

Getting Our Ass Beat in the Age of Saturn

Dr. Bones

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“Laugh, and the world laughs with you; weep, and you weep alone.”

— Ella Wheeler Wilcox

“What denies you is an illusion... A curse put upon you by the heartless... You knew from the very beginning... And yet, you cowered in fear... Will you die as you are told...? Who will you obey...? Cursed words spat out by a seething illusion? Or the truth within your own soul? Contract... I am thou, thou art I... The forbidden wisdom has been revealed. No mysteries... No illusions shall deceive you any longer.” –Persona 5

It’s 5am as the darkness pervades, and with it the unwelcome chill of death. Ice is building up on palm fronds. Manatees have hidden deep within the springs. Streets are empty of raccoons, possums, and all manner of nightlife. It is so cold iguanas are literally falling out of trees and turtles are washing up dead. Only the frosted beams of souls off to work exist to light the way, comfortable in warm cars.

On the sidewalk shuffles a shadow, bundled up in a trenchcoat and black hat, struggling to stay warm. He holds a small beat up radio in one ungloved hand, the only companion for a long and arduous journey. Under the flickering street lights you can see his eyes are tired, tear ducts swollen yet undisturbed. He watches the cars go by, very aware he is in another world; he smells the dogshit, the open sewers, while they cannot. He appears like a ghost, flicking into reality with each vehicle passing by.

He’s on his way to pick up his car from a parking lot. He has chosen to do so at 5am and with the temps at 30 degrees in the hopes it won’t light on fire and kill him when he attempts to drive it home. The car is toast, the engine victim to a failure the mechanic *“never seen before.”*

“The amount of pressure must have been incredible” he had said, shaking his bearded head to note the horror, *“normally you gotta hammer the freeze plug in. We figured okay, maybe a radiator leak or something, but that bitch was GONE. Your fluid drained out and the engine overheated. Not only that but ya heads blew.”* He pauses for a moment, as if to hammer home just how much he cares. *“I’m sorry to tell you this but at this kind of mileage you’re going to need a whole new engine.”*

“And how much would that cost?”

“About \$4,500 dollars.”

The jeep cost \$3,000. It sounds like bullshit. Has to be. I laughed because all I could do was laugh.

The laugh of rent increases, firings, or deadly diseases caught at emergency rooms when you have no insurance; the chuckle you get when you watch dreams die. To be poor is to know it well, to carry it in your pocket. It usually grows like a callous right over your heart to match the ones on your hands.

And my hands were calloused.

Christmas brought news about my mother-in-law’s disability case. My wife has cared for her mother since she was sixteen, her high school years spent in apartments with no electricity and having to beg for sanitary necessities. Her mother didn’t work. She did at one time but the PTSD of having her husband kick her down the stairs and beat her within an inch of her life makes crowds impossible. Since we started dating, almost ten years, we’ve payed every bill and effectively spent the same amount of money supporting her as if we had a child. My wife has lost her entire childhood. She’s never woken up to an empty house, never sang a song simply to herself; she’s spent every waking moment worrying about someone in the other room. If that thump on the floor was someone hanging themselves or a cat knocking something over. You can see it in the darting of the eyes, the restless and frustrated sighs.

The hope was both parties might have what they call a normal life.

The judge's decision came in an envelope that was beaten to shit. Her mother would get enough from the State to pay the light bill, some food, and that was about it. She couldn't afford to live on her own. My wife and I had planned and imagined what life might be like, just the two of us. Holding the letter, hands shaking, it became suddenly clear those dreams would never, ever happen.

My wife cried for three days, inconsolable, her one chance at her own life gone forever. She worries we'll never have children now. How can we afford it? She cries and cries and all I can do is hide my own anger and rage.

The two weekends later, dazed out of her wits on anti-psychotic meds, my mother in law walked into the bathroom and proceeded to eject half a gallon of liquid shit in the closet. On our clothes. She then passed out on the floor, hitting her head. We had planned to spend that Saturday night out with a friends, the same as any other twenty-something couple does. We instead spent it cleaning her off, mopping and scrubbing the floor, gagging and retching from the smell. Out of towels at one point, my wife decided to use an old t-shirt.

