

TIME matters



supplement



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CINEMA

Interview with Salma Hayek



It was Salma Hayek, an actress known for her steamy movies and Latin sensuality, who brought the great literary work of Khalil Gibran, 'The Prophet', to the screen. Putting this philosophical poetry into pictures - and doing it justice - was no mean feat.

Salma Hayek showed her skill as a producer in finding just the right people for her team, for example Paul and Gaétan Brizzi, whose artistic presence and talent are immediately apparent.

Right up to the end, problems arose that delayed the film's release; it was meant to come out several months ago.

It eventually came out... in the week that followed the 13th November Paris attacks. We were curious to hear what Salma Hayek had to say on the theme of time, and we did not come away disappointed.

In your opinion, is time more like a line to be followed or a painting to be contemplated? Have you, during your career, had the impression that time is a sort of image in which everything is simultaneous?

It's a very complex subject but that's fine because yes, I am very much into quantum theories of time and I will answer you.

Great, let's get started. Have you ever had reasons, during your career, to think the way the Prophet character thinks? He says the past is only the present remembering, and the future is the present imagining. Is the future therefore contained within the present?

Yes I think it forms a whole. Everything happens at the same time in this temporal machine, I could tell you a thousand stories from my career which point to this, but I don't even dare to, you would think I'm crazy, the coincidences that have happened to me in Hollywood are just too bizarre.

Not even a single one?

No, not even one, it's too strange to tell, people would think I'm a nutcase.

At least tell me if, in your career - which by definition for an actress is made up of paths crossing each other - something leads you to think that you are followed or preceded?

By what?

By your destiny.

Of course every day, in my life everything is cyclical, everything is locked into circles that follow each other, for example this film, The Prophet, had almost been made, twice already - and then the project capsized, we don't know why, well, actually, today I do know why. If you put aside the purely technical last-minute difficulties, which kept on coming at us, it was simply that *it was not the moment* for this film to be made. It was written that things should be different; and how it was written, I am beginning to understand. Since the Paris attacks this film has taken on a whole new meaning, as though it was waiting to come out at that particular moment.



Why?

Because this film is the antithesis of what terrorists are trying to promote, or rather, it glorifies what they hate: art, tolerance, a little girl who seeks to master her voice, music, poetry, the cinema, everything that ennobles the human spirit and frees it from limits. Time is one of the limits imposed on the human spirit, just as space is, but we can break free of it as is said in *The Prophet*. At one point we see the character flying through the gardens and he explains to the child that he's free in his mind.

Can you do this, free yourself from time?

Constantly.

When? During normal life? When you're asleep?

Do you see a difference? I don't. I think that time is everything all at once, it cannot be divided into waking and sleeping. Time is meaning, life is meaning, for me time is above all the kingdom of patience, it is the place where evolution happens, self-revelation, of an inside truth, but in fact, not of a single truth, of a multitude of truths that are like paths, and that all exist at the same time. When you have doubts, difficulties, well for me at least it's this way, you try to come up with a range of solutions and interpretations, and this helps you to choose the right one, because if you don't do this you tend to follow only one path. In fact you have to have enough imagination to jump from one path to another, just like that, continuously. I confess that I'm an avid reader of all these

theories on quantum time and on parallel meanings. I pay attention to all the solutions we build with the use of our imagination.

For example when you were twelve years old, you had a clear enough idea of who you would become?

When I was eight years old you mean. I didn't know exactly where I was going but I knew I was going somewhere. And whenever I did anything that I felt was outside of my plan, even if I didn't know exactly what that plan was, I would arrange things so as to be in tune with it. It's a deep intuition that has more than once helped me redress the situation. I always had the feeling that I had to choose an experience that would bring another, equally necessary experience, and why this one rather than that one, I wouldn't be able to say, but I have gone exactly where I intended to go, or where something inside me was telling me to go.

Up to the point of measuring up to a standard?

No, no standards, I don't like established standards and I especially don't like conforming to them. Destiny is to go where you must go, without imitating anyone.

From an interview with Salma Hayek by Rodolfo Cohen,
in Paris on 8th December 2015.

CINEMA Any day

A philosophical tale by Rustam Branaman

The main character is called VIAN.

It's clear he's in a difficult situation: he's just come out of a dozen years in prison, with no money or work prospects, tired out and scarred by his experiences.

Vian goes from problem to problem without ever giving in.

At each rejection, each obstacle, he resigns himself, takes the knocks, and grits his teeth as he pounds his punch-bag.

The actor, Sean Bean, is excellent. He talks very little, but his voice has resonance.

He's on the verge of having to sleep on the streets when his sister picks him up, just in time.

