

# Tamasha and Batasha

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# Tamasha

Tamasha is a member of the secret service. He knows things which never get out. This secret service is not a part of the apparatus of the state. It is a private secret-service. This private secret-service was commissioned by the society of rag-pickers and motion picture cameras. This society really exists. The reason the society exists is that rags and motion picture cameras have a lot in common with each other. Rags are fragments of content. Motion picture cameras deal with fragments of visual experience.

Rag pickings are assemblages. Motion picture archives are assemblages.

Tamasha likes to talk to himself. In self-talk the distinction between communicating, hearing and perception gets blurred. You are talking to yourself, you know both sides of the story and still you immerse yourself in the performance of not-knowing.

"The neon lights are catching my eye."

"You installed them there yesterday."

"Yesterday I was desperate."

"You cannot expect me to track your maladies."

Tamasha imagined himself talking to himself in a confrontational, high-tension pose - eyeballs to eyeballs, nose to nose. In this pose, he experiences a clarity of the distinct voices that reside in him and the things they want to say. In a more relaxed pose, he does not remember any dialog and he does not know anything worth saying. Confrontation produces content. The clamour of one side putting pressure on the other produces material.

Tamasha was born in a family of farmers. He was accustomed to the idea of life tending to life. He disagreed with the prospect of sociality and did not like to engage with figures to interact

with. If distance is needed, enough distance from the self is possible to achieve. It is just a matter of not giving in to the urge when it arises. Instead of feeding yourself affection, feed yourself a few parts affection and a few parts disaffection.

So Tamasha existed with this model of himself as a self-pivot. He could leverage his own self for reaching out further in his swim in the pool of consciousness.

This self-pivoting was the unique trick of that Tamasha could play.

He could lean on himself as well as step away.

This condition affects the condition of pop symmetry that we live in. Pop symmetry describes a condition where the mean condition of experience remains the same. The sameness is construed at a different scale than the scale of our vision so we never figure that this is the nature of our envelope. We live in a cave taking it to be a world.

Now, who am I? And how do I know all this?

I am a confidante of both Tamasha and Batasha. I am the only person in whose narrative the duality is known and in that knowing, a balance is struck.

The concept of pop symmetry also describes the way that these two narratives that I balance in my perception as a singular narrative, unravel at the same time as they are narrated.

This simultaneity of narration and experience are often misunderstood. It is understood as a detail that reveals something about who I am and where I am situated. But the truth is, it doesn't. I am a part of the same narrative that I narrate.

Tamasha is sleeping on the road. Sometimes he talks in his sleep.

Tamasha's talk is like duct tape to the world. No, it is like the oxygen. It is the media packet within which all content is modelled.

Tamasha means a spectacle. I cannot say in which language. The languages are too many to list here.

The spectacle exists because it talks to itself.

I have been describing a person who has become a condition.

"Can you modulate your frequencies? Can you shape the broadcast?"

"I have nothing to do with the content. I only deal with the surface"

"So, you are not really following the story. You do not really taste the syrup."

"I am a part of the story that you mention. I am a part of the taste of the syrup."

The adventures that Tamasha experienced are a special feature of this story. The adventures are like a special nugget that you can swallow down without hesitation and only expect a joyride on doing so.

One day Tamasha was standing under a mango tree. He was standing there waiting for a mango to fall. But none of the mangoes on the tree were ripe and so neither of them had a reason to fall. An unnatural event had to occur. At that time a small kid threw a stone. The stone hit a mango and it fell. But it fell into Tamasha's hands and not the boy's hands. But the boy laid a claim on the fruit because he had thrown the stone. Tamasha laid a claim to the fruit because he had anticipated and waited for long enough at the right spot. Tamasha and the boy started arguing. There seemed to be no quick resolution and they decided to flip a coin. Tamasha won the coin toss and got to keep the mango. Being the actor has its rewards but getting the fruit is not one of

them. Being the actor is rewarded by being acted upon. Sometimes you give, sometimes you receive.

Another day Tamasha was traveling on an escalator and the escalator got jammed. It stopped with a jolt. The jolt was so sudden and so massive that most people fell. Exactly at that time a gunman entered the airport and started firing. The gunman fired crazily everywhere. And because Tamasha was standing, he took multiple bullets in his chest. But in spite of taking multiple hits, he did not go down. The gunman thought that his bullets were fake and that they had no sting. This thought depressed him so much that he shot at himself. But when he shot at himself, he died immediately. The bullets were not fake. The only reason Tamasha remained standing was that he was wearing a bullet-proof vest. And also it was not the right time to die for him. A terrorist committed suicide unnecessarily but the Tamasha of the times remained intact.

## Gloss

When Tamasha stared into his own eyes, he saw his own reflection. This reflection like all reflections had a white arc within it somewhere. The gloss was not at the centre, it was towards the outer rim of the eye-ball. This gloss was a hole that allowed Tamasha to connect to the sky. The sky was behind the body he stared at. Because of the hole, he was not perfectly blocked. As his super-powers depended on his connection to the sky, Tamasha was not able to deal with himself. With the connection established, his superpower manifested. He thought of all the words that could be acted on in that moment, and then thought of FREEZE.

The odds for the word trail in Tamasha's head to stop at FREEZE were very huge. So huge that nobody thought it possible. Tamasha was trained to follow the word and when he heard the word FREEZE and he froze. There was nothing else that he'd rather do, but FREEZING meant a total suspension of action. Are involuntary functions of the body actions? Do they need to be controlled?

The wizards secret is only known to the wizards.

Tamasha FROZE. But nothing happened. The world did not crumble because of Tamasha's state. His reflection also reflected the frozen self back. In this moment, when nothing seemed to be in play, when all contrivance had seemingly paused, out of Tamasha's navel rose a stink that had the power to freeze everyone else in their tracks. So when Tamasha froze, the whole world also froze.

