

THE HAWKER

14 March – 12 April 2014

Private view 13 March, 6–9 pm

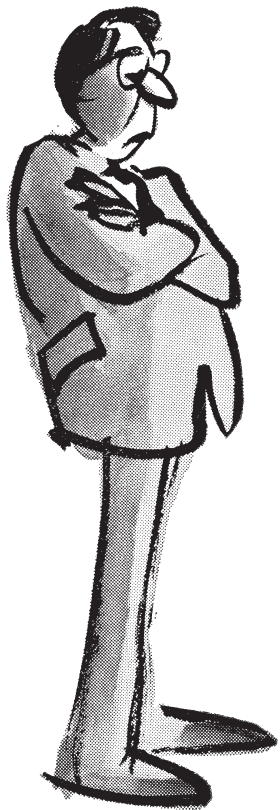
DÉPENDANCE AT CARLOS/ISHIKAWA

Unit 4, 88 Mile End Road

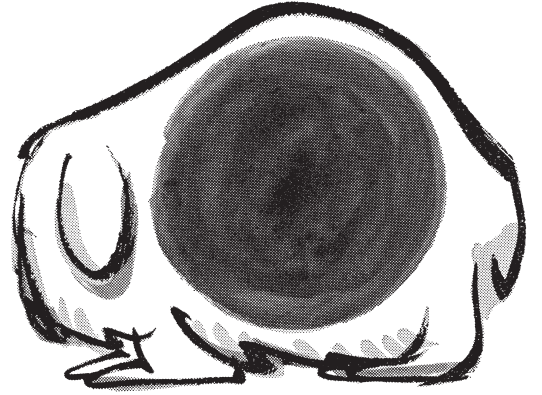
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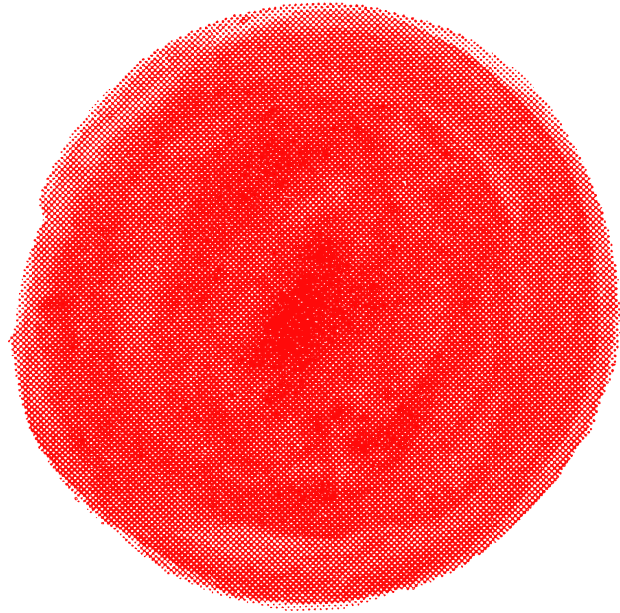
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“And here’s my dog, Spot.”

The Bad Glazier
Charles Baudelaire

There are certain natures, purely contemplative and totally unfit for action, which nevertheless, moved by some mysterious and unaccountable impulse, act at times with a rapidity of which they would never have dreamed themselves capable.

Like the man who, dreading some painful news, instead of going for his mail as usual, cravenly prowls around his concierge's door without daring to go in; or the one who keeps a letter for two weeks without opening it; or the man who only makes up his mind at the end of six months to do something that has urgently needed doing for a year; then, all of a sudden, they feel themselves hurled into action by an irresistible force, like an arrow out of a bow. The moralist and the doctor, who pretend to know everything, are unable to explain how these voluptuous, indolent souls suddenly acquire such a mad energy, or how it is that, although incapable of doing the simplest and most necessary things, they yet discover in themselves at a given moment a lavish courage for performing the most absurd and the most dangerous acts.

