

Categorical Existence

written by

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INT. ROOM

A pitch dark room with only one light vaguely gleaming, a man is sitting on a chair. There is only blood and gore where his right eye used to be, and a few trails of crimson tears are quietly dripping down onto his shirt. Shadows are being directly projected onto the tortured man, sounds of old-timey advertisements with archaic measures to convey advertizing pitch echoes in the room.

Another man, standing in not far away, is observing how his prisoner is reacting to pain.

Echoes of ghastly yelps penetrate the molecules in the air, like the pig squealing under the butcher's knife, but no one can ease his discomfort. The burning sensation of having one's nerves held directly to fire keeps him sharp and dull at the same time. But this is only the beginning.

The man in black circles his companion with a sledgehammer in his hand.

MAN IN BLACK (MIB)

To quote a dead man:  
In order to eat, you need to be  
hungry;  
In order to learn, you have to be  
ignorant.  
Ignorance is in the nature of  
learning;  
Pain is in the nature of health;  
Passion is in the nature of  
thought;  
Death is in the nature of life;  
To see, you can't use these eyes.

Not to his surprise, the prisoner is too cowardly and clueless to answer anything back, except for unintelligible groans of agony.

The projecting box, still casting shadows, holds its prisoner captive with its enchanting trance; he wields the sledgehammer and slams it down hard. After his second full blow, the box cracks into pieces, the sounds of advertisement and the everlasting shadows ceased after a quick quiver.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

Can you still see the shadows now?  
In your mind? Can you name what  
they actually are without looking  
at them?

He says, while he shuts up his captive with one hand, another gouging the other eye out with a thick blade.

## MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

Are you capable of telling me the essential nature of each object that you saw, you know, or what you thought you knew without looking at the shadows?

When you did see them, did you actually see them for what they are?

Do you understand everything you saw?

I think not.

What you know is nothing but misleading shadows.

Yet you take the most untruthful falsity as truth.

Do you see my point?

No matter.

Now, open your eyes."

He puts his hands where the prisoner's eyes used to be, and pulls the man to the ground.

## ENT. NATURE

After moments of pure silence and ear ringing, the vague scenery is becoming clear to the prisoner.

## PRISONER

Where am I?

The Pacific Ocean at its sunset is perhaps one of the most beautiful places in the world, but it's bizarrely quiet, too quiet. As if there is nothing alive, there is no wind, no clouds, no birds, no sound.

The bright sunlight penetrates the clouds and quietly shines on the earth, but our prisoner is not in a welcoming mood.

## PRISONER (CONT'D)

It's too bright! It stings!

I can still see... What is this place? Hello?

A voice abruptly answers him:

## MAN IN BLACK

No need to panic, we haven't really started yet.

## PRISONER

What? Forget it, you have to let me go!

MAN IN BLACK

This is The 'Real World' where you feel the sunshine for what it actually is. Now, once the journey begins, there is no stopping. You are here because you wanted this yourself, and this journey ends when you can see the difference between the shadows and the real.

PRISONER

I certainly don't want this, damn maniac. Leave me alone, I want to go back!

Almost as if his wish was granted, the other voice ceased, and in a few moments he began to panic.

FADING TO BLACK

PRISONER (CONT'D)

Hello? Take me back!

FADE BACK TO  
NATURE

MAN IN BLACK

We are about to begin, I'll be right beside you. Stay sharp and use your brain. There is no other way to find it, and when you do, remember, you have to embrace whatever you find.

PRISONER

Find? Find what?

MAN IN BLACK

Yourself.

EXT. STREAM OF NATURE

Thousands of natural wonders appear in front of his eyes, as if he is really standing on the mountain peak looking down to the magnificence; or the tip of the lake, in completely mesmerized by tranquil harmony; or in the midst of the redwood jungle filled with April fog, too little next to the 20 meters high trees in the magical land...it felt eternal, yet it felt almost merely a moment, the longest moment that ever could be experienced.

EXT. GOBI WILD

And then...

Solitude.

Endless land, endless mountain, endless walking in this Gobi wild.

A cigar does not alleviate any anxiety but intensifies the meaninglessness of his presence in this serene but forsaken land.

Puff, Puff.