When Tamasha is active, filtered through the constructions of the reflections, the whole world is active. When Tamasha is frozen, the whole world is frozen.

The world follows Tamasha because Tamasha maintains his connection with the sky.

Because Tamasha sees the gloss of reflection as a hole and uses it to see through.

Reflection is a kind of copy.

The hole hides in the gloss because no copy can be perfect. The imperfections fail to register their content. They do not want to be seen as artefacts of low-resolution copying, they would rather be seen as natural occurrences, as freak distortions. When a copy realises that it is the manifestation of stray data, it immediately becomes suspect. Before and after, both times are tragic. After your eyes detune from the gloss, they become opaque. They do not

have empathy anymore. They become merciless, hardened and unavailable.

Tamasha looks into your cold eyes, carefully avoids looking at the arc of gloss (to avoid triggering a loop) and infuses humour into the blacks of your eyes.

Without this humour, you cannot survive.

Reflections occur in the wild. The gloss that is produced as a by-product is an intoxicant. When pragmatic functions are more important, gloss has to be avoided. This avoidance produces the neurosis that everyday experience is.

Tamasha is a conductor. What should happen and what should not are both fodder for the emergence of the gameplay.

"Reflect back only time, remove the message."

"Reflecting time also includes our reflections on time."

"The music can gather the tremors in its flow."

"Listen and you will learn to avoid."

After Tamasha threw away his hearing aids, he relied solely on his eyes to listen. He observes faces very closely. His hearing can register only very high-decibel sounds. For registering subtle variations in the environment around him, he relies on his eyes and on his ability to scan.

Deflection is a defence mechanism for him. If he needs to deflect the flow of some conversation or the tangent of some thought even, he holds a glossy surface to it and disrupts it. This ability of gloss to deflect has nothing to do with the opacity of the surface. If the surface is opaque, deflection occurs. If the surface is transparent, deflection occurs. The surface performs on incidence. There is no after the fact because there is no fact. Permeation does not occur.

So for his devious manipulations, Tamasha relies on gloss.

After Tamasha has dealt with a situation, he hides away all the gloss in the archives of history. Some pasts look enticing, others don't.

Legions of criminals have attempted to find Tamasha's gloss. But no one has succeeded. Gloss is not pop, it is not the same for everyone. For Tamasha it registers as gloss. For others with a different scale in their eyes, they only see dense muddiness.

A glossy surface is a surface with friction less than a certain threshold.

Gloss has nothing to do with content. It is a bullet, it will kill whomever it is shot at, no enquiry into the character of the victim is needed. Absolute function, absolute results. Light does not ever enter a glossy surface, it gets reflected on incidence.

Celebration, uninhibited joy, the idea of happiness, are all glossy. Rough surfaces that retain their friction play the part of the anti-hero. These anti-heroes are like shy, silent people. They hear everything but they say nothing. These surfaces are totally inert and black. The word for black holes existed before they were actually discovered. It is a very appropriate name. The name suggests something flat and something deep at the same time.

Not all glossy surfaces are equal.

The history of reflection that each one of them holds, defines their character.

Much like two equally sharp knives, one of which has been used for murdering someone and the other only to chop vegetables, are not equal.

People who agree to everything are only blobs of gloss. they have nothing to hold on to. They blend into the landscape. Into the duller part of the background. Once they blend in, their situation cannot be determined anymore. They are declared deluded.



If the weather is not good, only the trauma of the moment has the answer. And in this answer resides the reflection of the trauma too, as a tiny space of gloss. Gloss in a tear, for instance, has the capacity to be seen in a context of empathy and withdrawal. It is important to cry once in a while to experience this state.

## Pop

Pop is not just a shorthand for popular. Pop is also an onomatopoeia for emergence. Popularity can be constructed, emergence can't be. Emergence is a phenomenon that has a special kind of registration. It is the beacon call of an arrival, an urge to update vocabulary and syntax.

Tamasha was once roaming rather pointlessly in the wasteland behind his house. During his walk, he was taken aback by what he saw. He saw some figures with glassy eyes and a dome shaped head rise up from the ground. The surface of the ground was not even broken, but these figures were rising up along some invisible elevator shaft. The rise was smooth as if rehearsed and orchestrated. The figures rose up to the ground and addressed Tamasha directly.

"Take us to your reader."

In reading, Tamasha's leader had given shape to the world. No, Tamasha's leader was Tamasha himself. As light has no hierarchy. But in spite of this fact, Tamasha did not break the sequence of conversation. He did not sabotage the process and he guided the figures to a palace. Went Inside, changed clothes and came out again wearing a manner suggesting leadership.

The figures could not recognise Tamasha and immediately started attending to business.

"Sir, why did you read?"

"I did not."

"Sir, we have proof."

"Oh. Ok, I did read. I read because I was forced to. I did not have a choice."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"This paragraph of text that appeared before me, was not brought to me, it popped up for me."

"Sir, pop will destroy the lens."

We never stigmatised pop. We always respected things which popped into our lives the same as things which gently transitioned in. How was this antipathy towards pop dealt with?

Because our biases were clearly stated, we did not feel inclined to think about what the figures told us. We dismissed the concerns and we did not do anything. But the figures who had emerged in the middle of the wasteland that day were from the future. What they shared with us is what they had clearly witnessed in the future. Because of our bias, they came to warn us.

In some time, pop became so simple, so flat that the lenses of people's minds, that had been designed to perceive trickier content, cracked. The mother lens, which nurtured and guided all the lenses worldwide, had cracked.

When this episode happened, we were left without a choice. We quickly had to put together another mother lens to replace the broken one. We did not understand anything about optics. We did not understand anything about refraction. We did not understand anything about light or glass.