A lifebuoy is thrown out to him – a job, offered despite his past as a convict: 'I've got a good feeling about you,' says the restaurant owner, and hires him on the spot, American-style. Shots of open skies and clouds set the film's pace and provide a poetic space to breathe between the scenes. Pylons and high-tension cables line the horizon.

Symbols of electricity, of the energy flowing all around, silently, always in the background and forever present.

Despite Vian's daily efforts to stay afloat, a series of events catapults him into disaster.

Deep at the heart of this crisis, he undergoes a spiritual experience – a waking dream, connecting him with his nephew who recently passed away.

He has a 'change of heart', and, from then on, he approaches things in a different way.

This change of perspective allows him to understand the elements at play, the messages, and the answers that have been staring him in the face the whole time.

Within 48 hours, he manages to sort his life out in such a way as to solve everybody else's problems too, and the film ends with a powerful, emotionally uplifting scene.

Artistically, the film is a great success. The actors are comfortable in their roles around the hero played by Sean Bean, who projects controlled strength.

The music, by Czech-American Elia Cmiral, discreetly accompanies the action. Pitched at just the right tone, it suits the story perfectly.

Director Rustam Branaman makes important literary references: first, in the main character's name (referring to multifaceted writer Boris Vian); and second, to Hemingway's 'The Old Man and the Sea', a story that holds the key to saving Vian.

THE FILM HINGES ON VIAN'S SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE.

This concerns a connection to another dimension, a contact. We don't know exactly what it is; – the character himself doesn't know – we only know it's all about a dream.

Bright and laden with meaning, this moment of contact resembles the thousands of testimonies collected by the Swiss Institute of Noetic Sciences.

Such experiences are becoming more and more common. In spite of all our modern-day pessimism, humanity, far from spiralling to apocalypse, is climbing, progressing, and discovering new spiritual horizons.

At the same time, a whole new scientific discourse is engaging physicists and astrophysicists; a discourse, rooted in the most rigid of theories, which can explain and validate these experiences.

Just like any other person who goes through a Near Death Experience or Out of Body Experience, Vian cannot, at first, bring himself to tell others about it. When he eventually does, nobody believes him.

If he'd been able to quote Einstein, would people have been more likely to listen to him?

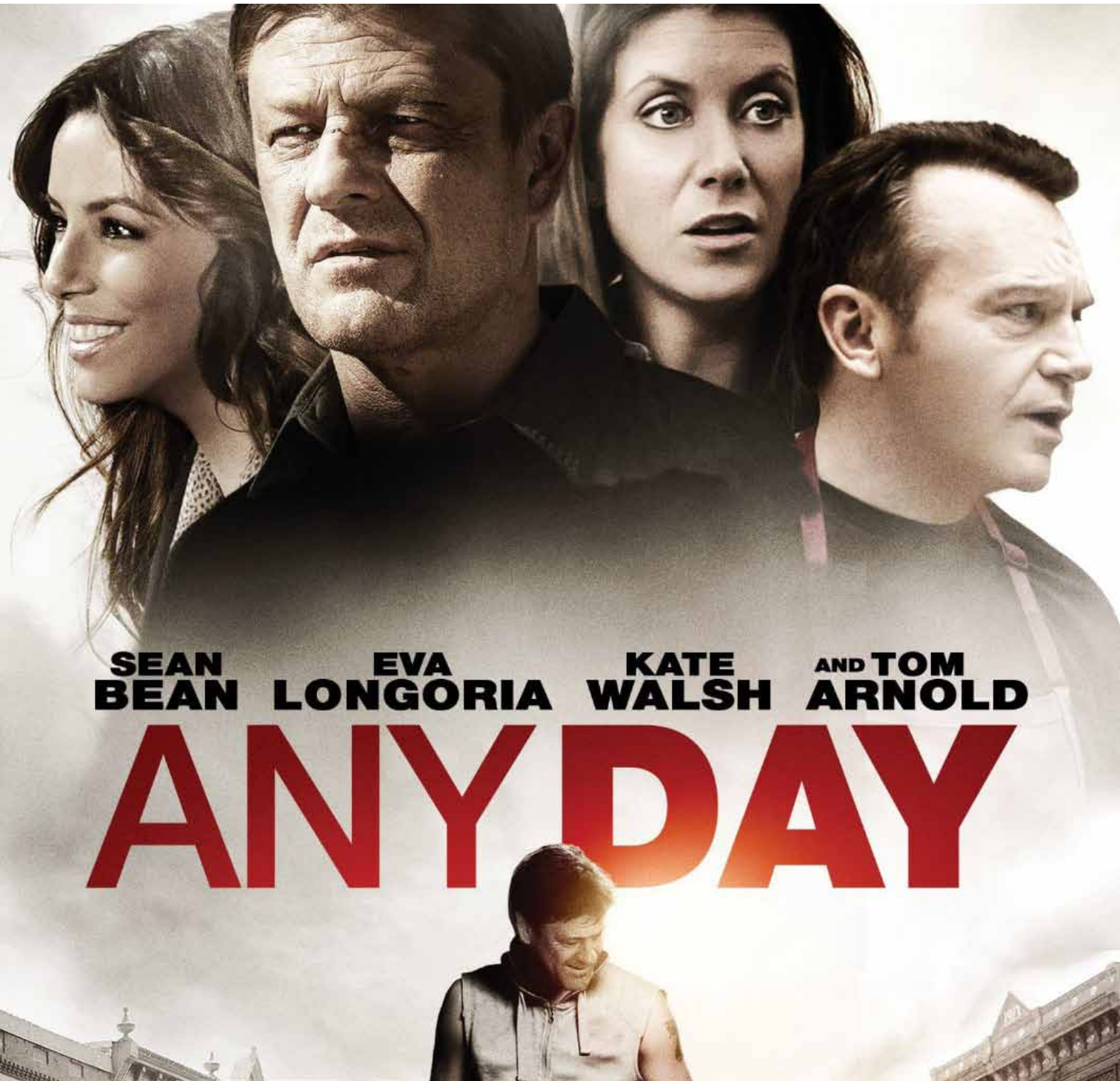
Maybe not.

