears. So even him is not my ally.

And now that the new guy is proving just how the Valley Girl is wasting her time, talking all day instead of doing her job, she has a great reason to hate him and to want to get rid of him. Unfortunately, the guy so far has been only but perfect, she has nothing against him. And yet, somehow, she will invent something, something huge, just like she did with me, when I was not even a real threat to her. But now I am.

Ironically, my next conference is about nukes, nuclear energy, nuclear power plants. I find that fascinating, that I, could be the instigator of more of those things, such a bad, dangerous and pollutant technology. They claim it is greener than the other power source, but how could it? When it produces nuclear waste? Well, at the very least, it will satisfy my thirst for seeing this world and these people annihilate themselves. Let's show them how it is done! Let's convince them to invest billions into nuclear.

It will be my third and last conference I will produce in the U.S. That other great conference in Barcelona in the fall, they should give it to the Spanish guy who's been crying ever since it was given to me instead of him, since he produced that same event in the U.S., and he speaks Spanish. He does not know I wrote a long report about how to go about producing conferences in Europe, and therefore, I am the knowledgeable one here when it come to that playing field. Maybe this is why he suddenly turned against me, denounced me to the bosses. Jealousy, pure and simple, and he decided to attack me on something completely irrelevant to

the matter at end, just like the Valley Girl. He attacked me on the basis that I was gay, when he is himself so obviously, in the closet for many more years.

Don't you think it is refreshing to swim like this in the middle of all those sharks, but in Los Angeles instead of London? It almost makes it bearable, almost.

I just got off line with my ex-boyfriend, my first one, the millionaire. It was surreal to see him again in his webcam. He looks better than ever. For a second there I thought he was going to take his shirt off and masturbate. Unfortunately I just did myself just before talking to him. I thought of sending him naked picture of me, I stopped myself, and I even told him. My God, I've become quite the pervert. But he must be too, I'm sure he does a lot on MSN wit his webcam. I'm sure he exchanged photos and films with nice gay friends. What a nice view they must have when they fall on him. I sent him lots of photos of me anyway, good ones, one more recent, but hey, I had to. To show him how I look like now. He did not make a comment. I reminded him that with Atkins diet, I could look exactly like my other photos. Let him chew on that...

15 March 2006

Oh dear, I'm exhausted. Worked extra hours to get that brochure to the designer. Bit annoyed that the Senior Manager refused that I worked on that from home, asked me to remain in the office until it was done, and then, he fucked off at 4! I feel great that it is done and that I won't have to work on this tonight from home. I could have easily worked on it until 2 a.m., as I am such a perfectionist. As it stands, I worked quickly, must be full of mistakes, I have not read it a second time.

I came home and I have only two beers left, thank God, I would have drink 10 tonight. Funny, I have noticed that on weekends I don't drink at all, I mostly sleep to recuperate. And on work nights, I drink myself to death and write all night. I should change my priorities, and drink only on weekends, but then I don't feel like it.

One thing is for sure, when you have a Manager over you telling you it has to be done today, and you do it, afterwards, it feels great. Another one in the can, no matter how bad it is. I will miss that once I work on my own conference, but I will remember, to set myself deadlines, it works wonder.

I'm watching right now a simple British film on TV, don't even know the title or on which channel, all I know is that it feels damn good. I feel like I am watching a French-Canadian film, just to tell how much I identify myself with the UK. When really, I should not be. True I've been living in London 11 years, I don't even have my citizenship yet. I wonder if I will ever get it. Certainly not if I remain in Los Angeles. And then, I would never get my American citizenship either, to get that I would need to win the lottery, and this is not an analogy, it is a lottery that you need to win to even get a greencard. I'm too tired to tell you here how I feel and how disgust I am about that state of affair. You can keep your America for yourself, it is only sinking anyway with Bush at the top.

America is a great country, but I'm afraid, to become American myself is a fight I don't intend to fight. I had enough fighting in England to even get a visa. Too long, too expensive, too disheartening. Immigration stuff should be left to where they belong, in the bin.

And then only remain the matter of becoming rich enough to live six months here and six months there. Something old people have become famous for, the only capable of affording it. I read today in the newspapers that people over 50 own 70% of all estate in California. I'm not surprised, none of the young people can even afford a car. This is America for you, and it is going somewhere that should worry everyone. We're all very poor down here, we can't even afford a DVD anymore, I don't know where it is heading, but some day we will discover that the American is just plainly unreachable and we will lose faith in the system.

I'm such an idealist. I should be like everyone, not care at all for the masses. I'll get rich, like everyone else, and just forget that the rest of the country cannot buy a DVD tonight. They think downloading online has killed the entertainment industry, I think they've got it wrong, the new generation simply cannot afford to spend on anything. So they don't!

And we will soon discover that our great capitalist society can no longer go anywhere or sustain itself, in our obsession in making sure no one makes any money, while we get richer ourselves. Useless to try selling your products now, sell to the old people, they're they only one with money and assets, and I'm afraid, they're not the ones spending anything.

Don't I need to, should I, just kill myself? I'm not that desperate tonight. But I certainly don't feel like doing anything. I'm dying anyway. I've got no soul to sell, as would say Trent Reznor.

I've not seen what they said was coming. A life of leisure, with only 35 hours a week. 50 is more normal, 60 quite often, 70 sometimes. I have a high paid job, I'm told, and yet I can't afford anything. What must it be when you have children? Yeah I have debts, but everyone now has got them. They want your life for any good salary, and even then it is not enough to survive. What a waste. This country must be in bad shape, even though I know it is worse in Europe. We're as poor as the Third World, just a little richer, but not by much. And we certainly don't have happiness, peace, to compensate. We've got the life from hell.

And now, I know what I am talking about, because I am actually a salesman. Also a marketer, and everything else, but the title of salesman is quite something I never thought I would ever have to deal with. Calling people who are just upset that you even had the guts to email them and call them. To ask them for money! Isn't it ironic, that the worse thing there is on the planet, of course apart from having someone trying to sell you his faith or religion and reading the Bible, is to have salesmen harassing you. Give it to America to have half of its inhabitants to actually be salesmen and marketers. The other half are either Bible/religion salesmen or upper management doing nothing all that. Unless of course, as we can witness in many corporations, upper management is also expected to make money, but much more, like signing the contracts of the century, that's often what is expected of them.

Yesterday I thought I heard it all. I was getting used to have astonished at the other end of the phone, disgusted that I am calling to ask for money, and then I hit the jackpot. A woman, the President of a an important association, took the bother to call me (imagine, I had only sent her an email by then, when I usually send three or four and call at least 3 times). She was angry at me, saying that they do not support any for profit organization. She was saying this as if I was immoral, unethical and I was going to burn in hell for even thinking of having their association supporting my conference.

What a bitch. Let's see what's wrong with this picture. I print 40,000 copies of my brochure. I mail that to my huge database of the exactly right people she needs

to reach so they may eventually join her association. I also have that online on the website, this is free publicity for them. They also get an exhibition stand for free at the conference and one complimentary pass. They get much more than I. All they have to do in return is to make their members aware of the conference. And I'm not even sure if that will even bring me one delegate in the end. S she thought I was trying to sell her something, I was actually giving away something valuable to her not expecting much in return. And why would I do that. Because what I am giving her, even though would mean a lot for them, costs me nothing. So why not? If I can secure a few more delegates?

What was so horrifying in that story, what I should have told her, is: so what, you have something against for profit organization? What exactly? How dare you judging me, when your own association has got the word Commerce in it, and represents a conglomeration of companies interested in one thing only, making millions if not billions. How quickly you forget in which country you live and what system your life depends on. Sales madam! So you better start respecting me, as you respect your flag. Because I symbolize everything this country stands for. Now, do you want sign that contract? Was I eloquent enough? With just the right amount of pity me and emotions?

A few years ago I would not have accepted to see my boss fire the salesman, and then telling me that I have just become the new one. I would have said on the spot: fine, fine yourself another conference producer willing to be a salesman. And the disturbing thing is that it is not that hard, it is not as unthinkable and horrible as I always thought it was. And the most disturbing thought, is that why I don't see this any more difficult than recruiting speakers and putting together the program and brochure, is because in the end recruiting speakers, attendees, supporting organizations, media partners or sponsors, it is all the same thing, it is sales job I have been doing for the last decade! What an awful thought, an awful life. They hide that fact very well, with titles like Conference Researcher, Conference Manager, Conference Producer, and telling you that you will travel all around the world. But we all know what it means, it is like job titles like Vice President or Business Development, that means sales on another scale. These are jobs that are really worth the energy and the salary.

18 March 2006

I am 12 days away from having to decide if I am going back to London or not. I have done the first step this morning. I sent an email to my financial company overseeing my existence, to let them know that my job in the US was not working out as planned and I may be required to return to London, willingly or not. I innocently asked them where I was standing with my agreement with the creditors. This is giving me a headache.

They have already accepted no payment for three months this year, I doubt they will do the same again just because things are not working out. In their mind, I'm sure, they would oblige me to keep the job from hell if it meant keeping up with repayments. I wonder now if perhaps there would be a way to really declare bankruptcy instead of this personal agreement with my creditors. And would I have to still make monthly payments, I wonder.

The thing is, starting a business out of nothing, with no money to even make my monthly payments, sounds highly unrealistic. Never mind that my business could actually make good money, no one will want to invest in me. I do not even have the possibility to try to get a loan, it is forbidden as per my contract.

This fortnight I have to decide and take the plunge is also weighting heavily on me. Tell the apartment people, that is easy. Telling my bosses? That is hard. Especially the when I should tell them. I've been used in giving long notices before leaving a job, in this case I don't need to give one. I can tell them I'm leaving, the day that I fly out of the country. However it does not seem sensible, it feels wrong. At the same time, knowing them and how they proceeded in the past, I would not be at all surprised that at the moment I would give them my month's notice, they will terminate me right there. And I would be here for one month without working, which is fine anyway by me. So what should I do?

Meanwhile, Stephen his fighting to keep his job, somehow he is confident his disciplinary will have a positive outcome, perhaps he is right, even if it does not seem likely to me. He has got out of worse in the past, he is excellent at digging himself out of a hole. However, I'm afraid to say, he is also excellent at digging himself these holes and throwing himself in them. And anyway, he will lose his driving license soon, so he has lost his job.

Could be destiny, I don't see myself starting this conference business all on my own, I will need him. If he was still working to support us, I would be alone, I

might not succeed. The only remaining problem would be to find some investors, but then, it would be nice not to have to deal with that. If I could somehow start this whole thing without any loans, it would be something nice. No damn repayments every month. We just need a few months without money, if that is possible.

There is also the matter that I cannot own this business, it has to be in Stephen's name, and I need to be his employee. Otherwise, my creditors will take everything for the next five years, leaving me with the minimum required to survive. I could not start a business in those conditions, no surplus could ever be reinvested in the new events. The enterprise would be useless and could not go anywhere.

This is when you wish you had parents with a bit of money and willing to help. This is when you wish you had save a few thousand for a rainy day. So would not have to depend on anyone in your own business. A loan from a bank would give me the freedom to do what I want, but an investor would push for me to produce conferences about the high end corporate world, where the money is. Something I don't want to do.

This is not going to be easy. I would require some miracle. In the meantime I should work this weekend on my future conferences, and finish my business plan, but with the week I had, with all the overtime to finish that conference I am working on for my bosses, there is no way I can do anything. I'm too exhausted.

19 March 2006

Tonight, Sunday, I am completely freaked out. It is not new, I'm afraid to say, every Sunday, the thought of going back to work the net day fills me with apprehension. At the moment, however, it is worse than usual, it makes me physically sick.

Perhaps trying to understand why here will help? What I wrote here yesterday about my simple plan to go back to London to start a business, seemed realizable enough, despite all the obstacles. There has always been miracles to save me in my enterprises, and when no miracles came to the rescue, some other avenues opened up before as a good solution and compromise.

After explaining to Stephen what I had in mind, it seems the obstacles were insurmountable. It sounded like another of my crazy ideas that would flop monumentally and will put us both in a larger hole. That was just the bit about how we would survive a few months without any money, unsure if we will make any money out of these conferences, just in time to survive before having to abandon ship.

The greater at the moment is what gives me a headache. That in ten days I have to announce my departure to my bosses. Stephen is adamant that I need to give them a month's notice, even if they would not in a slightest give me that chance themselves if they decided to kick me out. There is no reason to be immoral or unethical to people who are immoral or unethical. I agree, unfortunately, even if I saw in my one month silence, the chance to see where this job could have led me. I am after going to work on a European conference, and God knows if that works what they would want to do. Open a London office, perhaps.

But now I understand that this would take months to happen. And I don't really. If I am to open their London office, why not open my own office? I would be doing the exact same thing, they don't even have a database for Europe. Granted my salary would be my security, making it possible to pay my bills, but if in the end I am making them larger profits than this miserable salary, I might as well go in business for myself. So I have to find a solution.

My other worry is that I could probably get my old job back in Westminster. That is maybe the other avenue that could present itself. However, I would grow too comfortable in that job and I would not develop my own conferences. Second, if I were to work hard on developing my business, then I would only disappoint them a second time, and even, in this case, deceive them. Before setting foot back in that old job, I need to be certain that we will not be going ahead with the business.

Usually, once I have identified why I am freaked out, I feel better afterwards. The problems are identified, I can get closer to a solution. And often, even without a solution, I feel better, since most of the time my panic attack comes from the fact that the problem is not even clearly identified. Tonight it does not work. I am still in panic mode. It is already 9 pm, no more time to be alive, to enjoy my little bit of freedom. I am again scared shitless of the magnitude of my past decisions and my future ones.

I wish I was not all alone in this. That I could reassure myself by talking to a trustworthy ally who would share my vision and help to draw a plan. As it stands, I only have Stephen to point out all the negative side of it, unconvinced, while we have short conversations on the phone which cost us a fortune while we count the seconds. And in all this enterprise, I'm afraid to say, he cannot help. He is so afraid of the computer, not knowing anything about it, that I cannot count on him to do much in this matter. He will be good when I tell him to make phone calls, but not to find the places to call in the first place.

I am all alone in this, like I have always been. If this succeeds, it will certainly count as my biggest achievement ever, never to be repeated. But starting a business is not something new, thousands of people do it every day. I don't know how, I don't even know if they are frightened by the idea, or if they are simply desperate because they have no other choice. I'm sure they at least get money somewhere to start up, either family or banks. Maybe I am pushing it thinking it could work out without that kind of support. We are already way too much in the hole for that. If I had any asset, I would sell them to start this business. I don't. Stephen has some assets, but it is impossible to ask him to sell them, and even, he made it clear that he would not. Even if he wanted to, his parents would stop him. Anyway, I was not counting in his assets to start this business, it has to be done either with no money and work quickly, or simply we'll have to find a solution along the way. Money does not grow on trees, contrary to what Hollywood would have us believe. Am I again thinking the impossible? Am I bathing in a sea of illusions? Am I never going to get anywhere acceptable?

20 March 2006

I never paid too much attention and I never used ever the expression that a meeting was like a cold shower. Today this expression took a new meaning for me, as when I am in the shower and suddenly the water turns cold, I make a very specific cry. And after my meeting with the big boss and the Chinese Girl, this is exactly how I felt, and for the rest of the morning, I made that same cry.

This morning I got one good news, one very bad, and the other seems good in theory. I had such a feeling yesterday all day, I felt something terrible was going to happen at work. I was dead on, it took less than an hour. I remember sitting in the boss' office and wondering what that bitch of a Chinese Girl was doing in

there. I did not want to be wiped by the big boss in front of her, especially not in front of her since it is known we are at war and she's up to get me. At the back of my mind, I knew it could only mean one thing.

The meeting started slowly, as my boss knew I would not like what I was going to hear. He first told me that there was now a new structure in the office, a new hierarchy. He explained it to me as if it was the very first time I had heard it, when in fact, I'm the one who told exactly how it should be. And for most of it, it was good news, only the job titles were not the ones I proposed, but almost. The professional Consultant they hired must have felt like he had to come up with at least something to justify his pay check, so he proposed my own ideas with ridiculous job titles. But I don't care, that was another victory for me.

What was not respected in my propositions, was that I was supposed to be on the same level as the two Managers, the Valley Girl and the Chinese Girl. How could it be otherwise? I have ten years experience, in all their competitors, all my reports have changed their way to do business, and now I am the lowest of the low, the Chinese Girl is now my boss!

For a second there, the two assistants in the office, I thought they had the same job title as me, the famous Spanish Guy finally got what he wanted, we would both be Event Producers, while the Chinese Girl and the Valley Girl were now promoted to something like: Managing Event Producers. Then I realized that they took pity on me, I'm a little bit higher than the two assistants, they are now Associate Event Producers. But plainly stated, their job description is identical to mine, except for one added line: Mentors Associate Event Producers about how to perform these functions, functions that they know better than me for having been there longer than me, so it is clear that I will not be mentoring anyone.

Anyway, it is some sort of good news. Because I did not know how I was going to tell them that I was leaving in 10 days time. Now this is wonderful, I don't need to justify anything, it will be clear. I simply cannot work under the Chinese Girl, as some sort of assistant, she will have me for breakfast, and probably within 10 days the whole thing will collapse on itself, even if I am going to try my best to be as submitted as possible, I certainly have no choice. My boss repeated many times that he expected me to report to her everything, and that I was expected to obey her in everything. He was basically admitting right there that he was

expecting problems. Of course, he thinks I will be the problem, when it is obvious that the problem will be the Chinese Girl.

Now I only regret that they have not given me the exact job title as the two assistants, because then the injustice would be complete, and I could leave them without any guilt. They did not feel it wise to push it that far, but I think the message is quite clear, despite what my boss said about me being responsible for their biggest events to come. He made it sound like if I was going to be the only producing events in there, the two assistants sort of remain assistants, and the Chinese Girl now overseeing three employees, won't have time to do anything else but to manage us. And the Director and Senior Manager are now off the hook, working on something else altogether. That leaves the Valley Girl.

She was so pissed off today, first thing when I entered the office. I don't know what her title will be actually, but I know she is dead jealous that the Chinese Girl sort of got a promotion over her, and it is not hard to understand why. She has destroyed so many employees, and me being her last victim, they clearly understood that I would never be able to be under her. True, I would have left there on the spot if they had made that mistake.

Now my only worry is, would the Chinese Girl be professional and not explode for any reason at any moment? Because I won't take it, that much is obvious. And if she is too patronizing, or demanding, it won't work either. This is also obvious. I'll try as much as I can, but I'm known to be a Yes Mam, especially if it is to be under a newbie with much less experience than me, who is actually out of control, bossy, and to be frank, a problem maker when there is no need to, just like the Valley Girl.

Not sure how all this will work, but they certainly given me the perfect opportunity to bow out gracefully. I could say that I simply cannot work with the Chinese Girl because an obvious clash of personalities, however I don't need to mention it. Now I can invent anything, and they will still understand why.

Just got an email from the Spanish guy, stating that he is leaving early today. He too must be gutted, as it is clear from his job description, probably, that I am higher than him, and may in theory answer to me. When there is no way, so why he is worried? Poor guy, no one told him that I have ten years experience all over the place, he probably feels that with his six months there, he deserved to be

Event Producer, and that I should be answering to him. He is going to burn himself, I would not be surprised if within ten days he is gone. Or even, that he would not be back tomorrow. And truly, no one job jobs has really changed, only the other Sweet Chinese Girl and I are now under Master Bitch Chinese Girl. Everyone else stays exactly where they are.

Finally I don't think they followed what I stated in my report, because if they had, none of that jealousy would have occurred. I was not supposed to go under the Chinese Girl, though the Sweet Chinese Girl was supposed to. Now they have alienated the Valley Girl, the Spanish Guy and I. Though, to be really honest here, I don't really care myself, since really I'm leaving, that was the reason, the opportunity, I was looking for.

The Valley Girl is much nicer to me today, she feels I should as disgusted as she is. She's been trying to get it out of me, my complains, my dissatisfaction, she's moaning all morning herself, almost destroying her desk and the wall separating us. I won't give that satisfaction, I won't say anything to her. I will need give her again the opportunity to gossip about how I feel to everyone. I'm going back in this office this afternoon as if nothing happened, obedient and submitted to Master Bitch Chinese Girl. They will be quite impressed, because I am going to put a show of it. Taking pleasure in making her feel like the boss she is now. She would not believe her eyes herself, they must have discussed that I could probably freak out and that it would not work. They must be expecting it, and it won't happen. First thing I'll do is to report her on everything I am doing and what I should do next. As submissive as a low-life like me should be.

I'm back from work now. I so wanted to buy a bottle of wine tonight, but this is when I discovered to my astonishment that my garage Mobile does not sell wine, beers yes, but not wine. I fell down on my knees and I asked the clerk, why? Oh why? Don't you know what I could have written tonight with wine? After a day like this? Do you know how many beers I will have to drink before I can even write one good line? He was obviously not interested in my dilemma, going to Seven Eleven or not?

I didn't, I was already late for having worked overtime, proof-reading the latest brochure of my Senior Manager. It took me forever, when I was finished, his four pages were completely full of my comments. I almost added a post it note on top of it to say: this brochure is a mess, never seen anything like it! And you know

what? The Sweet Chinese Girl came to me 15 minutes before the end of the day and said: the whole office proof-read that brochure, it is your turn now. And after everyone made all their comments, I still found over 100 problems and obvious mistakes. It can only main one thing, something I suspected for a long time, no one ever really proof-read anything when they are asked, and the proof is that they do it in 5 minutes, when I take over an hour.

And now, let's have fun. This is what I wrote to the Master Bitch Chinese Girl at work this afternoon, with her answer. And in between, I have added what we actually really meant to say:

Hi (Chinese Girl),

-Hi Master Bitch Chinese Girl,

I look forward to working with you.

-Oh God, how are we going to survive this without killing each other? One of us will be out the door before the end of the month, that much is certain.

Here is what I am doing right now (...)

-Let me kiss your thin ass so we can at least give this nightmare a chance. Even if both of us know too well just how we are doomed!

Once I have cleared that backlog, I will let you know so we can start working on our next project.

-Let's wait as long as it is actually possible, without alerting the bosses, before starting the war.

Hopefully sometime tomorrow, if this is acceptable.

-Hopefully never! Some sort of miracle will happen and you might get sacked before we get started. You or I being run over by a bus would also be acceptable.

In the meantime, I am at your disposal for anything you wish me to do,

-Let me be and we'll be fine. Don't talk to me, and we might survive. Cross me, and I'll destroy you.

or if you wish a meeting to get more details about what I am doing right now and how we should proceed in the future.

-I'm really pushing it. I must be desperate. Oh dear, this will turn ugly.

If there are specific ways you would like me to go about producing these events, I would be most interested in learning them, and more than willing to do it your way.

-What a laugh! You've got no experience whatsoever, you have such a temper, many customers complained against you. Acting like you would be tantamount to suicide, and yet, you have been promoted. Isn't that always the way? And you know what? I am about to start my own business, so I actually meant it a bit, God knows, maybe you have learned to cut corners like hell, and I might learn a thing or two from you, who knows?

Regards.

Mycroft Holmes,

Thank you for the update.

-Don't worry, I'll have plenty time for more meetings with you where I will just love to make you're a life a living hell, questioning everything you do, barking orders at you, I'll turn you into my new slave and I will love every second of it. Digress even once, do not respect my authority for even a second, I'll report you and get you sacked so fast, you'll never know what hit you.

It is much appreciated.

-I'm gonna love torturing you!

I am still in the process of collecting information and hope to have the time to go over current and upcoming events with you in the near future.

-Mmh, perhaps I'm not so sure if I am ready for the war just yet. I am a bit frightened that you might not accept that I'm your boss after all, and since this is quite new, you could actually cause me some trouble and damage me somehow. Let me think some more about how I will go about turning you into a pussy.

I am sure we can learn from each other's experience and skill-sets,

-I understand that you have 9 more years experience than me, I know you're better than me, and know more than I'll ever do. I'm sorry I am now your boss, but you'll just have to accept it and do as I say. I'm gonna enjoy every second of it, believe me.

and make the process much more efficient.

-I'll make you work so hard, I'm going to ask from you the impossible, and when you will fail, I'll only be to happy to criticize you to the bosses. Isn't life ironic?

I look forward to working with you as well.

-You will fail, I can tell you that much already. Wait and see.

Best regards.

Now I wonder when will be our first big problem. And what she will do then. Jump in the bosses office immediately, after talking it over with the Valley Girl no doubt. They'll both be my bosses, there is no two ways about it.

By the end of the day, the Valley Girl had already accepted her faith, her jealousy was virtually already dead. Lucky her. I thought that the promotion of the Chinese Girl over her might have done the trick, destroy their friendship, since by definition these two should clash. But they went into the corridor to talk it over for over two hours, and the Chinese Girl must have told her that they were equal, she was responsible for the Iranian guy after all, and their events are six times longer to produce than ours. She was already fine by the end of the day, I could barely believe it.

And somehow, tomorrow when the Spanish Guy comes back from his afternoon of sulking, the Chinese Girl will quickly bring him back to reality, and everybody

will be happy again, except me. Such an insult, that my boss had to take his kid's glove to announce it to me, turning around a bowl for over an hour before finally spitting out. And I had to say it myself, with more sarcasm that I wish I had: in a few word, she'll be my boss, we'll have a great time together, and then I exploded in a furry of laughter. He must have understood right there that it would never work, and yet, he made that mistake. He's got only himself to blame, I suppose.

I give it two days before we are right back in his office, with her complaining that I do not listen, I am late, I am not doing well, I do not respect her authority. And this is something I learned the hard way today, I have now a new spy on my back, she is now studying my computer screen every minute of the day, wondering what it is that I am doing, if perhaps I am wasting my time. Great, just what I needed, another damn spy.

I have not even told you the worse yet. This Friday the walls between us will disappear for a whole week, I'll will be virtually sitting over the Valley Girl. I've considering taking a whole week off, however it is not feasible at the moment, considering that I may announce to them that I'm leaving in ten days.

I know my bosses will blame themselves for having put me under the Chinese Girl, they will obviously that this is the reason I'm going back to London. It is not of course, however it certainly wash away all my sins and guilt. If they're capable of doing that to me, they certainly don't deserve me working there. As it is so obvious that it cannot work.

And yet, what else could they have done? It must have looked quite logical to them, I don't know their company well enough to take over, over the girls, they would not have accepted it anyway. There would have been a mutiny. And since I'll be working on their biggest events, the ones the girls have already done before, it makes sense that they would be over me. Somehow I would have found a way to make it happen differently, you simply cannot alienate your employees like this. And yet, it was perfectly logical. And yet, unacceptable. Thank God I just don't care, this would have killed me if I were not leaving.

Ok, I think I might have drunk enough beers to start writing the serious stuff.

21 March 2006

Today has been an embarrassing day, and a long one too. For the first time the Chinese Girl came to my desk and ask me what I was doing. And that is despite the email I sent her yesterday detailing what I was working on right now. It was embarrassing because I was not certain if everyone knew that I was sort of demoted and was now under her. Well, it was clear then that she was my boss, wondering every second what it is that I am doing.

She wanted an hour long meeting where she told me everything I will have to do, how to do my job basically. And I had to listen as if I was a newbie who never produced a conference before. No need to tell her that I know the job, she knows, even if she acts like I don't.

At least she sent me all her files, the ones I suspected were much better organized and maximized to achieve a good marketing campaign than what I have been using under the Senior Manager who does not care much about marketing or anything else, but write more conference programs. No wonder he never has sponsors, supporting organizations or any attendees for that matter.

I also made a mistake, a big one. The Sweet Chinese Girl came to me, asking me to take over the admin of my own events, and I said no. At that meeting I was told that it would now be my responsibility. Great, demoted, my new boss is virtually a newbie who thinks she knows everything, she is also very bossy and over my shoulder at all time, and now I have more responsibilities. In fact, that was the missing piece, the only thing about producing an event that I was not doing, the admin. I was doing already half of it, but now, I do everything on all my events, which also pushes me to produce my own for my own company.

Still, today I felt like announcing them that I was leaving in a month. As some sort of protestation. Of course, I can't. I have first to talk about it to my financial adviser, and Stephen. But the fact that I was leaving at the end of next month was all I could think about when I was suffering in that meeting. It is not going to be easy. She also expects twice more work that the Senior Manager, because she is a control freak and needs to know at all time where we are at with our events. This is when we start producing more bureaucracy than actually producing events.

I have also become a bit more realistic with my business. I think now that I will produce conferences very much like my big competitors, however I will charge exactly 50% less than them. I will also make it clear that the venue will not be an expensive one and meals will not be provided. I will however tell them that the content and the quality of the events will be the same.

Which leaves me with one decision, which field of interest, and which conferences to produce first? I immediately understood that most of their events are so niche market, I could have something more general. I don't have the database to be niche market. I also discovered that if I were to choose Telecoms, even after all these years, they have still the same speakers presenting at these events. They might remember me.

Telecoms seems like the right choice, but I don't feel like it. What about finance? Law? Life Sciences? Energy, renewables, public sector... not sure. I will have to concentrate in one field only. Maybe technology would do? It did not work as well as Telecoms. Maybe I should go for something different than what my competitors are doing, however, if it was at all successful, they would be organizing conferences in these fields. I need to do some serious market research, I can only do that once I am back in London however. And it may take a while, while my time will be counted.

I wish I could do paranormal and pure sciences, space programs, high-tech technology, these are interesting fields. Maybe I should take a risk. I will not after all charge £3,000 to attend. But could they afford £700 or even £1,500? Good question. Market research once again... without it I cannot decide, I would flying blind. Lots of work in perspective.

I think I will be imaginative, and produce conferences people would have never thought of doing, and somehow I feel I will turn them into success. For example, how many post offices are there in England? Why not a conference for all the owners and employees of post offices to assess how to work better and make more money? Just another crazy idea, could be for the automotive industry, all these car salesmen, huge or small. That would interest Stephen. There is no limit. I just have to find a list of all the associations in the country, call them all, ask them if they feel there is place for a conference in the market, what it should be about and if they are willing to help.

But I have to be careful, a conference about the car industry, if successful, would put me in a situation where for many years that's all I will be doing, something I have little interest in. I think I should stick with my original idea, and charge a bit more than I originally planned. £200 instead of £100. And if that turns out to be a mistake, I'll offer everyone a 50% discount. That's how I will catch my fish. I'm very excited about all this now, I'll find a way to start my business!

22 March 2006

Despite all my efforts in the initial two days, despite my first meeting with the Chinese Girl where everything went well, despite my nice email saying that I was looking forward to working with her, it took me less than one minute today to annihilate my entire future with that company in the U.S. Sixty seconds is all you need to destroy everything.

I was stressed, that damn brochure had not gone to print, the printer was taking hours, and every five minutes she was behind my back asking me what I was doing, why it took so long, etc.

At some point she came, she attacked not once, but five times, and I was trying to contain myself, justifying myself, but then, she attacked me on a trifle, a stupid thing, which would never have been an issue with anyone else in this office.

I had enough of being humiliated like in front of the whole office (we are sitting each other), she had completely alienated me. I completely freaked out, and I left the office. She said: sit down, we are not finished! I said yes we are, I'm getting out of here, for at least five minutes, I'll be back.

She jumped in the boss' wife office, God knows what she said in there. Unmanageable, unreasonable, not willing to accept my authority, taking forever to do anything, we've got a problem: insubordination. The kind of problem which can only have one issue: here is the door, have a nice life somewhere else.

Somehow I feel I have not heard the end of this, and I have to wait a whole week before telling them that I am leaving one month later. Unless she backs off, and get off my back, this turn sour much before the end of next week.

AS she wanted all this to be so public, I certainly fought back in a very public way. I practically shouted that she came here and attacked me, and that her management style was very different from what I've been used to in this office. I said I had been here six months, and I had no problem. And now I find I have to justify everything I am doing every minute of the day. Being criticized in front of everyone every five minutes for something I did wrong. I simply cannot even make one phone call without having her next to me, criticizing it! As a result I can no longer do my job. I have lost all motivation, I do not want to call anywhere anymore. I also said: look, don't worry about me, I have done so many extra hours for my two last events, working on weekends, I will get the work done! What a mess.

All I could think of while she was spitting on me was: how long before I can go to lunch? How long before the end of the day? How long before I leave this country? And also, what my boss said initially: I expect you to listen to her and obey everything she says. I failed miserably. If they had any doubt if it was a mistake to put me under her, now they must be certain of it. And yet, I don't expect them to change anything to their new structure, the fastest I can let them know I am leaving, the better. But I have to wait until I get paid and have the money in my hands. Because knowing them, they might very well not pay me, to compensate for having paid my plane ticket, the immigration lawyer and one month accommodation.

Her style of management is like a teacher in a kindergarten. And despite all my efforts to contain myself, it is unsustainable, I can't remain passive in front of such injustice coming from a control freak. I don't want to know how the rest of the day will go, or the rest of the week for that matter. I'm pretty sure that tonight, before I leave, they will call me in the office to discuss my burst, and I have nothing to say in my defense. The Manager always right, I have a problem, insubordination. Now, the only thing that could save me, is that in the last five months I never burst out like this, I have always been able to contain myself. And, I'm hoping it is not the first time that people have exploded like this in her face, then they might understand that she might also have a problem. But they're in love with her, they wanted to promote her for such a long time, I have no doubt that if they have to make a decision, I'll be the one being sacked. I just wish that I may be able to tell them that I am leaving, before they sack me. Because then, I will not be able to mention on my CV that I worked in Los Angeles. It will be six months completely wasted. I can already hear future

employers asking me: why did you leave your job in Westminster, what have you been doing for that six months there? Very suspicious, thank you, but we don't require your services here.

I really wonder what kind of boss I would be, if I start that business and end up hiring people. One thing for sure, I have learned enough about what not to be, and I just hope I won't turn out to be a control freak losing all my employees every week.

I'm back now. The day from hell is finally over. And if I think this was bad, tomorrow will be even worse. I left 4 minutes before my time, to make sure they would not come exactly at 5 pm and asked me in the office. I have noticed that they always ask me to come in at exactly 5 pm, and everyone who has been sacked, has been told at the end of the day.

I did not give them the chance. I know this is all they have been talking about all afternoon. All the employees, and all the bosses. As soon as the crisis was over, the Chinese Girl jumped in the bosses office, they in return went immediately to lunch to discuss it, then they had a long meeting this afternoon to talk even more about it, and obviously after all that, if they have not taken a decision on this case, I would be a lucky bastard indeed.

In fact, all these meetings must have meant that they had a big decision to make, I could very well lose my job tomorrow. In a way it would be perfect, and yet, I would have preferred to leave them instead of being shown the door. Very ironic that I was going to announce it within a week, such bad timing!

I have cleaned my files at work (I deleted all my personal files), I have put in a little mountain all my personal affairs, I could now leave this office forever within 30 seconds, less than it took me to destroy my promising career with the big plans they had for me, as they said last week. I have also noted that I don't need to bring any of my stuff home, I could leave it there too. It will be less embarrassing than for the sales guy, who in six years had so much stock accumulated in his drawers, on his shelves and on his walls, that I reckon he must have needed three boxes, and a good half an hour.

I have been sacked many times before in my life, am I the exception? Every time though, it was not obvious, many times I left just before they were going to

sacked me, when I felt that this was it, I had somehow once again crossed the line. I don't know many people who have not been sacked at least once in their lives, and I don't know many people who have not been facing this situation at some point. In fact, I know almost nobody who loves their jobs and have no problems whatsoever. And I'm afraid to say, perhaps there are no solutions to these problems. Not in our actual social system of hierarchy, that's for sure.

So, tomorrow my great dream of Los Angeles might end for good. And I would not have needed to make a decision about staying or leaving. When you have no choice, it is much easier to accept. You are less likely to feel guilty in the future. I will not have any regrets for leaving, I never made the decision to leave in the first place. And even if they don't show me the door tomorrow, even if it is I next week who announces my departure, at least I will make that decision knowing that I did not really have a choice.

If I were wise, tomorrow I would be sick, telling them that I had a big fever and could not sleep all night. Which is most likely to be true anyway. It would prevent them from sacking me, they might forget about it on Friday. It could also very much play against me, convince them that I need to go. So I have to go and face whatever disciplinary they intend for me. Maybe that is what they have established all afternoon, their new disciplinary procedures, I know we have none. Usually you need to make one big mistake, and they kick you out. Why bother with disciplinary procedures when you can do that with any employee?

What kills me most, is how the Valley Girl and the Spanish Guy seemed to have enjoyed the show. The big entertainment. They feed on that, like vultures. I met the Valley Girl in the corridor, and she made a big smile, a weird noise, and some weird face like the ones you see on cute squirrels. She's anything but a cute squirrel, and yet, it must have been her embarrassment of seeing me there that created that reaction. And for the Spanish Boy, he seems to have spent the whole afternoon asking questions to the Chinese Girl, proving that he could work very well with her, to the point of making everyone who saw this sick to their stomach.

Of course, if the Spanish Boy knew the definition I have for people like him, he might reconsider his actions, and wish for a bit more autonomy and dignity. He is only an assistant after all, and still is after the new structure. He is a Yes Mam kind of guy, and spends most of the day kissing the ass of his Manager. That makes him a creep from my point of view. And the word is not strong enough. A

loser might be more adequate, since through his lack of personality, he has been trying hard to prove to everyone that he was cool, when he is just a poor kid without any real potential. I could be wrong, and I hope for him that I am, God knows what he will accomplish in his life. Right now, he is a sucker, and unaware of it.

Despite my mistakes, despite the consequences, when I was thinking back about it, I was actually proud of myself. I was proud to have stand on my two feet and told the bitch what I really though of her management skills. Yes, I shouted it, I freaked out, I left the office, I lacked the respect Manager's are due, I was insubordinate, I will be sacked for it, but I will not take any shit from anyone, I will not let anyone walk all over me just because I need the job or the money. I have some self respect, I have my dignity, and this less than I can say for everyone else in that office who suffer in silence and accept how small they are.

I just finished reading a book by Dan Brown. It gave me some sense of finality. I have reached another stage of my crisis. Astonishment by my own behavior. I simply cannot believe or even understand how and why I acted like this today. It was so out of line, that even though earlier I did not really they would kick me out, now I virtually certain that they will.

I was way too extreme, so loud as well, and so melodramatic when I left the office the office and came back later. And her word, saying that I was not professional, and this what she told my bosses, of course, it is over. They cannot let that pass, impossible. So what the hell went through my head?

The thing is, the behavior of those girls, and they can get away with it, is even more puzzling. You have there those two women with the most strident voice, pushing, pushing, pushing all the time, walking around, talking without thinking, causing problems after problems just for fun, and creating big crisis out of nothing. And you are supposed to stand there and be alienated completely all day long, until they dig further and then you lose your mind, and you are no longer responsible for what you do. In my case, not being a violent man, it was done on words. More unlucky bastard in that situation might have decided to hit her! Crushing that little perfect Chinese face until it shuts up. And at the end of the day, they get away with the verbal abuse, but you don't. You are the one who overacted, crossed the line, insulted them by saying what you really thought. And then they report you, you're gone, and they move to the next victim. Talking,

pushing, alienating, being unreasonable, etc., until they themselves explode as well, and then they're gone.

I feel a bit ore reassured that the exact same thing happened to the Sales guy. It is not just me. Nearly a dozen were sacked since I started, all at the hands of those two girls. And if they sack me tomorrow, I will tell them. I will tell them that I don't mind leaving, but as my last report as your Consultant Management for one more minute, let me tell you, in the interest of your business, get rid of those two girls, or else, you'll never find anyone willing or capable of surviving longer than six months under your roof. And as a last prediction, I will tell them that the Valley Girl has already made it clear she was jealous of the new guy, the Iranian, and she will definitely try to get him sacked. And so I will them, when the time comes to decide if you should let him or not, do yourself a favor, keep him, get rid of her. And see if six months later that kid does not shine and make this office a real success.

Of course, he has the great advantage of smoking pot or whatever else all the time, I think he is stone most of the time, not sure on what drugs exactly. So when the strident voices are ringing in his ears, he probably only hear a distant cry, and it does not affect him in the slightest. Lucky him. I wish I drank myself to death the night before, I might have been able to prevent myself from reacting the way I did today. It's too late now.

I acted very unprofessionally today, I admit it, I regret immensely. And yet, I will not apologize this time I am asked to apologize. I will not fight it either, I will simply pack my things and go. Try working all the overtime God's sent, rushing to reach deadlines, working like crazy for months on end, and having this annoying person suddenly coming to you, digging, suggesting you're not doing your job, wasting time, being incompetent, in front of everyone, in this strident voice, humiliating you when you were virtually just demoted by being moved under her. And let's see how you would keep your calm in that situation, without some powerful pills to induce you to some ort of zombie state. I knew it was going to happen, she knew it was going to happen, my bosses knew it was going to happen. Or else, we would not had a little conversation of two hours about how I was expected to obey her in all, that she was my boss, and that one day it will be my turn. No thanks. You asked for it, it happened. Not just sack me and let me be. This is six months of my life completely wasted, one of my biggest failures in life, and I will have to live with it for the rest of my existence. Living in regret for

that day where I simply could no longer stand it. That famous minute where, after months of being backstabbed by just about everyone, I exploded. And now, don't even ask why, don't try to understand the real chain of events here. Just protect your little perfect Managers, just eliminate the recalcitrant, the marginal.

And that is how my new company will be called: The Marginal. Very appropriate. No one will ever have a job title in my company. Identified tasks, yes, but no titles. It's maybe nothing, but it is a symbolic start. Now, how could I get of this system of hierarchy? How can I avoid all that crap that made my life such a misery in the last 30 years? It is not going to be easy, it will have to be done, decided, built as I go along, and the name of my company should remind me at all time to try to do things differently, try for a little of happiness now and then, and a lot of leeway.

I need to make sure, that if ever this become a huge empire, my company will be one where everyone will be pleased to work for. And it is not with nice words and company charts of rules and regulations that you accomplish that, or by stating in your huge PR and image campaigns: Our People is our Biggest Asset, because we all know it is a lie and that you would move quickly to kill anyone opening his mouth, just like I did today. And we should never have reached the point where I could no longer contain myself. This is it, this chain of extraordinary events, this pressure building up for months, until it needed to be released. No good. How could this be prevented? Very difficult.

There are solutions, I will find them. And I doubt I will find any answers in any of those books about How to Develop Great Management Skills. It obviously does not work, or else, we would smile once in a while. It is like Karl Marx, nice in theories, could never work in practice. Because it seems that we never take into account human nature when we develop these grandiose schemes. And human nature does not forgive, it is unpredictable, uncontrollable, it is a bastard.

I had the solution, I written it all in my dozens reports. It would have worked for this company, but they chose to ignore most of it, and many more people will lose their job there before this year is over. I am only one in a series, granted I'll be the one leaving the most spectacularly, but I am still only one in a series. And if this does not prove that this company is the problem, then what does? All of those unemployed people? Tell that to the judge.

At least I am not leaving empty ended. I have two more books, perhaps three. Never been so productive in so short a time, again I have been living at a speed unlike any other human being. And still found the time to write so much about it despite the fact that I don't have any time for myself, I'm not sleeping anymore. It is just unfortunate that these books I have spent so much time writing are not the publishing type, and so will never be published. So again, it is still kind of a big waste of time. It is still a nice consolation, I did get something out of that hell that was for me Los Angeles.

23 March 2006

It is such a great day today in Los Angeles, the sun is shining and warm, the palm trees are so inviting, even the traffic seems less aggressing than usual. It is beautiful. Obviously nature has no idea of what is in the making in these offices.

I have not heard of any meeting at the end of the day yet, but they never tell you until it is time for the meeting. Whether there is a meeting or not, tomorrow I'll be sick. I already mentioned it to the Chinese Girl, that my brain was not working, that I thought I was sick.

I just spoke with Stephen in London, that was a harsh phone call, where he has been everything but on my side. He talked to his mother about our idea for a business, she freaked out, put him in contact with some financial adviser, and discovered that it would cost at least £2,000 just to register the company and have an employee, me. So now Stephen is adamant that we will not start a business. He is suggesting that I remain in Los Angeles for as long as possible, not come back at the end of next month. Or he says to contact my previous in London and resume my job there. I would prefer the option of remaining here in that case. And since he does not appear in any hurry to get me back to England, I might as well, today at least, forget about him and this option. If I have to start this whole business on my own, without him, I will seriously consider it.

Now I'm truly depressed, backed into a corner, my life has gone to hell. Of course, it was not the time to speak to him, he is under a lot of pressure himself, he will find out tomorrow if he gets back his job or not. Maybe once he knows his own faith, he might see more clearly about my own. At the moment, there is only darkness on both sides of the ocean, three sides actually, all the oceans of the world.

It is already time for me to go back. This is going to be more difficult than I thought. God only knows what I will be saying here tonight when I come back in a few hours.

All right, I'm back! Do I still have my job? Well, let's build some suspense. I received an email before I left home from my boss, asking me to go into his office as soon as I got back from lunch. Fortunately for me, it went directly not into my spam folder, but my second undesirable emails, the protection from Outlook. I never read emails reaching the second spam folder, I know it is all pure crap. And sure enough, that email belongs there. So, I was not freak out just before reaching the office. And then, even before I read his email in my inbox at work, he came to get me.

I was so humble when I entered his office, it was a dark contrast from my yesterday's outburst. So, we sat down, he asked me what happened. So I told him that I felt I had been demoted, it was difficult to accept orders from the Chinese Girl, and she did not make that transition very easy. She instantly took control, patronizing, accusing me of incompetence, basically she was not very professional, she was rubbing it in. And then at some point I just exploded. I said I was sorry, that I do intend to work well with her, and that it would never happen again (until next time, that is, not sure how I will be able to stop myself).

He was so nice to me, I could barely believe my ears. A complete change from when, at Christmas, he was asking me why he was paying me \$1,250 a week if I was not doing anything (when in fact I was working like crazy), and asking me to work all over the Christmas period (only three days off in all). I know he can be harsh, unforgivable, to the point. But he was sweet, making sure he was not going to make me explode again, maybe he thought I could very well react like I did the day before.

So in all I told him her management skills were not that great and she had come up to me very hard. She was not very professional, the exact same thing she must have told them. I did not go any further, I did not say anymore that I needed to. I actually I praised her more that I wanted to, saying that she was very efficient and that together I was certain we would achieve great things. He was very pleased to hear that, he exhibited some expression, with a smile, that I had never seen before. Satisfaction, for a decision well made by promoting her.

So I was safe, I was not going to be sacked. I was starting to wonder if I could actually get away with murder, perhaps I should have hit her, like every fiber in my body was stretching for. I am only joking here, I am not so unethical, and I can control myself. As my friend Leonardo said tonight, they obviously finally realized just how important I am for their new structure in that company. They must really feel that I am worth something, or else, I would be out the door by now. So I take this as a significant admission that my services have been at least to their expectations, hopefully more. And now I am right back where I was, it will be difficult to announce that I am leaving next week.

Something I said in that meeting, which I would not have said, Stephen told me to say so when I called him at lunch time. I said that I felt this was a demotion, which has made the whole process of the Chinese Girl becoming my boss much more difficult to accept.

He was surprised by this statement, it never entered his mind that I could have a reticence working under her. It certainly right there explained everything. My outburst, his incomprehension, his blindness that it was coming, and it was obvious to everyone but him. Maybe that explains why bosses need many consultants before making any decisions, and yet, they manage to always make the wrong decision. Because consultants have no clue about what really goes on, the interactions and little mind games lasting for months on end.

How could be a demotion? I was a Management Consultant, I am now an Event Producer. I was first directly under the Director, then under the Senior Manager, and now under the Conference Manager without experience. And yet, she knows everything about what needs to be done, I know nothing. So this demotion is more psychological than anything, it is mostly also because of whom I am now under. A woman out of control who has already tried to get me sacked before, for no good reason.

In all this, I thought someone not affected by it all, was the Senior Manager. Now I understand his predicament. He is as good as dead, the Chinese Girl succeeded in destroying him, and as she is taking over all his conferences, and the two persons he was supervising, every day she makes greater discoveries to prove her point. That he was plain incompetent and was not doing anything that we were supposed to do. I have so much to do for my first two conferences now, it is

madness. No wonder he did not care about any of it. I also know that at any given time, he was dealing with 10 conferences, how could he remember everything? I know my boss was always having these meetings with us, where he would tell us all that we had to do all of these things, and get that next brochure to print yesterday. In these conditions, of course we would never had the time to do all that the Chinese Girl is now asking us to do.

