

THE NYSSE

THE PROLOGUE

The phrase “it all began” normally refers to stories about the beginning of the universe, but since every story creates infinite branches and brings to mind universal models, I choose to begin my story likewise. So, “it all began” on the 11th of September in 1987, under unknown weather conditions (usually storytellers begin with “on a sunny day” or something like that, but no one really remembers . . .) at the maternity hospital Mitera, my mother in the company of the “final countdown” and the success of the Greek National Basketball team gave birth to me. My parents who grew up in the 1970s had absorbed all the culture of their generation from the hippie ideology to the . . . hippie ideology. I don't doubt this generation as thought, art and music blossomed in that period of time, but I am happy that my parents were born then and not I. I would write more about my parents, but I am impatient to write my own story. I promise you that if you buy this book, I will then write a book about my parents. However, you must also buy that book.

This book is dedicated to schizophrenia from which I suffer the last years, so that's why I will not focus on the years previous to that. As you will ascertain, it is the most difficult and the most disgusting mental illness. However, it does have some good sides. My first encounter with imaginary friends was when I was four years old. Even though my brother was just born and even though I socialized with the other kids at kindergarten, I had a strange habit. I had an imaginary friend called Koki-koki. Koki-kok lived under the balcony table. The strange thing was that my imaginary friend had an image;

that is, I could see him and he could talk. When my parents first saw me talking alone under the table, they didn't pay much attention, thinking that I was simply playing. At some point, I mentioned Koki-Koki and the discussions we had under the table. My parents were concerned and tried to convince me that he was not real, but in vain Every day, when I got home from kindergarten, I would sit and talk to him. We spoke about everything, but because I was so young, I don't remember what we said. I still remember what he looked like. He had brown hair, he was a little older than I was and he was always laughing. This went on for half a year. The situation gradually changed when I met a little girl. My need to talk to Koki-Koki decreased, as I preferred to play backgammon with the little girl. So, that is how the story of my imaginary friend finished.

Since then and until thirteen years of age, I didn't have any outstanding psychological problems, except for the usual childhood and pre-teenage concerns. I will tell you about my first girlfriend, Dora. Up to the age of nine years old, I had the usual boyish attitude towards girls. They seemed stupid and I didn't want to have any contact with them (except, of course, for very few exceptions such as my friend from kindergarten with whom I had a friendly relationship). One day, however, during the school recess, as I was eating my sandwich, Dora passed in front of me and I started to feel strange. I had never felt that way before. Dora was one year older than me. After one week of internal conflict, I decided to speak to her. She showed interest gradually and, so, I acquired my first girlfriend. This affected me so much that I stopped playing with toys. Then followed my first kiss under great stress because, of course, I was shy. What followed was that she cheated on me because she was shy. I'm just being ironic.

My junior and senior high school years were connected with a lot of bullying since nasty nicknames came and went. Even though I

tried to react to this, I was often the center of ridicule. The climax was when I developed social phobia. Social phobia is a kind of agoraphobia and in connection with the intense depression I had, I can say that those school years were difficult. Apart from the social phobia, which became a basic part of my life then, I also had symptoms of obsession and schizophrenia. With my obsession, undesirable images appeared in my mind. Whereas with schizophrenia, I found things even more difficult. Every night before I went to sleep, I heard a panting. Not being able to endure it anymore, I agreed with myself that it was a creation of my mind and, so, it went away. This story continues with a very important part of my life. Pot....

I smoked my first joint when I was fifteen years old. I had already started smoking and a childhood friend of mine would offer me something that would radically change my life. I was hanging out with a friend of mine from afternoon school, when suddenly another old friend of mine appeared. When he arrived, we were smoking. He saw us and said, "Is that how you're gonna pass your time, assholes? Look here..." He took out some pot and said, "Wanna smoke this?" I immediately understood that a new world was opening up for me. I just didn't know if it was good or bad for me. My friend from school and I looked at each other uncomfortably. Without thinking much I said yes. My friend looked at me and said, "What are you doing, you idiot? I'm leaving." He didn't speak to me for days. As soon as he left, we went to a nearby small forest and my old friend started to roll. I still remember he rolled a blunt. As he was rolling, I observed the skillful collage that he made. They looked like magic. My first joint was lit up. I felt weird. I had become part of the drug scene. Nevertheless, I didn't get too high. I told my friend and he said that was how it was the first time. "Whenever you want, we smoke again," he said. I told him to arrange it and I left. That's how the

second time and the third time came along and so it went. From the second time, I started to get high. Nevertheless, until I was eighteen, I smoked little. A joint a week.