A used-up chair is deserted in the field, poor old wicker chair. The cool breeze quickly dries up the hot sweat and blows away the dwindling dust, the riding boots are no longer shining black but embedded in mud.

There is not a soul but him in this bit of infinitude.

PRISONER

What was all that? Do they actually exist?

MAN IN BLACK

Didn't you see them with your own eyes?

PRISONER

Never seen anything like that before.

MAN IN BLACK

Never saw sky or trees?

PRISONER

Not like that, I knew them from the shadows.

The prisoner ponders and speaks up again.

PRISONER (CONT'D)

I still don't get it.

MAN IN BLACK

About?

PRISONER

SO WHAT these places exist and Awesome, but what's the point?

MAN IN BLACK

How do you mean?

PRISONER

The big mountain, birds or the tallest trees have nothing to do with me, and what can I do with them?

MAN IN BLACK

They are pointless.

PRISONER

No! I know they are important but I just...ugh! Something is missing, What is it?!

MAN IN BLACK

Perhaps you need to observe more carefully.

PRISONER

No, I don't want to see more, it will be a waste of time...I got it, they are not filled with life.

MAN IN BLACK

No?

PRISONER

Yes! There is no living people in any of these places, they are beautiful but they are dead. I'm just alone, so it's all a waste of time.

MAN IN BLACK

You would prefer a lot of company?

PRISONER

Can you do that? You are going to help me?

MAN IN BLACK

Such is my duty.

PRISONER

Then Yes! Definitely! Good! Take me to people!

MAN IN BLACK

As you wish.

EXT. LAS VEGAS

Las Vegas.

The drinking, partying, drugs, gambling, sex, consuming, lost in money, lost in pleasure, loss of control, enjoying free fall.

Huge billboards bombard the visual field, vans with girls in lingerie read "These girls to your door 24/7, call now!", an evangelist shouts into a bullhorn about God to the streams of crowds pacing through the skyline onto their next destination of pleasure.

If you squint your eyes, sometime "On sale 50% off" is read as "Greed is good";

"Happy hour 9-12" is "Pleasure is God";

"Calvin Harris, DJ in Club Mix" is "Youth is forever".

Full of life indeed.

PRISONER

OK, that's enough.

MAN IN BLACK

You wanted to be with living people.

PRISONER

Not with this lot. End this.

MAN IN BLACK

I can't.

PRISONER

Obviously you can, so Cut It Out.

MAN IN BLACK

I can't until you've articulated why you can't see more.

PRISONER

Because it's very boring to see life being wasted.

MAN IN BLACK

How are their lives wasted? They appear perfectly content to my eyes.

PRISONER

-I don't think that they realize that the pursuit of pleasure, hedonism, is filling a bottomless bottle.

(MORE)

PRISONER (CONT'D)

There is little satisfaction when you try to fill it and the next moment it's gone. That little moment of pleasure is such a great relief and the perfect distraction from either whatever they are trying to run away or to kill the endless time they have on their hands. They are EXPERTS at wasting life.

MAN IN BLACK

Quite a harsh assessment. Amuse me, what are the ways of living that wouldn't be considered a waste to you?

PRISONER

You can perfect a skill, to compete on the highest level, peer of the realm. Or build something great from scratch, creator of great things, changing something bad for the better. You can try to perfect yourself toward...Greatness!

MAN IN BLACK

In short, honor?

PRISONER

Yes, honor.

MAN IN BLACK

But don't you think, to use your words, that the pursuit of honor is not dissimilar to filling a bottomless bottle? The never enough-s? Has to be ME? Not to mention it's based not entirely but overwhelmingly on invidious distinctions? The crown can only sit on one head, if I want it enough, I can contentedly see thousands of severed heads roll down a hill so I can be the only person to try be King. It's quite lonely after your triumph is built upon the destruction of all others.

PRISONER

Huh...so not pleasure, not honor then.



MAN IN BLACK

If you think so.

PRISONER

I am at a loss.

MAN IN BLACK

Let's try somewhere else, shall we?

EXT. BADLANDS

The badlands are something of a unique feature in the natural world. Little mountains just tall enough to be classified as mountains, short enough for men to climb, and not so strenuous so that the climber feels beat when one has reached the summit. Often between summits there are uneven grass fields that create separate worlds upon your horizon. You might fall under the delusion of your eyes by the drastic spacial change around you, as they often are so gullible.