In this film, there is not the slightest hint of a mobile phone, of a tablet, of technology or algorithms.

Vian confronts his destiny without technological crutches.

It is Hemingway's story, 'The Old Man and the Sea', that gives him the answer he needs.

-Ph. S



SEAN BEAN **EVA LONGORIA** **KATE WALSH** **AND TOM ARNOLD**

ANY DAY



CINEMA

Time Lapse - The power of time by Bradley King

Caught in a time paradox,
three friends go insane...

Callie, Finn and Jasper, three young adults, find a camera that can take photos of tomorrow. Curious about their own future, the three friends decide to try the machine out and have a look at what lies ahead for them.

There's no doubt that the beginning of the film is very exciting, but this excitement very soon turns to disappointment as it becomes increasingly clear that Bradley King (III) will not provide a satisfying answer to the eternal question: 'What would we do if we knew our own future?'

Caught in a temporal paradox, the friends realise the future they have seen in the photos must be carried out, that they *have to* carry it out, otherwise their own chronological time will stop and everything will be over for them. That is to say, if they do not carry out this future, then the past shown by these photos will never have existed and the future will not exist either. One can't help but wonder what the director means by that. Would it be better to become pre-programmed robots so as to avoid the risk of falling outside of time?! It's a naïve

and simplistic answer.

The only thing the film shows is how stupid man is: instead of finding a clever practical solution, the three friends go straight into the tragedies of their destinies. No happy ending here; the film finishes in total disaster. Thank goodness! Maybe what Bradley King means to say is that we had better take charge of our destinies and not allow ourselves to fall towards a predestined future without even asking any questions. So there's a nod in favour of free will, after all.

The film is shot in a claustrophobic style, but it's not clear whether this is intentional or only due to low budget. It doesn't matter anyway. Thanks to its low budget, 'Time Lapse' stands out from other American films on the same theme: there's nothing superfluous, no special effects or overly dramatic soundtrack. It is sober and proper, and keeps the psychological aspect at its heart... It's just a shame that the psychology is of characters that are so stupid it's hard to actually watch this film to the bitter end. -*Lisa Gummesson*



CINEMA

'The Pearl Button' by Patrizio Guzman

What if water had memories...

Chilean director Patrizio Guzman set his previous film, 'Nostalgia for the Light', in the Atacama desert in Chile, the driest place on earth, with the clearest night-skies. His new documentary, 'The Pearl Button' takes a different element as its starting place: water. Concentrating on the ocean, Guzman retraces his country's history, from the violent colonisation of the Patagonian populations to the tortures under the Pinochet dictatorship.

Chile has a 5000 km-long coastline and yet there has never been a seafaring population, apart from the nomadic people in the south of Patagonia who travelled around in canoes. More than strange, this is a real mystery. It is to solve this mystery that director Patrizio Guzman sets out in search of the real significance of the vast sea lapping the shores of his native country. And the answer he finds is beautiful: Chile's history is borne in its water. Through poetic narration and stunning shots of the universe, the earth and the oceans, Guzman demonstrates that water is an element connecting us not only to our past, but also to the universe.

Indigenous peoples lived in the south of Chile around the mid-19th century. Water was crucial to their existence; it was, quite simply, what allowed them to travel and to eat. But in 'The Pearl Button' their life also takes on a cosmic meaning. The director ponders on whether this Patagonian population, which was exterminated with unimaginable cruelty, might not live on in another place, on other planets, in harmony with

water that flows elsewhere... Although this is a far-fetched and unrealistic idea, Guzman brilliantly transmits his conviction that water transcends our earth, crosses the universe and makes things possible elsewhere – things that, here at home, have come to an end long ago. Water thus goes past the death of eras and breaks through cosmic frontiers.

