

I try to hold a grip on my inner monologue to keep myself from self-talk. To vocalize my thoughts would be a sure sign that I've lost it. That I am a person who talks to their self. In the during-times, I could carry full dialogues between my selves since I had a mask on. No one could see my grocery list on my lips, or the proper response to that thing that person said to me eight months ago, or two years ago, or back in elementary school spoken in such delicate and conscientious detail under the breath in the safe, recycling climate of my mask.

When I inhibit all intention to speak, when my thoughts slow from words to moment, to senses, my mind falls to a quiet. I ingest the moment around me and produce nothing within me. When my head is free from words, I am at peace. I may extend and contract time at the will of my activity. Too much talk hurts because my state of mind without it is peaceful.

This state is outside the verbal processes of my mind. It washes the gum from my eyes. It's something distinct from bliss that is not positive or negative—whole. But why? Why do purely nonverbal moments in my day feel so freeing? Maybe I should explore what words do to me and what I can do with them. Then maybe I'll come out the other side with an understanding of why their lack has such a sobering effect on me.

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Speaking is the origin point of word-thoughts. I used to think it was the other way around. There's this accepted understanding of speech as expression; poets talk of confessing *out* souls and their rhetorical exhalations, phrases which accept, implicitly, that words are drawn from within us.

I reject this. It's the words which came first, not the thoughts. My mind had no thoughts before it had words. Thoughts are just invisible words. Words are not inside of me. Only soul, energy, emotion can be found there. Words are on air, paper, and computers. They are the bridge we cross to bear our souls. The tool for the exchange of ideas. The bowl we light with meaning and smoke with mouths. They do not come from me but I make use of them like any technology.

Like any technology, language is outside of me but feels connected to my body. So connected that some people think they started from language—i.e. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God* (I say, whatever happened to the heaven and the earth?). My soul pushes my heart to pulse my blood to my lungs which entrap the air through my throat who, on the exhale, conspires with my mouth and nose to form the strangest of sounds—the multi-millennia old vestiges of barbaric yawps and avian imitations—that I call words.

But they are not my blood or heart or lungs or throat or mouth or nose. They pass through me like a worm in the dirt. Earthworms beneath me earworms inside me. The breath mists of introspection in my throat throughout my body and across the air spread these strange sounds within and without me. If I'm close enough, I physically strike the ear of another, and it casts a spell on them. This spell is the real concern. This spell is meaning.

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To invert the biggest question: what is the life of meaning? Where is its origin and where does it reside? I could continue with my somatic understanding of language by calling meaning 'electrical neuron signals' but that's so unsatisfying. (By the way, for the record, to be clear, I was not taking a purely physical approach to language in the interest of science. fuck science. focusing on the material is my way of validating the immaterial.) That approach is unsatisfying because it doesn't account for the telepathic shock of creating/receiving meanings. Maybe I should explore what meaning isn't to find out what it is.

Those who spit anti-poetry for poetic reasons find meaning through nonsense. Before and after frinking, Abomunists sing *Derrat slegelations* and *Geed bop nava glid*. I should take a page from their book. Such dedicated use of nonsense is inspiring in a world governed by reason. But it is not just noises. Kaufman's maybe highlighting the nonsense of the invisible manifestos I've been subscribed to since birth. Rulesets to which I adhere out of fear. Meaning comes from reception and connection. When the only emotional connection between those unwritten constitutions and me is fear, my receptive ability is inhibited.

A different kind of nonsense is what some call flub. Literary filler content is relatively meaningless compared to the (usually weak) argument it surrounds. Does infantile pileup of scatological buildup words drain meaning from their sentences? Or is there meaning in the scat? Stein may agree with the latter. Reading *Making of Americans* can feel like consuming a pie and then eating another identical pie right after, and repeating that action for each of its thousand pages. She is a repeating being. Her small repetitive collections of filler words look and sound like nonsense when beginning her work, but I understand the pie better each time I eat it. Meaning is built by repeating. My own human mind builds meanings no matter the scatology.

If sense can be made out of nonsense then it can be made out of anything. In everything there is meaning waiting to be sensed. Such an overwhelming amount that, in order to relate all of the meaning, we need a logical system of communication. But if my conditioning differs from yours, so will my communication.

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The voice of a writer. Simultaneously their least important and most important quality. After reading thousands of words written by Kaufman I still have no idea what he sounds like. I don't know the depth of his timbre or the speed of his lips. But somehow I know his voice.

This is an extremely fascinating element of writing. I can have a voice without speaking at all. My conditioning led me to this specific voice like any person with words. Some come over with their violin and sad music while others spit culture seeds and eat poetic loaves of bread. I know their voices are distinct without having heard either of them. We can distinguish one writer's voice from another because everyone's relationship to language is their own. And when voices clash, magic happens in the space between them.