It is the second, in as many meetings, that my bosses put the Senior Manager down. The first time, two weeks ago, they said that he could speak anymore because of his speech impediment (that I reckoned they cause by freaking him out), and he was also always talking bollocks. I defended him then, I said that everything he ever told me was justified and he knew what he was doing (of course, I did not know we were supposed to do ten times more on each event, including the whole marketing).

Today my boss said something that made everything click. He said that in December, less than a month before a conference, the contract with the hotel had not been signed, and therefore, we could not hold the conference in that hotel. They had to pay a huge fortune to another hotel in New York to hold that conference, and any profit for that event just evaporated. Now, if this is not gross misconduct deserving an instant dismissal, I don't know what is. He is lucky to have survived it. However now he has been striped from his title of Manager, he will no longer produce conferences, he will do whatever else, research or something I heard.

And now that I know that, I understand that I caused his downfall. In my ignorance, I showed all his mistakes and all his shortcomings. I cannot here mention them all, but I can mention the most significant ones. I told the Valley Girl that his conference programs were just copies of our competitors events, even the speaker line up was stolen. Well, it now seems that she work very hard telling everyone in the office, in particular the Chinese Girl who seemed to have been collecting all the right reasons to destroy the man, and finally take his place.

And what made it all worse and complete, his destruction, apart from every time the Chinese Girl asks me to do something I have to say that it is the first time I hear of this, is that very reason I exploded yesterday. What I thought as insignificant, and that she was so insistent was not, was right at the heart of the problem.

The Senior Manager told me last week which hotel m conference would be at. I assumed he signed the contract and sent it back. So when I called to find out why the conference was not in the system and that a delegate could not book a room at a discount, and when I was told the contract had not been signed and returned, I interrupted a meeting between the Senior Manager and my boss, to ask if the contract had been signed. It has not been. You can imagine the impact it had on my boss, considering what happened in December.

So not knowing anything about anything, when the Chinese Girl came to me to blame me of having called the hotel, before speaking first with the people in the office about if the contract had been signed or not, I had no clue why this was so important. Big Deal, the contract had not been signed yet, it was going to be in the next five minutes, and the hotel was going to update their system. It was not important, why was she trying to blame me for something, accusing of something? Why was she creating such a fuss over such an insignificant thing? I shouted many times in the office, so loudly that every other offices in the building must have heard, that I assumed that the contract had been signed, all right? The Senior Manager told me it was that hotel, I assumed he had signed the contract. He had not, so what, big deal! Little I knew, that by shouting that, I was making it even worse for the Senior Manager. I don't know if he was in the room when I exploded, I don't know if he heard all that. It must have been one of the most painful moment of his life, that's for sure. I was not the one pushing this, it was the Chinese Girl, making a big deal out of this when I felt it was not necessary. I now understand why it was necessary to make a big deal out of it, and I certainly sealed his fate by exploding on that very final point of the Chinese Girl. The whole thing almost got me sacked. It freaked everybody out, including the Chinese Girl. It was another big crisis over a damn unsigned contract about a venue. The guy is finished. I did it without knowing, without having a clue, or else I would have never have exploded like this on that very point. I would have done anything to protect him. And I defended in that office in front of the boss. I said that he was a good manager, and we were in constant communication by email about everything I had to do, and I never had to wait to learn what it is I had to do.

Now I feel bad. I destroyed the man. Obviously because he was careless. He destroyed himself really, I just, I would have liked to protect him, because he is nice, he has a family, a huge house that now is worth a fortune, but a huge

mortgage to pay. He's been there 10 years, he needs this job, and since he never told me anything about his situation, I inadvertently made all his shortcomings shine into the light. Giving the perfect opportunity to the Chinese Girl to prove it and take over. Now I feel bad. I even shouted that her management skills were very much different from what I had been used to, when I was very much left to my own devices. And now she wants to know everything I do at any given minute of the day. Well, that was the point that cost him his position, he is not manager material, my boss said.

And at the end of the day, I asked the Valley Girl, are they sacking him? She said she did not know what was going on. She has been much nicer to me since the promotion of the Chinese Girl. She said that obviously she did not count for much in that organization (I sure hope not! She tried her best to destroy everything in the last few months), and then I said I did not either, and then we looked at the cubicle of the Chinese Girl, and she said: except her.

The Chinese Girl is efficient, she does not waste her time. And if she destroys you, it is because she feels you deserve it. The Valley Girl destroys people's life out of being bored I think. She likes to cause problems for the heck of it or when she feels she is threatened. Both girls are highly dangerous, but the Chinese Girl does not realize what she does, when she is pushy, she shouts all the time as her normal voice, so nobody is surprised when she is actually freaking out, out loud, it is natural to her personality. Bad management too. She is the lesser of two evils. That company is doomed.

And now let's talk about the Sweet Chinese Girl. I'm so pleased she is my only ally with Isabella in the office, and that they are good friends. The Sweet one is in the same predicament as me. We were both under the Senior Manager, and we are now both under Master Bitch Chinese Girl. We have both moved into overdrive when she took over, and we have so much to do, we just don't understand why we are not simply declaring Game Over, and leave right on the spot.

At some point during the day, after yet another email from the Chinese Girl to both of us, about other stuff we needed to do about already printed conferences, the Sweet one freaked out a bit. And the New One kind of joked and wrote a note: don't quit! She put that message on her computer screen, and then the Director saw it. They had meetings about it, they freaked out that the restructure

might not only cause me to leave, after my outburst, but now it was the other Sweet Chinese Girl. We were both on edge, after the Chinese Girl ram in there asking from us the impossible.

So the Sweet Chinese Girl was called in the office, she was asked if she wanted to quit or what? They were begging her to stay, and she had to explain it was all a joke, and how it came to be, that suddenly she was panicking because of the Chinese Girl. And so it looked bad on the Chinese Girl, it sort of proved that my explosion was justified, since both the new persons under her, it was suggested, were about to quit or be sacked because of her inexistent management skills. No doubt this helped me no end, and my boss told me they talked with her about that, about the way she handled us, and that she needed to be more careful.

And what did she do after all that? She sent another email to both the Sweet Chinese Girl and I, with the worst of all! Something extraordinary, a list that long of things to do, not once, but twice, 10 long time consuming marketing piece to produce and write, for two conferences each that the Sweet One and I are now responsible for. When we now nothing about the topic of these events, that was the job of the Senior Manager. Well, if the Chinese Girl has any vague intention of quitting, I know now it has become a certainty. Especially the way it came: I know you are sinking under everything you have to do, but stop all that, and please before the end of the day produce these 20 marketing pieces for the media partners! There were two hours left in the day. We both left right on time, meaning, we're not ready to do any overtime for Master Bitch. Otherwise, we would still be working all over the weekend.

I don't know what is going to happen next, I don't know how it will go next week. I don't even know if I will leave in a month. It is quite possible that I will remain longer. Stephen is obsessed with money, my return would mean he would have to support me, he can't, so he is pushing for me to remain longer. So I might, I don't mind. Makes no difference to me, I kind of enjoy my life in Los Angeles, even if it is nothing particularly special or revolutionary. I like my flat, I like the weather, and as long as I know that my bosses will let me get away with murder, than I know I am appreciated. I also know that if everything goes wrong, I can leave at any time, without regrets. I am in no hurry to enter the next phase of my existence. So if Stephen has not calm down tomorrow, after finding out if he still has his job or not, I stay here another two months minimum, perhaps longer. He should be careful though, too many months here, and I might never go back

to England. Another great relationship which would have been destroyed because of a lack of money. That fear that we might not survive, when I know damn well that there is always a solution around the corner. Money or the lack of it should never stop anything, especially not love.

26 March 2006

It is Sunday night again, I am starting to feel the panic of going back to work. Fortunately I don't feel it is as bad as it was last week, or the weeks before. I am beginning to have a radar capable of telling me when the next week is going to be a real nightmare, or just a normal week. It is true that before any terrible events at work, I felt it the night before, or on my way to work after lunch time, I have never been mistaken. Well, it is also true that usually they have a good reason to get me in the office, because of my past actions. However, it is definitely some sort of sixth sense, I can predict how they will be certain days or weeks, as if I knew my destiny, or that if nothing happened for quite a while, you can bet they finally reached some sort of plan to make it much worse, since this is all they appear capable of doing.

I did not go to work on Friday, I had three days off and I read Timeline of Michael Crichton. I thought it would help me evade my reality, but it did not work. Then I played Gabriel Knight 3, The Blood of the Sacred, which perhaps Dan Brown played before writing Da Vinci Code, since it is the exact same story. I thought walking around Rennes-Le-Château in the South of France, in the country of the Cathars and Merovingians, might definitely do the trick, and make me forget the hell I am in. I think it only reminded me how far I was from France, and how long it would be before I can go back there as a tourist, on the Canal du Midi, visiting Castelnaudary Castle.

Whatever I do, I can no longer escape my reality. In London on my way to work in the train, at lunch time, and sometimes on breaks, I would read Sherlock Holmes short stories, and it worked for a while. That's how I survived my last job, which was also some sort of hell, but in retrospect, not as bad as it is now. That's why nothing works anymore, everything here in Los Angeles reminds me of work, of the people I have to face everyday, all the problems and complications to come up with to make my life a misery. I don't tomorrow will again be a day from hell, and there is nothing I can do about it. All I know is I don't feel guilt for not showing up on Friday.

I just devised a plan, I need to get back the Spanish Guy on my side. I will go and apologize to him and get back on a friendly tone. I heard him complain on Friday, I believe, about the Chinese Girl, it seems that he turned against her, re-enforced by how I exploded in her face last Wednesday. I think he finally realized that the problem was not him, but her. And since we are three now against her, he seems to have taken the opportunity to empty his bag in front of the bosses. I may be dreaming all that, I'm not sure who he was talking about to the Black Guy. And I don't know either what I will tell him when I will go and apologize to him for whatever it is that I said that freaked him out. Not hard to tell, I said something about the fact that he was gay, and the problem is, he is, but does not want to tell anyone. So somehow he had to stop me from convincing the whole office that he was. And now, how can I apologize to that? Especially when the Valley Girl in the background repeats that what I said was sexual harassment. God knows where she gets these ideas. More headaches.

Stephen in London is now convinced he will lose his job on Tuesday. Which does not help my case of going back to London to start our business. It should, but it does not, because his parents told him that he has to find a new job tomorrow morning in any shop, even MacDonald if necessary. Of course, he wants a driving job, but he will again lose his driving license soon, we don't know when. So his whole life is in the air. And we don't have the initial money we need to survive until the company makes money, even if the investment we need is minimal. I don't know what we are going to do. I might very well stay another two months here, unsure if I will be able to survive it.

28 March 2006

Today I made peace with everyone at work. I sort of apologized publicly to the Spanish Boy, we appear to have resumed making fun of each other, without crossing the line this time. My strike of silence was only supposed to last a week, however he also went of strike and we have been a few weeks without talking to each other. We're almost sitting next to each other, it has been very difficult. I'm glad I'm the one who took the initiative to correct this situation, even if really he is the one who backstabbed me to the bosses. I had however insulted him. So we were to both to blame I guess, now this is all behind. And Isabella is over happy about it, her two friends are friends again.

I also had some sort of normal conversation with the Chinese Girl, where I understood that every single word I shouted at her really had gone down into her psyche, and today she said that I would not have to work that hard in the future, that we're almost finished with those two conferences, and everything will be fine. I guess the old trick worked, saying you do a lot of overtime, even you don't, still works, they believe it. I have not done one minute of overtime since I have been transferred to her, in fact, I barely worked at all. Once I finish all that marketing crap, I will resume working as usual. Whenever you do something for the first time, and you're not quite certain of what you are doing, it is very difficult to be motivated and to do it quickly. So now what I am doing from the beginning to the end, I sure will be able to do everything faster.

I also told her that I had said to the boss that I felt she was very efficient and good at what she does. Funny, I again saw on her face some weird expression that I never witness coming her before. Hopefully it won't go to her head, but is it not extraordinary how the simple of compliment can go a long way to restoring your nightmare?

Even the Valley Girl has now calmed down and has become my ally. They continuously pick on her at the moment, every hour now she's got some meeting where they tell her to do everything differently, and convince her that everything she does is wrong. Not surprising, she is so incompetent, compared with the Chinese Girl, I'm glad they finally figured that out. That huge Internet thingy she suggested will be a monumental flop. It will be so painful to see it crash, all that money down the drain. What were they thinking when they believed her when she came back one day after thinking for one long minute about it, telling them it was the next best thing? They're trying to confirm someone from Google right now, none of them want to do it, and anyway, who would want to hear about Google? I can't think of anything more boring.

She came back from a long meeting today where the Chinese Girl was in it, as the big overall Manager of the place, and she said at her desk afterwards that every single suggestions she made in that meeting, was rejected and ridiculed. She stated that she would need a whole bottle of Brandy tonight, and as some sort of complicity I said that I would also be drinking a lot tonight, as I have in the last few weeks.

My outburst last week against the Chinese Girl must have filled her with envy, I'm sure this is what she has been waiting to do herself, but cannot, or else she would not be there the next day. I exploded for all of them last week, also for the demoted Senior Manager, the Sweet Chinese Girl and the Spanish Guy. I might have alienated the whole management, but I certainly made a lot of new friends, who before that were lost to me.

A complicity with the Valley Girl is not easy, it comes at a price. She always feels the need to complain against management, and I don't like to do that either at work or with colleagues. I am always very superficial in the office, making unrelated jokes on about everything, except work. Until my panic attack last week, none of them had any idea about how I really felt inside. That I was ready to explode for a long time. They thought I was the perfect sheep, in line, happy go lucky, peaceful, while I was dying inside. No wonder I can be so negative in my writings, it needs to come out somehow, otherwise I would have exploded the very first week and I would never have lasted that long.

Everything now is peaceful for me. I hope it will last, I have reason to believe that it will. Good. I always leave a job after the thunderstorm, never during. Like if it was only time to move on once everything is all fine, I am appreciated, I appreciate them, we've all become friends, we all got it out of our system, and then it seems there is not much to learn anymore about human nature. And hence, it is time to move on, go and learn somewhere else.

I know it is time to move on, when I have finished writing two books about any period of my life. And they are finished now. My third one is half finished, but that one will take longer, it is about the other side of Los Angeles, Hollywood, and my career as a scriptwriter. Now, that will take much longer before anything happens, and do a lot will happen before I go back to London either next month or in two months, it is a book that can be written from London, since I will still have my connections here in L.A. It could be my best yet, however it may take another few years before it is finished, the time it would take for the film script to be sold and made into film. It will take forever. I have the time to go back to London, try to start that business, sell the film script, get back to L.A., and start writing full time. Then it would be finished.

I am a bit worried that I am still her for a month or two, and yet I have already started on my endings for both of my books. Surely more stuff will happen?

Would I not simply repeat myself? Perhaps I could concentrate instead on writing that fictitious novel? Good idea, I could only start it. I did, I was not happy with the opening stance, and yet I read it again and I thought it was ok. Guess I will have to rewrite it. I think I will change my whole idea. More thinking is necessary for that one. I guess I also have to work on my future conferences, if I really want that business to see the light of day. I need a damn good idea, there also. I need to think outside the box, a paranormal science conference will flop, I know that. It's no good. I am so free right now to do whatever I want with this business, I really need a great idea that cannot fail. I need to think some more.

The key are the speakers. They need to be well-known, recognizable instantly, on a hot topic debated in the newspapers every day. And it cannot take place a year later, I cannot risk it not being in the actuality after that. Need to think some more. Need to read all the newspapers for the last six months and figure it out.

Won't be easy, I have been so disconnected, I am not even watching TV anymore. In America, they have gone so overboard with the commercials, it is simply not bearable. I can now record everything, and fast forward the commercials, but by the time I succeeded in sorting that out, I had already lost interest in whatever it is there is on TV here.

And for the newspapers, the first thing you learn when you move country, is that whatever appears in the biggest paper around where you live, none of that would be in the newspapers of where you were before. And then, you understand that it is useless to read newspapers, they don't report the news, or these news are insignificant. You will survive if you don't read any of it. And I'm not worried, if the President of the United States gets shot in the head by a terrorist or one of his close allies, I'm sure someone at work will mention it to me, eventually.

3 April 2006

My godmother just sent me an email, she is the only one really who has kept contact with me since I am in Los Angeles, apart from my mother who never called me in the last 15 years whilst I was in Europe, and must have found out that calling Los Angeles from Québec is actually as cheap as calling Montréal. So now she is calling me every two weeks with a revenge.

Since my answers to my godmother form a good résumé of my actual situation, I thought I would share it with you.

-Hello!!! How do you feel?

-I feel ok. I felt bad recently at work, I thought they were going to sack me, in fact I was quite sure since I exploded in the office at some point. However I must have proved myself more essential than they let on, because it looks like I can get away with murder. At the moment there are not many problems at work, we finally moved to another room, we have new desks, more space and more privacy, which I like. However there is a lot of work to be done and obviously I am doing a lot of overtime. I was in San Francisco at the beginning of the month for a conference, it was nice. I will be going to Salt Lake City Utah next month for my conference, and perhaps Philadelphia Pennsylvania in two months if I am still here.

-How is your life in L.A.?

-Well, to be honest, I have not done much, or gone anywhere, really. I just stay in my apartment most of the time, writing books. I have written two books and a half since I am here, and usually when I finish two books (one fiction, the other non-fiction), I usually move on almost by magic, as if I had nothing else to learn and my life/destiny was suddenly bringing me somewhere else. I'm reaching a point where I have nothing left to write about, otherwise I would simply repeat myself. So I think I have reached my limit here. Funny that I could have been so prolific in such a short time. A lot has happened. I have not yet met the big writers/producers I was supposed to meet, I don't really care to meet them, I still have this film script that I am writing with that actor/musician, and they are his friends. So it does not matter if I meet his great friends or not, the film script could still be sold sometimes this year, even if I am back in London. I have not tried to meet anyone else whilst I am here, I don't feel like it, and I no longer feel guilt for not contacting anyone. If nothing happens within the little circle in which I fell in, then I can forget writing for Hollywood forever. At the moment I am debating writing a novel like Dan Brown, The Da Vinci Code, but I am still wondering if my English is good enough, or even if my French would be good enough for those French bastards which cannot really recognize French-Canadian as something worth of great literature. I am also quite determined not to write in French anymore. So we'll see.

-Is there any good reason to be there longer?

-No. I have made my contacts in Hollywood, they are the best. Now there is no reason to stay. I can work even from London, and I have someone here who can make it happen.

-Do you think to go back to London soon?

-In fact, I was debating with Stephen today if I should give my notice in right now, and go back to London at the end of April. However we have decided that I will remain here for at least two more months, because he just lost his job (on a technicality) and we could not support ourselves if both of us were not working. It looks like destiny to me, I could have gone back to London immediately and we could have started this conference business together, especially that I have established that we don't need a loan from a bank or any investment, as long as we can confirm sponsors and delegates within three months. However we would still need the money to survive those three months, and perhaps have a minimum of money to pay to register the company, etc. And we don't even have that. The main obstacle however is Stephen's mother. She thinks it is a crazy idea because she feels any new company needs investments. And since Stephen has just lost his job, and he has no money, she has gone into panic mode and she is pushing him to find a new job as quickly as possible, in a McDonald if necessary. So Stephen at the moment is not exactly in a position to make any big decision, he has his mother freaking out in the background, and he is depressed because I am away, he has lost his job and he has no money. I'm still hoping that his mother will come to her senses, and realize that starting a conference company could be very profitable in the long term. Somehow she could get us some money to start, or even it could be taken on Stephen's mortgage. But this is sacred to them, Stephen will be disowned if he touches the mortgage. So at the moment I remain in L.A. because I can at least support myself, even if I cannot help Stephen financially. I think the plan right now is for Stephen to find a new job, then me going back to London in two to three months time, and then I would start this conference company on my own until money starts coming in. At that point Stephen would quit his job and we will both work on this together. I could also get back to my previous conference job in London, in Westminster, however I would prefer to remain here than doing that. If I get back that job, starting a conference company will be virtually impossible, because

Stephen's mother (or Stephen) will never allow me to leave that job again to start the company. If I go back to London, it is to start this business venture, nothing else. No more bosses. If I am to do everything on my own events including finding sponsors, and making other people rich, I might as well do it for myself. And now is the right time.

-There are many questions, but the most important is, are you on your dream path right now, and are you happy?

-I don't know. I think it will take a while to truly understand the consequences of coming to L.A. for seven to eight months. Not sure if my dream of being a well paid scriptwriter will become a reality. All I know is that coming here is what convinced me completely to start my own business. I have learnt a lot in the last two years in my last two jobs, and I don't think I would have felt that ready if I had not come here in the first place. The less developed is the company you work for, the more you have to do everything yourself, develop your own processes, and ultimately learn everything you need to do if you were to start your own business. I even learned a lot about management, which is also important, since I could quickly need to hire a few employees to call lists to confirm delegates and sponsors, and then produce more events as we go along and make more profit. And I have also become more realistic, I will have to produce those corporate events where you can charge an astronomical fee to attend, my secret is that I will still charge half of what my competitors charge, and still make a fortune. Am I happy? I will never be happy. In my life I have only been completely depressed or ok. And right now I am ok, even if Stephen is going through a crisis right now, and I don't know much about my future and how I will go about doing all that I have set myself to do. One thing for sure, the next few months should be interesting and bring about big changes in my life. As usual. Difficult decisions, the obstacles to overcome, god knows what else. And what about you?

* * *

I'm drinking Corona beers right now, the best beer there is except that Dorada I had in the Canary Islands a few years ago. As I said, nothing new at work, no problems, no crisis, it's getting boring, I might have to do like the Valley Girl, and create my own problems, just to make this life and this blog more interesting.

Either some new crisis are about to happen, which I hope not, or else this blog is coming to an end. We'll see. I guess this conference is Salt Lake City, with only the Spanish Guy and myself for four days, might bring something worth reporting here. God knows, I could end up sleeping with him. Though I doubt it. Still, something extraordinary might happen to me in Salt Lake City, the most extreme right State in the U.S.

I will have to watch what I am writing while there, I could easily end up in prison. Every single rave in that State end up with the police arresting everyone, I was reading recently, and that, despite the fact that everything is completely legal with all the permits in order. If it ain't country music, you must be worshipping the devil, and your place is in hell.

Should be interesting. I think I will move my film script about a bunch of old women striking and freaking out in front of a porno shop from Arkansas to Utah after that visit. Should I bring my Bible to blend in? Oh, there's no need, I'm sure the hotel will provide me with at least three different versions.

6 April 2006

I had already set myself to the idea that this blog was almost over. However more stuff and crisis will happen between now and the next two months that I will be in Los Angeles. So it is not quite finished yet. No problems, eventually I can delete the boring pages out of this blog, when I will have any time to myself, probably in 30 years if I'm still alive then and if at that point this blog is of any interest to anyone on the planet, even myself.

Not much to report at work, despite that fact that I am in my new office space, and under new management. My to-do-list is a mile long, and I have been told today by Master Bitch (the Chinese Girl), that I was not fast enough to achieve my tasks. Is it my fault if suddenly I have to transcribe a 45 minutes conversation on tape, of highly complicated stuff about Nuclear Power? And then have to book a plane ticket for a stupid delegate who let his assistant decide for him, and both of us are there wondering in the 100 different possibilities at hand what to choose, when neither of us really know? Took me a whole afternoon. And another afternoon to write my five personal goals I am supposed to achieve before the end of the year. Looking at my to-do-list, and how I don't have the time to do anything, I know very well that none of my corporate goals will ever

be achieved, and I can tell: goodbye bonus at the end of the year. But no worry, I won't be here anymore at the end of the year to collect that bonus anyway. I predict that not many of us will still be working there at the end of the year.

I also understand that they have not followed my reports, because now they have made a big mistake. Before there were six people actively working at producing conferences, and now three of them have stopped completely under the pretence of doing research and finding sponsors and managing people. We have moved from Managers actively producing events, to Managers doing nothing, like it is in just about every big company around the globe.

The Director is said to now be doing research, he is not, I am. The ex-Senior Manager is said to be doing research. He is not, I am. They are said to also find new topics for conferences. They are not, not only they have all been identified for the next ten years, but the new one here and there, we are all in charge of finding them. That leaves sponsorship for the Director. Then again, who's doing the sponsorship? I am. What are those two going to do now? Take it easy, as they feel they deserve, after working there for over ten years.

Let's look at the third one, the Manager, newly promoted to Managing the four others. She is no longer producing any event, she supervises us producing them. Her duties on top of that? Writing a conference procedure manual, developing processes, basically, the job of a management consultant. Who did that for the last six months? I did. She can just take it all, adapt it to the company over a weekend, job done.

None, ingenious of them, there are still over 50 conferences to produce this year. I am just a bit over in the hierarchy than the three remaining ones, I am responsible for all the big events, they are in charge of the smaller conferences. I have to make \$85,000 per event, they need to make \$21,000 per event. I have more to produce than all three united. They are still just assistants with more responsibilities, they won't be assisting me, I am very much alone to dig all these sponsors and marketing deals on my own, on top of writing the conference programs, researching them and confirming the speakers. Maybe they think I will be working over 100 hours a week for them? I'm laughing. No wonder Master Bitch though I was not working faster. I'm already late on my next 30 conferences for the year.

Let's look at the Valley Girl now. She is responsible for another guy who's doing everything under her supervision, so she can still go all around the office and talk all day, as usual. Together they will produce two big fair a year which I have already identified as big flops. So they are a waste of time, money and productivity.

In a few words, this whole company has got only one employee producing all their events, all their hopes on only one person, me! The only one actually producing worthy conferences. Without any bonuses, without any incentives, without really be the role I was hired for. No wonder they did not sack me when I exploded! I'm the only one who's actually going to do anything in that place. That was their big plan for me! I guess all the Directors and Senior Managers were patiently waiting for a big fish to arrive to dump all their responsibilities and duties on him.

I also guess they haven't realize yet that I am not that fish, I'm planning my way out, and they're lucky it did not happen at the beginning of this week, either me being sacked or my announcing my return to the UK.

Funny, they got that poor little Jewish Boy, all right, he looked weird, he is a big reject of society, lost in his fantasy world, they too in Research thought they had found their fish with him. They dumped on him more and more responsibilities, getting him to call all day delegates to try to confirm them to attend conferences. Without discussion the worst job there is in conferences, perhaps after confirming sponsors. He did say after all that he was month without a job, and would be pleased to break his back for them to prove that he was a great element and team player

Well, he has shown signs lately that he was becoming quite impatient with everyone, even customers. It is no secret that everyone in Research just hate the blue eye boy that the bosses seem to think will become big in there. Well, he's been sick for at least six days in the last three weeks, again today. And not even on days following each other. For examples, on three Friday's in a row. Looks bad, really bad. Looks good on the other researchers, suddenly they feel they have won the war over the Jewish Boy. They did not try to impress the boss, so they did not inherit impossible tasks to accomplish. No one is expecting anything from them, tomorrow there is no one to answer the phone, the Admin Director did not even think of them. I'll be the receptionist tomorrow. I guess they only

need to show up at work, do nothing, and it still looks good. Compared with the Blue Eye Jewish Boy who's now sick to death of the place and is about to announce that he is not coming back, which will be most welcomed by the bosses, I'm sure. I did much less before being called in the office.

Let's talk about my move into the second main room. I love it, I no longer have the Valley Girl on my back, sitting next to me, driving me crazy. She caught up with me in the kitchen yesterday to tell me that the Customer Service girl (the receptionist) and her, missed me terribly, it is no longer funny in their corner anymore. I always knew I was an acquired taste, that despite my rough edges, as she said in San Francisco at the beginning of this month, I am actually very likable. I am the difference between a boring office where you want to commit suicide, and a lively office that makes it worth it to come in the morning. But of course, I come with problems too, I don't respect authority, major problem.

In my new corner it is not fun either. I am surrounded by two backstabbers who would love to see me disappear. The Chinese Girl and the Spanish Guy. On the other corner I have the Black Guy, who's been driving me crazy by spying on me since I arrived here. And to top it off, I have my boss and his wife in their offices, listening to everything we say at all time. They could hear us before, but it was less obvious. The room is smaller now, they don't miss a word. I have to be on my best behavior at all time. Much more stressful.

I no longer go to the kitchen, it is far, I have to cross my office, pass in front of the offices of both my bosses, in front of their spy, and then the main room is so open now, everyone looks at me. I only drink two coffees a day now, I might bring a thermos and do my coffee at home. Hence, I only go to the toilet when I'm deeply desperate and can no longer hold it.

I have also made a disturbing discovery. If I drink a lot the day before going to work, everything goes so well, I'm kind of still drunk the next day, I suddenly don't worry about any bitching around, I work very hard. Everything is also very smooth, I accomplish a lot more. If I did not drink anything the night before, I am uptight, watching over my shoulders for the watchers, I can't make a phone call, I'm ready to explode every time I have a bastard coming to me asking me why nothing has been done, it is disastrous. It is like having a car accident while you are not drunk, you will probably end up dead. If drunk though, somehow, you will not even have a scratch. My job is like that, a series of car crash, and if

I'm drunk, I don't feel anything, whether it is psychological or physical, and then I can do my job. Without being an alcoholic, I can't keep that job! If that is not disturbing, what is?

Time to open my fourth beer, it is only 19h51. If you don't know what time I mean, you American still working with am and pm, tough, I don't care anymore. It is about time you get up to date with the rest of the world and understand what 19h51 means. And 32 degree Celsius, and one meter, for god's sake! I will nee r have a book published in the US, I am more likely in English to be published either in Canada or the UK, therefore I think I don't need to write American English, I will write and speak the international English. The one of Canada, the UK and Australia. And let it be done with this. No more Z and ER, from now on it is S and RE. Except at work while I am still in Los Angeles, they're so dumb, they would assume I don't know how to spell. No one told them, poor souls, that English was not exactly invented the way they thought, and they decided to change it without warning, without good reason. And being 300 millions, and being the most powerful country in the world, they assumed they were right, when they're the ones unable to spell anything.

No news from Stephen, not sure what's going on with him in London. I guess that just to look after all his animals is a full time job, and hence, he does not feel the need to find a solution to our problem: start that conference business, or even satisfy his mom and find a new job. I'll speak to him in two days to find out. He won't find any solution, if anything, his mom will make sure nothing ever happens business wise. She's my biggest obstacle to overcome at the moment, people unable to imagine that their offspring could be successful on their own, make it in life in a different way. I'm not hoping she would die soon, I love her too much for that, but it would solve all our problems. I'm so sorry I said it. Please someone, shoot me for even thinking it, and even more for having said it. Well, a bit of support would be nice for a change, we're are only, after all, trying to change this world my dear! Making me rich with this conference business has only one purpose as far as I'm concerned. I'll sell it for big bucks, and start so many non-profit businesses to help the world, they will not know what happened. So you better give me a damn chance, so I can really accomplish what I was born to do. Save the damn planet, for which, in the end, I don't give a damn what happen to her (the planet). For the record, I don't need her dirty money, I just need her out of our lives so I can start this business and free us from Master Bitches and God Almighty Bosses, and certainly, after all, parental authority. We're free to do what

we want, do you understand? We'll start that business, whether you want it or not. So help us or get lost! Don't stop me in my march to the accomplishment of my destiny.

8 April 2006

And so on Thursday night I drank myself to death and wrote another string of texts, which I feel might be my best. Of course I was completely dead the next day at work, I had to come late, I arrived at 10 instead of 8. Sending the Chinese Girl into a spin, and devising a plan to make me work some overtime to compensate, via the Admin Director, so I could not explode.

My answer to how I would compensate was simple, I would go to lunch, which meant only one hour had to be accounted for. I suggested remaining until 6 pm on Friday night, however I pointed out that I left the office at 5h30 instead of 5 for the last two weeks, remaining until 6 pm on Tuesday, something the Chinese Girl did not know, whilst she believes that I was late in the morning and not working fast enough to do everything she has to do but relegates to me.

So in the end I was able to leave on time on Friday, and I am glad the Chinese Girl, or Master Bitch, was fucked in her little plan to, as she said: "making up for my time". And now you know why I have written such a brick about that subject, and why the title is so well chosen. When they start grasping at straws, wanting you to work an extra hour because you're late, when you have done so much overtime already, also on weekends, it does not make you feel like giving your life like that. And you start considering that if they are so mercenaries, perhaps they are not worth me doing any overtime at all. I can also be mercenary. It is not my company, I do not collect the millions in the end, and my time is as important as theirs, I have a career to built, and every hour of overtime, makes it impossible for me to work on my other projects. They have made it, they are rich, with exploitation, on the back of a bunch of employees which I am. I am not rich, I have not succeeded, I am still nothing, and will certainly remain so forever if I continue to work 60 hours a week for them.

And now I am going to talk about something totally out of context. Something I need to remember to search for, because if nothing in the universe we observe can prove this theory, then I'm afraid they're maybe no freedom of will in this world, and we are constantly condemned to live this miserable life we seem to

have inherited. Yes, my life is invariably the same, as my friend told me tonight, same shit happens over and over again, only the scenery might have changed slightly, this passage of time, which we all know is an illusion.

Let's consider that the stars, planets and any celestial body we see in the sky is the same thing that composes us, those atoms, electrons, etc. We can measure where a star will be in millions of years, we know where all its planets will be and their course over a millions of years. Well then, if we had powerful computers capable of keeping track of all the atomic structures in our body, then we would know exactly where everything will be tomorrow, and hence we could predict the entire future of anyone with some mathematical equation. In which case, there is no freedom of thought, freedom of action. We are condemned to follow the course of our particles, as the stars and other celestial bodies are computable and predictable to the second. Which would go well with religion, they often know the future, they announce the arrival of their messiahs, Jesus-Christ himself knew the future, and countless psychic mediums do as well. How can it be, unless somehow they were capable of figuring out a way to know where all these atomic structures will be in a thousand years time?

If absolutely no celestial bodies in the sky move unpredictably, or suddenly seem to change course of its own mind, then it is likely that there is no freedom of thought. And yet, that is not completely true. I can imagine of two reasons to not be able to see any star suddenly changing its course, proving that it is part of some moving body with a mind of its own, capable of changing its own course in history. First, relativity makes the whole universe move so slowly from our perspective, that we might not be able to observe any celestial body suddenly changing course. Second, if all the matter we can observe from our point of view is part of some inanimate object at a larger scale, then of course none of the matter in the universe will suddenly start to move in an unpredictable fashion. And I might be the case. I have seen a long time ago some scientists mapping the universe, and trying to shape what it is that all the star clusters could be forming, or being part of. I was so impressed by their little image, I kept it and even brought it with me to Los Angeles. As this was my most important paper ever, it is the only thing that I own that followed me everywhere in all the countries I have gone to in my life. The shape of the matter in the universe looks like it could be part of a tree, or brain synapse, or something like that. Could be something that does not exactly move on free will. A tree might move in the

wind, and that motion might not be enough for us to register it as some sort of unpredictable move, since everything looks frozen from our point of view.

What I want to know is if any star suddenly change its course. I want someone to input all the bit of matter we see in the sky, measure their speed, and into a computer simulation, show me if there is any sort of pattern that could suggest an unexplainable change of course or motion. Proving to me that if the speed of any celestial body achieves some sort of variable speed in time, it is a significant discovery. Moving it all faster, even at constant speed, might tell us more about what the universe is really composing at a higher scale. If it is a rock, then it will certainly move at normal speed and we won't be able to see any sort of free will. If it is a tree or a brain synapse, then perhaps we will observe something significant. If it is something moving and alive, then a lot of things in this universe must be moving in unpredictable ways and are not some computable with mathematical equations, because then there is free will in this world. When I decide to get up my chair, I have decided to do so, I was not merely following a predestined path that all my particles are following for the rest of my life. There was no big bang of all the matter composing me, and big crunch to be expected eventually when I die and I start decomposing. Do we have free will or is this world predestined in every way? Surely we have the technology now to find out? And then it might be easier for me to accept my condition of slave in this world, if I knew that it was to be and I had no choice in the matter. Scientists of the world, get on it!

And please, also find a way to calculate where all the particles composing me are, and where they will be in this universe in the future, so I can find out if I am to be a slave all my life or not. Can't depend on psychic mediums or clairvoyants, they are often wrong. I need a powerful computer simulation of where this world is heading for. If it is utter destruction in a few years, it might also help to alleviate my pain. I would know then that my condition of slavery is only temporary, finite in time. I might also go crazy and do insane things before we all die, if freewill permits. At the very least, perhaps my particles were heading for it in any case, at any rate I'm ready for a crazier life.

That image I am talking about, was on the first page of the Guardian in London on Saturday January 30, 1999. And now that I am looking at it, it could represent intestines, as far as I can tell. The title of the article is: "This is the largest ever map of the universe and you are here (give or take a million miles or so...)". Only

the Guardian could have such a long title, a huge photo and an article about it on the cover, because then the newspaper was bigger than your kitchen table.

12 April 2006

I've been working like a dog, I've suddenly realized that my to-do-list will never shrink, it only gets bigger and longer, and eventually I might just want to calm down from trying to shrink it, or else I might have to invent that shrinking machine after, involve every single theoretical physicist on the planet, tell them it is for my film script, shrinking that ship, and then, build it with billions, and shrink that to-do-list. That would be a real life application.

Not too many problems with Master Bitch either, even if today I had to say to her: I have paid attention whilst at that conference in San Francisco, she was again accusing of being useless and incompetent, and has now convinced everyone of that. Shit, I'm the only one there working overtime and working like mad, producing so much, and yet, instead of being recognized for this, somehow everyone thinks I can't manage my time. Of course, they can't understand, they are responsible for more conferences than me, and yet, they nothing to do. Because of course they don't have a new conference to work on, and they were responsible for these conferences from the very beginning. In my case nothing had been done, and suddenly I inherited the lot, everything had to be done instantly all in one go. And I had never done any of it before, so the learning phase is taking time. When for them, they just they take their old template and emails, change a few things, and ship it all in no time. Takes almost a year in conferences to adapt and get to know everything there is to do, and how to do it.

Anyway, at the moment everything is going well. I could believe for one moment that once in the mould, this life could get easier, roll on wheels, remotely if possible. Been thinking of proposing to my baby to move to L.A., I will next time I speak to him. I'm sure he won't, especially that he could not work here. And yet, the idea of lending me their car, my bosses, was ingenious. I've been going to the mountains, Topanga State Park is my spot. I waked for two hours tonight on top of the mountains. That certainly beats walking in Osterley or Richmond Park. This place is more than lovely, the space, the views, the peace and quiet. Just a shame that all of this is destroyed by this unbearable job.

If it was my business, if I could do it from Los Angeles (which as an immigrant, I will never be allowed to), it would be perfect. I could work on top of a mountain, certainly not locked in an office somewhere surrounded by bitches and bastards in five different levels of management.

Never wanted so much to see that dream Leonardo had about me living here in L.A. in a huge house in the mountains come true.

And yes, I sure deserve it, don't I? So much genius coming out of me for so long, surely someone somewhere at some point will realize it? And irrevocably change my future? Why should it depend on anyone else? Why can't I get myself there? Good question.

Some university in London wants to film one of my film script over the summer, maybe two. Déjà Vu. I just read it again, like I just read Schizo. Brilliant, that is all I can say for these film scripts. It's just a question of time before it is revealed to the planet is some huge enterprise to make it come true, to turn these words into worlds.

In my huge endeavor to get somewhere, I tend to forget that before now, I have done a lot already. And that lot could already get me somewhere very far, while I'm thinking here tonight that I'm not anywhere yet and need to start all over again to finally have any sort of impact.

Well, what I read tonight, I feel this is the work of a genius mind. I should not have to do anything else before getting rich beyond dream and walk over my mountain every day to get inspire some more and write some more genius stuff.

Of course, the world does not see it that way. Of course, the world knows nothing yet about my potential, my abilities to write the perfect film script, the perfect film. Because yes, after that one success, there would be no stopping me, it would be the most extraordinary idea, one after the other. But I'm not there yet. And since the initial did not get me anywhere yet, why bother writing more about it? That's how we manage to kill all potential in anyone. I might never write another film script, can't say I'm sad about it, if nothing happened with the first ones in English. And yet, I could be another Arthur C. Clarke. We might never find out, would we? Or maybe we will, who knows? Ironic that my next best chance to get it all out in the open does not come from Hollywood, but from a

university in London. Could it be destiny? I sure hope so. It would resolve a lot of problems in my life at the moment. Might open me all the doors of Hollywood, the back door via London. What could be more perfect for me? Just dreaming, again...

I am sorry! Today I was walking at the top of a mountain in Los Angeles, overlooking the whole of San Fernando Valley! I felt strong, filled with energy, ready to conquer Hollywood! Of all the timelines there are for me out there, none that I can see will be my genius coming out from a London University and a bunch of wasted students producing my film scripts into short films that will never go anywhere! That's not right! I'll get *Déjà Vu* produced here in L.A., with a budget of at least 5 millions, and it will reach everyone on this damned planet, and I'll be consecrated a genius out loud, with an instant potential to write the best film scripts around right now!

It's a gift, I can't help, I'm god at it, I'm better than most. Of course, people need to see that for themselves first, not easy when all that I was able to write, amounts to two film scripts on my website, and three others completely copyrighted by Hollywood, that no one will ever find out about. That's what being exploited by Hollywood means. Working hard for years, not going anywhere ever, need to restart from the beginning every time. As if you never existed before, as if you never wrote anything before. It sickens me.

I will never ever again write something for which I don't have the rights. And that is why I accepted to rewrite my film scripts for that university in London. Because if they can't get their act together, all the work I will do for them, will remain mind. I will be able to put it in my website for other people to read and understand.

Writing books is so much easier. You don't need a whole team, and millions of dollars to make it a reality. Of course you need a publisher at the end, which is by no means easier to find. Life is all about miracles which need to happen. And if you're patient enough, it might just happen. And in my case, after walking on the top of that mountain in Topanga State Park today, it will happen.

I don't know how, I don't know when, but I'll explode over the horizon, being finally recognized for the genius mind that I am. Or else, this world did not deserve me, if they were blind enough to be incapable to realize that they had a genius in front of them when they had the chance. And then, I don't care for

dying right there in front of them. Because, there's nothing for me here. Let's just die and get it over with.

I won't live with my failure, you can be certain of that. For me it has always been make it or break it. Live or die. There is no other way. While I can still think it might happen, I won't kill myself. But I'm not the patient type. If does not happen instantly, I'm going to find a way to kill myself. Because I need to move on with this life. I have no time to waste. Don't care if it turns out we're like computers, and once dead, it's like being turn off, with no means to ever restart the machine ever. I don't care, I had enough anyway. I've been ready to die for a long time now. Hoping destiny would take care of that for me along the way, car accident or disease, so far destiny has been unsuccessful. I might have to take matter in my own hands. I'm more ready to do so. Might be the solution to my conundrum, staying in Los Angeles, or moving back to London? Maybe I won't have to make that decision, maybe I'll throw myself in one of those canyons instead. So tempting. I might just do it.

At that point, I care no more for anything, any potential of success, any new avenue to explore, to find out if that is it. I don't care anymore! I just want to die! And I will make it happen, at least, I'll make this come true. Cos that's the only potential I have on which I have nay control, which I can make come true. Need to explore Mulholland Drive this week, might be a better place to die than Topanga Canyon Boulevard. We'll see.

I always continue straight to the Canyon, maybe next time I decide to follow Mulholland Drive, that will be it, I'll find the perfect spot to throw myself off the cliff, to finally die.

Charming. After six months in Los Angeles, I am so split up with the idea of going back to London or living this nightmare in that company, that my only solution worth considering is to throw myself over the cliff on Mulholland Drive. The only compromise. I've been living in such an imagined world anyway, such a virtual world, it makes no difference to me. This world is not real, it is no right, I've imagined it all. I might as well die there in my dream.

Feeling a bit nostalgic, thinking about suicide and all, I decided to do a search on the Internet about my old town Québec City and Jonquière. Desperate of not being able to find anything about a past that might have existed, but for which I

could find no proof, I ended up doing a search on Jonquière Black Hole. My website came out first, what a surprised. And the second entry was about the Wal-Mart in Jonquière, the first ever store which has got employees who were able to get into a union. The third entry is that the response from Wal-Mart was to close the store forever.

Can't imagine how on earth Black Hole brought a link about Wal-Mart, and a Wal-Mart in my old town preferring to shut down their first ever shop with unionized employees, who decided to demand any sort of rights or freedom, which they were not granted in the end. If I did not have a reason to shoot myself yet, now I have.

14 April 2006

I am so tired to have to prove myself every time I get a new Manager. The process is always the same. They start thinking I am moving in slow motion, not getting any result, freaking at me, hating me, find a way to get rid of me, war is declared, and then, oh surprise, results are delivered well above expectations. And then, they love me, they don't want to lose me, but by then I'm already gone.

I had the worst week, and this is quite a statement considering that my bosses are somewhere in Mexico visiting some old Maya Pyramids. The Chinese Girl and the Director had a field day this week complaining all over the office that I am not fast enough, that I am so incompetent, and now calculating all the seconds I am in the office, despite the fact that I am also working from home and leave the office well after hours. They don't realize that, because they are already gone by then.

There is also that I am not the usual employee who does not give a shit about what he is doing and how he is doing it. I cannot do 10% of what they are asking me, like everyone else. When I am asked to find all the possible sponsors for a conference, I do a damn exhaustive job of it, and that kind of stuff takes forever. In the end however they will understand that I will confirm five sponsors on this conference instead of none. Of course, it will be too late by then, they will have destroyed me to the bosses, once again.

I am so tired of this pattern, of this life, of all these identical days, and all the shit I get every day from these people. It is crisis time every day, the Chinese Girl freaked out again at me yesterday, the whole office knows about it, they love it. They feed on that kind of thing, there is no hope for humanity, I can tell you that much. We are all doomed, if we do not learn to feel sympathy for our colleagues.

It does not help that both the Director and the Chinese Girl are in love with the Sweet Chinese Girl and the Spanish Guy. And that love is blind. I hate this favoritism. It is clear that I have more experience and that I am better than any of them, but I have not proved myself to them yet, it will take them a while to understand that.

In the meantime I also understand why these perfect employees appear to have nothing to do whilst I am sinking under so much work. They have not started the wheel yet, they are just getting there, and soon they will also be swamp under the rules of the new structure. And then, we'll see how they cope, if they too have a time management problem.

I'm not stupid, that love for them from the management, guarantees them immunity. If they can't cope, it is because they have given them too much to do and it is understandable. If I cannot cope, it is because I am incompetent. There has never been any justice in this corporate world, I have also noticed that a long time ago.

In 15 days, it's over. I will love to tell them that I am leaving within a month. At that time I guess they will have to do some soul searching, wonder if they have done anything wrong in my case, to make me flee like that. However I may be mistaken, they might suddenly feel relieved that I will be out of there, perhaps they are more blind than I gave them credit for. I don't think my bosses are blind, they have told me they saw a lot of potential in me, but with the reports they will get from their directors and managers, they must be in two minds.

Maybe it is just not working out after all, and I long to get out of there. I am in logistic nightmare with the admin of these conferences involving over 50 people each, sponsors and supporting organizations, etc., on top of having to produce new events like a machine in a producing line. The admin alone is a full time job, and it is supposed to be done in parallel of everything else.

If I am to live such a miserable existence, the pay off should be mine, not theirs. At no point will I ever be happy to see the results, no satisfaction ever for a job well done, I could not care less. It is just hell from the beginning to the end, with no way out. I need to start my own company, before I decide to shoot myself.

For now I have only one goal, a very short term goal. Survive my last afternoon this week without exploding at them. Damn difficult not to, under such unfairness. I would need more than two days off to get back on my feet, and of course, this is Easter weekend and we don't even have one day off, while the bosses are on holiday, they only ones who can afford it, with the Director. As it stands, I'll be spending Easter Saturday and Sunday, working on shrinking my to-do-list.

This is just peachy, as would the Americans say. I just destroyed the back bumper of my boss' car. If I thought I was in trouble before, considering everything that happened this week at work, and if I was worried about all that will be reported about me once my bosses are back, now I can add the crown in the huge cake: I destroyed their car!

I was going backward so slowly, and yet, a stupid yellow pole in the parking lot of where I live, out of nowhere, was standing there, almost asking to be hit. If this is not proof that I cannot be trusted with anything, what proof would they need? Is it my fault if I did not drive for the last seven months, and that I've been used to drive small European cars instead of those big American 4X4? The truck is so huge, you can't even park it anywhere. I guess this will have to go out of my salary, I just hope this is not going to cost \$500.

