

Bear Pause™



# A Dream About Jane

by Daniel Mirsky



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*A Dream About Jane* Short Story written by Daniel Mirsky

Cover art by Daniel Mirsky

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Bear Pause™



Bear Pause is a delicious multi-media company created by Daniel Mirsky to make his work seem more official and whatnot.

# I

I'm getting dinner in the local wherever with an endless buffet of despicable food. I've been looking for a meal for 10 minutes but the only thing on my plate is soggy bread with lettuce and tomato. There's a bizarre contraption sitting in the middle of this buffet, a little black box that plugs into a wall with a wire hanging from it. I stare at it for a long time before I notice the cafeteria watchman. I nervously grab the contraption and rush to the other side of the cafeteria trying to discard my fresh uneaten meal in secrecy. There at what can be called the 'discard station' is the same cafeteria watchman, who I realize is standing at both sides of the cafeteria simultaneously, staring at me and my way of being.

Between cafeteria tables I see Jane smile. We talk.

I stand there and she stands there. I haven't seen her in 6 months, and here she is 200 miles from home in a college cafeteria housing an omni-present observer.

"Am I taller?"

"No, I'm the same height."

"We're the same height."

We laugh illogically at these words spoken aloud. Jane smiles. I reciprocate until she vanishes from thin air. My goal is immediately to leave the cafeteria.

This building has endless open doorways and corridors and as I trek through them I encounter Harry Walton, a host from one of my favorite weekly internet shows where they talk about another internet show. He tells me about his nice new Chevy Kerblecht.

"It's got chrome plating and clothed seats."

I nod hypnotized by my admiration for Harry, falsely believing that this information remotely interests me.

Down more halls and corridors I find and enter the elevator and I witness a working class man, suit and tie and brief case, radiating his own stress, running down the hall. He's clearly running late and the elevator is going down with me in it, but the door hasn't closed all the way. The working class man manages to leap through this space that's closing

horizontally and vertically and his fall shakes and damages this mechanical prism. The elevator is now moving slowly and shaking with the working class man and I as helpless passengers. There's an innate realization within us that elevators are the only way to exit this building. The human dumbwaiter lets us out on the 4th floor which consists of wide unnecessarily fancy hotel hallways that feature various shades of tan. On the walls at hallway intersections are arrows pointing in the direction of the other 4th floor elevator. At every intersection there are directions to 7th and 9th floor elevators but the working class man and I disregard this mystery as we run down the endless path and it's all losing purpose.

After what feels like eternity we come to a door marked with an elevator symbol. Inside is a slide connecting to a maze of slides and platforms in place above an inner-building abyss. One slip off an unrailed slide is an unreasonably far 4 story fall into pitch black before splat. I trudge carefully onward wishing Jane could be here to make my possible death more meaningful. Maybe if I could see her face and her hand reaching down as the darkness of gravity would engulf me I could feel safer.

The working class man speaks to me for the first time.

"It's 8:45 and this establishment locks from the inside out at 9:00."

Standing on a small rainbow-filled rectangle in the center of a bottomless indoor pit I decide I'm ready to open my eyes. The working class man shouts as I open my arms and let my body go loose over the edge.

My eyes open and all I can think about is Jane.

Her charming smile and imagined infatuation with my existence.

Our playful joke of an interaction.

For only seconds I saw it.

The relationship I'd never have, the feelings I'd never share.



That's the girl I'd always love, stuck in time, my hope  
a piece of a memory in my mind that I'll always try to  
remember as

Jane. I wander in this and wonder about my journey  
with the working class man; why couldn't we just use the  
stairs?

## ·II

I've known a few Janes in my life. The Jane I gave up on, the Jane I wished I'd given up on, the Jane I quickly forgot. Endless Jane in my life. Not many have I dreamt of. That's where I saw her last night, in the cafeteria maze with the cafeteria watchman as my externalized self judgement. In a dream.

There are other girls that show up like this every now and then, girls that aren't quite Jane. I call them Jan.

Jan is in this bed with her mouth on mine. She whispers a request in my ear that I've long awaited in the waking world. Her eyes are devious. She's gorgeous and in bed with me and ready to act upon that fact and I search my pockets to realize I don't have a condom. Her smile is a frown and I am told

“NO.”