Language is shared, it is constantly collectively reproduced and readapted every time one person talks to another. With each word spoken, language is once again contextualized anew. Old middle early late and modern English are all re-contextualizations of a similar structure. But so is

the hello how are you of my barista and the how you doin' of my pizza guy. No matter what level you take it at, language is changing thanks to its communal existence. Voices from unique conditions converge into a synthesis in one second or over a thousand years.

The zeitgeist that any artistic clan lives through conditions each artist's voice. Their attitudes on the world converge to create a movement. They are all writers, but the space between their writing is the movement. It's this invisible cultural vibration that inspires new work—work which goes on to make its own vibrations that infinitely ripple through culture in the same way its inspirations did. new and old, new and new, old and old, all merge in their own specific ways on top of one another at a speed and size that human logic can't grasp. Everything builds on everything, producing a new thing that will be layered onto sometime later.

Talking, word-thoughts, these produce. My words create a separation (i.e. *my* body) which then creates something new. Creating my self. With each word I write I build upon my self. My voice is constructed by my words and their organization. So is my voice me? Is Walt Whitman *Leaves of Grass*? I know it's by him, but is it him? He would say so. The work of a writer is made from their voice and their voice is made from them. They are made from their conditions and their conditions are made from chaos. So where does the person start and end? How far does their voice carry them?

For me, it's either all or nothing—there is not a certain point where you can say a thing someone creates ceases to be a part of them—and between the two, I choose all. People extend infinitely in all directions. My voice is my art my mark is me. It will be me after I die. I am comfortable with this conclusion because I know that I am actively creating myself in every moment, through both conversation and craft. This active creation will ripple for some time, and those ripples will be me. At a certain point my 'individual' voice will be washed away and unrecognizable, but it will still be me whether I know it or not. Kaufman certainly doesn't know that the bits of him in the air have been inhaled by millions of people since his death. Yet he lives on through the effect those bits have had.

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You speak to me. I speak to you. I speak to me. You speak to you. We participate in the collective experience of language. Even on our own. What does this make me? I know that I am I, but grammar makes me me. Obviously by nature of communication we must separate each other between you's and me's, but do we have to separate our selves between me's and I's?

I feel like I but apparently I'm me. The grammar of my existence schisms me into object/subject. But any sign of division today is an unresolved representation of tomorrow's singularity. What is the tomorrow of today's object/subject division?

*Find tomorrow*, a cincophrenicpoet pleas. *A million tomorrows*. "Plea" is a critique of the logical conclusion of the object/subject thingamabob. When we speak to train our brains to signal ourselves as separate from each other, we are able to commit the atrocities which haunt so many of Kaufman's poems, especially "Plea". Language governs the modern mind, and so division is inherent to our reception of stimuli—the world—and thus our perception of others.

Di Prima would agree that these linguistic practices are connected to our political understandings of each other. but, in the interest of the revolution, she takes it more domestically. in her thirty-sixth letter of the revolution, she asks *who is we, who is the they in this thing?* We must *declare our independence*, we must not *accept a share of guilt they want to lay on us*. Our linguistic relation to institutions is an unbalanced power dynamic. By making them them and us us, our brain makes division palatable—division from what governs us and thus from the others us's it governs.

Another revolutionary letter begins with a quote from the Tibetan Book of the Dead, *may it come that all radiances will be known as our own radiances*. This idea opposes the inherent division in language. If everything belongs to us then it negates the need for a possessive view of property, people, bodies. Di Prima's revolutionary drive is to initiate us into this possessionless state. Poetry and spirituality—both concepts which utilize words but whose affect is between them—allow her to pass through the object/subject wall that divides us all.

Words can unite, but not if we aren't conscious of their tendency to fracture. To feel the cracks of those fractures is to breathe the life of meaning.

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Words cast meaning-spells and make us become apart of each other. The act of writing this dug up meaning that already existed. I've learned a lot about words thanks to my use of two-thousand and five of them so far. But that's made it clear to me that the not-words are what we use words to describe.

The lack of words. The in-between. That is where I find peace. In between words is invisible meaning. So when I am in between my use of words, when I try to hold a grip on my inner and outer monologue, when I inhibit all intention to speak, I am in meaning. And that's a nice place to be in my opinion.

But while I'm here (on your screen and in your imagination) language is all I am. I hold my breath before I dive into the deep. The further I swim, the more I see, the less I can describe. Eventually I will come up for air, and then I will be the language I use to describe my plunge to you. But even as I exhale these descriptions, I long to dive back down.