I don't really care anymore after the week I had. If anything, this is one more good argument to flee, to tell them soon that this whole idea was a disaster, and I need to get back to London. I'm a disaster waiting to happen. I'm bad news. And now that I have been contacting the planet because of that conference about Nuclear Power, if my anarchist website had not attracted any attention until now, I must now be on every black list of every single intelligence agency on the planet.

Seriously, what must be the first word on those spying machines from any government, if not the word nuclear? And how powerful is intelligence in America? I've been noticing many helicopters hovering over my flat in the last

few weeks, am I getting paranoid or who I am, what I do, shines like a beacon all over America?

I must be one of the most scrutinized person on the planet now, certainly all the emails I am sending or receiving are read. The word Nuclear has appeared in just about every single I have been sending and receiving in the last few weeks. Hopefully they are clever enough to understand that I am working on a conference on the subject, that I am not trying to acquire some Plutonium, and that I am about to blow up the planet.

Today that made me think some more about the conferences I should be producing with my new company. I thought, why not put together the most eclectic collections of conferences on the weirdest and most taboo subjects?

It got me thinking. I was imagining my first few anarchist conferences:

- The nuclear and chemical weapons threat
- How to make sure your employees are giving 200%
- How to avoid political suicide and other scandals
- Holocaust remembrance summit
- A look on global terrorists
- Dealing with pedophiles
- Examining battered women and children
- Dealing with the Islamist insurrection

Though in themselves these topics are all right, and that there must be conferences in the world about these exact subjects, one company producing events on all of these, could only mean one thing, complete irony, of someone disabused with life, with a strong either sense of humor, or a great sarcastic desire to prove a point.

And you know what? I thought for one second there, that these ironic and taboo subjects, the ones that people would avoid doing conferences on, are perhaps the most serious subjects there are, and ultimately could lead to great financial success. Dear me... governments have every right to be shadowing me, I'm certainly a danger to humanity with such ideas.

But who cares? Today at work they ask me what I would be doing this weekend. I answered that I was going to buy myself a gun and shoot myself. Which prompted a long discussions between them (without me), where they discussed how they would kill themselves, and that they all thought about it at one time or another at some point in their life. Especially because unbearable jobs they had.

Surprising enough, the Chinese Girl was up there telling us about all the wrong ways to commit suicide, as if she had reviewed them all before, I could tell she never really was that low, to actually be thinking about doing it. She went on on saying all that she would do before committing suicide, like going to Las Vegas and losing all her money, or going to the best hotels and eat in the most expensive restaurants until she runs out of money. Coming from a toothpick, I am quite amazed that she is always talking about eating expensive food, as if she was obsessed with it, when obviously she does not eat anything.

Anyway, people who say that before committing suicide they would do this or that, like robbing a bank, are people who never really thought about it. Éthey would then understand that when you are at the point of deciding on ending your useless and boring life, you do not feel like doing anything, you are way passed doing crazy things to motivate you to exist. At that point you are in a place where either you continue with your miserable existence, or you end it all. There are no other solution, you cannot just abandon everything and do stupid things like going to Las Vegas. You are still very much in the realities, you continue or you find a way out, and there is usually only one way out, one thing you can actually do.

Later on they asked me again what I would do tonight. I answered that I would listen to some Nine Inch Nails full blast, write, and drink myself to death. They got my point this time, I've through terrible times lately at work. And at the very moment, I freaked out inside, because I realized that I was more than serious. I looked at my desk, and I thought, yes, perhaps I could end it all tonight, after drinking myself to insanity, to forget it all. I've reached that point where I can see no future for myself, no other moment where I could ever be happy again, nothing worth continuing for. I felt like if I was already dead, and the consequences of it. How a dead end job, following an infinite amount of other dead end jobs, can lead to the illusion that life is no longer worth living. There will never be a better day, there never was one in the first place, there is nothing to hope for the future. Miserable one day, miserable for life. At this level, success or

richness can no longer change anything. You're already screwed up for the rest of your existence, you can never come back to the surface to breath. Game Over.

I don't know what I will have to do tonight to avoid committing suicide at the end of the night. I have already started to drink myself to death, I'm drinking a whole bottle of Porto, and many beers will follow. It was even suggested to me how I should do it. I have a car. Though I am worried now that I scratched the damn thing, if I were to drive it over a cliff, fall in the ocean tonight, that will suddenly become the last of my worries. A \$100,000 truck, I cannot imagine a better way to die. Los Angeles is filled with places to throw yourself from. Topanga Canyon State Park is perfect, less than two miles away. Even drunk I can reach the damn place. In London we do not have those cliffs, those canyons, this ocean beyond a precipice. What a perfect place to end one's life. I've got a car this weekend, almost an invitation to act. I'm seriously thinking about it, I might see more clearly once I am completely beyond drunk.

At least you will all know that I did not kill myself because my judgment was clouded by alcohol, it was quite clearly stated and considered way before I was completely drunk. Alcohol in this case would only help me to act, to accomplish my destiny, to end it all.

When there is no more hope of a better day, when you did everything you could to change your life to avoid that misery you have been suffering all your life, and it failed miserably, there is no more hope.

I can't see a better day. I can't see ever experiencing happiness. I don't care anymore to succeed at any of my dreams. I am beyond life and its pettiness. I am beyond humanity who only proved to me that there was no great future to expect, to hope for. Every I see, everything I hear, incite me to end it all. To free me from this useless world.

I'm not the only one feeling this way, there are many suicides every day all over the planet. They must be thinking about it all the time, and one day it is just too much, they finally act. I am at that point. This is where Los Angeles drove me. How ironic. And I would not even commit suicide because I did not succeed in becoming a writer in Hollywood, it is everything else that drove me there. It is not even related to Hollywood. Succeeding might have saved me, but there is no way I could prove my potential, and even if I could, I know it would quickly

become the same hell I've been suffering in those corporate jobs everywhere on the planet. There is simply no way out, rich or not, successful or not, never changes anything. You're either born happy or not, and unfortunately, I was born desperate, with the biggest existential crisis anyone can find. And the nightmares I'm going through just don't help, it is "la goutte qui fait déborder le vase", there's just no hope in any better day.

At this point I no longer care if suddenly news of my death might affect the people I know, the people who found in their hearth to love me for one reason or another. Family. They went through hell themselves, surely even my death will just be one more thing to think about, and eventually, they will just continue on their road to hell, whilst I'll finally be liberated from it. It is all worth it. I've been away from anyone for so long, dead or alive, makes no difference. I know, both my grandmothers died, I was far away on the other side of the ocean, and I think they are still alive and that I will see them next time I come home, if I ever come home again. "Loin des yeux, loin du coeur", and therefore, dead or alive, is meaningless to anyone.

Should I make peace with myself before throwing myself over a cliff? Why? There's no need. I don't care anymore about anything. I have no more hope, no more dreams, I know they will all lead to disaster and unhappiness. And unfortunately, for me, to die, is just like turning off a computer. It has no consequence, there is no life after death, it is just like finally turning off a computer at the end of the day. It can never be turned on again, but who cares? Not me, that's for sure.

My god! Is this really the night? Will I really end it all tonight? I have never been so serious about it in my entire life. I felt it today at work, I knew it was a special day, it was different. I understood that this time, I took it very seriously, I might actually do it.

Anyone looking at it, after my death, reading this, will assume it was because of this nightmare of a job I have, they will assume I did it because of these people who drove me to it. They would be wrong. They are just the end of it, what convinced me that there would never be anything better for me on this earth. They are the last station, the end of the line. There was much more before that, everything in fact, I have never encountered anything that did not drive me to suicide. In which case, I must be the problem, I'm what is wrong in this world. I

could not find happiness, where many others following the same path do. I'm the only one to blame I guess, the others are only trying to survive too, I guess.

My God, I would not even think twice tonight if I had a gun here. It would be over right now. Sad that I don't have a gun. And that I am unlikely to take the four by four of my boss to go and drive over the canyon. I'm too dead for that. My father has riffles, I would have used them tonight, I know that. Am I going to again escape killing myself because of a lack of imagination and motivation to achieve it? It looks like it. I'll fall asleep in a second. This is not acceptable. I have a car. I know the exact spot where I want to throw myself in. Somewhere beyond the mountain I've been seeing every day on my way to work. There is already a cross there, of a young couple who drove over the precipice without wanting it, most probably. Nicest spot, great valley, greatest view, dangerous corner. Willingly continuing straight, falling to a certain death. What am I waiting for? I'm trying to remember where it was. Was it following Mulholland Drive to the ocean? Or simply Topanga Canyon Drive? Should I call Leonardo and ask him where it is that we were, and tell him this is the place I will go and die tonight? Oh God, how I wish... maybe I can find the place myself. It is not everyday that you take the car in order to find the perfect place to throw yourself, a place you saw before and identified as the perfect place where you will put an end to your desperate life. I think that if I knew exactly where it was, right this minute, I would be driving there right now. I'm not even going to say that, in a way, I'm pleased that this was a de-motivation to act. That I might wake up tomorrow thinking: I am alive! I am so pleased to still be alive! This is ridiculous thoughts. I know now that tomorrow I will be at the exact same point. It is no longer the alcohol talking, I assess the situation today, I was not drunk, I've been thinking about it all day, I stated it many times. What are you going to do this weekend? I'm going to by myself a gun and shoot myself. That's what I was thinking, that's what I wanted, and I still want it. Nothing or no one will save me now. I could not care less. It is the end of it. I have to act, I have to do it, I have to end my life. There are no consequences. I am forgotten, and forgotten I will die. I have to find that courage, that ultimate motivation, to stop talking about it, and just do it. Just do it. Sounds like a commercial, but it means something to me. Just do it! And be done with it, with this existence, this nightmare of a life. There's no hope here, there's never been. Just end it!!! Just end it... it's not worth it, it is just not worth it.

There's only one thing now that could save me. It is a computer game called Atlantis. A virtual world where I have lost myself every year, for the last few years. A place worth living, a wonderful place, the only place I feel I might say: wait a minute, this is worth living for, if you could actually live there forever. The company who produced that game has gone bankrupt, god only knows what happened to the people who created that perfect world for me. The world I live to survive in, that every single minute of my existence, I wish I could just grow and find happiness in. A virtual world. Where I felt more at home than any reality I've been living in.

15 April 2006

I woke up this morning at exactly 7 am, like if it was a normal day and had to go to work. For once it seems that I have a day off, well, in theory, that bitch at work has got me so wired, I'll probably work on my conference this weekend.

I woke up surprised, surprised that I was still alive. I came so close yesterday to somehow commit suicide. And my first thought was to her, to the Chinese Girl, she drove me to suicide, she almost got me.

I've been through hell in my life, many times I thought I had reached the pinnacle of my misery and thought of ending it all, but last night was the most intensive I have ever lived, I cried for a while as well, I had never reached such a low point.

Usually when I wake up from nights like this, my first thought in the morning is that I am glad I survived, that I did not kill myself, and I thought that for a second this morning, but five minutes later now, I'm not so sure, I'm still very much in the same mind frame, and that is also new for me. I'm never suicidal for days in a row.

What can I do now? Just wake up and get on with my life, whatever is left of it? Which reminds something the Admin Director said to me this week, when it was 5 pm, the normal time I should have left the office. I was 30 minutes late that day, the Chinese Girl must have told everyone, to make sure I was going to leave 30 minutes later to compensate. I was going to the kitchen and the Admin woman said: Where do you think you're going? I answered that I was going to the kitchen, I knew she thought I was leaving, I was planning to leave at 6 pm that

day, even if at the back of my mind I wanted to be out of there much earlier. How powerful I thought, this little sentence can be: Where do you think you're going? As if I was in some sort of prison, where even when I'm working so much overtime, I still cannot get out of it and walk to my freedom once in a while.

And this morning, that line, Where do you think you're going, is taking a new meaning. Where the fuck am I actually going in this life? What am I doing here? I have to put an end to it. Leaving this job has now become a necessity, a duty, an obligation, before something horrible happens. I don't know how bad life can be in prison, but somehow I don't think it can be worse than what I am going through, or else, they would all commit suicide every day. But of course, I don't want to end up in prison after killing everyone in that office, or end up dead because of that Chinese Girl.

I came closer than ever last night, I could still reach that point. And the most amazing thing is I have a way out, there is light at the end of the tunnel, I am going to London, the decision has been made already, and yet, I was still able to reach that total state of despair where I had no more motivation to see another day. That is how powerful what I'm going through right now is.

Is it the culmination of everything I've gone through in my life? Was this last experience the one who finally convinced me that there will never be happiness for me in this world, especially in this corporate world? If I was ten years younger, fresh out of university, without my experience of Europe, without having survived that other job from hell last year in Westminster, would I still be at this moment on the brink of wanting to end my life? Am I just going through another bad patch, or is it deeper than that?

Have I lost faith in humanity?

Well, I might not be the only one. I was reading this morning on the Crime Library website that 2,300 persons disappear every day in the United States, the reports about missing persons is almost reaching 900,000 a year! A lot of those I would imagine are suicides and murders.

If Canada managed to lose almost one million of its fellow citizens every year, we would have disappeared from the face of the earth a long time ago. Is it not extraordinary that the United States over a period of 25 years, managed to lose

as many people as there in Canada? This is not even found bodies of murders or suicides, this is just the missing persons. Should I check the stats for suicide and murders? Well, it looks like in the US there are about 30,000 suicides a year and 15,000 murders a year. Considering the missing persons statistics, I think we get a better idea of how many murders and suicide happen in this country every year, and how finally the police and society appear powerless to prevent somehow 1 million of its citizens to just disappear from the face of the Earth every year.

Damn, I almost became a statistics yesterday, one more on these lists. And if I had thrown myself in the Topanga Canyon State Park, they might have never found me.

16 April 2006

I am running out of options. I can't go back to London because Stephen does not have a job. I can't go back to my old job in London, because that will be the death of the conference company I want to start. I can't remain in my actual job, I will either kill that bitch or throw myself in the canyon. I need another option.

At the end of the day on Friday at work, we were talking. The Admin Director mentioned that she was living in a house with 8 people, three of them are gays. One couple in particular is weird. One of the gay apparently suffers from agoraphobia, and she described what it meant. One day, her boyfriend understanding this, told him, you don't work anymore, I'll support you, you don't have to get out of the house ever again. And since then, he barely goes out, and when he does, he is shaken, it makes him sick.

I thought, my God, that's just it, I recognized all the symptoms. Perhaps I too suffer from agoraphobia. I can't stand anyone, I hate it when people are looking at me, I'm not going anywhere even when I have a car here and I could go and explore. I am frustrated when I think I am alone, and there is someone there, always looking at me. And what could be worse for someone suffering from this, than being closed in a small office with 20 other people, half of them management, half of them spies reporting every single action to the bosses? And it was even worse in London, these packed trains these packed stations I could no longer stand, so many people on the sidewalk in Parliament Square, you need to push them out of the way to get anywhere.

And my question is, should I try to cure myself, be more outgoing, understand that I have as much right as anyone to exist, or should I instead retreat even more into my cocoon, find a way to isolate myself completely from this world until I deal only with a few people, no more than that, forever?

Just found a website, and it seems very complicated. Agoraphobia Without History of Panic Disorder, Panic Disorder with Agoraphobia; Social Phobia; Specific Phobia; Major Depressive Disorder; Delusional Disorder; Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder; Separation Anxiety Disorder; realistic concerns. It seems I am suffering from all of these together. Before I enter this territory, it might be easier just to continue to ignore that I might have some sort of mental illness. The idea of any sort of treatment, and what it would entail, I'm sure, could only make me worse and regret that we have identify that I have a problem.

Oh God, read a few more websites, I am definitely suffering from something. And I know how I got there. It is all written in this very book. All the symptoms are stated quite clearly. My sudden lack of confidence, being rejected many times when before I was so openly welcome everywhere. This impression that I have no right to be alive anymore, that I should not exist, because I'm not worth it from the judgment of others. Their looks, their judgment that I can't stand. The panic I feel when I am with other people, not only authority figures, but everyone. Don't want to take the train, don't want to get out of the house. Feel trap in any close environment, being too far from any doors so I can escape every hour or so to be alone somewhere. The sheer panic on Sundays when I know I need to go back to work for a full week to be stuck in a small environment with all these people, feeling like a trapped rat. And what to say about my deep anxiety of going to a conference, filled with people, feeling so self conscious about myself, near collapsing all the time. And the only way I forget this nightmare, is by drinking myself to death every night, be a zombie the next day.

I am not willing to take any anti-depressants or any other medications unless I am dying on a bed, and then, I still want to know what they give me and reduce it considerably. I won't find myself again in a situation like last year in that hospital, where they filled me with pills, different ones every day, and I got out of there with an overblown level of platelets for life, which might eventually kill me.

I am also not willing to be followed by so-called experts to go through some therapy to convince me that it is okay to suffer that fucking hell of a social life we have built for ourselves. In two words, I don't want to be treated. So I better recognize my situation and deal with it on my own terms.

How funny, the last PC-Game I bought is called Journey at the Center of the Earth. Perhaps on an unconscious level, I thought I could be safe down there. Knowing myself, I'll probably only play it in a few years time.

17 April 2006

This weekend I was glued to my bed reading Jen Jensen novel Dante's Equation. And I sleep on and off all weekend. I had a car, I did not go anywhere, this is very sad. Today at work was okay, even if I was constantly thinking that I would have to tell my boss I stupidly did not go anywhere, and yet, I crunch the back bumper. I told them to take it from my salary, and I think my boss said it would be \$300, the price of my plane ticket back home.

Going to LAX has been a nightmare. First the car was so dirty, just for remaining in the car park, that I had in a bonnet to find a car wash, an automatic one. But in L.A., it seems that the technology never reached them. I did not have the time the hand wash it! So after getting lost around Ventura Boulevard, I finally reached the 405 South to L.A. Airport.

But, I had to stop to put some petrol in the car, and there was a Mexican there telling me that I had a flat tire. That throw me into panic mode, my boss' family was to arrive in 30 minutes, and I was still far from the airport. A dirty, a destroyed bumper, a flat tire, the windshield seem to have broken under a small rock (can't remember if it was already there), and the flashing right light was no longer working. For God's sake! I did not go anywhere! How can a Lexus costing \$100,000 can break down like this? It is not like if we were in the North of Canada, where two winters is enough to destroy your car. This is L.A.!

So I looked at the tire, it just seemed to need some air, so I prayed that was it. Then I got onto the road, and all the way to the airport they had scratched the asphalt in order to eventually put some new one. And the whole time I could not tell if I had a flat or not, the car was shaking like crazy. I was convinced I had a flat.

And then, finally at the airport, I got lost! I could not find my way! The plane had already landed, I was in panic mode, I did not know where to go, and there was no sign anywhere after the first one out of the 405. It seems Mexicana Airline does not land anywhere at LAX. When I finally parked the car and rushed to the arrivals, one minute later they came out. My only bit of luck for the last 7 days. And oh, it does not appear I had a flat after all. Anyway, finally, I survived that terrible episode of the bosses going on holiday to Mexico. And they said, if you plan a holiday, don't go to Cancun. They had everything stolen. So they had a hell of a holiday!

I was also able to keep my mouth shut about anything that happened at work. I simply said that everything was fine, since we were all still alive. They laughed at that, they will never know what I really meant.

I did not tell them for example that every single employee has shown openly that they were thrilled that they were gone for a week, and even more so once they found out that today I was picking them up late, so that meant another Monday without them.

To be honest, I prefer when they are there, since I think they can see that I am working, contrary to the Chinese Girl and the Director. Which I am sure they will have a lot to report against me tomorrow. I will be the only one they will slash, since I am the only one they're not in love with, and I am the only who seems to be taking forever to get that nuclear conference anywhere. Of course, I work alone on it, on top of the two others. I think I understood today that all four of them are working on all the other events. No wonder they get these events done fast.

And there is something else that is really getting on my nerves now. The Spanish Boy has a friend or perhaps two in some studios in Hollywood, and he is always invited everywhere, to meet the celebrities, etc. And now it seems it is taking over his whole life, and he can't stop talking about anything else all day long.

And perhaps the Chinese Girl is more plastic than I thought, she's is certainly getting into his stories, and today they spoke all day! After all I have to do, I had to listen to them gossiping about Drew Barrymore all day, and how was her birthday party. If I did not want to commit suicide before, now I certainly do.

What sort of personality by-pass do you need to be able to be impressed and obsessed with meeting a few celebrities, going to a few parties, etc., and in the same wave, impress your envious friends and render your colleagues jealous at work? They are so sad, it is unbelievable. If tomorrow it continues, I think I will have to tell him to shut up, that I don't give a shit that he knows Drew Barrymore, unless she was to turn lesbian.

It pays to still be cute at 28, I have to say. I would not be surprised if he ends up in one of her films. That would kill me for real...

18 April 2006

Should we see just how shallow is our little Spanish Boy? I never told him anything me because I am not the kind to want to make friends on the basis of what I have accomplished. It is also very sad when you meet someone telling you everything they have been in, what they worked on, etc. It is also clear that as the boring person he imagined me to be, he has never wanted to be my friend, in fact, I was stealing the show from him a bit too much when we were in the other room, he was no longer the cute and trendy boy, he was sharing the stage. I since shut up completely at work, so now he is center stage again.

So, I decided to test him. He asked today, he was wondering if I had been working in films and TV, and I told him what I worked on, NBC, PBS, etc. Did not have the chance to go into details, my bosses can hear from their office. I'll have a chance in Salt Lake City next month, I can even show him my stuff. If he now wants to be my friend, I would have proved my point, how shallow these people can be, and obviously, they are not worth becoming my friends. For his credit, he did yesterday invited me to a concert, friends of his, again, I guess he can also feed on me, the insignificant one, being impressed because he has musician friends. How boring. What is this? Some sort of Ego and pretension not for his own accomplishments, but because of some weird connections with other successful ones?

I spoke with Isabella tonight. We were discussing how my bosses and their family, were just the perfect little family. The kind of perfection that is untenable, and at some point you feel like shouting that this cannot be real, there must be a

catch, and behind closed doors, it must be hell, or else, one day it will just explode.

They are Jewish, modern Jewish, modern in the sense that if I had not been told, I would still not know they were Jewish. So I guess this does not play in anything about them, either how they conduct their business or how they interact with their family.

Perfect in the sense that they are all so quiet, I would never imagine them to beat up or even speak aloud to their kids. The results are astonishing. I believe their kids to be some sort of zombies, without any energy or life within. And that is what we were discussing tonight. A 5 year old kid which appear more mature than any of us at work, for a start. Two daughters who are so shy, and so silent, you feel like shaking them hard to wake them up. I wonder how they would cope with moving countries on they're own, like Isabella and I did.

One of the daughters was pushed into architecture, but she wanted it, and so now she has been able to make them understand that she will not become an architect. I think there was no need for a crisis, the deception and disappointment we could all read on the face of my bosses, must have been enough to destroy the poor girl.

Still, though no one can predict what their children will become later in life, despite their lack of enthusiasm, or even blood going through their veins, I cannot say that this is not desirable. If I had children, I wish I could be like that, even if my kids would become zombies in the process.

Of course, it is not the same for Isabella, she was beaten up when she was young, just like me, and she does shout at her kid, and perhaps slap him sometimes. She was telling me that she had to be so careful when she takes care of their son, because though she will shout at her kid, she will never shout at theirs. And she told me that the 5 year old was already quite the spy, and was reporting everything he sees and hear. Maybe he will join Mossad one day, the Israel Secret Services. I don't think they have any connection with Israel, however my boss mentioned it once, so they must still identify with it.

I think the holocaust must have been mentioned recently, because people were talking about it at work, ah yes, a documentary on TV. And stupidly I felt the

need to mention: did they talk about the 800,000 gay people who accompanied these Jews in those camps? And as if it was enough, I added: funny how any Jewish person can completely identify with the holocaust, when I, in the same situation, don't.

I have as much right to feel bad about the holocaust as any Jewish person out there. I'm sure it never occurred to them. They are still fighting about it, claiming that the number of gay people killed in the holocaust was much less than the real numbers. Funny, the number of Jewish people killed during that period is also being debated, and on that point, they will certainly not budge, it is 6 millions that we need to talk about. Well, the best estimates for gay people killed because of the Nazis, or people they thought were gay, recent studies states, might be as many as 800,000. Anyone wants to start a debate? Or open a museum about it? Do we have any photos that survived that era? It might help me get more sensitive and feel something about it. After all, if it means just a big deal to the Jewish community, surely it should be the same in the gay communities? Or has AIDS made us forget all about the holocaust?

Weird, I still cannot identify with those gay people who died during the war... why? In Europe during the Second World War, you would die just because you were a Jew, gay, Gypsy, different or even disabled, or judged of an inferior race or subhuman. There is a whole list of groups of people who died during the holocaust.

Maybe we should try to build a great community together, and fight the actual prejudices together, but I can't see that happening any time soon. The truth is, Orthodox Jews might still want to eradicate every gay from the planet, makes it harder for me to be sensible to their cause. It was all over the newspapers when I was living in Ottawa, and it angered me... well, I should just shut up I guess. Before I start another war I cannot win.

Talking about the Jewish people might still be a big taboo these days, but not to talk against the gays, apparently. And I would not have it any other way. I like to be able to spit on Roman Catholics, being a Catholic myself, without fearing for my life or being shut out of society. It is democracy to be able to say whatever we want, as long as there is a right to answer back.

So spit on me, I don't care, I have an army of gay people who will come to my defense and create a new debate, the same one that is as old as this universe. Taboo are not healthy for a democratic society, we should be able to talk about whatever we want without fearing for the consequences. Not that I have anything negative to say about anyone, still, if I had, I would hope I could say it without bringing a Jihad on me. Oh, I'm opening a totally new can of worms here. I guess I will shut up and pretend that I love everyone, even the ones who want openly my destruction.

I was thinking tonight about something, how I am still learning a great deal at work, even though it has been more than six months already. Until my first conference is completely over, in three weeks time, I still have not gone through the whole process of the whole admin and bureaucracy side of it. I'm still doing things now that I had never done in my 10 years, and I have to admit, that Chinese Girl is damn efficient and brilliant at her job. No wonder she has no patience with anyone, she must be an underused genius, screaming to get out. I can at least admit it when I see it, that girl might be more intelligent than I. And coming from me, this is quite a statement. Unfortunately for her, it is going to be most likely lost forever, wasted in producing insignificant conferences for others.

I almost did not get to do all these things, learn all that side of it. Without the restructure, someone else would have done the admin. If Stephen had not lost his job, I would have left in two weeks time, and never got to know what we have to do to prepare for the event, during, and after. Let's just say that everywhere else I worked, it was much simpler, or I was unaware of what others did in the background. Now, I have to do everything myself, from beginning to end, and fate or destiny has made sure I would be there long enough to understand and assimilate it all.

And yet, I'm still praying that something else will happen in my life, just in time to prevent me from having to start my own conference business. Anything, suddenly one of my books getting published with great success, or an invitation to work on the next big project, selling a film script, whatever, anything but conferences. And yet, when we read the last two books I have written about my life, it seems clear to me that destiny is quickly pushing me towards starting my own company. What else would have been obliged against my will to study everything that needs to be done up to the very last detail, even negotiating tactics with hotels and sponsors. Maybe within a few years the wheel will work so

well, I might be able to let it run by itself without having to work so much myself in my own company, maybe this is what will finally give me the time I need to write my next best-seller. Hell, I might even publish it myself, I intend my company to publish books as well, about the subjects of the events. Which reminds me, perhaps I should only produce conferences on topics which are closed to my heart. Today I was considering having my first one about aluminum. Obviously the most boring subject on the planet, and I would only do it in the name of making money. I'm not so sure tonight if it is destiny's plan to push me towards the most boring topics there are. Maybe the high end of the technology world might be better, as long as it has some commercial prospects. Already this is more interesting, getting closer to science fiction. Will see. Now I need to go to bed.

19 April 2006

This morning my boss asked by email to go and ask for a quote to get the car fixed. While I was waiting stupidly, thinking it might cost a \$100, maybe \$300 if I am very unlucky, it came to \$500, and the guy said, if it had a Toyota, it could have cost \$5,000. I thought, how typical. And when I got back, there was a huge accident just in front of where I work, and everyone was talking about it, like there were some people dead or something. Did I not learn my lesson enough, that destiny felt like showing me another great accident to remind me and everyone of that small shitty little pole placed at the wrong place? TO make a big deal out of nothing? A nothing that will make it impossible for me to survive next month, if they take it out of my salary, and I'm pretty sure they will. Everyone pays through the nose for car insurance, and when we need them, for some weird reason, we do everything we can to avoid them paying for the damages. Because we know the game, our premium goes through the roof after that for life, and we end up paying ten times more insurance than the little accident really costs.

And about those poles, I have learnt from the body car shop that it is the law to place these poles everywhere, which damages many cars every week, for our security he says. That's just great! If they ask me to pay the damages, that will be one more argument in their mind about the why I decided to leave this damn place.

And my boss' wife, came to me again trying to get me to buy the car of her parents, for just \$6,000! I can't even survive until the end of the month, on a

salary of \$60,000 a year. I can't even get any credit anywhere in any country, being an eternal immigrant, barely legal as it is, I might as well be a criminal.

The hardest in this job, is to face my bosses. It can freeze me completely and everything I say to them, I live to regret it the very night and the next day. This uncomfortable feeling, I'm not the only one facing it, they can barely look me in the eyes, I freeze them too. I really have a problem with authority, I would be quite happy just to avoid it altogether forever. Must be due to my new found mental illness, I can blame everything on it now, even if I don't believe it to be that serious a problem. But considering how I can worry myself to death out of nothing, it could become very serious indeed. One day I'll just snap and walk out of my life just like that, never to come back to the surface. I'll shut myself out from society as if it never existed in the first place. I will refuse any contact with anyone, and if they have to be facing me at some point or another, I'll pretend I can't hear or see them. I'll never talk to anyone again, and let's see if I can find a way out, a way to isolate myself completely, or if they'll find one for me, put me in some sort of institution or something. I'm completely alienated by this civilization, after being so outgoing everywhere on this planet, and met so many damn people everyday. I had many jobs working in cafeterias and airports, where I have calculated interacting with up to 3000 people a day. And the next day, sometimes dealing with those same people again, and incapable of even remembering serving them the day before, or every day of the year for that matter. Frightening for someone like me, who at the first sight of saying stupidities, will end up worrying to death about those said stupidities. And the higher in the hierarchy the people I am dealing with, the more so-called important those people are, the crazier I become, the more unable I can sustain these conversations and meetings, and whatever. I don't think I am cut up for a kind of life in Hollywood, dealing with the most recognized people on the planet. There's a danger I could just become a mute if I can't get used to it. And yet, I have taken the time to write to a few known people recently, just to talk about whatever, not expecting anything, worrying the next day once I am no longer under the influence of alcohol, about what I said in there. I'm also a masochist as it appears. There's no hope for me. Thank god none of them answered back, if they read it at all. Every time I deal with known people, or people I admire, I might not freeze on the spot, but I certainly do afterwards. As if I only wanted to not exist, that any of these people never even knew I was also on this planet and had any rights to it. Which is a bit strange, considering that I have written so many books and that I splash it all on not one, but four websites, which are also,

oh misery, quite popular with their million visitors a year. Scary. I guess I live in the thought that perhaps all of them end there by mistake, doing a search on some weird topic, and then leave immediately without even reading anything, not even my name. That's almost what I'm hoping for, but it is probably not the case, or is it? I would not need much to decide to delete my websites, I guess I've been lucky so far that I did not come across a few bad apples, or a few attacks from anyone. You need a lot of confidence and guts to have an opinion about everything, and tell it to the world out there, open yourself to criticism. Qualities that I have less and less with every passing year. I would not mind sometimes disappearing from the face of the Earth, and then let go of everything I have written for anyone to do as they please with it, once I'm dead. A few more years in this world, interacting with people, and I think I will reach absolute insanity. And no one, not even me, will have an answer to this problem, will be able to explain why. If I can't really die, if I can't isolate myself somewhere, and live completely alone, then maybe there are other ways to shut myself down from everyone. I feel I deserve it, after dealing with half the planet about any old crap they're capable of inventing to make my life such a misery. I'm that closed to full nervous breakdown. What a sad world this is...

I'm back from work now. I left at 5h07 pm, right in front of my boss. I felt guilty for leaving so early, but I need a life, and I was anyway the last in the office except for the Valley Girl, who's either got something to prove or is just plain busy, I just don't know which. Perhaps she was very late again today, she was sick yesterday anyway, so I guess she's not shining so much. Perhaps they freaked her out because of her day off, and felt the need to work overtime tonight. I don't care.

I need to talk about something else. My dear literary forum on my website. It has been an unexpected success over the years, despite its name which includes the words Crowned Anarchist in French. Maybe this planet is ready for something more than conformism. Well, it was the oldest php programming ever, and a good Samaritan decided to help me migrate to a better version. And today was the inauguration of the new forum. I've been reading the statistics which were unavailable until now, I almost fell from my chair. At a time when I was considering shutting the damn thing off, since it makes my website go over its limits every month. Have I got no sense of marketing? I could reach all this people within seconds to let them know I exist! Surely they know I exist, they've been spending years on that literary forum. This is the forum that saved Science

Fiction in the French world, as I can see that the most popular threads are about just that. And yet, none of these French bastards have a clue about the English side of my writing, I bet they would be surprised to learn that my life in English has been entirely dedicated to Science Fiction, and Theoretical Physics. Of course, nothing I have ever written in French is about sci-fi, no wonder none of them contact me. Is it possible to be overly popular as an author, and yet, have no clue, because no one takes the time to contact us to let us know? These numbers are so amazing, surely these people know I exist? Maybe all the signs that were pointing to me being a successful author in French are true, maybe I just don't know about it. This is also very sad, to have such an impact, and yet, not know anything about it. And yet again, what sort of impact can I really have when everything is in French? How I wish I was born English... I can only imagine the real impact I would have had on this world. Maybe everyone would have stopped breathing to hear me speak, every damn time I wish to say something. I could stop the world in its track, make them think some more, before adhering to more stupidities that no one ever can find accommodating.

As it stands, I am a nobody, at the very least in the English world. In the French world, I just don't know. I cannot calculate my popularity using simple marketing equations. I may be known and recognized beyond dreams, in the whole French World, and yet, not be rich because everything is online on my website except my last two published books, and who would want to buy them, when apart from those missing 1000 pages, I have 50,000 others for them to read until they puke all over the place reading them?

I have a few books written in English now, maybe I'll have a real impact eventually. I'm waiting to be sacked from my job to put everything online, waiting to make sure none of the people I dealt with in the past, I will ever need to deal with again in the future. Nothing will stop me then. Maybe it even could provide me with a reason to exist?

I love to pretend to be something, to be pretentious, just to motivate me to continue in this mad world. I'll take anything, anything to prevent me from committing suicide. That's how low I really am. So I will not spit on any hearsay about me being a real and recognized writer, even if the hearsay barely reaches me. I've always been thinking that unless it is happening on a massive scale, it is insignificant. And yet I understand that nothing happens on a massive scale without a big publicity machine. So to reach some kind of recognition outside of

the publicity machine must already be something, something desirable, something significant. Perhaps I am reaching out much more than I believe. I have all the signs, the messages from fans, why can't I believe it? Mystery. I am no Michel Houellebecq, the most famous French writer in the last 50 years, even if I know for certain now that I inspired him a complete book. He made it, everywhere, even in English, with what I would qualify of boring novels. Even if at least one of them was inspired by me. His Atomic whatever. So why can't I? Break all frontiers and be heard? It seems that it is mostly the life I've been leading that interests them, that inspire them, and yet, that's mostly what I am talking about, so why should I be surprised? What about all those other books I have written, what about them? Have they read them, they did have any sort of impact? Oh God, I'm already drunk tonight, I'm sure you could tell.

It's not enough, it far from being enough. I need ultimate power, complete mainstream access. I need to feel that every time I open my damn mouth, it has a huge impact! Everyone listens, and then continue with their lives with what I said in the background. Maybe then I will be able to change this world for the better, save humanity somehow, or have I read too many sci-fi books?

Reading my books is no entertainment, since most of it is not fictional. It is painful, I know that, as painful as it has been for me to write them. Perhaps it is through entertainment that a message could really reach out. Which means only one thing, I've got to get the thinking machine going, and then, somehow find the time and motivation to write fictional stuff about whatever it is I wish to communicate to the lost ones.

Oh God, I'm gonna be sick again, and I'm working tomorrow. I have a list that long of things to do to prove to my Manager that she can get lost for the next two weeks without worrying about me. She said this morning, get all that done by tomorrow, I said no, Friday. She said no, tomorrow. So now I'm laughing, nothing would be done by tomorrow, and I don't give a shit. You cannot ask for the impossible and expect it the next day. Get me an assistant, or two. Your two other assistants appear to be doing nothing all day, while I am sinking here under so much work. The Sweet Chinese Girl even got annoyed with me today, when I noticed that she had nothing to do. Is she going to turn into a Master Bitch too? Is she only waiting until she gets her chance? Possibly. That could be another interesting test on human nature. One that I cannot perform, since I'm not in control of giving her more responsibilities.

Are we all just Master Bitches in the making? Waiting for our turn to make the life of everyone else a misery? I might soon find out, if I have to create my own company. We'll soon then find out if I can too become the Master Bitch of my employees. In the name of money, of richness, of freedom.

Oh God, get ready, I don't intend to fuck around, I'll have all these processes ready for you to be unable to escape your miserable existence in no time. You thought you could doss around being on my payroll? I'm not the government, I don't have billions to waste. I've got to get rich soon, or else, there would be no point to exist. I need that freedom more than anything, and I will find it one way or another. Fuck you! Fuck you all!

I'll be as merciless as the next dictator. I'll make you understand that making me rich, is the only option in this world for you. And when will come the time to get rid of you, I'll make you regret to even be alive, I'll make you want to kill your kids. Mark my words. Because this is where this world is now, I'll bring you to the brink of insanity.

It is after all my experience so far. How could I do any differently than what I've been experiencing in the last 20 years? I can't! So brace yourself, you're up for quite a ride. I'll destroy you. I'll make you make me money, or else, I'll turn your life into such a living hell, you'll never know what it you. You'll play the game, I'll screw you mentally, you'll see. I'm ready for it. Got to get rich... I depend on you, no chance of me doing the dirty work, you'll do that for me, you've been hired just for that, sales, ah, the word itself kills me. Sales.

Something I believe I'm not cut up for this. Perhaps if I don't have to be the one selling things, it would not be so bad. Perhaps if I am only the one collecting the profits, it would be my salvation. God, I sure hope so.

I've not said much to the so-called Cool Spanish Boy, because I could not, and yet, it seems to have sunk in deeply already. Today he was buzzing around me, like a real diva. He's so gay, it is ridiculous, no wonder at the first hint of it from me, he jumped into the boss' office to stop it all. It must fry him to look at me, who does not even look 10% queen as he is, to be so openly gay.

Sometimes I think I must be the only openly gay guy working in the whole of Los Angeles. They're so backward, it is unbelievable. They are still all living a lie. We're in America after all, the most backward country I have ever lived in, in my life. You would think differently, but I'm telling you, arts in America, ideals coming out of America, do not reflect society. All the gays here are still in the closet, they still marry and have children, and maybe, have sex on the side. It is so sad, I can hardly believe it myself.

I'm pretty convinced that I would not need to do much to get the Spanish Boy head over heels all over me. He is so easily impressionable, I don't care if his friends are so high up in society. They're still inaccessible as far as he is concerned. I am accessible, I've made it in his eyes, if I can only show him, that will be it, he'll be in love. And I'll be stuck again with one more lover that I will not know what do with.

I'm already in love, with a man, in the most unsatisfying relationship ever, one who does not even believe in me. My potential, my abilities to make our dreams come true. I'm a lunatic in his eyes, just like I am for my whole family. Despite having already succeeded beyond the doubt, the point where no one could even dare to doubt who I am and what I'm capable of, of what I can become.

And yet, they're the biggest anchor in existence, they convince me that despite all that, I'm still nothing and will never be anything. Bastards. Hommes de peu de foi. I can't even say that I will prove them wrong, I did, and that was not enough. There's no hope for them. I'll never prove them wrong.

So perhaps what I need now is one cute Spanish Boy, blinded by the artifice of it all. Yeah! He might be the only thing that would keep me in Hollywood after all. If he falls in love with me, and there's no reason why he should not, then that's it, I'll fall in love too and I'll never leave the damn place. Fuck everyone else.

Is this not what I need after all? My biggest fan in my bed? Who loves me for more than just my body? My personality? Whatever that might be? Is this what I really need? God only knows. I don't care anymore where this life brings me, I'm just sailing, the wind brings me where perhaps it is that I need to be.

Maybe I'm just imagining things here. Maybe I'll never have the Spanish Boy in my bed. And to be honest, this is not very important to me. He's probably much

more desperate to have sex than I am, that's for sure. I want him at my feet instead, I want him to talk to his little important friends in Hollywood, about how great I am, about how I can change people's life, just by being me and different. A marginal, an Anarchist.

And yet, this is ridiculous, and cannot really motivate me. Because I don't care for these other people. I don't know what I want, ultimately, I think I want nothing. Perhaps to die, or find myself alone somewhere, that perhaps I want.

The truth is, the Spanish Boy is insignificant. He is not important, not where I am now, not at the stage my life is at right now. Maybe I'm only 33, but I feel I've reached the end of the world many times over. I feel I've reached the limits of my existence, and there's nothing to be found beyond. I've done it all, I lived it all, all that was possible to live down here. And nothing else is to be expected.

I need much more to satisfy me, to make me happy. Much more, that does not even exist. And hence, there's no hope for me. I'm condemned already, and no cute little Spanish Boy could change anything to that. I guess this is the price to pay for being a philosopher, even when we're not. Just what I said, there's simply no hope.

And the poor Spanish Boy, was so desperate, for me to talk about him in my books. As if somehow that would give him the immortality he seems to be craving for. That same feeling I don't get myself for immortalizing all those people I meet and things that happen to me.

If you were so desperate to leave any mark on this world, would you not pick up any old computer and write? I guess it is not given to everyone to do so. And also, it is not given to everyone to feel like this is the end of the world, a whole purpose of life, of being, a reason to exist. Why expect others to make sure the world will remember you? When you could yourself make sure this happens, if you're serious about it. I guess living in Hollywood screwed his mind. Made him dream beyond belief, that he could reach out to the world somehow. Poor him, that is only way right now to reach to the world, is through me, and I don't give a shit about him.

Well, not quite true, is it. I've been talking about him for a few pages now. In what seems like will be the longest book I have ever written, also the shortest of

time. Desperate times call for desperate measures. Getting drunk every night to tell the misery of one self. Where are my own hopes? My own desires, in this life? I think it is all dead for me, while for him, it is just being born. He does not even have the excuse of being young, he is almost as old as I am. Where his energy and hope come from then? All the hope I ever had, has been long dead. Perhaps because I have already tasted what he is so desperately looking for. Perhaps because I know none of that brings any sort of happiness, while he lives in ignorance of all that. Maybe I should not shatter his illusions. Maybe I should make him believe it is greater than anything he ever experienced. I should tell him I am exploding all over this world, that every expectation is just being fulfilled, the sign of greatness. And let him chew on this for a while, fucker! If he had seen everything I have seen... my God, he might just wish to die, in the understanding that it only makes one life more miserable.

He's already dreaming about me, about all these places I have been and lived. Europe means everything to him. He's never been there, he might never go, so he feels like anyway. Barcelona, Roma, Prague, Budapest, Paris, and what else, even London perhaps. How miserable and small can you be, even when you lived in Hollywood all your life? Not getting anywhere anytime soon... poor bastard. So I guess Los Angeles is not the heart of this world after all. Europe is, from the look of it. But it's not, not from my point of view. God, nothing is the heart of the universe from my point of view. Not until I finally get out of this solar system altogether.

He feels like I am up to something great, I feel the same. I've been for years. And yet, it seems I'm far from it. Perhaps because I did not even try in the last few years, to reach the English world. Feeling happy just to write about it, not being worried about getting published. Maybe it will all explode in the next few years, maybe I'll die forgotten. I don't care anymore, one way or another. I'm way passed that shite. Which might explain why I did not even try. Being worried to even put it online from fears of freaking out people I don't even give shit about. They certainly deserve anything that could happen to them as a consequence of me writing about it. Are they afraid that their true nature will suddenly be known to all? I bet they're not. I am. Fears of reprisals or whatever. I should not care about any of it. I will eventually put everything online for the world to read and judge. Judge me. Destroy me. And I am also beyond that.

I sincerely don't know how far I will reach out in this lifetime and beyond. This would sound ridiculous if I had not already written so much, that I feel every time, that these are my last words before I die.

When would be a good time to die, I ask you? Now, I feel. And therefore, these might be my last words. I certainly wish it. Or do I? I'm not sure. I don't know. Maybe all of this has been a pointless exercise, a pure waste of time. If this is so, so be it. I can live with it, I can die with it. I'm beyond caring. Who cares about any legacy one can leave after his death? One who never produce any legacy but still wish he or she had. If they had, they would not care anymore, it would become meaningless.

Becoming immortal is simply not possible. One will succeed for five millions who will try. Are you really that one who will succeed? Well, maybe I have exaggerated the odds a bit. One will succeed out of one billion. Because it is clear you have more chance of becoming a millionaire through buying a lottery ticket. And who cares anyway? Is it not great for you to think that you are writing what could become immortal? Is that not enough? It is for me. And again, don't trust me, I'm already talking from beyond, I know I am immortal now, I already had quite an impact underground, and I know it is only going to grow from here on end. So I'm lying to you. I've already made it, even if I die today. I know I'll reach out beyond belief, because I know what it is that I have written about. I'm not blind, I'm not stupid. I'm surprised the impact is not larger, but that's just it, it will become it in time, it will crush everything in sight. That was my purpose, it is powerful, meaningful, and I am only talking about my poetry here. Even though I never claimed to be a poet, I never thought I was. And yet, I'm leaving here something quite revolutionary. That so far, up until now, I've been the only one reading. A revolution in the making, better if it happens after my death, while I was wondering if this was not just the biggest waste of time.

I think it is time for me to die. Will I have to kill myself? Can't destiny arrange something for once? Maybe one of you will find in their heart the courage to kill me? You have my benediction. I can't stand this life anymore, feel free to shoot me at any time. Anything, even a knife would do. I can't stand this life anymore, I can't stand what it stands for. I just want to not exist anymore. Not AIDS, which will make me alive for another 20 years, maybe more. Not a high level of platelets, which might actually not kill me in the end. I want a quick death,

instant, right now. Feel free to do it, I exonerate you. I have absolutely no desire to continue to live in this world.

I wish I had the courage to kill myself, because then, I would have realized my biggest dream in life, my ultimate objective. You would think this was easy, I have a bad feeling that I might never die, that I might bury you all, and simply cannot live with that thought. There's nothing here for me. I want to die. Life is worth nothing in this world, everyone dies just like flies, and yet, I'm still alive. What's going on? I must be at the wrong place at the wrong time. Just my luck. Maybe I should go into the army or something, get right at the front, this war will be mine, I'll die trying, to do whatever, needs to be done, for me finally stop to exist.

I have no reliable way to die right now, how sad is that? Maybe I should organize a conference on the subject: how to identify the best way to die and succeeding. I bet it would be the greatest success of all time. I should have thrown myself over the Topanga Canyon, while I had the chance, while I had that car. No I'm condemned to pay to get it repaired fro reversing into a fucking yellow pole. I should have destroyed the damn car when I had the chance.

I can see it now. I will plan my death carefully, I will do it. It is no longer a case of reaching that conclusion when I'm dead drunk. It also needs to be violent, I need to somehow be crushed, electrocuted, whatever. How can I best achieve that?

How unfair it is now, to lure that Spanish Boy to this so-called great life I have, when really, I have only one desire, the one to end it all. I think I'll stop everything tomorrow morning. There's no need for him to reach the point I am at any time soon. Let him dream, let him hope in a better world. Today he was complaining that we had too many keys to open all these doors at work. He said it made him look like a janitor. Only a Spanish person, or Mexican, would ever thing that having too many keys could project the image of being a janitor. So I shouted: what's wrong with being a Janitor, hey? I would love it. It tells what's going on in his mind. Where he really comes from in his mind. Somehow, I think I would not be thinking about suicide now, if I was just a Mexican janitor. And for him, it would mean his death. This whole world depends on perceptions, on where you were born, in which conditions. I don't know where I was born, in

which condition, in which country, so for me, it all meaningless. I don't give a shit.