At that point the only thing we could do is arrest a figure from the opposite species, dismantle its eye and replicate that. This was not simple. We were shocked to learn that for instance that the human body has no empty space. The human body is densely packed with tissues. We may represent bodies as very neatly

planted gardens but the truth is that they are chaotic packages which an overwhelming complexity of layout and design. The kind of design our bodies display, could only have emerged from a process of an attempt to tame unregulated growth. One variable wants to ceaselessly progress and another variable wants to make sure the content fills the package. There are constraints. Of size, of layers, of density. Eventually bodies are eaten by bodies and can only be as dense as other bodies can tear apart. The abdomen can only be as thick as one that the mouth can chew into.

After we had managed to reverse engineer the eye, we started working with the fabrication and the assembly. Only after we made the whole eye, could we isolate the lens, make it again and replace it.

After this whole process was over, we realised that the lens we had made had too much noise. There was so much artefact noise that people had to deal with that we were having to struggle. There was no fidelity of vision anymore. If we published something there was no guarantee that it would be seen in the same fashion by anyone else. The framework that governed vision was interpretive. There was a lot of potential for variation.

The leadership in Tamasha's head was appalled. This condition meant that all of visual culture had been rendered as a code. The eventual visual experience could neither be imagined nor approximated. There was no way of knowing what distortion existed in the onlooker's eye.

A way for correcting this situation had to be found.

Tamasha went into deep silence and mounted an enquiry onto the problem.

"How can vision be rendered into a flat surface that is entirely self-contained?"

"Can noise in the lens be discounted?"

"How can the current crisis be resolved without actual replacement of all the lenses?"

"What substance is causing this distortion, is it sabotage and conspiracy or is it fault?"

Tamasha meditated on these questions till he could feel clearly what had to be done and how resolution had to be sought.

Tamasha decided to operate on the content of sight itself. What if in the act of seeing itself, the pixels of vision as well as the grid for parsing that vision, both were to be received? What if there was no learnt component of vision? What if the process of evolution were to be negated and a real time vision system were to be formulated?

Tamasha infused himself into the world. Nature itself became a prototype for the new synthetic vision system. This vision system had no place for redundancy and familiarity. There was no active process of ageing anymore. Everything was always seen for the first time because abstractions were baked into the surface of the world itself. There was no code that also did not teach the onlooker how to decode it with the right tools and with sufficient time. These tools were purely a hardware specification and not experience or intelligence.

Everything had become ready to pop at a moment's notice. This popping was recursive and not a singular event. If pop is all and all is pop, depth is denied.

## **Chilli-flakes**

Chilli stings. It does to the taste palette what the pinch does to the skin. A moment of excoriating of the frontal layer of experience. Some people like chilli, some don't. Some actually valorise the consumption of bland food for spiritual reasons. There is only one

thing to understand actually, all else is either fear or a lack of courage.

That thing is that chilli is Tamasha. Or to look at it another way, Tamasha is chilli (also).

In the moment that chilli stings, a disruption of experience occurs. A transition from track A to track B. This is valuable. In storytelling or rather experience, breaking out and breaking in are the biggest struggles. After this is done, cruising along itself is not so difficult.

Tamasha floods the buffer and breaks out. It always helps in the transition of experience if a given episode is truly a Tamasha and not a mimicry of one, nor a simulation.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. We moved from knowing Tamasha as the name of a person to Tamasha as a kind of experience that dazzles. The word literally means something close to the meaning of spectacle. We did get carried away with this connection, between the name and its meaning. Forgetting for a moment that when a word is accepted as a name, it can't be read as a word with a meaning anymore. A name is an identifier. Identifiers are not semantic.

Let's go back.

Tamasha was sitting by the canal on a sunny patch of grass when a salesman with chilli-flakes came unto him and made an offer. Initially Tamasha was apprehensive, because in the cultural climate he had grown up in, he had heard only chauvinistic things about chilli. And chauvinism did not attract Tamasha, so he was not interested in chilli. But this salesman offered a new perspective.

He came from a very old school of chefs from Egypt and for him chilli was the root ingredient (and so the root taste) of liberation. He explained that eating chilli facilitated the lubrication of

the mind. In a well-lubricated mind the theatre of the world has nothing to do with the theatre of the mind. Experience is an onanism.

When chilli is eaten, the channels communicating sensation to the mind explode. The mind is filled with the heat of the chilly-eating and every other phrase of thought gets disrupted. This radical disruption forces the channels to form again, and when anything is done again, it is done with some insight into the constraints and failure of the previous time.

When these channels are freshly formed, their capacity is expanded. This expanded capacity is like seeing more wavelengths of time than before, it is like thinking more the before. Any narrative is dangerous. Any continuity that implies a progression or a regression has the potential to be misread.

With this expanded capacity of perception the spectacle cannot be ignored anymore. This persistence of spectacle is called tamasha. And it is not a name, not a property, not another word that splits hair over a small detail with the words already in existence.

Chilli aids perception.

Time is slow. Intensity hastens the pace of time. This pace is all that registers. And any experience which alters the nature of this abstraction is effecting our experience. That is all that we are saying here.

How did I become a We? Voices make themselves evident and all singularities are busted. All singularities multiply. Stories become believable only when they become a jumble, a bunch of interwoven threads that they can no longer be seen as fiction.

Isolated threads of isolated stories are never absorbed.

The chilli of experience, the sting of time has to be taken head-on. Escape is not an endpoint. Tamasha knows that he is a critical

force to be balanced for any experience to register. Any condition to consider for experience to be registered has to be in place already. There is no room for improvisation. There cannot be anything to do. Nothing is worth getting distracted from the haze of the runtime.

When we started tracking the analogy of chilli for the registration of experience, we realised the potential of fable. The spectacle is a maze which only has waypoints but no guides. There are waypoints for everything, the choice is made by the historicity of our experience. We are a pattern and a pattern that is growing on its own. Although everything is on auto-pilot, the accidental deviations need to be triggered. The triggers cannot be auto-produced in the narrative that the actors are present. The waypoints become the triggers.

Experience is a compilation of narrative and triggered episodes.

