

Missed Opportunities

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Intimacy

To crave for intimacy is to want to consciously reduce your options. There are some of you who are dissatisfied with the array of options out there vying for your attention. Options require choice. Choice demands a firm belief in game-play, in the fact that even if your choice is nullified by meta-dynamics eventually, it does matter, If only as a ritualistic act. Because rituals are like triggers in a game. Rituals are the buttons, the levers. If they are not performed the gameplay or rather your participation in the gameplay does not further. So resistance is not a pause button of course but it does create bumps and jolts in the otherwise smooth texture of game world highways.

For believers in the heroic virtue of individualistic action, choice is fodder for action that fabricates history. Choice is the test where individuals prove their mettle. Choice is also tiring, punishing and unforgiving. For a moment if you think that the significance of doing x, y or z in a particular situation is so expanded that it actually directs the course of your life, you will freeze and you will not be able to respond from the

facility of your sensitive body. You will only be able to process the choice and your available options on the basis of your analytical and logical faculty. And then your life will remain in that mould forever. The days of laughter and paper planes and nonchalance will be over. Identification is a key hurdle to pass. If you can choose without thinking, be automatic and be responsive like a loaded gun, then choice is a fair game to play else it is a self-destructive phenomenon.

To experience intimacy you have to choose. You have to narrow down your preference for human company to a very few. And in this narrowing down, in this choice you show your hand. Why is it worth analysing human eco-systems to understand subjects? Because they reflect choices. If we see where you live, if we see whom you live with, it tells us everything we need to know about you. It lets us paint a picture of you in our heads. A picture that is complete, faultless and clear. We can then simulate you in our heads and project plot points in the future before they unravel.

So intimacy is not possible without exposure.

And intimacy is still desired.

So it is a risk.
In a story there needs to
be an internal logic for
a particular risk to be
taken. Either the risk
represents some shift in the
psychological landscape of
the subject and is necessary
to be established or it is
the outburst of a long-
suppressed desire.

For us it is a missed
opportunity.

Think of what might have been
if intimacy was a casual
sport, if it were more of
noise than signal. It would
have been so obscure as a
source of information about
a given subject that it would
have gone into a space of
dense statistical analysis to
be meaningful at all.

Then casual intimacy would
have been the norm rather
than a symptom of perversion.
Now, that scenario is a
fantasy. The possibility
of intimacy is like a gun
loaded with blanks, an empty
promise.

Taxis

Taxis ferry bodies from point A to B. on every transport, there is something left behind. The taxi drivers survive on the arbitrary resale of the stray items left behind.

We are not talking about suitcases or handbags or laptops. We are talking about thinking bodies. We are talking about stories which are dreamt and then forgotten on the back seats of random taxis plying on city streets.

Conversations are struck and then left hanging, left incomplete. These conversations develop deep, dark hearts and become pathogenic viruses. These viruses disturb the calm of ordinariness which taxis allow at first. Taxis then become like haunted spaces. These haunts can neither be documented, nor archived, they can just be enjoyed. They can be frequently robbed of their secret thrills and be left vegetating in the same condition as they were found.

As public mail-boxes that anyone can empty and anyone can leave a message at, taxis still manage to retain a distinct flavour. Just like all streets do not feel the same even though they could,

taxis move all around, carry people of different auras across and still manage to develop a character of their own.

Air is thin and the cocoons that exist above each locality in the city could have been punctured and the air could have gotten mixed together and become generic. But it did not. The cocoons remained intact and each locality retained its ethic. The cocoons remained intact and each taxi retained its own distinct haunt.

Because this happened, taxis became the site where people's ordinary lives got extraordinary jolts. The haunts started haunting the passengers traveling in the taxis. When this happened, things from here got mixed up with things from there and an exchange of great potential started happening. This exchange became the spike in the graph in people's lives. This spike became the source of worry for priests, magicians and witch-doctors everywhere. Because these spokes ignored their charms, spells and cures. These spikes seemed to be totally unexplained and random.

The academia and the media treated these spikes as the signs of correlation between learning, publishing and performance. They started

spinning rumours about the ultimate validation of education and culture by these spikes. The truth has been something else altogether, of course.

The truth has been that the taxis plying in the city have been responsible for these spikes. For the revolutionary and unexplained nature of transformation in citizens' life.