Life is good it says, with a big smiley covered in human feces.

She can't help but laugh. "*The irony is not lost on me.*"

After adjusting we dreamed new dreams: maybe take the plunge into debt and get a house. After all, we'd never be on our own so me might as well own something that was ours. Apply for that first-time home owner's loan. Paint it how we wanted, plant those banana trees I had read about, stop paying rent and at least craft a warm place for us to die. We had a new city picked out and were set to start hunting Thursday morning. Somewhere calm and peaceful farther down south, away from the highways and tourists. I made plans for turning the Florida Room into a writer's den and hoped to find something next to a forest; she began picking themes to direct our painting and decorating. We could make it work. Our lives may not be the ones we wanted but we would make it work.

My wife lost her job on the 3rd. The car was pronounced dead the same day. Crossing the street, clouds of breath escaping from my collar, I laugh even now. A freak accident. By Wednesday that week every step forward for the year previous had been undone. Every dream, every hope, ripped away. My insides felt as cold as the air scraping against my throat, hurt in ways they don't make words for.

The lot is open, and I walk over to the jeep, allowing my fingers to trail along the door of a nearby luxury vehicle. I attempt to scrape the ice off my windshield but succeed in only wiping free a small hole about the size of my palm. This will be my only visual for about two miles at fifty-five miles per hour, a desperate race to get home before the engine starts shooting out flames. There's no coolant and the damn thing wouldn't hold any even if I had some. As I adjust my seat I reach into my pocket, pulling out a small flask of Sailor Jerry's. Three sips, 93 proof each, enough to warm my stomach and agitate the blood. One last ride, windows down, and loose enough to enjoy it.

What have I got to fucking lose?

Grim Father of Time, Lord of the Outer Darkness

Engine on, the smell of smoke. Can't tell if it's a campfire nearby or me. Get the car into position. Radio on, slam the pedal. Trotting like a coyote, picking up speed as her internal heat begins to rise. The thermometer is broken so I have no idea how much time I have. I can only go forward, faster and faster, until the love of speed overtakes the fear of death.

I think we're all driving a car like that into 2018. Comrades I know have already been through a lot: several have lost their jobs, some are now homeless, others are watching long-term relationships disintegrate. In a facebook group normally devoted to a love of acid and journalism a man cries out to total strangers.

"Well, it happened," he begins. *Found my son cold stiff blue today. 21. Fucking dope, seriously? The fucking government funding their secret opps. so now he's fucking dead.*" Tears hit the keyboard. "There is NO more great rise in the tide," he rages, "only the fall back to the jagged coral of a hell we call America."

That feeling is grasping and strangling everything, like fishing line around a bird's beak. Everywhere people are being dealt terrible hands and luck is freezing over. So great are our tribulations it should come as no surprise that unseen influences are partially to blame.

"Saturn is the planet of consequences and hardships, and it just entered its home base in the Zodiac, Capricorn," says Arthur Lipp-Bonewits, an astrologer and fellow Gods & Radicals author. Located up in the strange concrete jungles to the North, I'd come to know him as an amazing occultist with a keen eye for interpreting the planets as they related to radicals, sex-workers, thieves, and revolutionaries. "2016 was the year reality shit the bed. 2017 was the year the shit got spread over the rest of the apartment. 2018 is the year we start trying to clean up the shit that's everywhere, which will take until late 2020. The reality of the task ahead of us is arriving. No longer do we engage in the panicked screaming of 2015-2017's Saturn in Sagittarius, for now we are faced with the cold, dark terror of what's real and what isn't."

The metaphor of human shit was quite familiar. So too is cold, dark terror. Being working class is living like you have hope but planning like there isn't any.

No need to mince words. We are a generation born in a gutter, handed a world-turned-septic-tank slowly rotting away. At every step the rug is getting pulled out from under us. We went to college only to never get a job in our field; we work two jobs and still can't afford to eat. Everywhere dreams peddled since childhood turn to cinders right before our eyes.

That's our power, the great secret behind the strength of the laboring classes.

