

**TAKE PLACE**  
**(nothing is enough)**

*"Have you ever when believing yourself to be completely awake, had a vivid impression of seeing or being touched by a living being or inanimate object, or of hearing a voice, which impression, as far as you could discover, was not due to an external physical cause?"*

The International Census of Waking Hallucinations of the Sane 1984

*Take Place* forms a narrative network of melodramatic vignettes that fuse the formats of telenovelas and romantic love songs.

The characters collaborate on constructing pyramids of frightened desire and fervent consumption within an Eating Landscape. A striving towards plugging holes and stopping up doubts with a suffusion of *stuff* prevails. Characters keep themselves busy clutching at the sense of having authored a reality akin to a roller coaster (packed with drama, uncertainty, intrigue and suspense). This, in turn, permits them to ignore the lack of control they have over The State of Affairs and The Storytelling Organisation. There is scant time to dwell upon on their general disappointment over the way things are run.

We eat the Earth  
The Earth eats us

The set will be Baroque and Minimal at once: so fucking tasteful and spartan that you can't even see it, and yet, furnished with language like someone's projectile vomited diamond encrusted gold leaf curls all over everything.

Each scene will feature a lone individual in a disused, threadbare landscape in DF. This site of potentiality, change and transportation will be used to explore how language and movement might be instrumental in the construction and metamorphosis of space.

The characters, interacting with people who are not there, are surrounded by a decadent array of objects that are not visible. In a virtual reality nothing gets in the way, space is smooth and frictionless, there is freedom from obstacles but there is also isolation in such freedom.

For this project I will collaborate with dancers to create a choreography of movements combined with voice-over to describe a series of interconnected vignettes featuring individuals living in virtual realities.

KEEPING YOURSELF IN PLACE  
BEING KEPT IN PLACE  
STEPPING OUTSIDE OF YOUR PLACE  
LOOKING FOR A PLACE  
CHANGING PLACE  
TAKING PLACE

*(the sky that is blackish)*

***Ilhuicatl-Yayauhco***

He never throws away a bunch of flowers,  
And so they crowd around him in various stages of rotting and drying.  
He's read that archaeologists found traces  
of countless species of flora and fauna  
spread all over the pyramids.  
He thinks the temples must have been like great compost heaps of blooms,  
Each ceremony in the calendar forming a new sedimentary deposit.  
The lower layers of feathers, flowers, blood and bones biodegrading into  
oil.

His dressing room is more like a cave of bouquets,  
An archive of his admirers.

He pushes a wish-bone threaded with cat gut through leather,  
Darning, darning, still darning, still doing it  
Until the tear in the crotch is stitched up.

His heart is going at the rate of a rodent.  
He's noticed that recently.  
He uses the note from the management to fan himself.  
It expresses their anxiety about his routine,  
which is in violation of their brand identity,  
because, although they support employees developing romantic, dance based  
approaches, in accordance with the classical conventions of the striptease,  
his act now strikes them as violent and theatrical  
and perhaps it would work better in the context of a circus.  
They say they were going to let it lie,  
but last Sunday a lady in the audience called  
to say she'd found a fleck of something like actual blood  
on the lapel of her cream chemise.

His job is dept payment,

He, the living image of a god sent to strut amongst tables,  
fastens the leather thong around his hips and between his legs.  
The costume is in total accordance with traditional Aztec attire  
and made using tools and materials that they, the Aztecs, would have  
actually used.

He practices unfastening it and pulling it off in one gesture,  
fastening and unfastening and fastening.  
He stamps about the room like he's killing cockroaches in his apartment,  
Before fixing his reflection with a furious glare.

Chosen on the basis of his physical features  
His skin is smooth like a pebble, like a tomato,  
He is not with heavy lids to his eyes,  
nor oversized eyeballs,

nor swollen cheeks,  
nor downcast face,  
He flashes some sort of a smile to reveal teeth white like sea shells,  
He whips off the thong  
And before that action is complete he's already carved his heart out  
and catapulted it into the open air  
(it bounces off the mirror)  
A series of short sniffs,  
some long inhalations,  
Then he swallow dives forward, arms wide open,  
so his chest hits the ground first.  
His body springs back up in spasms.  
This is the moment in his act when he flings himself on the ceremonial fire,  
and he's gyrating and body popping,  
and fucking the ground,  
and if we were in the club this would be the cue for the lighting technician  
to turn on the red strobe.  
The burning part takes a while,  
But eventually he is still.