Taxis could have had the hallowed position in society today that universities and media outlets occupy. But they do not. Today, taxis are just sites of missed opportunities.

Stigma

Stigma acts as an identifier for people for knowing things that they should not know. And where is the boundary, where is the line that demarcates knowledge in these terms? That line will never be found because it has not been drawn. Drawing is a wilful act that needs to be done with utmost attention to detail. All humans were created only to be able to draw a certain number of lines and after that their minds and their ability to think straight jumbles up, gets warped and forever only thinks in terms of closure. They strive to only complete drawings, even the ones which have become impossible to be deciphered because of their inherent chaos. While completing drawings, they do not think twice about the communicative role of their pen touching paper. They do not try to say anything, they just make sure that there is nothing incomplete, no open loop capturing their life and rendering it benign.

When they do this, when they stop drawing, stigma develops. So stigma develops after the ability to draw a line clearly demarcating itself from other characteristic descriptors. This is the void that is the source of all mystery.

The ability to insulate the idea of oneself from all possible discussions. But still these ideas, these characteristics become fodder for social interactions and culture, they treat them as clear categories which are somewhere defined in absolute terms. The stigma becomes only a mode to propel oneself towards absolution from responsibility and accountability. If niceness is not going to be imposed on us, if social propriety is not going to be a constraint, we can do anything. And that is what we want. But we have to deal with the additional burden of stigma on our shoulders and manage to grind it away to become a dull stub that nobody points to but always remember. And that absurdity we live with.

When we meet strangers, they know nothing about us but they know about our stigma. Stigma has a mystique, which by. It's very association allows the tagging of multiple stories to our name, it is like a license for free association, free yarn-spinning, fantasy. The stigma-tainted are like storybook demons, they manage to be as bad as they need to be, they have to offer what the plot demands.

Inside us, in our minds, there is sometimes a dialog that has us think

of ourselves in dismissive terms. But it never works, the flip side of stigma is shamelessness. We have no personal identification with our stigma, we wear it on our sleeve and when we want to wish it away, everything becomes just a bit more blurred. This shamelessness dismisses stigma as another speck of idle dust. Nothing is able to puncture our steam. Nothing is able to tire us. We operate as automatic streams, insulated from all elements of noise.

Stigma questions our absolute hold over the flux in our minds. It suggests that external perspectives of our self matter when they don't. Stigma carry the world in which it is defined. Systems of social norms, conventions are often the objects of carriage but familial codes, honour and standards which we hold ourselves against might equally well be carried by these stigma. But we hold ourselves against nothing and we do not accept any messages that carry potent missiles of stigma as we do not understand the systems that define it. We are bestowed stigma freely by the world on its own accord but we do not accept it. This creates noise in the way we read ourselves and the way others read us. But this dissonance is filtered by us by a simple refusal to engage with any

entities that do not match us in our self-perception. If you have a different perspective of us than we ourselves do, we have nothing to talk about.

Stigma has a successful run with porous personas which do not have a robustness and stability. But these personas and their noisy, volatile passage through this world as it is vulnerable to a lethal incident at any time. Only sufficiently insulated people get the luxury of eventually perishing with time, wearing out their bones and spirit slowly on the grindstone of time.

Stigma could have been the gifts we assigned to the world. Stigma could have been the thorny path that we led casual visitors into our world down on. It could have been the binary through which we channeled our angst for the world. Instead of letting the world find its way of weeding itself out of the dark corners of the maze of our world, we unnecessarily do the same for it instead. Stigma could have been the core of the suffering we imposed on the world, it is just a missed opportunity instead.

Devotion

Devotion is the ability to selectively withhold the processing of some information by the mind. Devotion is the ability to know when to think and know when not to think. Because thought produces a world of a certain nature and it does not have everything. We often have to live in this world, that thought creates, and then to survive we need qualities that thought does not recognise and thought dismisses. Devotion is one such quality of experience.

