

Title: Nowhere: Café & Society

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Abstract: This is a story about no place in particular that deals with the plight of identifying one's credibility to oneself. The place is a particular area, just outside of Nashville budding metro area, where people go to find out more about themselves and their heritage.

I, Adam H. Lochemes, submit this unpublished manuscript, written by me and entitled, Nowhere: Café & Society. I retain all rights as holder of copyright for this manuscript Some.

Date: January 2, 2019

Sign:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Lochemes', written over a horizontal line.

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This is a memory, fiction, idea. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product  
Of my imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons living or  
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Lingering out west of town, just beyond the sea of sprawling homes and the towering apartments, a haze collected and waited. Most days it went unnoticed, but recently it clicked into Tobe's mind that Nashville was in fact turning into the LA of the 1970's. The theory often brooded in her mind during grim car rides back home. She contended, especially whenever she listened to the "Inherent Vice" audio book, *That's it*.

Today, however, Tobe was heading towards a glitch in Davidson County. Sitting just blocks from a booming West Nashville was an unincorporated city block cut out. On it, the Nowhere: Café & Society stood as a coffee shop and communal place where people could get away from the incessant call of the internet and day-to-day life. Its proprietor, Matth Wahrheim, hated modern American life and built somehow an invisible Faraday Cage around the entire property, blocking all incoming telecommunication signals.

Due to its neon lighted sign on twenty-four-seven and an assortment of sixties singles blaring out into the neighborhood all night, city officials often tried to hand Matth cease & desist letters for noise ordinance violations.

"Mr. Wahrheim, of city's code you are in violation of four, and we are here to take you down to the court house," the agents yelled.

"Wait, wait, wait..." Matth putting up a finger while a guitar solo screamed across the sky; the agents plugged their ears. "You want me to what now?"

"I SAID," the woman official readjusted her blazer, grunted, and said in at a normal volume, "I said, Mr. Wahrheim, we are hear to take you down to the courthouse since you are in violation of at least four different city codes and ordinances."

"Well, why would you need to do that? The courthouse is right here," Matth said while pointing behind him.

"According to the Tennessee State Law, we are required to appeal to your judge and receive communications back within a year and one day. We sent the appeal almost two years ago."

"How'd you send it?"

"Via email."

"Yep," taking in the morning air, rain coming within the hour, "I don't have internet or phone service here, and I told them down at the county courthouse that I prefer a paper notice in the mail."

"We sent one of those too. It left our hands a eleven months ago and we figured that your postman..."

"...postperson..."

"Postperson, excuse me, would hand it to you."

Tobe's car screeched to a halt just short of a parking sign. She got out to Matth heading her way; arms outstretched; officials still not piecing together that the proprietor was in fact both Nowhere: Café & Society's judge and postperson.

"Tobe, how's it going?"

"Somewhere."

As they both walked inside, the sky behind them red, thunder rumbled in the west, there was a large clinking of porcelain, and from behind the bar came Thomá.

"What's the matter with you? Ever since Tuesday, you've been dropping more cups and acting strangely," Matth said.

"It's this damn neurological disorder that started a couple days ago. I'm still not used to it yet," he looked exhausted, "my whole body feels like it's got pins and needles on it. I can't confidently hold anything."

Matth and Tobe listened, arms crossed.

"Like, I'm not even sure that I can trust any of my senses any longer. Like, I can't trust them now, why should I if I ever get better? I mean look at it like this: I take in only sensory information. If that information is not one-hundred percent accurate and I am constructing, and trusting, a world based off that inaccurate information, then I can't really know the world,

"and don't get me started on sight..."

Matth and Tobe walked away since Thomá's rant didn't have a foreseeable end.

When they sat down under the rear veranda, the wall of rain was just a couple blocks away, and they could feel the temperature drop. Luckily, just when it hit, Thomá brought out his newest creation to warm them up: Peking Cup.

He placed the plates and introduced the course, "This dish was inspired by Tim Raue's 'Peking Duck'. Instead of duck, I have used one cup of espresso for all three dishes. First, is a coffee flour biscuit with a crema foam on top. Second in the middle, is the body of the shot used as a broth, boiled with coffee cherry skins and potatoes, and topped with pan seared duck. Finally, the foot of the cup over vanilla bean ice cream. Enjoy."