Another great passion of mine was always music. The first time I was occupied with music was when I was fourteen years old. We would hang out with my best friend and listen to music for hours. Mostly nu metal, that is, Korn, Deftones . . . as well as other kinds of music (ska, punk, rock). That's how the idea of creating a band came about. My best friend played acoustic guitar and I had a tendency for electric bass. During a trip to America (I have relatives there), my uncle asked me what present I wanted from him and I immediately answered "a bass guitar". My uncle misunderstood and got me an electric guitar and an amplifier with American voltage. As soon as I got it, I tried to play the song Blind from Korn. When I returned to Athens, I started guitar lessons. We slowly put together our first band. Since then and until today, music has been an obsession for me. Every Friday night, we would gather at my house and record on my PC. Since then and until the age of eighteen, I played in a lot of bands until Prozak Party was created. My current band.

Prozak Party started out as a band in the summer of 2005. We had just finished school and we had started to listen to a lot of punk rock bands such as Strung Out, Wilhelm Scream, Belvedere. That had a strong influence on us and we started playing technical punk rock. At that time, metalcore made its first appearance along with all its branches also known as the emo scene. Lots of bands emerged during this time in Greece. However, being occupied with music became trendy and, as a result, many bad quality bands appeared on the scene. From then for about four years we had to put up with side-bangs, make-up, fagety screams and a lot more. Music in Greece was connected and helped by the Internet, especially through Myspace during this period of time. I feel nostalgic about Myspace

since all the bands communicated with each other creating a strong scene. Lots of people listened to your music, lives were constantly organized...As Prozak Party, we experienced this. However, one cannot say that all this phase was based on the Internet. It was something more than that and such an acknowledgement would downgrade it.

My life, on the other hand, was closely connected with pot. From the time that I finished school and started university, my addiction gradually began. I went to the university (the Physics Department) only to smoke weed and I also smoked at home. Until my fourth year, pot became my only pass-time, setting aside music and girls. Somewhere here begins the story of my schizophrenia.

So, as time went on, my condition worsened due to pot. When I smoked, I had at best intense depression. At worst, panic attacks, catatonia and suicidal tendencies. With catatonia, things were really bad. I could be with people who spoke to me and to whom I couldn't answer. Comments like “what's your problem, asshole?” and “no, don't die in front of us” and “let's see if you reach 23 years of age” were all a fact on my 22nd birthday. I couldn't have sex with my girlfriend because of my condition. Generally, pot isn't so destructive. However, combined with psychological illness, it can cause many problems. In my bad condition, I had started to feel that something strange had happened to the world. A change. . .

THE PREMATURE STAGE OF COMMUNICATION

This started as a general feeling that something had changed in people and was conveyed with glances and facial expressions at its premature stage. You could feel it, something had changed in the communication between people. I thought it was the drugs. However, it seemed to be something much greater. It was a gradually increasing of communication from brain to brain. Nevertheless, because I was absorbed by my problems, I couldn't participate. I faced it with apathy as I faced anything else that came up in my life in that period of time. While I was hanging out with my friends, I started to hear words in my mind coming from them accompanied by the image of each person talking. When I went to a live show, I could hear people responding to what I was thinking. I often had the impression that all our conversations had a faint tendency to question what had happened to people and everybody seemed to wonder what impact this change had. Even though nobody knew what it was, it seemed as if a new magical world with tremendous prospects was developing in our minds. However, nobody really spoke about this because there was an undercurrent feeling that it was all in our minds. This coincided with my last trip to America to see my relatives.

