ie Darling freewrites Montez Press Writers Residency

I'm supposed to be learning about the heart, but there aren't that many interesting things to be said about it. Well, that's not true. I think I'm dissociating. I should meditate, but I'm on the line with an agent of bureaucracy, and although he can disappear for large chunks of time, I cannot.

I wonder if I'm even much of a writer because I struggle with "affect" and "effect", run-on sentences, and comma usage. Well, with commas, a lot of that is because I still use the Oxford comma (word to Vampire Weekend). But also, I'm neurodivergent and I write how I talk. My friend said they don't like receiving walls of texts yesterday, which I do know to be true, but I didn't feel like it was a wall. I wonder if they're being passive aggressive. I don't think they are. It feels like a sly, underhanded remark all the same.

I see this guy's sister all the time because of course I do. She's very famous and he's, like, regular famous. If there's such a thing as "regular famous." I don't want to see her because I don't want to think about either of them... or any of them, really, because it was a narcissistic group dynamic –

Halt! The agent of bureaucracy has returned. NINE MINUTES LATER. All he says is to 'please stay connected.' I respond: 'okay.' And that's it. I will stay connected because it takes absolutely forever to reach an actual person these days, especially at an airline. Oh, wait, he's typing...

Anyway, so, it was a narcissistic group dynamic in which I was the scapegoat, of course. I hate groups. I hate groups. I haaaaaate groups. And spiritually weak people who cannot go against their conditioning to cause harm. But so, I hate seeing his sister. I'd hate seeing him as well, but I rarely do.

There's probably some level of him that doesn't want to be seen at play, and some level of us that is not meant to interact with one another.

She's never really done anything to me, but I hate any reminder of those people and that time in my life. I'd really rather not see her. But when I think about it honestly... she did. Yeah, sure, she was nice enough to me, but – honestly, I don't even want to think about it. I wonder when the agent will return. I hate bureaucracy. I know that I shouldn't say I hate things, but whatever, you know what I mean, like, can't a bitch just have a fucking normal life for a little bit? I'm not smoking cigarettes! Goddamn.

And so yeah, I feel like niceness is, like, almost worse than just being ignored. Ugh, I'm just ruining my own day thinking about this.

You know, I'm also not interested in Ezra Koenig at all. There was a period where people would talk about him *all*. The fucking. *Time*! And I never knew what they were talking about, because I don't actually really like Vampire Weekend. Now I know who it is, and I still don't give a shit, to be honest. I did like that lyric 'is your sweater on? Do you wanna fuck?' I *loved* that fucking lyric. It's *so* good! I genuinely can't remember most of the lyrics to Vampire Weekend songs even though I actually listened to that one super famous album quite a few times; it just didn't resonate with me. But I always think about Oxford Comma because I used to be like "who gives a fuck about an Oxford comma?" Uh, well, hello?! I do!' I thought that was so clever and funny, and I am such a millennial, and a byproduct of my time and circumstances.

Run-on sentence. Run-on paragraph.

I'm supposed to be researching hearts, but I just... do not

want to exist right now. Like, I just want to go back to sleep, and sleep for days. 'Come over, come over. I won't make the same mistakes. I'm dying not to hurt you.' Cobra Starship.

Well, I've been running through the Aether and diving into the deepest of depths to pull out whatever it is the land is trying to tell me. Then I remember, it's not the land. It's the sea. And the rivers. I'm learning about how the River Thames protected the indigenous Celts of the land from Roman invaders and how once the Roman Empire broke them, they were colonized again and again, over and over by different people.

It's well known to most that I absolutely hate the Hapsburgs and the Holy Roman Empire.

No. 2 (or, Unholy Trinity)

Whilst I was walking to the 21 bus, very confused and annoyed by the fact that the map misled me, but also overjoyed by the sheer bounty of Indian treats I had gotten at Rajmahal, it occurred to me that there may well be a third and final boss that I have yet to best. Because, let's see – in the month or so that I've returned to dating after not doing so for six, six and a half years – I have managed to hit all the archetypes of my ruin on the head quite squarely.

'The hypebeast fuckboi wannabe,' I thought, counting on an aethereal thumb. 'The neurodiverse older handler who wants to sexually dominate me. All that's left is the intimacy avoidant model who can't express their feelings to me directly.'

Then I considered that maybe I had already encountered that with the fascination I had redeveloped in the past month for a past intrigue I once had. Prior to hooking up with The Handler, I was actively trying to manifest this person, for better or for worse. I think they may have been thinking about me a lot, considering I very rarely like to backtrack. But, betwixt us two (and whoever might be reading with you), I have long harbored regret about this... missed connection of sorts, because he's really hot and I am 100% certain that he knows how to fuck.



And that's very important to me, considering that I don't do it often. If I do "do it" it'd better be phenomenal — oh wait, maybe there's a fourth. A really hot girl who looks like a boy, who looks like a girl. You know, hot stemmes who think they're Billy Big Bollocks bc they've got small tits and daddy top energy. Excuse me while I puke up my heart. Honestly, I feel traumatized from dating people who've been socialized as women... but the archetype still stands.

Anyway, yeah, so like... that's important to me, y'know? Like, of course, the cis het wannabe hypebeast fuckwad was a shit lay – honestly one of the worst. I don't want to think about the past to compare, so I'll trust that it is definitely ranked up there with the worst consensual lays of my life. Meanwhile, the only reason I give one iota of a fuck about The Handler is because it was so good, it was maybe *too* good. But men who have nothing else to offer tend to be really good at sex. They have to be. They have nothing else to offer.

It hadn't even occurred to me that both he and Handler No. I are both Scorpios. Handler No. I actually did have things to offer, he was just actively trying to exploit my youth by trying to give me less than I deserved or wanted. Even Handler No. 2 (a Gemini) had something to offer — although it was just access to parties and drugs, which is great because he was not good at sex. This most recent Handler (Handler No. 3, as it were) had nothing to offer except really good dick. Which isn't really worth that much.

No. 3

Children are easy pickings for predacious people. Narcissists love children – not in the sense that narcissists are capable of love. Perhaps love is the wrong word. I actually think most narcissists don't care too much for children in that sense. But narcissists can appreciate the relative ease with which they can delude children and feed on their energy, which is very potent and very powerful.

No. 4 (or, ra-ra)

I used to be so angry. It was the mordant undercurrent of my personhood, the rage I was subtly and brutally forced to disappear for the sake of my oppressor. It was easier for me to ra-ra about systemic injustice than to face what was dreadfully wrong within my own life. I suppose I felt like those hellacious bones of contention were irreparable – in a way, I was right. In the pit of my being, I knew there was no fixing this, no fixing them, no way to fix hundreds of years of insanity and sickness and abuse and inequity and tyranny and atrocity and unanswered grievances and unaccounted for blame. In the pit of my being, I knew there were really only ever two options – stay and die, or go and thrive. I've been playing both sides, middling on the fence like I had all the lifetimes in the world to either heal or die.