

A CONFESION · NOT FOR SALE

ONE HOUR OF PAIN

The Birth of V. Tacet

V. TACET

The Quietest Sound in the World

They said it would fix it.

A pill in the morning. A pill at night. That it would settle. That I'd stop falling.

So why does it still hurt?

How can sadness get through antidepressants? It's medicine. Medicine for exactly this. And it's still here anyway — the whole of it, unscraped. It grinds me down at three in the morning, phone in my hand, an empty chat where a message should have been, and wasn't.

And in the dark, I figured it out.

It hurts because my emotions are stronger than the chemistry. Stronger than the pill. Stronger than everything they packed into me to dim me down.

That's all. That's the answer.

That's why it hurts this much. That's why I love this much. That's why I fight this much. That's why I'm ashamed. That's why I'm too much. That's why I'm lost.

It's one thing. Over and over, one and the same thing.

And it can't be split. You can't keep the good and throw out the bad. If there were a pill that took this pain away, it would take away the fact that I feel like this at all. And that's me. I have nothing else.

So I sit in that dark and I finally understand it.

The pain didn't get through the pills because it's strong.

It got through because that pain is me.



She really didn't write.

And now, replaying those moments, it hits me — it's not the first time. How many times now. Always the same. And I'll probably never get her out of my head.

I told her. At night, between the laughing. *What if I wrote a book about you? It'd be funny.*

And I did.

Only not the way I meant it in the moment I said it. Back then it was supposed to be funny. Back then I didn't expect her to leave. I expected her to be here tomorrow.

I know how it sounds. I know. Two strangers on the internet, both strange, both awake when half the world is supposed to be asleep. They find each other somewhere around midnight and start talking. For hours. And they don't get bored. Not for a second. Time disappears, you don't even know how, and we keep calling, and calling, until she says she's tired.

Goodnight, she said.

Goodnight too, I said.

One last look into the camera. And she hung up.

I didn't sleep all morning.

She said she'd write when she woke up. She had three hours to sleep, something was waiting for her in the morning — three hours, because we'd been up together until six. Three hours of sleep because of me. That felt almost beautiful. That felt like proof.

Nine o'clock — nothing.

Ten — nothing.

Noon — nothing.

Afternoon — nothing.

Evening — nothing.

Nothing. Nothing. Nothing.

And I found out what the quietest sound in the world is. It isn't silence. Silence is empty, silence means nothing. This is a phone that doesn't light up. It's a screen you stare at so long your eyes burn, and it stays black. It's the waiting that after hours turns into knowing — and you feel the exact second when hope breaks into something else, into something that weighs like a stone in your chest.

Because it doesn't hurt, what she said.

It hurts, what she didn't say.

It hurts that she wrote nothing at all. That I wasn't even worth a word. Not a single one. If she'd written something bad, something cruel — even that would have meant I took up enough space in her to be remembered, enough to want to hurt me. But this? This is worse than hate. This is as if I'd never been.

And I remember everything.

I remember how her voice changed when she talked about something that had once hurt her. How she laughed too fast to skip past something heavy. What she's afraid of, even when she says it as a joke. How she looked away when it came to her. After one evening I know more small things about her than anyone else will remember about her in months.

And her? She had someone completely ordinary beside her. Someone who did nothing for her, who remembered nothing. And still she had him.

So that's how it is.

I give everything. Attention. Memory. My whole self, down to the last drop. And what comes back is emptiness.

That moment when, for the first time in a long time, I felt truly alive — when I felt life had meaning, with a complete stranger who seemed made exactly for me — that moment was an experiment to her. I was just someone far away. A strange boy you can pour everything that hurts you into at night, because in the morning he disappears and no one finds out. Safe, because unreachable. Useful, because temporary.

It hurts.

But this pain I'll keep.

Because it's the only thing I have left of her. And because it's mine — not borrowed, not pretended, not dressed up. Real. And if I learned one thing tonight in that dark, it's this:

When the world keeps taking away the people I feel for — let it at least leave me the feeling.

You can still build something out of that.

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The Body Knows First

With me, pain doesn't start in the head.

It starts in the body. Always.

People think a person breaks from a thought. A sentence comes, a memory, an image — and it hurts. With me it's the other way around. First the pressure behind the eyes. Then the throat. Then the chest, as if something in there pulled inward and refused to let go. Hands light and heavy at the same time. Skin too close. Air too sharp.

