

# the factory

She had first heard reports about the factories about a year or two ago. She remembered, of course, hearing stories about such places as a child and a young teenager. Everyone in her generation did. Her father would wag his finger at her at the breakfast table and admonish her for typing the questions in her social studies homework and retrieving the answers by copying them word for word directly from the search engine results to her notebook.

## EMOTIONAL DETOX BODY SOAK, \$35

- \* Takes the edge off during turbulent times
- \* Centers the body and spirit

## IT'S TIME FOR YOUR DIGITAL CLEANSE

You'll soon notice, that much like with quitting anything, like smoking, there's a decompression period in which you can track the changes in your body and in the chemistry in your brain more or less step by step. After 10 minutes, you'll notice your blood pressure evening out. After an hour without your phone, expect your attention to increase by 10%. After 6 hours, by another twenty. At the twenty-four hour mark, your ability to take in new information and actually retain it in your brain almost doubles.

## SCREENS ARE THE NEW CIGARETTES AND FAST FOOD

'So... are we doing nothing for the sake of doing nothing? Or are we doing it for the sake of getting somewhere?'

**SOME YEARS** back FERMAN had the ingenious idea of offering environmentally friendly slow travel where passengers gave up their access to their devices in order to have amore mindful experience of time as they passed through space. With a price tag, of course.

We used to have these places called libraries and archives. People would go there to find books for their research projects or maybe just to read or get work done in a quiet place. By the end, they were pretty much only used by homeless people. At that point you could find everything online digitized so there was no point to go anymore and there weren't really any other options for needy people in the city. You could have a warm place to sit with an electrical outlet and an internet connection and a bathroom without having to buy anything or subscribe to any religious ideology.

They had these people there who were paid to do the most boring work—literally—because no computer could do it. Just imagine, they were professionally renowned for their ability to withstand extreme boredom and just trudge through it for tedious hours upon hours.

"So don't waste your time resources! Don't waste our raw materials!"

that in a world as unfair as unequal as this they got to account for their own time. He was of the 'check your privilege' generation. She sometimes wondered if he and his friends would have anticipated that their children would not have patience for this kind of talk.

And you see, it's very important that we think of them and just how hard they work whenever we send off our silly obsessions into the search engine ether. After this, her father would embark on a long-winded talk about their privilege and how grateful they should be

to get bored, get tired (من = from / of):

أَنَا مَلَيْتُ مِنَ الشُّغْلِ فِي الْمَصْنَعِ [P] I got tired of working at the factory

مَا طَلَقْتِ مِنَ الْمَلِّ؟ Weren't you bored to death?

الْوَاجِدُ بِيَجِيلٍ مِنَ التَّوَاشِيفِ [P] one gets tired of snacks (dry crunchy things)



There was also this one story that had been circulating... that a Swedish insurance company had outsourced their customer service callcenters to Senegal, where immensely overqualified academics who had learned Swedish in intensive courses within only a few months took the calls from elderly customers dissatisfied with their car insurance, anywhere from Växjö to Uppsala. She remembered seeing it in the news, but the exact details of the story had become foggy. In fact, she had heard many rumors in the newsroom, that this story was not an anomaly, but far more common than the public, or most informed journalists, for that matter, assumed possible.

Put geographical distance and time between people and you'll find that a lot more is possible than you think. Out of sight, out of mind.

It had been American history or something uninspiring like that.

"When I was your age you had to check books out from the library to do that!"

"Nothing in the world is that simple," he'd say. "Do you think something so magical could just happen on its own? I'll tell you something. There's a place

so far away from here that you can't even imagine it, where time passes differently than for us. 0.56 seconds for you can be weeks, months, or years there. And that place is full of huge factories, and every time you search for something in your computer, here, a hell frings there and a little girl just like you needs to jump up and search for all the information in huge halls of books, until a long list of possible answers is complete and it can be delivered to us.

They have thousands of people doing that there all day long in lines and lines of factory halls. And they don't have clean water and very little food. And in that place they don't have nice toys to play with like you.

"You see, they produce the knowledge and package it so that we can access and consume it. And as a result, many of them become very educated. Often they can read in dozens of languages. They would like to attend to all of our hypochondriac online searches for symptoms of our imagined illnesses. To find work for a visa, because who would want those kinds of skills nowadays?" ... "So for them, it's really the only chance they have to care for themselves and their families is to do the research to attend to all of our hypochondriac online searches for symptoms of our imagined illnesses."