Look into his eyes, they are ever so large, shiny and black.  
Like obsidian, which people say is dangerous  
because although it absorbs your bad energy it also retains it.

When he performs on stage a woman might suddenly look away,  
because she glimpsed herself reflected,  
and she thought she looked different somehow,  
distorted,  
not only on account of the curve of his eyeball.  
Sometimes they prefer to imagine they saw something else,  
That it wasn't them at all,  
but *him* instead.

His dark eyes look up from his position on the ground  
They are fixed on the pyramid of tear stained letters from the pulp fiction  
writer,  
who says he is staying with his wife for the sake of the children:  
*"It really hurt me  
when you didn't come to my birthday.  
I spent a lot of time preparing.  
And your presence mattered more than anything.  
My mother will be amongst your audience tonight.  
She will be wearing a beige blouse.  
Please throw your heart in her general direction.  
She will intercept it and bring it to me."*

He tugs at his skin in various places  
picturing the perfect strip routine,  
the one where he doesn't return to the normal world.  
And then the Pulp Fiction Writer could wear him as a coat,

could collect up and ingest certain organs,  
could sprinkle more blood over himself and his mother,  
thus prolonging both their lives on earth.

He smiles as he oils up preparation for going on stage.  
Does he run his fingers over his bulging body with a degree of awe?  
Does he believe in cosmic forces?  
What did he eat for breakfast?

Martín's act can be heard drawing to a close,  
Martín is very popular and the ladies are screaming.  
The slide guitar reaches it's quivering peak -  
Martín dresses as a cowboy and this is his cue to whip off his chaps,  
and casually fling them behind him,  
his lower body never breaking from it's metronomic motion,  
torso static,  
totally blasé  
and sorta like, whatever...

**(the place that has corners of obsidian slabs)**  
**Ilhuicatl-Nanatzcayan**

He's lying like he's been flung on the bed from a great height.  
A huge knot of feelings tangled up in sweaty sheets  
100% Drama!  
100% Live!  
100% lights, camera, action!  
And how about the sound?  
It would be like: *Grrraaahh*, so fucking angry!  
Frustrated!  
Because of all these emotions he's having.  
(he's checking messages)  
Will Luis' wife finally consent to the dinner date?  
Will Luis accept his offer of private tuition?  
Will the child hero agree to pose for him?  
Will the exotic dancer send him his heart as he promised he would?  
So WHY hasn't it arrived yet?

Not to mention all those people on Grinder and Tinder  
Will they "like" him back?  
Why hasn't niceguy224 replied yet?  
How is it possible for cheekycheeks to be 80% sex driven, 59% wholesome and  
97% compatible?  
Millions of triggers have been set in motion.  
So many moves have been made.  
So many people have been drawn into his thick plot.  
It's a lot of admin work,  
like playing 40 different board-games at once:  
roll the dice, go to square 5: you win her a giant pink animal at the  
funfair.  
Bingo! You loose him at the casino.  
Snap: you both lost someone at the casino,  
Wait one turn on the park bench, you know, the one near the stagnant green  
lake.  
Checkmate: she, he, it, they love you.  
Call on line one: they say they can't go on without you, but at the same  
time they can't understand why you fucked their evil twin while they were  
putting on lip liner in the bathroom...  
and they don't think it was *only* because of the crack you'd been smoking,  
but yes, they are willing to give you a second chance.  
Call on line two: they say that they want to keep it,  
that their name is Roxxxxy, spelt with 4 x's  
and that they want to call the child Harrypotter (yes, that's one word).

Perhaps it would be an idea to slow down...  
But all he can think about is speeding up.

