

Dolphins
(a suicide note)

By

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“Impregnate a distant world”- That was the original pitch, and it spoke directly to the American male’s manifest destiny fetish. Obviously, it sold very well... and why not- people were full of fear, consumed with panic. The world was collapsing in on itself; everything was depleted, destroyed, or dying. Children were not part of Earth’s future they said; our seeds would wither and die within us. Yet instead of accepting responsibility, tempering our actions, taking control and fixing what we had damaged, we simply decided to alter our perspective. Literally... we aimed higher and set our sights to the sky.

The vast expanse of *space* was to be our national womb, our mistress to be used- celestial legs spread eternal wide, inviting us in. We will now force ourselves upon an infinite and unwitting cosmos. Thanks to the staggering scope of the military industrial complex and its generous corporate benefactors, WE could now evolve into warheads; weaponize our DNA to rebuild the caustic force of mankind someplace new.

The program launched with a multi-billion-dollar marketing campaign. Celebrities and politicians waved to hungry crowds as they entered into the facility, being interviewed in their stunning gowns and sharp suits while the press licked boot and asked regurgitated themes on the same question ad nauseam: ‘how does it feel to be so special?’ The program even earned the full and hearty endorsement of the Church- the Pope himself crawled down off his golden throne to personally take part.

There were three packages offered in this ‘intergalactic insemination’ project. The first option was the cheapest and most popular, as it allowed you to hedge your bets – you could simply send your sperm into space while “you” stayed here to see how things played out. A small, personalized seed pod would carry your fluid out of our atmosphere and then essentially... wander space. What’s supposed to happen then is anyone’s guess... the pamphlets become quite vague after they convince you it will be easy to ejaculate into a little cup. It’s the concept, in the abstract, that sells this option- ‘Shoot your load into space’. Everyone who signed up for the larger packages gets this option as a free add-on, however... women are only ‘*encouraged to utilize any spermatozoa they prefer*’. Why they didn’t just allow them to freeze their eggs and send those into orbit comes down to that age-old mentality of the capital, M-A-N

being in control of all reproductive decisions. They didn't want an alien race impregnating a human egg and making some disgusting hybrid species... no, they demanded honest-to-goodness, hand-made, MAN-made sperm would be the only thing allowed to do any penetrating to make half-alien babies.

Option two, known colloquially as 'the popsicle', was to be cryogenically frozen, wholesale, all together just as you are, and put into a large pod. They launch that pod into open space and then it's up to fate. Perhaps, they tantalizingly taunt, in a thousand years you'll awaken on a distant world, to find yourself worshipped as a God. However, the mathematical reality was that you would float forever and never awaken, or worse, be pulled into a black hole and cease to ever exist in the first place. This option was most attractive to the seniors; they figured they didn't have long left, why not play the cosmic lottery and see if their luck panned out. Einstein famously said, "God doesn't play dice", but then, Einstein didn't have the disposable income that people have today, so how would he know. Besides, from what I've witnessed, God is obviously a degenerate gambler.

Option three was reserved for the economic one-percenters since they were the only folks who could afford it- otherwise it would take thirty plus years in one of the high-paying labor camps to even come close to working it off. For a sum equal that of a medium-sized nation's GDP, the premium package promised a full, mature and cerebrally coherent clone. You continue to live however you see fit; meanwhile you – *a copy of you* – goes into the pod, is fed intravenously, grows, and eventually, at whatever pre-determined age you request, the pod's engines engage and the on-board guidance systems head toward the gravitational pull of the nearest planet. When awakened your clone is presented with detailed instructions and video tutorials, they don the included space suit and step out onto an alien world, fully prepared to colonize. The pod contains everything needed; an armory of guns, a year's supply of fresh water and dehydrated food, a briefcase of seeds carefully curated by top botanists, and all the equipment necessary to set up a small hydroponic lab. The pod itself doubles as a shelter and you're even afforded fifty terabytes of films, music and e-books to entertain, distract and relax with. They made it seem like they thought of everything, and maybe they really did.

It became the main event of our wheezing culture; millions of people, lining up around the storefronts for weeks to gladly pay the exorbitant costs with big, dumb smiles plastered across their mugs. This was the next big thing, possibly *the last big thing*- you don't want to be left behind. It was genius; the perfect, unholy marriage of our consumerist lust and our solipsistic dreams of immortality. The future of death turned out to be just another way for the cynical present to continue unabated into a for-profit afterlife. You see, marketing had become the dominant religion without anyone realizing it. We worshipped at invisible alters all around us, on every screen, billboard, and shiny new product designed to deliver adverts to us twenty-four hours a day. We were tracked and recorded and quantified, then barraged with exactly what we wanted before we knew we wanted it. The desires were manufactured, and they bred marketing campaigns inside of us, then, believing it to be our own taste, we evangelized the gospel outward, made it part of our self-perceptions. Our brands defined us, useful idiot cultists that we were. People starved in the streets, children lived in cages, and yet everyone kept buying nine hundred-dollar cellphones for reasons they didn't understand. This is how it all worked; goods, services, politics, the tax code. A contrived economic servitude we all ached to take part in, for fear that we may miss out on a grand, nebulous *something*.

Me on the other hand... I'm disgusted by the lot of it. The idea that we are willing to send our madness out into the universe is too much for me to abide. We will eat up all of outer space if given the chance. No place will ever be safe from our insatiable hunger for domain. Of this, I am certain.