With touching stories and splendid images, Guzman starts by telling the history of the Patagonians Indians, and then leaps a few decades forward in time, to Pinochet's dictatorship.

During this period, 2,400 bodies were secretly thrown into the sea by helicopters. The water turned into a graveyard holding the awful secret of this crime. Little by little, these bodies, these people and their stories have become a part of the sea. Water is, in a sense, the incarnation or materialisation of past events; the past remains present in this liquid element.

Guzman's film tells two parts of a story happening in the same place – the southern tip of Chile – with the sea at the very heart of the tragedy. The events are linked by a sequence of free associations, in harmonious flow, so that, in spite of the harshness of the facts, the film is pleasant to watch. The narration is shaped like a running stream, switching between different scales: on one level, there is the entire universe, and on the other, the importance of the little pearl button that gives the film its title. In the deadly ocean, a button has been recovered. The trace of a human being, not yet dissolved into the secret memory of the sea, exists. -Lisa Gummesson

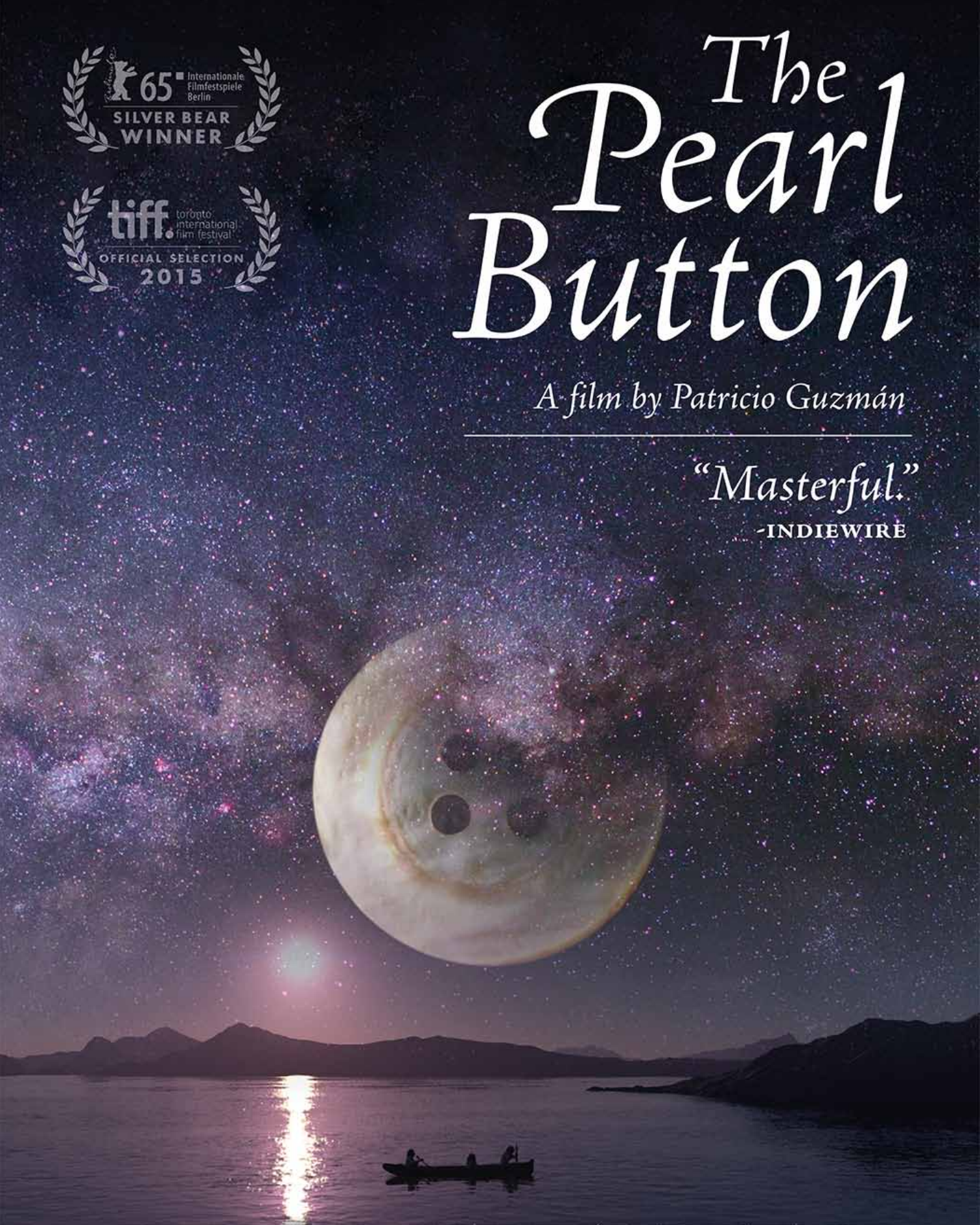


The Pearl Button

A film by Patricio Guzmán

"Masterful."