His body glistens with Testosterone Gel.  
He's also taken poppers more viagra,  
so his cock is seriously hard,  
so hard it's painful.  
The dancer was *supposed* to come over...

He's breathing loudly:  
A series of short sniffs,  
some long inhalations,  
The Pulp Fiction Writer is in need of fresh air.  
His lungs feel like iron,

or like *she's* still standing on them  
or like he's part of an army marching into battle:  
tight chested,  
heart's fit to burst.

His research is going very well... too well,  
he's 3 weeks behind on writing up his notes.  
They need the next episode.  
They need endless episodes.  
Because even if an eternity of excessive sentiments sounds exhausting,  
it serves as light relief for the limited real life solutions on offer.  
If the ground shakes and the buildings sway like trees in the breeze,  
you can count on melodramatic fantasy to take the edge off,  
keep things at arms length.

He's writing about a final glimmer of hope,  
And then a violent shooting and duct taped mouths,  
and rags to riches to rags to riches,  
a lesson about trusting no one,  
fall in love and pay the price.  
The publishing house are pressing him  
but the boss is giving him a little leeway in exchange for...

GRRRAH! Everything is buzzing, the paper is buzzing,  
The pen is pulsating.  
The pen is fucking turning him on.  
Now he will have to lick it with his tongue.  
Maybe it will stop working  
Maybe his mouth will get black Mont Blanc ink all over it.  
A black tongue...  
Black lips sucking a red nipple peeping through white frills...  
Grraaah!  
He *had* planned to write but now he will have to masturbate first  
And then his fingers will be sticky,  
His keyboard will smell,  
And then his mother will spray his computer with Mr Muscle while he is out  
teaching his creative writing class.  
He has *told* her not to do that,  
He has *told* her he *knows* what her game is,  
And that if cleaning fluids trickle into the delicate electronics  
causing the computer to crash, it will be no accident.  
But has he ever noticed that she sometimes polishes the mirror in their  
bedroom for hours at a time?  
Or that in the mornings there is a damp patch on the loveseat,  
a cocktail of tears, saliva and snot?

**(the place where people's hearts are devoured)**  
**Teocoyocualloa**

Sometimes he tells people that she is his mother,  
but she is his wife.  
She sleeps on the love seat most nights.  
She has a brownish stain upon her cream silk shirt,  
it could be dried blood  
or chocolate.

During the day she cleans.  
Her repertoire of facial expressions has been limited by a medical  
condition,  
But sometimes tears fall in the path of her polishing.  
She likes to buff mirrors, photograph frames, windows and trophies, because  
then at least her reflected face gets to be caressed.

After half an hour plumping brocaded cushions  
with degrees of violence and tenderness,  
she suddenly mounts one  
or folds herself over and against an arm rest  
moving her hips almost imperceptibly,  
breathing through her mouth,  
and visualising her pheromones penetrating deep into the duck down.

She hates the furniture for standing by and watching.  
Complicit in her husband's deceitful whoring.  
She cannot see the house as a house any longer,  
it's just an inconceivably huge lie.  
The decor is all very minimal,  
straight lines, blocks of muted colour  
but it looks like a mess to her,  
a wreck, a bomb site.  
She is pushing things around,  
Re-arranging,  
Trying to sort it out,  
before he gets home,  
before she goes out to her Tango class,  
before she comes back and he goes out  
and then she can start again.

So, first she fucks the furniture,  
And after that she polishes the place,  
before finally laying little traps around the room,  
pulling out long peroxide blonde blow dried hairs  
to fasten between sofa and coffee table,  
drinks chariot and love seat,  
lazy boy and dumb waiter.

The markers permit meticulous reconstructions  
of her husband's stumblings around the salon  
in the throes of passion with a stream of others.

She measures the dimensions of the ghost of a head in a pillow,  
archives an eyelash upon the arm rest of a chaise long,  
Ascertaining that its loosening was the result of too much batting and  
fluttering.

She transforms the house into a map of his activities.