And only then comes the thought.

Never the other way.

First the body decides it's the end of the world. The head only writes the reason in later.

The body is always first. The body already knows. It stands at the door, pale, coat in hand, and says: something is wrong. And I believe it every time. Because how do you not believe something that hurts?



For a long time I thought I was oversensitive.

That's a word people use when they don't want to admit you feel something more precisely than they do. As if the radio inside me were tuned wrong. As if I were picking up static that isn't there.

But what if the static is there?

What if the others just live with the sound turned off?

I'm not saying it's a gift. A gift can be refused, set down on the table, left alone. This can't be refused. This wakes up before I do — sometimes even before I open my eyes. I lie in bed and I already feel what the day will be like. Not from the weather. From the pressure in the body. From whether there's room in my chest, or whether something foreign has been in there since morning.

And then there are the days when there's too much of it in me.

Too much light. Too many sounds. Too many thoughts. Too much of me. One sentence opens ten more. One look means more than it maybe meant. Someone looks at me a little differently and I build a whole theory out of it about whether they like me, pity me, or are already starting to stop wanting me.

And the worst part is that sometimes I'm right.

If I were wrong every time, it would be easier. I'd tell myself: you're just paranoid. You're a broken device that beeps even when nothing's on fire. But sometimes it is on fire. Sometimes I really do catch the change before the other person says it. The cold in a message. The pause that was longer than it should have been.

And that's the problem.

Because once a person is right a few times, they start believing every alarm.

And my body is a siren.



I don't know how to be normally tired.

A normally tired person lies down and sleeps. The body closes shop, turns off the lights, and lets them go. Not with me. I'm tired and awake at the same time. Wrecked and wired. I lie with my eyes closed, but inside someone left the engine running. Quietly. Enough for me to hear my own existence.

An hour. Two. Three.

And that's when the head starts to talk. Not in a voice. In images. Things I said wrong. People I lost. A future falling apart in ten versions at once. A past that comes back like a dog no one called.

Sometimes I tell myself insomnia isn't the inability to sleep.

It's the inability to stand down the guard.

As if something in me stood at the window all night, waiting to see where the next blow would come from. And I tell it no one's coming tonight, the doors are locked. But it doesn't even turn around. It just stands there. And guards.



For a long time I waited to grow out of it one day.

That this was just a phase. A bad version of me I'd set aside one day like old clothes. I'd be calmer, steadier. Silence would stop meaning the end of the world.

It didn't come.

I only learned to function better around the fault. To hold my face better. To say "I'm fine" better, when nothing is fine. To look more like a person who has a body — not like a body dragging a person across the floor.

And maybe that's exactly what adulthood is. Not that you get fixed. Just that you learn to carry your own brokenness so it doesn't get in anyone else's way.

Inside, though, it stays. The same sensitivity. The same need to be chosen. Not seen for a second, not interesting for a night — chosen. Like when someone lays a hand on something fragile and says: I don't want to break this one.

And the body still believes it. After everything. That's maybe the cruelest thing about it.

Not that it's afraid.

But that it hopes.



People say: calm down. Don't think about it. It's nothing.

And they're right. Outside, it's nothing.

That's the worst part.

Outside it's nothing. Inside it isn't. Inside the nothing has a shape. A weight. A temperature. It sits next to me on the bed, breathes into my face, takes up my room in my chest. It isn't empty — it's full of everything that hasn't happened yet, but the body has already prepared for it.

And so, over time, a person makes a translation. Instead of "I feel like your silence erased me from existence," they write "all good." Instead of "my whole body hurts from not knowing what I mean to you," they write "haha yeah."

And then they sit alone and the body says it for them.



Maybe my body isn't broken.

Maybe it just doesn't know how to whisper.

Maybe everything the others called excessive in me was only survival turned up too loud. A nervous system without a muffler. A heart without skin. A body that never got the manual for how to be calm in a world where even love acts like something you're supposed to wait for quietly.

My whole life I took it for an enemy. A faulty machine. A cage where I wait for the alarm to go off again.

But maybe all along it was only trying to protect me. Badly. Too much. But protect. Maybe it didn't betray me — it only learned that everything beautiful can leave at any moment. And so every time the beautiful goes quiet for a while, it starts grieving in advance.

That's my body. Not a home. Not a prison.

More like a house where someone is always running up the stairs, locking the windows, shouting that a storm is coming.