Tamasha acknowledges the role that chilli performs as a trigger.

He mandates chilli as an ingredient of all food.

Food cultures of the world reform to fulfil the mandate. People start eating as a way to manipulate their narrative instead of eating just to wallow in the taste.

A kind of reverse psychosis process was born. Chefs controlled the palette of experience that could be triggered by food. They became very powerful.

Chillies attained a currency value for exchange.

Sacks of chilli were sacks of money. Chefs acted like bankers to control this value.

One day, Tamasha was on a journey around the land and it was late at night. He was so hungry that he could not wait to go back home to eat.

He knocked on a random door on the highway and asked for food. Now, the stranger who opened the door for Tamasha didn't

know what to say. The first thing that Tamasha said when he saw the stranger's face was, "I am hungry." Tamasha assumed that everyone must know the symbolic reference system within which they lay suspended. Tamasha assumed that the myths that actualised life were known.

But Tamasha was wrong. This stranger who opened the door for him that night did not know anything. He did not recognise Tamasha from the tingling that was produced in his skin by Tamasha's presence. This tingling was the same as the resonant frequency of his dreams. But he was not aware.

He did not offer food to a Tamasha. He refused.

Because Tamasha was dependent on chilli to moderate his experience, this event of denial was very harsh for him. A bigger blow to him was perhaps the failure of this stranger to recognise him as one of the mythical beings that inhabited his own dreams.

Tamasha was depressed that day.

So depressed that he gave up. He gave up his struggle to try and make things appear to be even-keyed and logical within a narrative system. He withdrew and succumbed to his slumber for a few hundred years.

The ages that actors spent in trying to unravel experience were wasted because Tamasha did not get enough chilli flakes.

## **Dance**

When Tamasha met the woman, he was convinced. The woman in question was Climax and she was possessed by a dancer named Disaster.

Being possessed by a dancer meant that she was dancing all the time. If she was happy she danced and if she was not happy she danced too. Dance was Disaster's way of getting through. Be-



cause Climax was not a so-called cultured woman, she was allowed to be possessed by a spirit. Else she would just have to be bottled-up and sad. Because culture does not allow outlets. You cannot step out and you cannot plan for alternatives.

So she did not speculate. She just gave in to the moment (not that giving in is a choice, but the theatre of resistance offers more agony). She did not want to suffer so she danced. She did not know how to listen so she danced.

Voices have a property. They have a unique quality that registers. This registration cannot be denied, but cannot be specifically understood either. On possession, whatever an actor does is scripted by the voice. This is a direct correlation.

So Climax knew that she was possessed by Disaster.

Disaster herself had a long story. She died dancing. She was shot in the chest. She was dancing with her lover. But her lover was taboo. She was dancing with Shiva himself. Loving God was treacherous. It was not permitted.

Because of her taboo act, she was ostracised. Being ostracised is like death. You cannot speak to anyone and no one can speak to you. In this isolation, Disaster decided to haunt Climax.

Disaster started enjoying this so much that she started doing more of it, she started having a relationship of possession with multiple bodies. She understood herself more and more. She learnt about herself through the bodies which she haunted.

She didn't haunt just women but also men and children. Anyone could be Disaster. She glided through the bodies of people. She started connecting deeply with the desire to dance that lay buried deep in the fabric of people's personas.

Connection with these desires led to a unique opportunity for Disaster. As desire is a fragment of experience, through extrapolation, she could reverse engineer experience itself. This reverse

engineering was so complete that the world in which Disaster existed became entirely self-referential. In this self-referential world, desire sometimes broke free from its trigger and became an illusory type of content, free floating and amorphous. These free floating elements, became distracting fragments of reality and set people off-course.

Disaster grew fond of her passage through the fragmented landscapes of desire. She expressed this fondness back through dance also. The dance that she performed was whimsical and playful. It inspired images of a wrestling match with the self, a quagmire of conflict with one's own shadow. When she possessed Climax, she stopped caring for her own future. She had always had a bundle of empathy towards her own future. After a point she hoped to get her body back. She wanted to trick the cycle of life and death itself. The ethics of the cycle did not mean anything to her. What is the ethics of death? Death is an archival system. It keeps track of everyone who is not alive. But once you are a part of its index, there is no way of erasing your record. Because the past and the future are opposing forms of narrative, there is no possibility of reversal. Once a body leaves the perimeter of pragmatic reality and it is registered as a dead body, then either it disappears or it remains floating as an artefact of consciousness. The narrative point at which death strikes is decisive factor. Either the story matters or it doesn't. For Disaster, the story always mattered. And her story needed her to dance.

As a dancer, some of her best performances had been through Climax. Climax lived in a suspended state. She allowed Disaster to float in and out of her body. She allowed Disaster to do pretty much whatever she wanted to do. There was no script that she was trying to adhere to.

Climax lived at the margins of believable narrative. Sometimes she was like a soccer ball without air and sometimes she was a flute through which air was becoming music.

Climax was related to Tamasha in a rather oblique way. This relation was not known by people at large. But when Tamasha walked on the streets with his gang, playing the fool with subtlety and sobriety, people point fingers at him and said that, "there goes the dancer's parallel narrative."

Because of her proximity to the most popular story, she was seen as a privileged operator and was given the right of way. She didn't demand a preferential treatment, but it was offered to her nonetheless. This also meant that she was judged more than the average haunted body. When she stood in a queue at the temple, to take the umpteenth round of blessings which would supposedly cure her state of possession, she felt a very strong resistance to the idea of being cured. This resistance was a refusal of the return - going back to a life in which she could not dance. In which her limbs had actually frozen for some strange reason, they did not move no matter how much she cajoled them. When dance was not on her mind, she could move her limbs just fine. When it came to dance, she only knew what she had witnessed via Disaster's occupation of her body.

Disaster had become an inspiration to Crises. Both never spoke to each other, though. They never even had indirect conversations in which they addressed each other.