But devotion has a different history. It emerged as a mode of entertainment. It emerged as a kind of role-playing that was initially introduced and nurtured by a thoughtful energy but then devotion got carried away. Initially the idea had been to act devoted so that the false impression of immersion could be created. Initially devotion could be towards anything and it did not mean anything to be devoted. But things changed. This change happened when the nectar of devotion was found - the seed of the sentiment that is now known as grace. Grace was totally outside the ambit of the role devotion was thought to be playing and totally outside the ambit of what was considered plausible. Grace

led to the casting out of devotion and the development of devotion as the anti-thesis of thoughtfulness.

Devotion could have been the stand-in for irrational thought. It could have been accommodated in the world of questions and answers, but it was cast aside and given up on too soon. If that casting away had not happened so hastily, today we could get away with so much more. Our core wouldn't have been wedded to reality in its base form in such a critical way. We would have some room to wander, we would have had some leeway, some space and time to exercise the negative unexpressed potential of hours of forced behaviour. The worlds of thought and devotion might not have needed to be divorced, we could have moved towards a gentle balance rather than a harsh cut-off. But this did not happen, that tangent is only a missed opportunity for us. A game in which we are only staring at the prospect of loss and emptiness.

There was a time when the devoted sang songs so that the intense could find their way to the experience of solitude. Singing-along could very easily offer the proof of the pudding, but now these songs are old. These songs are considered to be cultural entities, they are

thought to be music. People listen and sing these songs melodiously as if the scale of harmony and pitch is the only. Important thing. There is no time for the singers to pause and let the words they are singing sink in and touch their exposed flesh somehow.

So devotion has become associated with a sense of loss.

Neglect

Once there was an effective way to filter experience. It was very simple. All you had to do was neglect things happening around you. Neglect everything fearlessly. And then the things that still required your attention called out again. It worked very well. I will repeat again: neglect everything, and the when you hear a call, you answer.

Neglecting things fearlessly meant that even if things fell apart, even if things got so troublesome that they started falling apart, your neglect would still be steadfast. This state of mind of course demanded a certain attitude from you. This state of mind and its steadfastness described a stability that can only be referred to mathematically. In a mathematical equation, balance is intact. The variables on either side can change of course but the state of balance is not disturbed. Such a condition can only be described concisely in mathematics.

This state of neglect reflects a situation which refuses to acknowledge any fragility, refuses to acknowledge any room for noise. This mathematical condition is immersive in

its optical or sonic form. Such form can be its only afterlife after the spark of theoretical certainty has extinguished. I will handhold you through this. See this scene: we are standing in the midst of what appears to be a chaotic environment. It is a street, and around the spot where we stand building are falling, people are disappearing into holes in the ground and all kinds of general mayhem is progressing. We look calm, as if we are not even there. We look unconcerned. But after a few minutes of your watching, you see a fish jump up from the molten magma around us and you see us grab it. You see us pop the fish into our mouth and swallow it down. Neglect, catastrophe and profit can work together.

We have outlined a golden framework for neglect. Sadly this is incomplete because it is after the fact. The idea of neglect could have been this ideal pose for humans to strike. We could have bred a race of heroes, we could have neglected all detractors till they turned towards us. But today talk of neglect is a missed opportunity. It seems that we will have to live with the unrealised potential of the idea.

One reason why we have to compromise now when we still have infinite time before us

is that when we talk about the process of re-casting the idea to anyone we encounter protest and disbelief.

Neglect is a bad word today, if we look at the prospect of embalming the word in a sympathetic view and drawing out more from the idea, we face resistance. It seems that to sweeten the deal we have to offer a word that can replace the current meaning of neglect to be able to negotiate.

The current notion of neglect is too wilfully evil to warrant a special word dedicated to it in our lexicon. If we just say that instead of devoting a special word to the implausible cause of neglect, the best we can do is offer a pause. In the middle of a round of speech, when a spontaneous pause manifests, we can project the intent of neglect on it. So let's say we are keen to wipe the slate clean and paint it back again in the same way but imagine a new meaning to be perceived in the re-painting.

Disharmony

Disharmony is a promise that has the potential to keep us insane. But the promise has not been kept. Life constantly deludes us by letting us skim through harmonious times. Life keeps our experience mixed, we sometimes feel that we are having a very smooth experience and other times we feel that we are having a very rough and harsh experience. We are not able to build our expectations in terms of what is coming next and we cannot train ourselves. We remain muddled and confused.

