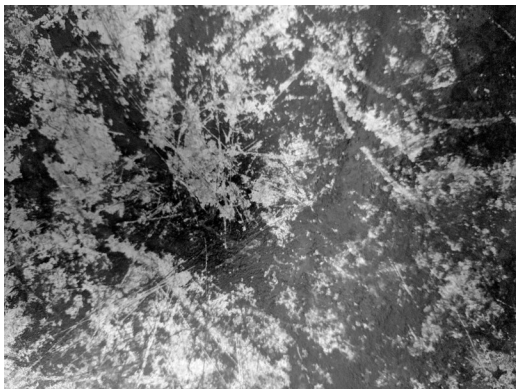


Trauma Scenarios



by D.E. Morgan

Psych-Ward Hallway

You're walking through a psych-ward hallway at 3am. You're locked in and haven't slept all day, you have tardive dyskensia, and there's a woman locked in a room screaming in anger and terror while your Ativan wears off, and you can't take more for four more hours while a bunch of guys behind a desk nearby talk about bad TV shows as you pace back and forth. Back and forth.

Sometimes you look at the paintings, but it just looks like the paintings are looking at you. No one else is awake, just the screaming woman and the people talking about the TV show. Is it some crime show or something? You can't tell. You have on a hospital gown, and you notice it has flowers on it, but even the flowers feel like they're looking at you.

The Sound of Gunshots

You hear gun-fire coming from somewhere near your house. You don't live in a neighborhood where gunfire happens often, but you realize that it's not fireworks, and you hit the floor. You lay there wondering why you aren't scared, and just stay there on the floor for a few minutes, thinking to yourself, "Only an idiot would still be around after shooting their gun several times at night in a suburban neighborhood." You wonder if anyone was assassinated or if someone was just popping some shots off, you get up, and go to see if everyone in the house is fine.

The I-Beam

You are under a bridge and see an I-Beam with a rope on it. The rope is frayed, and it looks dirty and polluted, like it has been there a long time. It is a short length of rope, and you ask yourself why it is there, as it would be difficult to tie the rope to where it is positioned without falling. Perhaps, you think to yourself, the person who put the rope there was not afraid to fall, and you can only think of one reason this would be.

Cooking Wine and Mouthwash

You wake up to the sound of your mother's voice dimly coming through an intoxicated haze. She says your name with anger and concern. "What did you drink?" she asks, and you realize that you are covered in your own vomit. You hesitate, and then respond, "Cooking wine and mouthwash," and then try to roll over, but roll off of the side of your bed and hit the floor. "Ohh!" your Dad says with a little sympathy in his voice. You somehow make it to your knees and notice that the bed is covered in green puke and that you smell horrible. You fall asleep on the floor.

Amphetamines in Church

You knew you had to do the sound engineering for the church in the morning, but you stayed up all night, figuring that the amphetamines would keep you awake enough to do it. You had snorted several lines of crushed up Adderall the night before, but just as the service is nearing an end you feel your heart race and an uncontrollable urge to vomit. You race down the stairs, through the basement, into the bathroom, and throw up profusely. You go to your father, who is an usher upstairs, and you tell him that you have to go to the hospital. He says, "Are you sure? Why? Did you take something?" And you reply, "Yes."

Boy Scout

You're in a tent, and you're thirteen years old. Literally everyone you know at the time is a homophobe, and so the topic of conversation turns to how gay everyone is. It seems like mockery, but then the person you're in a tent with pulls down his pants and shows you his buttocks. "What, are you gay?!" you ask, every bit of homophobia you've internalized from your hateful environment falling from your lips. The boy says, "No, no. I'm not gay. If I were gay I would have showed you my penis." You both silently decide to leave it at that.

Hitting a Pedestrian

You stop by a country bar while driving aimlessly in rural Illinois and have a couple of beers, trying to space them out so you will be below the legal alcohol limit when you leave. You're pretty sure you are, but you get in the car and drive for about half an hour until you reach a town. Seeing a McDonalds you decide to try to pull into the parking lot, but as you're pulling in you hit a guy, who falls to the ground like a sack of potatoes. You get out of the car thinking that you killed him, see that he's not moving, and exclaim to someone watching from their car, "I think I killed him!" He breathlessly says, "No, I'm all right, you just got my knee." You proclaim how sorry you are until the police and paramedics arrive.

Shoe-Throwing

You're in the locker-room at the junior high school you go to, where you are often bullied by the other students. You pretend to like it at one point, thinking you'll curry favor with the bullies by letting them bully you. They start throwing their shoes at you, and you pretend that you think it's funny. They turn the lights off, and there is a wave of shoes that smack you from all angles, some of them thrown rather hard. Everyone is laughing. They collect their shoes, and then the boy at the lightswitch yells "Fire!" and another wave of shoes comes flying at you. You feel numb inside, like you've killed the part of yourself that can hurt.

Chrono Cross at 3:00am

You have to go to school in the morning, but you have a copy of Chrono Cross, an RPG which you have pirated for PlayStation. You decide that you don't care how tired you are in the morning, you are going to play as much of this game as you can, because losing yourself in a Japanese RPG is one thing that you like doing more than anything else. You play through different sections of the game, fighting battles and making progress, intrigued by the storyline. You make it to a point in the game where you get stuck (in some castle or something), and you can't figure out what you need to do next. You feel that the game has become frustrating, and begrudgingly go to sleep.