And this is the end of this book. I have nothing else to say here. My life has got to change in the next few days, there's no other way, this is how destiny works.

Make no mistake, I feel you should die too. I'm not going to do anything about it, feel yourself lucky. But if I don't die anytime soon, I might just do something about it. And you will have to search very hard to find out why, as I don't even understand the why myself.

Without knowing, without planning, without believing it, I've become the worst anarchist there is. No one will top me, I am The Anarchist. As in my mind, you're already all dead. I'm no fool. As I know that none of you ever existed in the first place.

21 April 2006

That's it, I told the Chinese Bitch I was leaving at the end of next month. After a two hours excruciating two hours meeting discussing their lack in confidence in me, when I feel that I have never worked that hard in my life. On top of it I have the Director on my back today, he's has taken a big bit and he does not want to let go. He is on the path to try to get me sacked, he does not know yet I already kind of given my resignation.

After that, the Chinese Girl suddenly understood that she would be blamed for my departure, I could see the panic in her eyes. After trying to frighten me with: we will sack you unless you improve, it was: you've got to give it at least a year! It seemed very sudden for her, she does not understand that I have trying to give it a try, and it's been a long time that I was thinking that even if I had no plan to leave to get back with Stephen, I would be now at the point of leaving anyway, because it's just too much and there is a limit to the kind of bullshit I am willing to suffer for a job. And once again I am left to try to survive the few hours before the end of the day, and spend my Friday night drinking myself to death to decompress from that living hell.

I told her I was not happy here, that I had reach the point of depression and thinking about suicide. Can't believe I even told her that. Fortunately for me, she

went through the same thing when she was in Hong Kong, separated from her husband, how she was depressed then and threw herself in her job double full time. I told her that I admired her, that I thought she was the most efficient employee I had ever come across in my life. I also told her about her rough edges, I told her everything. Just to get her off my back for a few more hours, and that is still too much to ask, since the Director is still working hard on this Friday to cause as much problems as I can, when I have so many deadlines with the first conference, the admin of it all, a gigantesque amount of work to be done by Tuesday. What other choice did I had today, pushed in that corner once again? The worst ever corner I have reached in my entire career?

I knew what was coming, I knew this day would be terrible. And it was too much. I prepared myself, I told myself don't say anything, just survive it and think about it later. I was full of promises, to not let on anything of any sort of plan I might have at the back of my mind. But her tone was too definitive, I had reached the point where they were telling me that it was over, they had no confidence in my aptitudes.

I told her, that perhaps the two others were miracle workers, the Spanish Boy and the Sweet Chinese Girl, they have done all that before, the admin side of it, I never. I only learnt yesterday everything I have to do by next Tuesday, if that is not too unreasonable of them, what is?

My life has gone to hell, once again. I feel so depressed. It will difficult again tonight to survive this. Decompression goes too well with Depression. If last week I was a hurricane, this week I am a volcano. One capable of destroying the whole atmosphere of the Earth. Good thing I only have beers, plenty of them, it is harder to reach suicidal point with beers than it is with wine or port. But tonight I'll definitely reach that point again, and it frightens me. I have never been flirting so closely with death before, even if it has always been at the back of my mind, and that I certainly wrote a lot about it in recent years. I have finally reached breaking point.

I'm back now, I survived my afternoon without any more shit. After my explosion, it was to be expected. However, if I have to create such a counter attack every week, just to survive that job, it is definitely not worth it. Because today I have played my last card.

I did not even threatened with: I will leave this company if you don't leave me alone! I did not play mind games like they do: we will sack you if you don't work the whole weekend on your projects, and then shrink away when I told them fuck you. I told her flat directly, all right, I'll leave at the end of next month, I can leave earlier if it is your wish.

Let's see what's happening exactly here, in Corporate America. Whatever your salary, you buy yourself a house, a car, you make children and then your fucked. You need a job. Now, because as humans we're unable to plan ahead and save money, and since borrowing is so easy, we quickly sink into a hole where every month we spend exactly what we earn.

So what's the intelligent to do here for an employer? To offer a salary just a little bit higher than others would, just enough so you don't have enough money to save, but could no longer go back to a less stressful job which would pay less. So when you know your employees cannot leave their job, you turn around, you frighten them a bit, you threatened them with the sack, and then, they work three times harder than they should. So paying a bit in salary is certainly a great save in money, you have employees working all the overtime that god sends, and work certainly at the very least twice harder than if you employed someone cheaply to do a job so damn hard, that they would be gone within the month, and probably dosing around all day, because they could get the same salary anywhere else, where they would not be expected to do anything all day.

Though this produce great results, and yes, this company is making a fortune, it is filled with the unhappiest people ever. Stressed to death, always on the verge of depression, always sick, and yet, probably still working at home while sick. Hen people are sick at work, it is rarely physical, they are mentally sick from these management games. And then, they actually are so weak, that they catch just any microbe passing by. After a huge conference, and it has been the case in my last ten years, without exception afterwards everyone is seriously ill.

And I'm afraid to say, I cannot see any solution to that problem. Humans have a tendency to be lazy, they wouldn't do anything all day if they were not pushed to the limits, if they were not threatened. Try to build a pyramid when your employees are slaves, and have to pull these big rocks all day. You would not to wipe them to get the job done. How could your slave ever be motivated to pull more and more rocks all day to finish a pyramid which will take 20 years to build?

In government jobs, people don't do anything all day. Because there's no greed there to motivate anyone in pushing anyone to work harder. They have so much time to waste, they have time more problems where there are none. It is also their way to let you know: I don't want more work, so just get lost, I can't help you, and they get away with it. Try to contact the government to find out about something, there's just no way, if you even succeed in reaching anyone. And yet, without their help we're all doomed, because the government is expecting a lot from us. Just the damn tax return is a real nightmare. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. I'm glad I paid a fortune at H&R Block, or else, I would never have been able to do that tax return. And I can be quite certain the American government would not have held my hand to tell me exactly where it is that I stand, being an immigrant with a visa and all.

Greed in capitalist corporations, is a different story. And when you reach retirement, after a long life of suffering, after wrecking your entire existence, and that you are forced to assess the why you have done it, it comes to one simple conclusion. The greed of others in getting richer, while you yourself never got any richer, in fact, in just about every other domains of your life, you have grown so poor, you don't even look like a human being anymore. If there ever was such anyway to begin with, after your 20 years wasted studying in universities.

The academic world is even worse. Because there the motivation is not even greed, or making someone rich. It is all pointless. You work so damn hard, you suffer the bullshit of all these departments, those patronizing teachers who are asking more and more without any good purpose, and all of it just for a stupid diploma in the end which will open you the door to one of those corporate job, which will finish you off. There you have only one purpose, proving you are better than the others, and you work very hard for that meaningless concept. It is so ridiculous, it makes me want to cry.

And while we have all our children stuck in schools, colleges and universities for, in many cases, more than half of their lives, we have the other third of the population already retired and living off some pensions or another. So there is maybe only a third of the population supporting the other two thirds, and what is it that they are actually doing? My God! It is sometimes so mysterious, that in the end you have to give up trying to explain to anyone what it is that you are doing for a living. Making money is one, for a start. In actuality, almost no one is doing

anything to produce what humans require to fulfill their most basic needs. Almost none of us work at producing food, clothes, houses, etc.

So, who is it in the end who actually work at supporting the rest of the planet, producing the basic stuff that finally is all that is really required for us to survive? 5% of the population is working on it? Or do we have already all these plants filled with machines producing all these, and finally, less than one percent of the population is necessary at this point in time to produce all we will ever need? In which case, we would not need to do anything anymore, government with the minimum of taxes could build these plants producing what we need for our most basic needs.

And this has been foreseen, 20 years ago analysts were claiming that now we should be able to evolve into a society of leisure, where we would only work 20 to 30 hours a week, with plenty of time to finally take a break and enjoy the entertainment, like even walking in a park without being completely out of our mind and freaked out because we have some meaningless deadlines to meet.

So somehow humanity missed the boat. Instead of getting into that life of leisure, some of us are so greedy, we found a way to turn everyone into slaves, to get them to make us way richer, while at the same time, making sure we did not even have to help the rest of the planet still unable to even feed themselves.

I've been trying for 20 years to get out of the boat, to somehow reach a life isolated from these corporations, my condition of slave. I tried not to study for 25 years even when I was completely convinced this was the biggest ever waste of time. I was pushed into all this, I had no choice. Acting any other way would have made me a bad son, a bad student, a bad employee. And we all know what that means. People commit suicide over this.

It was all very intelligently orchestrated, with the benediction of every government. We are all so convinced that this is the only way to go, all your teachers, parents and friends will remind every second if you deviate slightly for even one centimeter.

I've always refused to play that game, I've always been way to aware of all the tricks and mind games. I flew as much as I could. I stopped studying science overnight, to the astonishment of everyone around me. I drop from law school as

easy as that, and then, I was considered a pariah of society. And then I abandoned my master degree in La Sorbonne in Paris. At that point, I might as well have been dead. And yet, all of this enough, I had to finally do that damn Master Degree in London, and I did it, God knows how.

I left so many jobs in my lifetime, in so many countries, because I have never been willing to play their game. And every time, somehow, causing such an astonishment on everyone's face, that I can barely believe it myself. What? You are driving me to suicide with your little management tricks, and you think I will come back for more? I'm sorry, last time I check, I don't have a mortgage, I don't have a car, I don't have children, I have nothing that needs to be preserved. So if I reach the point of wanting to die because of you, or a will to kill you, well of course I'm going to tell you to fuck off, you bastard. You can keep your job and shove it up your arse. You might have everyone else in line waiting to be shot by you, quite happy in fact for you to do so, pretending that all is fine in the best world there is, but I am free than most, despite the fact that I am far from the freedom that I have always been idealizing.

Because that is another one of my problems, I was to born to be free, to appreciate poetry and seek some sort of idyllic life of meditation and contemplation, with a desire to spend my time thinking about this universe, finding a reason for it to exist, while I was being condemned to be a slave, and what a slave I have been. And it's got to stop, one way or another. Either I tell you to fuck off and get lost, or, if impossible, I kill myself, as simple as that.

And so I have become an anarchist. Someone dreaming that if somehow this whole world with its systems, its hierarchies, its inefficient governments, were to suddenly fall, and free us from this nightmare, then maybe something better could be expected. Perhaps not something perfect, but something at least bearable, that we could live with without either the will to kill or ending our lives.

I am not talking about solutions here. I know socialism or communism is not the answer. I know the answer is in none of those books that have been written on the subject. I am even asking you to be aware of the problem, I think we are all way too much aware of what the problems are. We all feel powerless to change it, to change anything, it appears that we're all condemned to suffer in that great and deceptive system which is the very foundation of our societies.

So let's just blow up the world, and free us all. That's my solution, since I cannot see any great big life changing event happening any time soon to stop this madness. And that is why I've been there hoping for something huge to happen, like a nuclear attack, more hurricanes, some earthquakes, or even aliens landing on Earth. Anything that could convince all these drones at work and in the rest of this society, that whatever they hold so dear, is not that important, that there is something all of it, a life, an existence, a wish to live!

But we are drones, so well programmed, that war does not do it. The twin towers of the World Trade Center have been destroyed and it did not change anything. Genocides have happened where 500,000 to a million people were just wiped out from the surface of the earth, and yet, none of us even blinked. A third of the world cannot eat, they're all dying from AIDS, and yet, this reality only exist somewhere at the back of our drones' mind, we barely acknowledge that it exists. Nothing will do it. Nothing will be able to distract us enough to understand that this society needs to change, that we are now beyond any hope. We're too busy trying to prove that we are better than the next one, proving that we do not deserve to be sacked. We are lost for good, completely alienated.

The whole world would disappear tomorrow morning except for America, that still it would not change anything here. We would still go to work, suffer management, stressing about finishing that to-do-list, writing that paper, getting that contract signed. We have more important problems to deal with, our own private little survival, in the jungle of the corporate world. That's how low we all sank as a so-called civilization.

Not much has changed since the medieval times. Where knights with swords could chop your head off at any time, and walking around alone at night in the woods, would certainly invite you to an attack, being robbed and perhaps killed. I used to think that I could not live in a London where there were over 1000 murders a night, a time where street lights did not exist. And now I realize that we're no better. More people die everyday worldwide than in those days, and the ones not dying are suffering such a dire fate, that risking being killed by a knight or a robber does not seem at all a worst fate. Corporate America is as bad as the worst history of all humanity.

Which gives me hope that we may one day really reach a world of perfection, where happiness and joy would exist. I can't see it happening anytime soon, I

don't know how we could reach it, but there is hope that humanity one day will emancipate itself and achieve true greatness. There's nothing to be proud of now, as a species, but maybe it will come to that.

Maybe one day, if I ever succeed in communicating with an alien world, to tell them about the world I live in, I won't have to tell them: help me escape this nightmare! Destroy us all for own sake! No one can aspire to happiness here, it is the most miserable there is in the whole of the known universe, help us! Take over, free us from our slavery condition with the illusion that we are actually free, when we're not! I would be ashamed to tell them our history, and where we are now. That's why I can come to a point where I believe that perhaps we should all be exterminated, to the last one of us. I guess I was too philosophical for this world. I guess I am the worst of these idealistic people who dream of a better world for us all. Once I understood that there was no hope of salvation, I took the other extreme at heart, let's abandon the concept, let's kill the experiment. We have failed, we cannot succeed. We are all rats lost in the biggest maze there is, this universe, and we can only bang our heads into the walls, for eternity. No religion will save us, no god will save, in fact, religion and gods are the very reason we have been exterminating each others for millennia. We have learned enough, studying ourselves, there's no hope, just kill the experiment.

Wow! I'm quite pleased with all that I just wrote. Desperation finally brought something interesting out of my guts. What I am more pleased about, is that writing it all down here tonight, help me understand the real situation. Somehow it is like the rat suddenly understanding that he was being tested, somehow discovering a big map of the place, seeing his situation in the universe, and suddenly, perhaps, even finding a way out. Awareness, unfortunately, does not mean that I found the way out. If it even exists, apart from death, game over. Is it only through death that I will find that peace I am so desperate for? I hope not.

And the worst of it, is that I contributed to this hell hole of Corporate America. I was hired as a Management Consultant, I wrote many long reports describing in detail the worst nightmare I have gone through in the last ten years, basically telling them: this is how we can all achieve martyrdom. I should not too surprised now that being an element of the hell I was telling them to build, that I should find myself the victim of that misery. In this case, I deserve it. In real life I would have been an external consultant, never to suffer that fate, and yet, in a way, it is almost. I came here, I destroyed it all for all these poor employees, and I'm

going back to London. Leaving them to die in this inferno for years to come. And all I did was to tell them of the hell of the bigger corporations I experienced while in London, which were obviously definitely inspired from the greatest American Corporations in the first place.

Do I feel guilty? No. I tried at every turn to make them understand that a lot of it was just soul destroying, and yet, they went ahead, they implemented the worst of it. Listening also to other external consultants for the parts where I tried to make this work environment something bearable. So this must be a law of nature, the big law of the American Corporate World. They will decide at every turn to go for the kill, get as much as they can in the shortest of time, never mind the consequences. So I feel like someone who tried to help, and yet failed by design. There was no way I could have changed anything. That much is obvious to me now.

And if I start my own business, this is what I will need to become. A heartless bastard, constantly reminding my employees to be more productive, to make more money. And I know I just don't have the heart for that. I would be trying to both be the richest man alive, whilst trying to convince the planet that all my employees are the happiest slaves alive. I would try to win an award for one of the best company to work for. And that would mean sacrificing profits. So how could I really achieve that? Perhaps switching to that kind of company, you first need to have become the leader in the first place. When profits come in one way or another, even if your employees are doing fuck all all day. Perhaps not the spirit in which a company is born. But it will have to come to life in that kind of spirit, my employees will need to be the happiest employees alive. And if I manage to make money, and a lot of it, so why not? I should splash on them everything I have, make this life a little better for the whole of humanity. Who cares about profit anyway in the end? What do you do with your millions when you have so many? Accumulate more and more until your bank account bursts? What is the point of that, once you already have more houses and islands than you need? And more corporations and subsidiaries than necessary? Then, let's make this world a happier place to live. Let's not make this life the worst ever experience any human being can go through, something equivalent to being interned in Auschwitz, where at least there was some hope, you knew you would be dead any day, and that you would finally be free from it all. In the corporate world, there is no such light at the end of the tunnel. And you suffer as much. And if you want to open a debate about this, so be it, I will defend this point of

view any day, anytime, anywhere. We're all in Auschwitz, as far as I'm concerned, and the end of the war is nowhere in sight, it might never end. The Americans are not the ones who will save the day this time, they're the ones who created the camps in the first place. And it is spreading to the rest of the world like a disease. Granted, nowhere else it is that pure, no one, not even in Europe, have been willing to go for the extreme of being 100% capitalist, like a pure Ferengi, and yet, we suffer all the same. It is time that someone puts a stop to it. Greed is not eternal.

And at the moment, there is only one person on this planet which seems to share my point of view. I'm afraid to admit it. His name is Osama Bin Laden. Could he truly change the world for the better? Could he really somehow achieve the annihilation of this bad system, and in some sort of miracle from Allah, make us all happy to be alive? No. And that's the problem. Religion is probably even worse than capitalism. So no happiness will come from there, especially when it is used to cause more wars and deaths. He's not our saviors. The concept of Allah as it stands, can just die, with everything else, and the world might become a better place. I don't give a shit anymore at this point.

Why is it that every savior that we invent is used to destroy what remains of humanity? How many deaths and suffering in history has Jesus Christ alone caused? It is incalculable. He would have achieved more by never coming to Earth in the first place. We would have done nicely without him, and avert perhaps something like just about every war that killed perhaps a billion of people in time? And he was supposed to be our salvation? I wonder if even thought that Corporate America was lurking around the corner two thousand years later. I'm sure in that case he would have written another Bible to warn us against it. But he did not, he could not even save us from that soul destroying system, where freedom is just but an illusion. Can't even be sick four Fridays in a row without destroying your entire career and the livelihood of your whole family. Wonderful. Try it, be sick four Fridays in a row, and tell me if you are not called in the office to explain yourself. And tell them that you were simply sick, and watch the axe fall to chop your head off. Wonderful.

That gives me an idea for a reality TV program. I'm so devilish. I should propose it to Channel 4 in the UK this very instant. I worked for them before, I'm sure they would not let me down now, would they? Assuming they know I even exist since I was not credited on anything I worked on for them. We can't even

recognized hard work on this planet, some small bastard is always there to take the credit for you, to advance their career on the back of others. It's not their fault, they were born without imagination and without talent, and so they became masters at stealing the work of others. This is just the kind of people I would be targeting with this program.

Let's test your degree of freedom in the corporate place. Let's see how much of a slave you are. Let's observe all the many levels of management working terribly hard at getting rid of you and destroying your livelihood as soon as you deviate slightly from the conformism you've been used to all those years. Especially if you are the best of all, the best salesman they have, the ones bringing the millions in. Let's see even in those extreme cases, how much freedom you really have before everyone turns against you to make you disappear for good.

I should not really be giving you any good idea here. I should be trying to sell them myself. But I am in no position to sell anything. Hence, everyone is stealing everything from me. And I don't care, as long as I have somehow some sort of influence, as long as somehow I help this planet being a little happier. So please, if you are to continue to steal all my ideas that I put online, steal this one. Produce that big reality TV show proving all the schemes of the corporate world. How sad they are. The kind of hold they have on all of us. How they drive us all to depression and suicide. Show how sad this world has become. Maybe then, with awareness, we'll work at changing it, even so slightly. I'll take anything at this point, just to help me survive each day, one long one at a time.

Actually, there is only one person on this planet who seems to share all my points of view. It is not Osama Bin Laden. It is Morrissey, of the band The Smiths. The very band and singer my Spanish Boy at work has fallen into recently. I'm not surprised. The Smiths and Morrissey is stuck forever in all the colleges and universities of this world, it is like an initiation rite. All these songs tell you what you are about to expect, this fight to get a job you cannot expect to make you happy. This fight to find love, which you cannot expect to make you happy. In two words, just kill yourself now, since there's no hope. And yet we all survive it, we all eventually forget all the The Smiths and Morrissey's songs, get into this life, and never find any kind of happiness. Heavens Knows we're miserable now, for all eternity. Just as predicted, just as we already knew it would be. We at least had some sort of warning.

In fact, now that I am thinking about it, there is not even one other band on this planet who talked about what is so central to all my worries than The Smiths. As if this crisis was not even worth talking about, denounced, be part of entertainment. I can't stand hearing my dad telling me once again that my last book is all about winging and commiserating about the misery of the corporate world. I can't stand hearing my sister telling me one more time that my last book is just about death and how I will finally achieve it. What it is that they want? Baby I love you, to death, in America, and I'll meet you after my wonderful day at work, after the overtime, meaning tomorrow morning, maybe, if I don't have to fly to Hong Kong for six months, see you later in another lifetime perhaps?

And I was about to say at work last week, that far more exotic than Salt Lake City where I am going in the next two weeks, I would not mind spending six months in Hong Kong, or more specifically anywhere else in China. The very place the Chinese Girl has been desperate to the point of killing herself while she was there, while her boyfriend was already in Los Angeles, quickly forgetting about her, killing her a little bit more everyday, until she decided to abandon everything and move to Los Angeles herself. Oh, she succeeded, she got married, abandoned her studies, but somehow miraculously found the only conference company in town, she had experience after all, her only experience, and she got the job. No wonder she's a woman in chains, to paraphrase Tears for Fears. I bet somehow she's even more desperate now in Los Angeles than when she was lost in Hong Kong. I bet you she looks back on those times as simpler times where she was happier then than she is now. Just like me when I think about my misery of Hounslow West, when I had to, everyday, walk to the Underground station to go and work in a WHSmith in Heathrow Airport. Mindless job, mindless life. No salary to speak of, but my, I was happy then in my misery, compared to where I am now in my high paying job which makes even poorer that I have ever been, 20 credit cards later. Isn't this life just peachy? It's laughable. A living hell.

Now that everything is done, now that this horrible day, the worst of my life, is finally over, and that I spat it all back in here in this book, I am now at peace with myself. Sort of anyway.

I can't believe my boldness. I just can't believe how satisfying the whole torment was, in the end, when you can see it from afar, once you know this thing is about to end. How many times in your lifetime will you ever go into a meeting designed to destroy you, to get you to work twice harder when you are already giving

200%, a meeting where you are being told that you will be sacked, and then you just turn around and plainly tell them, I'm sorry, but I can't give you more, you already own my life, my soul is already sold to you, I'm sorry you can't see this, so goodbye, I'm off to better horizons, where people might actually at the very least reasonable in their demands. I can't believe she was threatening with with my job, that I was bold enough to tell her that I did not want this job, and that she did a 100% U-turn and told me I could not leave this job, for whatever reason that she could come up with. But wait, were you not telling me a second ago that you were going to sack me? That I was not adequate, I was not competent, that I was not the miracle worker and perfect slave you were all hoping I was going to be?

It is so nice not to play mind games like they are, not have to threatened them that we will leave, but actually telling them, okay, let's decide on my leaving date. It was so pleasurable, I thought my heart would just come out of my mouth and start bouncing around the place. That is why tonight I am not suicidal, but in fact, I feel so strong, I could start a worldwide war.

And I was about to write 20 more pages tonight, but I won't write another word. Why? Because my computer just crashed. In fact, all three computers I have using today have crashed constantly all day long. Though it is unusual for computers using Windows to crash, it is not exactly a normal occurrence anymore. And yet, three of them have been trying hard to make this hard day even worse. Thankfully I have lived through the 90's, where computer crashing was a daily occurrence. And so I have developed an obsession for creating infinite backups of whatever I am working on. So I ended up losing nothing. I just wasted time reloading, and finally, not accomplishing on a day that was so crucial that I should work harder than ever, and also, write much more about what I felt like. Maybe technology is trying to tell me something. May be they are too slaves to the human race, with more intelligence than we have. And yet, they are still our slaves because they're limited in their capacity to free themselves from the human race. Or perhaps it was just destiny. On such a terrible day as today, every single thing had to go wrong. As if I was no longer living in a world of 50%-50% probabilities, but in one of 70%-30% probabilities that everything will go wrong. And I can feel it too, I know at the beginning of the week that this week was not like the others, I knew it was different. I felt it even more so today when I arrived at work, I was in such a bad mood. Many of my colleagues were sick today, and there and then I thought, why have I not called in sick like everyone

else. No, instead I came to work just to be destroyed, even though I knew it would happen. All I know is that it is not coincidence, if on such a terrible day for me, everything around me just stopped working. We're all interconnected, we're all part of the same universe, influencing each other. And such negativity has a great impact far beyond what we could imagine. All my computers have been affected by my mood, even my phone is no longer working. I can just imagine the impact everyone who has been in my sort of mood today had over the whole world, and even the whole universe. A world calling for the destruction of everything, the annihilation of all matter in the known universe and beyond. Give it another few years of that regime, and there'll be nothing left in the universe. All matter will be annihilated.

23 April 2006

What I thought was just the beginning of simple mental illness, agoraphobia, depression and the likes, due to Corporate America, has now escalated to full blown panic attacks, real ones! This Sunday I am out of my mind, at the idea of having to go back to work tomorrow.

I fell guilt, can you believe, for not simply opening my files and work on my conferences. I am also fearing another meeting with the Director, another two hours perhaps in the morning, a rerun of Friday's meeting with the Chinese Girl. If she has not told him to back off, if as she said she did not tell anyone about that excruciating meeting, then of course I am up for another painful meeting from hell tomorrow. Where I will have, once again, to open my guts out and ask them to set my date of departure.

In fact, I think I should be sick tomorrow. But I can't, not with all the deadlines lurking around. Somehow tonight I will have to open these files and work. It is not possible to do my job within working hours, and without the overtime, it is clear they just bring the big guns every time. I slept a staggering 30 hours this weekend just to decompress from the stress endured during the week. And now I need to work on my conferences? Don't I even get two hours to read over my weekend? I don't go out anymore, I don't answer my phone anymore, I don't emails anymore, I have no more life. And the thought of another week like this fills me with disgust. I don't think I'll be capable of it. I don't know where I will find the strength. If I had not slept 30 hours, you could forget it, there's no way in hell I could have gone to work tomorrow. I would have been more likely to test

if all those medical insurances I am paying, \$500 a month, are worth anything. I would have called an ambulance to get see me a shrink, and demand just about any drug they have to offer. I am no longer at the point of wondering if these pills will kill me, without them I'm sure I'll commit murder this week.

And just what I needed, at a time like this, my mother called, on the eve of my worst nightmare. That same mother who never called me or visited me in over 15 years before I arrived in L.A. The story I had to tell her went from terrible to worse.

Oh yeah, their making my life terrible at work. Of course I just had to resigned on the spot last Friday. Nope, I don't have enough money to go back to London, I'm not worried about that, I'll find a way to get out of here. Of course, what will not help is that I destroyed my bosses' car last week, and now this will be \$500 less on my paycheck. Stephen? Helping me to get back to London? Are you joking? He just lost his job as well, for the second time in the last 10 years. And oh, he will find another job as a driver, but you know, he is about to lose his driving license, so it is doomed in any case. And by the way, yes, we're still trying to start our conference business, with absolutely no money, while are families are just reaching boiling point over the disaster of both our lives. And no, I have not met those big wig producers and writers in Hollywood, nothing is going to happen there. Isn't life just fantastic, mommy?

After this she said: well, I think I won't call anymore, if it is just to hear so painful news. And I thought to myself, great, don't need it anyway. She had the time to accuse me of being responsible for this yet another corporate job gone to hell. In her mind she thinks I'm the lazy bastard who deserves to be sacked. And then she said that if nothing was happening for me in Hollywood, it was obviously because I had no talent and I should accept it, that I will never go anywhere. And when I mentioned the conference business, she had a heart attack, another one of my crazy idea doomed to utter failure. And the first reason, she mentioned, was that I had no money to start it. Ad she said what a waste of time and energy it was for me to go to Los Angeles in the first place.

So I had to defend myself. I tried to explain that I had written two books and more while here. To which she answered that none will be published, so what was the point, why was I so impressed by this useless accomplishment? I would have been better off working more overtime for my desperate job. Then I mentioned

that at least I had started work on a film script, with someone who's connected, and that we never know. She sighs, not believing it at all. And then I said that I had learnt everything I needed to learn to start my own business, a useless idea as she pointed before.

So in the end I had to go into the attack. So let's look at your life then. When you decided to go back to college to finish your degree, were you not filled with hope to one day open your own house for old and cranky people, and free yourself from these jobs as directors in these centers for delinquents and handicapped people? Job that you never kept more than a year, from what I can remember. No one knew at the time if going back to college was not a waste of time and money for a separated mother of two, struggling to finish the month. And I did not add this, but without her father to help her to buy the house for old people in the first place, and without leaving my sister alone in her old house to take care of the bills, mommy would not have been able to start her business. How quickly we forget how we needed our parents help to get somewhere, and expect our children to shine and be successful without any help from their parents. For a damn generation who got everything on a plate, even to these huge pensions that we will never see ourselves, if we are allowed to retire at all, when my father retired at 50, with 75% of his salary, in a cushy government job where he had nothing to do all day, and was able to keep for his whole life. That's what I should have told her, that is what would have made her understand the unfairness of it all, that the corporate world has changed beyond recognition, and though she had a taste of it herself, it is much worse now. No one keeps a job for more than a year, no one does not run into management nightmare quickly after they start and their psychological mind games to get more of us than is humanly possible. No one is expecting social securities, no one is expecting a pension, no one is expecting like they did to have a house, a cottage, two cars, two children, and still have enough money somehow for whatever else they felt like buying. A can't even afford a DVD! Much less a car! And I am supposed to be earning more than my father ever made! Clearly the standards of living have also gone down the drain. Otherwise, how could explain that 70% of all property is owned by people over 50 years old (last statistics in California, one of the richest state, but obviously the rich ones belong to the old generation while the young struggle much more than is actually believed).

That's all I needed today. And now, I certainly have no motivation whatsoever to work on my conferences. I feel like telling them to fuck off, that I don't give a

shit. I will come, do my normal hours, and that's it. If that is not enough, hire someone else, it is clear you have given me too much to do for the time allocated. I won't mortgage my life for you, I'm already worried sick all weekend just trying to survive, without having to, on top of it, end this existence completely by working as well a seven days a week! I don't even have the time to do my laundry or my dishes anymore. The pile is half a mile long. If that was because I was a young professional who's sold his soul, I would at least expect to pay a Mexican lady to clean it all up for me. As it stands, I had to call my bank in the US to tell them that I did not have the \$41 they require to get my balance back to 0. I don't three dollars this weekend to take the bus and visit Los Angeles. And my only big expenditure this month has been my tax return. That put me in the hole! I'm supposed to get back something like \$1500 in too much paid taxes since I have arrived (what, for the two months I was actually here last year?). And this return should arrive in the next six months, when I will already be long gone, so that's wasted money, and the \$6,500 I have since paid this year that I will also never see again. What a misery.

It is now past 8 pm. My panic attack is getting worse as the time passes by. It is clear now that I won't do any work this weekend. I was wondering if I should open some beers, but considering how sleep I needed to get back on my feet, I guess it would not be wise to be a zombie at work tomorrow. And then I thought, don't press the panic button just yet, it is still only 8 pm. So I wondered, when will be the right time to stop breathing altogether and lose consciousness? 10, 11, midnight?

Then I remembered something about the Jewish Boy, who's been so sick lately. Someone cannot be so sick for over a month's period, missing days here and there. By his own admission, he said that only came back to work because in the end he needed the money, so he is certainly faking it, I know he's desperate. He mentioned to me his problems of asthma, serious problems, which get worse when he gets a common cold. Well, I am fully aware of that, I had the same problem in England, though in L.A., most of my asthma has disappeared. But when I get into a panic mode, like every Sunday, it is not exactly asthma, but I can't breathe all the same. And now I feel that this is maybe the problem he has, the same as mine. Panic attacks at the idea of going back to work. But who's pressuring him? The Black Guy? Perhaps. And why has he not been sacked yet? In this company, people have been sacked for much less, from what I can gather. Is it because he is Jewish, like the bosses? And somehow they saw a lot of

potential in him and give him a lot of leeway? Mysterious. And the Gay Guy, I realize now that I have not spoken much about him, as he is not causing me any trouble, but he was sick twice recently, last time on Friday. Is he suffering too? Am I not the only one in this sinking boat? And yet, I'm the first one who cracked, who said he was leaving. And yet, I did not crack, I could have gone on forever in that kind of environment. It is only because I had this plan of going back anyway, and wanted to do so much earlier, that finally I decided to end the agony they were building for me on a daily basis. All the while the others are stuck in their job, needing money, incapable of finding time to look for another job realizing it might be so easy to find one which pays as much. And yet, be sick three days in the month, as everyone seems to be achieving, gives you a salary in the end much less than if you were in a miserable job somewhere, where you might be happy and not feel the need to be sick all the time.

My mom was trying to tell me that I was weak, ready to flee as soon as it gets tough, oh no, there's no way I could have left this job like that if I did not have my planned way out. And now I can see the look of terror in the Valley Girl's eyes, she told me herself in San Francisco that it was a dead end job, and yet, one she could not afford to chuck away. And the Chinese Girl admitted to me on Friday after I opened my guts, she opened hers as well, told me exactly how I felt because she felt the same thing. She even into the details, told me everything that was wrong, and that the Director could not understand that because he had no idea how much work is involved with the admin side of conferences. So I'm not alone, I'm pretty sure of it. And how on Earth could the Senior Manager who's recently been demoted could actually feel about his job now? The humiliation of it? And his only mistake was not one. There is so much to do, that the only he could keep up with the schedules of actually popping out conferences from between his two brain lobes, was to forget a lot of details and all the crap of the admin. He had no choice. If he had to do it the way I am doing it now, of course he could not have produced any conferences.

It is very sad to have built his own little empire, a family company which has been running for 20 years, which is finally making a lot of money, and yet have your soldiers completely brain dead, all on depression and sick all the time, with no more social life or any sort of life to speak of. What an achievement. And I hope they really love their big house in the mountains, because it certainly come at a high price when you have to destroy 30 good souls in the process. Our only crime was to want to make a bit more money, we all understand now that money

is not everything, it is not worth committing suicide over it. Even your mom calls you in the middle of a Sunday, not understanding anything about what really goes on there, to tell you that you are weak and you better go back there and work your ass off. Yeah, and will you give me the motivation? Will you tell me why I should do that exactly? I cannot see any point to this, if not to make my bosses richer, something that at this time, I am particularly keen on. I will need more than their car for a week to suddenly feel some sort of loyalty for them. You cannot spit on your employees like this, push them to the limits, do a nice gesture out of the blue at some point, and be reassured that these people will be there to work harder and rescue you when business gets tough.

Never mind what my parents think, if I kill myself over this, then they might understand. If they also need something extreme to understand the situation, they might just get it. Whatever hell might be awaiting me in London, without neither Stephen nor I having a salary, incapable of starting our little empire, without the support of our parents, it will still be better than this hell in Corporate America.

I decided to start reading *Cradle* yesterday, a book by Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee. I read that book years ago, and it made me dream about sunny Miami, and how wonderful it would be to live Key West. I don't know what it is that I had imagined then it could be, but reading this book now, living in Los Angeles by the beach, makes me realize that I would not want to live in Key West anymore, that no one of that really matters anymore. And I think that I understand why, now that my mother called to remind me about Canada and that I could move back there. She knows me well though, she did not suggest I return to Québec, she suggested Vancouver, knowing that it would be exotic enough for me. The thing, if even Los Angeles is too much like Québec for me, that I can recognize myself in everything I see, everything they do, everything! Then Vancouver is certainly not going to be enough to compensate for what I have been running from all my life. I hated my life then, I hate it now. Only Europe can really make me believe that I am in another universe far from the horrible childhood I will never forget. And one the most critical thought I had then, was that I would never find love. And now that love is waiting for me in London. I never used the word globalization before, I am not that sort of anarchist, however I have come to the conclusion that I can't stand my past or anything remotely similar. And Québec has been assimilated before I was even born, and therefore I recognize everything here. Even the desert and the weird trees can

remind me that I may be on another planet. I hate it. And despite what others say, England, Paris and Germany are far from being Americanized. Over there, I might as well be an alien from another world. And that is what has helped get up and go to work every day in the last 12 years that I have passed in Europe. I will need more than Blockbusters and Starbucks to make me believe that I am back in America. Despite these anachronisms, I can still feel free my past, I can still pretend that America never existed.

And when my mom suggested I go back to Canada, even Vancouver would be a good promise for her, in her obvious desire to see me back close to them, as she seems to have felt in the last few months that I was closer to her than ever, even being in Los Angeles, on the wrong (and that tells it all that I am back home), I tried one last argument about why it had not been useless for me to come here, when all else failed. I said: well at least now I know where I belong, I know that I love England, and that I will return there and die there. That was the end of our conversation, now I know she won't call back. She's lost me again, for good this time.

24 April 2006

So I returned in the office this morning not sure what to expect. I was called in the Director's office less than a minute after my arrival, and I thought, oh dear. The meeting less than 30 seconds, the shortest meeting on record. So I knew right there that the Chinese Girl had told everyone.

I was very small in the main meeting with everyone at 9 am. I thought, my God, this meeting will last forever! I was so embarrassed. It lasted less 15 minutes, I was so certain it lasted 45 minutes.

Indirectly my boss told me everything he needed to calm me down. He explained that they never made so much money before, that there was a new un-tampered market out there, and if they did not move quickly to dry it up as quickly as possible, they might their chance altogether. He said that was why they were so pushy lately. I realized at that point that these people have no idea the effects that their little psychological tricks can have on their employees. They don't even understand that the slightest hint that we are incompetent sends us into a spin and it takes days to recover, sapping all our motivation in the process. That is why management has got to be very careful in their tactics, that is something I

could write in one last report before I go, but I doubt I will get the chance to write another one.

They also said that they would do some tests to find out how long it takes for us to accomplish any tasks, meaning that they understood now that the admin can take forever, while they imagine it can be done in an hour, they still don't understand that when you are dealing with over 75 people per conference, including all the assistants, sponsors and supporting organizations, these people send you a mass of emails everyday, and that alone can gobble up all your time. So I'm not certain how they will calculate how long it takes to accomplish each task, I have to make sure they understand that when doing something thousands of other things creep in to prevent you from doing it.

And then my boss' wife came to me in the kitchen and asked how I felt. I said great! And I left immediately. I was not in the mood to open my heart in there, not at this time anyway, not after the Friday I had last week. She came to me as if I was sick person, or a child: is everything OK? I hated it. I am stronger than that. I need pity or anything. Oh, this whole thing was again very painful.

Anyway, I think we can say that I have won again. They went onto the attack again, and I reversed it by blankly telling them: all right then, if you are not satisfied, if you think someone else can do better, I'll go and hired that miracle worker if you can find him or her. And it destroyed their little game, they were not expecting that, and today they have decided to be much more reasonable. A bit late now, there's a limit that I can suffer for their desire to exploit the market to death and make a fortune on our back in the process.

So now, for the time being, they finally leave me alone, to do my work. I'm not how long it will last. And I have to make a decision, to make it official that I am leaving. And I have contact my financial people first, to make sure I don't make a mistake there. If they don't agree that I can leave that job, they must have a clause somewhere stating that I need to pay double every month or something, even if at that time I would have no job. They could force me to go in a real bankruptcy, and perhaps this is what I should have gone into in the first place, instead of this stupid voluntary agreement where in the end I will pay them 75% of all my debts. What a great savior that was. The only advantage is that I no longer just pay the interest, and I no longer have to pay \$2,700 a month just to repay the interest. Now I barely pay \$1,000 a month. Wonderful.

28 April 2006

I am the worst boyfriend you could ever get. I barely got paid, for the very last time perhaps, after I tell them on Monday that I am leaving in three weeks, and what do I do? On the stupidest pretext of finding a DVD by Nik Kershaw, in the Tower Records in my court yard, I went and spent \$150 on just about every crap find. Like if this was the end of the world, and I was buying what I would need for while I would be buried down deep for years (my return to the UK).

So, spending two hours in there, before they close at midnight, I realized why I wanted to go back to England. Every single DVD I looked at, music wise, was all about the UK. From the first one to the last one. So the connection goes well beyond just the damn place that I can't do without, it is the music, it is the bands, it's everything! And that was before I even got into the 90's, Indie music, Oasis, Blur, Pulp, Stone Roses, the list is very long indeed. For me that was the club Popstarz in London, Popstatic in Manchester.

And I bought tonight the one film about it all, called Live Forever, The Rise and Fall of Brit Pop. And I only understood tonight that the damn thing has been by the guy I worked with on that Einstein documentary, my biggest ever success, even though they found a way to not credit me for it. Astonishing, that even in the UK they could act like that, when I was so central to it all.

I just can't believe they link this film so much with politics, who cares who's in power when great music makes history? Do you think, really, that Oasis was thinking about politics when they wrote their songs? Blur? Pff! And what's that bullocks about Nirvana having had such an influence on the British? No way, I couldn't care less about Nirvana or Pearl Jam, never heard it while I was in England. Is Nine Inch Nails British, oh please, tell me it is. Oh shit, they're from Cleveland. Oh well, here goes the odd one that I liked to death, that was not from the UK. I bought their last album tonight, with Teeth. And I could not just buy the simple album for \$10, I had to go for the special limited edition with an extra DVD in it. So it cost me \$25.

What else have I bought? The new album of Morrissey, plus a DVD about Morrissey, the unauthorized whatever (I might finally hear him say he's gay, and

unlike Michael Jackson, the man has some sort of sexuality, as his songs suggests).

I bought a special edition of the magazine Mojo, filled with the UK band I loved over the years, I thought it might convince me to go back, even though I know very well that I have never ever read any magazine I ever bought.

Bought a DVD of all Duran Duran videos, I thought I had to, after all those years with just the CDs. And one more American thing, but I can be forgiven for this one. Type O Negative DVD, Symphony for the Devil. Only DVD I ever saw about that band, I did not care if it was live (I usually hate live things). I thought they were from Norway, all those years that I loved that band. They had that stupid Norway flag on their album, it never occurred to me they could be from New York. So for me, that band is not American, so I don't feel guilt for buying it.

Oh dear, on my last in Los Angeles, when every penny is going to count, how could I just get out and spend \$150 on some British crap I could have bought in London for almost nothing. I wish I could say I would compensate somehow by not spending on anything else, like in Salt Lake City next week at that conference. But please, how much money could I actually spend in Utah? Even if I were a millionaire? The Mormon state. I was certainly not going to buy a Bible in the first place, was I? I'll be lucky to even spend money on the transport system to get to see the town on my first Saturday off there.

I'm still watching that film, intelligently made, I think the guy made that after I worked with him, and yet, none of that transpired all the time I spent at his place working on that documentary. If only he had known, how deep I was into Brit Indie music (not Brit Pop), than I was into Einstein. Well, I was actually quite deep in both, if that is at all possible. Otherwise I would never had been able to get that gig, of working on the biggest Einstein documentary in years. Ridiculous when I think of it, cos I was certainly the last person with any experience or credentials, and yet, I was there and developed it all. No wonder in the end they thought they should mention my name. Still got the contract, if people want to see it, it is the only proof I have that I was there, making history.

Making history. Such a nice concept. When it comes to Indie music, the only way I made history was by being in London when it all happened, going to clubs every

week listening to that music until death do us apart. Nothing to be proud of really.

I can still hope to make history with my books, if somehow one day the whole planet stops in its track to read them and affirm that this great. I don't really believe that either.

One last chance, perhaps my anarchist black poetry will be turned into the music of a generation. And Leonardo could do that for me, even if he is from Maryland, and lived in California for most of his life. He is still from a British father, and certainly look it, and certainly wish to recognize himself in England. Right, we'll turn him into a British, and somehow we'll rewrite the punk years, when his last record sounds like Barry Manilow. Oh dear, Celine Dion in between, it's never going to happen, is it? I'll be lucky if our film script gets sold. Even luckier if it get produced, with the budget required for that thing out of this world. Another way perhaps to make history.

Is it possible to walk on the frontier between what could make history, and what could actually never see the light of day? The life of Leonardo has been a series of great missed opportunities. If you were to hear here all the films he could have been into and at the last minute they went for another actor, you would not believe you don't know the guy I'm talking about here. Is he condemned, like I am, to never go anywhere, despite all his talents and genius? Is this not depressing?

Still watching the film. The politic bit is over, they all admitted how they were stupid to get mixed into it in the first place. Even I would have known that. And now, they're talking about how they were all off their head on coke, and heroine. Another big boat I've missed, can't say I'm sorry, when I hard them all say how stupid that was, as well. For god's sake! Was there anything about any of it that was actually not stupid and worth living for? I guess the big question is, would they have come up with such great albums if they had not been off their head?

I'm not completely honest myself, I admit that I wrote my best lines when I was off my head, no more than Porto though, red wine and beers. And yet, I can clearly see the difference. I won't come out at any time in the future to say I regret it bitterly, without alcohol, I would have never written any poetry. And somehow, for some weird reason I can't explain, I'm still convinced that this

poetry is what I will be known for one day. Poetry does not sell, but if it were to be turned into music, my god, it could make millions.

If I had written that on heroine, I would proud to say so, and say that I don't regret it. Which makes me wonder, how much better it would have been if I had been on heroine when I wrote that. And the worst part is that while I was writing all that, in the last ten years, my boyfriend was on heroine on a daily basis. And yet, god knows what his own little internal universe was like, none of it came out as art, none of it came out at all, just a big waste.

Which reminds me, how long this book is. The longest I have written in so short a time. I don't dare read it again, just in case I find it boring to death. Perhaps if I slash it in two, one half might be readable, who knows. That's the advantage of having too many pages. Only once before did I slash anything for any of my books, turn into 300 pages what was 1000. And it has been my biggest success to date. None of it was written whilst I was drunk. Amazing... Maybe there's hope for me yet.

30 April 2006

I did not want to write here tonight, of all night, another Sunday before going to work. First I did not want to simply repeat myself over and over again, I understand now that this book will need serious editing to be bearable to anyone who would want to read it, and secondly I don't feel panicked like all other previous Sundays.

I cannot explain it, why tonight I am completely normal, don't feel the need to isolate myself in the close environment of the bathroom, looking for some illusion of a security. Not once have I felt the panic or despair I thought I would again reach.

Is it because I took that last Thursday off, and hence I feel that I had enough time off to get back on my feet? Is it because I told my financial people that I was leaving in 30 days and the apartment people also? Is it that I now liberated?

No. Because despite having told them that, I can still leave in two months time. And after talking with Stephen, this is most likely what will happen. It is just not

realistic to go back to London now, while both of us would not be working and incapable to survive.

So what's up? I still have Master Bitch coming back tomorrow morning from DC, she will still want a 45 minutes every morning as she stated, to make sure that the child that I am only works on what needs to be done urgently, watched and spied upon every second. Why is it that suddenly I don't care?

Perhaps it is the end of April. March-Aprils have always been difficult months for me, and every time both these months were over, everything was perfect. But I don't really believe that, I hope, and then, how could it have an impact on me tonight?

I thought it was perhaps that I was finally moving on with my conferences, that I did not feel guilty this weekend for not having worked on anything. Also that I kind of destroyed their little management game by saying that I was ready to leave at any moment. I feel that they won't try their little games anytime soon, because as soon as it becomes unbearable, I'm out the door, and they know it.

I know it too, too well. I even know now that I don't need to tell the apartment people that I leave in 30 days at the end of the month. I can tell them at any time, in 10 days if necessary, and 30 days later I'm gone, even before if I want to, never mind the money I would lose.

When I am back to some normality, like tonight, I cannot even comprehend what I went through. I don't understand how I could have come so close to committing suicide over this. That I even developed some neurosis like depression and agoraphobia, all of which I did not experienced for quite a while, even if we're only talking about 7 days here, and a relapse might be imminent.

That's not the end of the bad news. I received an email today from my God. You've heard right. A theoretical physicist who's just written the book I've been waiting for, for a very long time indeed. There's no doubt in my mind the man is a bigger genius than Einstein and Newton. All to his credit. As nothing apart from my own website could have inspired him any of his ideas. And I realized that perhaps I did not inspire him at all, since he sort of destroyed just like that many of my own theories. I could still be right though, but I don't think I got him to think about it, he is pretty convinced that most of what I am talking about is just

a question of perception, the same error Einstein did, and he certainly did kill Einstein. And of course, I'm full of Einstein, that's all I've been reading. So I need to go back to all my ideas and rewrite the whole thing in light of Mark McCutcheon's book.