Now if disharmony was the norm and if our pipeline of forthcoming experience was constantly stuffed with potentially disharmonious experiences, then we would have something to do. We would be able to train ourselves well enough to treat disharmony as a training filter and rise up every now and then feeling that we have been able to construct a sense of harmony for ourselves. We would be able to surf that wave for long enough to establish a distinct enough experience for our memory to register. It will be no flash, no fast, blurry motion. It will be another viewport filled with novel information to

be gradually chewed and digested.

Disharmony could have been the way for life or consciousness to train us into becoming accepting beings capable of producing their own happiness. But it was not to be, we have become slaves who can only be passive consumers of happiness bestowed on us by others. We could have been self-sufficient beings but instead we just witness a missed opportunity.

In our current form we can only be likened to burnt, damaged and incomplete filters. We do not have any way to feel complete. Whenever we try, we trip into a routine of performing pathos for our lost parts. We are not trained for dealing with any particular kind of situations. Instead we are trained to be chance operators in a world that is a complex playground. When the going is good, we are good and when the going is difficult, we are not so good.

For the sake of empathy the "we" that we have created here is supposedly as vulnerable as you. The "we" that we have created here is as dependent on the fall and rise in the density of harmonious elements in our environment as you are. This

fabrication and enactment
allows you agree with us, it
allows you to let us talk and
negotiate on your behalf.

We can also give you a
straight set of guidelines.
We can tell you how you can
dislodge yourself from this
pathogenic dependency on the
will of a world that wants to
enslave you.

You should keep wiping your
memory every now and then
so that you do not remember
if you are experiencing
disharmony or harmony. If you
do that you can disengage
with the cosmic plan and
create your own disaster.
You do not have to let the
universe guide you anymore.

Mystery

There is the poetic notion of mystery as the haze that blurs the outlines and dulls perception. Even if you look at the world with frosted glass, when you fall, it hurts just as bad. So we have to replace that model of mystery with another. One that doesn't talk of obscurity in blindingly dazzling terms. An experience of mystery that talks about a lack of a desire to know as something that seeds mystery. Because the world here and it's attributes and your mind and its desires work in a circular loop.

This loop makes it necessary for us to talk about your mind first and then talk about what it perceives. We cannot talk of the darkness out there without first talking about the darkness in your mind.

So what is it about the darkness in your head that makes you want to cling on to it so passionately? Darkness is a matter of luminosity. Scenes naturally have gradation in lighting and many things get stuck in corners with sub-optimal illumination. Merely on the basis of their presence in the dark parts, they cannot be considered dark. Darkness is a characteristic that can

be labelled on the basis of an intrinsic nature and not on the basis of a clustering and chunking principle. Darkness needs to be understood and not seen.

We are describing a condition here. The condition of the loops that run between the darkness in your head and the mysteries out there. These loops get distorted with the pathogenic bonds between you and your darkness. The mystery you observe in the world gets displaced and is seen more as an illusion. Because of the distortion in the loops, you chase it's end points in the wrong places. When you think you are sensing mystery in the world, you are not really sensing it. Today the entire question of mystery is misconstrued and poorly understood, it is another missed opportunity that could have led you to the source or at least to the scaffolding.

We can show you a way of re-negotiating the relationship that you have with the darkness inside you. If you manage to do that you will be able to let mystery guide you through life.

When you let mystery guide you in life you become embedded in it. Your trails and paths of walking about chasing things in life become mysterious too. You

stop becoming a source for database operators who scrape the data of your life, your choices, the meta information of how you live. To find more mystery you need to fabricate more mystery and this process helps in doing that.

Mystery can be the variable operative in your life. It can take away the burden of choice and replace it with the possibility of auto-pilot, the music of being an automaton.

Sacrifice

To have something to take, you need to give it first. The act of sacrifice decides what you get back because it decides what you give up. Sacrifice means giving up a core part of what you need to survive so that a part of you remains incomplete and you have bandwidth to deal with more problems. Giving up on these essential parts of yourself is not easy as it first requires you to run an assessment on yourself at multiple levels. This assessment determines: which are the unique parts that you consist of, of these which parts are peripheral in their importance and which are critical. Once this assessment is done, you can proceed to thinking deeply about sacrifice. You can think deeply about how you are going to render yourself incomplete.