Stressed because of the fact that I wouldn't be smoking pot for a week, I set off in August 2009 with my mother and brother to visit

America. On the way to the airport, I heard words from acquaintances on and off in my mind. However, I was used to not paying attention. I tried to convince myself to feel enthusiastic about the trip, but in vain. Depression had overcome me again. On entering the airport, I felt an intense panic attack, because it was overcrowded with people. The worst thing was that apart from the strange looks I got from people, I also had the odd comments of those people in my mind; such as, “oh, what a junkie” or “that guy has some problem.” As time elapsed, my panic attack and the comments in my head got worse. As the flight was delayed, we were forced to wait in the waiting room with other passengers. As I was waiting, one of the passengers was staring at me. After a while, I thought I could see what he was thinking. I saw him murmuring, “Oh, my wife. What have I done to her?” and, at the same time, he was trying to hold back his tears so that the other passengers wouldn't notice him. At some point, I felt that he understood that I saw what he was thinking as he looked at me like I had realized his secret. I panicked. I didn't know how to react. He continued to look at me in a threatening way. A few minutes later, I saw him look around to make sure nobody was looking and, then, something unusual happened. Through his mind, he had transferred the burden he felt for the murder of his wife to me. I was overwhelmed with a feeling of dysphoria and regret as well as thoughts like “what have I done?” and “How will I continue living now?” It was like other people's thoughts were in my mind; that is, although these thoughts were in my mind, I didn't feel like they were mine. The guy sighed with relief and changed seats....

After a ten-hour trip, during which I slept, we arrived at New York and then after two hours approximately we arrived at Tampa Bay, Florida. My uncle was waiting for us at the airport from where he took us to go to the house which we had rented for our vacation. The house was spacious (as we were three families and our

grandmother) and it had a swimming pool. The first two days I felt OK. Relaxation, swimming in the pool However, on the third day, the usual symptoms started. Severe depression and confused thought which resulted in my being withdrawn sometimes. Nevertheless, throughout my stay in Florida, I had only two cases of optical illusions.

One night, as I was drinking my beer, Letos, who was my band's guitarist and my best friend, appeared as an image in my head. "Where the hell are you?" he says. "What the fuck!" I answered. We started to talk.

-What's it like in America?

-Good, man, peace, pool, beer . . . How's it going there?

-Awesome. We hang out every day.

-How is that we are talking, man? Do you have any idea?

-It happened suddenly. I don't know. It's awesome. Check it out . . .

-What do you mean?

-Do you remember the last song we found?

-Yes.

-Did you ever wonder why it was so fucking good? Hahahaha

-Tell me.

-Check this out . . .

At this point, he shows me a magic spell which he had in his mind. It was in the form of a thought and it had various pagan symbols and when you saw it, it gave you a weird feeling. Something between an attraction to the unworldly and the feeling of creativity. I was stunned.

-Where the hell did you find it?

-Eh. . . It's usually kept as a secret. From a shaman, magician, something like that, he whispered. You have to be careful, though. You have to know how to use it because it is dangerous...little by little.

After discussing a little bit more and after promising him that I wouldn't tell anybody, I drank my beer and went to sleep.

On one of the following days, I went shopping with my uncle. We found a skateshop in a shopping mall and I ran in. As soon as I got in, a beautiful, blonde girl came to help me. "Do you need any help?" she asked me.

"Yes, I'm looking for shirts," I answered. After I tried on some shirts, I thought of striking up a conversation with her, since she was very pretty. Coming out of the dressing room, I showed her a longboard and asked her how much it cost. After she answered me, she appeared in my mind as an image and said to me: "Poser." I tried not to seem anxious and I answered through my mind with an image of myself skating to show her that I am not a poser. As I was going to pay, she was looking at me and I saw her murmuring under her breath "Fuck. You really suck." And I answered her through my thought, "And you got fucked by all those skaters." She seemed embarrassed. I laughed discreetly and left. The rest of the days in Tampa were difficult. Nevertheless, I was overwhelmed by a feeling of optimism because of the new data concerning communication between people. The time had come to return to Athens.