For those who think this is hyperbole, if you're unfamiliar, let me just tell you- our history was not kind. The insidious truth was there existed a concerted, prolonged effort to manufacture and cultivate hatred on a scale previously unthinkable. We took and raped and killed and lied and demonized our fellow man over trivialities so we could tell ourselves we were 'better' than them. We did whatever we damn well pleased and called anyone else scum who even attempted to take us to task for our actions or rhetoric. We allowed ourselves to be demeaned, our spirits bound, our minds depressed, our grotesqueries overfed. We lost sight of our potential and were tricked into the idea of working and paying and ignoring our true selves

while busily celebrating the wolves in sheep's clothes gnawing away at our guts. We sold our human potential down the river to continuously line the pockets of a handful of unimaginative bureaucrats because they scared our benumbed limbic brains into thinking they were our only salvation, our only path to safety and stability. We were to blame, we, the willfully ignorant. Of all evils foisted upon us from every direction, our sickening passivity and cowardice was the most intolerable since it was entirely within our power to change. Really, that was our *only* power, and nobody used it. No one tried to stop anything and by the time we realized how dire things really were, it was too late anyway.

Which is how I've come to this... one thing I ask you to remember is that humans, by and large, had a long history of revolution. But revolution can be quiet and internal, just as often (if not more so) as it can be raucous and bloody.

Rumor is, somewhere out there in the brown muck that was once pristine blue ocean, a few places still supported life in a somewhat normal fashion. I'd been told on good authority there is such a place where, believe it or not, dolphins still lived. They swim and squeak and you can walk right up to them and touch them if you want, and after weeks of slow, dangerous travel through the blisteringly hot and drought-ravaged southern United States, I've finally made it here to see for myself. Signs still hang, announcing the opportunity to swim with 'therapy' dolphins. This was one of those places where the old, the infirm, and the enfeebled would come, wade out into a little area and be able to pet and interact with the dolphins in their 'natural habitat'. I know it seems silly... *dolphins...* who cares, right? I don't know much about the creatures and I have no strong affinity for them one way or another... but outside of a few thousand dogs and cats, most animal life died off long ago. I can't even tell you how long it's been since I've seen an actual, live animal that doesn't scurry on the ground and have antennae. Over the years, as things fell apart, I became more and more wistful, and began to obsessively think about running with a pack of wolves, flying in a purposeful 'V' with a flock of geese, bedding down on a pile of leaves with a family of deer... becoming part of nature, something larger and outside of humanity.

The idea that these particular dolphins were once therapy animals is extra comforting to me, un-ironically enough, because I do feel weary... I feel enfeebled. If there's somewhere to give yourself over to something compassionate and be healed, even in some small way, I need to embrace it. I need something non-human that's not inhuman. I need to know that once, *at least once*, there was some form of purity out there, something that made sense and was balanced, necessary, and wise in a way that we could never truly understand or emulate due to our sordid human nature, but all the same *was there* and for the shortest blip of time, even dominated this world.

The water isn't brown, but it's definitely not blue per se... more a slimy, oil-slicked-rainbow hue. But wouldn't you know it, it's true. Here they are- three goddamned living, breathing dolphins. Their skin looks a bit irritated, puffy and varnished with a gray pallor that doesn't seem a healthy, natural dolphin-gray... but otherwise, they seem fine, calm, and unconcerned. I walk toward them, and they pensively cut through the water around me, bobbing their heads up and down, taking stock, trying to determine if I am a threat. One of them brushes against my leg and barrel rolls in front of me a few times, its belly remains upward, and I stroke it gently. I hear a chitter, a few chirps and now I'm surround by the three of them, rubbing up against me like dogs, asking to be pet. With both my hands in the water, sliding over their slick skins I start to cry. So what, I start to fucking *sob*.

The whole scene reminds me of one of those classical novels of tragic romanticism where the young lovers, shunned by society for their scandalous love, walk hand in hand into the crashing waves, never to be seen again, preferring to die with one another on their own terms than to prostitute themselves to a world they didn't fit into. I notice small, malformed fish swimming around my feet; there's still a whole world thriving down below, I muse. I grab the dolphin's fin like a hand, and it guides me deeper, further out and I'm in up to my waist when I notice my skin tingling, a burning sensation from whatever chemicals I'm bathing in. I go further, until my feet loose purchase with the ground. When I'm up to my neck, I let go. I clamp my eyes shut and drift down slowly. Further and further down, with no intention of coming

back up. I choose to revolt instead of going forward, instead of going upward. I choose rebellion on my own terms in this endless depth.

It's comforting, to know you have no real control, yet you can sometimes still command the internal chaos in small, delicate intervals. I proclaim agency and I choose to return where this whole mess began; our collective primordial womb, where we made our first grand mistake of slithering out of the muck - our true original sin. I give in to the pressure of fathoms, squeezing air from my lungs, swaddling me tightly for the return to our birthplace. The dolphins have left me and I'm alone, drifting in the mute darkness of subaqueous sensory nullification. My skin burns and itches and it feels like gasoline is seeping into every cut and crack and crease. I keep my eyes shut tight and envision my traumatic descension as evolutionary necessity. The deeper I go the darker and colder it gets, and I can't help but think of all those bodies floating through space, desperate to wake up and conquer anew. I think about the grand poverty of such a desire. I think of those suckers floating through space and I imagine a Red Giant, collecting them at the end of the universe like a cremation oven, burning them up with incomprehensibly dispassionate ferocity. A universe imbued with ironic justice is a marvelous dream. I think of everything swallowed up and voided out, I imagine the abolition of all forms of slavery, a future for the innocent. I trick myself into being hopeful one last time as I run out of oxygen.