It's the precursor to any successful revolution: you have to have every fucking illusion beaten out of you before you accept the reality, watch each hope have its throat slit right before your eyes. Like gamblers with an escape route planned out, like con-men with backup stories, you gotta learn that nothing is inevitable. You have to get desperate. Hungry. Long in tooth and red in claw.

This pain and desperation often becomes the fuel for future greatness, the fuel we always end up falling back on. You build a catalog of life-and-death scenarios you survived, enemies and odds bested, and they help provide you the faith and energy needed to keep betting on black when everything goes red.

Before he became famous Buenaventura Durrutti had been an exile, beholden to a life of horrible failure and desperate maneuvers. Becoming an Anarchist after living the abject poverty his parents inherited, he'd been deported from France for armed robberies and was wanted by Spanish authorities for similar activities. Finding himself and his traveling companions in South America and the Caribbean, Durrutti went from one menial job to another living as a wage slave. The world he carried in his heart seemed as far away as Saturn's rings.

Still, having perhaps no future, he and his companions endeavored to leave the corpses of bosses, landowners, and priests in their wake. It wasn't revenge they were after. **It was a reckoning.**

Once established in Argentina they joined other exiled Italian and Spanish anarchists in robbing banks and carrying out attacks against the ruling class. South America during this time became notorious for Anarchist shootings, bombings, and robberies. Eventually heading back to Spain, Durrutti took this knowledge and became a celebrated *pistolero*.

Due to these experiences Durrutti quickly became a militia leader respected by all. The Durrutti Column, the anarchist militia which had elected him as their commander, were the only fighters who time and time again were able to defeat the Fascist armies, even saving Madrid from certain defeat.

Stop and appreciate THAT one for a minute: it took the practical, chaotic, and terrifying experiences of an Illegalist to bring the Syndicalists the one victory they would ever enjoy; the same people who suffered torture and execution while the *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* labeled them “crazy” and “utopian”; the very same who would continue the fight against Franco long after the banners and unions were trampled in Madrid; those beat down and weathered souls who... ah... I digress.

Durruti once said “*We have always lived in slums and holes in the wall... We are not in the least afraid of ruins.*” Tragedy, horror, if survived these things bring the wisdom of the Outer Planets. Saturn is about constriction, ending, death, but also about planting seeds that pay off in the long run. **It’s about long-term growth and the march of time just as much as choking the life out of the young and restless.**

I am at a red light, steam or smoke pouring out of my engine. This isn’t what I planned, nor what I wanted, but the few minutes here are going to be okay. I’m close enough to home to know I’m going to make it. I also know from practical experience that the police change shifts at 4am, and usually shy away from the roads normally filled with tired drones off to the office. I can blend in. Early morning is the time for decent people, and hiding under this assumption you can be absolutely black-out wasted without anybody noticing. I unscrew the bottle and take a sip to calm my nerves, trying not to focus on the very real threat of fire, but not before looking over to my left. There, eyes wide and jaw nearly on the wheel stares a man on his way to work. His face says he’s trying to mentally digest a car pouring smoke and running on no coolant driven by a madman drinking freely at the wheel, blaring the strangest music he as ever heard.

I tip my hat, smile, and quickly pull away under a green light, outwardly appearing as pure chaotic madness. The man is left to wonder what strange folk roam empty streets while he has his morning coffee. The kind of balls it takes to do that and get away with it. I’m struck by the idea that what appears effortless is actually propelled by familiarity wedded to pure criminal instinct. I feel a bluebird start to sing but I drown in it in more rum.

Home in a minute. Park the car, open a beer, and stare at all the memories rising with the steam. With it evaporates the investigation I had planned in Mississippi, the ability to go camping, the freedom of the open road and small towns unprepared for a necromantic drunk. I go upstairs, hitting my shin on a step. Cursing aloud but trying to stay quiet. Sitting at the desk. Staring at the closet. My thoughts frosting over like the window in front of me.

For most of last year the only thing that kept me from putting a gun in my mouth was the idea that 2018 was going to be the year I tried to live as a writer; that I was going down to part-time and focus on the engine that gave my life meaning. Every morning, waking up at 4am to work at 5, I knew this job was torture.