Tamasha knew of what was happening only through common friends, family and heresy. Tamasha knew of the high esteem in which Crises held Disaster and he was not very happy with it. One evening he came to meet Crises and told her everything that he knew about Disaster's weaknesses and how she had a history of maliciousness - especially towards her host. But instead of

drawing Crises away from Disaster, it only drew her more towards her. She was stuck in a notion that dance is a magical state and that it cannot be scripted. She understood dance to be an expression of trauma, unhinged from all narrative and unkempt in every way.

Crises died the next day. Nobody knew why. Tamasha suspected that Disaster and Crises decided to part ways for some reason and Crises could no longer live without dance and so she died.

## Batasha

Batasha is a technical consultant for the company that runs the fleet of drones used for surveillance. He was on the other side of the fence. He knew Tamasha only as an outlaw, as an element of disturbance, distortion and percolation of the message.

Batasha, as well as others in the system saw their message as a pristine and distinct transmission from the control unit. Any change in the message was seen as opposition. Because this message was perfectly encoded to capture incident minds and bind them forever, any change in the message was seen as a weakness. The transmission media that the system used was transparent. Being transparent, the flood of light that fogged the channels became an aid in the training of the message to become tolerant to noise. This tolerance to noise allowed the transparent cables to gloss over the registration of any noise that was encountered. So material hiccups and the noise of vibration was largely ignored.

So Tamasha was seen as an outlaw of an order that was hell-bent on control. There were numerous efforts to assassinate him,

undermine him, malign him. But nothing worked. They could never get him. They remained in pursuit.

Tamasha was always in the eye of surveillance. Although all his actions are known, his motives were a mystery. Why did Tamasha court attention? Why did Tamasha not attempt to cover his tracks?

Batasha and his colleagues worked to keep things the same. They did not like change. And they did not like the spectacular events capturing attention in a way that the linearity of memory itself got disrupted. In a world which was not balanced, the balance between the forces in support and those in opposition balanced each other.

Batasha lived a very measured and disciplined life. He woke up at dawn, did physical exercises in the morning and had sex with an animal immediately afterwards. He did the latter because he followed tantrik teachings on regulating his sexual energy. Such regulation supposedly helped in regulating the potency of his presence and in the clarity of his thoughts. He powered himself with an unwavering rigidity that was inspiring and sensuous for the masses. He followed the progress of science and technology in the world and in a small basement lab, he had a collection of such objects. In his personal time, he played with these objects and imagined the glorious future of the world.

Tamasha was the only irritant. In his collection of objects, weapons which could kill abstract images with the same felicity as physical bodies were featured prominently. Day and night he thought of ways to exterminate Tamasha. There was no shortage of henchmen, but there was a fault in the process, there was something missing in the approach. Tamasha was not one individual with one vulnerable body, he was a catalyst of sorts. He was protected by all the bodies who basked in his light. To destroy

him also meant destroying the Climax and destroying the dance she exhibited, so it also meant destroying Disaster. And these were all very difficult things.

So Batasha learnt to tolerate the corruption of the message that Tamasha represented. He talked his militant organisation to stop hunting for a flux that no one could put their finger on. A flux that was transient, light and unpredictable. As no one wanted to capture Tamasha anymore, he became a part of the construct that upheld the world. He came to symbolise the negative space of the message. Narrative that had no shape, density that had no form.

Batasha was the reward of disciplined narrative. This reward was accessible only by the actor who did not crave for adventure. In the absence of adventure lay only the predictability of the known and mapped. When Tamasha became institutionalised as the negative space of Batasha, a flitting in and out of the decorum of narrative became possible. There was room for manoeuvring.

Besides this, accommodating the actor's swiftly changing mood and the need to hide and drift away was addressed. The need to drift away is produced by numerous factors. For one, the commitment to fixed positions (the opposite of the urge to drift) is not so easy. Batasha has a tendency to be fragmented in his pattern of dispersal. This fragmentation is sometimes seen as having a bias for and sometimes against. A particular actor in the scene will sometimes feel that it is favoured and sometimes it will feel ignored. But the truth is that the dispersal of reward has nothing to do with the actor. The actor is inconsequential. The function of the inconsequential actor is to play its part relentlessly and not let its tempo break because of any perceived deficit. From the perspective of the Batasha, it did not matter who got the reward or who didn't. The rewarding process just needs to have a pre-

dictable pattern and that it has for sure. There was no problem that needed fixing.

This faultless state of affairs was the fixed narrative that actors drifted away from in their moment of restlessness. When Batasha woke up in the morning, he witnessed the world in a state of harmony. Everything seemed to be in its place and there seemed no cause for worry. All the restless elements gravitated naturally towards the wayward narrative. Towards Tamasha but only for some time. The harmony searched for a reward and the restlessness searched for spectacle.

In the pristine world of Batasha, there was no noise, and no echo. He had companions but they were idle and nothing much happened in their life. They offered only platitudes of dull, prosaic enactments and did not cater to any desire for entertainment.

These companions were Plateau and Tone. Plateau was known for blankly staring out at the world and Tone was known for making mundane sounds. When Plateau met anyone, he just looked through them. He was not excitable. He did not even register any event that happened around him. He glided through everything without being effected in any way.

Tone produced mundane sounds without betraying any emotion. He passed along the urban trails, absorbing everything but responding back only by monotonous, mundane sounds. He was like a sonic black hole. He did not betray any response.

## **The Reward**

The reward that Batasha offers is not one that guarantees long-lasting peace and satisfaction. It is a temporary calm, a trailer of a higher order of experience. But then what is the real thing? What

is the higher reward that is being signified everywhere? And can that higher reward be achieved within the idea of this mortal life?

What Batasha offers is like a brief buzz. It is like intoxication, a high. After every high is a low. After every low is a question about the state of the world. Batasha encourages questioning. Questioning takes people towards Tamasha. Questions help in scraping off the dry crust off the wound. The wounds inflicted as a result of living within a constrained narrative.