On reaching Athens and as my trip was good, I felt happy. When it was time to collect my luggage, suddenly two of my friends, Isidoros and Sakis appeared in my head. Both musicians. There was always friction between us as they played guitar faster than I did and they knew more theory. With a contemptuous attitude, they started to tell me about the magic they had found and that it was the best and that it wasn't dangerous. At the same time, they implied that magic is useless if you don't know theory. Their magic seemed lame in comparison with Letos's. They started asking about my magic and formalities like 'how's your band going.' As I didn't want to tell them that I didn't have any magic, I said, "hold on a minute...somebody's

talking to me” and I went straight to Leto for magic . . .to rub it in. “Dude, dude, tell me how to find that stupid magician. It's urgent. . .” I said.

-You asshole, I'm sleeping, he answered.

-I don't give a fuck. Wake up!

-I'll come by in a couple of hours. See ya.

-Dude, Isidoros and Sakis have come and they are talking shit about our band and they are saying that our band sucks.

-What? Those assholes? Tell them that theory is for pussies.

-Come on tell me how to find that magician.

-The guy's name is Spiritius.

-Spiritius? Hahahahahahaha. What a stupid name . . .

-Hahahahaha, yes indeed. He is the only one with that name so you won't have a hard time finding him.

-Yes, obviously he's the only one with that name.

-Just be careful because he's a bit of an asshole.

-OK see you dude.

Spiritius!? How was I going to find that asshole? As I said it something like a search engine appeared in my head and I immediately said the name Spiritius. The result of the search was a guy dressed as a shaman with a long beard and badly-made dreadlocks whispering some ritual hymn. Here we are I thought.

-Hello magician Spiritius!

-I feel a presence. A universal aura.

-Huh?!

-Who's calling me?

I thought that it was a good idea not to give my real name so as to avoid getting in trouble.

-My name is John.

-That is not your real name.

-Oh no, he got me, I thought . . .

-Your real name according to your universal aura is . . . Balzar!

-Hahahahaha what an idiot I thought.

-What brings you here?

He stayed quiet for three minutes.

-So?!

Three seconds later I felt a very intense strength running through me. My thoughts ran quickly and in a smart way and I felt slightly. . . possessed.

-Nice, thanks.

-Balzaaaaaaaaaaar!

-Yes?

-The only thing you should know is that if you use it with greed, it will turn against you and, in case of an argument, it will turn against your enemy.

-We are not going to argue. . . .I'm just going to rub it in their faces! Hahahahahaha I thought and returned.

-Hey, sorry that I left, but I was talking with Letos about the last details of our new song, I said after I came back.

-New piece, huh! Show us. . . .

-Sorry, I can't show you all of it because it is still in the process of being made. I can show you, though, some guitar parts. Half a minute. . . I activated the spell and I thought of a very simple idea on the song. Some pagan symbols appeared, my thoughts started to throb, I felt an unworldly strength and suddenly a clever riff appeared in my mind. I showed them. . . With obvious jealousy, they asked me.

-Very good. Did you use some magic?

-Yes, but very little because I depend on my creativity and not some spell or . . . theory. Dickheads, I thought and immediately felt a slight tendency to quarrel. Then I thought of playing with them a little...

-How about you showing me some of the stuff you have found...Pussies, I thought. Then they showed me a very good and technical solo. The tendency to quarrel increased in my mind because of the spell, however, I felt it was difficult to stop.

-It sucks, I answered, influenced by the magic. This magic had the characteristic of making you want to fight. As my answer seemed strange and irritating, they said to me.

-Chris. Watch how you talk. Don't insult us. This solo is objectively flawless.

-Hahahahahah, I laughed satanically. Sorry... Let's see what I can do with this mediocre riff.

-Fuck you, answered one of them and immediately seemed to be in pain. The quarrel had started and the spell turned against him.

-Man, what was that pain? he said to his friend. It fucking hurt...