I had a plan. I was going to get out. Bit by bit I had built my escape zeppelin.

2018 had found it on fire with the entire engine crew reduced to pools of smoldering human fat. Economic circumstances now demanded I keep selling myself shift by shift. There was no house, no forest, no writer's den, no weekends, no late mornings, and sure as shit no other road than 40 hours ahead of me. I stared wanting to cry but not having the energy. Spirits began to take notice. I felt swirls of darkness roll around my desk. I thought about the revolver up in the closet, all the countless times I'd picked out the music and written the note all in my head. Thought about what it might feel like to have your brains thrown ten feet behind you and splattered on the wall.

Like diving into a pool I figured.

I open up the closet. Gently. Quietly. Fingers touch cold steel, an entire death machine weighing a little over a pound. Yes...a splash in the water. Easy. Simple. I feel eyes upon me as the shadows continue to swirl. The spirits wait, they want to know—

And I... And I...

Thrust it into my shoulder holster. Grab my copy of *Storycraft* by Jack Hart, open another beer, and start to studying. *"It's a great year to build things you want to last a long time,"* says Arthur. *"Saturn in Capricorn collapses old structures so that new ones can arise in their place. This is the time for direct action in terms of building solidarity networks and strengthening existing ones."*

I'm inclined to agree. With no hope for anything else I can only live for now. The gods have refused my request to retreat to more amicable locales; this reporter is to stay deep in the trenches and covered in blood. Nothing left but to seize life by the throat and rip out its arteries with my teeth, filled with pure burning hatred for a system that tortures the people I love.

So must you. If you've been putting off gathering accomplices now is the time. Knowledge and practical skills will be far more resonant than the punch-outs we saw in 2017; use Saturn's energy to bring structure, discipline, and strength to maintain a program. Working out will bring long-term growth. Guerrilla gardening or other agriculturally-inclined projects will be particularly blessed. Skills that won't pay off till years later will be easier to learn. Fortifications, in the secular sense of radical centers and training camps or in the magical sense of protection charms and wardings, will vibrate with power.

This all comes with a caveat, Arthur would note: *"Any flaws in the structure or organization"* of our bases, forts, and communities *"will be magnified during this time too. So if, say, the men refuse to do their fair share of childcare and cleaning in your anarchist commune, it's not gonna last the cycle. But if everyone is responsible and hardworking and cares for each other, it'll be fine."*

Everything moves in cycles. **This time is one of loss but also one of preparation.** Seeds being planted. Plants being watered. In the lines of cheeks I see the future. Each twisted body and broken heart is a nuclear-powered engine that will one day reshape the entire face of existence. There will be other cars, there will be other jobs, but what will remain forever are the experiences encoded on our spirits. Soldiers under our own flags, cutthroats, thieves, we persevere as the world continues to fall around us.

I know you're suffering, dear reader. I know you're in pain. I know the shithawks are swooping in. I've seen it in your tweets, your posts, even seen it in your dreams. Know this: that this time will pass. As sure as these cycles come so shall they go. When Saturn makes its way across the sky some of us will fall. Many of us might be destroyed. That's all part of the revolution, isn't it?

It's never bloodless. It's never peaceful. It's never free from pain and degradation. Anger. Sorrow. But if you can make it through this year, if you can survive, if you can build the networks and structures you'll need when these troubles come round once more you will be unstoppable.

An age of heroes awaits us, an opportunity unparalleled. Can you not sense it on the galactic winds, in the motions of the planets? A world running toward extinction, a people hopeless and angry, from this wasteland shall emerge the greatest of survivors, perfectly adapted for the ruins of the old Earth and the new one in our hearts. We have made amazing things with nothing but scraps, refuse, and gnawed on bones. What wonders can we create when we have full control?

2018 brings ice and death, but tropical winds will return. Hoisting our flags made black by the outer planets, our forts solid as coquina stone, the inner darkness grows within each one of us. One day it will be summoned. The time will be easy to know, for then humanity will become like the gods themselves: free and wild and beyond good and evil, with laws and morals thrown aside. We will shout and revel in joy, the earth an inferno of ecstasy and freedom.