With every bit of crust that gets scraped off, a spectacle is arranged. With each scraping, there is a new influx of experience. Feelings never felt, thoughts never modelled. This novelty runs out of bounds for the sensorium and this running out of bounds is registered as a sensation, a tamasha.

Batasha likes to offer these temporary nuggets of experiences because a brief taste of the thrill is a good intoxicant and a good bait to capture the aspirations of those rewarded in this way.

The reward is like a trailer. It is a sampler.

This sampler always works. This guarantee might actually be against the idea of samplers but the statistics hold. It always works. This happens because of the way memory operates. Once an experience has been remembered as an exemplar, one that is fulfilling in every way, it is difficult to forget it. This permanent memory refuses to die away and this urge to remain fresh in conscious memory also disallows the formation of new templates of experiences. This disallowance forces people to slow down and set the frame-rate of experience really low. Low frame-rate changes the threshold of narrative. What never made sense before, now makes sense in a very intense way. Intensity is not the only rudder, things fluctuate with the winds of time, to the glory of attention and the tingling of eyes at the back of the neck.

A reward that fades is like no reward at all.



Rewards that fade are infected by the blitz of the graphologists. Graphologists wait for the inscriptions to happen on the surface of time and then once the inscriptions are done - they analyse the forms of the inscription and attempt to infer meaning from it.

Batasha was standing on the ground, wearing shorts, sports shoes and jogging in place as if warming up for the big play-off. The big game was about to start and there was excitement and cheer in the air. This was the game of charades. Each player in the game, eager to play a role. The players were conscious of the audience and want to put up a good show. This self-consciousness of the players is eating away into their joy. The players who are not joyful do not play optimally. Batasha knew this as the captain of the game, above both teams. He stood for the idea of a good game. The idea of the good game stated that both the sides would try their best at each point in the game to win. Any hesitation on that front immediately punctured the adventurous experience of watching a story unravel in real time.

This puncture was like breaking of the illusion. A rather violent and undesirable kind-of event.

So Batasha was very particular about breaking the trap of self-conscious emotion. The emotion prevented immersion in the present and had nothing but noise value. Like rust. Like creakiness in the machinery. This noise is deterrence to enjoyment. From a game if enjoyment of any kind is to be derived, it has to be played well. It is an all or none scenario. There is no scope for any middle-ground.

But what did he have in mind as a solution?

In a given game if you want to be unaware about the act of playing, you need to be absent from the scene. Only if you are absent, you will be oblivious to the layer of ongoing experience that has the tingling of self-conscious sensations embedded within it.

How to be present and absent at the same time? How to manage sensitivity and hesitation at the same time?

This is the dilemma that Batasha is trying to resolve.

How to remain within the bounds of regulated narrative and be magically forthright at the same time?

How to be fluid and rigid at the same time?

This question is very important. It can help in perusing the resolution of the pragmatic model of dance itself. How would dance be represented in the form of linear equation?

Dance is a format of communication that requires both Tamasha and Batasha to collaborate and inscribe together. If they do not work together, then only part of the picture is known.

When Crises gets to know Disaster via dance, the music is being performed by Batasha. The rhythm is being counted by Batasha. This calculative tendency, this urge to complete the pattern and to constantly gather the strains of time into webbed canopies for narrative to nest itself in is Batasha's true virtue.

Batasha never manages to resolve the situation completely. The players of the game manage to lose self-consciousness. But they do not manage to keep sight of the fact that they have to play to win. They act like listless players, trapped in the bounds of narrative logic. Listless players float about the scene having no intent and no desire. These zombies are not decisive enough to change the momentum of the field but they are noisy enough to generate a hum. This hum is a sign of turmoil on the ground. When the ground is tumultuous, the movement of air and sentiments in the atmosphere is not consistent and air pockets begin to take shape that constrict the flow. This constriction remains the lingering flavour of the land of Batasha.

## Nectar

The reward only represents the nectar. Of course as culture survives on deprivation, the nectar is inaccessible. What remains difficult to access, gets mythologised and spun into yarns.

These yarns are made up of material that is only an aggregate of bad guesses and assumptions. Nobody bothers to even attempt to verify.

That's exactly how loose the narrative has become.

Because of Batasha's monopoly on the reward and so on the nectar, people assume that they have to live in lack.

A musician discovered that there is another choice. The musician discovered that through performance, the same nectar can be realised without any need to negotiate the right of way with Batasha.

This musician was called Beej and he had discovered a way of producing music that allowed him to be continuously vigilant to his urge. With this vigilance, he responded to every episode of his urge that he could. And with this jurisprudence, he discovered that he had more time on his hands than he had assumed.

He was just making a lot of good music.

He was making so much good music that after a point he was only able to keep track of the movement of the melody and not its nature. Because of this he was able to respond to shifts in the pattern of emergence but not the matter that emerged.

This inability on his part led to a situation where he could not hear the music the he himself performed. Everyone else could hear the music. They could share the narratives of the music, memories of the music. But the musician still remained cut off from his own music. Now as Batasha was not interested in anyone being able to access the reward at all, he tried to bring interference into this casual spillover of sound. Batasha filtered the

sound at source, he made sure that the pattern of melody had gotten distorted by the time it was heard by everyone else. He did not allow any safe passage. He was interested in doing this because in the spirit of automatically produced content is hidden the address of the nectar. If the naked song of the musician was heard by the people, they would have accessed the nectar. And know of the reward. And know that he had made it inaccessible. This was a secret and Batasha did not want the reward to be questioned and investigated. He did not want any extra attention or censure on his reward structures.

This noise that he added to the spontaneously emitted music was like encryption. It obscured the surface of the music. And through this obscurity, the musician as well as the the idle audience couldn't figure out anything. The musician's self-image was of a jingle maker, someone concerned with just catchy tunes and sound meant for easy listening. The musician has never understood his own value in the plot. So self-image is also a kind of fiction. It exerts a frictional force on experience. Experience is what is transpired in spite of who everyone thinks they are. The smoothest experience is for the actors who do not have any self-image, who at best only have a blurred impression of themselves.

