

But the sentence stayed, out of stubbornness more than wisdom.

had broken through to first principles.

while staring at a ceiling stain and pretending he

Too much like something a damaged man would say

He hated how that sounded. Too near. Too online.

listening through the wall. Reality is a repeated

Then, later, in smaller letters, as if somebody were

Then: The day is assembled.

agreement.

right, said: K opens nothing. It removes padding.

The first notebook entry, if he later remembered it

sentences began before he did.

have been sentimental. He wrote because the

He did not expect writing to save him. That would

He wrote that down.

finished.

The world kept coming in. It just no longer came in

On the fourth or fifth day, maybe the sixth, symbols began to accumulate.

A crack above the window. Branching.

A cup-ring on the table. Then another.

A dark knot in the wood floor.

The tram wires over the street. Crossing and crossing.

The green pharmacy cross blinking in the distance.

Three flashes. Pause. Three flashes. Pause.

He had read enough bad and partial things about Kabbalah to be dangerous to himself.

Too little to understand it, enough to misuse it, enough to let the ten spheres drift over whatever surface needed structure.

Ceiling crack as tree. Table stain as sephirah.

Hallway light as path. Drain as abyss.

The whole apartment wanted to diagram itself.

But the little treaty between sensation and meaning had weakened.

smoke.

registered cold, fabric, water, stair rails, cigarette

The eye still saw. The ear still heard. The skin still

building unlocked.

inside the senses had gone home early and left the

It thinned the glue here. It felt as if the hidden staff

nowhere.

K was whiter than that. Flatter. It took him

Escape implies a direction, a door, a map.

escape, but escape was the wrong word too.

He had been using K. Not for fun, exactly, maybe

But waking did not deliver him into the world.

He opened his eyes. Yes. He left sleep. More or less.

waking up in the normal sense.

During the month in question, Mousa stopped

Null

Short story

the month

with no door

NULLZINE NO. 02 · PART I OF II

This frightened him less than it should have, which was its own problem, because fear would have meant distance.

Fear would have meant: this is happening to me.

But there was no good me-position left, only moving intensities. Near. Far. Sharpened. Muted. Charged. Drained.

The room was not haunted. It was over-read. It had become too legible in the wrong direction.

continued in part ii

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Blackening. Whitening. Reddening. Burn. Wash.
Distill. Rot. Coagulate.

The old sequence. The old theater of matter
suffering its way into another rank.

First the black stage. **Nigredo**, though he felt it
before he had the word.

Rot in the continuity of self.

Memory became strips. Fragments.

Childhood kitchen. Train window. One woman
laughing in bed. His father looking at receipts.



A school corridor. A dead cat by the canal.
Skin. Hospital light. Shame. Heat. Prayer.
Pornography. Metro announcements.

The little films detached from sequence, and floated
beside one another, equal in weight.

That was the **horror**. No hierarchy. No before and
after with moral force.

Then the **white** phase. The pale one. The stripped
one.

Delivery men. Tram bells. Lovers fighting in the
street at 2 a.m. Schoolchildren in puffer jackets.
Men washing blood from the sidewalk after some
small and forgettable violence.
Doner wrappers. Vape smoke. Rain on scaffolding.
The ordinary theater of continuity.
To Mousa it looked administered now, sequenced, as
if each thing arrived already tagged by some invisible
office.

Cross. Wait. Buy. Swipe. Scan. Sign.

Take a number. Accept cookies. Enter code.
Confirm identity.
He wrote: **The city is a ritual disguised as
convenience.**

Then: No. Ritual is too old a word.

Then: **An operating system with weather.**
That also annoyed him. But less.

By then the alchemical language had started to leak
in.
He never chose it. It was there whenever he reached
for anything else.

The city became clean in a terrible way. Plastic
shone too much. Supermarkets were lit like clinics.

His own hands looked less like hands, and more like
tools that had been assigned to him temporarily.

The skin on his fingers appeared almost **rented**.

END OF PART II



NULLZINE NO.
02
nullzine.com

Null

Short story

the month

with no door

NULLZINE NO. 02 · PART II OF II

He tried to correct for this. He told himself: **stop**.
It is only a crack. Only a lamp. Only bad sleep. Only
chemistry. Only Berlin winter.
Only your own head folding in on itself again.
But **only** had lost force.
And besides, what was only chemistry? A phrase for
people who think chemistry is not already
metaphysics in work clothes.

By the second week he no longer trusted categories
with hard edges.

Drug. Symbol. Idea. Hallucination. Archetype.
Memory. Myth.

They were different things, he thought, but they
bled into one another under pressure, and most
people survived by not noticing the bleed.

The city outside kept moving. That was **obscene**.