What you do today, what you build, will be where that fire begins.

“We have always lived in slums and holes in the wall. We will know how to accommodate ourselves for a while. For you must not forget that we can also build. It is we who built these palaces and cities, here in Spain and America and everywhere. We, the workers. We can build others to take their place. And better ones. We are not in the least afraid of ruins. We are going to inherit the earth; there is not the slightest doubt about that. The bourgeoisie might blast and ruin its own world before it leaves the stage of history. We carry a new world here, in our hearts. That world is growing in this minute.”

– Buenaventura Durruti

“The whole world is a product of cognition... ..not just the Metaverse. It can be freely re-made... The same goes for you, and everyone else. Soon a new world will come. One where mankind isn't held captive. The world will shine brightly as long as you hold hope in your hearts. Remember... There's no such thing as the 'real' world. What each person sees and feels— Those are what shape reality. This is what gives the world infinite potential. Even if you feel that only darkness lies ahead... As long as you hold hands together... See it through as one... ..the world will never end! The world exists within all of you...!”— Morgana, Persona 5

Saturn Security System

In an era where the Luck Plane ceases to tilt one would be wise to increase defenses against ill-winds, deranged assholes, and of course the pigs.

Get a deck of cards and pull out the Ten of Spades, The King of Spades, and the Jack of Diamonds. Get Black Cohosh, Black Mustard Seed, and commercial oils by the name of “Run Devil Run Oil” and “Law Keep Away.”

On a Saturday go down to a cemetery and find the grave of a soldier. Offering a dime and some liquor ask the spirit of the soldier to protect and defend your home from all those who might harm those inside. Leave the offerings and take a scoop of graveyard dirt. Bring the dirt home.

At the top of the King of Spades write the words “Watch My Back.” On the bottom of the card write “Protect This Home.”

Get the 10 of Spades. Write “A Hedge of Thorns!” at the top, “A Wall of Shields!” at the bottom, “What Send You Get Back!” on one side, and “What You Do Is Undone” on the other. In the center draw the Magic Square of Saturn:

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357

On the back of the card write the following words:

"The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt."

On the Jack of Diamonds draw a large "X" across the entire front of the card. On the back of the card write the following words:

"The police shall pass me by. The police shall walk on by.

Where I go they cannot go.

What I see they cannot see.

What I know they cannot know."

On a Saturday night get the three cards on your altar or workspace.

Under the light of a black candle rubbed in Run Devil Run Oil and Law Keep Away Oil anoint the King of Spades and 10 of Spades in the Run Devil Run Oil. Sprinkle the grave dirt on the King of Spades, praying the spirit of the soldier defend and protect you from enemies; sprinkle the Black Cohosh over the 10 of Spades, praying all witchcraft and evil be repelled from your dwelling. Anoint the Jack of Diamonds in a 5-spot pattern (like the pattern of dots on the "5" side of a die) with the Law Keep Away oil, repeating the words you wrote on the back with each application of the oil. Sprinkle Black Mustard Seed on it immediately after.

With the Black Cohosh and Black Mustard make sure to pray that the spirits of the plant take up residence in the cards. Using a rattle will aid in this. When all cards are ready pray Psalm 9 over them three times.

[1] I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

[2] I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

[3] When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

[4] For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.

[5] Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

[6] O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.

[7] But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.

[8] And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

[9] The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

[10] And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

[11] Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.

[12] When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble.

[13] Have mercy upon me, O LORD; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:

[14] That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

[15] The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

[16] The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

[17] The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

[18] For the needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.

[19] Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

[20] Put them in fear, O LORD: that the nations may know themselves to be but men. Selah.

When the candle burns down take the cards and nail them to the doorframe of the building, right above the entrance, making sure to get the nails directly through the middle(especially on the Jack of Diamonds! It MUST go through the middle of the "X"). The left over herbs should be deposited at a crossroads. Reapply the oil on each card once a week, praying Psalm 9 one time as you do so, and have faith in your protection.

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