PRISONER

My head is burning in flame.

MAN IN BLACK

You might be thinking too much too soon.

PRISONER

You are king of the world, you own continents, people worship you in droves, millions would die if you push a button, greater than Caesar, more renowned than Shakespeare and Mozart combined, or everyone absolutely loves you unconditionally, so what? Why that? What would any of these things have to do with you? It's all just causes and effects taking place within a higher order of things. If pleasure is so empty, if honor is so empty, and you die, then what? What?

MAN IN BLACK

Are you having an existential crisis?

PRISONER

No, I'm questioning my intellectual sloth. Why would I just carry on living for so long without a clear reason?

## MAN IN BLACK

Why don't you have a rest?

He rests his tired body against the lonesome tree, another quiet little mountain. No one is around, the end of horizon is endless, more little mountains just like this one. The sky is so short, the air brushes through his face and thousands of grass on the field together.

He looks up to the sky, the clouds are slowly moving toward left, the path where the wind is pushing them.

## PRISONER

Why have I never seen this before?  
Harmony.

He meant when he sees the grass bend toward the same direction together, the wind carries the clouds toward the same way, the sound of a bird chirping from the distance forming an echo, and the scattered sunlight silently lighting the ground.

## PRISONER (CONT'D)

But what am I living for? For what?  
What is worthwhile? What is always  
worthwhile? What can my life amount  
to? All my efforts for what?

He takes a long sign as he answered to himself: there is no answer underneath the afternoon sun, we are all carrying on without a clear clue, at least for himself that is the case. Desperation starts to fume up the mind when its questioning reaches no end.

He gets up and continues walking.

## EXT. OLD BARN

Our wanderer is pacing back and forth in an abandoned old warehouse from the Wild West time. There are holes scattered on the surface of the big old building, you can see the empty decaying inside by standing next to the wall. The sun is setting, the sound of a train honking is courageously disturbing the peace.

He paces to and fro, arguing, thinking, shouting, like a sports car driving at 180 miles per hour with the engine on fire from its ongoing acceleration.

## PRISONER

There are countless beings on this  
earth, living and deceased, who  
never doubted their ways of life.

(MORE)

PRISONER (CONT'D)

They live for survival and they were content in striving for it.

MAN IN BLACK

Yes?

PRISONER

What is the meaning of MY life?

MAN IN BLACK

Is that a question or just an expression of anger?

PRISONER

Both.

MAN IN BLACK

Anger entails a person's ineptness or incapacity.

PRISONER

Is that so?

MAN IN BLACK

Tell me, do you think little of yourself when you can't create a meaning for your life?

PRISONER

Create my own? In what, less than 80 years of time? What is the use of any of that? I die, the moment I die, it's all over. Whatever passed on to others is absolutely irrelevant to myself. I cease at death. Whatever meaning I create within my time is just as meaningless as death.

MAN IN BLACK

Perhaps you are barking up the wrong tree? How about finding your meaning outside time, outside cause, and outside space? Your meaning in the infinitude?

PRISONER

Then whatever I would do and did in my finite mortal existence is unbelievably—a JOKE! Would a single grain of sand on the beach matter? One tiny human in the entire galaxy matter?

(MORE)

PRISONER (CONT'D)

Throughout the universe and all of its history? And you are pointing me in the direction to GOD?...Life is impossible.

They go in silence until he speaks again.

PRISONER (CONT'D)

—I don't think you understand. The bleakness is greater than the situation itself...like standing in the center of the room and the ceiling is falling to bury you. It doesn't want to go away and somehow I know...that if I wait for it to go away, I will be gone with it.

MAN IN BLACK

—A vivid picture, how does that make you feel?

PRISONER

It feels...disempowering. I just don't want to be afraid anymore.

He looks at the setting sun and then jumps off the floor foundation.

MAN IN BLACK

What are you doing?

PRISONER

To end my horror.

EXT. TRAIN TRACK

He found the source of the train honking and waits next to the track. It growls louder and louder.