Tweezers, latex gloves and labeled baggies reconstruct the narrative of each romantic encounter,  
But mostly she deploys her nose,  
her sense of smell is acute, animalistic.  
She presses her face hard into the sofa.  
a series of short sniffs,  
A trace of a 14 year old's menstrual blood,  
some long inhalations,  
the semen of a man who ate garlic  
a man from her husband's creative writing class (*pause / sniffing*),  
Luis (*pause / sniffing*)  
yes, Luis.  
a pause, as she is suddenly struck by the number of visitors he manages to squeeze in while she takes tango lessons.

She feels like she is falling  
She has to bend her knees,  
She has to spread her legs,  
She has to hold out her arms,  
She has to steady herself  
Is she wearing high heels?  
Is she grateful that the visitors usually only come once?  
Is she hopeful that one day he will notice she has been crying?  
Has she considered replacing the contents of the tube of testosterone gel with vaseline?  
Or has she instead begun to use the Testo Gel upon her own body?  
Would she mind if Luis' wife, forever seated upon balcony opposite, had observed her recent climax against the corner of the dining room table?  
And isn't it rather warm for an outfit as thick and heavy as hers?



**(the place where hills crash together)**  
**Tepectli Monamictlan**

They both agree that he really should be a big success by now.  
The sentences flow like water from a tap,  
Like blood from a jugular vein,  
Like anything that typically comes out very easily from anything else.  
But she's noticed his fingers strike the letters so hard they've worn away,  
And what about that trouble he's having thinking at the same time as  
talking?  
And the struggle to relate a spoken word to its signification?

Luis is going out again.

"Don't stand too close to the window honey,  
someone might blow you a kiss"  
He calls back from the stairs.

Pursing her mouth into something like a smile  
she pushes the front door shut and slides on the latch.  
He can't have thought of that himself, she decides...  
She goes to a drawer and takes out a book.  
...Something the Pulp Fiction Writer said in the storytelling class perhaps?  
She opens the book and takes out a key  
...or it's from a Chet Baker song... or Frank Sinatra maybe?  
She turns the key in a lock under a rug upon the floor,  
and pulls out a sheaf of papers,  
his manuscripts,  
which she's improving...  
as a surprise.  
She feels qualified to do this,  
because he's writing about her,  
and how she feels,  
how she doesn't really love him,  
Even if she thinks she does,  
Because how could she know anything of love,  
When she's so busy getting caught up in vanilla affairs all over their  
minimalist furniture...

She leafs through the endless, embarrassingly predictable infidelities he's  
imagined.  
She edits the scarlet-lipped sighs he's described smeared on a different  
collar each day,  
On a formal level she's noticed he keeps leaving out certain words:  
Connecting words,  
words that describe the relations between two things:  
"in" "out" "with" "without" "beside" "inside" "underneath" "on top"

She highlights chunks,  
Scribbles notes in margins,  
Scores out whole paragraphs,  
Cuts and pastes words.  
Before finally folding the pages into aeroplanes  
and launching them out into the street.

She undoes a button on her pale patterned loose cotton dress  
Amid jurassic-type ferns.  
There's a hand-sized hole in her pocket,  
She reaches through it,

While twisting her toes around a broom handle.  
Luis' wife's balcony is littered with sponges and clothes pegs, brillo pads  
and bottles.  
These objects have become props in a collaboration.

The (soon to become) Child Hero sells juice from a cart,  
He meows very loud as he walks,  
That's how she knows he's arrived,  
That's how she knows when to throw down the scripts.

And now Luis' wife is holding a cucumber in her hand  
And casually taking it on a tremulous journey around the entrance to her  
pussy,  
while looking down from upon her balcony,  
and frowning in concentration,  
laboring over a precise reproduction of the (soon to become) child hero's  
actions,

She becomes the fruit  
Her props metamorphose into his hands, teeth and nails.  
The complex language of gestures they have established permits him, in  
accordance with Luis's writing, to twist a stray hair out of her eyes and  
around her ear,  
to trace the shape of her collar bone, pinch her nipple  
and then gag her with hosiery she's hung out to dry,  
and all without ever laying a finger on her.

No one ever looks up,  
because this isn't a touristic part of town,  
And from below it seems like she's just busy with her hands, embroidering or  
polishing something.

