

Then: **The day is assembled.**
Then, later, in smaller letters, as if somebody were
listening through the wall: **Reality is a repeated
agreement.**
He hated how that sounded. Too near. Too online.
Too much like something a damaged man would say
while staring at a ceiling stain and pretending he
had broken through to first principles.
But the sentence stayed, out of stubbornness more
than wisdom.



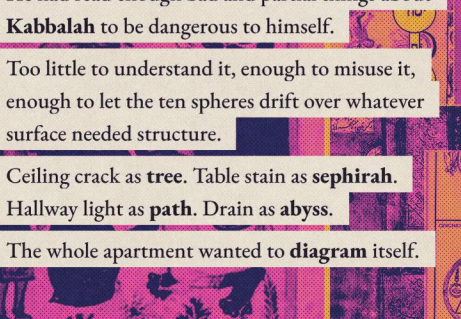
On the fourth or fifth day, maybe the sixth, **symbols**
began to accumulate.
A crack above the window. Branching.
A cup-ring on the table. Then another.
A dark knot in the wood floor.
The tram wires over the street. Crossing and
crossing.
The green pharmacy **cross** blinking in the distance.
Three flashes. Pause. Three flashes. Pause.



The world kept coming in. It just no longer came in
finished.
He wrote that down.
He did not expect writing to save him. That would
have been sentimental. He wrote because the
sentences began before he did.
The first notebook entry, if he later remembered it
right, said: **K opens nothing.** It removes padding.



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.



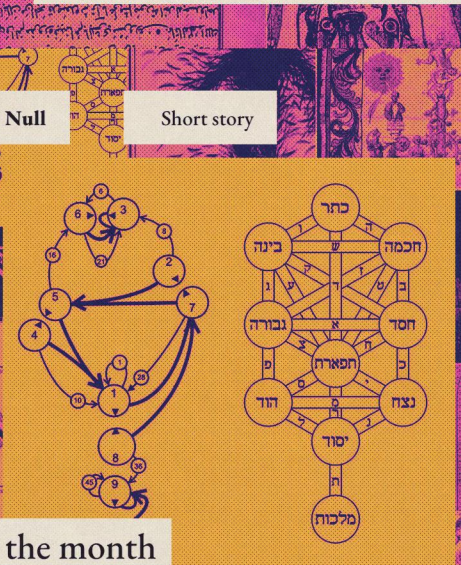
K was whiter than that. Flatter. It took him
nowhere.
It thinned the glue here. It felt as if the hidden staff
inside the senses had gone home early and left the
building **unlocked.**
The eye still saw. The ear still heard. The skin still
registered cold, fabric, water, stair rails, cigarette
smoke.
But the little **treachery** between sensation and meaning
had weakened.



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.



During the month in question, Mousa stopped
waking up in the normal sense.
He opened his eyes. Yes. He left sleep. More or less.
But waking did not deliver him into the **world**.
He had been using K. Not for fun, exactly, maybe
escape, but escape was the wrong word too.
Escape implies a direction, a **door**, a map.



the month

with no door

NULLZINE NO. 02 · PART I OF II

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

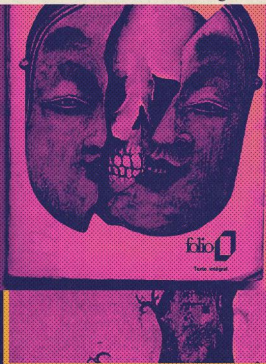
The old sequence. The old theater of matter
suffering its way into another rank.

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.

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



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02
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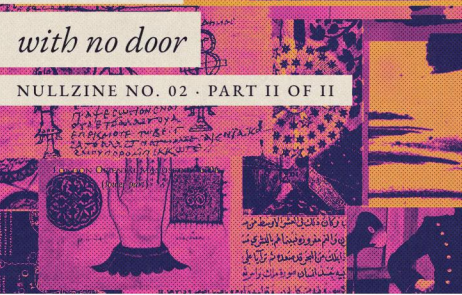
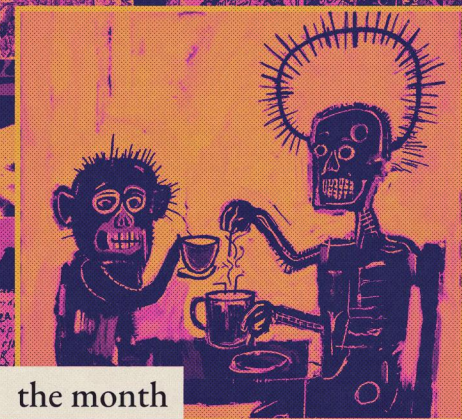
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Short story

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**.

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.