When he was in Chicago, Matth was invited to the chef's table at Alinea, which was his first experience of high-end dining. Ever since that fateful meal, he couldn't look at food in the same way, and said, "everything must be contested, tested, or tried in the world of food. I mean seriously, if you can afford to put that much effort into food, might as well go all in."

"But can you really afford to keep Thomá around, can you? You haven't worked a day in your life and you're behind on taxes," Tobe responded.

“Yes. Well, it’ll take the city at least five years to figure out my legal position. I’ve got them in a real the catch.” Specializing in property and state legislation, Matth took it upon himself to understand the state’s loopholes in regards to property ownership and city jurisdiction. He inherited the Nowhere: Café & Society from a long family tradition of “sticking it to the man”, as his fathers used to say. The attitude changed after reading Wallace’s contributions to “On the Tendency of Species to form Varieties”, their self-disclaimed patriarch, Papaw, prided himself on routine the check ups with his hereditary moral compass. He believed that one’s moral understanding of the world can be adapted to fit the greater, more idealized society at large. Most of the family joined Papaw in his bi-annual meetings until most of them grew much to old to be up-to-date on the goings on of the world. Interestingly enough, in the family agreement, there is a clause that states: Section I; Segment 4a reads, “Henceforth, it is to be known that the elder, gender not to be of any importance, once at sixty-seven-and-one-half years of age, is not to be the governing head any longer. Moreover, it should be noted that not only can an elder not be of sound mind past the prescribed age, but further they have too much moral baggage to adequately govern what ‘is up-to-date’.”

“I’m getting old, Tobe,” Matth sighed.

“What do you mean? You’ve got at least a good thirty years left in you,” she replied.

“Yes, but as you may have forgotten, my half-birthday is tomorrow, which means that I must go.”

“And?”

The noise from the café behind beginning to a hum with the morning crew.

“In my family, strangely enough, we consider our half-birthdays to be our *actual* birthdays, since we must give up the family throne at sixty-seven-and-one-half years of age,” he quoted.

“But who said that you couldn’t keep being the leader anymore?”

“My mother.”

“So?”

“Well, my mother said, ‘if you don’t follow the tradition, I’ll come back and haunt you,’ and I’ve been petrified ever since,” he said. he looked around warily. “I mean, I’m terrified of her.”

“Where does she live? I am sure you’ve been keeping tabs on her, right?”

“She’s in a better place,” he said abruptly.

“Where’s that?”

“I don’t know, somewhere.”

“What?”

“Exactly.”

As the waning hours of moonlight drift away into an early light, it came up a cloud and left my entire world in anticipation; the droning silence before a storm; an unanswered question trembling on the lips of a some younger soul, my younger soul.

We had to sift through what was left of it all though; the destruction, agony; the never ending buzz of a fly hovering just behind your right ear. As I see it, consequence is the unforeseeable truth waiting to happen; what’s left of a situation of which I cannot remember much, but as I look in retrospect, some twenty or thirty years later, I seem to have some rosy-orange memory of Nowhere: Café & Society. All of the faces of the world long forgotten, the words spoken now meaningless, and a fiction in my head. Most mornings, when I wake up to the rising sun and feel grog, I cannot help think those memories a dream, and that they happened not at all. I wake up three times, every thirty minutes, hearing, like water I suppose, these dreams call on me go to them and have them. Standing upright at the alarm clock, if I should take a path—any path!—, it will most certainly lead me to a stream of memories flowing by. It is as if I they call upon me to witness their fleeting waves and be an onlooker to their mysterious message.

I have since written down little anecdotes of the Nowhere: Café and Society to conjure up some sort of reality or truth to hold on to in my final years. Before I get to walk back down the streets of eternity, wading through the loomings of an afterlife that I’m not too sure of, I wanted to share their story for all to wonder about. Is it not but a dream or did it *actually* happen? I know that one day, maybe metaphysical, that I too will join my friends in the pursuit to get back to a time that never was.