-INDIEWIRE



TRUE STORY

Mikala's experience



NDEs and time

This column, featuring first-hand accounts of near-death experiences (NDEs) and 'out of body' experiences (OBEs), is launched in collaboration with the Swiss Institute of Noetic Sciences. The testimonies published here show how easily the concept of time – as we understand it in our day-to-day lives – can fall apart.

"Today is the 24th December and it's 5:30am. I haven't time to see the patch of ice. The first thing I know is that the car is skidding, faster and faster... It's careering towards the big ditch on the side of the road. I have no idea how I lost control, there's not enough time to understand anything except that the car is skidding, leaning over, and then... And then it's all confusion: I'm thrown around all over the place and I'm pushing myself into the seat as hard as possible. There's an infernal racket in my ears and I clamp my eyes shut against the shards of broken glass flying about everywhere. I hear the car crumpling, it's getting scrunched-up like a piece of paper...

Thousands of questions pop into my head, like "will I get to work on time?"; I couldn't possibly list them all here... The car is rolling over endlessly and there I am, thrown forwards, then backwards, then sideways... until suddenly...

Suddenly – but no, it's not sudden at all... Little by little, ever so gently, I feel myself being drawn away. Drawn away by cotton... into world of peace and calm, a world of silence. Silence, deep and soothing. Absolute silence. There is no such silence on earth... I feel neither cold nor hot, I feel "just right". Everything around me is white. I'm moving forwards in a mist that is transparent, white and luminous all at once. And I feel extraordinarily good.

Still in absolute silence, I "perceive" shapes coming out of the mist towards me. There are three of them. Two men and one woman. Although I "see" them, I would not be able to describe any detail of their faces and bodies. It's as though, "over there", we have no physical bodies. Even so, there they are, in front of me, tangible as can be. But I could not now tell you the colour of their eyes or the tone of their skin; all I can say is that they were beautiful and they radiated serenity.

The man speaks first. With profound kindness, he welcomes me. "Here, you are home", he says. His lips have not moved at all, but his voice resounds inside me with almost crystalline precision and... clarity.

"Where is 'here'?" I reply.

"Only here, on the other side."

They smile at me. Needless to say, I feel good with them and I trust them instantly. I have felt like this since the very beginning. I feel alive, "fulfilled", whole. Most of all, I feel like Myself.

With an overflowing sense of well-being, I understand that I have "crossed over to the other side". But there is something – I can't quite put my finger on it – niggling at me. So I ask them, as casually as though I was asking the time:

"Am I dead?"

"Not yet."

This time, it is the woman who answers me. She goes on:

"You still have a little time here before you go away again."

"Go where?" I struggle to put my thoughts in order. Just a few seconds ago I was someone, with a job, a name, a family. And now, I realise, I no longer really know who that is. The images of my life seem to be fading away, all my memories evaporating into the mist, into the great whiteness all around, into this intense harmony. I feel the Universe drawing me in and I am at one with it. I am both regenerated and... dispersed through it, as though every molecule of this body I no longer feel have fused with the whole universe. It's a marvellous

feeling... But somehow, in a way I can't quite work out, the three beings keep a hold of my attention. I am a hair's breadth away from dissolving entirely into this "wholeness of universe"...

"You have the choice", says the man. "You choose whether to stay or to go."

His words spark an instant explosion of images inside me. Hundreds of memories flash before my eyes. Little by little, they slow down and come into focus. The same face appears to me over and over again – my daughter's face. I see myself pregnant, then giving birth; I see the long-awaited moment when I first held her, the first looks we exchanged, her first candles... Her whole story, Our story, rolls out before me, and I feel again the emotions of each and every little part of it.



Then, all of a sudden, I remember the accident. It happened only a moment ago, but it seems so far away, so strangely foreign. It is at this moment that I understand I cannot stay. I have to go, this is not the the right time! The sense that “this is not the right time” takes root within me, deeper and deeper, until it becomes a certainty, an absolute certainty. I don’t have to say a word; the three beings seem to hear my sudden anguish and they surround me, answering:

“You have time. You still have a little time before you go back to her.”

Just then, I realise that the landscape around me has changed. It’s dark, but I can clearly see my daughter’s face and her little hands peeping out of the bed-covers. She’s sound asleep and she’s terribly beautiful. We seem to be sitting at her bedside. The woman continues:

“She’s been waiting for you for a long time, do you know?”

