

Eating Cherries in the Dark

Micro fictions by Alexander Nyström



PREAMBLE

The following micro fictions were conceived of and posted on Twitter between the 7th of May and the 7th of October, 2012. Some have been edited in retrospect for clarity, grammar and/or atmosphere. Did you enjoy what you read? Feel free to mail feedback to alexnystrom@yahoo.com.

Thank you for reading.

80

Waking up, hanging suspended beneath the bridge. Way down:
Rush of water. Mind foggy. What had the ad said? "Meet exciting
people." No shit.

80

∅

Mladic's mirror: When shaving, a scarlet line would slowly start growing across the throat. The general soon learned his way with the razor.

∅

∅

He carried a vial of ink with him wherever he went. When asked why, he'd open it and let purple smoke paint a thousand reasons on the air.

∅

∅

This fountain is filled with blood, the coins thrown made of bone.

But there are no hands; only shadows, no wishes made; only
prayers.

∅

80

As he closes his mouth, his tongue twists into the shape of a gun;
as they continue the taunting his teeth grow pointed, like bullets.

80

80

He had a habit of picking the skin off his cuticles. Hurt like hell.
But he had to know: Made of gold or just meat, like all the rest?

80

∅

B's diary always opens on a blank page. Slowly, words appear, as from below. When read they fade away, lazily, like sand 'neath water.

∅

∅

Suddenly, the sky becomes a mirror, the foam on my face turns into fluffy clouds. People below stop, point, stare. One of them has my razor.

∅

§

When recognized, the ghoul's eyes will turn oily black and it will desperately try to act human. Don't be fooled.

We were all human once.

§

80

Strips of cherry-red skin hi & low, the sugary cages of his lungs filled with chocolate. The kids: Ravenous. The shop had to close early.

80

∞

Den andra, hon som kunde varit: Alltid ett steg bakom. De liknar varandra där de går. Ögonens skålar samlar regn, spiller silver på marken.

∞

∅

As you put your ear to the small wooden box, faint scratchings can be heard. You cough, once, as the key disintegrates in your bloodstream.

∅

∅

The moon is a golden bruise pressing at your window. Dipping its quill in the navy blue of your sheets, sleep writes itself on your eyelids.

∅

∅

Magnifying lamp aimed at the opened ribcage, the coroners could see fingerprints scattered all over the soft burgundy flesh of his heart.

∅

∅

Människokroppen består till cirka 60% procent av vatten. Ändå är det så många av oss som aldrig lär sig simma.

∅

80

After the incident with the scissors, the staff removed her mirrors.
The eyes of the other children could not be covered, however.

80

80

He bought three minutes of intense rain, because he had an umbrella and a plan. She ordered overcast skies, because she was just like that.

80

80

Contents of locked desk drawer: Envelope (torn), dice, pencil (chewed), fish hook, photo (smudged), pliers, cigarette with lipstick, twine.

80

80

Morning: She wakes you with a cuppa freshly squeezed nightmares. You sip the tar black brew; sleep fucks off. Way more potent than coffee.

80

80

Popcorn - stale; golden ticket - torn & frayed. The dark eyes of the clown: Desperate. Outside the striped tent, endless space hurls by.

80

80

The nurse fakes a smile. Dead eyes. Overhead: Fluorescent gloom.
Needle pierces skin. He winces, as pulsating light slowly fills the
barrel.

80

∞

Love is a coffin built for two.

∞

∅

Trollkarlen uppträder alltid för fulla hus. Publiken skrattar,
applåderar, häpnar. Anar inte att den är hans allra mest
fulländade trick.

∅

∅

Resting on a sturdy branch; a swig of oxygen from the canister.
Eyes closed, sunlight a halo around her head. Far below: The
clouds.

∅

80

For sale: Hemingway novel. Never read.

80

80

It felt like love. She was pretty, funny, sensitive and smart. Perfect, if not for the enormous tattoo of a human on her soft velvet belly.

80

⌘

A room. The walls are stained in purplish bruises. Two small windows face out onto stars tumbling thru the black like leaves.

Chronos sighs.

⌘

80

The author takes a bite of his typewriter. It tastes salty. Scattered,
the pages of his novel bob on the rippling surface of the floor.

80

∅

He inserts a coin into the jukebox. A familiar fragrance envelops him. Her cool fingertips against his neck. He closes his eyes, shivering.

∅

80

The baby, restless in its cot, shrieks. The sound is ancient. Mother moves in the dark. The infant's lips close on the stained pacifier.

80

∞

The tiny piece of complimentary chocolate, navy-blue wrapper, is called 'The Rest of Your Life'. Unsurprisingly, it is dark and bitter.