// In Sweden, I found that this could also be the churches or god's houses, gudhuset. There would always be a bit of food somewhere, no more than a humble offering of sustenance, the Swedish way, usually in the form of knäckebröd with a selection of tubed fishpaste (Kalles Kaviar) or liquid tube cheese with, charmingly, shrimp flavoring. //

*Dread. The feeling that time is running out.*

*We talk of time in terms of scarcity. We use the language of economics to talk about time. We save time, we invest time, we spend time. Time, my friends, has become a scarce resource.*

*Many of us have felt that there's barely enough hours in the day to get everything done that we want and need to do! Which is great—there's so many important things to do, so much to discover in the world... right?*

*At some point, I just thought, what is it all for? I was sleeping five to six hours every night, if I was lucky. I was eating poorly. I was so stressed, I was miserable... So why is it that when we are bored, we can barely get time to pass fast enough, but when we are having a good time it flies by? That's where those words come from, right? Past time, killing time...*

*I'll tell you something, when you're working, you're trying to squeeze every bit of efficiency out of every minute, so that you can get as much done in your time as possible... and we've got a lot of great technological tools to help us with that, right? And then when you're not working, you have all this choice of entertainment to choose from. Never in human history has there been such a wide selection to choose from! In 2020, there is simply no reason to be bored.*

*I can go on Netflix, I can go on YouTube, I can have hundreds of videos at my fingertips — ANYTHING I want.*

*And we're at a point where the constant presence of these devices and their digital spaces in our lives is just a default, we don't question it, we take them everywhere.*

*We can immediately fill up "down time" with content from a device.*

*All that time you never have... the books you should have read. That script idea you always wanted to write and never get to. What is it that we're doing all the time that's so important? When did everything become SO important?*

*The devices are stealing our time. When is the last time that you just sat there and simply existed? Simply existed in the world? With no goal, no purpose... and also no distraction to pull you out of the moment?*

*So then we thought is there some way we can harness that type of time? Could there be an unconventional way that we could hack the pacing of time?*

*What we want to give you—everyone—is the freedom to accept the passage of time... to bear its burden. Human time. No algorithms telling you what to do, or how to spend it.*

*Because the human mind is a beautiful thing. Because that is what life is truly about. It's not about distracting yourself with superficial satisfactions to make the time pass more quickly until you die. Is that what you want?*

*Here at FERMAN we believe that boredom is an important ingredient for creativity and complex thinking.*

*There is a value on your time. What kind of value do we want to give it?*

*Give yourself the gift of time.*

*I love the feeling of sitting among all my screens all day. Spreading my attention thinly. Getting alerts. It makes me feel busy, like I've got something important going on. That my attention to these developments is requested.*

*I personally hate uncertainty. I always check the parking situation on the street first when I go out to eat, so that I don't have to be stressed about finding a parking spot. I hate just going without knowing.*

*Sometimes I just put my phone on airplane mode. It gives me anxiety that they can always get to me. So I love that I don't have an international data plan on my phone. That way I have an excuse not to answer emails when I'm not connected to WiFi... I think without that I would go crazy.*

*Yeah, it's never just like your time anymore.*

*Yeah I just always feel like that person who is stressing me out in that moment is coming with me everywhere I go, and like coming into my time.*

*Can't finish anything ever anyway. Can't finish a book. Can't finish the play I started writing. What I've rediscovered recently for myself is reading. When I was younger I used to read so much... I don't know what happened... and the thing is, that unlike watching a TV show, you can't do anything else at the same time when you're reading. You can't be reading and checking your phone at the same time.*

*Well honestly, I just can't do that anymore. I just can't get into anything for more than ten minutes.*

*You're gonna hate this.. but I've actually been using a speed reading app! You know the kind that just flashes single words at you really fast*







I'M NOT  
TOO CRAZY  
ABOUT IT

NOTHING TIME.  
WHAT IS THE  
DIFFERENCE  
BETWEEN BEING  
AND DOING?



8 HOURS WORK

8 HOURS SLEEP

8 HOURS FOR..



NEW YORK

رام الله القدس

الخنيل

//

Here's what I think. If everything is about getting time to pass faster and killing all the leftover time, what is the substance of the living itself?

I'll tell you a secret.  
No-one, absolutely no-one lies on their death bed wishing that they had watched more cat videos. You'll be lying on your death bed one day reflecting back on a life of cat videos and Netflix binges the basic plot of which you can't remember

Why is it called "Lang..weil..ee"? // I believe it's pronounced "Lang-uh-ye-luh" // It's German. Its a very literal way to say boredom.. so that when you're bored, you feel that time passes more slowly and you gain more time.

Lack of focus:

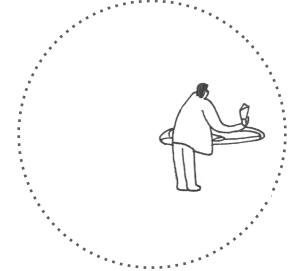
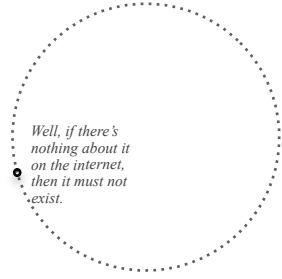
When a writer is distracted, only fragments fall out of her head when she shakes it. How do you give attention to your piece of writing? The task at hand is to write something. Note that it has already become a task, it's no longer a joyful release.