She’s been waiting for me... What does this mean? An extraordinary dialogue begins between us. Hundreds of questions come crashing into my head. Death has always fascinated me. What do you feel when you die, and, more importantly, what happens afterwards? Can a life crammed with emotions and experiences really be snuffed out just like that, brutally extinguished without a trace? My upbringing was not religious; I was not exposed to dogma – instead, I was encouraged to always keep an inquisitive, open mind. So now, my curiosity is all the more stimulated by what I am going through.

The three beings turn their attention to explaining everything I want to know, step by step. What happens between these two worlds; the nature of our passage from one world to the other and back again; the intimate bonds that hold tight; those we leave behind, then meet again...

As we “talk”, we leave the bedroom and return to the Other Shore where landscapes of unimaginable beauty await me. The idea we on earth have of Paradise is dismal and pale in comparison with these fascinating landscapes, filled with such colour, intensity and variety, so vast and yet so intimate at the same time.

In this way, I am to learn that, deep inside ourselves, we are all preparing our own, unique arrival into the world on the other shore. Each person approaches this place according to their own beliefs and convictions, and according to their own idea of “what death must be like”. Some take longer than others to get there, for many different reasons that are entirely personal to them. And when they get there, they create their very own place, so that this shore is made up of millions of worlds lying side by side, overlapping, coming together or moving apart, just like pieces of an immense puzzle. Each of them different and all of them complementary. Each of them tiny and yet essential to the whole.

Here, everybody is FREE. There is no violence. No resentment. Nothing but this sense of supreme Well-being... A well-being which, far from inhibiting us, allows an even stronger expression of individuality, of difference, of this indefinable “thing” which makes us both humble and unique... And above all, wonder of wonders, I am told that each person is his or her own judge. There is no divine counsel to judge our acts, there are no devils to persecute us, and there are no gates shutting us out of a barely glimpsed paradise because “we haven’t been good enough”... Here, FREE WILL shines forth in all its beauty, strength and wisdom. Each person is responsible for him- or herself and... somehow proud to be.

Each of my questions is answered with a demonstration that spreads a new landscape before my eyes and pulls me into closer communion. We have the fantastic ability to “travel at the speed of thought”. Wherever a thought touches down, our attention and sight follows. Instantly. It seems that the absence of bodily sensations sharpens feelings and ideas and allows the mind to work much faster. Everything in this world appears infinitely bright, more ‘visible’, and also, paradoxically, more present.

A whole day seems to go by as this peculiar visit takes place, the visit of a world which, I am suddenly reminded, is not yet mine.

“Have you made your choice?” asks the man. His profound “gaze” holds me and I know that I must now answer the question.

The woman speaks again. "You can decide to stay or to go," she says.

Right away, I see my daughter. She is still sleeping and she has moved a little. I can smell her and feel her warmth, just as though I were by her side...

The choice is mine, they explained that very clearly. "Crossing over to the other side" (and therefore dying) does not mean that everything is finished and there's nothing left to do. Quite the opposite. I know now that death is only a passage to another life. And that on the other side, everything is still to be built, everything is still to be done...

So I make my choice. She's waiting for me. If my only destiny is to be her mother, then it is the most wonderful destiny I could possibly imagine.

They warn me, however, that I will not remember everything – at least not straightaway. The memories will return to me one by one, as time goes by. It's much better that way. To go back into my life with everything I've just seen, felt and heard, would be too difficult, perhaps even catastrophic. Perceptions and experiences are so much richer on the other side that it is harrowing to return, suddenly, to the reality of our earthly lives. Not that our world is poor! But such contrast would be a great shock. When you have been floating like a bubble, weightless, flesh and bone become heavy... When you have travelled at the speed of thought, to instantly visit whatever you're thinking of, how limited it feels to see only through your eyes; how slow, how frustrating! And how unbearable, also, to have to find words, when you have been able to communicate the thoughts themselves without speaking; when, at each exchange, instead of confusion, there is only more clarity, richness and flavour...

Even after all this time, I find it all so difficult to talk about. Writing this is a real challenge. I have so much to say and words seem so clumsy (despite my literary background, thanks to which I usually find writing easy). With everything they told me, there is so much to share. But to what extent are we actually ready to listen to talk of freedom and Free Will? Most importantly, are we ready to hear about the kind

of Love, unconditional and absolute, that flows between our two shores...?

Because that is how I now understand "the world beyond". It is like a neighbouring continent where friends and family live; our loved ones who stayed over there when we came here, or who have "moved away". We'll be together again when the time is right. We are apart just for a little while, just for a Lifetime...

So I choose to "go home". A feeling of intense Love embraces me. I see their faces, for just another few "moments". And suddenly, I hear windows shattering, I hear the car crumpling like a scrunched-up piece of paper... One or two more rolls and the car finally comes to a halt. Once more I feel the hot and humid body that I inhabit on Earth.