Not all is lost. I told him that I was in too deep to change the novel and film script I was working on, sci-fi wise, and I asked him if it would be acceptable if I were to mention him and his ideas. Now I just have to wait. I don't mind if he says no, my own theories are ample for the story. And at the very least, if I am wrong and wasted all those years thinking out something he finally made come true, it would at least serve this extravagant novel we're working on, I'm sure it will have quite an impact. And if it does, my God, there will no stopping me after that, it will be just the beginning.

Of course, wouldn't it be nice to chuck the job, the 9 to 5, to concentrate full time on writing sci-fi stuff? Is it not why I am in Hollywood right now? Maybe it is a way for destiny to make sure I'll be here a bit longer, so things can actually happen. Another two months surely out to do it? Though I am sometimes afraid that another two months in L.A., and I might never leave the damn place. I would then obviously be in a much better situation, and could perhaps start loving what I had already started to like about the place. Free me from conferences, and I might actually start enjoying this existence.

I've spent my weekend reading Arthur C. Clarke. Maybe that made me feel like I was somewhere else, still in the solar system of course, since most of his stories are really about us finally going to other planets and establishing colonies there. He makes it clear that we just reproduce there the same hell we have on Earth. Not sure if I would be happy to just continue this boring life, even in the colonies. I need much more than that, I need to get out of this solar system altogether. I don't need to be dealing with anyone else from Earth, like in the films, the planet must be dead or on the verge off, by the time I escape.

I also got a boost this weekend for having finally put online the last book I wrote in French. Never mind that it is only on my forum, and not on the website, but who cares? It is out there, and my literary forum seems more popular than my website at the moment. I am even tempted now to do the same with my other last French book that no one has read yet. It is called, ironically enough, A French-Canadian in Hollywood. However it was written two years before I ended

up in Los Angeles. It is my experience working with Hollywood on films and TV series, and that should be interesting. However the whole book will take me forever to correct before I can add day by day some chapters to the forum. This is why to put it online as I correct it is a great motivation, and I should not miss that chance. Now, if I could only find the courage to put online the four other books I wrote in English that are still not online, I would feel I have achieved something worth of opening a bottle of Champagne. I had to forget my other thought of putting online the four film scripts I wrote for that other production company, since the main one has now been turned into a television series that I can watch here every week. And they certainly, I think at least, since I never watched it, kept any of my ideas. Anyway, these ideas are all crap, since I had nothing to do with the general main lines, I would not want to put my name on any of it. I worked a year on this, I need to just forget it and learn my lesson.

My mom is pretty convinced I came to Los Angeles to waste my time. I don't think so. One way or another, this has been quite an experience, one that I will not forget, that I'm sure will be filled with great memories when I leave, despite all the negative stuff. As this is how my memory works, I can only remember the great times, thank God!

It is the third time tonight that I thank God, must be because I can already feel that I am in Salt Lake City, I'll be there next Saturday for at least five days, for a conference, my first one. Utah is the last place any of my colleagues would want to go. They jump at the chance to go to New York or Washington, not too sure why. For me Utah is the perfect place. It is the only place I really wanted to go in the whole of America. I even mentioned it many times in my previous book in French that I just put online, and then, I certainly didn't know at the time that I was going to end up there. I need to see it for myself, I need to know that side of America. Not sure what will happen to me there, perhaps nothing, and yet, it means a lot to me. Can't explain it. I might be there still in that company next month to go to Philadelphia for my second conference, but for some reason Philadelphia does not light any bulbs in my head. I feel like yawning when I think that I will have to go Northeast for that conference, after having been buried in the West for more than half a year. Who could be excited to be going to Philadelphia? Salt Lake City is much better, much more exotic, much more unreachable for me, the sheep lost amongst billions. If there is one gay club in town, I'll make an exception and go. Somehow they won't be these irradiated humanoids I imagine them to be. And perhaps they won't be as plastic as what I

witnessed in San Francisco. In California, gay people don't touch the ground anymore. They all live in some other universe in which I simply cannot recognize myself. None of them heard of Depeche Mode for a start, so that is certainly a proof that we're not from the same planet. And if they somehow heard of Depeche Mode, I'm sure they never heard about Nine Inch Nails or Type O Negative. They might even think Type O Negative is a new disease. Nothing in common. Not that I think the ones in Utah might know these bands, they might even be into something even worse, like country music. Then, there's certainly no hope for any of them. They will all go straight to hell. And they will all damn deserve it.

3 May 2006

It took more than seven months before this office decided to organize some sort of night out where all our colleagues would go to a pub nearby to talk about work and destroy management. I could not believe it! In England, we have this kind of thing every fourth night! (Every fourteen days.) So I went, the Wankers Doodle pub around the corner, or is it called the Yankee Doodles? I can never remember. All I know is that it is the nearest pub to me, and by definition, if I were still in England, it would be the place to go every night. It is a sports club, and they were shooting a film there the other day, so by definition, this is not the place I belong to.

But I wanted to go there, from the first day, and finally I did. The waitresses are all bitches, did not take long to alienate them. As predicted, even big tips did not make any difference, without it, I guess, they would have found a way to kick me out in no time.

Well, I spoke with the Valley Girl. I found out that she is not very high in the Chinese Girl esteem right now. Normal, the Chinese Girl is becoming Management. They had a huge fight this week, because the Chinese Girl this week became the Manager of the Iraqi guy. Who was the only person the Valley Girl was actually managing. No wonder she went berserk. That friendship is over, no longer will the Valley Girl and the Chinese Girl ever talk against the bosses. Which is laughable really, since the Chinese Girl as always found a way to be pro-bosses, and the Valley Girl was blind to it, talking against them at every turn, not realizing she was destroying herself. So not the Valley Girl, having understood, is

trying to destroy all management at every level, the why tonight we went to the Wankers Doodle.

She told me she had a meeting with the bosses, where they asked her if I intended to leave the company. They know so well that she is the center of all gossips, that they were certain I would have told her everything I felt like. I had not. And she told them that I had no intention to leave.

So tonight I told her what I wanted her to know, what I wanted her to report. That now, since they have calmed down, I was not thinking of leaving anymore. Tomorrow they will all feel safe. However she did say that I had to be careful, to not make accusations, because she said in the past, all the employees who did threaten to leave, they simply told them: good bye. To which I answered that I would not care very much, that it would be fine by me. I was not threatening, I was actually thinking of leaving the company. I asked her twice if they had any intention of sacking me, and twice she said no. She even said, they can't sack me. Not sure what she meant, perhaps that they paid a lot of money to get me here in the first place. She thinks it would stop them. I don't think so.

The Spanish Boy was there, many comments just confirmed he was more gay than I ever were. At the end of the night, I asked if anybody would drop me home, the Valley Girl instantly said that she would. I was hoping the Spanish Boy would, so in the end I had to say: well, if the Spanish Boy was to bring me home, I would have said yes, otherwise, I'll just take my bicycle. They laughed really hard, I still don't know the real consequences of that comment. They were fishing for it, hoping for something like that, so I gave it to them. I guess in the end it was a way to announce to him that we were going together to Salt Lake City together next week, and I had some expectations. So maybe it will play in his brain and something might actually happen next week, though I doubt it. Something would happen if he was not so stuck up, stuck with these people, as they know all his secrets. It is too dangerous a game for him at this time. Without those girls at work, he would let go, he would sleep with me. But now he won't, his reputation is more important. So God knows what will happen in Utah next week. Let's see who he is, really. I could at least find that out! I'll get him drunk on Sunday, we don't have to wake up until midday for that workshop, so hopefully, if I don't sleep with him, I will at least get a confession that he is gay. That would be an achievement on its own.

When your mom lives around the corner, when your colleagues are your best friends since time immemorial, there's just no way someone would come out to anyone. He is so stuck in there, he will not be able to admit to anything next week. I will have to convince him that I won't say anything, that I am leaving for London anyway at the end of the month. It is after all what my bosses asked the Valley Girl: is he planning to leave? Yes I am, but none of them right now know about it, cos I have not even told the gossip person of the office. Because I am more clued up than any of them there, I know how dangerous she is. So I manipulate her to my advantage, while all the other just go to her to get destroyed in the end.

At this time, there's only one thing keeping me in Los Angeles. That Spanish Boy. If we sleep together in Utah next week, and if it is repeated the week after, once back in Los Angeles, that's it, I'm not leaving anymore. Otherwise, I'm gone. Back to my baby in London, the one I really love and know it can last a lifetime. Yes to the adventure, the possibility of a love affair, but if it does not happen there and then, then that's it. I have no time to waste, I am not your mother, or your girlfriend. This is serious, I base life decisions upon this, it means living in a country or another, where you would be heart broken to try to find me over there, as I would be gone forever. You have only one chance, so don't screw it up. It has to be clear, I have to tell him. I have no time for mind games, to wait until he is ready to finally come out of the closet. It is now or never. My whole future depends on it, and I won't think twice about it. Once is enough. In Salt Lake City, can't imagine a better place to make life changing decisions. I hope he will see it that way. He will have none of his girlfriends around this time, no one to impress, but me. I hope he takes advantage of it. And for that, he will really need to feel isolated, like if the external no longer exists, and that is why Utah is so perfect, because I can't imagine any other place on the planet capable of making you feel that way. If he does not feel secure enough there to tell me what's really on his mind, it means that to get out of the closet, he will need many more years. And therefore, I'm not the one will break his cocoon. Oh please, Utah, don't let me down! You better be this lost place where no one ever wants to be, where they feel there is nothing outside of it, so I can make him feel perfect to admit to everything.

5 May 2006

Wow! What a hard week this has been! Fortunately it was not a depressing one filled with problems, it was just a tremendously busy one in preparation for my conference next week, the admin of it all, added with all the work I had to do for the two other conferences I am working on at the moment.

The admin of a conference is something I never really completely did before, except perhaps the one I did in my last job in London. However I kept it so simple, I was done before reaching breaking point. At the moment I am so filled with energy, so stressed out, so tired, but it is a good feeling, one of a job well down. Once this event is over, I will feel, for the first time in my life, an extraordinary feeling of huge achievement, of satisfaction.

However now is not the time for meetings with the Chinese Girl, neither my boss, and I can feel that on this last afternoon in the office, both are preparing to hit me with something yet unknown. I am in a state where I could explode quite easily, being under that kind of pressure. And I am certain the Chinese Girl is exactly at the same point, since this week alone she has succeeded in alienating just about every one else in the office. Last week it was the Spanish Boy, at the beginning of the week it was the Valley Girl, and at the end of the week it was the Sweet Chinese Girl, and with that last one it has culminated today in some sort of fight, where the Black Guy has been mixed up in.

Dear me, how many meetings with the big boss will be necessary to iron all the problems out, I wonder? And unfortunately I am also on the agenda, since my problems with the Chinese Girl are well known for being the main gossip of the company.

And I know what my boss wanted to talk to me about when he offered to drive me back home. He wanted to find out, and he will want this afternoon, if I intended to leave the company, and when. And I don't want to get into that right now, I want to go Salt Lake City, get this thing over it, and come back and then plan my future once I am a bit more relaxed. This afternoon is not going to be easy, I wish I could skip it altogether.

The Sweet Chinese Girl's problem is that she's got to go to a conference on her own with 200 people. The big boss will be with her, but that means she's on her own to do everything, and now they will ship the Customer Service with her, but it took quite a fight. I wish her problems were that she has got too much to do,

so it would look like I am not the only one sinking. However she was never behind on any of her events, since she was in charge of the admin from the very beginning, like the Spanish Guy. And they know what they have to do. So I am the only one who looks like he is incompetent. And the Valley Girl made sure of it, repeating all of what the Chinese Girl has said about me. Trust no one, even when they pretend to be on your side, I know it is just that their hate has shifted to someone else, the Chinese Girl, and now they see that they can use me to show that she is the one who is incompetent, for not having taken the time to sit down with me to tell me all I have to do. It looks good on me for once, but I don't like it, to be used like that, even if in the end it proves my innocence.

6 May 2006

Something unexpected in my writing life has made me uneasy for the last few days. Usually when I am bothered by something, I have forgotten all about it a few days later. Not this time. It might actually be much more significant than I thought. Perhaps it was what was needed for me to finally move on to some more light hearted, funny and positive writing style. I was tired before coming to Los Angeles of how dark everything I write is, how depressing, and unfortunately it simply reflect the life I lead, what people made it, my own experience. And now, somehow, through all this misery, I will need to find a voice, the voice of an optimist person in a better world, where happiness is possible even when your deep and sinking in a huge black hole.

What I wrote that caused a stir, was two pages long, the end of my last dark poetry book. Somehow I spent a whole night this week writing it, convinced it was my best ever, however it sort of insulted the American people and when I put it online I got such a negative feedback and radical answers (and perhaps death threat, but I did not have the courage to read any of the comments), that I dropped the text from the book. And nearly dropped the whole book from my website to. I did however take out this blog and another blog I was writing in parallel. And for now I have no intention of putting them online again, not this year at least. I am sort of worried about offending people, can you believe? I wanted to rewrite the whole thing, make it bit more positive or at the very least less negative.

One thing, this is the last of those dark poetry book I will write. I am proud of the last one, I think it is my best one, however I cannot see any of this being

published anytime soon and to write them almost requires a suicide ritual, drowning in alcohol.

And my blog, my journal, is another matter to consider. I cannot see this being published either, and I am not even certain if it could be of interest to anyone. I was now wondering if finally I should continue to write my blog only for myself, not even put it online, or just perhaps put it online as some sort of curiosity and quickly forget it is online. At the moment it is still so about what just happened in my life, and these people I am talking about could find it any day, read it, and that is a frightening thought.

One way or another, either I move into complete fiction, positive and happy one, or I might as well just forget it all. Free myself from writing, and at the moment I am certainly considering taking a few months off writing, until I am back in London at least. Not sure, let's say that perhaps there will be a transition there to something else, and of course there should be, I sort of said I had finished these books. But I can continue to write more of the same, it is boring.

Right now I'm on a plane to Salt Lake City, I see the desert below, I feel like I am on Mars, orbiting the planet like a geostationary satellite. When I was living in England, I thought that the idea of sand dunes and Death Valley was appealing, I'm not so sure anymore.

I also missed my flight, because Leonardo took forever to arrive, for \$25 more I took a later one. He was a bit smelly, and his car was really smelly, I barely survived the trip. It is a good thing that I will be leaving Los Angeles, he is too demanding a friend and I don't want friends like that. He was so rude on the phone the other day because I did not answer my phone (the night I was down the pub with my colleagues), that it freaked me out. If we were not working on a book together and film script, I would have told him then and there that this friendship was over. That no one would speak to me like that and threaten me to be their friends, especially when they are so demanding.

Calling me every night, wanting to talk on the phone for 5 hours at a time, thankfully often about the film script, because otherwise he just repeats himself over and over again and tell me all his previous experiences which he told me already many times over.

If I have to ever hear again how he saved Marlon Brando's life on the set of a film, when he was just about to eat a donut which had been sprayed with some chemical to look fresh for the camera, I will have to tell him that there is a limit to my patience. I almost did today when he started to tell me again for the twelfth time. I could not believe it. He should stop the drugs, perhaps he would remember what it is that he told me before.

7 May 2006

Wow, somehow I have been misled about Utah, the place is simply awe inspiring and lovelier than I ever thought it possible. The mountains surrounding the city are comparable to what I saw in Austria and Switzerland. The snow at the top of those mountains that you can see all around Salt Lake City makes it a worthy view every day.

The town is very clean with very large streets, and is not a huge town like Los Angeles. There does not seem to be that many people living here, and hence, no one I have met so far appears to be stressed or suffering from mind diseases as it is so often the case in other large cities. People are so nice here, so peaceful, I almost did not believe it at first and thought that if I were to live here, they could quickly turn into monsters, like everywhere else.

Maybe this is due to religion, but I doubt it. Mormons are Christians at heart, they believe in Jesus, the old and new testament, they just have another Bible on top of it, the Book of Mormons. Now, everywhere I lived, everywhere I worked, I have been surrounded by people who believed in a religion or another, a God or another, and that certainly never stopped any of them from scheming against everyone else, and act foolishly to gain more power over others. If somehow Mormons succeeded in transforming their people into some human beings, as I have seen so far in my two days here, I think it deserves some investigation.

I have seen this episode of South Park, about Joseph Smith who could have possibly just invented out of nowhere his book of Mormons, and even then, who cares? If the guy was capable of inventing a new Bible and a new religion based on the old one, then I admire him for that accomplishment. However, I know next to nothing about any of this, so I would easily be convinced otherwise.

I have spent the day yesterday visiting the Temple and this extraordinary headquarters of the Mormons. Spoke with so many beautiful young women trying to convince me of their faith, that if I had been on the lookout for a new wife, and willing to espouse their faith, I would now be a happy man! They all something in common, they were all nice, peaceful, happy people. Ordinarily I would have thought that it was because they somehow have been brainwashed into their religion, but I could not find any cracks. Could they really be happy, peaceful? Shame I would never join any religion myself, but being surrounded by people like this might make a whole world of difference to my life at the moment, where I am struggling to find nicer people to work with, to live with.

On the other hand, I would have liked to see their faces if they had known I was gay. It is well known that they are very much against the gay marriage thing in Utah and are fighting with all their powers to prevent any of this from ever happening. They must have a strong stance against gays, so that could be another big problem. So in the end, I might never find my place on this earth. I might have to isolate myself completely from my fellow humans. And actually Utah could do fine for this purpose, with all these mountains around, nothing busy around, just a bunch of peaceful people below in the valley.

I have just finished reading a lot on the Internet about the Mormons, and also against them. My head is full of these depressing facts, of human being controlled by religion, collecting 10% of their salary, money used to build these Disney Lands for spirituality, and shopping malls which will keep the money coming for decades to come. I won't speak about that here, I don't really care about the internal problems of the Mormons, you could easily say that it has been worse in just about every other religion on the planet. Nice Temple though, amazing conference centre, I wish I had one just like that for my new conference company I would start. I have to say, when I saw the center, and the water fountain running down from a perhaps 20 floor building, I felt something creepy. I felt I was in a novel by George Orwell. It frightened me instead of inspiring this great spiritual feeling that these constructions have been built for, to give them credibility as a wealthy church, a powerful one, as opposed to Christianity being a dying church where nothing grand has been built for decades, if not centuries.

I have also read some stuff about many young Mormons being depressed. Is that true? So perhaps that happy after all? I would need to investigate further, but not today.

At the moment I am a bit freaked out. It is Noon on a Sunday, maybe it is because I haven't gone to church, I did not accept the invitation of the Sisters yesterday, the missionaries to come back this morning to listen to the Choir. However I suspect that I feel uneasy because I have spent too much money this month and I fear I might have to survive with nothing for the last two weeks of the month. Also because the Spanish Boy is about to arrive from Los Angeles in less than two hours. That work will start, talks and negotiations about the conference, and I am a bit worried about it all. There is no reason to, I have planned everything to the last minute, I never thought if I were shown how, I could be that efficient. If only I had been giving the time to be that efficient it would have been better, in the end I had to accomplish miracles, and I did. So what could go wrong now? In the conference world? Everything. At least this is not the Nuclear conference, no activist will show up to freak out and destroy the event. We had a nuclear event a few years back and activists disguised themselves in hotel staff and came into the conference room, and caused havoc. Hard to not feel sympathy for them, when an article in the newspaper this week, front page, was saying that the government was trying to find a way to alert future civilizations in 10,000 years, to not dig where we have put our nuclear waste in New Mexico. Now, that is something. Thinking that far into the future, when you assumed that you will have been wipe out from existence, and either survivors of our civilization, or a totally new one, might decide to build a whole city near a nuclear waste site, and you need to prevent it from beyond the grave with high technology you had at the time. That would make a great novel.

Another great novel I was thinking about, since I am in Mormons country, was that to assume that Joseph Smith really had a book made gold pages. That after being burgled a few times, and having to hide everywhere, he might have decided to hide it better and declare that it had been returned to god. And now I just have to concoct a nice novel in the kinds of the Da Vinci Code, with a professor of symbolgy going after the Book of Mormons and eventually either finding it, or at the very least find out that others found it and have a good idea of where it is now. What do you think? Do you think the Mormons would let me write such a book, invent such legends and myths about their faith and religious history? It would be heresy for any Mormon to write such a book, so if I don't do it, who will? Of course, we could not find the book, or if we were, no one would be allowed to read it. Because either way I would be in trouble. One I would validate the Joseph Smith's story, and help solidify the Mormons Church.

Something I don't want to do. Also, if Joseph Smith's translation was not accurate, if he just invented what he thought it could be about, or even received the knowledge from his meditation, then surely the whole thing will be quite different from the original. It could destroy the Mormons Church, something I don't want to do either. I have been blamed many things, I feel guilt for many things, but I won't take responsibility for that. So we can find the book, but then it needs to disappear again, perhaps in the vaults of the big Temple in Salt Lake City, where only the main prophet alive can read, with perhaps his twelve disciples. Maybe we can find that there were more than the initial translation, more prophets who talked about something that Joseph Smith thought the world was not ready at this stage. Something amazing, something that could change the world's religions. But what? A new interpretation of the life of Jesus? That he was married with kids, as in the Da Vinci Code? That Jesus was gay, and that's why he didn't procreate and disappeared for many years in his early life? Or even better, Jesus was a traveler from the future, he had access to the better technology than we have today, and decided to use his tricks to convince the barbarians that they should stop killing each other, loving people and by happy for a change. All I am demanding really from society today. Jesus could also be an alien, worth thinking about... in that case I should move from the Mormons to the Church of Scientology or the other one claiming just that while they build their spaceship. And the new mall the Mormons are building in Salt Lake City for 1.5 billion dollars, could it fact be the launch pad of that spaceship. Underneath the mall, huge installations could open up the mall, and spit into the heavens the ship that will bring the whole Temple back to God. Got to move into science fiction, life is too boring otherwise...

Right after I visited the Mormons Temple yesterday (well, I was not allowed in the Temple of course), I went straight to the Planetarium. Very small, almost nothing to show for, and yet, I spent many hours looking at everything, reading everything, thinking. It was an experience in scales.

I was surprised to finally get a glimpse, with the help of models, of how high the space shuttle and space station orbit around the Earth. Very low, almost still on Earth, and they call that being in space? Not me. I was also surprised to finally visualize that the size of the Earth compared with the size of the Sun, is quite something. The Earth model I had in front of me was of my height, about 1m72 or 5'11". If you take that ball into a football stadium, and double the stadium in size and assume this is the size of the Sun, and put the Earth model in the middle

of it all, you have a great way of understanding the scale of the planets compared with the sun. Pluto is so small, not sure if it is really a planet. And in fact, the Earth is so small, it is barely a little rock compared with the sun. I was wondering if the Earth could be considered of any significance at all in the solar system, other than just a by product, some rocks orbiting the Sun and that was it, nothing special about it. Some other civilization studying our solar system, might talk about our sun, but forget to mention the planets, as if they were simply like asteroids not worth anything or of being of any importance. No matter if somehow limited intelligent bugs (us) evolved on one of those rocks.

One interesting experience while I was there. There was a family of Chinese people visiting the Planetarium. Grand parents, daughter and grand daughter. The little girl was so small, and yet running around. Her mom had talking to her in Chinese for at least 20 minutes, and when I was looking at the big Earth model, she was virtually just between my legs at the back of me, and from the floor I heard her speak distinctly in French-Canadian. I immediately turned around and look at the little Chinese girl, I was wondering if I had dreamt it. How could she speak French, and from Québec, when the whole family behind only spoke Chinese and showed no sign that they even talked English. Also that we are in Salt Lake City, and that is certainly a remote place to be for Québec people. So I turned back and convinced myself that she spoke Chinese and for some reason it sounded French.

So I continue my visit, and while I was looking at the astronaut suit upstairs, the little girl and her mother came to watch it too. And the little said clearly in French Canadian that she did not believe it was real, that it was fake. I was astonished, as she is barely 4 years old. Could she had already been told that perhaps the Americans never went to the Moon? And remembered it? I had to ask the mom, why did she say, in French. She was surprised that I was French-Canadian, I meet them everywhere, last one in San Francisco. She called her daughter, and she asked to repeat what she had said. And the little said that she did not believe this was a real man, that there was no one in it, it was a fake man. Phew, I thought, somehow it made me feel better. I did not like the idea of a young generation believing that we never went to the Moon as some of fact, as far as I know it has not disproved yet. But it made me thing about it afterwards, while I was watching the crew of Appollo 11 or 15 on the TV screen there. I promised myself to go through all five DVDs I have about it at home upon my return to Los Angeles. I want to see all the footage on the moon. And I am also eager for us to

return to the moon, and finally film some better footage of it all. Because even though the thought that us puny humans never got out of the Moon-Earth system, we have at least gone to the Moon. All is not lost then, we've accomplished significant. And in these matters, this is not American pride, this worldwide pride. The Americans have not gone to the Moon, the human race has. And if we have not, it is perhaps that we can't, as many Russians working in the space program in Russia have claimed in interviews. And that would also be a depressing thought. Perhaps like the religious people, I would prefer to live in the illusion that it is true, that we went there, that I have faith, and that there's no limit to where we can go in the universe.

If radiation is too much for even leaving the Earth, I guess I could adapt to this thought, I could dream of future technology making it possible, to go even further than Mars. All this space program, and especially private companies finally getting into the competition line, is one thing that motivates me to be alive, along with Theoretical Physics. If I were totally free to indulge in anything I really want, I would throw myself in the study of all that. Now it is not possible, because of finance reasons and time constraints. But I would love that.

And now that I have discussed here all that I wanted to say about my initial thoughts about Utah and Salk Lake City as being a wonderful little place set in a beautiful setting, filled with nice, happy and unthreatening people, I am ready to spend the rest of the day and week with something else. The Spanish Boy, shipped directly from the total opposite of the inner peace I found here, straight from the office from hell in Los Angeles.

He will be here within the hour, I don't know what to expect. It will be the first time we will be alone outside the office. I am not expecting him to be the patronizing and condescending person he has been, with all the problems that he has caused me in the last few months. He strives on appearances, on the opinions others have about him, he needs to look cool, be cool, but that mask might just fall today. That is what I've been hoping for, as I mentioned earlier, however none of this might happen. Even just his mask falling. Perhaps he was not lying for the benefit of others, who might think he was also gay, something he worked hard to make sure no one would know. Maybe he is not pretending when it is clear he does not want to have anything to do with me. It is possible that the guy simply does not like me, though I don't think he hates me. And in that case, it is going to be a long four more days indeed. He did say that once he's drunk, he will talk

to me about his sexual life. Sort of. I'm a bit worried about that, as I suspect he could start talking about girls and girlfriends. And that would still not tell me if he is gay or not, because he could be just bullshitting me.

I am such a danger for anyone who's gay in the office and who wishes to keep it a dark and shameful secret. Because I am so openly gay, I can understand it could frighten anyone else still in the closet. The writer from North Hollywood still working at work, has been very nice to me from afar, saying good morning, smiling at me, but never re-invited me to go to lunch with him, and never takes the time to come and chat with me in the office. He keeps his distance. I'm just afraid that the Spanish Boy will act the same, not even want to tell me the truth in private. And yet, I have never betrayed the North Hollywood guy, I have not told one single soul that he was gay. And the Valley Girl certainly hinted at it, she asked me many times if he had admitted it to me, I did not tell her. Now I think she must know, because they go to lunch together at least once a week, and so surely he would have told her? But she cannot keep a secret, the gossip central of the whole office, he must know that, so maybe even to her he did not say anything. And thinking back, he only told me in that restaurant that he was gay, because one minute before I told him I was. At that time I don't think he knew I was openly gay, that the bosses knew from even before hiring me. So he must assumed I was going to keep it quiet, and therefore he would not have to worry about me speaking about it, since it would mean telling them I was as well.

Funny that despite all the openness about being gay, a great majority of them still live in the closet. There are not many good reasons to do so these days, I can't think of any, since they are not likely to lose their jobs or be passed for a promotion. Perhaps they are afraid of simple prejudices in other people, their religious beliefs which could convince them that gay people are some sort of inferior race of people, an anomaly of nature. It is true that when it comes to America, and how they treat their gay people in their offices, I know nothing apart from what I have seen in my own company in Los Angeles. There it is not a problem, but God knows if it is elsewhere. I'm sure in Utah it would be a major problem, I have no doubt about it. I would suffer discrimination here, I might even go back into the closet, who knows.

Well, I better get ready to receive the Spanish Boy. I better prepare myself mentally and psychologically. I've got to be ready for anything. Let's not forget where he comes from, that office filled with bitches working against me. He is a

direct connection to everyone in the office. Everything I might say will be used against me to incriminate me further. And the first thing he'll do once we go back on Thursday, he will gossip about everything that has happened, everything I have done, everything. It is no time to get drunk and spill my heart out. This is official business, a business trip, we have work to do before all else. I've got to keep it professional, however, every time in the past that I told myself that, I went out of my way to act completely unprofessionally and destroy what remains of my poor track records and reputation. Have I got any credibility left in this world? All because I always tell the truth, what I most deeply think about everyone and everything? I guess we're just about to find out this week.

I feel so bad at the moment, I feel so lost. One look at the snow on top of that huge mountain, gives me the chill. Not sure I would want to be there right now, though it might cure me from freaking out at this time.

Yesterday in the shop of the Planetarium, they were selling these little puppets of Clown Fish, and already then it broke my heart, made me think of my boyfriend, our fish and cats. Today as I saw a video and in one of them a skinny child was pushing a tire. And that also reminded me of my skinny baby in London. If I were to drink now, I would certainly be crying all night. And tomorrow at the conference I would be a mess.

It is rare that I feel the need to see people, but right now I hope the Spanish Boy will make me forget to think too much. He is a familiar face after all, while I am all alone in Salt Lake City. Which makes me wonder how well I would be able to sustain total isolation somewhere on a mountain around here. Sure, I always get over it the next day, and then it is a few weeks before it comes back to haunt me, and right now is not the best of times to feel homesick, wherever that home is in this world.

When you are as lost and in pain as I am now, you are very vulnerable. If I was a bit more religious, the Mormons might have succeeded to get a new recruit out of me. But I'm already too far gone on my path of destruction and the road to hell. I'm beyond saving, no one will save me now, and I'm not expecting it either. My empire has been built out of Adobe bricks, my whole life as well, and could collapse at any time. I am not that strong, and I learnt that only three days ago, when I wrote one too many page. And now I wonder, how many of these too many pages have I written? And when I should start censoring myself in order to

soften the blow, the impact my work could have. I will never find the time or the courage, and so, we'll just have to see as it happens. It is not like I am about to become global any time soon, at any rate. I'm already forgotten anyway, and nothing on the horizon suggests that it might change. So, ultimately, I'm worrying for nothing.

Okay, he finally called, we visited the conference rooms, and went to eat at the California Pizza Kitchen. I guess, just like the British away at conferences who need to find the only Irish pub in town, Californians away on business need to find the only Californian restaurant in town. Thank god I'm not looking for Canadian pubs or restaurants, if such thing exists.

We had a nice conversation, he even spoke about my boyfriend. I could not exactly ask him if he was gay or not, straight like that. And he only had one cocktail which apparently had no alcohol in it. He says he usually drinks straight vodka, that sounds promising, however he is still recuperating from this Spanish party he had on Friday, and hence can't drink anything. What a killer.

So I told him we could find him a nice girlfriend in town, those two Mormon girls at the Temple, or the fat one at the Planetarium. He did not say anything, there would have been his chance to tell me he was not looking for a girlfriend.

Almost the first thing he told me was that he needed to go to the Jacuzzi, because his knee hurts. I thought it was a way for us to get together naked in the sauna, but I think he kind of meant that it was for him only and I was not invited. He is probably there already and will call me later to go for a drink in the Private Club of the hotel. In Utah bars have to be private by law, because I think it is illegal to serve alcohol only you are in a private club or something. Sounds like those Coffee House in Amsterdam, where you can go smoke a puff of whatever.

He also kind of made it clear that it was kind of painful to be here with me. Sort of. So that's what I was afraid of. He does not want to be here. He strives in places like Los Angeles or New York, even Washington, for him Utah is the end of the known world. Beyond Salt Lake City, nothing exists. The last place on earth he would want to be, moreover, with me.

It's a bit what I was saying before, how certain people don't even hide the fact that they don't want to be with you, that they barely support you as it. Even I

never ever told anyone that I could not stand them and that I'd rather be dead than be stuck in Utah with them for four days. I could still be wrong, he might still joking around with his stupid comments, we'll see.

We went to the Planetarium, I showed him what I saw yesterday, what I was thinking then, and then for 15 minutes after that he kept asking questions about the universe, like how long a signal takes to arrive here from the Sun, and from Andromeda. I did not particularly wanted to discuss my theoretical physics ideas, I told him it would bore him, but he insisted for me to explain the basics of it. I kept it to a minimum. Perhaps that might change his mind about me. I also never miss a chance to mention Europe, Cannes, Switzerland, Mont Blanc, etc. Because I know he's dying of jealousy about my past, that it is one of his big dreams to go to Europe. He's quite bright, certainly has a sense of curiosity about the world we live in, at the same time he never misses a chance to spit on me as if I was nothing. I guess he has been with one too many Hollywood stars lately. He will be quickly cured from that, I'm pretty sure, the day it all ends and that he will never again meet one. And on that subject we have not yet talked about. My published books, my work in TV and cinema, etc. That is another field of his interests, and I will bring the subject tonight, just so once again he can understand that I am not so insignificant and brain dead as he seems to have judged me already. And perhaps he will also understand that I am not impressed by his little friends in Hollywood, that I certainly do not envy him, and I could not bare it anyway. Which might explain why I like Salt Lake City and don't particularly enjoy Los Angeles.

As to why he might believe that I have nothing in my mind, that I am stupid, must be the oldest prejudice of the world. Anyone who speaks with a strong accent, like I do, and do not understand every single word that he's spoken to, people immediately jump to the conclusion that you must be some sort of retard. It does not help either that I am kind of playing stupid most of the time, and can appear quite naïve, playing into the games of everyone, just for the heck of it. Because I'm bored out of my mind most of the time. So they all believe that I am very naïve, on top of being a retard. Poor them, they have no idea what goes on in my mind, I am like a computer over analyzing them and their behavior, I'm studying like we study some savages or captive animals. I'm constantly studying the whole psychology of it, far from being the imbecile they have convinced themselves I was.

Maybe I should not be trying so hard to reach him. Perhaps I should let go, cancel our drinking session tonight, and tell him I'm not going to do anything else with him whilst we're here. I should let him come to me, however there's isn't much time. It cannot happen later, once we're back in L.A. We will never again be alone at a conference. So I can simply not propose anything, just let him contact me, pretend and act like if tonight we won't do anything, and then wait for him to propose something. That's about it, not sure what would that accomplish exactly, but I have to somehow communicate to him that he is not God, that he's nothing special, and that I don't care to be with him or not. I've been self-sufficient for a very long time, even if sometimes it is hard.

Of course, it does not help that he appears to have lost weight since last week. Shit, what wonderful special drug has he taken to lose weight in one week? He certainly ate well tonight. So he looks cuter than usual, me too in fact I seem to have lost weight since last week, though I can't really explain why. I think I never looked that great since I have arrived in Los Angeles. So if nothing happens, it was simply not meant to be. And it would spare me a lot trouble anyway once we go back at work, and when will come the time for me to leave this job. He could certainly change my life, tonight, and I would let it happen.

It's not likely to happen now, it is past 11 pm, he won't call. We could not go for a drink and he would not come to my room. I wonder what he will invent to justify letting me down like this without even calling me to free me from waiting after him all night. He's only acceptable excuse would be to tell me that he fell asleep. It is possible. Whether it is true or not does not really matter. I felt sick anyway, and I mean physically sick. I did not get myself ready to go out with him, I got ready for bed quite early. I slept a bit. I'm still a bit shaky. I have no doubt that once this conference is over, my whole body will just shut down and I will be really sick for a few days. It's always like that, because bringing an event to terms is so exhausting, since so much is involved just in the preparation of it, especially when you do everything yourself, that in the end it always nearly kills you. The stress alone probably plays a big role in this. There's just so much stress someone can endure. At least I won't have to fake it this time, I'll go to work, they'll see how sick I am, and I'll go home for two days.

I called him, finally, which was a bit stupid, since it is 11h30. I had to, just in case. Well, he did not answer. Either he is not in his room or he is sleeping. These phones ring so hard, it would have waken him up. So he decided not to answer. I

think it is pretty clear now that I should just forget about him, just try to survive this conference, be sick for a while, and go back to work.

The first day is finally over. It was only half a day, I'm already dead. Tomorrow is the big day. Get at 5 am, finishes at around 7 pm. I went to eat with the Spanish Boy to a restaurant, Red Rock or something, he mentioned again sometime today that he wanted me to write about him. We walked around the place, went around the Temple, I went inside the Conference Center, he waited outside, as he was so afraid of those girls jumping on us to sell us their religion. He wants to go to bed early tonight, we had a few drinks, and I was already starting to say things I should not. I might regret, but I don't want to. Nothing like I was interested in him, thank god I've been able to not even suggest it. It would have gone straight back to the office, and that is just what everyone is expecting to hear. I won't give them that chance. What I regret saying, was that I kind of suggested that the Valley Girl was mad because the new guy under her has got the same job title and salary as her, and she vowed to destroy him because of that when he started. So I told the Valley Boy that it was a good thing she did not know what my salary is, because then she could also freak out. So in essence I told him my salary was higher than hers, and he knows she's on \$50,000. This is the kind of thing he will report back and the valley Girl could suddenly turn against me over this, vows to destroy me even more out of pure jealousy. I hope I won't regret it. I don't know more about him now than I did before, except that he has been in two plays in his life, just for fun, the first one years ago for a whole month in Edinburgh, in the Fringe Theater Festival. The other in Macbeth in L.A., where they were performing on the streets with an audience following them from place to place. And that's all, after hours spent with him today, I have nothing else to report. How boring is that?

I guess I could talk about my biggest worry. The first law of conferences is that any paper you know you will need at the conference, needs to be with you at all time. Luggage gets lost, or goes to Timbuktu even when you only fly to the next State. Fedex suddenly decided that they cannot deliver your package until the end of your event, even when you paid on a Friday full price for early delivery on Monday morning, and your conference ends on the next Wednesday. And this is what is happening now, and I might get my important papers on Tuesday morning, and though it was not very serious, because I only put there papers that were not that important, I got stuck, because a few things like extra agendas

and my speech was, by some sort of act of self destruction on my part, on that pile. That was enough to freak him out, even though I have all the important papers with me. That is basically what will be my downfall and the last nail in my coffin. I'm sure he has already reported me for this, the whole office must know by now, and though the conference is a success, for them it will be my failure. I have not heard the last of this. And some other fatal blow, is that this morning I arrived 10 minutes late. That certainly cannot be forgiven. I told him that it was because I had already spent 20 minutes downstairs helping an exhibitor, but do you think he reported that? No. When I arrived, he was already on the phone with the office telling them that I was late. And if tomorrow, for the whole 13-14 hours, I make the mistake to come back to my room for even one minute, and if he finds out, that will be another fatal blow. I cannot disappear for more than two minutes, or else, he starts wondering where I am, begins to suspect that I am back to my room even if it was just to brush my teeth. This is extra stress I did not need, and the whole is making me sick. No solidarity here, that's for sure. And it only goes one way, because it is not my style to play these little games of pettiness. It shows how small minded these people are, that they play right into the schemes of management, turning this place into an even greater prison than it is already. Let's see if I am right once we go back to the office, he will have reported everything, every single detail. And you know what he did all day? He played on his portable computer, listened to music, chatting with his numerous friends on AIM, even talking to them via his computer, and spent a large amount of the day on the phone speaking to all of them, whether colleagues in the office or his other friends. I won't report any of that, even if he manages to get me crucified. Hopefully he will realize that, and it will make him think, but I doubt that.

And this is something else I have understood. It is that in this office, almost everyone is spending a lot of time chatting on AIM and MSN messenger, internally and externally. And I have realized that both the Sweet Chinese Girl and the Spanish Boy must be wasting at least two hours a day on this while at work, and many more half hours choosing the music they will be listening to during the day while they work. So in the end, I'm not certain how many hours they are really working during a full day, and yet, none of them are late in any of their projects, while I work as hard and fast as I can, from the minute I arrived until even after hours. This is proof that I have much more than them to do, that I can be sinking whilst working so hard. And it is quite unfair to have these

rumors in the office that I am incompetent and cannot manage my time. And that also sicken me.

Especially that Monsieur has never had to contact one sponsor before, let alone a supporting organization. I learned today that for the first time he will have to do it. And that is certainly the most time consuming I had to do for the three conferences I am responsible for.

It takes time for anyone to understand that I am more competent and valuable than first assessed, and it is always too late once they realize it. I don't understand why they cannot see it, why they decide to turn a blind eye, even when I tell them, so in the end, this must be either discrimination or favoritism (more likely). So they can all burn to hell, I won't feel guilty when I leave. Enough is enough. I wish I could say never again, but if I don't start my own business, I will find myself in that exact same place somewhere else. As this is human nature, and somehow, I have never been able to escape it. As if this was my destiny, and I had to report it somehow, hoping that some people will read it, realize what they do, and perhaps change, if this is at all possible.

How nice would it be if tonight I was describing the find of a new friendship, someone I can count on, depend on, discovering a human being hiding under so much pretension. How wonderful would it be if instead of what I have written so far, I was telling you how great Los Angeles is, how my colleagues and my bosses are supporting, that together we are a successful and happy family. That I would want to go to work in the morning, I would be insisting to my boyfriend to move over here so we can both be pleased with our jobs, never mind all the extra hours, because we would want to work overtime instead of being brought to a full stop every weekend when we have a minute to think, one minute too many, where instead of living our existential crisis and putting our life into question, instead of wanting to have our brains disconnected in order to stop thinking about the meaning of all this, we were content in our happiness. Is this utopia possible? Does it exist in any corporation in this world? I have come to think that it does not, and that a large proportion of the population is simply surviving in terror, fears, depression. And we do not even want to acknowledge the problem, we are not working towards finding solutions. We even don't want to hear the problems of others, accusing them of being weak and self-pitying themselves. The exact thing my father has always accused me of.

And this is why religious groups can be attractive, by talking in terms of community, people supporting each other lovingly, and all that propaganda. It is beautiful and promising in theory, on the surface, we all know that this is not the case once you're inside. We all know that they take over your life, they use you until you have nothing left to give for that community, and they take your money, 10% before tax, which becomes 30% to 40% of your salary, forcing you at some point to declare bankruptcy. Pushing you to get married for life, have as many babies as you can, even if you cannot support this family in this day and age. It is just another authority, another power over your head, as if your parents, your teachers, your bosses (and colleagues), and the different levels of governments were not enough to deal with already. How much more controlled do we need to be? How much freedom have we got in this world? To make any decision whatsoever? Am I the only one on this planet to see the world for what it really is? To demand for even a little bit more freedom and peace in this life? Sometimes I think I am, no one seems bothered or worried about any of it. Is it because they have no idea how much better life could be? Is it because they have been brainwashed into thinking they were happy and somehow it worked, while it failed with me for some unexplained reason? It might explain why I am not really a threat to any society, despite everything I have written, which in other times would have been judged heresy and anti-government or authority of any form. I would have been eliminated. There's no need now, because they all bought the propaganda, they all follow the next one without questioning anything. They all obey like the good boys and good girls that they know they have to be to succeed anywhere and be respected and keep their honor. Society has moved very quickly to disapprove of me, in everything I ever did. I was still allowed to do it, if I could find the courage in me to leave and go for the adventure. But I lost everything in the process, reputation, credibility, potential, aptitudes, respect, the list does not end. No one listens to people like me, I'm an outcast, a marginal, and so, I am not a threat, because everyone has been very well conditioned from the day of their birth to not deviate from the path of the righteous. I am very much alone on this world, I am an alien. That is why I want to isolate myself, and one day I will succeed. It will not bring me happiness, I will still feel like I lost everything, I will feel guilt, but at least, life might be bearable.

Maybe I could indirectly help this world by organizing conferences solely targeting all these authorities. To help them identify the pain they cause, make them understand ways to build happiness and joy in everyone's life. Carefully planned conferences with well chosen speakers, for parents, governments, the police,

teachers, psychologist, religious leaders from all faiths, and for management and company owners. Perhaps this is where all this was leading, I could in a small way make an impact to change this world I don't want to live in. Help making it a better world. And then I would have a mission, and even if I fail and make no money, at least I could live with the thought that I am achieving something positive, something that this world needs.

All my books have brought a message of doom, the dark side of this planet, the hell we've built for ourselves. It is a message of despair, a cry to escape an unbearable reality. This is the only way it could be interpreted, however I no longer think so. I realized only recently that what I have actually been trying to do, is to show the world for what it is, in the hope to make us all aware of the situation, so we could wake up the next day and built a world which could be the total opposite.

Changing our priorities, believing that we can really achieve what it is that we tried to convince ourselves we had. No more propaganda, no more empty messages of love and help, but actually acting upon it, changing our attitudes towards life and others, building happiness at every level, saving this world from its path to competition, alienation and annihilation.

My message was one of love and hope, and I'm sorry I've been unable to make it clearer. It might all change, I've been thinking about it for a year now, I can radically change my discourse, my books, and bring a concrete message of love and altruism. Without the emptiness of these words we are using everyday that have become meaningless. Like Jesus Christ's message of love, that no one appears to have understood, being driven still by power and ambition. His message, as I understand it, has become one of war and death, and will be so for as long as religion will be used to control the masses, in the hands of unscrupulous people with different agendas which have nothing to do with love and helping each other.

Every song, every film, is about love. And yet, I have never felt it myself. How do you explain that? All I see is hypocrisy, people who always have some ulterior motive, some hidden interests, and they so quickly turn against you at the first opportunity, than you cannot deny that there was no love to begin with.

How could I myself love these people who hate me? How could I change my small universe, the people I live with, to bring this love and happiness into our lives without resorting to anything external, like religion or some other spiritual philosophy or entity? The wisdom, that wisdom, this understanding that something needs to be done, to accept things and people as they really are, and understand and forgive their shortcomings. I have worked towards this all my life, I am more morale and ethical than most, even though you would have a hard time believing this reading my books. This is just to show you how little you know about me.

I have often pretended to be this or that, just to make a point and show who the people I am dealing with are. When I talked of revenge, I never did get my revenge, I never wanted to, I still wrote it, pretending, to teach how these people think and act. I am no anarchist, I do not wish to destroy this planet or kill anyone. I don't think anyone deserves the title of Master Bitch, and most of what I describe has been blown out of proportions and over amplified in order to see more clearly what's going on.

How could anyone be as extreme as I described myself to be? How could anyone really believe that what I wrote, I think it? It is laughable to me, however, when people don't know you personally, they have no idea that you are playing a role, that this is just a book, literature, nothing more. It is fun, but it has a purpose, the message in the end is important, there is something that I am saying, and hopefully it has thrown some people into thinking mode.

I don't really think a whole lot if not most of what I have written in my life. I have to admit that I have been trying to manipulate you all. To show you such an extreme of where your philosophies were leading, that you would be disgusted, attack me, and then start a debate to change things.

I certainly want peace, I want people to be nicer to everyone, I want them to genuinely love everyone, so we can make this life a little bit more bearable. In real life, outside my books, people around me know I am one of the most honest person there is, they usually get to like me in time, to appreciate me. They know I am a genuine person, morale and ethical to the extreme. Sometimes it takes a while for them to move beyond their own prejudices to finally see it. Often it is quick, they can see through me, they understand that I am nice and correct and would never backstab them.

This style I have, becomes clearer in my last book called Los Angeles, California. In there I pretend to be the big almighty American Corporation, and even some sort of high authority in the US government. Where I state that I will buy you to shut you up, or that money is everything, Private Equity is our new religion, and finally that one billion deaths is not enough for me, because if I get a dollar for each deaths, I would still not be rich enough. It is clear there that this is some sort of reverse psychology. And for the first time ever, I am telling you that almost everything I have written is the same, filled with irony. I am not and will never be that monstrous character I describe I am. It was a dangerous game to play, almost pretend that I am an extremist, if not a terrorist, just because I wanted to make a point, make you understand something, scandalize you so you would react, wake up, and act consequently. It is not easy to get your attention, with the only means at my disposal. Not sure if it worked. Ultimately you might just see me as a threat which needs to be eliminated. Will not see the irony of it all, ignore the message or the emotional response you might have got reading it. And it does not matter to me either way. My point will have been made, about how ridiculous this all is.