There are many ways to be incomplete. One of the important ways is to not desire completeness. This requires you to suspend some features built into your mind that evolution deemed necessary but now are holding you back. Some of these features we can tell you about, others you have to discover yourself. Your mind has a tendency to make sets, search for

patterns. Long before we developed agriculture and settlements and rigid ideas of personal space, we had to survive on our mind's ability to form patterns from disparate fragments of information and directly from bits of chaos itself. These patterns provided our ancestors motivation for further action and offered them directions about what to do. This ability to recognise patterns was a precursor to thought. But now that we have thought, now that we have the illusion of free will, we can think about what to do, we can make mistakes, find out what works better and learn. We do not need the analytical and pattern-sensitive of our mind. We can do without it. To learn how to sacrifice, we need to first be able to give up on this nature of our mind. Then we will be able to give on our core components painlessly, without automatically pining for completion, for a closure of our pattern.

Next, we have do away with our tendency to adhere to scripts. This tendency is actually a residual, lurking facet of a presently ongoing process of evolution. In the future we will not have any desire. We will be numb. In that time, we will need to know what to do again and then unlike the past things will be too complex for us to

find patterns in situations anymore. So, in that future we will follow scripts. Talent will be commonplace. The ability to write, to script situations will be commonplace. Each child will be gifted a personal script for life. Lives will have a credit-page, attributing their character and flavour to specific authors. Doership will disappear and the identification of free will will be absorbed by the attribution to third-party authors. This is what the future is going to be like and our tendency to follow scripted situations is a hangover from the future. It is a germinal process that will bloom into an all-consuming, world-defining characteristic one day. If we do away with this tendency now it will also do the future a big service. If we do this we will also manage to learn how to sacrifice soon as we will then be safe from the temptation to keep living with the same rhythm, following the same script.

Sacrifice could have been the novel behaviour that inherently had the power to add dynamic noise to plastic personas. But now sacrifice is just a missed opportunity.

Sacrifice can still be learnt and imbibed but it is highly improbable because that will require us to already know

how to sacrifice. If we do not know how to sacrifice how will we do away with the characteristics of our mind that we describe above? It is a bind, a paradox, an impossibility.

Bondage

Bondage is a fashion, some like to be free and some like to be bound. It is not an absolute state which cannot be played with. Bondage is desired, demanded and solicited. Often you can be in chains and have the key in your hand and still you remain bound.

Bondage is enjoyable because of many threats that it saves you from. It becomes an excuse to restrain the body from wandering. Bondage becomes the localising act, the ritual that prevents spirits from getting dissipated.

But bondage is also a bad habit, it becomes a method to engineer a delay, it becomes a framework for excusing a further processing of logic. With bondage it becomes easy to quote a certain status quo as a reality. It becomes unnecessary to keep pace with rates of transformation and cycles of change.

But bondage of what? With whom? When? These questions are best answered by the agents who participate in episodes of bonding, either in being the bond or the body or the venue. What we can describe here is the net result of the effect of a bondage. We can describe it

as an experience that is a mix of a desire for safety and adventure both at the same time. It is difficult for anyone to reasonably balance both these desires. It leads to a conflict. But the positive side of the situation leads to a certain stillness of the mind. When you are bound, you learn to think of things only once and not get locked into loops which recursively pile on and prevent the progression of either narrative or viable solutions in the logical space.

Certain bonds are weak and often need to be given extra reinforcement. These bonds are the ones that represent newer relationships. Relationships not given time enough to either mature or die. Relationships which are at best still prospecting for a toe-hold which can go on to become a platform for forming a long-term liaison.

Bondage was once understood as an arrangement which was a support-system for extended catharsis, an enabler of continuity and lucid experience. But now it is just a missed opportunity, just a villain in the narrative grid of characters that describe the unfortunate and undesirable events of our life.

The relationship of bondage

and pleasure is peculiar.
Bondage often acts as the
inhibiting agent in the full
and complete experience of
a pleasurable experience
but then it also doubles up
in becoming the amplifier.
Bondage amplifies pleasure
by limiting the possibility
of the noise and friction
that movement can add to
a situation. In a rather
quixotic way, bondage becomes
freedom by taking away the
fidgety urge to break free.

Museum of Vestigial Desire

<http://www.museumofvestigialdesire.net>