The flame finally settles. His mind is so clear that he can see all the ideas on his mental horizon, they are almost translucent and all have nearly invisible strings sewed within one another. In totality they build a web beyond comprehension at a first glance. The horizon is all dormant and docile. The web stays perfectly still and he feels so much calm, he feels like he understands everything now, he knows how everything works in his body and mind and the world itself in relation to him. He can pull a string and the web will vibrate in the rhyme of Mozart's piano sonata. All is now and forever, he is ready for the becoming of the natural force, again.

MAN IN BLACK

I admire your courage, or your stupidity. You can't really die here.

PRISONER

Well you gotta fucking try.

He jumps right at the moment when the moving train is going at its prime, perfect calculation. He felt his hair rustling in the wind, his coat and hat getting crushed on impact. There isn't pain, there is only a pause on the ongoing stream of conscious events. The world snaps to black, sheer black.

Then he opened his eyes again.

EXT. FROZEN LAKE

No, it's not over.

That's the first thought that entered his mind.

The view in front of him is another natural wonder, a gigantic lake is frozen with a decent amount of snow covering its surface. His black hat is sitting in the middle of the frozen pond. The red sun light splashes upon the huge mountain in far away.

He is still on his journey, and the familiar voice echoes in his mind once more.

MAN IN BLACK

And in vain you tried. Why quit a winnable challenge? Please, pick up your hat.

PRISONER

No.

MAN IN BLACK

You wanted this, you have to see this through There is no where else you can possibly go.

PRISONER

It's meaningless.

MAN IN BLACK

I promise you it isn't. Now, there is no time for more idling, you have wasted enough time in your life as is. Please, pick up the hat.

PRISONER

No, I need some answers from you.

MAN IN BLACK

Ask.

PRISONER

What exactly am I with my desires?

MAN IN BLACK

Here is a perspective: In the outlook of the entire universe, everything has its place and each is distinct from the other. They start from simple matters and with time they transform, become more complex and strive toward perfect. You are a part of this transformative process.

PRISONER

All things are unique, get more complicated and eventually perfect through time? They are just words. Empty, means nothing at all. How does it matter to ME?

MAN IN BLACK

You can a be source of light, a beacon for a worthy cause or ideology. You can spend your life in research, art, or helping those in need. By doing so you achieve the best parts of humanity.

PRISONER

-Not to mention that science doesn't have a conclusion nor a consensus, but what research precisely is the right one? Hmm? Choose the wrong path and a lifetime's work is meaningless. Art? Only shadows and semblance of the real thing! Decorations of life, distractions, a quick pick-me-up, a big centerpiece of nothingness! Are there ideals

(MORE)

PRISONER (CONT'D)

without objections? I don't know the life of others, the ones I encounter I know barely a little and then they are gone the minute they are out of the door. I don't know anyone! I don't even know myself!

MAN IN BLACK

Then why not observe and learn the life of humankind? Study the world around you, and then you may find your place...

PRISONER

Observe and learn the life of mankind that no one can be sure of its beginning or end, some elevated baboon from the jungle occupying a little star amidst billions of other stars in an incomprehensible universe, then I will know my place? Please! There my life has no meaning. Nothing will come out of my life; I exist because I exist! I just do! Then I die! All for nothing! The wise prepare themselves for death in their whole existence so death holds no fear for them. Our nature is just the will to live. All is but vexation of spirit. There is nothing new under the sun! And somehow Sisyphus is content? With rolling a fucking rock over and over? I'm no longer ignorant, I despise hedonism, I can't die, I am a living coward.

MAN IN BLACK

How did you arrive at this conclusion?

PRISONER

Thinking! Reason!

MAN IN BLACK

-Hmm...Now IF reason created the world, your reasoning leads you to conclude that life contradicts reason. Your reason, creator of life, denies life. Would reason exist if life doesn't exist?

(MORE)

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

I think life comes first and reason comes after, but something belongs to life is denying life itself. My DEAR FRIEND, SOMETHING is WRONG here. Somewhere YOU made a MISTAKE.

As if a computer glitch, it suddenly cuts back to the Torture room, but the prisoner has one eye replaced to where it was.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

Do you honestly think that you and the hundreds of thousands like you who understand Plato, Schopenhauer, Solomon, Camus and what not are the entire humankind? No, and you don't even know the life of mankind. All of mankind throughout recorded and unrecorded history, in its billions, does not doubt the meaning of life. What I see is, you are amongst a narrow circle of idlers of life sulking and drowning in your own idleness, and the billions of others living and lived are nothing but cattle to you.