∞

∞

Whenever I smile, my face cracks a little. Society berates me for not having enough thread, but gladly supplies the needle.

∞

80

Lifting the doll out of its case, the girl can hardly contain herself. It squirms between her skeletal fingers, so painfully alive.

80

80

The queen's domain lies in the shallow breaths that haunt October
phone wires. Silver and shadowy grey her standards; fleeting,
austere.

80

∅

When Dora started using reflective eye shadow, people around her slowly began to lose their contours. The irony did not escape her.

∅

80

At the feet of the beggar woman, a wooden bowl. Inside: An eye,
two thumbs, a tongue. Mouth coppery, I move along, four teeth
poorer.

80

∅

The serial killer arrives home early. Crimson butterflies are smeared all over the refrigerator. He smiles. *The kids grow up so fast.*

∅

∅

In the City of Brass, there is a park where lovers meet. If they happen to glimpse green foliage reflected in the pond, their love is true.

∅

∞

Vampire mirrors: Pondering your reflection, you're drained of self-worth. Once empty, the surface before you fading, your eyes turn silver.

∞

∅

In our town, a minute is 62 seconds. Discarded dreams hover
beneath red/white striped café awnings. *Slowly now*, doll. We only
have forever.

∅

80

In Monochrome City, desperate shirt collars roam the streets,
longing for burgundy lips.

80

∅

In the City of Glass a cardboard box is put before an anxious princess. A waft of meat escapes as she takes the lid off.

The shoes tremble.

∅

80

When she woke up and saw the lanky ones approaching, washed in a light so white it hurt to look at, she knew she was back on the ship.

80

∅

Whenever it rained in her bedroom, she'd pluck a tangerine from the bowl and peel it. Light flooding over her, she'd lean back on her cloud.

∅

∞

In our every move the remembrance, and promise, of loss. Some only learn better than others to tame their shadows.

∞

∅

It's true we're all cogs & springs. But I know someone who keeps a
bowl of blood to grease her machine. Weeping, she won't stop
believing.

∅

୧୦

The Book of Minutes is jade, title embossed in gold. Opening it, the soft pages tickle your fingertips. Memory already fading, you sigh.

୧୦

∅

Bodies of mercury split to make way as you ascend. Upward, ever
upward. Liquid a warm coat on your skin. In the distance:
Yourself, blurred.

∅

80

She has an extra room for you, located between her 4:th and 5:th
rib. Here, a bed and an always cool pillow.

Sleep comes with the red tide.

80

80

The author wrote all his stories on cigarette paper. Once you smoked 'em, they were gone. The best ones were about crying at hospital beds.

80

∅

Pears, white as the stars & filled with snow. An open silver cage.
Shared breaths. Leaves bleeding ruby. Smiling, he dreams another
miracle.

∅

∅

Dark waters lap gently at your bed. Rocking to and fro, you imagine glowing starfish beneath. From above, an invisible net slowly descends.

∅

∅

At dawn, faces are painted on. Noses protrude from taut skin, slits
grow into mouths, eyes appear out of the gloom.

Dusk bides its time.

∅

80

He put a big mirror in a gilded silver frame at the foot of his bed.
Needless to say, he did not show up for work the next morning.

80

∅

He'd reach within, extract the bullets, load them into the revolver,
spin the chamber, pull the trigger. And the pain would be no
stranger.

∅



Today you are loved not for the way you look, what you earn,
where you live, or even for what you are, but for everything you
could ever be.



80

There is a place between hours where seconds are weighed on a silver scale. Asleep beside you, minutes curl up like hair around her face.

80

∞

who carries his heart in an ivory box. Despair: A creature with no
beginning or end. Its beauty is deadly, its whisper serene. It is a
king

∞

∅

How to know: The white of their eyes. Look closely. You will see a tiny dot moving in circles. Crimson wings. The hunger perpetuates itself.

∅

∅

The egg that hatched me bore a faint bruise on the white shell. My
song may be weak, but at least the notes are honest.

∅

∅

[1/2] The world is a novel, and the reader is getting closer to the last chapter. Suddenly, the phone rings.

∅

∅

[2/2] Weary, he puts the book down and picks up the receiver. When he hears that voice, he smiles and tears well up. The novel concludes.

∅

∅

At the castle, the count himself comes to greet me. Squinting behind thick glasses, he offers me a drink. His fangs are duller than mine.

∅

∞

The eiderdowns of the bed: A cloud that floats lazily across the green of her eye. But which one of you is doing the dreaming?

∞

80

She has a suitcase full of clouds. Whenever someone's too happy,
she lets one out. All in the name of perspective.