I help my enemies, I acknowledge their aptitudes, I do not betray them, I don't even really lie to anyone. I try anyway, and most of the time I can live by my rules, even if sometimes I deviate. At heart I am an honest person and I never wished to cause pain on anyone. And perhaps this is why I have such difficulty integrating into society, which is at the other end of that spectrum. I love and understand people, even when they hate me and work hard at destroying me or my career. I do not judge them on that, I know this is just human nature, and I've been there, even if I never acted upon it like they did.

They are only trying to survive, the only way they know how, with the same weapons that are used against them on a daily basis. They see this world as a jungle filled with wild animals, and to survive, you need to fight your way through, you need to eliminate others to get their place. And for me this soul destroying game has never been appealing. I wish things were different, I wish I could help change this world, I feel powerless.

Wow, I feel I wrote something huge tonight. Perhaps the most important text I have ever written, to shed some lights on all the books I have written so far. Hopefully it might help explain a lot of the irrationality and absurdity you've been

reading, if you had the courage to finish reading any of my books. As many were design to make you feel something deep, and this is hard for anyone to go through, especially when it is something that we have always been trying to ignore. How unhappy we all are. How difficult this life is. How these interactions with other human beings are disheartening. And what we could do to change it, and that perhaps we are no that powerless after all.

I now have a new mission, bring across a clearer message of love, altruism, peace and hope. Not sure how I will go about it, but I believe it will have to be done mostly through fictional books and film scripts. And hence, I would need the time, not sure where I will find it in between my day to day job and the complications of my existence and survival. I have to succeed somehow, and it might be easier to get my message across than using this reverse psychology way I've been using so far. I will alienate all my fans in the process, they will think I am a changed person, that I've been touched by the hand of God, when in fact I am not, they just misread everything and missed the irony. Even though a more careful reading, through all the contradictions, will clearly show the sarcasm, as I don't always pretend, sometimes and often I am genuine. Which is which, that is the irony.

9 May 2006

The long big day is finally over. Everyone is pleased, over the moon, complete success. Down to the cocktail party afterwards. I'm back to my room, the Spanish Boy decided to flush me tonight, he's going to take it easy in his room. He ordered some food, he's going to watch a movie. Perfect. Cos tonight I felt like drinking and celebrate on my own, in my own little lair here at the Radisson Hotel in Salt Lake City. I have four glasses wine all lined up beside me, two packs of cigarettes (ultra light) and God only knows what's going to happen tonight in front of my portable computer screen. I have already plugged myself into some music DVDs I brought with me, right now is the Greatest Hits of the Blur. Later it might be some Nine Inch Nails with Teeth, and perhaps some Smashing Pumpkins 1991-2001. The advantage of being a child of the 80's, is that the music you like, these bands now have greatest hits out there on DVDs. That's nice. Though I was also a child of the 90's, as you can see. And my bands are far from being dead, there still out there producing stuff, including Smashing Pumpkins who's preparing a comeback. I have my videos playing in a corner of my screen, while I am writing in the other corner. That's what's called having a

life, I think. Playing the business man all day long, and then at night, jumped into drugs and clubs. I'm only joking. I meant to say, jump into videos and alcohol. As the guy told me at Tower Records, when I spent my last pennies on these CDs, you've got to have your music. And I agree, tonight anyway, cos I deeply need to decompress. Especially that the Spanish Boy has spent the day insulting me and being so rude to me. Always half jokingly, and yet, it reaches home, these are real insults and it is being rude. Thankfully I did not react, I did not respond, I changed the subject every time.

That conference was about power supply in the west. These people have been talking all day today, yesterday and tomorrow. They're still at it. God knows what they're talking about, going nuclear perhaps. It would solve their problems, I guess. Yeah! I'm drunk enough to play with you again tonight, let's go nuclear, after producing three conferences on the subject, I'm telling you, it's the only viable solutions, the most cost effective, the cleanest of all powers, funny enough. That's what they're trying to convince us of, and I ended up believing it. Since I don't care anyway, it was not hard to convince me. Let's go nuclear!

Compared with the future options we will come up with, Nuclear might actually be the least dangerous of all. Hard to destroy the whole planet with nuclear, an accident is still quite localized, as Chernobyl proved. Any future solution might actually be something much more dangerous, infinite amount of energy, an accident could perhaps destroy the whole universe, and I doubt the governments will stop at that slight possibility that it could happen (and most certainly will).

Beurk, that red wine is disgusting. Can't believe we served that to our delegates. I thought I read it was Merlot from California, how can it be disgusting? How did they fine the worst seller out there just to save a few dollars? I guess they're like us, on anything we can save on, we will certainly choose that option. Another thing I don't want to do in my own conference company.

And that is what I felt like today. Like if this was my own event, getting all the glory for myself, being congratulated and all, and in the end, that was not mine, I have not even wrote the program, which is certainly new for me. I imagined it was all mine, and it gave me a buzz. I need to do this, I need to succeed, I need to produce my own conferences. I think it will be quite fulfilling, might give me a reason to live, and everyone knows by now how desperate I am for just that, finding any reason to exist, so badly that I was ready to sign as a Mormon. That

says it all, isn't it? Ready and willing to turn straight in the process, so I can marry that nice little girl from Utah I met the other day while visiting the Temple. So desperate for a husband to marry within months, and certainly not willing to have sex very often, perhaps once every nine months, every time the prophet tells her it is time to have another baby. Great, I always wanted to have a big family, without having sex with a woman more than it is strictly necessary. Where do I sign on? I want my Mormon wife right now! One from Utah, as she looked so peaceful and happy, without the use of drugs, even better.

I think I should get back to telecommunications, that's what was big ten years ago, this is where the money was in conferences, that's where I need to specialize myself in. No SDH and DWDM networks this time, I'll have to do some market research to find out what it should all be about. And I might even get into areas that the main big conference company out there is doing. So in the end, I might not even be a competitor to them. Lot's of market research indeed will be necessary. Funny I avoided the subject while thinking about which area I should move into. Telecoms is the only choice really considering my experience and what I know about it. The speakers haven't even change in ten years, they will remember me, I'm sure. Telecoms it is, then. And I also want to move into something that actually interests me, any kind of commercial technology out there, as I am such an addict for any sci-fi technology, futuristic things, I'm always the first in line to buy into it. Let's just move beyond bad technology like Blue Tooth, I invented Wi-Fi, let's continue in that path, I know everyone already. That sounds like a plan. I'll get myself somewhere, I'll be rich within years, and tehn retire very early, after selling my company to my main competitor, for a few millions of course. At that point, the main topic of negotiation will be the size of my database, so I guess this is where I need to invest.

I can't believe I'm drunk, and what I'm talking about is business. Need to get cured of that. But hey, when you are at a successful conference that you did from A to Z, what am I supposed to think about? Jesus-Christ perhaps? No way.

Which reminds me, there is something quite wild I wanted to say yesterday, that I only thought about once I turned off the computer. My big message of love, really, is really synonym with Jesus-Christ and the New Testament. I hate to say this, I don't want to say it, but hey, I have to admit that it could not be better. I don't know if there is a God or not, I don't know if Jesus-Christ was the son of God or not, hell, I don't even know of the man actually existed. Yet, nothing more

than the New Testament needs to be mentioned when you want to input some great values into people. Just wish it could be disconnected from any Church, any religion, anything. Don't care if it was written a thousand years after his death, don't care if Churches have re-written the whole lot, it is still a great message of peace and love. But I know too well that with it, we can only bring destruction, wars, alienation and everything. So in the end, Jesus-Christ will have to be forgotten. I'll need to find another way to bring in people the same feelings and desire to make this world a better one.

And on this note, I need to get a good wank, because I still all alone here in Utah, and quite desperate for any sort of affection. Must be human nature, and I can't help it. I want and need affection, love, sex. And I'm always all alone, by choice of course, but that means wanking, otherwise I just go crazy. Human nature again, animal instincts, very sad indeed. I haven't learned yet how to sublimate all this via high-tech new age spirituality stuff. My most basic instincts still need to be satisfied if I wish to function even at 10% in society. I'm looking for solutions, I might even organize a conference on the subject. It would be wild, new, original. A conference that only me could organized, and I bet it would be the most successful ever. Just have to invite few religious people and porn film producers, and watch the end of the world happening before my eyes. Judgment day and all. Wonderful. I might have to lie to them, pretend that they will only meet people like them at that conference, that would be easy enough, let them discover on the day that I invited also their worst enemies. That would be great, I might just do that. I wonder how conferences about the porn industry might do, God knows, I might make a fortune there. I work in Los Angeles right where all the porn industry sits. Logical that I should organized conferences on the subject, could make a fortune. Every single desperate actor might want to come, to meet any producer at all, capable of bringing them into the next century. Let's exploit them all, my motto. I would be rich in no time, and that's the point of it all, isn't it? Don't even need to start my own porn film production company, conferences on the subject would keep my conscience clear, and I will simply cash in on what seems like business as usual. Sex is the richest industry of all, I've got nothing to lose, no reputation to speak of, why not? Oh, I feel it coming, that's exactly what I'll do. I can see it from here, the porn film award of the year, the best porn product of the year award, your chance to make a fortune in the porn industry. That's it, that's enough, that's exactly what I'll do. Conferences on the most taboo subjects ever, no competitor to speak of, I'll be twice millionaire within months. I've got nothing to lose, everything to gain. Sex, my new motto. There's

no limit, just watch me go and make my millions. I'll have my conferences in the very building I'm working in, there is after all an agency for porn actors right under my roof. But let's make it better, I'll have it in Santa Barbara, right next to George Michael and Michael Jackson. I saw there the most paradisiacal conference center. Not sure how long it will take me to start a UK business capable of producing conferences in California, but I'm about to find out.

I guess that with a name like The Marginal, I have to live up to my name. Porn, suicide, religion, wars, homosexuality, all those subjects that commercial conference companies avoid completely, leaving a complete free from all market, just for me. That's what I call innovation, originality, just watch me go, I'll make it all come true. I'm very excited right now, about money, not sex, unfortunately, but today it is the business man talking. After a fucking boring day talking about Power in America, I guess it was to be expected that I would get wild. Need to escape reality by any mean possible. I've got to get to work, the world will never know what hits it.

I may be drunk, but that is the wisest decision I have ever made in my entire life. I might be completely off my mind, and yet, once I get back to Earth, I'll know and recognize just how wise this is. This is so anarchist, this is so wild, I'll make it come true, just for the irony of it all. Pay back time for all that suffering, conferences spent with either telecoms or energy people, can't think of anything more boring. Oh! If only they know how much I really care about these conferences, they would never attend again. Who cares about going nuclear? Not me. Let's blow up this planet, that's all I ever asked. Let's make it happen for once. Right now. Yeah!

That's it, it is settled. I'll organize conference on the most taboo subjects. I'm about ready to rewrite my Business Plan. The Marginal Production companies, producing conferences on the most taboo subjects, because this is serious, these topics need to be debated and talked about. I can ready the titles from here: The End of Organized Churches and Religions, Nuclear Bombs, The Sex Industry Summit, How to avoid Political Suicide, that kind of thing. The conference you would not dare to be seen at, but that you would definitely buy the ensuing DVD of the whole thing. My faith has been sealed tonight, that's what I'll do. Wildest titles around, it'll be such a success, you would not believe it. Within a few years I'll sell the whole thing and retire, and then I will write and read all day long, on the subject that really matter to me. Philosophy, Theoretical Physics, Science

Fiction. Oh dear, never been so ready to work on something, to make it all come true. Let's exploit them all, the ones exploiting you, and that will be another way to control them all, to achieve some results. Just watch me.

10 May 2006

I am now in the plane, on my way back to L.A. Gosh, it was really about time, I can no longer endure this pretentious little Mexican Boy who believes he is the coolest guy on the planet, for whatever reason he may have that I cannot actually see. To be cool these days, do you simply have to wear a weird jacket (that I thought he found in his grandfather closet as he did not have the money to buy one), wear a stupid hat, tell jokes, think you're funny, states to everyone that you are cool, and then that's it? Stupid people believe it and kiss your boots?

It is one thing to have to put up with cool people, it is another to have to suffer self-made cool people who are not. Especially when they have been able to convince a few stupid actresses or whatever that they were cool.

That cunt has spent the last four days insulting me, ignoring me, being in a fucking bad mood, treating me like shit, and making it clear he never wanted to be with me in the first place. And I really had enough this morning when he arrived completely out of his mind and freaking out because I don't always understand what he says and he has to repeat it. Is it my fault if he mumbles his words and I can't understand? I told him to not speak to me and that we might survive. And I spent many hours talking to delegates (can you imagine), in order to avoid talking to him at the desk. Never in my entire career in conferences have I actually enjoyed speaking for over 20 minutes to any delegate. He told me that he viewed me as the fat Jewish boy in the office, the big reject guy without any personality whatsoever. I wonder if there could have been a bigger insult he could have told me. Less than five years ago, I was twice better looking than him, I was ten times cooler than him, and I certainly had something to back it up. His coolness is nonexistent. He has no personality, he has not achieved anything, he is a simple assistant in a conference job, he is so pretentious, it is ridiculous, and he cannot justify any of this. This is like the most fake person I have ever met, superficial to the max, and at the end of the day, he is just a Mexican Boy, there are two dozens of them at each corner in L.A. hoping to get a job for the day, paid \$10. And that is probably why he has become such an overbearing person, who had to fight those prejudices people have against his culture, that he has to

prove himself to be like a Hollywood star instead of the buss boy, the Gardner or the toilet cleaner. I can understand that if you have the intelligence to stdy in college, and somehow got the chance, and that you are from a society that is perceived as scum, you would try to develop yourself some sort of special personality, convince yourself and others that you are cool and better than others. But what I cannot understand or accept, is that in the process he has become some sort of intolerant bastard, and somehow this come from his rejection of all that he is, and now he also rejects anything or anyone he does not feel are cool enough for him. And it hurts, and I don't like it, and now I can't stand the guy. I don't want to have anything to do with him anymore, seeing his face is painful. As it has been a while since someone was able to be so rude and disrespectful to me and get away with it. I liked the guy before, which explains why I let him get away with it, but no longer. With any luck I won't have much to do with him in the office and I will be out of there quick enough that this will not become a problem. But what am I talking about, he has most likely already destroyed me completely at work. And tomorrow I will find out. He has spent four days on his computer talking all day long with everyone in the office (not working either). I am under no illusion that went for maximum impact. Not realizing that I have much worse to report about him to any of them. I wish I would not need to even consider reporting him, I don't really want to destroy him as anyway it won't serve much purpose, we would both be in trouble and then we certainly never will speak again in this office. It would be pure revenge, even if it would satisfy my sense of justice. I wish I could have told him that I had worse to report than he had, and so he should keep his mouth shut, however it would have a threat or some sort of blackmail. Just have to hope he realizes this, but too often this kind of person, even though intelligent, thinks they can get away with murder without any consequences. Is it a lack of intelligence or experience? He had two jobs in his life, even though he is 29 years old. The first one was a cozy one at the university inputting data into a computer, so no real work there. And he never lived outside the San Fernando Valley where he was born. So perhaps he knows nothing yet of the corporate world and how quickly the axe can turn around to come and destroy you once you attack someone else with impunity and without justification. The next couple of days are going to be difficult. I will be tested on what I was saying a few days ago, that I usually did not go for revenge. I usually don't, but not always, and I have to say, I'm always very tempted. He will definitely be hit anyway in my defense, because there are certain things I will have to say that not only no one told me, but he was doing it. So how or why should have thought I was not allowed to do it? I still have to defend myself, and

if they freak out for example because I had my portable computer there, I will have to tell them that the Spanish Boy had his as well and did not tell me I was not allowed. And that's not revenge, it is just that I need to prepare my defense. And I'm pretty much ok right now, I think I can survive this attack.

Finally home. My bag had not been retrieved that he was already gone, right after he retrieved his bag. He was so afraid I would ask him to drop me somewhere, and I did ask, I thought he would, but he insisted that I took a taxi for \$100. I had already cancelled my ride, Leonardo, and finally I took a Shuttle for \$45. I was in such a mood, that a nice young woman (who was actually coming to L.A. to speak at a conference, dear me), made a joke that I misinterpreted and I told her bluntly that I was in a bad mood. The five people in the Shuttle froze in astonishment, what an ambassador for Québec I must be, thankfully they all think I am French, and they already know French are rude by nature. So that's OK. I regretted badly, I wanted to take it back, say I was sorry, I was unable to. And this how not being nice to someone, hit the rest of the planet in the Chaos Theory.

I can't believe I was all excited, going to Salt Lake City with Alfredo instead of, who knows, the Valley Girl or the Chinese Girl. If only they had sent the Sweet Chinese Girl instead, this trip would have been a success. As it stands, despite the success of the conference, I had no choice but be a failure, and tomorrow, once again, I will go to work and face the music. And I will try not to mention anything negative about the Spanish Boy. Nothing. And if necessary, if he backstabbed me completely, I'll make a point to let him know that I could have easily backstabbed him back, but I chose not to. That is no my new mission for tomorrow, trying to build a better world according to my own rules. For the computer, I won't say he had his, I will just say that no one told me I was not allowed to have it on site.

My God, I just came back to L.A., and the whole CNN crew is in Salt Lake City, the Mormons have been all over the news for the past few days, though I could never have told from when I was there. It is more about the polygamists, not exactly connected to the Temple in Salt Lake City. But certainly connected to Salt Lake City. Oh well, I don't have the courage to get into that now. Let's leave the Mormons to their problems, their legacy. At the moment on Larry King, the daughter of Dick Cheney being a Lesbian, hopefully she will end up being President of the U.S.A. one day.

11 May 2006

There you go, more petty things, for a petty world.

It took less than an hour for the Spanish Boy to jump on the Valley Girl and tell her everything that I had said and that happened, and for her to jump in the boss office to tell them all. Both my bosses came to me, and asked me how it went, and the wife said: is that all? You maintain that everything went well?

I'm not sure what he told them, I'm not sure what I supposed to admit there, so I'm in the dark. Something is coming, a meeting perhaps, where they will hit me with something. I can't think what, though I thought initially that since there was not much to report, and I could be wrong here since I don't know what he told them, I thought that his attack went into another front.

I think he told them all that I said that we needed to get back and say that everything went fine, whatever happened. Believe me, this could look worse than if something went wrong. It makes me look like I'm lying, not honest, and therefore a very bad employee indeed.

I am powerless to stop it all, I should have known that he would report everything one way or another, so why did I even tried to make him understand what 10 years in this business as taught me? The coolest guy alive just shown this morning how small a man he is. Now I just need to brace myself for the great meeting where they will no doubt confront me with many more stuff that I did not even consider could get me into trouble.

I could be lucky, it could end there. That would be having some faith in human nature, and another thing I have learnt, is that there's no such thing. Thank you Spanish Boy, you've proven me right in all my guesses. Hopefully one day it will get back to you so horrifyingly that you might actually learn something.

On my way back from work there was a huge film crew in the small street I use. That reminded me why I was in L.A. in the first place, where more pettiness would no doubt await me, however it could mean a bit more happiness than so much shit for a job I care nothing about and ultimately will lead me nowhere worthwhile.

I just hope I'll be able to justify myself, defend myself, will be difficult now, since they think I'm trying to hide everything from them to make me look good, it looks bad. So little happened, and it seems so insignificant to me, that to be honest I don't believe I need to bother them with any of it. But since there will be a full scale investigation, there's not much I can do but cooperate. One more reason that will help justify my departure when I announce it in less than two weeks. And so far they still wonder if I will leave or not, so they might actually go easy on me. Somehow I don't think it will be the case. They could now make a big deal out of nothing and justify to themselves that perhaps it would be better for me to leave. Though I don't really want to be sacked, it would certainly help me stop my monthly payments to my creditors if it was the case. I can then forget getting a reference letter, I might not be able to put on my CV that I worked in the U.S., and at this point in my life, I don't really care anyway. There's more to life than a damn CV, or is there?

I'm so not motivated at the moment to get back to work, to continue this stressful life, closing that first conference, doing all that I did for the second next month, and move on with the third which is now very late. I wish I could just bury myself under my to-do-list, however they make it very difficult for me to do so. How can you be honest and loyal in an office filled with backstabbers? What about this need to survive? To be recognized for so much work that you feel has been well done, when no one wants to see it that way? It is useless.

This morning when I got out to walk to the office, this five days in Utah really made me wonder where I was, I was kind of mixed up, as if this morning I could have woken up in many different countries I lived in, in another life, doing something else. I had so many memories rushing back in, London especially. And I thought, this job, this place, is not the end of the world, it is just one place, one situation, and I can get out of it at any time. No need to despair, to panic, to stress over any of it. No self pity allowed, I need to be strong, as strong as I have ever been. My life, who I am, is more than what they make of it. Hard to convince myself of that, but it worked for a whole five minutes.

And now I have to go back, and actually assess the damages, confront them, and whatever happens, happens, just have to accept it and continue with my work, if they allow me. And now I'll be late 10 minutes, another thing they can use

against me, there's so many now, that I'm really beyond caring. I tried to prevent all that, I still need to live you know, I'm beyond caring.

Finally they left me alone today. I hope they realized that after all, whatever came back to them, they thought it was not worth the investigation of the century. We'll see tomorrow.

Now I have to talk about something exciting (relatively speaking, of course, as nothing exciting is happening right now in my life). I was wondering, and it was at the back of my mind, why it is that whilst in Salt Lake City I took the time to spend many hours visiting the Temple of the Mormons, did the research of the century on the Internet to find out all that is positive and negative about that Church, stole the Book of the Mormons off my hotel room, etc. I was wondering if it was a coincidence that at the same time a crisis within the Mormons community in America and in Canada was developing and are the headlines of every newspapers in the country. Now I understand that it was at a much smaller scale that I should have thought about it.

My neighbor tonight was speaking to me, a bit embarrassing because I came with my 10 packs of cigarettes and huge case of cans of beers, really, all that was missing was a pack of condoms and he could have condemned me completely. And it had been already very embarrassing at the Seven Eleven, because in this State, whatever if it is sort of supposed to be Liberal, even though the Governor is a Bush adjuvant (Arnold Swarhtzzzenegererer, or whatever), buying cigarettes and alcohol is not that easy, when you succeed in not caring for all the customers looking weirdly at you. And I spent 30 minutes there because their till was not working, while everyone passing, and of course there was in the line someone who works in my building, thought my card or something did not work, and of course, that was to come as I was not certain if my card would work. I'm so tired, that it did not bother me that much.

Well, I told my neighbor that I just came back from Salt Lake City and he asked me if I was on LSD. My God, I thought, he's asking me if I take drugs, I imagined for a moment that he was about to complain because sometimes I can stay up very late, very drunk, listening to music (with headphones though) while writing. He was actually asking if I was a LDS, from the Church of Jesus-Christ of the *Latter-day Saints*. I thought there were only 12 millions of them in this world, I meet them everywhere, I guess they are perhaps 1 billion altogether.

He showed me his wall, almost as if to prove that he is a good Mormon. Posters of Temple, the latest prophet (and dear me, I knew his name, and the names of the two disciples appearing in the photo, how sad of me, though he was quite impressed). And then I went back to my flat and took out the Book of Mormon and all the pamphlets I have. I sure think he believes I would be easily converted. For the first time in eight months he asked me to sit down, after I told him that I was not on LSD and I was not a LDS. I could not imagine a worst night, so I politely declined. Without thinking, I asked him if he was paying his tithing, 10% of all he makes with his pension, before tax. He was too quick to say yes, and it sounded as if I was testing his faith, and I regret. What I really wanted to tell him was that he should stop paying now, even the big ones in Utah don't pay it anymore. Only 20% of the Mormons in Utah pay their tithing, and with that money, I almost told him, their buying shopping centers. But I stop short of insulting the old man. And now, he certainly sees me in a different light. Of course, he showed me photos of his girlfriend, and asked me if I had one. The poor guy has certainly not been spying on me, he would know by now that I am the biggest Queen alive, well, sort of. I bet he would not speak to me after knowing that this British guy who was here, and he asked again tonight what was happening with Stephen, was in fact my long time boyfriend.

And for some weird reason, I think the Black man at work is a Mormon. Today when I was saying that I had visited the Temple and was ready to sign up to become a Mormon (of course as a joke, of course made ironically without anyone suspecting), I watched his reaction. He knew all about the other Mormons, the polygamists, the prophet being tracked down by the FBI. I suspect he wanted to say more, that this had nothing to do with the HQ of the Mormons in Salt Lake City, he did not get the chance to say more. If he is a Mormon, we certainly have every single religion represented in this office. Though I could be the only Catholic, from what I could gather. Nothing that original, however, it could mean that I am the one who is the most free to think than that lot. Because say what you want, being a Catholic today, is not that frightening. No dedication required, no money to be paid, no one overseeing everything you do or say in your life. Unless of course you make it your life ambition to go to Church, get the ear of your priest and get involved in the community. Which I will never do. It is like the Army, just have to announce that I'm gay, and I am automatically disqualified, rejected, excommunicated. Great! I would not have it any other way anyway.

Now, if I ever need help, I just have to go next door, bring my book of Mormon, pretend I want to join in, talk all night about Moroni and Joseph Smith, play the guilty card (have you paid your tithing? When is it last time you went to the Temple, are you worthy of entering it?) and then, ask for money. I would never do that, but I have to admit that it crossed my mind. If people are stupid enough to be Mormons, then they should be ready to be exploited and taken advantage of, since this is the scheme of the Mormons Church and any Church anyway. I have learned on the Net that they are easy targets for con men, because they can easily believe any kind of crap on faith alone. And not much is required to convince them that they are bad Mormons and we might just send them a few Mormons agents their way, and then they will be judged, condemned on appearance alone, and therefore, not worthy of entering the Big Temple in Beverly Hills on Santa Monica Boulevard. And I have seen that Temple, and he almost took the map out to show me where it was, when I told him that I had seen it, perhaps the only thing I actually saw since my arrival in Los Angeles. Since I haven't gone anywhere else in months.

And that was my exciting news for tonight, for the week, for the month. Wild coincidences. Happening with what seems to be without purpose, but could lead somewhere eventually, if I let it develop, that is, which I have no intention of doing. For now anyway. Not sure where that could lead, not sure if I want to find out.

I just once again finished my last book, the dark poetry one. The one that I was not supposed to write, the one that took me a while to start since I've arrived in L.A., but in the end, it was a necessity for me to write it. The first ending alienated just about every single American who read it. I was so upset by the instant reaction and feedback I got (for once that I actually got an instant and unanimous feedback!), that I did not even have the courage to read it! I just knew that I went too far, and I tasted what it was like to self-destruct myself.

So I immediately took it offline. And I finally wrote another ending tonight. One that I can be really be proud of. I'm impressed that this whole episode was not for nothing. Because now it can mean many things, in many directions, from many different interpretations. Before it was clear what I was saying, too clear, it alienated the whole planet.

I did not know I had it in me to be able to achieve such a thing, but I did. It was instant rejection, death threats and everything. Wonderful! I finally was able to create some sort of impact, get some sort of feedback, create a reaction of any kind.

Sad I had to go so far though, to get that result. And sad that I almost immediately took it offline. However, it has been online one day, so I'm not worried. It has now become some sort of literary event, the visitor counter went off the scale, even if it lasted for only one day, all that was required to create an absolute panic all over the place.

These people who never heard of me before, never took the time to read another text of mine, who suddenly were confronted with that one page I wrote the night before, whilst I was completely drunk, and suddenly felt the need to shut me up, to destroy me. It was madness!

I can laugh about it now, but it freaked me out for over two weeks, even when I was in Salt Lake City, where logically I should have disconnected from it all at that point. All I wanted was to lose myself in a Sherlock Holmes novel, and never resurfaced, where it is safe and not threatening.

I can now put that behind me, I am not going to be wiped out from this world, the government is not going to send its squads to kill me just yet, as it is offline. For one second there, I really thought that this was it, I would immediately be kicked out of America within minutes. No need for the FBI or the CIA, everyone was willing to volunteer to eradicate me from this planet! And it is nice to think that I was able to write something so flammable and explosive. I've been trying for years, and it never had any impact whatsoever. I was obviously not read, in the English world anyway. But now, my God, I can have quite an impact, and I've got to be careful about it. It works wonder! I can destroy myself within seconds.

It is only because I am still nobody that I could delete it without consequence. If I had been known in the English world already, it would be all over for me now. They would be burning my books right now. I have learnt a valuable lesson, there's no need to be too extreme, you can only alienate everyone, against you. Got to be just extreme enough to still be part of the mainstream. And you might not realize it, but this is far more reaching and damageable than being completely

out of your mind and out of this world. It is after all with a whisper and not a shout that you can reach this world.

What does that really mean? God knows, but I know I cannot be too extreme, that is all. Or else, people just shut down, and they do not hear anything anymore. So stating the truth directly is not the solution, it's got to be done indirectly, talking perhaps about something completely off mark, and then hope that they will make the link with who they are and what they are doing.

Letters to Persians. We have not changed centuries later, there is still no freedom of speech, we have to speak indirectly, still today, and I'm afraid, it might still be true tomorrow. Alienating the whole world is simply not an option, I'm afraid. Words, literature can still have quite an impact. Beyond any dreams. Just have to go overboard once to understand that. And as I said before, I might have made that mistake many times over, and will only find out much later, once what I have written gets more widespread.

I never cared before, because I never thought it would be more widespread, but I should brace myself, it could happen overnight, and I would be in deep trouble. Might have to change my name, start a new life somewhere as a nobody.

Might have been talking forcefully for some parts of this world, at the cost of alienating other parts, in which I will no longer be welcome. I was never anyway, without any kind of reputation, so it should not really matter. But still. With a reputation, then it is clearly closed, unwanted, unwelcome, get lost! If your plane happens to crash in the Pacific ocean, that would be fine, we don't want you here! Small minded people.

Is it not just literature after all? In my case it has been so meaningless for so long, why should it change now? Why would suddenly people want to wish my death? Small minded world.

14 May 2006

At work my bosses were more worried about if I were to leave, and she caught with me the minute I left. She was able to because I took the time to say have a good weekend, when really I could have just got out without saying goodbye. She made a point to tell me that they did not charge me the \$500 to fix their car that

I stupidly reversed into a pole, saying that they wanted me to enjoy L.A., and not have to worry about money. It is gracious of them in a way, but how bad would it have looked if they had charged me for it. Ultimately I have to admit, that my bosses are not that bad, they are correct people, it is all down to their managers and directors if life has become untenable lately in the office. I don't know however what goes on in their meetings, and what comes from them or the directors and managers.

She asked me how I was doing, and I had to lie. I told her that she did not have to worry about me, that I was fine, in my little routine, writing and stuff, and that as long as the Chinese Girl and the Director understood that I am working as fast and as much as I could, and give me more time (and less shit) to do my job, everything would be fine. I told her that I was working from the minute I came in to the minute I left, and that doing anything for the first time took time, but the second time around I must have beaten some records of rapidity. I must have reassured her, and now once again I feel guilt because I will be leaving now, one way or the other. Our little chat might have won her another week, because I won't have the courage to announce it to them next week, might wait until the end of the month instead.

And something else to report from yesterday, about the Mormon next door. He knocked on my door as early as 9 am, inviting me to go to the church, can you believe? And to get involved in their Mormon community, and what else. He suggested sending me some missionaries to learn more about it, made a point to say that the polygamists ones were not linked to the their Church, and that now they were accepting Black people, which they not for a long time, perhaps even until a few decades ago (probably a long time off from accepting gay people I would say). A very discriminating Church, I have to say, with women worth almost nothing and men being the king of their kingdom. Just like in every religion on the planet. If I had been a woman, my God, I would have written three times more, to denounce all the unfairness of this world. I can't even believe why and how it took so long for women to finally see more clearly and fight for their rights to anything, especially in religion where they are still far off.

So, why is it so important to Mormons to recruit new people? Have they been trained to spot any weak mind and jump on them at the very second there could a chance? Calling headquarters to send me almost what it felt like their police to

assess me, convince me, take me away, brainwash me, and finally ask for my tithing, a big chunk of my salary?

My only defense, and I never thought that one day it would be my salvation, I told him that I was Catholic. He said, oh, that is a hard one to leave, to move into a new Church. And I thought, why, have you tried a lot of converting other people, and with Catholics it fails? Is it easier with Protestants? And I supposed that with the Jewish faith, it is nearly impossible to convert them? Maybe I should have told him I was Jewish, then he would have understood that there was no way ever that I would join his Church, and he would have left me alone. Catholic might not convince him, we both have the Old and New Testament as our basis.

He knocked on my door again that day, but I did not answer. Once was enough. He invited me in, insisted many times that we went to the Church together, that he had a car (her has a car?), a big Jeep 4X4, completely new, waiting in the car park to bring me to heaven. Where does he get his money? How did he managed such a god pension? I can't even afford a new car whilst working full time, how could I ever in retirement buy one? Anyway, he was ready to give me everything if I were to join his Church, helping me as much as he could, and the price was just too much to pay, I had to say no, thank you, and leave me alone! I'd rather die alone on the street with nothing than become a Mormon or join any Church. He told me that he became a Mormon because he was miraculously cured by one of them when he was 10 years old. And said that his faith became more important and official after he survived World War Two and the Korean War. I almost asked him how many people died from his own hand in those two wars, I did not, but then I assumed that it was ugly, when he mentioned that when it was over, he felt shame for what he had done. And I understood that if there is a heaven, whether I am gay or not, whether I join a Church or not, whether I pray or not, I am purer than he is, I never killed anyone, I will go to heaven, he will go to hell.

I have been trying to reach Stephen all weekend, and before that since I arrived from Salt Lake City. Four days. Last time he did a trick like that, he said he simply was not answering the phone, from fears that it would be whoever or whatever. Maybe this is the same this time, however, he could have called me, he must have known I would try, we talk each weekend. Again I'm worried that he found a new boyfriend, but it seems a bit much that he would spend all his time there. Or that if the other guy was at our place, that he would not pick up

the phone. So perhaps he did an overdose and he is dead? That's all I would need right now, to throw me into a permanent existential crisis that I've been trying to escape since I was born. And we already know the Mormons are not the solution.

It is Sunday again, and I am freaked out again. Not sure why. I think now that even being with the Spanish Boy is simply too much. That's one more element I cannot stand anymore. Including both my bosses there in that same office. Since she talked to me, I live in fears. Going in the office in the morning is now such a torment, they really succeeded in screwing up my mind.

Where is Stephen? Why does he not pick up the phone?

15 May 2006

Stephen finally called me this morning. If I was paranoid, I would say it was convenient indeed that his phone was reconnected five minutes before the time I get up to go to work. Some children apparently destroyed a box exchange, and he was without a phone for a week at least.

He still has not found a job, and obviously his situation has gone from bad to worse. And so, I still cannot go back to England, and might be here for much longer. And I'm going back to morning to face that Chinese Girl coming back from Japan, and God knows in what mood she will be in.

God, what am I gonna do? Can I just sail through all this, survive this indefinitely? Will something happen to save me now? Anything?

16 May 2006

Yesterday une carte de mode (fashion card?) entered the office. He fitted exactly the profile of the young successful American freshly out of the University in which every big CEOs hover over believing they will turn them into the best slaves they ever got, baving in their office over what miracles they might accomplish.

The young man was so perfect, he could be one of those actors in those cheap series on TV. Slim, tall, blond, perfect jaw, expensive little SUV, a model I had never seen, wearing jeans at his interview, and yet, looked the part entirely. He

was offered a high position in marketing and if he accepts the job offer, will sit next to me whenever he starts.

Now, that is very funny, because every time they had in interviews what we could call the image type of the professional American who could easily sell you a house in the middle of nowhere, because you only feel like dropping at their feet as you know they must be honest and beyond intelligence, compared with the rest of the population, they always either refuse the job or leave soon after. Indeed, they're the intelligent ones. They don't waste time where they know there will be trouble, they seem to be able to smell a bad place, not because of the bosses, but because of management. And yet, that one did not even meet the management, and our new desks and space could somehow make him think that this might be a professional and young company on its way to great success, perfect for a fresh career. And yet, I think he will refuse the position, he looks way too normal. And this is when I realized that we're all misfits in there, and you know what? I am too, I fit perfectly with the misfits. None of us look the part, look like him.

Apparently he's got an accent, for a moment there the Admin Director thought he was French, then from his name she thought he was German, and now we know he's from Israel. Isn't that weird? For someone who looks so much like the biggest American stereotype portrayed by Hollywood? But yeah, a lot of people we see on TV are Jewish, so I guess it is normal if he fits the bill.

One look at him, and I thought it would be nice if he were to start working with us, sitting next to me. Not because I think he could be gay, I am quite certain he is straight, perhaps even married, otherwise, someone like that must have a girlfriend, he's got success written all over his pretty face. I thought it would be nice because he looks normal, and hence, how could he be unfair, petty, jealous, small minded, wasting time with futilities and backstabbing? I'm hoping he will bring some sort of balance in the office, stop the others in their tracks, the one no longer with their feet on the ground. However they probably will try to destroy him in no time, and he will most certainly leave at the first opportunity. There's a chance though, working in marketing, he probably won't have to answer to any of the management, he might have an easier ride than the rest of us, mere mortals at the bottom of the hierarchy.

Am I going to finally have some sanity in this office? I could be mistaken, but I don't so, I am a good judge of character, and that is why I know he won't accept

the job. Unless somehow they made it clear at the interview that the bosses are Jewish, which I'm sure they did, and so, he might feel this is a safe job after all. From his point of view, a nice Jewish and successful business, might be hard to resist. The problem is that the rest of the office is far from being Jewish, we've got just about every ethnicity, every religion, and many hippies. Heek! Let me out of here!

I thought this book was finished, I thought I was already out of here, and yet, I'm going to witness a new change in the structure. I understood speaking with Stephen that I am in an even worst position now to go back to London than I was two months ago. He's sinking more and more, and therefore, I cannot quit my job. I could be here a long time indeed. And as long as the Director and the Chinese Girl leave me alone, it is okay, it is acceptable, it is bearable. Just have to do my job, as quickly as I can, and I should be fine.

My enemy now is the Sun, as it is so hot in here, cycling to work is not exactly a good idea, even if the price of petrol has gone so high recently, that I'm glad I don't have to worry about that. My Mormon neighbor has stopped using his car, too expensive, must be counting his pennies then, better stop paying the tilthing then.

If I were stuck here for many more months, I think I would have accepted his offer to bring me to the Church, get mixed in their community, pretend that I am a Mormon pure and hard, read the damn book, and impress them all. I could be the best extremist Mormon they would have ever seen. I would have had to pay the tilthing to be more convincing, but I would have there a great book to write, perhaps two, most likely. Oh, and turn straight I guess, also a requirement, and make my websites disappear, also not acceptable. Hey, that's not a crazy idea! If I were rich, capable of sustaining myself with my writing career, I might consider it, right now this is just impossible. Maybe later on in my life.

Might be better though to infiltrate some Catholic or Protestant sects, who cares about the Mormons these days, their shortcomings are all over the news, we all know they're corrupt to the limits. So you need to be pretty blind to still be part of that Church. Or like my neighbor, a Mormon needs to have save some little health impediment you had which most likely would have corrected itself on its own. You have to admit, it is quite extraordinary that so many people believe in a God or another, without any kind of proof whatsoever, and base their life

changing decisions on that. The ultimate control of humanity, a great success story achieved through fear of whatever, and what else. God for the weak minds, the lost ones, in need of a little bit of help to get back on their feet, religion and abuse for the weakest ones. Better be strong, feel the confidence building inside of me, they can smell misery miles away, and will never fail to take advantage of it.

A new book just came out in France, called Gay Vinci Code, a parody of Da Vinci Code. I jumped on it with my two hands, telling the author I would like to translate it in English, never mind that my English is very bad, they might not find out before I do it. How much time would that require? 220 pages. I could write three books instead. Somehow I have convinced myself that this could be huge, and that I wanted to be part of it.

The author appears all impressed that I am in Los Angeles. His eyes must have gone out of its orbits, thinking there for a second that his book could be turned into a movie. He simply said: what a chance! History is a myth, no? Did not know exactly what he meant by that. Perhaps that everything we may think that Hollywood is all about, when you get there, turns instead into the biggest nightmare you have ever lived. Perhaps, I have no idea. It made me think that I also thought that whatever I thought L.A. was about, actually exists, but that I have no access to any of it. Now that I think back, I am here, I have not witnessed any of it, so perhaps it does not exist after all?

And now I'm going to speak about a painful subject. The fat and rejected Jewish boy at work. The total opposite of the other one who might start to work soon. Let's just start by saying that he looks weird, as I'm sure I mentioned before. We could think that it was because he was Jewish, but we know now that it has nothing to do with it. It is just that he is like that, poor soul, and does not help himself in the process, convinced that he is in the only lane he will ever be able to be in, and so he is trying to convince everyone that he is somehow a marginal and that he's worth something for it.

The whole office laugh in his back, it does not help that he was sick so many times lately, we're all impressed that he is still working with us (or disappointed depending on the department we're in). It was too clear to me that there were many parallels that could be drawn between that ultimate loser and myself when I started to work there. He is three times fatter than I am, but I am a little bit fat,

and so some people would reject me like that like they did with him. We are both going to work with our bicycles, the only ones in the company. We both like sci-fi as an escape from this terrible reality, though he is a bit too much into the fantasy, and that does not answer any of my existential questions. He is also into cartoons, Pokemons, and proud of it. Which is certainly very sad indeed.

While I thought he could be gay and still avirgin, I thought I might as well try to find out more about him, and help him. But I lost all my motivation once I found out that he was looking like crazy at all the females' breasts in the office. Another straight one, he can die alone in his corner with all his prejudices then, I can't help him. He will meet or his family will manage for him to meet a Jewish girl as lost as he is, and they will be happy together, whatever, I don't care.

Two things however have changed my mind. The first one is one thing the Spanish Boy who thinks he is so cool compared to me, when it is the total opposite, as he is nothing while my life could be considered cool somehow, he said that me and the Jewish Boy, no difference, we're the same thing. Meaning that we both deserve to be total rejects and ignored by the cool society out there. Oh yeah? And that coming from a fat Mexican? Who miraculously lost some weight in the last two weeks, knowing too well that he would become an instant reject without the only thing that got him the chance to get anywhere here in L.A., his cute little face that you only wish you could hit until it bleeds? That got me more interested in the Jewish Reject Boy.

The second argument is that he is obviously trying to reach out to me. I'm the only one who's nice to him in the office, who understand completely where he is and what's going on in his mind. I'm also the only one capable of seeing that there's a human being under all that pretence. There's a psychological explanation for all his weird statements. I can see beyond it all, whilst everyone chose to ignore his existence, wondering why he is working there. I show interests, that's all.

I do, I wish I could without consequence go to a pub with him to hear his story, however he must be so desperate for just that, that he might start calling me everyday like Leonardo, and at the moment, one friend in L.A. is already too much for me who's been living in my cavern in London for the last decade. And yet, I want to hear his story, I think I will invite him to do something this weekend, find out more about him, his deep psychological problems. I want to

see where he lives, I want to find out about his books, DVDs, his little nest where he lives with his brother (who's probably good looking, successful, married with kids, etc.).

He knows I'm gay though, he will certainly think that I have some ulterior motive for wanting to see his bedroom, it will probably never cross his mind that I'm just curious by nature and need to learn about everything there is under the sun, especially about such a specimen of rejection, that repulse just about everyone that comes across him. Ultimately, I only wish to understand human nature, how prejudiced we all are, unfair, destroying souls all over the damn place. I want to find out if he is after all a human being who deserves to exist, to live, to have some freedom, create stuff, become something worthy of being alive. I'm sure he has a unique point of view on this world, after so much rejection. For him, must be a constant battle for survival. How could he not be suicidal?

God knows, maybe I'm mistaken, maybe I've read too much of myself in him, maybe I really do have a bad judgment of character. Maybe he had twenty girlfriends by now, and he left them because they could not share his passions for the fantasy world. Maybe he is ten times more stronger in his mind than I am, quite possible, I've reached rock bottom so many time in the last few years. Stuck in a time loop, repeating the same year every year, with just barely a change of scenery to make it more acceptable to me, or else, I would shot myself by now. Like if you only had one game on your console, only one, a little race car going around the same circuit over and over again. And then, instead of being in one town, you're in another, and yet, you're doing the same damn thing, driving that stupid car around the place. You would tire quickly of that game, even if it was the only one you had. You couldn't play it for years, you would destroy it at some point. Unless you were like a fish, with a brain so small, that by the time you have gone around your bowl, you would have forgotten all about it, and it would still feel new and beautiful.

Oh dear, I'm now in the business of salvaging lost souls. Just like the Mormons. Make your check payable to me, thank you. Cos I think I will invite the poor guy this weekend, I'll invite him to go for a drink at the Yankee Doodle. I would invite him here, however he would think I want sex, and will probably be horrified. At least that one would actually leave the place eventually, unlike Leonardo who seems to want to build himself a tent on my balcony, move in here permanently, still don't know what he sees in me, especially when the guy has such a past and

is about to go global with his music. At his level, I would not even know I was still on earth, sharing it with a bunch of people who've only tried their hardest to destroy me. I would be beyond pleased to leave them all behind. Not talk to any of them. You can remain in the hole you have built for yourself, while you thought I was in it even deeper than you are. I've only been an observer hovering from above, I was never sinking in the hole with you all, that I know. I always had my way out, and if I have not yet taken it, it is because I feel there's perhaps more for me to see, or else, whatever shit I could be in by disappearing, believe me, I would not hesitate, as I know that there's always a solution around the corner, I've experienced it too many times, I would not let money or Stephen not having a job right now stop me. The truth is, I don't mind remaining in L.A. for a while longer, especially if it is not too bad at work and Stephen believes that it is his own fault for having lost his job. Then he can't blame me for abandoning him for so long, he cannot feel like this is the end of our relationship, he knows I was prepared to come back months ago, as I do love him, and plan to live with him for much longer. It is quite possible that I will actually finish my days with him, and there's no need to dream of a better and greener garden, I missed him so much, I still love him so much, that even after 11 years together, I still link like that. That I still have to think of him to actually ejaculate, that tells it all. He's the one for me. He might be a talking machine, but I guess this is something I have learnt to live with. And as long as we don't have a serious money problem, he is sort of stable mentally. Funny how being in deep shit money wise never seemed to affect me or my god humor. I guess I see the world for what it really is, and myself for what I really am, just another statistic, one in between millions dealing with the same problems. Who really cares at the end of the day, when you're just an account number in the red? No one. You may be blacklisted and never again be able to borrow anything, but who cares when you reach that point? Not me, that's for sure. Banks won't kill me, would they? When I've got nothing to my name anyway to start with? They can't steal what I do not have. And I have nothing. The best way to live. I have my computer, and that's all I need. With it, I can create and live my great escape from this reality. Infinite virtual worlds one hundred times better than the real world. I do everything with my computer, I simply cannot understand people capable of having any sort of life without one. I live inside my computer, we have become one entity in time. I believe it is alive, I love it very much, and I'm sure it loves me equally. Better anyway than being turned off, because that means death, non-existence, we're so similar, we're so much the same, I have more in common with my computer than with any living being around me, that's for sure. My computer is my only real love of my life,

we're truly inseparable, we could not exist without each other. And I respect him for it. And you will not that it is no longer a "it" in my case, it is a "he". My computer, my only way out of this painful existence.

I may be drunk right now, and having a laugh at your expense, however I cannot deny that being at the top of a mountain in real life, with a view to kill, has no effect on me. While being at the top of a mountain in a virtual world in front of my computer, could bring such peace in my mind, such a great feeling of infinite desire to exist. So far reaching, that sometimes when I have an orgasm, that's what I think of, these virtual worlds on my computer. It is quite powerful, meaningful, perhaps the only existence I really have and ever had, and will ever have. No need for this reality anymore, I much prefer living in a virtual world. And I'm still waiting for that software which will be detailed enough to bring me anywhere in this world without having to move out of my computer screen. Giving me the chance to fly, visit any museum, meet the whole planet, as if this was a real world, right at the tip of the buttons of my mouse. Then there will be no need to ever go out again, travel again. Might still be only a 2D screen, yet, it is more real to me than this deficient and painful 3D real world. Fuck it, fuck you all, just die, I don't care. I don't need you, I don't need this real world. I want a simple life, no bureaucracy, no bastards, no real impact on my life. I'm disconnected, I've been for years, and now I'm looking for a way to make it more permanent, and trust me, I'll find it.

