

Aftermath

The sun shone through the clouds sifting brilliance. Laser beams moved across the ground through clouds blowing east like searchlights for a movie premiere in the fifties. I felt good but I began to second-guess my own premise. I had plenty of friends but really they were pretty much involved, understandably, in their own lives. Even my girlfriend seemed to have a time-share commitment towards me. I had very little money having been without a job for some time. My parents had retired and moved from Oakland a few years ago and my sister was in Australia or New Zealand, one of those safe places where everyone spoke English except for the indigenous people civilization pushed aside to view like circus sideshows. So if family, friends and money weren't really the issue, what was? I had taken in so much in the last two years I felt saturated and dripping wet expecting to be wrung out dry and happy in the sun. When I had set out across the country I really didn't know why I was going where I was going and the question kept re-emerging. I did have a half hatched plan of meeting up with Ken and sailing the boat back from Spain that he bought with his inheritance but deep down I really knew that wasn't going to happen. And now that I'm back in Oakland I feel like I really did what I set out to do which was in effect to absorb, the people, everyone and everything, the dirt, wind, sun, surf, clouds, the cosmos, the filth and despair of cities, the abuse of the downtrodden, the drone of insects on a North Dakota highway after another car passes you by, the endless confrontation of the people on the streets, the hitchhiking gone psycho bad, the drug deals hardly worth it and the desperation of love and the manic worry of being alone. I am the fish with an open mouth gaping upstream and am the bat that zeroes in at the benign. If I'm guilty of one thing it is a naive desire to dwell in the moment, to celebrate when it moves you and to revel in it, to honor that instance. I cannot escape this instinct or desire to. I will not try to deny ---

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