

The weather was overcast and cheerless as Walter sauntered down the hill to ring the bell in front of the large doors to the loading dock hoping somebody would answer. Inside a guy who could use a shave groggily gets up from his deep slumber amongst a tangled web of woolen blankets, wooden pallets, and aluminum beer cans. First thing he does is cough and lights up a smoke. Amidst these environs everything is black, white and paler shades of gray, the dude wears a wife-beater and camies. As he sits there smoking the cigarette he ponders the night before, the day ahead, the years gone by and the various shapes of gray around him. He gets up to go to the toilet. "Must have gotten into one helluva fight last night: I think I might have broken my jaw..." "There is a bell ringing but it's not in his head. The ringing continues. The guy goes about his business taking a long steamy pee --- taking a look at the mirror five feet to the right of him staring at his tattoo. It's a tattoo from a place a long time ago. He wonders if he should get it transformed into something different, something interesting, something to forget just U.S.M.C. Maybe a colorful cockatoo. He shakes himself and turns so he's right square in front of the mirror taking a long hard look at himself below the anonymous florescent lighting glaring into the mirror like in a motionless trance --- Concentration, Focus --- then... Ka-Boom! as the dude whips out a 9mm Beretta from behind his back and blows the mirror away. The look of bewilderment and utter horror that runs across the shootist's face belies that he didn't really mean to waste that mirror. "Shit! I thought I grabbed the empty clip! Gawd! First day on the job!" Taking the clip out he saunters out of the bathroom, grabs another smoke, hears the other ringing and yells, "WhAh-Aht!" He ambles his way across the subterranean space like a pinball attempting not to trip on any of the dark mounds and gray shapes. He peers out, eyeing a desultory dweeb in a Little Abner suit, funny-looking in a harmless way, kind of lumpy, sitting on his hapless haunches. It is Walter who has just had the last of his cigarettes absconded off by a group of kids --- young toughs, unmonitored roisterers, bandying about with hockey sticks, but no skates --- rude boys. A little song about them comes to Walter's head and he sings it --- "take the skinheads bowling, take them bowling..."

"Who the fuk are you?! And what do you want?!"

"I'm Walter... I'm looking for Mister Maurice --- you must be the new guy... the night-watchman."

The door opens. Walter is greeted by a stocky man of a Mongol cast.

"Yeah that's me, the keeper of the keys of the House of the Lord --- Maintenance Supervisor... part of the survey team. Hey, you're not the asshole who called earlier to sell me aluminum siding and exercise equipment now are you?"

Walter, the refugee, shakes his head aggressively in denial. And then like an apparition the barefoot gibbering lady who was smoking a cigarette appears from behind and shouts at the night-watchman, "Sailor! I will walk 10,000 miles to weep upon your grave! If you waded in the water, it will drown you! Don't ignore what I say or it'll be your ruin! You will vanish like smoke leaving nothing but cold air behind you! Your glorious deeds do not warm us."

"Yeah go away now --- Wouldja?!"

The beldam slithers off down the bleak street with her mumbo-jumbo Santeria voodoo and an occasional hackle-raising laugh. Her name is Cassandra.

"Who is that?" inquired Walter so innocently and open-eyed.

"That's my mom --- who the fuck do you think it is? I don't know --- Come on in."

"Anybody around?"

"Nope, just me and the rats."

"You gotta name?"

"You gotta warrant," the dude bristles back.

Walter sheepishly ambles around with an earnest attempt at admiring the fine arts ensconced in this bunker of a building graced under the banner name of the New Museum of Indecision and Hysteria and the We B Art Gallery. The night-watchman heads toward the back. Walter relaxes a bit --- viewing the beautiful and the grotesque; paintings and large abstract metal sculpture, a wooden boat 15 or so feet long put together like a mini-pirate ship (the parrots looked good on it), graffiti on the red walls and black ceilings, modified trucks and motorcycles in the garage/loading bay, black and white photography of street scenes, a sign reads: Welcome to the Manifesto Party --- Free Guns and Dope for Life! --- comic books are strewn all around on a table along with revolutionary periodicals, union stuff, Indian rights, grape picker's rights, post-modern critiques and the preamble and constitution of the Manifesto Party: Doctrine and Dogma. All interesting material --- (especially if you're crazy) The list of some of these fine publications included: The Militant, The Maoist Sojourner, The National Enquirer, Mad magazine, The Catholic Worker, The Revolutionary Worker, The IWW's Industrial Worker, The Worker's Worker, West Coast Sailor's Bulletin, Earth First!, The Star etc... etc... and a slew of others. In a graffiti-like scrawl written on a large wall is:

Dada postcards...

full of fugacity

amongst sartorial acolytes

filled with frenzied idealism

disrupting public tranquility

in middle class districts

running past the ruins

an epidemic of mental diseases

suffering from a poverty of passion

shouting out, "God is Dead!"

What about the baby?!

Doesn't translate....

Walter's eyes scan more of the premises... seems there is some kind of religious shrine in the far corner with statuary of saints and pictures of the popes and Mary and Baby Jesus. A banner hangs in

another corner and on it is written: Keep your distance in sword fighting and paintings. Colorful, but faded Buddhist flags hang limply over some steel shelving racks full of toasters and alternators. An old YMCA Zinsco Roll-O-Matic canvas-strapped, belly-shaking, fat-burning, jiggling, vibrating machine resolutely sits idle in the middle of an aisle. A red flag with a large black A for Anarchy is draped over a soft round comfortable beat sofa next to an old classic pinball machine. The head of a large animal hangs from a wall. To one side is a 3' x 3' photograph of John F. Kennedy shaking hands with some old cigar-smoking men in suits who looked like gangsters, or contractors --- probably somebody's grandfather. A half shelled-out Willys station wagon lies forlornly in a lower garage/loading dock bay upon jack stands and behind it lies great wooden medieval-like doors used to keep the Saxons out.

Upon the garage walls painted in black in a large primitive hieroglyphics text against the gray din is written: Happiness is not based on one's self, it does not consist of a small home of taking and getting. Happiness is taking part in the struggle, where there is no borderline between one's personal world and the world in general...

Lee Harvey Oswald