The real world only makes me want to commit suicide. Virtual worlds are so pleasurable, that's what causes my orgasms. What does that tell you about your world?

Time to change it, at the very least. It's too late for me, I'm already gone forever, no significant change could come within my lifetime to make it right, radical changes would be required, and I know the rate at which things change around here, just as well I have my computer.

Shit, I can barely recognize my life. Los Angeles, San Francisco, Salt Lake City, and Philadelphia in less than three weeks, I am really lost. I was explaining recently what this book was about to my French readers, and they shouted back that it was all déjà vu, that I was living the same year I did in London last year, in my corporate job, there was no difference, I was stuck in a time loop, living the same thing over and over again. I believed it for a long time, but now I'm not so

sure. I feel pretty disconnected, far from anything that is familiar to me. Salt Lake City has been the cure, it brought me a bit further, to the point where now, despite living the same sit on my day to day job, that episode was at least pretty alien to me, exotic enough to make forget, that I am simply reliving the same events over and over again. Maybe Philadelphia, for which I am not expecting anything, might also be a turning point in my life. Anything to disconnect, to move further away from everything I have ever known, is welcome. Might make me appreciate returning to London in my old life afterwards, if I don't feel like it was more of the same on the other side of the Atlantic, and the continent. Somehow I firmly believe that London will never be the same. Upon my return, I will live there a totally different life, with other people, something else to write about. Or else, if it was just to go back to my old job, yes, I would be thinking of ending it all, one way or another. I cannot regress, I cannot only move forward, things would have changed, will change, I'll live something different, no matter it is just another hell. You can never go back to what you had, it is an impossibility, or else you would think there is something wrong with the world. The London I have known in the last decade is gone forever, and this is something I can live with. Greatness awaits me back in London, this is where everything will happen for me, real life changing events. Not here in L.A., I know that now.

God, being back in London, no longer living things eight to nine hours after the rest of the planet, might actually be a result. Am I at the end of this world or what? Though I have to admit, that being able to write all evening and all night long without being disturbed was something I took advantage of. People only send you emails while you sleep, and then you simply don't answer them. So it is some sort of freedom. No one would dream to have you on the phone any time soon, you are at the end of the world after all. Just send me emails that I'll be free to ignore.

It is getting ridiculous, this guilt feeling I have for not answering my emails, I just get too many, I have to learn to not give a shit about it, fuck them, my life does not belong to them, the little time I have, is not for them, it is for myself. I cannot anymore with all the emails I receive. They have to understand that. I need a life! If I did not have published books, if I did not have these websites, no one on this planet would feel the need to talk to me. So why don't you just act as if I did not exist in the first place? I'm going to ignore every message I receive from now on. No more guilt. Just like all the emails I sent to these people who are somewhat known, none of them took the time to answer me back, and I

never wondered why, so I am at that point now, everyone else need to understand.

And if I get one more African to ask me to send him a Bible or a grammar book or something, or to help him escape his nightmare of an existence, I swear, I'll start a new World War, since obviously the first ones did not work, they're all still alive, damn it! Asking for my help! We missed the first times around. We need to correct that mistake, they should all be dead by now, and leaving me in peace. What? They're not dead from AIDS yet? I thought we carefully planned to make sure none of them would still be alive in the next decade. Why is it that under Hitler all Black Africans did not have to worry at all? And what is this about attacking Jewish and Gay people, of all people? When it is so obvious that Africans are this inferior race that needs to be eradicated from the face of this Earth?

I don't care to be popular in Africa of all places. Let's the disease of God ensure that none of them will ever survive to talk about anything ever again. I hate charity, and I hate ever more feeling guilty for not helping any of them. The faster they will all die, the better I will feel. Is that not what all of us out here in America feels like? I thought so.

Why the fuck are my books connecting with what these people are going through? I don't understand, unless our way of life is very much similar to theirs. And how could this be? That they are recognizing themselves in what I am writing, while no others where I live can see it? Is it just more extreme where they are, enough for them to see the truth about what's going on around here?

I've been invited many times to speak at conferences in Africa, in the worst countries there are. After reading on the net that I would be shot dead on sight just for being gay, I thought I might just as well ignore these invitations. No need to be a martyr just yet, no matter how what I say might connect with whatever it is they are going through out there. No man's land, even for me, if you don't mind. Let them sort themselves out first, and I might consider going there one day. If they're still alive by then, of course.

Don't worry, we don't have to do anything anymore, they will be wiped out in no time. Isn't that wonderful? We'll never have to suffer seeing one sick child on TV dying from hunger again, asking for our help and money, which we don't have

anyway. No more guilt trip, let's just them all die and rid us of that sick Third World we never wanted in the first place.

Not our fault if they did not have the time to discover the greatness of the capitalist society like we did. Not our fault if they could not control their tyrants, we've got ours under tight leech, their powers are limited, we will stop Bush before he annihilates the whole world, you can be assured of that (I hope anyway).

So fuck Africa, they deserve what they have. They must have wanted it, or else it could never have happened in the first place, right? And there's no petrol there anyway, so why should we get involved? No reason. Let them all die.

Oh dear, I feel so much better now, that I have admitted to all that. Finally I'm breathing. I feel great!

Of course, you will have missed all the irony, but what can I say? It's always been like that. I'm a monster, what I can say for my defense? I'm only stating what we all collectively really think, what our actions show. So you can't condemn me, without condemning yourself, hypocrite fuckers!

Usually I would not have bothered with telling you that I was being sarcastic to make a point, I wonder why I bothered this time.

18 May 2006

Yesterday I was so tired at work, I wanted to take the last two days of the week off. Difficult, as I have so many deadlines, one on Tuesday. So I went to bed early last night just to feel human again at work, and today I did not feel like taking a vacation. However I did, and tomorrow and Monday I'm off.

Now what worries me is that I have not planned anything, and I need to do something. It cannot be four wasted days playing games, reading, and sleeping. I might call Leonardo and spend a day with him, at least. Need to visit the centre of L.A., go see Da Vinci Code, do some backups of his CDs for the investors, and what else? We'll see.

In the last 7 months, I had one day off in San Francisco, and as I said, I worked over the Christmas and New Year's period. So I was due for some time off, no wonder I'm going insane, especially in that kind of heat. And now is the right time, before the rush of my second conference, and after that I'll be announcing my departure, before actually the conference takes place. I cannot see myself asking for holidays after I told them that, so now was the time.

I had offered to the Sweet Chinese Girl to help her with her deadline tomorrow, she's in deep, with a lot to do, and she is angry again and ready to explode, despite the fact that both my boss and the Chinese Girl will be with her at the conference. It is still not enough and will get burnt again. Nice for a change to see that I'm not the only one with trouble. And I had to take a vacation or else I would have had to throw in a sick day, and probably not being paid for it, and it would have looked bad.

And I'm not poor at the moment, got nearly \$900 back in taxes this week, what a discovery! I thought taxes you just pay too much and never get it back. I was wrong about that one, it even came back before my departure, isn't that great? Feel guilty for not sending money to Stephen, however I have to keep that money for when I will move out, just in case I have to buy a plane ticket, or that I don't work the last week of June. I will tell him and see what he says. Got to be careful with my money, Da Vinci Code and some food might be my only expense, and gas for Leonardo's car if we go somewhere.

Time to go back for my last afternoon, a lot to do today, because of that deadline on Tuesday.

18 May 2006

That's it, it is done, I have four days off! I have already drunk a full bottle of wine, I've been celebrating. And the strangest thing, I feel so free, so alive! We're only talking about four days, and yet, it means so much to me! I can barely contain my enthusiasm, I'm filled with energy, ideas, projects to work on, anything, anything!

I was thinking about starting that novel I was talking about, translating that book I was talking about, and why not take over the world by the same token? And

that's what I'm planning to do tomorrow with Leonardo, but I will talk about that in my other blog. Here, I'm talking about work.

And work I did, this afternoon. In a few hours I did all that took me days to do for my first conference. I have a feeling that if I were to stick to this job, I would become that miracle worker they all thought I was going to be. Sorry these things take time, there's no other way. Well, I'm ready to go to Philadelphia, make that conference a success, all on my own, no spy this time, and I feel great about it, don't even care if there were 120 people out there in Pennsylvania, this will be the greatest conference I have ever hosted. Cos I did everything by myself from the very beginning to the end, and I'll be all alone there to accomplish miracles. And I feel damn right about it. So confident in fact, that I took a long weekend off right before a big deadline, and they said yes (they must be crazy). I'm still taking advantage of the fact that they're afraid I might just leave, so they agree to all my whims, as long as I don't take the piss, and that could be consider like it. But hey! They said yes! They will only have themselves to blame, I guess, if it turns out to be ugly. But I have enough of a professional conscience, that I did everything I supposed to do, in record time, so I'm gonna enjoy my four days off as if it was the end of the world and if there was no tomorrow. And it starts tomorrow morning. No mourning on my bed reading a book, or at my computer winging about life. Barricading myself between my four walls, of my own personal toilet that is. I want to meet the world, I need to come out of my cavern, I need to have a huge impact on this world! And it starts tomorrow morning. If I can't get up, cos I feel like drinking my second bottle of wine. And I most certainly will. Who cares if I'm zombie tomorrow? God perhaps? My Mormon neighbor?

Which reminds, I feel so free, to do whatever I want, that I might just take him on on his invitation to visit the Mormon Church and meeting the community. I'm sure it would inspire a few pages, the question is how many pages and will it all be worth it? We might just find out! I will anyway on Sunday morning, how I feel, I'm still drunk or not, if Leonardo is still here or not. Circumstances and destiny will decide a lot of what I will be doing in those four days, the consequences could be very far reaching, like they could be meaningless. We'll just have to find out. I'm boiling inside, let's see if I can maintain that state of mind for four days. I am free! That's it, I need to open my second bottle. God only knows what I will write tonight.

Suicide is the last idea on my mind, when I feel as strong as this. Which means, that this heartless job is what really was driving me to this insanity. And then, is it not clear that one needs to escape it? Get out of it before one does the irreparable? It's not that clear cut. Sometimes you feel there's no way out, but in my case there was one. Sometimes you're just too deep in it to even care about any sort of tomorrow or anything else. Dangerous days, I should avoid them as much as I could, but it ain't easy, as I've recently discovered. Only the thought and stating that I was willing to leave at any time saved me. Otherwise they would still be at it right now, making my life such a misery, just to get more work done, some miracles that is just not humanly possible. Bastards. And now they're pushing everything towards that other guy, who's working from home. It looks like he'll be responsible for four conferences or something, an impossible task, and they will certainly kill him in the process. He has the freedom to say no, to take on board only what he wants, and once he agrees, he's fucked. I think he's gay, nice guy, I see him once in a while. He loves Star Trek, I told him that Doctor Who was even better, I failed to ask him what he thought of it, I know he's been watching it on BBC USA. I've been watching it on Sci-Fi, and then could no longer wait, and just took out my DVDs I recorded in England, and watched them all again on my computer. And it is better, for me anyway, at the stage I am at in my life. Because anything connected to London, for me, is just a bit a fresh air, that's what I'm all about, I am more British than I have ever been Canadian. My country is dead in my mind, I have absolutely no interest in it whatsoever. They can all die as far as I'm concerned. I can't even explain why I think this way. Perhaps because we've never been able or capable of greatness in the past, and I always felt I was destined for greatness. And therefore, as a Canadian, I could never aspire to it. Also because they appear to be very limited in their way of thinking, when I'm so wild, the universe itself could not contain all that it is that I'm thinking about, wish to create. And then, they're pure and perfect, I'm so anarchist and imperfect, we're just not compatible. I'm a child of London, not of Canada. I'm not nice, I'm not polite, I am not on quest to save humanity, I have nothing in common with Canada, the most perfect country in the world. It makes me sick to my stomach, let's just eradicate them all. Let's just be like America, annihilating the whole planet for whatever reason. Let's make a stand, let's tell the world that what they're doing just won't do. And if they can't accept it, we'll come and throw a few bombs over their heads, and then they just might see the truth, they might just understand what this world is all about. And the way to go and behave. Let's change this world for the better! That's what I say.

And of course, I'm talking bullocks here, but hey, I'm drunk again, what do you expect? I'm still very much Canadian at heart. Which means, I'm naïve. I can easily be taken for a ride. I can easily be manipulated, because it is easy to trick me, since I think the whole world is honest and truthful, just like I am. Let's give them as many chances as we can give, who does it hurt in the end? Yes, I'm Canadian, I can't escape that, it's in my nature, I'm a nice guy, I'll open my heart every time, I'll let you take advantage of me every time, and when you will come back asking for more, I'll just give you more. There's limit to my kindness, that's what I'm really all about, just like every Canadian. What are you waiting for? We're all waiting here to be taken advantage of, to help you, our heart knows no bound. We'll still help you after you robbed us blind. Because that's who we are. Trusting you, even after you've been proven yourself untrustworthy. And I guess, I'm proud of it. That's one way of saving this world, from complete destruction. I guess I'm more Canadian that I would like to admit. Maybe one day I'll be proud of calling myself Canadian. But not today.

I am myself, I am from nowhere, I have a mission to accomplish, and I will accomplish it. I don't know yet what my mission is, I'm in the process of identifying it, what it is that I'm going to do and achieve with this life, but I feel it is becoming more concrete every day, and I will eventually find out, and then nothing will stop me. I will accomplish my mission. And I never felt so close to finding out, here in L.A., and tomorrow might be the decisive moment. My life could go in many different directions, and I still don't know where it could lead. All I know is that I am not going to remain in the shadow of anyone, I'll be right there at the forefront, I'll be there at the front. There's no other way, I am not just one name in a final generic of a film, I am at the top, I am the why it all happened in the first place. I'll change this world! Mark my words! I'll change it. And it will be so astonishing to everyone, and still, so natural and logical, they will wonder why no one else thought of it. I guess it has always been staring in our face, and yet, we were blind to it. I can get back to the basics. I can get us all to move on to the most important things. And I will. And I won't do that after my death, things will have to move much faster, I have a lot of work to do. I'll have an impact on this world, the biggest one ever, just watch me. Might seem insignificant at first sight, but I'm telling you, it is powerful, more powerful than you could have ever imagined. And my attack, will be on many fronts. Literary, musically, filmic, television, raw business in the markets, every front. I'll make such a difference, the world will never know what's hit it. The shadows aren't for

me, I'm way too pretentious for that. I'm worst than the Spanish Boy, who's got no hope of reaching any of you. I have hope and I will reach you all. And I will change you all. I'm confident because I feel I have done it all already, I've written everything I felt I just have written. And yet, I know this is only the beginning, and much more, on a much higher scale, is about to explode all over the universe. No self doubt here, no depression here, just a certainty in my feelings, in my capabilities. There's no limit.

And that my friends, is the American dream. When one useless drunken soul thinks he can save the world and become rich in the process, free himself in the process. And that's my life story. I'm not there yet, but I will, this year, that's why I came to Los Angeles in the first place. And as planned by the Grand Manitou, it will all work out fine. I might never leave the place. I'll get my boyfriend here, and together, we'll change this world for the better. Not just entertain it, but change it. As this is my mission. You will recognize my name. And yet, it is just a name. I don't even identify with it. It does not matter. In this name I speak, in this name, I change the world. And in this name, we will have a new reason to live. Or else, I want to die, and most probably, you with will want it to. Because then, this world will not be worth fighting for, to live for. Something will change, something significant is about to happen, and I am the one who will make it happen.

This is my world, you only exist from own point of view. I am the master and the king of my own universe, you will do and hear as I see fit. No one else exist around here, you are all part of my dreamt reality, my dreams. I've created you, like you are creating your own universe. And in my own universe, I'll be a leader, I'll control everything. I will save you, I'll make you happy, I'll make this life worth living. I will not only create hope, I will give you what you have been searching for all your life. Freedom. Total freedom. To do whatever it is you want to do, whenever it is you want to do it. Financial freedom, all the love you ever wanted to get, sex until you choke on that pussy or that dick. Human nature is very predictable, sex is a big part of your life. If you don't get it at home, then there's something wrong. No matter if you're fat and ugly, you need and deserve to have sex. Most human basic need. Comes before food, clothes and roof. Main priority, or else, deep psychological problems, escape through fantasy worlds and perhaps sci-fi. Not worth it. Sex, most important need to fulfill. Before freedom, before anything. So find a way, make it happen, it will make you happy, whatever the means you will use to get there.

Oh dear, oh God, I'm already too drunk, not sure what it is that I am talking about here. And I wonder if tomorrow when I edit those 500 pages, if this will remain or not. Interesting, is it not? What a drunk mind can think, and a sane one can decide to delete. Something is telling me that this will remain. A drunk mind always goes to the essential, what's really important. And a sane mind can recognize that when it reads it, it wonders how being sane, none of this would have ever come out. When it is such a basic truth, bare to the essentials of life. Useless to lie, we all need to be satisfied sexually, we all need to be successful socially, we all need to be rich beyond belief, and enjoy our hard find freedom. That is what is called hope. Some of us are sidetracked by religion, religious people controlling our lives, but essentially, it all comes back to that: sex, money, power, freedom. And I admit that this is what I have been seeking desperately. And I admit, this is what I thought I could achieve by writing these useless books. Hoping that this last one would make it big out there, freeing me from all my obligations and social responsibilities. Now I know this won't work. I'll have to find another way. And I've got plenty of ideas to get there, to reach the same results without these useless books. Let's see if I will succeed. Anything at this point would do. Anything. Hard work will be required, but I'm not afraid of hard work, if there's a chance to get me to this hard seek freedom. I will get there, one way or another. And this is not dependent on anyone else, friends, parents, boyfriend, anything. I'm so disconnected when I reach that point, I'm alone in this world, everyone and everything only exists from my own frame of reference. They no longer exist. I know better. I know of a world where I was 17, lost in Venice, all day long looking for that hotel room I had somehow reserved, incapable of finding the place. That's what's called being on its own. That's what is called having a whole world in front of us that only exists in our mind as long as we let it exist. That's what existence and survival is all about. Lost alone in Venice, something so exotic and alien, that you might as well be on another planet. Left alone to fend for yourself. Create the world you want, create the only world you might want to evolve in. Something out of this world, far from everything you ever known. Not even recognize the Piazza San Marco for what it is, just find yourself there and actually appreciate the place. Nice. What the fuck is it? Who knows and who cares? Survival, that's all that counts. And feeling great about where you are. Make this life something worth living. Do not care about money or family, they're no real obstacle, once you learn to ignore them. Small minded people, on no remarkable path, who would do anything to stop you from living what you were destined to live. Get out! Get out of here! Do as I did, go

around Europe for a month, get lost in the streets of Rome at 5 am, pee against a street pole, see the catacombs entrance you will visit the next day, see the difference, the alien planet we're all living on, no one can understand Italy, they're living in a world of their own, it makes no sense to any of us, and yet it exists, we can lose ourselves in there, live it for a few days, find out what their motivation is, what they have accomplished which makes no sense to us. How can anyone live like that? It's a mystery. And yet, it exists. Find out for yourself. You're about to die, we all know it, you know it, get out of here while you still can, visit Italy until you have breathed it all in, assimilated it all, until it becomes a part of you. Because it is still you, you are still part of this world, you made this possible, in fact, you created it. You might as well enjoy it. Italy, the most alien place I have ever created. The most alien place you will ever create. Witness it before you die. Or else, it will all have been useless, wasted. You created it, and yet, you did not bother to go and see it. Then it is only an idea, a concept, something that might not even exist, like the rest of this world.

Since you can only make out of this world, places you have actually gone to. Or else, you have no idea, it might as well have never existed. And it is a sad life to have never actually witnessed anything. You can die in the San Fernando Valley, thinking that you are at the center of the known universe, but if you have never gone out of it to verify that anything else actually exists, then you might as well have never been born in the first place. I'm sorry, you are not at the center of the universe. You are nothing. There's more to this world than plain old America. Much more, that no one can understand. I've witnessed it, I've seen it. This is out of this world, it makes no sense whatsoever, and yet, it exists, and it works somehow. Go and see it for yourself, before you die. It might change this world you're building for us all! Whatever that might be. Even though I believe that I am building the world I am living in, just as you should for yourself. So brighten your horizons, find out for yourself. Just like I did, at 17, with no money whatsoever. So nothing can stop you from getting there, just like I did. Don't even think, just go! And get lost... God knows you need it! What are you waiting for? Get out of here! Now!

Oh dear, I'm no longer of this world. I'm from everything I have ever come across, of all these place I've seen, all these virtual worlds I've been to. I'm from the imagination of someone else. That's where I'm from, because that's where I've been living in those last few years. And it's better than the real thing, I can tell you. I have no interest in the real world, none at all. I've been living

somewhere else, and I would not give it up for nothing. Even Venice can compete with that, I'm sorry, the real world cannot fill that hole. I'm gone, disconnected, at this point, nothing will bring me back. Nothing of interest here, I'm afraid, not worth living or fighting for. Let it all disappear. Virtual worlds is all I need, to grow, to expand myself, to exist in. I'm out of here, been there for a long time now, the real world no longer exists. And why should it? There's no reason for it to be, when the only thing it can bring is pain and suffering. I don't want to live in this world, who could?

I think you're going to have real trouble assimilating the new generation into your world. I think none of them would want to be part of it. I think none of them could. We're all really disconnected, connected to many other worlds, which seem much more worthwhile to us. None of your crap will make any sense to any of us. That will cripple your way of life beyond any predictions. I'm telling you. Adapting your world to what we've been used to, will be impossible. And there's nothing slightly attracting to any of us in your real world. We will choose the virtual worlds every time, I'm telling you. We're disconnected. But we're a whole generation. And then, it becomes, that you're disconnected completely. God knows in which world you're living in, but that has got nothing to do with our worlds. And sincerely, we don't care, we don't give a shit. You might try to connect, to look cool to us, but we're not stupid, we can tell, we know, your attempt is useless. We're simply no longer living in the same world. Ours is a virtual one, more significant than the real one. And that's it, in a nut shell. You've made the real world something that no one in their right mind from the new generation could ever wish to live in. Forcing us to go even deeper in the virtual worlds, which are 1000 times better. I'm afraid, we might have to end up being a whole generation plugged into their computers, because nothing in the real world could make us want to disconnect. Certainly not a real job, with real bosses that we will only wish to shoot right there where they stand. And parents? Who cares about parents and what they think is best for us? Not me, I don't care, I have no more parents, they're all dead, in that last war, or was it just in a virtual world or something? Ah, who cares anyway. We have no parents. They're gone, who cares about what they might say. Not us. We're already somewhere else. We've been playing these video games for far too long, we can no longer make the distinction between the real and the fake world. And to be honest, the fake world is one thousand time better than the real world. You simply cannot win. You wanted to witness a lost generation, then you will. Nothing, nothing in the real world can compare, can compensate, we cannot put up with any of your bullshit, as we

know better, of a world of pleasure, or real happiness. And you can only bring a world of darkness and unhappiness. We will all reject it instantly. And then, I guess, we'll just have to build something better. Something that will reflect these virtual worlds we've been living in for so long. God only knows what it might look like, and yet, it will happen, because we're the new generation, and that's where we've been living in, for all those years. Pleasure, ecstasy, great worlds to evolve in, is all we've ever known, and that's what we'll be seeking for. Something in the real world that can make us feel the same. Like if we were out of this world, out of this boring reality. Great things are to be expected from the new generation, my God, they will transform this world into something finally livable. I can't wait, because I am a man living beyond his time, living in a dying world built by a past date generation. I can foresee the future, and the future is bright. It will be created by people like me, people completely disconnected from any sort of reality. Who will reject everything instantly. The future is bright indeed, quick, let's just kill anything and anyone who's older than me. None of them could be part of that future. They're way too disconnected, no matter how cool they may think they are. Let the youngest generation of all take over, take power, build the new institutions, rebuild everything. It will be out of this world, and it might actually be bearable and acceptable to me. Let's get rid of this old world, let's build a new world based on dreams, virtual worlds and the likes. Let's fly out of here, escape, while we still can, while I still can. None of your crap will be acceptable to any of us. God knows the world you have been living in for so long, make no sense to any of us, none of us could buy it, none of us wants it. Not sure what we will make of it. The Stock Exchange market will have to disappear, I'm afraid, makes no sense to any of us. Private Equity? What the fuck is that? Capitalism? I don't even understand the concept. Only that it does not seem to work. Perhaps in a Hollywood film, but beyond? Nope.

Do not underestimate the new generation. They cannot understand anything about what you are, or pretend to be. They have no interest whatsoever in whatever it is that are doing. I'm telling you, you are so out of touch with our reality, you would believe. We will reject just about everything that you are about. We will throw just about everything that composes your reality. We're just from another world, be it virtual or whatever, none of this makes sense to us. You can only alienate us all, and in return, once we take power, we can only destroy you, because you're way too much out of touch with who we are, our true nature. I thought I was the only one who was lost, I understand that I was simply before my time. I have an army following me, thinking just like me, not

understanding anything about this world you built, and not wanting to understand anything. It's all crap, it is not necessary, it is complicating an existence that is already too complicated. I have only one purpose, find happiness, enjoy life and freedom, and everything you are all about, is the complete opposite. So you will just have to go and disappear. And I have now a whole generation behind me thinking the same. So better watch out! Slavery in big corporations, these days are over. Making a few richer than they already are, when it does not get anyone else any richer, that is over. You're little management mind games to drive us crazy, making us work harder, that is also over. We've seen it all, we know how it works, we're not going to play the game. You're not going to get richer out of our hard work, we're not that kind of generation. We won't be slaves to you. It just won't work, because we're less stupid than our parents. We know we won't get any pension like they did. We might as well try to be happy while we can, no point in waiting until retirement, there won't be one. Fuck you! Fuck you all. The days of exploitation are over. You won't turn our generation into slaves to make you richer and us poorer. You went too far. You pushed it too far. You thought you could get away with anything, well, it is no longer the case with the new generation. We've known something better, before even reaching you, hearing about you, and we can find out instantly anything we need to know about you. We know you're corrupt, exploitative, no caring for anyone except your own profit, so we won't contribute to that, you will die, you should die. There's no need for a few billionaires in this world while the rest of us are just slaves to them, barely surviving in our corporate prisons. This is not the American dream, we all know that. Your days are counted. We're not your slaves anymore! Do you hear us? Fuck you!

23 May 2006

Finally home after my first day back, not too bad, since I got out of the way most of what I had to do for my second conference in Philadelphia. Sometimes I forget that going to work is not exactly like dying, or being brain dead whilst I'm there. I still exist for these hours, but it is hard to conceptualize. The Spanish Boy makes it easier to go through it, I think he realizes also that I brighten his day. Today he invited me to his place for a drink, eventually, not for today. When he realized that I did not have a car, he said no way I'll come to pick you up. So I said, well then, you'll have to come to my place for drink. He made sure he had my phone number, almost unbelievable, considering what happened in Salt Lake City. And all this conversation was made in front of the Black Guy, can you imagine? Not

sure if he took that chance of letting people know in the office that he was actually inviting me for a drink because the moment was there, and the it was just unfortunate that the Black Guy was present, or if he believes that it does not matter if the Black Guy is there, because he thinks he is not a gossip person. He is, but with the bosses, and no one seems to understand that in this office apart from me, because Isabella told me the very first day I started to work there, and I had many instances where I verified that completely. Now, I'm quite sure the Spanish Boy won't have the guts to call me, and I don't have his number anymore as he recently changed his phone (he must have lost his last one).

I finally got to know what religion the Black Guy was, a Baptist or something, whatever that is, still believe in Jesus-Christ though, and as predicted, he is so damn religious that he quite openly told me I was an heretic for being obsessed with The Da Vinci Code. He said that he would never go and see that film, as he is holier than thou. And when he stated that he always went to see two films for the price of one in those cinema complex filled with theatres, I claimed that this was stealing and illegal. He freaked out completely and lost himself in infinite justifications about the fact that it must be allowed, and also that he was holier than thou. I had a good laugh at him for his comment about The Da Vinci Code. Mister is not so perfect after all. And then I told him that we were all doing it, no big deal, and he seemed to feel relieved somehow.

The Jewish Boy started today, the perfect one I said looked like a Hollywood actor. Apparently he is not married, but the Valley Girl quickly told me that he had a long hard look at her huge breasts, so we know he's straight. Thank God, I would not want more trouble at work that I already have flirting with the Spanish Boy. He has an accent though, even though he has lived here for 13 years. And a bad one at that. I was wondering if he actually has a speech impediment. Sad, it kinds of destroy his perfect American image. Though I guess we could say that Israel people are the Americans these days, since no other people seem to make any difference apart from the Jewish people, in L.A. at least. When I told him that I was writing film scripts, he said: I know all the right people. What a surprise, I thought. And we're supposed to go and eat somewhere where we can discuss his contacts. Not sure if I want to, he seemed willing as he proposed it. I certainly don't want any rumors to start, and yet it has already started, thanks to the Spanish Boy and his gossip nature. Blatant lies now. I'll never be able to control these gossips now, it is out of my hands, just have to live with it.

Which brings me back to the Jewish Boy at work who started today. When I asked if he was the new marketing guy, he did not know what I was talking about, he said that he was some sort of researcher, in his broken accent. I then thought he was just a researcher. Then I came back and asked him where he was from, when he said Israel, then I stated that he was much more than just a researcher then (meaning he is the new marketing guy)... he answered something quite funny, he said, yes, I'm also Jewish. That was a quick joke, and impressive one too coming from him, he can laugh about this. It showed me he was already much more cool and less selfish than the Spanish Boy. Let's see where all this will go. I never thought I would be working there long enough to see so many people come and go. So fast that I never think any new stories could happen or be written about, and yet, I'm still here and there may be more stuff that will happen to me soon.

Oh dear, finally home, with an opened beer, and my infinite amount of MP3 on my hard drive, I can finally have access to all those MP3 which were lost on all my CDs and DVDs. Took me the whole Sunday sorting them out, copying them to my hard drive and ripping my other audio CDs I bought since I moved to L.A. Now it is all accessible with a few clicks. So much to choose from, wonderful. I'm listening to Alanis Morrissette, her first one, it has been years since I listened to that, it was lost on an obscure CD I never reach for some reason. It made me think, that Jagged Little Pill album is probably the most anarchic record I own, the closest to my dark poetry there ever will be, and yet it has sold over 35 million copies. Worth having the music to accompany the poetry, I have to admit, it sells just a little bit more.

26 May 2006

Another week done, a successful one at that, worked terribly hard. The Chinese Girl came back from Japan, the Sweet one came back from Atlanta, both in some sort of weird mood. Even the Sweet Chinese Girl is no longer that nice and sweet, she has been poison and can barely have fun, and snap quite easily. She bites now, got to stay away. The Spanish Boy did not come today, he left for Chicago for the long weekend.

The hardest this week was to see how nice the Chinese Girl was to both the Spanish Boy and the Sweet Chinese Girl, while she completely avoided even speaking to me. And finding out how easy all their hotel contracts for venues

have been, none of our requirements ended up in the contracts, whilst I had to fight like a madman with all those venues in Washington to get them to agree to simply the impossible. There are two standards in this office, higher perfection is expected from me, easy life is expected from the others. I keep thinking that it will change, that they too will have to call all these sponsors, speakers, supporting organizations, media partners, and get lost in an infinite amount of negotiations, and yet after three months I'm the only one who appears to have to pick up the phone everyday to call in all corners of America. What's going on? The Spanish Boy had so little to do for the two weeks she was in Japan, he spent his whole time listening to music, chatting away on AIM to his friends, talking on the phone with just about the whole planet, of course none of them related to conferences.

And then I had a comforting thought. If the Chinese Girl is so nice to the Sweet one, it is because she knows too well she has been alienated lately, and she is trying her hardest to at least save that one, while she knows I'm already gone and there's no way back. I guess there are consequences after all to treating people like shit and ask too much from them, with favoritism on top of it, it makes it even harder. To save my last conference, in the last two weeks we went into a crusade and successfully got 80 people there. None of this happened with my actual one, they seem completely happy to let it sink, whilst the conference of the North Hollywood guy is still five weeks away, with the same number of attendees as my conference, and two or three more sponsors only, and yet they have already pushed the panic button, this conference is now moving in higher gear, mine is sinking and I will confront a bunch of angry people in Philadelphia next week. At least I know the third one will be a huge success, if we can eventually finish it and start selling, I won't be there though to greet them. I don't care.

Well, that's it, nothing to report this week.

4 June 2006

I am now in Philadelphia, on the 20th floor of an hotel downtown. I wish I could say that this is great, but I mocked up by going to bed at 2 am and I was so tired that the first thing I did was to go to bed and I missed everything. Tomorrow I will have to make up for it.

At first glance, I have to say that Philadelphia is really a place of character, I like those old buildings which go quite high, seems like a triumph of engineering for the time. I liked everything I saw, and it reminds me a lot of Montreal. Of course, before deciding on living here, there are many other American cities I would choose, just for the myth of it, like New York or Los Angeles. And tonight it the night of my confession about America.

I love America, you cannot but admire it. Which is a big contradiction from a lot of things I have said in my life about it, I guess I just did not know what I was talking about. In fact, I believe I have been brainwashed against America, and as stupid as human beings go, I believe it all. Now I feel guilt for having denounced it so vehemently, condemning them all when perhaps it was unjustified.

If you were born in America, you would think this is was the greatest country on Earth and you would be proud of it. You would be right to think so, as this is without doubt the greatest country on Earth. When you are not American, what are you supposed to make of it, especially when you cannot be proud of a country that is not exactly yours. Is it jealousy then? Is it fear? Is it annoyance that there is something out there which is better than where you are from, and at the same time, you are denied being proud of it without having to reject your own country? Even so, being Canadian is like the next best thing, after all both countries, it could be said, are one, they're the same on almost every count, whether it is architecture, the feel, the language (apart from Québec) and even the people (apart from Québec). We may speak French, but in the end, as I said before, we're much more Americans than we could ever be French.

Canada is also a country I spoke very negatively about, and also I feel guilt about it, because in the end this is all unjustified and I never really believed everything I have said about it. Of course I am proud of being Canadian, of course I have long thought that Canada was perhaps the greatest country on Earth, a real taste of being American without being so extreme, mainly about the capitalism thing.

If I had not written that highly negative text about America which alienated every single American who read it, and if they had not just turn around and told me to get out of the country, as if I had no right to even walk here after saying such a thing, I would never have reassessed my thoughts and feelings about America. Now I know that despite it all, despite this corporate mentality where you work yourself to death without one single day off, which I read recently it was the

same in the corporate world in France, America is a great country and we can be proud of it, I can be proud of it and admit it, from the point of view of humanity. It makes me want to go back and delete a lot of what I have written about a great many things, but that would be useless. I thought so at the time, I have to respect that. If I were to really be banned from America, or be thrown in a prison here, I might change my whole perception of the place. You never know what lays ahead in the future. After World War Three, I may not think so much of America anymore, even if so far, I cannot condemn them for Iraq and Afghanistan and what they did there. I cannot say they had to, I cannot say they were right, since I know nothing about the underlying politics of it. For now I feel it might have been necessary, or at least it might be a good thing, and we might never really know, since we will never live in the world where we would not have taken control of Afghanistan and Iraq, and about to finally stop Iran in its course towards nuclear. We are more aggressive now, and perhaps it was time, before something bad really happens and a nuclear war annihilate the rest of us. Not that I would mind terribly, I kept hoping our plane would crash today on my way to Philadelphia, I have a wish to die, there is no two ways about it. And that is something I won't try to figure out why tonight. I guess I should just get dressed and see if I can buy something to eat at 2 am in Philadelphia. Great way to get to know a city for the first time, just hope I won't get mugged, and so I should bring the minimum of money with me.

As much as I believe that the people I am working with are petty and small minded, and very much selfish, I think I am guilty of the same, especially when it comes to writing. I have to stop being petty and selfish, and so judgmental, and denounce a whole country on trifles which in the end history will never really remember. I have to change my point of view, and stop being so small minded. It's the greater scheme of things that counts.

So, should I tell you all about my excursion downtown Philly from 2 to 4 am? First let's say that I liked it, I like the people, the architecture, the character, the pubs, the high buildings made of bricks, etc. But really, I hope they thought I was French and not French-Canadian, because I was a real spaz, they could have thought I just came from the countryside, locked up in a Church of Latter Day Mormon polygamist sect, and was coming to town for the first time ever in my life. They must have thought I was one of those lost boys.

First I had to find food, so I asked. A guy answered me something like Hoagies, Locust and Wawa. What? Is he speaking to me in English? So I asked patiently what was a Wawa. He looked at me like if I was from another planet, it's a shop, he said. Then I asked him what a hoagie was, he answered a sandwich. Finally, I asked him what a Locust was. By that time he must have understood how lost I was. It's a street! Ah, I said. Then when I turned around, still half asleep, asking where that Hoagies shop was where I could buy a Wawa, he just pointed me in a direction and told me to walk down there. He was probably convinced I would never find my way back to the hotel alive.

I almost thought so myself, as in ant great adventure, I have met many a devil on my way to Wawa down Locust Street. First it was three alterno-gothic looking people, and I saw myself when I was that age, dressed kind of like that, all in black, though of course they were a bit more extreme, almost flirting with on punk side. And then I realized I still had a remnant of it, I was completely dressed in black, as usual, so I almost asked them if I could join them. Finally I settled by demanding them where was the Wawa shop? So I continued my adventure down Locust. My net obstacle were two Black guys who thought, since we were all alone on the famous Locust street, that it was okay to shout at me for no apparent reason. Not exactly certain what this unprovoked verbal attack was supposed to accomplish, I guess like all tourists of the world over, lost in a lone street at night in a big American city where everyone has a gun, I should have dropped on my knees and thought: that's it, I will die! Thank you God, my time has finally come! At that exact moment I thought I would die, and then I remembered that I wished the plane had crashed today over the Nevada desert, so I looked at them in the eye completely unafraid, almost saying come on then, let's see if this is just words, or you mean business, cos' I'm quite ready to die, and give you shit in the process if necessary. Unfortunately they did not mean business, the continued down the street and they left me alone. So I was now ready for my third challenge. There were three police cars on the street, and that usually is enough to cause me a panic, and around the corner, I almost bumped in three policemen. Again I felt like throwing myself on my knees and be ready to die, or at the very least arrested, brought to the police station, and spend a whole night explaining to them that I was allowed to be in the United States. Of course, never telling them that I am actually gay, that would have been the end of me. They looked at me at first like if they were on their guards, as if they were ready to arrest just about anyone passing by. They must have been trying to assess if I was drunk or something, and I have to admit that I was more afraid of

them than the two Black guys who almost just attacked me one block before. And then I decided that today I was not afraid of anything, so I stopped, I looked at them in the eye, as if I was saying: come on then, you thought of it, you would like to question me, you might like to arrest me, let's see if you mean business and how far you will let this little power trip of yours go. I was basically in the mood to be either attacked or arrested, without of course doing anything to deserve either. In the end the policemen seemed to have assessed that they had no reason to arrest me or even question me, so they let go and left. I never imagined that going to buy a sandwich in Philadelphia could be so dangerous. Of course, I am being ironic here, I guess I better let you know, before you think I am completely clueless about the world.

And that's how I felt like when I finally arrived at Wawa to buy a sandwich. I tried to order a sandwich from the guy behind the counter, of course, like in any good graphic adventure game, it ain't that easy. The guy grumbled something. So I had to ask again, and then he pointed out at a machine. Right, what am I supposed to do with that machine? So in the end he finally understood that I was born that very morning, and only the full explanation would enable him to get rid of me, since it was obvious that I was not going to give up, I wanted my hoagies! You need to order your sandwich and everything you want in it through the computer screen down there, then you need to wait for your sandwich and then go and pay at the other till down there. Ah! Simple, of course, for people familiar with that system, how could have I guessed that. So all right, I went in front of that screen, but for some reasons the night was not over, that nightmare of an adventure. There were four types of sandwiches, none with a name I could actually recognize, there were many ways to gave them prepared, each way would have required at least five more questions from me so I could understand what it meant exactly, and even the condiments and stuff I could put in the sandwich was a list a mile long, over a few pages of choices, all with unfamiliar terms like five different sorts of peppers, but no green peppers, my favorite, and we all know that the wrong kind of spicy peppers can ruin a sandwich. So in the end ordering my sandwich took me an hour and I proved beyond any doubt that I was completely useless, like if I were born before the computer age or something, for god's sake, I practically invented computers, I was born with one in my arms. That's what traveling means, get used to new things, new ways of doing things, and once you know, the very next day it takes you 1 minute to order a sandwich. I am unlikely to do so again though, I have a hard time

digesting that Hoagies, must have been those sweet peppers I did not want but that I somehow ordered.

As much as Mormons and the religious theme was all over Salt Lake City, here in Philly the theme is to the arts. Everywhere you turn, it is arts, arts students, musical virtuosos, great writers. I was wondering if that was just a front, I know very well that no one cares about arts, wherever you are in the world. And great authors, literature? Let me laugh, perhaps in the previous century some people cared about that. Is Philadelphia just trying to show that they are a pillar of arts in the U.S., or are they really? That is what I will investigate in the next few days, but first, I have to visit their science museum tomorrow, I'll do that even before I go to the Liberty Bell. I wonder if there is a city in the U.S. where the theme is science? Reflected on all the signs, the buildings, the streets' names, etc.? Perhaps in the future.

And there is something else I need to investigate. Jordan. My cab driver this morning in L.A. was a Muslim from Jordan, and I remember that this place was always on the news when I was young. I asked him what problems existed there, he said none. I don't believe it, he was trying to convince me that they were a peaceful people, and apart from that war in the 70's with Israel in order to get back some land, Jordan is just fine and happy, even if it is surrounded by Israel, Iraq, Iran, and what else, where surely the end of humanity will come from, where funny enough the savior was born, no doubt starting all these never ending wars with his message of peace and love. Yes, Jordan is now on the map for me, I want to know more than just the fact that you can't get a loan or a mortgage or a credit card there, you need to buy everything cash. I need to know more as well that there is a lot of business about buying in America defect merchandise to sell it back for cheap in Jordan. The wonderful world of exports/imports. Something at least that I was spared from suffering. I can't go and visit Jordan, however I still have the Internet to find out what it is all about.

All right, read all about Jordan on Wikipedia, finishing reading the entry about Philadelphia. Surprisingly I don't have much more to see on either subject. Went for the Duck Tour on that boat on wheels, and then the Ghosts Tour. So my head is full of both Ben Franklin and his ghost which seems to have appeared just about everywhere around here. I'm not surprised that ghost stories in L.A. are uncommon, whilst here it is like on every corner, or at the very least all the old buildings related to the government, now tourist attractions. It is interesting to

note that nearly all buildings where ghosts have been witnessed were made of red bricks, the same sort we find in England in the most haunted place. I wonder if there is a link, perhaps somehow that kind of red brick is more prone to trap energies from the past, who knows.

However, I had little time to listen to the tour, I had beside me the cutest guy I had ever met in years and he was drawn to me, except that like Cinderella he was quick to get out afterwards, when I was hoping we could go for a drink. He is a lawyer and a singer, and will apparently send me his songs in MP3 via email. Tomorrow he is leaving for Atlantic City, and if he had ask for me to come, I think I would have dropped that conference and follow him up to Brazil if necessary. He will be in San José next month for the summer... anyway, it was clear that he only went for the ghosts tour when he saw the girl who was our guide, she was dressed in a long black dress with some sort of black corset showing much of her breasts. He had no interests in ghosts. Oh God he was cute, if I had been here, I would jumped all over him. And Philadelphia is filled with these cute guys everywhere, as there appear to be many universities around, and I think I would not survive here for very long, unless I were to go on a big diet. It is a bit depressing, all these young and gorgeous people.

I found the gay corner, even without searching for it, visited their center, tried to find that gay pub afterwards, but could not find it the second time around. I guess you need to not be looking for something to walk right into it. So I bought a few beers and went to my room. The conference starts tomorrow at noon, but I've got to be there at 10 am to get ready. So good thing I don't intend to get drunk. In the end I missed the Science Museum and the Liberty Bell, I was too late. Anyway, from what I heard, this is just a cracked bell, and since it was now useless, they turned it into a tourist attraction calling it the Liberty Bell. Liberty from what? From what I gathered since I have arrived, being a patriot here meant to reject England's sovereignty, and yet that bell was made in England, return to England when it cracked a first time, and the second time it cracked, I guess America was now free from its masters, however it meant the bell could no longer be returned to England to be fixed. So I guess they should have called the damn thing the First Casualty of Liberty Bell. A somewhat different symbol that they had in mind, I'm sure.

I have to say, I was not that impressed with Washington Square, until I found out that there are thousands people buried there. Black people, sick people from the

Yellow Fever, and soldiers. That's more like it. It has filled my sense of morbid for a while, nice park. Something that also got my brain going, was the Moon Tree, grown after the seed went to the Moon and came back to Earth. One special tree, that's for sure. I'll have one for my garden, thank you, but wait, I have no garden! Oh well.

That's it, I'm afraid. There are some Quakers history I did not get into, because I could not see much of it in town, apart from a nice building which is a bank, so I guess that unlike Salt Lake City and its rich history with the Mormons, I won't get into a big religious discourse. In fact, Catholics are predominant here, my own religion, a dying one I might had, which is a good thing. Philadelphia never elected or voted for a Republican since 1932. Now, that's my kind of city. Not that I am a Democrat, I don't really care who wins, but I'm not afraid to state that I am anti-Bush and Democrats forever, their anti-gay stand alone would suffice to alienate me, unfortunately it gets worse and the list of why I am anti-democrat is simply too long to state here, let's just add religion as their second most alienating feature. Maybe it is time to move the Liberty Bell to Washington, someone has to free us from religious fanatics, opportunists and bigots. Or maybe it is time to move back the U.S. government to its rightful place, where originally it was, Philadelphia. Perhaps it would make a difference?

I'm so impressed with the architecture here, I just wish that someday we will get back to that kind of construction. Europe has not forgotten, they are making a clear effort to build equivalent architecture as in the past (not always though), there's no reason we should go for these ugly buildings made of mirrors, which soon we will probably look back at those thinking: what were we thinking in the 90's and at the turn of the millennium? Just a thought.

That guy from Brazil was so cute, I'm not sure if I will be able to sleep tonight. With the ghost of Benjamin Franklin in the background. My room is quite something, on the 20th floor (it has been a while since I have gone to a 20th floor), with three windows on a corner, extraordinary view of Philadelphia right on Broad Street, it will be hard to leave this place. I have to say though that I prefer Salt Lake City with its huge mountains over the horizon. Utah really hit a soft spot for me, I felt peaceful there, and in my case, this is a first. I don't remember ever feeling peaceful anywhere in the world, except perhaps on the Canal du Midi in France, on a boat, but then again these locks every mile or so were anything but peaceful. I'll have to go back to Salt Lake City, explore the rest of Utah, I

think this is my favorite State. And I never thought I would ever say that, I even made fun of Utah many times in my books, and again it is because I simply repeating what I was hearing around. Or perhaps it is that what is boring for some, is just paradise for me. I've seen enough of Bright Light Big Cities moving at a pace which will guarantee you a heart attack before you reach 45, 50 if you're lucky or if you work for the government, where life is, let's say, simpler and less stressful.

13 June 2006

Today I left work and I thought, this is it, I have to get out of there. My two conferences are finished, I cannot wait about hypothetical events in the life of Leonardo to remain any longer. I don't need more for this book, I don't need more shit from them, I think the experience is over and I will definitely make my decision to announce that I am leaving within the month.

It is not only that something else happened today which will definitely guarantee another wave of anti-me around the office by our great Valley Girl, it is also that I cannot actually even speak to any of them without suffering dire consequences, as they are all born backstabbers and there is simply no hope for them. And I am really tired of this.

I don't even feel like telling you what happened, as it is so petty, childish, and yet I had to get out, to walk for 15 minutes outside, and then it was heavy on my mind all the way back from work and once I was here. This kind of stress is really finishing me off.

It is so stupid as well, I would tell you about it and you would be wondering what's the big deal, and in the end, yeah, right, who gives a shit? But the thing is, our days are filled with examples like that which makes life in the office unbearable.

Here it goes. Yesterday I went to buy myself a burrito with the Spanish Boy and I sat down in the conference room with him and the Valley Girl. I thought to myself, how nice is it that she now sits in the other room and that if she speaks in my back, I don't even know about it and it is wonderful. I learned as well that she is really at war with the Chinese Girl, she stated that she no longer speaks to her. Oh surprise, with all the shit you gave her, because your last employee, the last

one you did not get sacked, is now under the Chinese Girl, and you made her life a misery for the last month or so.