A series of short sniffs,  
some long inhalations.  
She watches the child's movements intently,  
If he breaks off she shoots him pleading looks.

But would she even recognize him out of this context?  
Beyond the world of her balcony and his cart?  
Perhaps she hopes he's never even noticed her?  
That the whole thing's just a coincidence,  
that he's just doing his job,  
preparing the fruit,  
maybe he can't even read the instructions she throws down,  
Maybe this is part of another kind of game for him.

She works nights, serving tea and snacks to an old woman based in an  
armchair in the Place Making Department of the Storytelling Organisation.  
She likes the feeling of disappearing into the dusty silence,  
merging with the wallpaper,  
simply becoming a tray bearing biscuits.

But better still is this feeling of dissolving onto the character that her  
husband is writing.  
Sometimes she faces away from the balcony, watching the boy through a  
carefully angled mirror,  
A reflection of a reflection of a reflection,  
because the real trick is to disappear.

She likes that she's performing Luis' scripts,  
becoming an actor in her alien-husband's imagination,  
Does she even like to think of it as *their* collaboration?  
Does she, as a consequence, avoid considering that perhaps the boy is her  
director?  
Preferring to believe he's employed by Luis,  
Who is watching everything from a window close by,  
Or from high up on a wall,  
arching his spine and making funny clicking sounds  
Because he's been pretending to be a beetle intermittently for the past  
week.  
As a homage to Bruno Schlutz  
As a homage to Franz Kafka  
As a homage to Ovid

A metamorphosis she's elected to ignore,  
even in the moments when he gets stuck on his back.  
Just like how last week when he stood in the corner acting like a lampshade  
for 3 days  
she *still* wouldn't turn him on.

But surely she can see that her actions are also a kind of vengeance?  
Against the alterity of her other half's perspective on their so-called  
"shared life"?  
Doesn't she wonder about the end of the writing course?  
Doesn't she long for him to look back over his manuscripts and discover her  
revisions?  
Has it ever crossed her mind that the juice seller might in fact be a girl?  
Does she even consider where the child goes afterwards?  
Does she worry about the legality of what she's doing?  
Like, is it plagiarism?  
And what are those shapes in the pattern on her cotton dress?

**(the place of duality)**  
**Ilhuicatl-Omeyocan**

Sometimes figures appear before her,  
As she prepares the fruit and vegetables,  
people with missing body parts: noses and fingers.

The last thing she *actually* saw was the vat of acid opening above her,  
and now she really can say that appearance has no meaning.  
Since then she's become disenchanted with language too,  
because of how badly people use it,  
and so she just meows.

That's how they know she's arrived  
And why they call her "Cat-Girl"  
In accordance with their hopeless lack of imagination,  
A girl and also a cat, therefore "Cat-Girl"

Probably she wasn't seen as a threat because of her melted face,  
her gunky glued down eyes,  
and the way one side of her mouth has fallen away to expose her teeth...  
and also because of her terrible dress sense...  
and the stains...  
and also because she is the last one.

She, The Last Juice Seller,  
AKA Cat-Girl,  
AKA The (soon to become) Child Hero,  
is chopping,  
Watch her chop, it's seriously fucking beautiful.  
Oh! Look!  
Oh, but look! Look at that!  
She's slicing the papaya in half.  
Such accuracy!  
Scooping seeds!  
Never wasting a shred of flesh.  
She intuits precisely how deep the bruises go  
and if it's got rot in its heart.  
The fruit speaks,  
she learns secrets from listening to the fruit.  
Of course it's a total cliché that it's the blind kid who truly gets it,  
but she really does.

Now she holds a papaya with the end cut off in one hand,  
a cucumber in the other.  
She casually takes the cucumber on a tremulous journey around the entrance  
to the papaya's seedy interior,  
And she looks up,  
she intuits what the woman wants.  
She is right here right now, present, embodied and embedded.  
She can see behind herself,  
And purplish-red flowers are everywhere  
And muscles are twitching and contracting  
And she's in at least 3 places at once,  
and one of those places is inside Luis' wife.