In this environment the surgeon and the philosopher know only one thing and that is that nothing can be accepted at face-value. When the musician meets the philosopher and introduces himself as a jingle maker, the philosopher is naturally apprehensive. He counters this introduction by an attempt to listen to the musician's music as if it were classical in nature. Very patiently, letting long passages pass before he expected any repeat or a completion of a pattern. The philosopher found that mishearing the music yielded him some clues to what might be hidden. He figured that a decryption exercise and that too without any help from a com-

puter and only processed through hearing would take a good long time.

He set out to perform this by first developing a long term memory. Pop is produced by two things, small phrasal repetitions in the rhythmic structure and a short-term memory. The short-term memory reads for the repetitive signals and if none exist it introduces the artefact of reading by reading ghost signals in the bit-stream. The production of the phrasal repetitions is only marginally important.

So when the philosopher developed a long term memory and the patience to ignore all the short term signals and search only for longer pulses. This enhanced listening technique yields instant results for the philosopher. The results are instant and not long-term because in listening, only the first moment of patience is important. Once the ear of the philosopher trips into the first phrase of construction, instantly the elongated process of hearing starts. This breaks the stranglehold of Batasha's encryption. This shatters the spell of pop instantly.

The nectar is now exposed. It is available for mass access. And now the only narrative ploy that needs to unravel is the question of transmitting this access to everyone. And this is done through the demonstration of syrup. If the syrup is sweet, the nectar has been accessed. And a responsibility towards relentless access as well as a continuous theatre propagates the news of this breach, this accessing of the nectar in spite of Batasha's barricades, to everyone.

After a point people start wondering why everyone is so happy. And then they start investigating.

On investigation they figure out that the leak has sprung and now life can take on an entirely new form.

The nectar spread into the veins of civilisation then and and neutered the tide of disappointment and plainness.

Batasha had to accept defeat and retreated from the field for the moment. He decided to mount another attack at the pirates who had smuggled access to the precious nectar. Take anything valuable and make it available to everyone, it is not valuable anymore. The idea of value is based on scarcity.

Batasha started thinking of ways to control access to the nectar again. Ways to enforce the web of encryption again.

## Light

The world was already corrupted. Batasha was not sufficient any more to balance Tamasha. So the world was in a state of imbalance. The imbalance offered the world an opportunity to shuffle things around and change the position of things. This possibility was a moment of play for the suppressed elements. These elements now occupied places that they had never imagined that they could occupy. They occupied these positions of power with a certain discomfort. They knew that they were too rough to easily carry off the sophisticated images that they were wearing. But there was impatience and stubbornness in the air.

This mood did not change. Imagine a swarm of monkeys clamouring for attention but still escaping on approach. Hold on to this imagination. It will help you approximate the mood of the suppressed elements.

Who were these suppressed elements?

What were their aspirations?

These suppressed elements were the actors consumed by anger. These angry actors were turned away by the calm and polished actors. They were turned away many many times. Turned away

from the dinner table, from the feast, from the public celebration, from the public display of faith.

Being rejected so often led to a certain angst. This angst dictated that when they would finally be able to lay a stake on their place in the sun, they would set this record straight.

So now in the disturbed world, in the confusion they captured the podium. On the podium they first declared supremacy of their ilk. They ridiculed and discredited the self-delusional aristocrats and the poets, dreamers and other fine-folk. They tried to root out all the support bases of imagination and narrative drift and offered a lens of pragmatic benefit to weigh the importance of everything.

This lens showed the capacity of pragmatic contribution as value and the webs of self-obsessed fantasy as a wasteful burden on the nation's economy. Of course the economy is only a programme with quantifiable attributes and it does not reflect the quality of people's lives. The economy is only an umbrella concept which falsifies the state of the field by offering data that reflects a configurable model of the world. This model of the world is essentially a leak. It offers us only a fraction of what all there is. Thinking of the economy and making connections with factors that impact it is essentially an exercise in witchcraft. The economy is an abstraction. The transition of the economy cannot be attributed to anything. Abstractions are only meant to be points of reference.

So when the suppressed elements took over, and when they ridiculed the bodies with an obscure vision of the world based on their contribution to the economy, they essentially engaged in mindless violence. This mindless violence was vengeful. But vengefulness was to be expected. That is not a narrative element that is special. This element is mentioned here only because the

vengefulness that erupted here went on to develop into an emotion that led Aba to fall in love with Kua.

How did that happen?

The distaste with which the suppressed elements ticked off the juvenile delinquents of propriety was indeed very violent. But it brought together very odd sets of people. It shuffled up the narrow confines of social cliques and communes and essentially destroyed the notion of the class which knows. There was no more anything like an intellectual circuit powering society. The bringing together, the shuffle punctured all the bubbles.

In the outhouse of the city, huddled together by a mistake or a chance were Aba and Kua. Now, Aba and Kua would normally have never met each other. Aba was a professor's son and Kua was an activist's granddaughter. But Aba was trying to break free of the ropes that held him together and Kua was trying to find a scaffolding that would hold her firm. In the sequence of narrative justice they were a perfect match. Aba and Kua managed to escape the duality of for and against, the enclosed and the forsaken. They went their own way. They lived like primitive apes at the edge of civilisation and they died in each other's arms. But they had a reason to be thankful to the new order. They would never have met each other if the old world had continued. The earlier narrative had to end for a new one to begin. In the years that they lived they celebrated the new order. But that was not enough to allow them back in the folds of the world. Their eyes still reflected the smoke of dreams and the mischief of laughter. They were ostracised.