Even when outside it's only morning.

Even when no one has left yet.

Too Much

At first I thought it was a defect.

That I was born wrong into my own body. That there's a gear in me spinning faster than the others, and if I slowed it down, I'd finally be bearable.

Because I heard that word my whole life, even when no one said it out loud.

Too much.

I'm too much.

Too intense. Too sensitive. Too fast. Too honest. Too able to remember a person's whole tone from a single sentence. Too able to turn silence into evidence.

Usually no one tells you straight. People aren't that honest. They just pull back a little. Slow their replies. Shorten their sentences. Smile in the way that means: I don't know what to do with you.

And you catch it.

Of course you catch it.

Because that's exactly what they punish you for. For catching it.



If I were dumber, I'd be happier.

Not dumb like a person without intelligence. Dumber in feeling. Less able to hear the crack in a voice. Less able to catch the moment someone's attention

turns from warm to polite. Less able to sense that I'm no longer a place someone comes back to, but something they have to deal with.

But I see.

I see the micro-departures. The small retreats the others don't yet count as betrayal. The delay. The change of rhythm. The emoji that looks the same but isn't. The "goodnight" that's no longer an invitation to tomorrow, but the closing of a day that's done with me.

And then they ask why I'm strange.

Because I glimpsed the leaving while it was still acting like presence. And people don't like that. They want the right to leave slowly. Quietly. Without a witness who lays their own coldness on the table before they can name it themselves.

I take that right from them. Not on purpose.

I just feel too early.



Most people don't want to be loved deeply.

They want to be loved comfortably. In a way that flatters them but doesn't bind them. So someone sees them, but not too precisely. They want warmth, but not fire. A touch, but not a hand that remembers the shape of a wound.

And I came in like fire into a room where they only wanted a lamp.

I didn't want to burn.

I just didn't know how to shine less.

That's maybe the biggest misunderstanding of my life. People thought my intensity was pressure. That if I remembered what they said a month ago, I wanted something from them. That there's a kind of love so focused it starts to look like the light in an interrogation room — not because it wants to hurt, but because it doesn't know how to stop aiming.



For a long time I thought the solution was to make myself smaller.

Write less. Ask less. Show less that I care. Want less. Hope less.

Exist less.

I learned to be bearable. How not to say the sentence that's too true. How to write "all good" when not a single cell in the body is good. How not to say that you remembered something they tossed out in passing and for you it became a small sacred object.

To kill yourself a little, but in a socially acceptable way.

And people call it adulthood.

I call it slow disappearing.

Because every time I made myself smaller, someone around me looked calmer. But then it hit me: if I shrink enough, maybe someone finally holds me — but they won't be holding me. They'll be holding the version I built so it wouldn't run away.

And that's a worse kind of loneliness.

You're not alone because no one chose you.

You're alone because they chose someone you're not.



The worst part is that it works.

When you're lighter, people stay longer. When you don't need an answer, they answer. When you don't give everything, they don't feel they owe you anything.

That's how a person is made who knows how to act normal. Not by being normal. But by learning to fake a low temperature, even while inside the whole house is burning.

Sometimes I envy people who know how to love simply. They miss someone, but they don't collapse into the shape of that person's absence. They can say: we'll see. They can not-know and not die of it.

I can't do that. When I don't know, my body starts writing itself the ending. And always the wrong one. One unanswered message, one different energy, one night that was supposed to continue into morning — and suddenly I'm not a man who waits.

I'm a child at the door.

And behind the door, someone who promised they'd come back.



I don't know when exactly I started believing that being too much means being unlovable.

It didn't happen all at once. It settled in. In the looks. In the pauses. In the way people first said I was different — and later looked tired at the exact same thing. First my depth drew them in. Then it started to weigh on them.

That's a strange kind of pain. To be loved for a door people then run out of.

And you watch your truest parts turn, in someone else's hands, into evidence against you.

Maybe it's all simpler than that.

Maybe I'm not too much. Maybe I'm just too much for people who wanted less.

Because you never need the whole world to carry you. One would be enough. One single person who doesn't look at your depth as a problem to solve. Who doesn't flinch when they find out there's no single room inside, but a whole building with the floors gone dark. Who doesn't come just for the tour.

One who stays.

I don't want to be admired for how I burn.

I want someone to know where to put their hands when I don't want to burn anymore.



Today I know that shrinking isn't the answer.