Love, she feels love,  
And wetness  
and amazement at the smell of the fruit,

and gratitude for the feeling of the sun on her skin,

But do her erotic dynamics correspond with the government's new cultural program?

Is this conception of communal activity in accordance with appropriate forms of developing public space?

And what was that photo of?

The one she stuck to the wall of her room before the accident?

Has she perhaps forgotten it's there?

(the place where smoke has no outlet)

Mictlan

She's misting up her eyes,  
so as to not see what's *actually* there,  
Droplets of full fat cream laced with preservatives cloud her vision.  
It's part of her job,  
tapping into The Good Old Days.  
unearthing "once upon a time..." and "long, long ago..."

Once upon a time when the sunsets were almost too bright to bear.  
Once upon a time when pavements were clogged with people selling tat under  
parasols,  
When food could rot,  
When eggs were laid,  
When babies were born out of cunts,  
Once upon a time when the birch trees were greener, whiter, cleaner,  
clearer, better, always better.

Mining the past has a huge turnover if you're any good,  
and she's good.  
In spite of this her staple food is biscuits and she rarely leaves the  
depths of the stinking armchair she's sprawled over right now,  
in a pose that's closer to that of a fat dog than a human being,  
because she couldn't care less about right now.  
Recapturing the past wins hands down over what the present has on offer.

It's hard to be sure where the Place Making Department ends on account of  
the gloom,  
but it's at least the size of a train terminal,  
just grey walls and armchairs with high sides and nothing to attract  
attention,  
because sensorially deprived zones offer a free pass to the "prisoner's  
cinema",  
and that's where she's going.

Today the hallucinations are hard to control  
Space suddenly shrinks to the size of a cupboard,  
while crafts with flashing lights hang about her.  
Her leg appears across the room, attached to another worker,  
as animals and children run about,  
never speaking, just silently gesturing.

There's an archeological dig going on in every head.  
She's taking it back, taking it right back,  
Making things so ancient that when she touches the air it feels like it's  
thick with cobwebs.

Right here, right now she's hallucinating an aroma  
a series of short sniffs,  
like... like... damp autumn leaves!  
But she has to go beyond the generic categories...  
Deeper,  
Even if they'll probably use the clichés in the end...  
some long inhalations,  
like... a candle burning inside a pumpkin... and...  
printer's ink, rust, or...

She's almost caught it when she receives the poke.

She rearranges her face into her angriest look  
and directs it at where she imagines the poker must be standing.

The poker's job is to heap more quilts on the poke-ee  
and to top up the tea,  
and hold the biscuit tray,  
and to poke her should she drift off.

Idiot girl!

A Shelly Duval to her Jack Nicholson, if this was *The Shining*.  
Just when she was getting somewhere!

The current brief, to call forth the Old Orchard Coffee House on Historic  
Front Street has got everyone struggling.  
The place was shut down years ago.  
No one can put their fingers on what made it so unique.

Now she is seemingly concentrating hard,  
Seriously focused, with her brow all creased up.  
But she hasn't gone back to work,  
she's straining because...  
because... She's defecating... in the chair,  
whilst wearing a strange sort of triumphant smile,  
and with her eyes trained on the idiotic biscuit-bearing-tea-topping-up-  
poker.

Another chair is wheeled over.  
She is lifted out of the mess she's made.  
Her tracksuit is removed,  
Her undergarments,  
What colour is her skin?  
Does she wear her hair scraped back or loose?  
She can't bear to ask anything of anyone,  
but would she mention it if she felt unwell?  
If she thought she was dying?

She is being wiped by pairs of hands,  
roughly.  
She seems to be fixated upon something very far away,  
and now they are zipping up her tracksuit and bending her into the  
replacement chair.  
She shakes their hands off her,  
makes 3 small and awkward circles  
and settles down, once again, into the fat dog pose.

**(the sky of the sun)**  
**Ilhuicatl-Tonatiuh**

The Storytelling Organisation Man swallows his Design For Life™:  
The pink one for regulating his heart.  
The baby blue one for stabilising the pressure of his blood.  
Orange for over-clocking and reflexes and remembering.  
Mint green for Zen-like states and love and light.