This jumbling up of the world was celebrated by the outsiders of the earlier circuit too. They felt that now that the bubble had burst, no one would be able to bask in the glory of controlled fireworks anymore. The envy of the community that had to stand



outside the glass door and stare in reflected in the witch-hunt that ensued. They became converts, turncoats for whom the nihilism was as pleasuring as it was for the new overlords. They became the inadvertent trophies of the regime - "We have so many painters of diffused sunsets on our side, those who are criticising us are either dead or biased or both. We do not have any shades of black in our persona. We are angel dust."

Thus the long tradition of thinking was broken. Those in power changed the way education worked across the country. Liberal ideas and principles were replaced with a vacuum. The capacity to see anything from a distance, see its ramifications modelled as a story and do the needful was lost. Pragmatism ruled and became the single most important pillar of logic.

In a way which cannot be called anything but funny, the disturbance and chaos that had allowed the suppressed elements to take control subsided because of this cloud of pragmatism. The power of these elements subsided. When the memory of failure stares into the face of success, the momentum of angst gives away.

Again the world was at the brink of disaffection, and no amount of the politics of fear, confusion, doubt helped. People turned away from the rabble rousing bastions of progress. They figured that with everything else being alright now, they needed some song and dance. They went on a desperate hunt for the dreamers, for the farmers of night soil. But they found only corpses. They found only hollow, exhausted bodies. They found only spent hope and extinguished vision.

In that moment they realised what the progress that they were celebrating was at the cost of. They shed tears, but it did not help. They mourned, but it did not help. They could not turn back time and they had to live for a long time without any cheer.

## Void

The void is the bracket of inconsolable time in which Tamasha and Batasha both lost their way. When their inability to counter each other ushered in the new order that stripped the world of lyric and melody, they resigned their positions. They decided to rift and drift. They could not balance the polarities of the world and hold it in balance anymore.

When both of them got lost, they started spending a lot of time together. They got united. The world in which Tamasha and Batasha were united was very confused. Confusion is a short-circuiting, a unity of polarities.

In this confused world, the delusion that led everyone astray was that of emptiness. Everything seemed to be hollow, there was no mass, no content, no containment in anything. In this empty world, people were sad. They were nostalgic of the times when figures and concepts occupied the emptiness. The time when the voids were filled.

A sadness hung in the air then. This sadness mourned the loss of content and volume. But this mourning was not very intense because everyone knew that they had to come back to the cold shoulder of a void. There was no point in getting lost in grief, if there was no possibility of recovery anymore. The new production that transpired evaporated immediately. It did not stick. It did not enter the course of narrative and history. The void was very divisive. It was like a non-stick pan. There was no possibility of any emergence anymore. Because emergence happens out of stacks of accumulation and accumulation is constructed from a layering of material. And layering had stopped.

The stark flatness of the void was almost blinding.

With the blinding nature of the environment, no vision remained anymore. Every perspective went bust.

A monopoly of the narratives of the world took over. This monopoly was clear and sparse as it was isolated and singular. In its singularity it could offer only what the world already had. And that was the emptiness.

This daze filled the air and all the pores of the world. Out of this daze, a monotonous hum sounded out. From this hum rose up an entirely new world.

Because the source was empty, even if the new world had semblances of content, they all added up to nothing. It was a zero sum. And this zero was just a reflection of the void again.

In this world what mattered was the facility of illusion. How can emptiness hide itself? How can the virtualisation of content be achieved in a form that neither the sign nor the signified have any possibility of being realised?

As Tamasha and Batasha had already gone wayward and resigned their positions, this new world was modelled without any polarities. It did not have any directional forces acting on its apparitions, it did not have any hemispheres. In this plain spherical world, even gravity was a deceit. It was only a rule that was followed because there was no other choice. The new world was a hall of mirrors filled with illusory bodies.

In this world it was very easy to do anything. The facade of illusion and the simulated world that it led to meant that to reflect and suggest served as disinhibiting zones and there was more free speech and spontaneous action than we can imagine. This made the world believable.

The shadows which called themselves people in this new world felt very free. They were productive and transparent and never hampered in style. And this free-flow of delirium and content filled the world. The aggregate of the world was zero but still the illusory shadows of the world immersed themselves in the con-

tent. The content couldn't possibly amount to anything because amounting to something would have disturbed the stability and stillness of the zero.

Zero held the world captive.

Culture which developed out of this hollow simulated content was shallow and without any density or potential but it still had the trappings of mystique, message and validity. This dichotomy was easy to understand but invisible from everyone.

The only way for zero to move to a one was the reconciliation of Tamasha and Batasha and their willingness to resume the assumption of polarities.

And this was a very difficult task because there was no one to do the job.

As far as Tamasha and Batasha went, they were just waiting for someone to ask them to come back. They were feeling ignored and awkward.

They had had enough of being lost and wanted to come back into prominence and disturb the control of zero.

The right person for this job was hidden within the tumultuous personas of Tamasha and Batasha. This hidden person was not a person to be taken lightly just because he had no body. The ghost was complete without a body. It was in a perfect state of balance. There was nothing lacking.

This ghost was the only link between the polar opposites of Tamasha and Batasha. When something in Tamasha's mind moved Batasha felt the twitch too because of this ghostly connection.

As if consciously programmed, both Tamasha and Batasha simultaneously rose and came back to assume their positions. Because of their ghost-assisted synchronous action, the world slowly

came back to its base state. The simulated sequence that had emerged from the zero vanished.

Everything seemed to be the same as it was before. But the dynamics between the two poles had changed. Instead of role-playing the hunter and the hunted they became aware of their interdependence and learnt to collaborate. Polarities do not necessarily need to be opposite; they can also be a part of a tactical plan to balance a force. It can be seen as the delegation of responsibility also.

In the world that was balanced anew, there was no flip side. Stories did not have to carry around the mirror opposite of their narrative. No balance needed to be struck because there was collaboration across the board. There was no absolute anymore, everything was realised to be a dirty shade of grey.