Jan holds my hand on the old playground set while we walk up the small rusted stairs. A cold wind blows and a grey sky sets in and with a firm grasp Jan lifts my entire body with one arm. She slams my frozen torso against the metal bars. I'm shattered. This is the only time I feel physical pain while dreaming.

In a hallway I sit down with Jane worrying about the annual appointment that I just missed. Jane is making conversation with her mouth closed and without sound and the hallway elevators constantly run, filled with people on each stop, but no one ever gets out. They just watch us. I sit there not realizing that this Jane is Jan. With the lights on and the sun down I spoke no more than 9 words to her on an undated fuzzy night out. She sits here while I try desperately to trade words but I can't feel her voiceless response, only the eyes of strangers in elevator limbo. I'm starting to run out of breath.

I always find myself cherishing the memory of Janes that were actually named Jan. These false memories can be completely forgotten seconds after having been the absolute truth. It turns out that when the lights are on, most every girl's a Jan whose absence in my life transformed her into a Jane. But I hold on to this scrap of doubt that tells me the real Jane is sitting on the other side of this grassy old hill I'm on, watching the sunset. Doubt tells me I just need to walk up and over to the other side of this land and join Jane dramatically in the end of light.

### III

The dance is alive and warm bodies are twisting and feeling and rocking in the steam of an unlit high school cafeteria turned bass-blaring night club. A thick cluster of teens press against an indoor marble balcony that this town could never afford. In this elevated platform madness my lonely pal Gary searches for a partner but loses his feet over the ledge. Where the crowd has made space below Gary paints the tile floor red. The music stops and a horde of young eyes watch his skin turn pitch black. His head becomes a mask and his arms turn to fisted tendrils and warm bodies start flying through the air. Gary has no mercy.

Music returns and bass silences the screams and I see Jane standing alone with her friend next to a brick pillar. Indoor electric moonlight shines in her eyes and I hold her in her tight black dress. We move steadily while standing still, in a motion peace sealed from the wave of warm raucous sex and murder. In a room where everything is touch we kiss softly and I float into a plane of blue clouds and paint brushed lines. Jane drifts away and my feet touch the ground and the bass has somehow silenced Gary's rage. He walks over to me, no longer a dark wraith, in my closed corner of the cafe floor. I ask first.

“How much longer do you have?”

“I've got 7 years left of High school.”

Gary walks away forever and I wrap my head in his anguish.

History is rewritten and I'm in my old apartment. I've always had an older sister named Sam who sits with my brother and I in our old shared bedroom while she enthusiastically explains to us her meaning of life. What a kind sister she is, and how profound that I feel such real familial love for a person that doesn't exist. But I don't know this is a dream.

We take a trip to the large local flower and plant store. It's bright and green and jolly but there's a plant salesman in

a green shirt with a frown on his face. I'm holding a small flower pot and this fellow tears it from my hands. My family is in awe. Sam is upset. I'm angry beyond all words. I've gone lucid, and as the all powerful child of my own mind I fabricate a glowing blue ring that turns me into a beast of men. My body and muscles grow 2 times larger than a fully formed steroid-using super-male and my skin is blood red. I grab the sorry plant salesman and scream him into nightmares before ravaging the plant shop to crumbs and soil.

In this new chronology of memories that I create is a history where Jane always wanted me. I can find a world I want while subjected to these illusions, and I can see a certain Jane I last saw months ago, long before I even knew Jane from the cafeteria or Jane from the dance, though Janes they were. This is Jane that keeps me asleep at night, a meeting I'll forever remember as though it happened right now.

I'm a high school graduate when my eyes are open, but right now I'm in my freshman gym class and vulnerable. This old Jane is studying me, not smiling. I'm feeling naked while wearing gym clothes and this Jane is aggressive without saying a word. She feels my chest and shoulders and records data and laughs and continues with her experiment.

Her words:

“We're going to have sex.”

What articulate lines my unawakened mind writes.

Obviously this task can't be simple, so we leave the gym and I'm in her car and this is real and Jane wants me and I'm going to be with Jane at her house. I'm in this car on Hartmouth Ave wondering if she'll have a condom. I'm looking at the road to meaningless sex with a Jane I once loved and I notice that Hartmouth Ave is hills, like highways with strip malls. The horizon is thick with fog and the road ahead curves up so steep that it looks like we're driving into the sky, and I begin to tell Jane about this surreal phenomenon.

I don't know this is a dream. I loved her once.



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Thanks for reading.