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# The Black Notebook

R. G. Vasicek

# What

are you trying to  
say?

Is it sayable? Are you a lunatic? Are you an asylum seeker? Is Amerika disappointing you? Are there no books good enough for you? Are you a writer? Are you an artist? Why am I asking all the questions?

Say something.

Yes. Well. There you go again. Breathing all the air. Igniting all the fossil fuels. Do you ever rest? Your mind races. We can barely keep up.

Slow down.

I apologize. I am not myself. Never have been. Too much cereal. Too much Cheerios. I am the hole at the center of a Cheerio. I am empty space. I hold the Cosmos together. I am dark matter. I am invisible. I am palpable. You cannot ignore me. You must. You must pretend I do not exist.

Pages and pages of what exactly? Your writing perplexes me. Is there a purpose? A goal? Is experience just experience? What am I learning here? What new thoughts? What curiosities? What information?

Ink is the petroleum of the mind. Spill it at your peril. Every lover will denounce you. Every friend. Your mother cannot read a word you say.

We are all visitors here. The metropolis is a carnival. Every building a funhouse. The trees are artificial. The river looks real enough.

I cannot speak much longer. I am running out of time. I thought it was infinite. I thought wrong. Surprises no one. Least of all myself.

You look good in stripes. What a fine choice in fashion. Are you a jester? A fool? Are you a hooligan?

Buy me a coffee at the bodega, will you? I need to sip something. Milk & sugar. Possibly a refreshing thought will emerge. Something optimistic. Something real.

Something no one has ever thought before. Alas, I lose. I lose the game. The game is the game. We play it anyway.

Time to show your cards. What hand were you dealt? Did you make good choices? Wise decisions?

We are everywhere always nowhere. I probably said that in another book. It is still true. Even more so.

My knowledge of myself grows. I forget less and less. If that makes any sense. I am becoming the barest essentials.

Even the books on my shelf must go. I no longer need them. They get in the way. I feel the weight of a thousand wrong turns. Only I know the right way.

I keep trying to be you. And it is not working. Whoever you are. We take turns being each other.

The black notebook was an accidental discovery. There it was. So, I picked it up.

It was empty. So, I began to write.

If it gets filled, it will be complete. I will not write more. I will not write less.

Time and space has its purpose. Even here now.

I might go to sleep.

I might.

3:23 am.

Things are not going well.

Last thought. Every thought. A melancholy thought.

I must wake up.

Sunrise.

Afternoon.

Everything looks hazy. Unclear. Uncertain.  
Murky.

I am an animal.

I feel animal feelings.

Human feelings.

I am a Neanderthal.

I am a European.

I am an American.

Every thought escapes me.

Lines of flight. The airport runways of the  
metropolis. The highways. The concrete barriers.

The restless river called the East River.

I am emerging

... from something  
... from somewhere.

Coffee on the rocks. I am losing my mind. I never  
had a mind. Just an amygdala.

Easy on the ice cream. Easy on the screaming ice.  
This is the tip of the iceberg. The last iceberg.  
Before it melts for good. Swallowed by the sea.

We are quite capable of reality. We fabricate it  
every day. Image-texts for all to see. Copies of  
copies. Echoes.

I scream into the void.  
The abyss.

The fathomless hole.

Anechoic chamber of the mind.

Resist the machine. Resist typing it up before  
your hand aches from writing it all down. Faster  
& faster. There is no time. No time to lose.

Ninety degrees Fahrenheit. Eighty-seven degrees.  
Summer needs to end.

Give way to autumn.

Give way to winter.

Cool off the human mind. Let it percolate. Ignite  
the coal. Release the plumes of smoke.

I am waiting.

Anticipating.

Anxious creature in an anxious age.

I have thoughts.

We all do.

I press myself into paper. Ink & more ink.

Machine noise surrounds me. Air machines. Water machines.

War machines.

The computer is not your friend. It is your keeper.