He touches the dial on a small disk attached to his temple  
EXCITATION IS ACHIEVED BY THE ANODAL RED STIMULATION  
INHIBITION IS ACHIEVED BY THE ATHODAL BLACK STIMULATION  
Now his eye is like a telescope  
Now a microscope  
Now a camera.  
He blinks slowly, perfectly, mechanically.  
You just can't beat him,  
His personalised Design For Life™ brain-hack makes his synapses fire faster,  
Which in turn permits him to be in several places at once,  
Which in turn permits him to get even further ahead in what he smilingly  
refers to as the "rat race".

He's beholden to the organisation,  
the system and any science that serves it...  
but at the same time he worships self-interest,  
even if he won't actually do anything interesting.

He will mostly sit in his ergonomic seat rubbing out sites in the city,  
and then re-writing them through an accumulation of almost invisible  
gestures that hide behind phrases like:  
*Regenerating **Your** Village of Health, RYVH*  
*Empowering **Our** Art-Culture Corridor, EOACC*  
*Activating Clean Public Space **Together!** ACPST*

He's on the phone,  
and doing his cross-fit training.  
It's OK, he can do both.

He's congratulating you on having asked such an insightful question,  
He is explaining that aside from his parents and a few school friends  
he hasn't found time to check what people think about his project for  
*Activating Public Space...*

Thank you, he says, yes, he'll certainly consider asking more people in the  
coming weeks...

He has been very busy with his other project.

You didn't know?

He sticks roles on backs.

For example:

**You** might suddenly find **you** have committed a murder  
or that a strategic non-monopolising joint-venture has co-opted the stall  
where **you** always your ate breakfast,  
or that you're a war hero,  
or that you don't exist, you've been disappeared,  
or that your apartment block has been flattened to make way for a community  
tree planting initiative sponsored by a hedge fund,  
or that someone saw you crossing their yard in the form of a great black  
satanic dog.

Don't imagine it matters if it's true or not,



it's already been decided.  
Don't imagine you can change it or undermine it,  
things will be made very difficult for you if you try and peel off the story  
he's stuck there,  
Don't try craning your neck to read it,  
Looking at it draws attention:  
you'll start to stand out,  
and then things will really start to kick off.

He is talking to his chief of Public Wellbeing who is on the other line:  
*"We're going to shake the tree and a lot of apples will fall."*

But why does he want this excess of power and money?

That's a good question too, he says smiling gently, very good, very interesting.

He'll have to have a long think, maybe he can get back to you about that in the coming weeks?

He is The Extractivist - never putting anything back,  
just sucking out everything he can from everything he touches,  
and he just loves the smell of emissions...  
And cleaning fluids...  
and that stuff for wiping the computer screen,  
A series of short sniffs,  
some long inhalations.  
Really it's just logical:  
if he can create the conditions for the self interest of others to flourish  
to the degree that his own interests have been able to run rampant...  
Of course it's also about investing in the right people...

And what's he working on now?

He has an idea to blot out the sun,  
Well, dim it...

something about spraying sulphates into the stratosphere  
bouncing sunlight back into space...  
like... a solution to global warming.

He has his science people on it

but his main project is the conversion of the last juice seller into a Child Hero.

The Child Hero will get his own statue, over there on the street corner  
Something for the community,

Something they can decorate and leave flowers on,

Because collective memory is important.

But...

Ah! He's sorry, there's no time for more questions now!

No, really, no time...

He is already closing the lid on his sensory deprivation tank,  
pushing out into a distant world of abstractions.

Already tuning in to the sound of blood flowing around his body

The sound of digestive juices in his stomach

The sound of shit coagulating in his bowels

And what about those bowel movements?

Solid? Loose? Or downright watery?

Reddish? Ochre? Burnt sienna? Beige?

Startlingly frequent? Almost non-existent?

But hasn't he noticed that the juice seller and soon to be Child Hero is in fact a girl?