But knowing isn't enough. A person can know the truth and still not know how to live by it. And then someone comes who smiles the right way. Who at one in the morning says a sentence that lands exactly where something had been missing for years.

And all the wisdom dissolves like paper in water.

You're whole again. Too much again. Standing again with open hands in front of a person who maybe just wanted to talk till morning — and you're already

building a life out of it.

Not because you're stupid.

But because your hope is as fast as your pain. Both run ahead. Both lie to you that this time they finally know where.

And so if there's any fault in me, it isn't that I feel.

It's that I turn every feeling into a fate.

But I don't want to survive anymore by pretending nothing matters to me.

Because it does matter to me. All of it. The words, the silence, the tone.

Whether I'm real to someone even in the moment I'm not in front of them.

Maybe it's too much.

But it's mine.

And after years of shrinking, I don't want to be easy to love anymore. I want to be true. Even if it means someone leaves again.

Because maybe I'm not too much.

Maybe I'm just whole.

And a whole person is heavy for some people — but I won't cut pieces off myself anymore just so someone can carry me more comfortably.

The Museum

I don't remember things because I want to.

I remember them because they stay in me.

That's the difference.

People say they have a bad memory, as if it were an innocent trait. They forget what you said. What they promised. How your face looked when something first hurt to say out loud. And the world forgives them, because forgetting is normal.

I don't forget so easily. Not that I'm an archive — numbers, dates, instructions slip away from me, I forget to reply, I forget why I walked into a room. But I remember a sentence someone said at two in the morning three years ago. The pause before an answer. How someone's voice changed the first time they stopped acting strong.

Some things don't file into me as information.

They file in as a place. As a room I can go back to years later and the same light is still standing there, the same air, the same pain in the body.

Someone says something in passing.

And I turn it into proof that they existed.



Maybe this is my oldest form of love.

Remembering. Not the big words, not the promises — the small things that fall out of people's mouths without them knowing they just gave someone a piece of themselves. What music they put on when they don't want to be alone with themselves. When they laugh for real and when they're just filling the space so no one sees something moved in them.

My attention goes to a person before I can stop it. It sits down beside them and gathers — not like a thief, more like someone who found a broken object and doesn't want it to get lost any further.

And then I carry it. Sometimes too long. Things don't pass through me — they stand inside like furniture in an abandoned flat. Like a glass on the table after a person who won't come back.

But memory doesn't ask me.

Memory is a dog that comes back with a bone in its mouth and lays it at your feet exactly when you'd finally caught your breath.



The worst aren't the big memories.

Those, at least, you know where to file. They have a name. A breakup. A loss. A last message.

The worst are the small things. Because small things have no grave. You can't sit down over a bench and say: here lies the tone of voice I mistook for home. Here lies a sentence someone said in passing, and I carried it like a candle in both hands.

Small things stay without a place.

So they make a place inside me.

If someone opened my head, they wouldn't find just fear and chaos. They'd find rooms. Corridors. Shelves of little things no one else thought were important. Sentences next to songs. Looks next to smells. Mornings next to evenings. Cigarettes on the balcony next to notes from a piano.

And maybe they'd finally understand why I'm tired.

Because I don't just live my own life. I live all the moments that stayed in me too.



Music is the worst. And the best.

Because music explains nothing. It doesn't come and say: you feel this because loneliness, because ADHD, because the body, because the world. Music just opens a door. And behind it is everything.

Some songs aren't songs. They're years. They're rooms. They're people. They're versions of me that still believed in something I don't know how to believe in today. One note and I'm back.

The body remembers before the head. That's the cruelest thing about it. You can convince yourself you've survived something, that you've processed it, tidied it away — and then a track comes on that you haven't heard in a year, and the whole body goes back to the place where someone left it standing.

For me, music is sometimes more real than the day I listen to it in. In some tracks there's more love than I ever got from people. More home than I felt in the flat I live in. More future than I can see when I wake up in the morning and the body already knows the day will be hard.

And so I tell myself that if I had to explain who I am, I wouldn't hand someone a résumé.

I'd hand them songs.

So they'd understand what rooms I lived in while, from the outside, I just sat at home and looked like I was doing nothing.

Because I was doing something the whole time.

I remember. I feel. I store. I burn.

It just looks like silence from the outside.



Memory is a strange kind of loneliness.

Because when you remember something alone, you start to doubt whether it even happened the way you carry it. Was it really that strong? Or did I just take an ordinary moment and dress it in meaning, because I desperately needed it?