I make noise with silence.

The whispers of solitude.

The screams.

I have to believe in myself.

Or at least pretend to.

Let's figure this shit out together.

The puzzle. The enigma.

Enough paper. Enough ink. We are on a roll. A toilet paper roll. A scrolling manuscript for the ages.

East River breeze.

I feel it on left cheek.

Dare I speak of New York?

Prague.

Albany.

Dubrovnik can now be added to the equation. Split. Zadar. Stari Grad.

My soul absorbed into ancient stone walls.

Flickers in the crypt under the Diocletian palace.

The file inside the file inside the file.

I am an electronic being.  
Flux.

Ebb & flow.

Surge.

Nickels & dimes. A drawer of memories.  
Paperclips. Pocket knives. Who will clean it out?

Gray light of late August bounces in a frenzy  
off the page.

You are a remarkable reader.

I envy you.

Endurance.

Curiosity.

Are you a thought machine?

Are you restless?

Are you perpetual?

The problem of New York is the problem of  
everywhere.

We no longer speak to each other.

I sit.

I stare.

This is a lot to be. Whatever I am.

Tangles of metal. I am a robot. I am a cyborg. I am a human being.

Early warning system.

Rocket attacks.

Anxiety.

Hit the red button, if necessary. Emergency button.

I am exploding.

I am not a human being.

I [am] a human being.

You bear witness... to whatever this is.

I hope you can forgive me.

I apologize.

What am I doing here?

I wander the metropolis.

In search of..

I am attaching a file. It is larger than 25MB.  
It is 994.7M.

Can you believe it?

Can you open it?

This black notebook keeps getting smaller.

Far less space than I imagined.

I switched from black ink to blue ink in the black notebook. Not sure why.

I suspect it is irrelevant.

I feel odd.

Uncanny.

There are so many people in Amerika. There are so many people in Europe.

I know nowhere else.

I am a beginner.

I am a late bloomer.

If I believe in this black notebook, I might... what?

What is possible in this space?

What do I hope to accomplish?

Fuck me.

I am tired.

I did not sleep.

I never sleep.

Not like I used to.

Or how I imagine I slept.

Maybe I am kidding myself.

Filling the black notebook with nonsense.

Lies.

Fabrications.

I just don't have fucking feelings anymore.

Or.

Anger.

Turned inward.

I am trying to be a person. And it is not working.

I am not going to curse anymore.

Makes no sense.

Nobody is listening.

This is me now. A hungry ghost. Sipping coffee.

I want to laugh.

I want the laughter of the Cosmos.

It stares back at me.

Empty.

Cold.

There are a few suns out there. Ignited spheres  
of gas. Trillions & trillions of burning suns.

Cigarette tips in the night.

We are ash.

At least we once burned.

I remember things.

I write things.

This is a thing. A burning thing.

You can see me.

Almost.

A transparent man.

A human being.

I can see you.

Almost.

We could make a novel together. We are.

Your role becomes increasingly important.

You are the brain machine.

Particle collider.

Cyclotron.

I am a recording instrument.

This is a laboratory.

Experiment.

I am a whirlpool of emotions.

Feelings.

Thoughts.

Half-thoughts.

I am a man of fragments.

Echoes of echoes.

Ghosts.

I cannot do it. I must do it. Keep going.

Time is not your friend.

I need an ally.

A lover.

We could go to the beach together. Swim. Frolic.

This black notebook is incredible.

It is made of paper.

I am made of paper.

Ink.

Thumbnail sketches of a person.

Easy on the details.

Rapid drawing.

Get there first.

Be first.

Are you trying to read my mind? Stop trying to read my mind. Get out of there.

It hurts.

I was a sensitive child. I made less noise than necessary.

Amerika requires a scream.

Otherwise.

Nobody hears you.

I thought I could make noise with silence.

Absence.

Void.

Who is the speaker? I am the fucking speaker!