To me being distracted means sitting between many languages, feeling incomplete and inadequate in all of them because you can't give any of them the attention they deserve. You feel tired, hungry, unmotivated, and a bit restless, anxious, even. The screen will wake you up for sure. Maybe it will give you something so delightful that it will energize you and you will be able to return to the painful work.

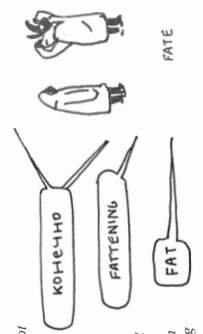
So let's go to Youtube. Or the feed. The feed is good too. The best are 27-47 second videos. Or vine compilations. No waiting around, the satisfaction is right there.

Hit that search engine  
classic and rare vines that cured my anxiety  
vines that make me forget that i'm dead inside  
vines that cared for me when no one else did

You could always make your phone more human-friendly, of course.



I had this realization the other day that if I keep going at my rate of only reading one book a month that's only twelve books a year, and that's really not a lot of books in a life time! So I really need to make sure that they're good books. I can't waste my reading time on anything not worthwhile.  
— You know, I remember sitting in a bookstore recently, everyone had a book face down in their lap and was just staring at their phones.  
— So sad



FATE = ALGORITHMS, IN TODAY'S TERMS



in prison, you're never in a hurry or pressed for time



Any device is a portal. It holds endless promise. And seeing a sheep enjoy itself by bouncing on a trampoline is proof that yes, there is magic out there somewhere in the world.

inefficient time unproductive time wasted time

Teachers complained that students were losing the ability to withstand boredom.

SEPTEMBER

00:00 Set out from Schönefeld Airport

01:35 Land in Arlanda Airport

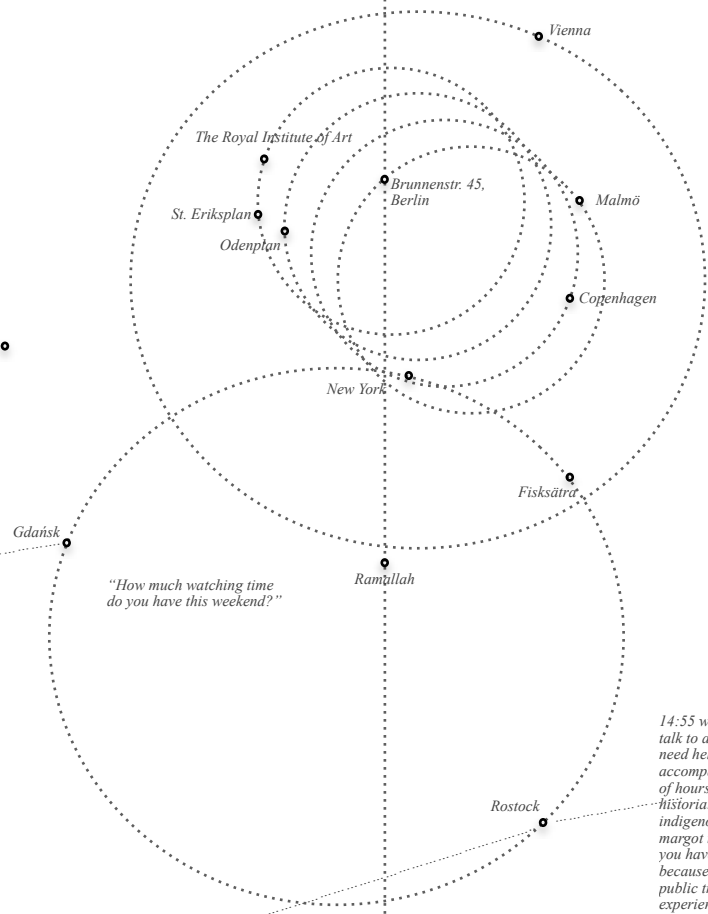
02:30 arrive in t-centralen

00:00 take a bus from t-centralen to arlanda

00:47 arrive in arlanda. make a new swedish friend, bobby, in the waiting area.

01:50 set out from arlanda

03:30 land in berlin



One guy is wearing a shirt that says **VODKA** connecting people

"How much watching time do you have this weekend?"

14:55 while getting off the ferry, you talk to an elderly australian couple who need help getting to berlin. they end up accompanying you for the next couple of hours. richard turns out to be a historian engaged in research on oral indigenous storytelling in australia and margot is an artist who likes mosaics. you have a lovely conversation, but because you're speaking english on public transportation, you also experience rostock's hatred of foreigners at its most pronounced. germany feels culturally cold compared to sweden.

03:30 take a cab. chat with the armenian cab driver about exilic life in germany and visiting armenia with his grown children, learn some armenian words, but only remember 'thank you': shnorhakalutyun