Romanticizing Life

The human mind is a curious thing - as soon as though I have figured it out, something new comes up, like the early morning fog over the field near my house. It appears out of nothing and just as quickly opens up like a curtain on stage. The fog is not always there, it is just as uncertain as me. A fresh morning in June. The official beginning of summer is only a few steps away and while we already were able to bask in the sun’s generous warmth, I still have to put on a scarf on my way to work or pack an extra sweater in case the warmth is being chased away by chilling winds through the trees and bushes. A while back I suffered a little health scare - all possible scenarios clouding my mind just like the fog on the fields which I passed on my way to the doctors. I should have learned and listened to my dear ones to stop any unnecessary researches regarding health-related issues as it just makes me more nervous. When you come to think of it, there are more than just a couple of reasons why I am unfit to work in the medical field. Anyone that does work there, has my whole heart and my biggest respect; the devotion and altruism is incredible and admirable. Stepping out of the building it seems as if the sun is teasing me. Shyly peaking through a cloud as if she wants to look after me. The doctor told me that I have a Vitamin D deficiency. Did the sun know? I am nowhere near a critical and worrisome condition. The low levels of the vitamin in my body are noticeable but easy to treat. My mouth is running quick like a stream, the words spilling out like water – I have trouble keeping things to myself. Eventually my worries leave my lips like bees leave their nest. I cannot help myself and end up telling my supervisor at work. On official orders I am now to spend my lunch break outside on our patio, but it is too cold to take off my thin, long sleeved layer. The doctor said that arms and face should be exposed but I do not want to catch a cold in order to cure the lack of sunlight on my skin. It is not like I do not ever leave the house. I don’t purposely avoid the burning star and its energy, it is just shy.

I am an indecisive person, anxious yet stubborn. A lot of times I wished that I would put the same energy and effort into completing a task as I put into avoiding and procrastinating it. I am not certain if am completely content with where in life I am standing - Even though nothing is going horribly wrong, it could also be much better. I am blaming myself for it because I am painfully aware that it is me all alone who has the steering wheel of life in my hands. I like my workplace, yet I could make an effort and look for something more challenging, possibly rewarding. I do love my friends. There are not many but those ones I have, I love dearly, loyally and with no reservations. But I could try and break out of my comfortable shell and find new connections. My studies are fine, challenging but in a fun way. However, I am not certain what I want to achieve in the long run, what to do after I achieve the milestone of graduation. Most people in my field are prepared for a rather diverse field in the professional world. Teaching, publishing, fine arts, journalism, entertainment business and also law and medicine. I am still not sure if that takes the weight of my shoulders to know of the many options or if that only makes it harder to pick something if there is such an abundance of opportunities. That is like picking the prettiest flower off of a field, not knowing if the flower is poisonous or already past their blooming period. What should I do?

One thing that comes easy is looking for an escape. Building castles in the sky, devoting life to finding shapes in the clouds instead of drifting back down to the ground and participate in building actual projects, enduring the hard labor that comes with it. I am sure that every generation on earth is longing for the seemingly easy life of childhood that we buried under a ton of memories and fragments of earlier times - It is easy to get lost in there, like drowning in a sea of polaroid pictures that are one’s memories. Spending an unhealthy amount of time in the castles in the sky, wasting it on daydreams, knowing that most will not turn out to be true. Yet, there always remains the little sparkle of hope that maybe, hopefully I am wrong. It’s just way too easy to let oneself drift away and drown in the stream than to call for help or
look for a big enough rock that we can hold on to. That rock is the silver lining, the romanticization of ordinary life. If you pretend that it is pretty, it is so much easier to hold on.

My most trusted and loyal comfort is very reliable and long term, very damaging. Worry accompanied by melancholy - and the painful realization that at some point it will all be over. It is paradox how some of the best and powerful feelings in the world are outweighed by the sole perception that it has an ending. Standing in a crowd at a concert for example. Seeing not only your friends but everyone around you living in the moment, enjoying themselves - apart from oneself. Looking into the smiling faces of your loved ones, who all came together to celebrate that you, many years ago, were born that day. Singing Happy Birthday more and more feels like the beginning of the end. Who thinks like that? Painfully aware that it should not be like that, at least not in that moment.