That's what destroys me. Not the memory. The doubt.

Maybe my memory is just a dramatic director who takes an ordinary shot and plays music under it so big that even I believe it. And maybe not. Maybe I really did see something that was there — and the others just don't stay with things long enough to understand their weight.

I don't know. And that not-knowing is the hell. I live between the possibility that I'm too sensitive, and the possibility that the world is too insensitive.



I envied people who can set a day down. They come home, they eat, they sleep. Morning is morning. A sentence that was said, was said. The door closed.

With me, nothing finishes all the way. Things keep echoing. Weeks. Years. Someone gives me a small tenderness and I hear it in me long after that person lives somewhere else entirely and maybe doesn't even remember my name in the same color I remember theirs.

That's why I move on so hard.

Because I don't go forward empty-handed.

I go with the whole museum.

And then people say: let it go. As if memory were a bag I could set down by the door and leave without. But some things I didn't remember with my head.

I remembered them whole.



For a long time I thought that if I remember more, it means I love more.

Maybe that was my most dangerous belief. Because then every forgotten detail hurt like proof that the other person loved less. Like an account I keep paying alone.

But maybe people don't forget because they don't care. Maybe their inner world just doesn't work like mine. They don't have every sentence wired to a nerve.

And maybe I don't remember because I'm better.

Maybe I remember because I'm afraid. That if I don't store something, it disappears completely. That if I forget, I betray the version of me that in that

moment felt something so strongly it seemed sacred to it.

And so I hold on. People who left. Evenings that ended. Music, because music holds me. I hold everything, because I never learned to trust that things can be beautiful without me saving them from disappearing.



Maybe it started long ago.

Maybe I was always a pilgrim. A person who goes through life and settles nowhere — not because he doesn't want to, but because he wants it so much that every place starts to hurt before it becomes a home.

Whoever has a home can forget the road.

Whoever has no home remembers every stone.

Maybe that's why I collect details. A detail is the only home no one can take from me right away. I can be alone, I can not know what's coming, I can feel the world isn't for me — but when I put on a certain track, when I play a few notes on the piano, suddenly there's a place that isn't on any map. A place where I was real. At least for a while.

And maybe my whole life isn't a search for love.

Maybe it's a search for a place where I won't have to remember everything alone. Where someone says: I know. And it won't be an empty sentence. It'll be proof that part of the world doesn't lie only inside me.



If someone offered to erase all of it, I don't know if I'd agree.

Maybe on the worst night, yes. But if I forgot the pain, I'd forget the proof that I was once whole. If I forgot the people who left, I'd forget that I knew how to see them. If I forgot the music that broke me, I'd forget the music that kept me alive.

I'd be lighter.

But would I still be me?

Because even though the memory hurts, it's mine. Not borrowed, not dressed up. It's my way of telling the world: I was here. I saw you. I noticed.

And even if you didn't notice me, I noticed enough for both of us.

That's my most tender curse.

Because everything I ever truly loved stayed in me somehow.

Even when it left.

Even when it went dark.

Even when, to someone else, it was nothing.

The Pilgrim

I dictated this at three in the morning. I'm leaving it exactly as it fell out of me. No edits. Because it won't get more accurate than this.

A stranger in a strange land. That's what I am. A pilgrim. Who never finds the meaning.

I figured it out. I don't want love. I want to experience love.

I'm lost and I'll never find myself in this life. Day after day, minute after minute. Why is it always the same? New pills, new surroundings, new life. What am I missing? What do I need? That's the question I don't have an answer to. If I only knew. If I only knew where to go, what to do. But there's no tutorial. No manual for how to live. My brain is a gift and a curse. I don't know where I am. I'm in the darkness and I have to turn that darkness into light. If only people knew what it's like to live in my skin. How much pain it takes. And how much love there is in the world and in us — and no one shows it. No one wants to let it out.

I don't even know if I'm writing the right books. Maybe I just want a book about me. Maybe I don't want to write stories. Maybe I want to write my story. That's why all my books have a piece of me in them. Maybe I want to write a book about a pilgrim. About a pilgrim who stays silent — but inside feels the whole world so strongly that the silence is killing him.



This is maybe the most accurate thing I've ever said about myself.

Not a diagnosis.

Not a sentence for a psychiatrist.

Not an explanation for people who want to hear something tidy, so they can file me on the right shelf.