PRISONER

(Hoarsely)

Then what?

MAN IN BLACK

Let me show you somewhere else.

EXT. DETROIT

Broken and abandoned homes, ragged streets, void of human inhabitant.

PRISONER

What are these houses about?

MAN IN BLACK

Think of the people who used to live here, can you see the families, where they had their first child, the first Christmas in the new house they just moved in, the couple who

(MORE)



MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)  
 set up a jazz record and dance in  
 the living room, the husband  
 singing in the shower after working  
 till midnight...they were all here,  
 for a time, this is the place they  
 return to everyday, a place called  
 home.

PRISONER  
 But this is what they are now.

Chirping of Nightingales breaks the void of silence.

MAN IN BLACK  
 A different life form is slowly  
 taking over, do you hear the birds?  
 The plants that flourish regardless  
 of their elements and the insects  
 moving quietly beneath the surface?

PRISONER  
 Life persists, regardless of who or  
 what.

MAN IN BLACK  
 Correct.

PRISONER  
 These birds, plants and worms did  
 not need an articulated rational  
 answer to live, instead they live  
 in accordance to their nature. My  
 rationality excludes life, but  
 their life doesn't build on  
 rationality but they just live, and  
 their actions continue their  
 living.

MAN IN BLACK  
 Either your rationality isn't that  
 rational, or life is not built on  
 reason but on something entirely  
 different. Maybe both.

A moment passes by.

PRISONER  
 I know what my mistake is.

MAN IN BLACK  
 Let's hear it.

PRISONER

I made the mistake of asking the wrong question.

MAN IN BLACK

Oh?

PRISONER

—My mistake was asking a wrong question: What is the meaning of my life within space, within time, within causation? Nothing. That's the answer to it. But I think I meant to ask another question altogether: What is the meaning of my life out space, outside time, outside causation?

MAN IN BLACK

Finite versus Infinite.

PRISONER

I want to know if there is meaning beyond my mortality in an infinite world, meaning outside these conditional, transient pleasures.

MAN IN BLACK

Ever wonder what happened to the people who used to live here?

EXT. ST. LOUIS

The bustling struggle of living in the worn out parts of town, but life persists.

MAN IN BLACK

Those houses are in ruins but they are very much alive and thriving, in a different way.

PRISONER

How can they go on about their day and never question life?

MAN IN BLACK

They do question it, never underestimate people you don't know. They build their lives not by strictly rational knowledge, but a strong sense of belief in life, they hold

(MORE)

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)  
faith in living through all the  
numerous things they have to do  
everyday to ensure the well-being  
of those around them. This is  
something you don't have.

PRISONER  
Faith?

MAN IN BLACK  
And people who depend on you and  
who you also care deeply about at  
the same time.

PRISONER  
But the problem of faith is that it  
doesn't stand questioning.

MAN IN BLACK  
Perhaps that's your second mistake.

PRISONER  
That Faith is incoherent and its  
unfounded origin, amongst other  
errors?

MAN IN BLACK  
No. It's that you question  
something that you don't really  
feel or understand at all.

PRISONER  
What does that mean?

MAN IN BLACK  
You have seen the people in Las  
Vegas and they repelled you. Why?

PRISONER  
Because they chase after transient  
pleasures like simple animals, it's  
degrading.

MAN IN BLACK  
And you think there are better ways  
of living yet you have denied life.  
What exactly is a the better way?

PRISONER  
...To learn the infinite, to feel  
the world itself, to become life,  
to perfect yourself.

MAN IN BLACK

Tell me, do you think that's a rational answer?

PRISONER

No...I don't know.

MAN IN BLACK

Right. You have seen the living in all its different forms, but humans live because they believe in something. The people who cannot see beyond the finite live within the transient illusions of the finite, the finite is thus their belief. The ones who understand the illusional transient pleasures of the finite must believe in the infinite, otherwise they wouldn't be living on. So tell me, what is this belief?

PRISONER

Sure, you can call it faith, but faith has to be depend on something unintelligible of we called God...