But with growing older also comes the development of senses. A sort of awakening? How many children love the bitter and acidic taste of Brussels sprouts, beer, or coffee? I find it fascinating how most of the people I know, now love at least one of those. Just like we appreciate a heavy rainfall during summer because we know that nature needs it. As a child that only made me upset because it meant that I could not spend a fraction of my seemingly countless summer vacation days playing outside. For me I found a passion for coffee. I love to know everything about the geography facts, where the beans come from, the processing, balance of temperature and time to reach its individual peak of aroma, acidity, body and flavor. I think that it is very the same with wine, just with a different effect after consuming. Both share a logical complexity.

My favorite kind of liquid complexity is a good dark roast coffee. It is not too acidic but rather sweet and rich in flavor and perfectly fine on its own as a dessert. The best coffee I ever had the pleasure of tasting, was during my travel to Paris this past spring. It has always been my dream to explore as much of the world as possible and the perks of living in central Europe are the relatively short train rides to a neighboring country – That brings me to my next point. My favorite travel companion and best friend. I can certainly and confidently say that her presence makes life so much brighter and colorful - Like the vibrant colors of nature after the rain. She helps me with fulfilling my daydreams into reality and shares the joy in doing so. Like the fictional character Blair Waldorf. I have a scrap book with pictures and receipts and doodles and old tickets. On some pages I wrote down some sort of bucket list. The clichés which slowly turn into actual memories, captured in my mind and in photographs.

I myself admit and call it all a bit pretentious because everyone else does and they are right. I read poetry, listen to Louis Armstrong on Vinyl, embrace the idea of caffeine and storms outside. I enjoy Wes Anderson and Studio Ghibli movies and their aesthetic. I cry over books written by Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Plath, Haruki Murakami, J.D. Salinger, and Oscar Wilde. I wish I looked different- my high cheekbones could be more noticeable and stronger, because my face is way too round and my knobbly nose could be smaller. More generic, I guess. After every book I read, movie I watch, song I hear, I rethink my whole life and make that very thing my entire personality for a while.

I am wondering.

Why is pretentious heavy with such a negative connotation. Why is listening to classic music even considered pretentious? Why do I participate in this and accept it? Why is everything I like considered suffering the special snowflake syndrome? I maybe and genuinely just really enjoy Chopin, Satie, Liszt, and Bach. They were and still are geniuses and there are many reasons as to why they are relevant hundreds of years later. Who am I to ridiculous this.
It feels like the sun just peeked from behind the cloud again and I apologize for the sappy, dripping, self-pity. I need to forget it all. I will and should enjoy my Café Creme in a cute Café in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, the 6th arrondissement in Paris with my lovely friend. Live in the moment and accept it as fleeting but beautiful. She will put on Debussy to wake me up and the soothing tunes of Arabesque I from 1888 will be the soundtrack for the first early hours of the day. Waking up feeling refreshed like the morning dew. The morning fog on the fields look prettier than any Monet Painting could ever capture. That’s what I believe in. For me, Debussy, Murakami and Anderson all have the ability to grasp our attention (yes everyone’s attention) while offering us the possibility to let ourselves go and go along with the flow, the stream of time, of the moment.

What is so wrong with les grandes chansons françaises. With tasty croissants and romantic bistros. With Vespa rides in the narrow streets of Livorno in the Tuscany. With admiring the Renaissance Buildings in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Germany. With enjoying a cold beer and pierogi in Gdansk, Poland. With riding bikes in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

I believe that people are just afraid- afraid to travel and see those things which the write books and make movies about themselves. I know that I have my doubts and fluttering nerves. People are afraid to escape their busy lives even though the wish they would. Turn their daydreams into reality. But those bring comfort, the realization that I am indeed the main character in my own life. Of course, the world revolves around me, I am the one living in it. There is nothing wrong with that. I’m not afraid. I’m in love, at ease and I want to discover and to experience. La vie en rose. Call me a dreamer, with my head in my hands, building castles in the sky and enjoying the warmth of the sun on the apples of my cheeks. I think. I can live with that.