

“On a Day in the Life of a Man Who Dreams”  
by Ryan David Orr

On a day in the life of a man who dreams,  
he found himself approaching boredom and sleep.

Back tattooed to a chair  
While the library air carried the remnants of whispers from the voices in there;  
They were remnants of whispers dispelled with care (so as not to upset the literarily scared)  
(so as not to displace the content unaware)

His breathing grew steady, and his eyelids grew heavy,  
and his fingers touched, lighter, the pages of history.  
Such books were stacked high, surrounding his curiosity.  
He thought he might dig deeper to sooth his animosity,  
so he scoured the references with a livid ferocity.  
But now, after hours of processing atrocity...  
“It’s too much,” he said, “too much. Only dreams can revive me.”

It was last of his thoughts as the world melted,  
swirling,  
dripping,  
hot wax,  
into visions unfurling.  
Visions of life lived in fear and bleak prospects.  
It’s clear that weak life is disguise, but may cost less.  
It’s a tedious process to mull over the chaff, and hide what you fear with embarrassing laughs.

*And if I have to die, just remember what for...*

It was last of his thoughts reaching the bathroom door.  
Hand through the cold dark flicking the light on; he stood 2 feet back from his own reflection.  
Stood taking in the height, the width, proud, strong: 2 feet on cold hard and 2 hands on a gun.

And he stared straight through the glass into the eyes for a mad minute,  
Then he ripped a hole in the chest, and held the hole open, and he put his heart in it.

“Keep this for me,” he said, “while I have to be gone,  
and if I don’t come back, you be sure that lives on.  
I’m searching for excess to quell my desire.  
Don’t say that you get it, or that you feel the same fire.”

The flames dance, mocking him, like the blazes of hell.  
And Bruh Bear put rock salt in his shotgun shells;  
He sought out the fiends in dark alleyways and stairwells  
Thinking: *A moment of violence, should my reflection believe me, might suffice to relieve me*  
*(though my family might grieve me)*

“But it’s something. It’s not nothing. I’m doing this properly...  
I wanna scream my complaints so that the saints can hear me!  
I want all those who breathe to see me and mine clearly,  
And I want the earth, sun, moon, stars, and God to fear me!”

And just as he tipped the scales of hypocrisy, he bolted awake and sat up straight in his seat.

With new eyes he glanced at the books on the table,  
Which seemed more like a circle than a stack of rectangles.

Since stories were stories, the story’s the same;  
Everyone, everywhere pointing fingers of blame;  
And their lingering shame automates in a pattern:  
That we lash out in anger to prove that we matter.

We fear what we don’t understand, so we hide  
Behind faces contorted in envy and pride.  
And we build up our walls and let nothing inside.

So it never gets better, there’s no end to the means,  
‘til we slow down and see clearly and dust off our wings.

And he promised himself he’d remember such things  
On a day in the life of a man who dreams.