I open my eyes. I move each of my limbs, slowly, one by one. Everything is in its place. Is it a miracle? I try to get my bearings. The car is on its side and I get out through the window - or at least, what's left of it. I'm not hurt, I have no injuries... just a feeling of... emptiness."

First-hand account taken from the book:
'Altered states of consciousness - NDEs, OBEs and other experiences at the limits of mind'
Sylvie Dethiollaz and Claude Charles Fourier
Editions Favre, 2011.



Crown

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SHORT STORY

Captivating moments



Charlotte Brady

International poet and writer Charlotte Brady was born in Sweden and has lived in New York, Jamaica, and Barbados. She now resides in Miami and is currently working on a poetry trilogy. The first book in the trilogy, *As Silence Is Your Witness*, was published in 2015. A long time yoga practitioner, she has previously worked as a yoga teacher, and as an editor for the literary magazine *Mudfish*, in New York.

I started planning my escape even before I was locked up, even before I committed a crime. When I think back, it's obvious that the preparations even preceded my existence. Although I don't believe in destiny, I am sure my breakout was ordained by something larger than myself.

It was maddening to be locked up, but I will not deny that I sometimes enjoyed it. It had its perks. Life was very definable, and inescapably predictable. Back then I appreciated that sort of thing. I liked that straight was straight and crooked was crooked. There was something in me that feared freedom.

My cell was very small. It ran five seconds by five seconds, or more, depending on what you'd use to measure it. A drop of sweat, a coin, a feather would all give different answers. Gravity was really the one calling the shots, but I didn't understand that. Like everybody else, I was so under the spell of gravity that I didn't even notice it. The magic went undetected.

Even though my cell was minute, my memory seemed to measure at least 25 years, in the backward direction. I wasn't really sure what my offense was but I didn't doubt it was serious. It had gotten me where I was.

After a couple of years I was thinking about escaping almost every day. I had no idea how. Other inmates scorned me. I assumed it was because of the type of delinquency I had engaged in. I hadn't succeeded, obviously. But nor had

they. Yet it seemed there was some kind of consensus that I was more at fault than other prisoners. The taunting was unbearable and I kept to myself.

In my life I had lived through countless moments that I had truly enjoyed. The rest of the time, which was considerable, had been devoted to suffering. I was sure there was something wrong with me. Of course, I myself was the filter through which I observed everything. But like gravity, I couldn't see that either. I was convinced that something in me was inherently skewed, like an invisible birth defect. I blamed that flaw for everything that went wrong.

I wasn't oblivious to the fact that the minutes had grown in me, entangled themselves and become twisted like a DNA sequence. Who am I? I was ashamed to ask that question but at the same time I couldn't help it. Who am I? What does it mean to be? I was searching in my cell, in my body, in my memory but there was never an answer.

Eventually I got so desperate that I gave myself 365 days to figure it out. After that I would either kill myself or escape. Unfortunately, I very soon came to the conclusion that it meant nothing to ask these questions, that all thoughts of finding out were a huge mistake. The one asking – me – was the answer. Even I could see how ludicrous the whole endeavor was. 365 wasted days of asking and not knowing. I gave up.

Since there was no way of knowing who I was, I decided it would be best for me to escape. I had ruled out suicide because it wouldn't solve anything. My plan was foolproof, I thought. I was sitting on my tiny cot, facing the little window that filtered in light from outside. I laughed. It was so easy. I wanted to share my plan with the other inmates but stopped myself. Instead I dissolved into laughter everytime I saw another convict. Everyone thought I had gone mad. I guess I had. The escape was unavoidable.

Even before my time in prison I had conducted many experiments with time, and I had come to the conclusion that it was a fantasy born of misunderstanding. In prison it became even more obvious. The imprisonment was imaginary, and I was actually free. Some days I believed it. Other days I didn't. It was interesting to see how my emotions changed with each belief, but even though I was aware, I couldn't change my actions. They confirmed that time existed. I was nothing more than some sort of memory in my mind.

One of my favorite experiments before prison was the love thing. I would sit in any open space, such as a park or a plaza, and wait. I'd use my eyes for blinking, watching and thinking. Eventually a man would walk by, usually older than me. He would be captured by my youthfulness. In that moment I might smile, or just pout. Either one worked. He would want to drink me and I would let him. He thought that I'd remedy his problems but little did he know that I only made things worse. He had no idea who I was, not even who I pretended to be. He had no idea that he would die from touching me if he stayed with me long enough.

The moment of orgasm always fascinated me. Not so much the pleasure. Pleasure is mundane and, honestly, a little boring, but the awareness of being in that exact tipping point moment with the ensuing intervals of gratification was exhilarating. I watched carefully and every time the same thing happened. I was suspended in time, I ceased to exist and so did my lover. It was like murder.