One of my friends, the most inoffensive dreamer that ever lived, once set fire to a forest to see, he explained, if it were really as easy to start a fire as people said. Ten times in succession the experiment failed; but the eleventh time it succeeded only too well.

Another will light a cigar standing beside a keg of gunpowder, just to see, to find out, to test his luck, to prove to himself he has enough energy to play the

gambler, to taste the pleasures of fear, or for no reason at all, through caprice, through idleness.

It is the kind of energy that springs from boredom and daydreaming; and those who display it so unexpectedly are, in general, as I have said, the most indolent and dreamiest of mortals.

And another man I know, who is so shy that he lowers his eyes even when men look at him, so shy that it takes all the poor courage he can muster to enter a café or, at the theatre, to approach the ticket controllers who seem to him invested with all the majesty of Minos, Iacchus and Radamanthus, will suddenly throw his arms around an old man in the street and kiss him impetuously before the astonished eyes of the passers-by.

Why? Because . . . because suddenly that particular physiognomy seemed irresistibly appealing? Perhaps; but it would probably be nearer the truth to suppose that he himself has no idea why.

I, too, have more than once been the victim of these outbursts of energy which justify our concluding that some malicious Demon gets into us, forcing us, in spite of ourselves, to carry out his most absurd whims.

One morning I got up feeling out of sorts, sad, and worn out with idleness, and with what seemed to me a compelling urge to do something extraordinary, to perform some brilliant deed. And I opened the window — alas!

(I should like to point out that with certain persons playing practical jokes is not the result of planning or scheming, but a fortuitous inspiration akin, if only because of the compelling force of the impulse, to that humor called hysterical by doctors, satanic by those, with more insight than doctors, that drives us toward a multitude of dangerous or improper actions.)

The first person I noticed in the street was a glazier whose piercing and discordant cry floated up to me through the heavy, filthy Paris air. It would be impossible for me to say why I was suddenly seized by an arbitrary loathing for this poor man.

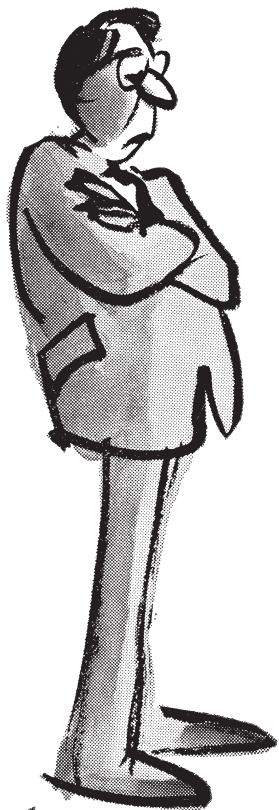
“Hey! Hey!” I shouted, motioning him to come up. And the thought that my room was up six flights of stairs, and that the man must be having a terrible time getting up them with his fragile wares, added not a little to my hilarity.

Finally he appeared. After looking curiously over his panes of glass one by one, I exclaimed: “What! You have no colored glass, no pink, no red, no blue! No magic panes, no panes of Paradise? Scoundrel, what do you mean by going into poor neighborhoods without a single glass to make life beautiful!” And I pushed him, stumbling and grumbling, toward the stairs.

Going out on my balcony I picked up a little flower pot, and when the glazier appeared at the entrance below, I let my engine of war fall down perpendicularly on the edge of his pack. The shock knocked him over and, failing on his back, he succeeded in breaking the rest of his poor ambulatory stock with a shattering noise as of lightning striking a crystal palace.

And drunk with my madness, I shouted down at him furiously: “Make life beautiful! Make life beautiful!”

Such erratic pranks are not without danger and one often has to pay dearly for them. But what is an eternity of damnation compared to an infinity of pleasure in a single second?



Lorenz



"And here's my dog, Spot."

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DÉPENDANCE AT CARLOS/ISHIKAWA

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