

1000StatesofMind

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KILLER: REALITY

What we have here is a mysterious murder: it's like a murder mystery, but the evidence arrives in reverse of the standard order. A murder mystery starts with a body; then comes a weapon, which explains what happened to the body; then there are theories about motives, which explain why somebody might have used the weapon on the body; finally, a prime suspect is determined. This story starts with the the murderer: there is a stalker among us, a lurker, a ripper, and his name is Rodger the Gouger. He is what they call a sociopath; like the rest of us, he follows a set of rules which determine his interaction with the world, but Rodger's rule is a formula which results in behavior which doesn't make sense to you or me. We know who did it, and we know he is out there waiting with a long list of names, but what is unclear is why he did what he did, how he did it, and even what he did in the first place. Why he did it is almost impossible to explain, because it is almost impossible to imagine that he really did do what he did. Any human action is difficult to explain, because, in the epistemology of motivation, there always comes a moment when a faith in a certain concept of desire becomes necessary to believing the logic of what caused a person to do something, and it's not enough to say that because one person could imagine doing a specific thing for a specific reason, all people would be likely to have acted similarly in a similar situation. What motivates humans to do the things they do, then? I don't know. I do know this, though: in the course of a life, a moment may come in which everything that has been learned in that life loses meaning, and all the information collected throughout that life is suddenly just a stream of numbers and letters connected to nothing and leading nowhere.

For me, this moment came in the autumn, in the year 2002, in a city lying approximately at the center of the West Coast of the United States. It was around then that I found myself the sole witness to the earliest manifestation of a massive murder, and the murderer's message took the form of a bodily testament: his victims were his testimonial and his manifesto, and he used them in a way that you and I have used sheets of paper. I remember each detail of the strange time leading up to this revelation which I would eventually like to describe, every weird affixture of the days preceding my final encounter with the murderer and the accompanying epiphany that my brain, linked, as it has been, to a universe which could contain an entity like Rodger the Gouger, was full of dead space. In so many ways, I'm imperfect, and it is a catalog of so many mistakes which makes these things which I'm going to tell you worth telling, but, in order to appreciate the story which I intend to reveal, you must accept this about me: I am endowed with the unusual and equivocal blessing of a near perfect memory, a capability which has been a boon due, in particular, as you can imagine, to the undocumentable nature of my work. To you or I, sitting, let's say, at a table in a restaurant, facing each other, presented with an arrangement of platters and utensils, surrounded by furniture which neatly fits the awkward and ununiform shapes of humans into an arrangement of surfaces, it may seem that the world is composed of constructions which are self-evident, like a door bearing a symbol which represents the type of person who might enter there, marked with the text push, indicating both how the architectural element is used and what might be happening on the other side. Recently, though, I've come to realize that the universe is made up of auspicious combinations of homogenous matter, and my brain, made up of so many verisimilar cells, is rigged part for part to this reality.

The universe is full of signs, always telling us what to do, or, if not that, at least what could be done to change the seemingly ineluctable nature of our perceived fates, but, nonetheless, right

now, I'm sinking through an increasingly congealing atmosphere towards something concrete. And, as for Rodger the Gouger, and as for the small circuit of relationships into which he injected his malicious program of disruption, the explanation is coming, and I'll reveal everything I know in the most appropriate order I can imagine, that is, in the order in which it all happened, recording in reverse the process by which my sensational memory, even now, is unravelling from the top like a skein of yarn. Bear with me as I recount the final days in which a strange confluence of complex lives resulted in an immense, unintentional, and unknowable pattern like the design of an entire city, and try to understand how, in the season of diminishing light, I entered into a confusion in which the alternating and exclusionary reality and fiction of night and day became so transposed that I fell into a lacuna in the volume of human morals, uncovering a discrepancy in the polemic of right and wrong illuminated by a sequence of evidence which would extend downwards along the pathway which I'm taking to the bottom of something until, finally, I dreamed a dream that the things which were happening to me were a dream from which I would eventually awake. Unfortunately, there has been no one else present to register the data which I've compiled, or which have been compiling in spite of me, and the exigence of my situation at this point requires me to put forth my own analysis of what's happened and what these events mean.

So, what we have here is a mystery which will unfold without the guidance of a detective, without a lens-like investigative mind to separate the otherwise dazzling jumble of information into something resembling a spectrum, an array with an order and extremes; it is a situation which bears strange analogy to the victimless crime. The murder itself, which I'll relate to you presently, is far from victimless; to the contrary, there are victims all over the place, so many victims that it's alarming to consider the unlikelihood of discovering an individual who will not eventually become victimized. But, like the victimless crime, this detectiveless mystery lacks the active element which makes it what it should be; thus, it is a crime in which that moment of incognito, the moment in which the criminal and his intentions are revealed, passes without the benefit of a herald. The scenario calls into question the entire antithesis of innocence and guilt: if a crime can take place without a victim, and a mystery can unfold without a detective, then who is to say that a murder cannot be done without guilt? Besides, you and I and people like us aren't interested in innocence; in a society where the antithesis of guilt entails guile and credulity and carries along with the connotation of righteousness the stigma of inexperience, I proclaim myself, thoroughly, proudly, not innocent. Having said this, though, I will warn you now that I have realized, above all, how little I know; I know so little that even the mechanisms of the small information which I do have remain obscure to me. We do not know where Rodger the Gouger came from, and we don't know where he is now, and, though I will eventually, timidly predict where he'll strike next, I don't know whether it's possible, at this point, to prevent his onslaught. We do, however, know that it all started with the organization known as the Electric Company.