Pilgrim.

A person who walks.

Not because he knows where.

But because standing still hurts just as much.

My whole life I've felt like I'm somewhere by mistake. Not that I was born into the wrong family, the wrong city, the wrong body, or the wrong system. That would be easy. That could be named. Fixed. Escaped. Move away. Change jobs. Change your haircut. Change your dose. Change your flat. Change your résumé.

But this was deeper.

I was a stranger even where I was supposed to be home.

A stranger in my own room. A stranger at work. A stranger among people who spoke the same language but said nothing I could believe. A stranger in a body that sometimes burned so hard I didn't know whether it was life or a malfunction. A stranger in a world that gets up every morning, gets dressed, goes to work, buys bread, pays rent, turns on the TV, falls asleep, and acts like that's enough.

Maybe it is enough for them.

I don't say that as an insult.

Sometimes I envy them.

I envy people who can settle into an ordinary day. Who get up in the morning and don't search the light beyond the window for proof that life still has color. Who go to work and aren't inwardly insulted by the very idea that eight hours of their life should belong to a machine, a shift, a performance, a spreadsheet, something that doesn't interest them. Who can have peace in the evening because they got the day done.

I never got the day done.

I only survived it.

And sometimes not even that.



A pilgrim isn't a person who loves to travel.

That's a lie for posters and people in expensive jackets on mountains.

A pilgrim isn't a person who always wants to be somewhere else.

A pilgrim is a person who doesn't know where he could return to.

That's the difference.

I didn't run from the world because I hated it. Just the opposite. I love the world too much. I love music. I love films. I love light on walls. I love the night air. I love a cigarette in my hand like a small ritual that, for a few minutes, gives chaos a shape. I love the piano, because there's a truth in it I can't say in a normal sentence. I love beauty so much that it sometimes physically hurts that I have no one to show it to.

I'm not empty.

That's the biggest mistake about it.

When a person looks from the outside, they see a flat, drawn curtains, a mess, a phone, a tired body, cigarettes, silence. And they think: emptiness.

But it isn't emptiness.

Emptiness would be simpler.

There's so much emotion in me it could heal the whole world.

It just has nowhere to go.

That's all.

I'm not an empty room.

I'm a room full of people all talking at once, but the door is locked.



Alone in the flat, alone in the dark, alone with just my thoughts.

I took my own name only later. I gave it to myself.

V. Tacet.

Tacet is Latin for *he is silent*. The silent rest in a score — the place where the instrument doesn't play, and yet it's still there.

That name sounds like a fate.

The one who stays silent.

Not because he has nothing to say.

But because if he really started talking, it wouldn't be clear where to stop.

There's so much love in people, I think. In everyone. Even the cold ones. Even the ones who act like they need nothing. Even the ones who laugh too loud. Even the ones who leave earlier than they'd have to. It's just that almost no one lets it out. People hold it inside like something embarrassing. As if love were a weakness. As if telling someone the truth about what they mean to us were a social failure.

And I don't understand it.

I never understood it.

How many things would be fixed if people said the sentence in time.

How much pain would never even happen if someone could say: I see you.

Not I love you.

That's a big word. Sometimes too big.

Just: I see you.

I know you're here.

I know you're not just another person behind a screen, on the line, in a flat, in a room, in a city, in a world. I know something is happening in you. I know you stay silent, but it isn't silence. It's overpressure.

Maybe this is what I was looking for my whole life.

Not a person who saves me.

Not romantic love as a reward for pain.

Not someone who finally comes and makes me a finished person.

I needed to experience love in the real sense.

Not as a relationship.

As proof that between two people the glass can, for a moment, stop existing.



I don't want love.

I want to experience love.

That sentence looks at first like nonsense. Like I'm contradicting myself. But I know exactly what it means.

I don't want to own a person.

I don't want someone written next to my name so the world sees I'm not alone.

I don't want a romantic decoration of life.

I want the state.

The moment a person stops defending themselves. When the world stops, for a while, breaking down into roles, looks, performance, status, work, money, the past, diagnoses, mistakes, debts, the body, shame, fear. When someone stands across from you and suddenly you don't have to translate your own soul into simpler words.

I want to experience that my existence doesn't have to be constantly explained.

That I can just be.

Whole.

Without a defense.

And maybe that's why ordinary life destroys me so much.

Because ordinary life is full of small defenses.

Why aren't you at work.