80

80

Hey, I just met you, and this is crazy, but the human soul is an
abyss, and most of the time our bridges are too frail.

80

♠

The Jack of Spades has made a pass on the Nine of Diamonds, which angers her boyfriend the Four of Clubs greatly. Expect a shuffle.

♠

80

There is a nation whose flag is completely white. Its people wear their hearts on their sleeves. When they sing of love, it is but a word.

80

⌀

Years later, she went back to where they had found the tricycle, already starting to rust. Clutching the red wool mitten tightly, she wept.

⌀

80

Sometimes God drives among men in a cream-colored Beetle with tinted windows. You know it's Him as the light turns green as He approaches.

80

80

Let us speak of human waste / humility and pearls 'fore swine /
bitter bitter is the taste / poured from thine cup into mine.

80

∅

A dream: Towers fall and are rebuilt, stars snuffed out, reborn. But
the keys I buried as a child remain, hidden deep beneath your
garden.

∅

80

You have been dead for ten days when the lid is torn off and you are lifted out of the coffin. Smiling, your new family greets you.

80

80

The ground crew folds the airport together, having slight difficulties with terminal 3. The airplane revs the engines impatiently.

80

∅

The unlit cigarette is a map, but your fire burns the coordinates every time. The smoke that lingers reminds you, though. Soft, like hair.

∅

80

When Marcy tried to escape the boredom of her little hometown she realized, choking, that someone had wrapped it entirely in clingfilm.

80

∅

Deep 'neath glittering turquoise, where water turns a dark blue,
they rest. Mermen, transparent lids over sleeping eyes. Dreaming
us.

∅

80

The banknotes tremble softly, ever so softly as they pass from hand to hand. Blood flows thru the fibre looking, in vain, for a heart.

80

∅

Han insåg att fjärilarna var döda sedan länge och känslan i magen var deras aska, med vilken en mycket nyckfull vind gjorde som den ville.

∅

80

I opened the door to find that those boots were, indeed, seriously looking like they wanted to walk right over me.

80

80

The emaciated are kept behind a huge glass wall. Families stop to look. Kids point, awed. They look so much like us! Except with clothes.

81

80

She paints with the soot that floats down from the chimneys. On
the canvas, the shapes of bodies writhe beneath her brush.

80

∅

En dag kommer döden och kurerar dig.

∅

∅

The postmortem reveals he's been stabbed with a mirror shard.
Leaning over, the coroner sees a heart, covered in black blood, still
beating.

∅

80

A city is being built inside my head. Fluid-filled membrane sacs pulsate, ready to receive tenants. I ache. Welcome to Tumor Town.

80

80

A book rewrites itself when nobody's reading. Desperate, it changes plot to suit what it believes readers want. Do you recognize this story?

80

∅

When Pandora felt grumpy, she'd leave boxes all over the house.
Her family grew weary. Especially the locust were a pain to get
back inside.

∅

80

When the UFOs came, I was at the beach with you. When the aliens claimed humanity for food, we locked gazes. The tide came in. I was happy.

80

∅

The cloud factory has a new model coming out: Small enough to fit in a matchbox, yet expandable to fill a bedroom. Dreams not included.

∅

∅

Magellan leans over the railing. Stars glow down in the black.
Above, luminous fish swim between the masts. Suddenly the ship
tips forward.

∅

80

The good thing about colliding with a rainbow, she thought, is at least the pot of gold would cover for the insurance she didn't have.

80

80

A magician buys a vanilla cone for his daughter. The child has a pet shadow on a leash. He smiles: One day she'll reimagine the world.

80

∞

There is a room in this palace that holds a beating heart. The emperor is asleep, but the silver compass beneath his ribs spins restlessly.

∞

∞

The painter weaves a strand of cloud around his brush. Her hair,
ghost white, envelops most of the canvas. The easel's legs
shudder.

∞

∅

"I want to return this man." The dream sighed. "Why?", asked the salesman. "It's his mind." "Yes, what about it?" "It's just too small."

∅

80

This museum exhibits empty envelopes. There are no visitors, but there is a sound: A tide rushing towards shore; an army of very small feet.

80

∞

If you see the world through a veil of tears, do not fear. It is only a boy in purple shorts weaving you into a bubble. Soon you will fly.

∞

80

Grimy tiles. Dropped pretensions: This is what's real. But a white horse is waiting. The stirrup, bloodlit, looks like an elbow pit.

80

∞

A golden cup. A melted mirror. In the steaming silver, I still see the outline of your face, beckoning me to drink. But I thirst no longer.

∞

Copyright © by Alexander Nyström 2012