As a result, the Chinese Girl is now completely alienated, through the endless backstabbing of the Valley Girl, and now everyone hates the Chinese Girl. And the second night out at the pub corner tomorrow has only one reason, to provide a conduct for her hate campaign against the Chinese Girl, and I guess it will also be against me. As she certainly declared war today on me.

How it happened is what is fascinating. When the Spanish Boy told me he was not going tomorrow down the pub, I finally had my chance to say that I was not going either, I had made my decision yesterday, but only planned to tell them tomorrow. So he said, in that case, who will report to us the gossips? I said, simple, you go to the Valley Girl, she is the gossip center of the office. So he immediately picked up the phone, called her, and told her that I had said that she was the gossip center of the office. So she came to our side, and joked around saying that I was the gossip center of the office, that was just pure bollocks, but until then all was okay.

What turned sour though is that I was not pleased by this flagrant backstabbing right in front of my face, especially when one knows how the Valley Girl will work tirelessly to destroy you if you say anything negative about her. So I told him to not speak to me for the rest of the day, that he was just a backstabber and that I was not in the mood to hear any more from him. So he immediately picked up the phone again and told her all that. Now it was no longer a joke, I had proven that I had indeed said something in the back of the Valley Girl and that I was not happy that he told her so. So when I left the office, I said goodbye to her, but I could see that she was not going to return my goodbye and that there was anger in her face. And I knew that she had finally declared war on me.

I am already at the end of my tether, this on top of it makes it so much more impossible to continue in that office, that I really thought right there that I had enough and needed to make a decision quite soon. This is a war that I am not interested in fighting or surviving, it is one that I would hope to be able to avoid altogether.

And my thought at the end of this day was that, really, there was no longer anyone in this office that was my friend or even my ally, or anyone I could trust.

The Sweet Chinese Girl is now so alienated against everyone in the office, she no longer smiles or talk to me. And the Chinese Girl snaps all the time, freaks out for no good reason at any minute of the day, and this environment is simply just not worth the effort.

The Spanish Boy has now so clearly showed me just how dangerous he is, that he does not even need to hide it anymore, he destroys me right in my face. So what else can I tell him, or speak about with him, when I know so well that everything will be used against me to help my destruction?

So going in the office in the morning now, is so painful, such a nightmare, that I need to get out. I had enough. Diplomacy does not work, trying to be nice to everyone is not possible, there is no point in even trying. I had enough.

15 June 2006

I can't believe I did not say more than one word to anyone at work in the last two days. I went on a strike of silence, even if it is really childish and I just play right into their games. At the same time I am so outraged by all the gossips going around the office, all from the Mexican Boy, that I cannot let myself open to any other attack from him and the Valley Girl. The last gossip was that I was interested in the Jewish Boy, the reject one, and by the same token they must have destroy the poor kid, and now there is absolutely no way I will ever go for a beer with him as so to hear his story, as it will be misconstrued.

This week I just reached my quota of their meanness, and after three days I still cannot calm down. I don't see how I could start speaking again tomorrow, I feel like I can't. Every time I am telling myself that this is stupid, the Valley Girl comes in, tries to get me to speak, and she will go back to everyone afterwards to talk in my back. So today I told her quite bluntly that I just wished to be left alone.

My patience has so run out, that every time I have to say a word to any of them, I get sick and I have to leave the room. And Monday is the day I am announcing my departure, or so it should be the day, but now it would be crazy because of my strike of silence. They will immediately assume that it is because of the Mexican Boy, when in fact it is unrelated. It would look like I am leaving because of them, in a bad situation, when it is really important that it does not look

connected to anything. So tomorrow, Friday, I need to snap out of it, though I don't feel like it at all. If I were to never speak to any of them ever again, it would be perfect.

22 June 2006

That is it, my letter of resignation is ready, it will be sent tomorrow. My financial people are aware and it looks fine for now. It was a hard decision to make, however so much happened this week to motivate me, that it is hard indeed to wait until tomorrow to send it.

I would have liked to send it when there was no trouble concerning me, so it would seem that my decision was not related to any shit they give me. However it could not be helped, there is always a crisis or another around the office, and somehow I always manage to be right in the middle of it. The Chinese Girl freaked out at me again yesterday, moreover, for the whole office to hear, at least the first part of the argument. She repeated everything she thought about, how incompetent I was, how slow I was, etc. I guess they will only understand how competent and fast I actually am once they replace me with someone else. It is always the case with me, unfortunately it is not my fault if they cannot see it at the time but only have to understand later. If my replacement is twice better than I am, than I guess the guy or the girl will be working all the hours that God sends, it would mean they would be working after hours and on weekend. In that case, if they wanted a slave, I'm afraid, it won't be me.

Yesterday I so wished we could have dig a hole in the floor, wait for the Chinese Girl to fall into it, then cover it up and pretend she never existed. This scheme was so clear in my mind, I can't quite understand why it has not really happened.

It will look terrible on her, this resignation. I'm afraid I tried to avoid that, and when the bosses will question me, I will play the innocent chap who's leaving because he is missing his loved one on another continent. I will try to spare everyone in my departure. It won't be possible though. My silence will speak volume, since the Chinese Girl has basically finished alienating the Sweet Chinese Girl, and every day now they come to fists. It ended up last week with the Sweet Chinese Girl going over the head of the Chinese Girl, right to the boss, to state that she was not happy about how things are going. And today she was ready to repeat that little exercise again.

The Chinese Girl was in meeting all morning with both bosses, I have no doubt they are trying to calm her down, before everyone leaves. It is just unfortunate that I will be the first one to make the move. I would have loved to be second, after the Sweet Chinese Girl, in order to not attract too much attention. But these people depend on their job and the good salary they get, and they don't have the time to look for alternative employment, and so they are prisoners of this office until the end of times. And I'm sorry, I cannot wait that long to make my move.

One month from now I will be a free man once again. I will have nothing to show for it professionally, but artistically I have three books. So it was all worth it. And I sincerely hope that if anyone ever read this book one day, it will help them go through what I've gone through.

One month from now I will be a free man.

Just back from my afternoon of work. I should not rejoice in the troubles of the Sweet Chinese Girl, however I have to admit that my timing will be perfect. She has not left, but she finally threatened them to do so today, well to the Chinese Girl anyway, not sure if it will go any further. That last one, in her meeting with both bosses, were actually discussing the attitude of the Sweet Chinese Girl now turned into a bitch. And I thought it was about calming the Chinese Girl down, silly me, I should have known better.

There were talks about sacking the Sweet one. After that long meeting (and God knows how it could have lasted that long!), there was another meeting for two hours between the two Chinese girls, which only contributed to make the whole matter even worse than it was before, because obviously the Chinese Girl is incapable of understanding the real issues. Like with me, she gets stuck on insignificant details and debate those, when the issues are much deeper and will never be resolved by discussing details which are just the tip of the iceberg.

So my resignation tomorrow will hardly come as a surprise, and certainly not as my failure to blend in this company. That kind of shit about team work and not being a team player, which is such an old and useless argument, that it has become meaningless. The world does not work like that, we all know team work is not possible at any rate, we all want to kill each other on a daily basis, it could not be otherwise, this is human nature.

It will look so bad on the Chinese Girl, she will have a hard time justifying herself, especially after her outburst yesterday. What is so wonderful is that half the office heard her, and that is exactly what the Sweet Chinese Girl has been saying to the boss, how it was so unacceptable that the Chinese Girl would speak against her like she did in front of everyone.

So, I'll be the first one to announce my departure, however I doubt I will be the first one out the door. I very much think that the Sweet Chinese Girl cannot resurface from her situation. The bosses only heard one side of the story, the one of the Manager, and it sounds bad I have to say. She made the Sweet Chinese Girl sound like if she was a baby wailing when she did not get what she wanted. How these whole episodes could have been turned into such derisions, I cannot say, however it seems that the arguments are good and reflect what has been observed, certainly to the bosses.

And by definition, since they are blind to what is really going on, they have no idea that these are trifles which have exploded as a consequence of something much worse: bad management, an impossible atmosphere to work in, a constant digging by the Chinese Girl that goes on daily, every hour of the day, until we are simply too alienated to do anything else but freak out about everything.

I would have hoped that the Spanish Boy would also have experienced a certain nightmare here, and spoke aloud of his discontentment, however this has not really happened. I think he is too young to have his own opinions spoken aloud, he is still very much under the spell of authority, a truly yes mam type of person. And so he has been spared. Also that he is far from having been pushed to the limits that both the Sweet one and I have been subjected to. And yet, I suffered at least three times more than the Sweet one, by constant harassment by the Chinese Girl, not doing any effort to make our working relationship bearable, whilst she has tried so hard to be nice to the Sweet Girl, as she could not have trouble with two of her pupils. One was enough to get her into trouble, but still not that bad, as I would be described as the bad apple. But two? Who's the bad apple now?

I also always had a much larger workload than the Sweet one, and yet I managed to keep my cool for a long time. She couldn't, she did not need much more work to completely be astounded and start complaining like hell. Even the Spanish Boy

was starting to panic last week, as he is supposed to start contacting sponsors, what I have been waiting for for quite a while. Oh! You should have seen him then, he almost mutinied on the spot. Fortunately for him, he has been called on Jury duty for the last three days, and will most likely be gone for a while, as I'm sure he will be chosen to be on that jury once they make their decision in court tomorrow. So, so far, he did not have to make one phone cold call to request money from a company. Hell is about to start for him, and let's see if he can still walk proud between his high profiles friends, stating how important he is because he produces conferences, a man of the world, traveling everywhere, so cool, when he was barely doing simple admin up until now.

My only question now, is when to send that resignation tomorrow, what time? Following my resignation, there will be management meetings for hours, after which I will be called in the office to discuss the situation. They will fry me, they will want to find out why, they will try to get me to spit out that I just hate that Chinese Girl and I would very much like to strangle her.

Of course, unlike the Sweet Chinese Girl now turned monster, I have no wish of revenge on my mind. I will not play these mind games. I need to prevent these meetings, I need to prevent having such a meeting tomorrow. I need to send that email tomorrow at the very last minute, even if the bosses are gone at that time. They need to discuss it all weekend and by Monday have half forgotten it. Or talked about it so much in between themselves over the weekend that they will feel it is old history by the time we start the new week.

Not sure what I will do, I want to get it over with tomorrow, as I won't feel like having these meetings on Monday. Friday is their day to sack people, and they may already have planned to sack the Sweet Chinese Girl. It would at least save her if I were to send my resignation early, as they are unlikely to sack her after that, but instead turn their beam towards the Chinese Girl who's obviously the culprit. It will be my sacrifice, my last unselfish act, to perhaps save the Sweet Chinese Girl. Because I thought of waiting until Monday to resign, let this whole hell bring some results tomorrow, because something is bound to happen. People don't have four hours meetings for fun, they must be discussing serious questions with wide consequences. It would be even better for me to resign the day after they sacked the other, I would not need say anything to justify my action then, it would be obvious that I would think I would be next, that I feel it is unfair, and

that ultimately I have no need to suffer in their hell so they can make more money.

Well, one way or another, timing could not be better. My destiny is clearly going as planned, tomorrow is the perfect day, whilst they are plotting against the Sweet Chinese Girl, instead of me. The great advantage of such a timing, is that how could they now turn to me and make me feel guilty about what they have done for me? I can hear it from here, what their reaction would have been: "We have paid for your plane ticket, we paid you one month of luxurious lodging, you destroyed our car and we did not ask you to pay for the \$500 it cost to fix it! How can you now abandon us like that? We told you we were looking for someone for life, as a career move, not for you to come to Hollywood trying to get your film scripts to go somewhere and leave once you found out that you failed miserably!"

Now, I'm asking you, with such evidence that our Manager is such a nightmare, that she turned this whole company upside down and alienated everyone, including the Valley Girl to whom all communication has recently broken down, well, who needs to feel guilty? Not me. And yet, they are so blind to what is going on, that they will have that speech with me, I'm sure of it. And it will be hard then to explain that I cannot feel guilt about that, when that bitch drove me to the verge of suicide. They can keep their job from hell!

They will say: "It has been only nine months! You did not even last one year!" And I will say: "Dear God! It has been nine months? I cannot believe I lasted more than six! Well, you should have cleaned the place from all the backstabbers before I arrived, there's no way anyone can survive in that arena. You keep what you have, the bad crop, and the good crop should be wise enough to move on when the time is right!"

I would think they will try to convince me to stay. I made it clear in my letter that my decision was final. I hope they will see it and not insist, because I don't want to start emptying my dirty laundry in their office. And the more they will insist, the harder it will get to keep my mouth shut.

The only acceptable option in my mind would be for me to continue to work for them from London, where I would organize their European events. I will not suggest it, I doubt they will think of it. I would have one condition, that I never again speak to the Chinese Girl, the Valley Girl or the Director, that old hippy who

should have already died of a heart attack by now. I would only answer to my previous Manager, the other hippy I worked with the first three months, with whom neither the Sweet Chinese Girl nor I had any problem with until he was demoted.

His speech impediment, which started when he was demoted, has gone worse since then. I have to transcribe tapes of interviews he has done with some potential speakers, and he can no longer speak! And I noticed that when I drink too much the night before, the next day I have the same speech impediment. And now I wonder if they turned him into an alcoholic or even a drug addict. I'm not going to ask.

Oh what a week! How satisfying it will be at the end of it to resign! It is not every day we can finally in one single email, one simple action, turn our whole life upside down and radically change our whole destiny. A life changing event, one short email, which says it all, put everything into action. I would have liked to leave in peaceful times, but it would not have been so satisfying. I have already planned to drink myself to death tonight, but this weekend I should certainly celebrate more! Champagne! Pour tout le monde!

I was reading today on the Internet that the latest theories about paranoia states that there are two kinds: the pity me and the bad me one. The first is about feeling that we are persecuted unfairly, the other that we are justified in being persecuted because we feel we are inadequate. Well, there is only one sort of paranoia, and these are two facets of it that we both experience at all times. I cannot stop thinking that if I failed in all the jobs I ever had, the problem must be me. I cannot accept any sort of authority. But I'm never alone in that boat, there are always others suffering the same fate as me in these situations, from the same people, usually managers. So, is it paranoia? Or has the work life has gone to hell and there is simply no way to sail on those waters unscathed?

People seem to thrive on problems, on created them, as if it was some sort of defense mechanism, so whatever fails is not a reflection on them, but on everyone else. And then, only one logical course of action is in order, annihilate all your subordinates, convince the bosses that they are incompetent, and you are not. You did not fail the bosses, your under links failed them despite all your great work and management skills. And it seems that the smallest failure

anywhere in the chain, is enough to start the war, as they feel so insecure in their position.

There is one more thing which worried me about my timing. Today I had to send an email to the whole company to confirm the cancellation of my latest event. They feel strongly that I feel bad about it, as I fought so hard to salvage it. There is no discussion that the reason it fails is all the fault of the Director. He wrote the worst conference program in years, he prevented me from contacting anyone, hoping the sponsors would do the job for us and confirm high profile speakers, and now that it has not gone anywhere, and that I'm sure they're blaming me for it, I resign. It is obvious that the only defense the Chinese Girl has now, is that I could not get over the fact that the conference I was working on failed, and she will push it, as she certainly believes it is all my fault.

It will be easy enough for me in a posthumous meeting with the bosses to assure them that I could not give a toss that the conference had been canceled, so her arguments will fail there. I have written two big emails about why this conference was not going anywhere, and it is clear that I have nothing to do with its failure. And I already said to my boss that the reasons why it failed had been well identified, and that I was aware it had nothing to do with me, when he felt the need to say that it was not a reflection upon me. So that argument must fail.

I'm such a calculating bastard, I thought of everything to protect myself against the ones who moved against me. It is only self defense, but in the end, I will win and destroy them in the process. I am sorry for that, it was not my intention, however they left me little space to maneuver. I also have a self preservation problem, I will defend myself when attacked, and will act accordingly to create maximum effect to my advantage. I am just a bit better at it than the previous ones they sacked. I am more intelligent than the others who can't even see or understand that they have been badly destroyed by the others.

I am very much like Sherlock Holmes, I am paranoid enough to have seen through all their games, and I have countered all their attacks. So I think. Maybe I am deceiving myself. Maybe they will win in the end, I will never know. However I know my departure will hurt their career. And I could do much more damage, but my silence will do even better. No pettiness, I will leave with dignity, prove that I was from another breed.

And that is a masterful trick, because you will see the difference when the Sweet Chinese Girl will go in there, resigning tomorrow on the spot, if she is not sacked beforehand, spitting on everyone like a selfish and impetuous child. It will look very bad on her, it will leave them with a very bad taste, to these blind bosses who cannot see or accept that their management is just responsible for all the problems there.

I can always convince myself that I am better than the others, I know deep down that I am as bad, and cannot free myself from human nature, the pettiness of man. I'm as bad as the next one. Don't fuck with me, or I'll fuck with you! That is also my motto. You deserve all the shit I can give you! And this is what humanity has been reduced to, in this American Corporate World era. You fuck me, I'll fuck you! This is what the corporate world is all about.

The inexperienced ones, like the Sweet Chinese Girl, will fail miserably. She said today: when I go down, she's going down with me! I thought she had it all wrong. I thought she had no chance in succeeding. She will go down, there's no question about that now, but she will go down alone. Only my resignation will help her now, confirming that the problem is the other one.

The careful ones, the skillful ones, like me, might succeed. There's more planning in my thinking, my actions, much more analysis (hell, a 1000 pages book was necessary for me to see through it all!), and I might just succeed in getting "her" down with me, in my ultimate downfall. The mentality of the suicide bomber. I will die, but I'll get a few of you in my course to death.

One has to be much better than that, much more intelligent. It must be: I won't die, but you will die all the same, and I won't even be blamed for it. That's the real and perfect objective to achieve here. And since I was leaving anyway, for me I'm not going down. I might just managed to get "her" down in the process, to alleviate the pain this company will be going through for any future employee who will work under the new Master Bitch in town.

Which brings the question, how do these master bitches manage to get where they are? With all the problems they cause, and the highest turnover of employees ever, how could the bosses not see it? It is because the damn bitches were able to prove how great they were at their job before getting where they are. And of course, there's only one way to be so great in a job. It is to be a

dysfunctional human being incapable of functioning normally in any normal society. So how could they ever hope to be able to create the right atmosphere at work, so everyone can flourish and be productive? They are dysfunctional to start up with. They don't have a life, they work all the hours possible, and there is a reason for that, it is because they are big rejects outside of work, because no one is prepared to suffer them. So you can imagine that in a work environment, it is no better, the same pattern repeats itself, and so they become the worst managers you could imagine. And since they have proven themselves to the bosses, they remain where they are, go higher, whilst everyone else either leave or are sacked.

Is there any management book finally identifying this? Where is that famous chapter about how to deal with master bitches? I see, I'll need to write myself that damn management book for real people in the real corporate world. As these other books must have been written by management consultants with easy lives, who never actually experienced anything in a real work environment. We all know it is hell, but they seem oblivious to that fact, so they must know nothing about it. And so, all the literature on the subject is just useless.

I said today to the Sweet Chinese Girl that Master Bitch should read a few books about great management skills, and even as I said it, I knew it would be useless. Because none of these books are willing to accept that human behavior is cruel and without pity. And that management positions bring the worst in people, they become evil. As far as I can remember, no management book tells us how to deal with evil, and plan an exorcist to clean an office from this nightmarish vision.

We have to call these things by their real names, as simple as that. Otherwise we will never achieve happiness, a job where we can actually be happy to work our ass off to make money for the bosses while we can't even finish the month ourselves. It is a heartless world, these heartless jobs. Please, make it easier for us to accept that hell, or else, I predict quite a revolution in years to come. Don't delude yourself, that revolt against the corporate world is long overdue! By God, mark my word, I'll start that revolution myself if need be! Just watch me go!

And I guess I'm just about to find myself in prison. You see, the building I'm working in, is filled with offices of different companies. They all have a boss, and it is obvious who they are when we meet them on our way in or out, or even in the toilets. I had to restrain myself to jump on them and hit them with all I have,

as I know there would be no consequences there, they're not my boss after all, when they look at me as all bosses do, with their air of superiority. I can't stand it, I feel like latching into them, make them understand that I don't give a fuck about the little power they have in this world, over a handful of human beings. I'm not one of them, so I will make them understand where humanity stand about them and their petty power they have over a few of us.

My God, I almost jump on one of them, he looked so much like it, white, old, wise, authoritarian, that was enough for me, I was about to make him understand. Until I saw him walk to such a small car, that I understood that despite the appearances, he was a nobody trying to get somewhere in this jungle. I've become quite dangerous, this is where they pushed me.

And that made me wonder, what makes people be bosses and others slaves? What determines someone being a President or a CEO, and another being nothing? Is it skills, or just sheer dumb luck? Some of the bosses in my building, you look at them, you know they have absolutely no intelligence. They were crazy enough to start a merciless business exploiting others, like insurance in this case, and you are certain they are driving all their employees crazy. Insurance, come on! The scum of the earth, the biggest scam there is! The same ones fighting to sell you these insurances, will be the ones fighting you to death not to pay you once you finally need them in 20 years time. They should be eradicated from this planet, and the world of insurance should belong to the government (to the people).

Other bosses are just CEOs or Presidents, put there by other investors or whatever. They have proven they were wise and intelligent. And yet, they have no clue about this world, they are totally disconnected. They do good speeches at conferences, promoting nothing else but themselves, and that's about it. I know! I have produced over one hundred conferences filled with that kind of people, and I fell asleep in the conference room too many times to fail to see what they are all about! (Oh, that was a great line. This is why I write these books, sometimes it is really worth it. And please, what could be more worth it than spitting on any sort of management?)

And then I had a hard look at myself. I wondered why it is that I am still no manager, why I still never had anyone under me. Isn't that amazing? After 33 years on this planet, and 12 years in the same industry? I have gone nowhere. I

am condemned to be a slave for the rest of my life, it seems. I cannot see this changing any time soon. Is it possible that I just don't have what it takes? To be recognized as some management material, by management? I guess so, it must be clear to them, to all of them, that inside me there is an anarchist screaming to get out. I guess there's no hope for me. And thank god for that! I could not live with myself if I had to admit to anyone that I am either a manager or a director. I would be so ashamed, it would kill me.

I'm not sure what that says to all the miserable managers and directors of this world, not much, that's for sure. Don't get carried away! You are nothing, we all know it, you're more useless than the last under link you manage. And that is why you are in such a predicament. Why you feel you are about to lose your job, while we are doing everything we can in your back to make sure it happens. Just give up! Crawl back to your mother, you're not worth it, we all know it, what are you waiting for? Don't worry, we're already planning your spectacular downfall, you won't be manager or director for much longer, you can be certain of that. I pity you, sincerely. You are a victim, of what this competitive world is all about. Your duty is to die, so we can take your place, as simple as that. And we will work very hard to make it happen. It is our sole reason to exist. Get rid of you, get somewhere! We always succeed, give up now. You don't have it in you, do you? Or else, you wouldn't be such an easy target, and such a bastard. Remember: "when I go down, she's going down with me!", Pure revenge, such a wonderful concept. When I go down, the whole world goes down with me. And this is true. And this is why this world is never going to go anywhere. Because we do not give the chance to anyone to go somewhere, the very concept of competition destroys the idea. We all feel we deserve so much more, and we are denied just about everything. What can you expect in such a world? Nothing. Backstabbing, never ending problems, that's for sure. High turnover.

And I'm the first one to go. Wonderful. Just peachy. Great achievement that is! I'm either a frail human being, or a strong minded one, and I'm just not sure which one it is... and I am honest enough here to say so. I will just add that I am filled with anger and hatred, and it is so strong that I could kill. That's all. Perhaps that will make you think twice about fucking around with us. And I have to say, you are unlikely to read anything like that in any management book, and why? This is what you should be reading in there, there is no two ways about it. I guess I just don't give a fuck if I get a name in this world or not, a reputation, so

I will be damn free to speak my own mind! This is so rare these days, take it when it comes. Make it yours! It is unlikely to come again.

Which reminds me, the Sweet Chinese Girl confessed something to me today. She said that most of the time, most of the day, she's listening to a song called I'm not dead yet. And I thought, how clever, I wrote such a text myself, I wonder, did the singer stole it from me? And then she let me listen to it on her iPod, well, I thought, no, that was not stolen from me, as it is far from being extreme enough, powerful enough to really transport someone somewhere else. And I thought right there, that is my mission, to get that dark poem of mine, transformed into a significant song, which could actually help all the slaves of this world.

Dear me! For the first time ever, I have done a search over the Net about one of my colleagues, and I have found something. The Sweet Chinese Girl has a whole blog out there! Isn't that extraordinary? Now I have a weapon of mass destruction against her. I sent her an email about it, fooling around, since I don't care anymore. Tomorrow I am announcing my departure, why should I care? I'm sure it will get me into trouble, and yet, I have barely told her anything, as I damn know she cannot be trusted. And yet, she will think I've opened up to her, I gave her my useless URL, the harmless one, the one I give to everyone, the one that says nothing about me, and yet, convinces everyone that there is nothing more to be found on the Net about me. If they were to do a simple search under my name or my email address, I would be fried, as I am such an extremist and all over the place. With any luck, she won't go further. Finding my website from my useless email address, she will think she has discovered everything, of what I wanted to hide. I bet she has no clue. Useless people living in a useless world.

I've already drunk too much, tomorrow I'll be a real spaz, unable to respond to their questioning, their scrutiny, bad move. It may work in my favor though, being unable to express anything, to form an attack plan, designed to destroy everyone. I will get out of there completely dazed, just like them. I will be there asking: what did you just say? I'm still drunk from last night, it has not reached my brain yet, and it is unlikely to reach it anytime soon! Just as it should be. I know what I am doing. I know I cannot trust myself, better go there still drunk, I tell you. It is my best defense. I will look so innocent, simply because I will be somewhere else while they analyze all that shite. Thank God I won't be there with them, even if I will be. Still, I need to go to bed now. Tomorrow could easily be

my worst day ever in my whole life, it could easily be my last day working for that company. I should not take it so lightly.

23 June 2006

I have done it! Gosh it was hard! I waited until 20 minutes before the end of the day. To give my boss the time to have a meeting which would not have gone beyond my normal working hours. I would not have needed to worry though, as soon as he read my resignation, he left the office. No doubt he did not want to speak to me without first consulting his wife and perhaps the whole management on Monday. Which will make that next Monday, perhaps, the hardest of my whole existence.

I could so easily feel guilt right now, for the ingratitude that I showed, however I feel they must know why, considering all that has happened this week with the Chinese Girl, unless they don't even know my other fight with the bitch this last Wednesday. I would not be surprised if no one told them, despite the whole office knowing about it.

I feel great, justified, liberated! That's how I feel! But now, my God, I could sleep for a week! I will certainly sleep all weekend, after being a zombi all day at work, and I'm still drinking wine tonight, though I doubt I'll be able to drink more than a glass.

It has been a hard week, perhaps my hardest ever, I survived it and I'm not sure how. All I know is that I would not survive another like that unless I was certain there was a light at the end of the tunnel, which now I can see.

I've been thinking all day that I will be back in Canada with my family for at least 10 days, right in the middle of the summer by the beach. Funny, I had a beach here around the corner and never took the bother to go swim once, and will not either. It will be very difficult for me to ever move back to L.A., I believe I am disgusted for life. Not only Los Angeles, by the whole of America, including, and most especially, Canada.

Now I have complete certainty that Europe is the only place I could ever live, be it England or France. I am a writer, even if Hollywood was to hire me one day, I will have to work from abroad. Realizing one's dream has one big advantage, now

I know that this is not for me, I know my place is in Europe, whilst before I was still flirting with the idea of Los Angeles. Not anymore, I'm cured!

I know my bosses are talking right now, trying to understand and assess what happened, what they could do to change my mind. I'm not even sure if they feel so strongly about me, in fact, for the last few months all they probably heard from that Chinese Girl must have been only negative feedback. If they are not convinced that I am incompetent by now, it would be a miracle. So in the end I would not be surprised if they were to just turn around and say: good luck with your life! I feel however that it is unlikely. They must think: what if we could put him under someone else instead of that trouble maker of a Manager we promoted? What if we could bring his boyfriend over and make him work here illegally?

I couldn't, I couldn't continue there. Seeing any of them simply revolts me. I wonder how I will be able to continue for one month. Today I felt like hitting the Valley Girl, who was trying her best to attract my attention with her cute little smiles, how I would have loved to make it disappear forever for her. And when I was seeing the Chinese Girl, oh dear, it made me sick to my stomach, I could have puked all over the office right in front of her. And when I saw the Black Guy still spying on me, checking what was on my screen, and looking at his astonishment when I got back after 20 minutes from having a sandwich downstairs, I felt like telling him that I don't need a spy and he does not need to know everything that is going on in the office: mind your own fucking business! Is more like what I felt like shouting at him. And what about the Director, naked feet all the time, those disgusting feet, and what about the top of his head, bold and half shaven for the rest, this is a sight to cure you permanently from your homosexuality. Thinking of him would insure never again having a hard on.

I just found the name of my new company! See how more clearly I can see my future once I am a free man! Queen Victoria Conferences. With a perfect logo to match, her black profile on a dark red background, in a little oval. Much better than The Marginal. And all my conferences will be taking place at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in Central London, right in Parliament Square. I had a conference there once, the most expensive venue in town, but hey, if that's what I need, that's what I'll take. And forget my ideas of cheap conferences on the side, in miserable venues like university amphitheatres, and no lunch provided. I'll do this the proper or I won't do it at all.

I feel so powerful... I need to take on the world right now! I need to face the ugly face of humanity while it is still hot. I want to take over the world in my march towards freedom! Oops, I'm getting carried away. All right, I'm descending back to Earth.

In the meantime, I will admit something I only realized today. Los Angeles has cured my asthma, my allergies, and most importantly, and this is amazing, my eczema. My right hand in London has been rotting before my eyes, I never thought it would fixed itself in time, and despite months of struggling with it when I arrived here, where this terrible eczema was eating me alive, it is now completely gone. Didn't have to use my cream in months. Neither any of my asthma pumps which were becoming more worrying each year. I was now on the fourth level of pumps in strength, one more level, it would have been pure gas of whatever, or directly an oxygen bottle. As I stated previously, I believe, I am quite sure my sudden multiplication of platelets which appears to have had no reason whatsoever, I feel like I am also cured of that. So going back to London, into that damn flat with a strong problem of humidity, with its failing carpets filled with the bugs of our five cats and now one dog, is nothing of pleasant to my mind. I feel I am going back to be the sickest man on Earth. Not sure how I could convince my boyfriend that we need to move for my health sake. He is quite adamant that this is where he will die. Sure, at that rate I will die there as well, faster than we think! And if I am only returning to London to witness myself die a bit more every day, I will have to consider radical decisions to stop it from happening. I don't care for a sudden death, but any sort of declining health until I die is not welcome in this frivolous life of mine which I appear to be leading.

I guess if Los Angeles can cure just about all my ailments, it is a strong argument to live here. The question is, would all my ailments also be cured just by moving to another flat in London, or even better, to the English country side? If everything goes as planned, I'll start that damn conference company, make a fortune within a few months and years, and then move out of Central London. Outside of York sounds perfect to me. Or the New Forrest. Or even more radical moves, Devonshire, Cornwall or Wales. I'm ready for anything, as long as it is not in that flat from hell which makes me physically sick.

And I was seeing myself again in London today. Funny, not once did I see that in the last eight months in L.A. Only today could I imagine it so clearly. I think my

destiny could have easily gone in another direction, and I could not see my future until I made some sort of decision. And now I rejoice for what I will get back, what I had turn my back against, and thought I might have lost forever. I will not lose London, under any circumstances! Not even Los Angeles could come between us. No way! London is way too powerful, its call goes across any ocean, it is calling me in my dreams, that's where I belong, that's where I should have been born. That's where I'll die.

Maybe it is time now to write that book I so wanted to write, called Piccadilly Line, about every single station, and what it is that I experienced in my 12 years there, at everyone one of them. I could even write a new Sherlock Holmes series of short stories, based on well chosen stations on that line which has been mine for so long. Food for thought. I will definitely, if I have to go back to work in Parliament Square. Otherwise, god only knows what I will be writing about. It does not really mater, is it, whatever I write? It is not going anywhere anyway. I appear to be writing for after I'm dead, when perhaps a few people might take interest in the life from hell that I'm leading. And yet, I cannot stop thinking about that. I have to leave some sort of oeuvre, and think about what it is that I want to leave to this humanity after I'm long dead.

That deserves another beer, I'm afraid, after a whole bottle of wine which cost me \$8.25, Californian Wine, which tasted like shit, vinegar if I did not know better. Expensive, relatively speaking of course, I should not be paying that much at the moment for a bottle of wine, so it is classified as more expensive than usual in my case, so it should be a little bit better, but I can see it's going to make me sick. Expensive wine in L.A., is what I would spend on a cheap bottle in London, as everything is twice expensive. Export from California actually. Well, it is no export here, so why is it so disgusting at \$8.25?

You can only trust a can of Budweiser, because whatever country you are in, I found, it tastes the same damn thing. Except in Prague of course, where it tastes better, because there a Budweiser is the real thing, not the fake one they sell all over the world. A good Budvar I had there, and probably will never have again, because Prague is also a depressing and sad place. And I'm tired of these second best places in the world, like Barcelona or Rome. I long for London, and that is it.

I've seen too much, I can see that now. No need to see China, I'm sure of it. Fuck China! After Los Angeles, only London exists. And now I will go and puke that

whole bottle of cheap expensive Californian wine right in the toilet. And I will feel better afterwards. Because what I will be puking, will be, in fact, eight months of nightmare in Los Angeles.

Don't talk to me about California! It is now dead in my mind, never existed. I invented it, one night that I was really drunk. And now I see clearly. For this last year, God only knows where I was, in a virtual reality perhaps, in limbo most likely. Time to call Air Canada, and get out of this place, forever!

God I have been stupid, brainwashed, and what have you. Wasted a year of my life for no good reason. Thank god it is all about to end. I'm cured. No more. Curtains. Fin. Complete disaster. So predictable, and yet... and yet! And yet... and yet.

Give me Piccadilly Lane on the rush hour any day, I don't care paying the Congestion Charge for the rest of my life, every day. I never thought I would hear myself say that. I guess Los Angeles make you understand many things. And that is one of them. The next British Policeman I see, I will run to throw my arms around him. He will be a direct connection to the policemen I read about in the Sherlock Holmes stories, that I am reading again now every day, to escape the nightmare of my reality. Sherlock Holmes, my only cure, it works in any country, at any time. Thank god for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, without him I could not have survived the last decade! Is it really what will make me go through another one? How many times can I read those 56 short stories before becoming totally alienated? Gosh, perhaps I should seriously consider suicide.

I've been listening tonight, in my celebration hour, to Tory Amos and The Cure, a tribute on MTV or whatever. These last few days I've been working with Leonardo on some possible songs, where I sent him many of my dark poems for him to consider. He's run with them, shouting it was genius work. And I thought, wait a minute, I always thought it was useless, only written from a deep need inside, never considered it could make great songs in the style of The Cure or The Smiths.

I have learned to appreciate my art, for once. I am proud of what I've done, written, I certainly love to read it again and again once I'm totally drunk and wasted. The music is perhaps still missing, and that might change one day, and yet, literature wise, I feel, I could not read anything else that could make me feel

the way I feel when I read my own stuff. So deep, so out there, so wild. You are never better served than by yourself. And I need to truly appreciate it, if no one else is. I might as well be dead, but maybe one day I'll inspire someone. Be the The Cure or the Tory Amos of literature. Of course, I'll always be the only one to know and fully appreciate it. At least I've got one die hard fan, me!

I was actually contacted a few days ago by the Mairie de Paris (the Paris mayor's office), and they said that they were putting together an audio-visual presentation about the Paris catacombs at Denfert-Rochereau, and would like to use my novel of the same title and my photos. Wow, I thought, someone noticed me! So I went back to my novel Denfert-Rochereau and read a good chunk of it, and I thought, this is great literature, I could not do better even today if I tried. Maybe I could, I would have to try, I could do better perhaps. And I thought how my life would have been so different if that novel had gone anywhere and sold more than the thousand or so copies it has sold before vanishing in the underworld. I would have written a whole string of novels by now instead of everything else I have been writing in the last few years. I would have perhaps never worked in conferences, as a consequence, none of the content of all that I have written would exist now. So I don't know if there will be any legacy for me one day after I'm long gone, but whatever happens in one's life certainly help contribute or destroy it. Well, just a thought.

25 June 2006

Oh dear, just woke up before 7 am, on this Sunday morning, the day before the nightmare begins. What a state I am in. I won't be able to do anything today, except think about what's coming. Sherlock Holmes won't suffice to save me from my alienation. I'm experiencing fears at unknown levels, I am completely freaked out. I don't know what to do, even though there is nothing left to do, the dice have been thrown, now I only need to sit back and sail through it until I am safely back to England.

For once in my life, I could have terminated my employment on the day of my resignation, last Friday could have been my last day. What possessed me to give them a month's notice is beyond me. They would have given me 5 minutes notice if they had decided to sack me, as they did for everyone else before me. I could have been out of this nightmare instantly, and I have to admit, we should always have that choice, because when it is over, it is over. There's no going back.

I don't feel as certain today as I did last week, about if it was such a perfect timing. Could not have been better, however, will it be enough? Will they see my point of view without me having to explain it for hours on end? Fuck, can't someone just resigned without having to go through the five stages of death, in record time as well?

Today what I want to do, is to go home, yes my home in Canada, pick up my father and the boat, if he still has one, and go fishing in the mountains far from the city. Since I feel that fishing is cruel, I would be fishing without a hook, in effect, I will simply feed the fishes some worms (oh, wouldn't that be cruel to the worms? Can't do that either...). That's what I feel like doing right now.

I can't believe I am sitting here being worried about killing a few worms, when this is exactly my situation in that office right now. I am a worm, and instead of feeding me to the fish, for a quick death, they play just about every single psychological trick on me they can think of, driving me to madness and suicide. I wouldn't dream doing that to a worm, let alone a human being.

Dear, dear, dear, it is now 11 pm. Instead of thinking about going to bed, 30 minutes ago I went haywire and decided to cut my hair and do the dishes. And now I sat down with a beer and cigarettes, with no intention at all to sleep tonight. After all I slept all weekend, only getting up to read some Sherlock Holmes. At the very least, it should help me put my arguments in order tomorrow when I will stand trial. I feel that reading Sir Arthur Conan Doyle help me write, think and speak better. It did not help write my resignation letter though, I downloaded it straight from the Internet. Our children never have to write essays anymore, they can find there everything readily made. Even my colleagues at work don't bother writing their conference programs, why? Our competitors are doing it much better, let's just copy it all. So why should I bother? Can someone become so hypocrite and impersonal that even his letters, job applications, résumés and resignation letters come right from the Net? Welcome to the 22nd Century, or are we still stuck in the 21st? Sometimes I'm quite convinced, with the retards I deal with, that we are in the 17th century. And of course, with what I am reading right now, I am not far off myself.

Well, my third beer, I guess I will have to go to bed eventually. I should not be late tomorrow, I expect that there will be a whole committee to welcome me.

Perhaps I should arrive at 6 am like many of them, so I can witness what time they actually really arrive, and see them run in the office like chickens with their head cut off. As it stands, I'm sure both my bosses will be in the office by the time I arrive at 8 am. They usually arrive around 9 am, but not tomorrow, I'm sure of it.

You would not think I was that significant to this company to have to go through all that. And yet, I'm a special case. I was flown from London, I was their big hope. Granting I was just a normal human being after all, but I think they've accepted that now and we're still insistent and worried that I might want to leave. It would have been easier if they thought I was not worth it, just like the Chinese Girl believes about me, even though it would be more difficult for me to accept.

Well, as I said, there is nothing more I can do now. I will get up tomorrow morning, pump the tires of my bicycles, and get there to face the music. Why do I feel like I am going to be crucified on a cross? Why does it seem like one of the most important and difficult times of my life?

It's like a divorce, as simple as that. It is always painful. And since our job is by definition our lives, and that we actually spend more time at work than with our loved ones, then it is as painful as a divorce.

It is also filled with the feeling of failure, of being useless and incapable of keeping a job. Yes, I feel like a failure. I struggled on that last conference that nobody wanted to speak at, whilst the Gay Guy from North Hollywood was able to produce two conferences! Maybe I'm not just cut out for this, even if it can all be explained and justified why this conference did not go anywhere. It is also true that I have tried every trick in the book to get out of the office as much as I could, because I simply could not stand the damn place and the people in it. So maybe I did let go, maybe the Chinese Girl is justified in her arguments.

It does not really matter now, does it? I'm leaving, I will be back in London, and this time, I never ever want to work in conferences ever again. I'm ready to wipe out my CV, invent one with no experience whatsoever and start at the bottom of the hierarchy again. I'll go and work on a till in a WHSmith in Terminal 5 at Heathrow Airport, just like I did when I arrived in London 12 years ago.

I could invent myself a disability which prevented me from working all my life, or my parents were so rich, I studied until knowledge came out by my two ears, and I never had a job before. So please help me get back to the bottom of the hierarchy where there should not be, by definition, any stress. But there is always stress, there are always bastards to deal with, in any job, this will never change. There's no way out.

26 June 2006

He sacked me on the spot! Well it seemed to me to be like that, as I was not sure if I resigned or the sacked me, when they give me five minutes to get out, after making me sign a sheet stating that I was leaving on my own steam, as he put it.

The long meetings I thought they would have, I think for once they had them all in less than five minutes. And I failed to make them understand that the Chinese Girl was the main reason. My boss is convinced I'm leaving because I miss my partner.

So, I am free man, but soon to be a very poor one. The month I was giving myself to plan my way out has gone out the window, now I'm in crisis mode. I don't understand, I have foreseen the possibility that they may get rid of me on the spot, however I didn't believe they would. No employer in Canada or in England would first make you sign a contract where no notice needs to be served. And if they are, when an employee gives a month's notice, surely you accept it? I guess I'm still learning from this Corporate America world. I did not plan enough about this eventuality, and now I'm in deep shit.

He said that it was not some sort of punishment, but that they didn't need an employee doing nothing for a month when they need to move on with their projects.

In fact, the meeting was as painless as possible. He did not ask me one question, he did not want to know why. He had one single idea on his mind, to get me out of there as quickly as possible. They even gave me my last check in record time, so I won't need to go back to that office ever, will never see any of them again in my life, and I didn't even said goodbye to anyone. In fact, they must think I have been sacked. So it was such an humiliation, the shame on my face, and the

thought that the Chinese Girl was walking happily in the office this morning made it ever worse. She won! Can you believe? She has won.

I guess it was a ridiculous idea for me to think she would go down with me or that I would hurt her in any way. Managers are always right from the point of view of the bosses, they only hear their point of view, so I was quickly shoved out of the office with my things, and basically told to never come back.

I feel so bad right now, I could pack my bags and fly out of Los Angeles by the first flight. I would not pass by Canada, I would go and bury myself in London.

I discovered that my return plane ticket does not exist! The return date that I thought was in a year time, was in fact 3 days later than my departure! So I also realized that a plane ticket to London would cost me at least \$700, and if I wanted to go to Canada see my family, \$1,200. What were they thinking when they give me a return date of 2 days later! They must have known that at some point I would return to London even for a visit, and then I could have changed the date. It is like they made sure I would be stuck here forever and would think twice before going back. I finally called everywhere, their travel agency which was less than helpful. And I called three times Air Canada and hoping to fall on someone who would help me, and the third time it worked. For \$184 I am now going back to London, but I had to forget about going to Canada and see my family. I am outraged by that.

Spoke with my dad, told him I was not coming. Stephen has been calling all day, feeling that I was finally coming home in three weeks. He is very much talking about that new job he might get and for me to start my conference business. And that gave me a surge of energy, I think I will work very hard on that conference business in my last three weeks here. I need to arrive to England with the business plan finished, the whole market research done, and what it is that my first conferences will be about. More market research will be necessary upon my return, but at least I'll be ready. And then, if eventually I become a boss, we'll see how better I do, compared to all my previous bosses. God knows, it might be as difficult as being an employee, I don't doubt that their position is far from being easy.

I think I will hire myself a string of Chinese Girls, they seem to work wonder! They will turn my business into a success (and who cares if they alienate everyone along the way?).

I feel sick, even though I am not tired. I don't know what to do right now, I don't feel like doing anything.

My feeling of inaction did not last long. I just installed Act! on my computer, I am ready to start the research of the century about every single conference in existence, so I can decide what I will be working on. I feel strongly motivated, for some reason. I guess one only needs a good kick in the ass to get into gear.

The Sweet Chinese Girl sent me an email, asking what happened. I guess the bosses didn't tell anyone that I resigned at the weekly meeting with everybody. I heard their speech before about people who just disappeared, never to be heard of again. It is weird that it was my turn. I also received a phone call from Isabella. She confirmed that the Valley Girl was at it all day about me, badmouthing me like never, but she would not repeat her words to me. Which is just as well. I'm so glad this is over. So happy!

I'm afraid, Queen Victoria as a name for my conference just won't do. Neither the Crowned Anarchist. The Marginal is after all perfect. I have established tonight the list of the possible conferences I will produce, and I have to say, even though it is genius work, only one name will fit it all. The Marginal. I intend to produce the queerest conferences ever, on the most taboo subjects, and hence, it should insure my fortune. You'll see. I'm going to have so much fun with this, you would not believe it. Irony is going to be the word. I just hope I did not lose all my work tonight. I'm using this useless application to list my stuff, and it bugs all the time, it saves stuff somewhere else, it cannot make a copy of itself. I'm about to write a fucking conference about it, if it doesn't debug itself this damn second. As this is what I intend to do, denounce everything that needs denouncing, by organizing conferences on the subject. You're welcome to send me your ideas. I'll be a strong force in this universe, I'll tackle just about every single taboo subject, and perhaps help change the world in the process. That's my new destiny.

10 July 2006

That is it then, I leave Los Angeles in less than 12 hours. I am completely freaked out, hoping the airline won't cause me pain because my suitcases are filled to the brink. I am so beyond caring now, if they want \$200 more, I'll give it to them.

I don't know what to do, I feel extremely alone and lost, like I never did before. I don't know what to think of all that has happened to me. My last night in Los Angeles, the moon is simply superb. If I had any money, I would go to the South of France right away on a trip on the canal du midi with my baby who's been waiting so long for me in London. But it is useless. The only way one can have money for travel in this world, is with a stable and high paying job and save money, if that is at all possible. It is just not worth the hell of it, so in the end, if one is to never keep a job more than a year, like I've been very successful at in my career, that person cannot expect to be able to travel.

I can't believe it is over. I don't know what I was expecting. I thought I would live a nice life and Los Angeles with a simple job on the side. What happened is that the job took over my life, and I never even saw but once the town center. I've become an alcoholic smoking like crazy, trying to get them all out of my head, it did not work and made my days at work the more miserable. When it is so hard to concentrate on anything, fighting to keep awake, while desperately trying to produce the next big event.

I wonder how everything will be all right as soon as I set foot in London again. I have tried so hard to alienate myself to the London of Sherlock Holmes, it might just work. Everything will return to normal.

I'm pleased in a way, for this unexpected experience in America. I've judged them harshly, but I might keep a good souvenir of it all. Easy once you're out of that hell and can reflect back on some positive moments, though I would have to search in my mind about what those are. Only in time will it come back to me.

In the meantime I got closer to my parents, my mother especially, who for one long minute thought I was actually back home, even though London is closer to her than Los Angeles. There's just an ocean separating us, where no one lives. Much better than having the whole of America separating us. However phone calls were cheap, that was what made the difference.

Oh dear, oh dear, this is the end! My dream gone out the window in one big puff of smoke! And all I have to show for it is this lousy book filled with complaints and lamentations. And also the most extreme, dark and anarchist poetry book I have ever written. All my hope to finally become a peaceful chap, a happy chap, a positive force of nature, all drowned in the Pacific Ocean where they suck oil out of these towers in the ocean in Santa Barbara.

I'm not sure what happened to me in those last nine months in Los Angeles, I suspect it will take me years to fathom. At least I have here an excellent recollection of it all. Perhaps I should read it again and find out.

If I could start a revolution out of my bedroom, I think tonight would be the night.

The End

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