Why are you so thin.

Why are you alone.

Why do you take pills.

Why don't you take them.

Why don't you have a girlfriend.

Why don't you have friends.

Why are you so sensitive.

Why do you write.

Why do you think you of all people could achieve anything.

Why isn't what's enough for others enough for you.

And I don't know how to answer short.

Because a short answer would be a lie.

And the long answer no one wants to hear.

So I stay silent.

And inside I feel the whole world so strongly that the silence is killing me.



Sometimes I wonder whether I'm really a pilgrim, or just a person who learned to romanticize his own inability to stay.

I have to admit this.

Because every beautiful word can be a hiding place.

Pilgrim sounds nice. Almost sacred. Like someone with a deeper fate. Like a person who isn't lost, just taking the longer way.

But maybe sometimes I'm simply lost.

Maybe there's no great map.

Maybe no hidden story.

Maybe I'm just a young person in a flat who doesn't know what to do with his life, his body, his brain, his loneliness, his longing, his fear, his energy, his talent, his debt, his job, his name, his day.

Maybe pilgrim is just a word I gave myself so it wouldn't all be only panic.

But even so.

Even if it's only a word.

Some words save a person, because they give them a shape.

And I need a shape.

Without a shape I'm just overpressure.

Without a shape I'm just morning, evening, pills, cigarette, music, hunger, exhaustion, an idea, a crash, another idea, another crash.

Without a shape I'm everything at once.

Pilgrim is the first word that even a little resembles all of it.



I'm in the darkness and I have to turn the darkness into light.

I hate this sentence.

Because it sounds like a motivational quote.

And I can't stand motivational quotes.

They're mostly written by people already outside, for the ones still inside. They say: pain will make you stronger. Darkness will teach you to value the light. Everything happens for a reason.

No.

Sometimes things don't happen for a reason.

Sometimes they just happen.

Sometimes pain isn't a teacher.

Sometimes it's just pain.

Sometimes the dark doesn't shape you. It just surrounds you, crawls under your clothes, sits on your chest, and waits to see if you'll get up again.

And still.

There's something in me that doesn't want to give it the last word.

I don't believe in god.

I don't believe in chance.

I believe in myself, even though even this last faith sometimes starts to fail.

And maybe that's exactly what a pilgrim is.

Not a person who believes firmly.

But a person who walks even in the moment his faith limps behind him on its knees.



I always climbed out of the darkness.

I don't know why.

That scares me almost as much as the pain.

Why did my inner flame never go out?

How many times was I sure there'd be nothing left. That I'd used myself up. That there was nothing left to pull out. That there was no other version in me that gets up, lights a cigarette, opens the laptop, puts on music, writes a sentence, makes a plan, comes up with a book, believes for ten minutes that all of it could still have meaning.

And then it shows up.

Again.

A small flame.

Sometimes ridiculous. Sometimes weak. Sometimes so small one bad comment could blow it out. But it's there.

And I don't know whether it's strength or a curse.

Because if the flame went out, maybe I'd finally stop wanting so much.

I'd stop looking at the world and saying: this can't be all there is.

I'd stop expecting from life the colors, the music, the love, the art, the people who really see, the sentences that come exactly in time, the films that change the body, the books that open doors, an escape from a place I don't belong, money as a bridge, my own name on something someone holds in their hand and says: I felt this too.

Maybe I'd be calmer.

But I wouldn't be me.



Do you know what I'm most afraid of?

Not that I'll be average. No. I'm not afraid I won't be famous, exceptional enough for strangers' eyes.

I'm afraid of something worse.

That there was something in me and I never got it out. That my potential stays locked in a body that went to work, paid rent, smoked by the window, was afraid of the people outside — and meanwhile a whole world lived in it that no one saw.

That I'll die not as an unsuccessful person.

But as an unopened one.

Like a book no one read, because even the author couldn't finish it. Like a color sealed in the tube. Like a flame under glass.



And there's a deeper thing.

I don't want to live in this system. And I don't say that like a child who doesn't want responsibilities — I say it precisely. I don't want my whole life to be trading time for survival, and the rest of the day just trying to patch myself up enough to trade time for survival again the next day.

This isn't laziness. Laziness is when a person doesn't want to do anything.

I want to do everything.

I want to write. To create. To build worlds. I want to make out of pain something that lights up a room for someone. I want to earn money not to have more things, but because money is a bridge. The distance between me and the place where my brain hears, every morning: this isn't for you.