Stoned

You are certain that both of your parents are sound asleep, and after a quick glance for neighbors being around, you place a few nuggets of hydroponically grown marijuana into a corn-cob pipe, even if a corn-cob pipe isn't ideal for the job. You had bought the weed from a short kid in your school whom you had previously turned down because he had "just weed" instead of "'dro". You place the pipe in your mouth, apply a lighter to the weed, and take several large hits, making sure that you blow the marijuana out of a window with a removed screen. You feel like reality has shifted into a dream-like state, and realize that you feel like just another primate, like an ape or something. You feel that this brings out some kind of inner primate whose nature is to be cool

in some way. To mask the smell of the weed, you light a Marlboro 100 and smoke it out the window as well, making sure to blow a couple puffs of smoke into the room so that the room smells "only" like cigarettes, rather than marijuana. You wonder if your parents can smell the stuff, and quickly put the screen back and lay down in bed, retreating from reality into stoned thoughts for a couple hours, until you go to sleep to get up to go to school in the morning.

Car Wreck

You're in high school, and you're driving with your friends in Chicago in your Mom's new gold Chevrolet Cavalier, and the album Toxicity by System of a Down is blasting on the car's stereo. You are at an intersection, and there is a stop sign. To your left and right in front of you on the street you are about to drive across there are cars parked close to the corner, obscuring your view of traffic coming from either direction. You pull into the intersection, only to see a black SUV driving toward you at the last second, which then crashes into the front right of your car, sending you spinning into another car. You swear profusely, then ask if everyone is OK, and they all say they are, even though a girl with you wasn't wearing a seat belt. A man gets out of the SUV and asks if you have insurance, and you inform him that you do.

The Tornado

You receive word on your smartphone that there is a tornado warning in effect for your area. You don't think much of it, since a tornado has never hit your quiet suburb before, but you go down to the basement with your father. The lights are off, it's daytime, and the rain is pouring hard. All of a sudden it sounds very windy out, so you hang out in the southwest corner of the basement. Suddenly, your father announces that a large tree next door has toppled over, as the power goes out. There is a friend who is staying in your basement and you announce that you think a tornado hit the place. He says non-chalantly, "I heard." You wait around for a while, and nothing else happens. Soon, the rain abates and you go outside and see that the tree fell

on some power-lines. Your house is undamaged. You go out and speak to your neighbors, to see that they are all right. You hop over live and downed power-lines on the ground. A house across the street had a shed which was lifted up in the air and thrown across the yard, and although everyone seems to be in good health and no one's house is seriously damaged, the effect of the incident is surreal. You go home feeling a sense of community from the neighborhood that had been missing since you were a child.

Morning Glory Seeds

Over a period of months, you have collected morning glory seeds from a morning glory plant in your backyard. You have read that they contain LSA, or lysergic acid amide, a compound related to LSD. You take hundreds of them, crushing the seeds in your mouth. You do not trip, nothing happens. You expected to experience an altered reality, but it was not to be, as simply nothing happened. You feel disappointed and try to enjoy the rest of the night without being on a psychedelic trip.

New Agey Therapist

You have a New Agey therapist, whom you frequently talk about spiritual experiences and mysticism and such. She's always saying that you have a "light" about you, and she sometimes tries to recruit you into the cult she's in with business cards, books, and CDs and such. One time she says that she'd really like to get to know you, and you say, "What? In the Biblical sense?" and she laughs. After laughing for a while she just keeps laughing and laughing, and you say to her, "All right, nevermind."

Hanging Out in the McDonalds Getting Cocaine

You have a friend who claims to have a cousin who is into selling cocaine, so you drive to the Pilsen neighborhood and drop him off near the McDonalds. You go into the McDonalds and order a Coca-Cola to occupy your time as you wait for him to meet you in the McDonalds. He comes. You've spent a good \$40 on a drug that lasts 30 minutes. You get in the car, drive a couple of blocks, dollar bills are rolled, and you wait for him to get the cocaine onto an ancient CD tray that's in your car. Carefully, looking around furtively for cops, you pass the CD case back and forth and snort lines of cocaine from the plastic. When everything is done, you look around again, drive off, and take the freeway home while your friend talks about his sexual exploits. It lasts a short time, and then it's over.

State Psych Hospital

You're in a state mental hospital, which is about as comfortable as a migraine headache. A medication is tried on you, and you spend the day pacing around in circles, feeling as if you are possessed by many demons. On the TV, some violent action movie or another is playing. You keep pacing along with a guy who has a teardrop tattoo near his eye. People are sitting about the area `non-chalantly, and the whole place just seems like a prison for people who haven't committed a crime. You see a woman with blonde hair and blue eyes sitting at a table and you catch her eye. She is very beautiful, and gives you a half-smile. You try to smile back, and continue pacing around in circles.

Caught Shoplifting

You're in a Value City department store, and you walk around looking to see if they have any video games so you can steal them and sell them to GameStop for cash. You spot a location in an aisle that has a small selection of games, grab three, and walk to a clothing section. You lose your nerve to steal a little bit, then after working up some courage bend over and put the games in the front of your pants. You walk out of the store, and are promptly greeted by a muscular man who grabs you and asks you to come with him. You resist and he tackles you, and you tell him that you'll get a lawyer. He takes you into a room and says that he will make a civil demand that you pay a few hundred dollars or be arrested. You are released.

Erased Save Game

You've been playing Final Fantasy VII on PlayStation for many hours and have made it to the last area of the game. Your friend comes over, and you want to show him the beginning of the game. You do so, but when you get to a save point, you end up saving over the game that you've put countless hours into. You are devastated, but continue showing your friend the game, and after your friend leaves you continue playing through from the beginning. You want to cry.

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Many thanks for reading this chapbook

Yes, all of this stuff really
happened.