MAN IN BLACK

No, No, faith is what you have to find first, and then God. You can't find faith through God. Without faith there is no ground for you to know God.

PRISONER

Fine, then what is faith?

MAN IN BLACK

Faith is the source of life, faith is the cause that gives possibilities to living, faith is the bedrock of a human's meaning, and then you create or find the meaning of your mortality upon the stage that faith has built for you. Faith is the affirmation of life that denies death.

PRISONER

For some reason I just can't agree with...or see your point.

MAN IN BLACK

Then it's time to stop using Reason to see the world but use your eyes to observe, your heart to hear, your mind to feel and without giving any judgement. Reason led you to destruction. Why not try a new way?

PRISONER

But I just can't understand it!

MAN IN BLACK

-Because faith isn't an idea that you can acquire by reading books, it can only be found and held onto when you live and work. No information is going to lead you to experience a PHENOMENON that is completely FOREIGN. At this point you have to accept the ineptness of your depth and the limit of your rational reasoning when it comes to the vastness of all the aspects of life. Put your feet on solid ground and actually feel first and think later, otherwise you will never feel or know life in a different light. Then you will fall into your old habit of self-destruction when you can change your life for the better by your own hands.

PRISONER

Show me how.

MAN IN BLACK

Splendid.

EXT. THE SUN LAWN

Upon a grassy field, he finds himself lying down holding a thin copy of *A Tale of Two Cities* while the Other is lying down feet to head in the opposite direction holding the same book.

He no longer feels the dripping of time and doesn't think there is a next moment. The only existence of life is here himself, reading a book.

PRISONER

It is the best of times...

MAN IN BLACK

It is the worst of times...

PRISONER

It is the age of wisdom...

MAN IN BLACK

It is the age of foolishness...

PRISONER

It is the age of belief...

MAN IN BLACK

It is the age of incredulity...

PRISONER

It is the season of light...

MAN IN BLACK

It is the season of darkness...

PRISONER

It is the spring of hope...

MAN IN BLACK

It is the winter of despair...

PRISONER

We have everything before us...

MAN IN BLACK

We have nothing before us...

PRISONER

We are all going directly to heaven...

MAN IN BLACK

We are all going directly to hell...

PRISONER

In short, the present is so far like the past periods...

MAN IN BLACK

That some of its noisiest authorities insist on its being received...

PRISONER

For good or for evil...

MAN IN BLACK, PRISONER  
 (Together)  
 In the superlative degree of  
 comparison only.

He picks up a sandwich and the MIB does the same. When he takes a gulp of coca cola, his shadow companion would replicate.

A soft voice echoes over his ear as he chews this food to ease his hunger:

PRISONER  
 Eating Together  
 A boy and his father  
 Sitting inwardly on the edge of the  
 pool  
 Outside the summer palace of Vienna  
 Their feet are just barely above  
 the water  
 They just sit there, putting food  
 in their mouths, then chew on the  
 food so harshly,  
 I can see the deformation taking  
 place.  
 From the other side of the pool.  
 They speak not a word  
 But eat their food and drink gulps  
 of Coca Cola  
 Their reflections in the water  
 would drink with them  
 Too.

On the right of the eating mates, he and the other are playing marbles.

PRISONER (CONT'D)  
 I Prefer Dreaming  
 I slept for 14 hours, intentionally  
 just to see what the world has to  
 offer.  
 Well, it ain't bad.  
 I was hanging out with old friends  
 that I could barely remember.  
 They were lively and laughing  
 as if we just met in years.  
 I carried the happy mood with me.  
 It's not that different from  
 actually meeting them;  
 time suspends, friends gather for  
 the sake of seeing each other and  
 make play,  
 oh my dear souls, you were the  
 purest when I was dreaming.

(MORE)

PRISONER (CONT'D)

Thus I make my case, I will dream  
more  
to feel your love without  
temperament of this world.

The three pairs of the prisoner and MIB form a perfect triangle on the morning lawn, filled with burning warmth, defrosting the coldness of the world.

EXT. BALCONY

They are sharing a beer on the balcony, both looking at the city lights, breathing in the fresh rain.

MAN IN BLACK

Your thinking on life has changed now, I'm very happy for you. What changed you?