Eye of the hurricane.

I feel okay, and I know... I know that is dangerous.

I must be careful.

Not to feel okay.

Vigilant.

Alert.

I am a disaster.

Are you sure you are still interested?

Very well, then.

Keep on.

Watch.

Listen.

Read.

Nevermind the emptiness.

Anger.

Implosion.

Explosion.

We are volcanoes. We are tectonic plates.

I feel the earthquake beneath your feet.

Asphalt driveways buckle.

Sliding-glass doors shatter.

I scream at a giant sinkhole behind my house.

A monster emerges.

The Sump Monster.

I am writing furiously on the third day of September.

Time is running out.

The space in the black notebook is running out.

Paper.

Leaves.

Geometric planes.

Rectangles.

Trapezoids.

Rhombus. Rhombi?

We make faces at each other.

You say you are going to come.

The landslide of existence.

L'avalanche.

I am nobody.

Nobody I am.

A pen stroke.

Four letters.

Two vowels.

Two consonants.

What a puzzle. What an enigma.

I cannot progress.

I am recursive.

Forget the past. I no longer care. Really. I don't.

Even here.

Onward.

Forward.

Go. Go. Go.

Every writer is retrograde. What an art form.

Of all the arts.

You had to pick this one.

The hole.

The empty space.

Nothingness.

You are my accomplice.

Collaborator.

Confidante.

Secret friend.

Imaginary friend.

I know you are real.

More real than reality.

Hyperreal.

Superreal.

The edge of the abyss is made of paper.

You thumb through this.

Like Zeus.

Jupiter.

Athen.

Aphrodite.

I am a human being at the edge of the Universe.

The sea is unfathomable.

The sky.

The atmosphere.

The ether.

We could pretend to be something.

What.

I have no idea.

This is the hardest thing to write.

To write into the future.

Unknown.

Uncertain.

Everybody is playing video games except for me.

Everybody is watching TV.

Except for you.

You are exceptional.

Rare.

The third of September.

The flooded city.

The flooded metropolis.

Sixty-eight degrees Fahrenheit.

I like it.

I could make love in this weather.

If I had a lover.

I am alone.

Terribly alone.

It is wonderful.

No one to disappoint.

Well.

That is not true, is it?

I am me, after all.

The bathroom mirror.

The toothbrush.

The toothpaste.

Brushing my canines.

A werewolf in London.

A Neanderthal.

Almost there.

A few more pages.

I can feel it.

Finish it.

You can do this.

A fifth-set tiebreaker.

Ink.

Brain.

Eyeballs.

Hands & feet.

Ass tight. Buttocks engaged.

A novel is never a novel.

It is something else.

Not describable.

Indescribable.

Look for no precedent.

No precursor.

No ancestor.

It is just...

I can taste it.

I can smell it.

I can see its shadow.

Projected on a wall.

Projected in your mind.

We are astronauts.

We are cosmonauts.

Everybody wants to explore outer space. This is the only spaceship I can afford.

It is faster than the...

I got nothing.

I am an empty cup.

This is what writing is.

Waiting.

Listening.

Perhaps I hear a sound. Perhaps it is a trick of the mind.

You are turning the pages.

I can hear it.

This is a book.

The black notebook.

Everybody is talking about it.

Try getting a copy.

Putting it in their ass-pocket.

Down their underpants.

This is the book.

The book you have been waiting for.

Slim.

Tight.

Captures the Zeitgeist.

Reach up a hand.

Grab a lightning bolt.

Say yes in thunder.

Hurricane.

Tornado.

Volcano.

The whirlpools of Hell Gate are swirling again.

The Kraken lurks.

I am a harpooneer.

Black ink in my hand.

I raise it...

...and

Strike

Strike

Strike

The Kraken puts up a ridiculous fight.

Drags me to the bottom of the Hell Gate.

Where I see the treasures of sunken ships.

And dead children.

I emerge.