Another experiment I found intensely fascinating was the one involving amusement parks. Disney World for example. The anticipation was thick in the air. The lines were long, the irritation was palpable, the forced dreaming more insane than

ever. Even before I entered I noticed big signs that said: Let the memories begin.

I thought that was very curious. How could I let the memories begin if I hadn't had the experience yet? After all, memories can't begin without an origin. Nobody seemed to care or notice, and I knew I had the upper hand. People were walking around in some kind of present past while I was walking inside an enormous bubble of now. It would never end, I knew it right then and there. I would be able to see what they didn't. I would be able to solve the question of meaning inside that bubble.

All would have gone very well with that experiment, unless the unexpected hadn't happened. People treated me like I didn't exist. Like my body didn't occupy a certain space. Like my breath didn't run through my body with the same certainty as it did for them. This greatly disturbed me. It made me feel insecure, like they knew something that I didn't. I began to question myself. I began to long to be outside of my ridiculous now and exist inside their memories. I decided to stop all further experimentation.

I felt shame, but didn't understand it was a sign that I was already inside their space. I determined that this particular experiment showed that time and emotion were intrinsically linked. No emotion without time and no time without emotion. I felt sorry for myself, as I could clearly see I was more entangled than I had thought. I still considered my experiment an immense success.

All of this came back to me as I was contemplating my escape. I was going to kill one of the guards, steal her uniform, and get out. I didn't think it was wrong. Actually, that's not true. I felt guilty for planning to murder her. I felt horrible thinking that she would soon be erased from her reality and that her reality would be gone for ever, as if it never existed.

I had observed her for many months. I knew her routines, her weaknesses and her strengths. She liked to feel superior and she loved praise and admiration, and I was going to give her exactly that. I made myself as small as possible and pretended that I was too shy to look her in the eye. Then I complimented her. I said she had beautiful hair, which was



true, beautiful skin, which was a lie. I told her that she looked like she knew what she was doing. It was all fake compliments and she probably knew it was. But she loved it. I found it very exciting to investigate how vanity worked. I even considered not following through with my flight, but realized it would be imprudent. Everything had already gone too far.

The day for my escape came. I had decided it was going to be a Friday. She was always happy on Fridays. She never worked Saturdays and Sundays. By now her vanity had swelled considerably and I almost believed she had fallen in love with me. I didn't want that to happen, so I knew I had to do it as soon as possible. It would be too hard to have a victim look at me with love in their eyes. I wasn't that callous. I felt sorry for her. It made me want to cry.

I had collected strips of sheets that I was going to use to tie her up and strangle her. Then I was going to put on her uniform, take her keys, go to her locker and steal her clothes. I was going to do it after dinner that Friday. I was proud of my plan and very confident after I got over my temporary emotional relapse. Unbelievably confident. Crazy confident. Confident for no reason whatsoever.

It must have been that unnatural confidence that helped me. I mean, the plan was ridiculous. Under normal circumstances it would never work out. But I didn't think along those lines. I just did what I had to do, feeling victorious and strangely honored. I was the chosen one. I would soon be free. I would be more free than my guard had ever been. I decided to not even bother to take her life. I would just let it be and move on. We would continue to live parallel lives while not knowing anything about each another.

Her capture went well. It was almost as if she were cooperating with me. She came to my cell as usual to let me out for dinner. As she opened I pulled her into my cell and forced her down on my bed. I held her tightly and tied her hands behind her back. She didn't say anything. She looked at me with a strange expression in her eyes. I gagged her. All she could manage was some muffled grunts.

My heart softened again. I could feel how it began to evaporate. Each heart beat meant a moment lost. And

another, and another. I wasn't afraid at all but quite ready for my new existence in freedom. At last I would be free. Free from each moment that had ever defined me. Free from every memory that had lodged itself inside my brain. Free from linear thinking, linear being. Free from counting. Free from waiting. Free from birth. Free from death. Timeless.

As if in a dream I took off her uniform and put it on. It was a little too small. Otherwise I thought I looked a lot like her. I left her in the cell and hurried to the guards' changing room. Nobody noticed me. I found her locker and grabbed her private clothes and her handbag. It was hideous but I took it anyway. I walked toward what seemed to be the exit and then suddenly I was outside. I took my first breath and almost fell. It felt so good.

I put one foot in front of the other and walked straight ahead without looking back. I didn't walk fast at all. I was shocked at how easy it had been. I couldn't understand why I waited so long. My new life, right here, where I'd always been. I knew I would never get caught, invisible as I was to my old reality. Behind me I heard the alarm go off. I didn't care. It was music to my ears. It meant I was free. I had made it.

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