PRISONER

It's the moment that I stopped thinking about myself, how things affect me either to my advantage or disadvantage. I shook off all the thoughts about my well-being and 'unselfed' myself. I did what you said 'To feel first and think later'. I didn't like it at first, feeling vulnerable, not in control, guards down. But I understood what you said, the world is as cruel as I fantasized in fear...and it could also be the most gentle, soothing, Loving, to anyone. But you have to try first, otherwise it's just same-old-you in your same-old-misery, no matter where you go.

He takes a brief sip.

PRISONER (CONT'D)

To have another being by my side, who knows and acknowledges what I am thinking about, who wants the better of me instead of beating me down for their gain. And play with each other just like children...I felt...how to describe it...genuine care? From the heart?



MAN IN BLACK

To experience the phenomenon as  
itself, making founded opinions and  
use them as the basis for values.  
Not bad, what next?

PRISONER

—That's when I realized that life  
is in the living, the meaning of  
being is closed off to whoever  
cares only themselves. That I was  
pathetic because I lived for  
nothing, nothing that is true or  
eternal. I was so narrow in my  
thinking that I only look within  
myself and ignored the existence of  
beings in the living world. I look  
at life and refused to participate,  
in pure idleness I concluded that  
life is impossible by not even  
trying it, by not even knowing it!  
I was a fool! I am a fool!

A beat.

MAN IN BLACK

You still seem perplexed, mind if I  
ask you a few questions?

PRISONER

Sure.

MAN IN BLACK

Are you always honest?

PRISONER

No.

MAN IN BLACK

Are you always kind?

PRISONER

No.

MAN IN BLACK

Do you always put yourself last and  
help others first because it is the  
right thing to do?

PRISONER

No.

MAN IN BLACK

Are you always brave?

PRISONER

No.

MAN IN BLACK

Are you always faithful?

PRISONER

No.

A beat.

MAN IN BLACK

Are you always lying?

PRISONER

No.

MAN IN BLACK

Are you always mean?

PRISONER

No.

MAN IN BLACK

Do you always put yourself first to seek your gain at the expense of all others?

PRISONER

No.

MAN IN BLACK

Are you always cowardly?

PRISONER

No.

MAN IN BLACK

Are you always debaucherous?

PRISONER

No.

PRISONER (CONT'D)

...Then what am I?

MAN IN BLACK

Good question.

PRISONER

I am a...contradiction.

MAN IN BLACK

Yes.

PRISONER  
I am capable of both.

MAN IN BLACK  
You are.

PRISONER  
But I can always choose to act  
toward one way or another.

MAN IN BLACK  
Correct.

PRISONER  
So it's always a choice.

MAN IN BLACK  
And?

PRISONER  
And it's up to me to strive for  
goodness instead of the other  
direction to...

MAN IN BLACK  
To abide truth and constantly  
strive for perfection. Act by  
example to make the world and  
people around us just a splash  
better, yes.

PRISONER  
Because sometimes...

MAN IN BLACK  
Sometimes that little splash is  
just what is needed.

A beat.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)  
There is nothing noble in being  
superior to others; true nobility  
is being superior to your former  
self. I think this journey is  
concluded.

INT. ROOM

He opened his eyes.

He is alone in the "torture room"; it's his own living room.

Outside the window, he can hear the rustling cars passing by, the chirping birds, the wind bouncing on the gigantic oak leaves, and the laughter from the hall.

The world is happening simultaneously altogether, with or without his noticing.

This time, he noticed, when the world sang.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY

The wanderer has found, in the busiest street of New York City, in a sea of people, in their striving for life, losing himself in the pervasive busyness, life itself. He turns his face to the left and follows the constant moment to the right. Then he closes his eyes and focuses on the sound all around him. He saw the light.

Suddenly the white screeches reappear and everything freezes.

EXT. SUMMIT OF HIGH MOUNTAIN

The Man in Black turns around and his eyes tells it all: There is no truth but more beliefs. There is no secret but more glorification. There is less fact than mysteries. The song of earth keeps on singing but there aren't enough little ears listening. In short, the cave seems to be pervasively persuasive, the prisoners who cannot break free by themselves will break back into the caves, and time always assures it.

He breathes, echoing the heartbeats of the Earth, stand again contemplating.

The End.