-Sorry, dudes, check this out. I took his riff and I put it through my activated magic. The outcome was a big and clever musical phrase which had notes from their musical phrase, which made theirs seem like a simplified version of mine.

-Hahahahahaha! Eat shit! I said obviously influenced by the magic. Then I showed them two riffs one after the other and all three of us hurt. They due to the quarrel and I because I used it "greedily"...

-Dude, it hurts, Isidoros said to Sakis.

-You are such a bad guitarist that it hurts, I answered and he immediately seemed to be in pain.

-You're doing it! With your shitty magic! You're fucked. I also have magic which will hurt you.

-Bullshit...At this point he started sending me small electric shocks through his mind, which however increasingly turned against him thanks to the quarrel while I didn't feel any pain.

-Please stop! It hurts. he told me. At that point, reality returnedSuddenly the influence of the spell passed and I broke into a cold

sweat when I realized what had happened. “Stop giving me shocks! It activates with contradiction. Sorry. I got carried away...” I said to one of them. “You got carried away? Fuck you. It hurt.” he told me. As the spell was almost over, I felt like saying something nasty, like: “that hurt, pussy” and so on, but I restrained myself so it wouldn't start again. I then felt that it was still dangerous and I just left, after apologizing again, to avoid any further quarrel. At this point, I had to find the magician again to deactivate the spell...

While I was still in an ecstasy and I couldn't control my thoughts, I found it difficult to find the magician again. I was trying to remember his name, but in vain. At some point, I remembered it, but the search engine didn't appear. I came to the conclusion that in some way I had to make the search engine appear. I tried to think of the search machine, it appeared and I entered the name, but the results of every search were blocked. After many fruitless attempts, I thought of a search engine that searched search engines and to my great surprise such a machine appeared in my head. I put a search engine in that machine, but there was no result. Then I put in that machine the name Spiritius and I finally got a result! The search engine of finding people was blocked as far as finding people was concerned and the search engine which found search engines was blocked... as far as finding search engines was concerned. That is, the results which had to do with the purpose of each search machine was blocked and you had to input a search that had no connection with the purpose of the search engine.

So I found Spiritius. He was feeding a goat.

-Hello magician Spiritius, I said.

-Who's calling me?

-I felt like cursing him, but in a strange way, my mind blocked and musical ideas came to me which resulted in my being in pain.

-It's Chris...eh it's John.

-I don't know anyone by the name of John.

-I felt like cursing him again, but my mind blocked again and I couldn't control the incoming musical phrases that brought pain inside my mind. The magician smiled ironically as if he knew something. That idiot had an anti-spell that converted contradiction into musical ideas, so that the magic that he gave me wouldn't turn against him, but against me because of its overuse!

-It's Balzar...I want to deactivate the magic that you gave me, I said to him.

-Balzar...This magic doesn't go away. You keep it inside you like a charm and you live with it.

-Are you kidding me, you ass... I said and he immediately blocked the contradiction with his anti-spell and smiled.

-I can only give magic, not remove magic.

After a wave of desperation overwhelmed me, I knew I had to do something. I couldn't live the rest of my life under that shitty magic. The first thing that popped into my mind was also a good idea.

-Give me the anti-magic that you have with the purpose of turning it to myself and to convert contradiction to musical ideas, so that at least I wouldn't harm the others when I thought something negative about them.

-You mean the anti-spell?

-Yes, I answered.

-He gives it to me and I leave.

Now I had to think of something negative about somebody to see what would happen. So, I turn the spell to myself and I think something mean about my parents. My thought blocked and musical ideas came into my mind. I had to think of something clever. One solution was perhaps to give direction to the musical ideas so that they negated themselves...So, I think something mean about a friend of mine, while at the same time I gave direction to the creativity in a

specific musical idea. I kept repeating the same thing over and over again and as the ideas that could come for a specific musical phrase were limited, I exhausted them and the spell deactivated. With a lot of pain, of course, due to overuse...

Returning to Athens, I felt depression and exhaustion as a result of the intensity of everything I had lived through during the trip. The new data concerning the inner communication had confused me and I felt I wasn't ready to face it. In that period of time, people were slowly trying to get used to the new situation, although there was a general feeling that something big would follow. Something that would change people's lives.