For five years it's told me that every morning. And I'm finally starting to believe it.

Not completely. I'm still afraid. I still sometimes wait for one dose to save me, one book, one person, one day.

But I already know that waiting isn't the answer.

That's why I create.



Creating isn't a hobby. A hobby is something a person does beside their life. I create because I don't know how else to bear life.

Art doesn't mean the pain is gone. It only means it found an opening.

A sentence is a hole in the wall. Music is a window. A book is a vessel. Without them it would all spill across the floor and I'd stand in it up to my ankles, not knowing the way out.

That's why I don't want to write stories.

I want to write my story. Not as a memoir, not as a list of events. As the anatomy of a pilgrim — a person who goes through the world and can't be home anywhere, because he feels everything before it becomes a home. Who stays silent, because if he spoke, he'd have to say everything.

And maybe this hour is the first place that pilgrim stops for a while. Not to stay. Just to look around and say: I was here. This is what I carried. This is what hurt. This is what I turned into a sentence anyway.



I have to prove to myself that I'll write it. Not perfect — perfection is another cage, a luxury of people who aren't chased every day by their own brain.

I don't need perfection. I need a result. Because unfinished things pile up in me as proof that I'm just a person with potential, not a person with a deed.

And potential is a cruel word. People say it like a compliment. But when you live with it too long, it starts to sound like a verdict. You could have. You should have. It was in you.

No.

I don't want to be a person there was something in anymore.

I want to be a person who got it out.

Even if it isn't perfect. Even if it's raw, strange, too much, dangerously personal, in places embarrassing, in places like a wound that hasn't managed to close yet.

Let it.

At least it'll be out. At least I won't just be a pilgrim with a head full of light, who walked through the dark his whole life and never showed anyone what he carried under his coat.



This is my tutorial. How to stop being a pilgrim and start being a creator.

Not by ceasing to wander. Maybe I'll wander forever. Maybe I'll never fully find myself. Maybe the day when I'm stable, calm, without fear and without shame, will never come.

But a creator isn't a person who finds himself first.

A creator is a pilgrim who stops waiting to be found, and starts building from what he has on him. From pain. From memory. From silence. From music. From the emptiness that isn't emptiness. From the love no one let out. From the sentence that comes to him in the moment he thinks nothing is left.

A creator isn't the opposite of a pilgrim.

He's a pilgrim who understood that when he can't find a home anywhere, he has to write one.



All right.

I'm a pilgrim. A stranger in a strange land. A person who maybe will never find himself the way people are supposed to.

But maybe I wasn't looking for a place.

Maybe I was looking for a shape.

And if that's the definition of me, I'll take it. Not as an excuse. Not as a crown. Not as a pretty label on pain. But as the beginning of a map.

I'm the one who stays silent. But inside I feel the whole world so strongly that the silence is killing me.

And because I don't want to die of silence, I write.

Because when a sentence comes out, the silence is no longer complete. Because when a page comes out of pain, the pain at least for a while stops being only pain. Because when a pilgrim writes down where he's been, maybe he's no longer completely lost.

Maybe I'm not a creator yet.

But I'm no longer just a person who waits.

And that's the first step.

Maybe the only one I need today.

Author's Note

This wasn't a book.

It was a door.

You just walked through.

Now you're in the world of V. Tacet. And this world doesn't end with the last sentence you read. It just began.

It's a world where pain isn't an ending, but material. Where hunger, love, the body, memory, loneliness, and longing don't stay locked in the head — they get their own names. Their own houses. Their own monsters. Everything you just read about me, I took and turned into stories you can read even when you don't want to admit they're about you.

I promise you eight books from this world.

The first of them you can open right now.

It's called **Raw Hunger**.

It's a story about a hunger that can't be fed — and about what it does to a person when someone finally feeds it.

If this hour hit you with something, it means we speak the same language.

So come further.

The rest of the world is waiting.

— **V. Tacet**

The rest of the world lives at vtacet.com.



Acknowledgment

Thank you, eden ahbez.

For *Nature Boy*.

For the simple truth that has haunted me since the moment I first truly understood it:

to love and be loved

Maybe it really is the most important thing in the world.

Not to win.

Not to prove.

Not to be admired.

Not to be understood by absolutely everyone.

But to love.

And to be loved back.

Everything else is just the roads a person spends a whole life trying to reach it by.