



F O b i a s

Tobias

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"It is the predisposition of human nature to consider an unpleasant idea untrue."

- Dr. Sigmund Freud

Cascading pictures turn to mist behind my eyes.
Only one retains shape and sets itself apart.

Tobit.

Tobias.

Tobi.

I imagine space. Time ripples over planets and stars, like a sheet covering us in darkness as our small planet spins underneath. The beginning and the end constantly intersect. East becomes west, as the sun rises and sets. The start fades to the end and begins again, making neither exist.

Blink.

I am here again, the thick smell of black mold clogging each breath. The brown ceiling crumbles over my perspiring skin. Glossy green paint stained from leaking pipes and body fluids curls as the walls crack for a sinking foundation. I scratch the veneered surface of a warped tabletop wondering why I left my meditation so soon.

He is here, body prostrate upon the floor. Blood dripping from the hole in his head sinks through the porous wood, bringing life to the dead, it makes the walls breathe an incessant breath.

Blink.

"Look at the stars. The city seems darker tonight." I say with a shuddering breath.

Tobias lights a cigarette with a deep residing drag. The smoke settles like a fog between us. He turns slowly to the open window as the smoke follows like an evil companion. His eyes keep with mine until I am lost from them. He leans against the windowsill and a sliver of moonlight settles

on his face.

"You still don't understand. You just won't see the truth, and now I know it's too late. I'm sorry, old friend." Tobias breathes out the words, and the smoke pouring from his mouth catches the breeze from the window and escapes into the city.

My left hand is cramping.

My whole body shakes.

The steel is too heavy.

I am too weak.

Blink.

Death.

Blink.

Life.

Blink.

There is no beginning, there is no end. There is only what remains and what has not survived. The start fades to the end and begins again, making neither exist.

It's me.

I'm the fraud.

I'm the killer.

Everything you read from this point on is all at once present and past. Every line is truth and fiction. Each word is who I am and how I see the events that take place. But you must know that who I am changes with the breeze. You will begin to understand who I am and how I think. You will want to judge me whether for the good or the bad and in one sentence you will feel like I have changed entirely, and you will need to start from scratch. I can't be sorry about this because I don't care about you. I don't need you to care for me. These things just have to be said. They always have to be said. When new people come in, I must at least warn them of what's coming.

I won't drag you along for 200 pages thinking that someone else is at fault. This isn't a mystery novel and I'm not the guy who learns any lessons. I'm also no writer. If you are an avid reader, I assure you that it is no intention of mine to break the rules or "do my own thing" as it were. In other words, the mistakes you find are not intentional and are entirely due to ignorance or more likely, stupidity.

Sorry.

I don't have that kind of time.

I don't have the patience to sit here and think of ways to string you along or mislead you. I'm not trying to be interesting or to sell a million copies and be featured on the New York Times Bestsellers list. I'm not trying to sit next to

any one of the dozens of talk show hosts and explain my brilliant writing method and how my book is actually a metaphor for society or some other bullshit.

I have no method.

Like you, I only have my choices, a kind of actuated method maybe, that lead to other choices and those choices lead me to several moments in which I found myself killing those I loved.

I've heard men say: "It just happened." Them, cheating on their wives.

"It just happened." Them, beating their children.

"It just happened." Them, getting so wasted they rape their step-kid.

The truth is that the one who cheated on his wife made the decision when he chose to get in his car and go to the bar. The truth is that the one that beat his child made the decision when he chose to never dedicate himself to refraining from impulse. The truth is that the one who raped his step-kid made the decision when he stopped by the store and picked up the twelve pack of whatever cheap shit he wanted to drink.

What I'm saying is that every moment you feel as though one decision has taken your life away, remember that you have been making bad choices a long time to get yourself to this moment.

Don't fool yourself.

Fuck, I'm going on again and I don't have that kind of time. Not here, behind or ahead. The sun will rise, and my moments will be gone.

Just remember, you have been a piece of shit for

years and suddenly you blink and you're killing your friends.

Blink.

"Pleshdondoudeesh"

When you have your hands around someone's throat it's hard to understand what they're saying. They slur every word together. Spit goes everywhere.

This is Eddy. He's the guy you can call when you need to talk. He's the guy that makes you feel good about your shit life because his shit life is shittier than yours.

He is my friend.

He is about to die.

He's not the first, but I don't see time as linear. My brain has never allowed me to. It's like the scene in every action movie when the good guy gets knocked out. The screen goes black but then he wakes up somewhere completely different. Yeah, that's me but my brain is the bad guy that knocks me out and drags me somewhere I don't want to go.

Blood is sliding down the blade of the knife to the hilt, then dripping to the floor. I need to end this in a timelier manner. The puddle's diameter and depth are increasing faster than I'd like. I don't want to miss the moment he lets go but I feel the need to monitor the knife that protrudes from my side. Eddy stabbed me pretty deep and I'm wondering if any of my vital organs are punctured.

Some people are just so ungrateful.

He's been talking about dying for years and now he

fights it. I will never understand people. If you don't want something, don't ask for it.

I'm still looking at the blade in my side when he stops moving.

Shit, he's gone, and I missed it.

I try C.P.R, still dead.

"Fuck!" I say, trying to stand up as the fabric of my shirt tugs on the blade. The pain is nauseating. Maybe tonight I'll die.

Time isn't linear but this is where we can start.

Blink.