One of those nights, I went to a nearby bar to drink a beer. The feeling that I had been left behind had at this point overwhelmed me. As the time passed, more friends came, but I found it difficult to socialize. I gave one-word answers to questions and I didn't participate at all in the discussions. I had completely withdrawn in myself. The conversation was lively as everyone was a little drunk. I continued to withdraw. At some point, someone asked me something, but I was unable to answer because I had lost the flow of the conversation. One of the guys felt sorry for me and gave me something which I didn't expect. Through his mind he gave me a way to look at things. This generally could happen; that is, for someone to give you a package of opinions or reactions inner communication-wise always. What he gave me was a personal philosophy of life based on hardcore ethics and streetwise perception. In the beginning I was glad because I could see the world through a different perspective. However, this "package" worked independently; that is, you couldn't think something in addition to it or add something to its philosophy. You had to use it in an absolute way, if you wanted to follow it. After I had socialized a little more because of it, I said goodbye, left and went home. This "perception

package” was interesting, but I didn't want it to be the only way I looked at things. I decided to use it, understand it and then deactivate it so that I could think about it later on without following it.

So, I activated it and I saw the following things. First of all, I felt pride. Pride is a basic characteristic of the hardcore culture and it was something that I liked even though I was a scumbag punk. Until then, I thought it was a defense, but through what that guy gave me I realized that it came from a more general set of reactions which made up the character of the hardcore kid; such as respect towards the people you choose, honesty towards yourself and, to some extent, the style you have and represent. Another thing I felt with the “package” was the rise and fall logic; that is, the rise and fall of ourselves are interconnected concepts and one always follows the other. Right. Then I saw a philosophy based on supporting those who had fallen, which was proved true since the guy gave me the “package” to help me. I appreciated that. Lastly, I saw a set of predetermined reactions, such as various greetings and expressions which take place between the hardcorers. This is a way to create a structure which through its repetition a global culture is supported. There are similar reactions in the hip hop and skate culture, since the birth of hardcore was interconnected with those two cultures. Coming out of what he gave me, I decided to keep some of the characteristics of hardcore, but not to follow them strictly. Only the feeling that I understood what it is all about and that I agree with a part of it.

The days that followed were difficult. The “package” hadn't helped me at all and gradually I felt that an attraction for a social exposure was in the air. This feeling was increasing more and more inside everyone, until there was ... a massive explosion. One day in September of 2009, something extraordinary happened. Suddenly, while most people were unaware or avoided the existence of inner

communication, there was a big “bang” and it was, then, impossible to hide from the new data of human nature. It was a wave of exposure for everybody, since the fact that everyone could see what you were thinking, it uncovered you. What happened more specifically was that your thoughts would direct you to specific individuals or groups of people without your being able to control it. For some it was cathartic, since they appeared in front of people with whom they had lost contact, hadn't seen in years or didn't have the strength to talk to again. For others it was a simpler matter, since they found themselves with friends or relatives, though enthusiastic as they could communicate brain to brain. However, there was a group of people who would suffer from this revolution of thought links. One of these people was me...

Since, due to my psychological problems, my thought traveled to people and situations I feared or I hated, this massive ...explosion which had come could have only negative consequences for me. Before the big “bang” occurred, I was going through a phase of ruminating, bringing to mind people who had annoyed me recently. More specifically, there were some guys who liked the chicks we hung out with and they often degraded me, while the chicks seemed to like them just because they thought they were cool. While everything was going on with the thought links, I was sitting and contemplating them. So, I suddenly find myself unexpectedly in front of those people. One of the chicks was making out with one of them while the others were playing poker. On seeing me, they started looking at me in a strange way and inner communicating mind to mind with each other, so that I couldn't hear what they were saying. The chick looked at me supposedly interested and said to me, “Where have you been? We haven't seen you for a while. How's your brother? Your family?” At that point, they all burst out laughing, even she. She immediately got serious like nothing happened and

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