

# Issue 3: Good, Simple and Honest

Distributed on the 2025 Summer Solstice



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# PUBLISHING REMARKS

This zine was created with love during the early summer and late spring of 2025. It's my first time experiencing the warm seasons here in NYC! But I wouldn't say I've fully tasted the summer, so this is not the summer edition.

This print is one of a limited release, which shall never be distributed again, unless I feel like it.

Printed at my office in Times Square, with the generous (unknowing) contribution of Microsoft Corporation.

This zine belongs to:

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# A DISAPPOINTING FORWARD

Most revered reader,  
I regret to inform you that this edition of the zine totally lacks thematic unification. It is only comprised of two pieces, and they're both way too wordy. (I don't have practice yet in long-form.) Also both pieces are perfectly unrelated. I just needed to write these things. They are on my mind recently, and now that they're on the page, I can finally let them go.

Here, will you hold this for me?  
(I delicately unfold my hand, and place in your palm, all my human misery). Sorry... ☹️

But thank you! Really, thank you. I do hope you like it!

with love, Hannah



# DEEPLY RADICALIZING EXPERIENCES OF AN ORDINARY TECH WORKER

## Source Citations:

(1) S&P Global, (2) Associated Press, (3) LGS, (4) No Azure for Apartheid (NOAA), (5) Me, bitch. I'm the citation, (6) r/sheep

This year, Microsoft [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] has looped fully back to being a weapons manufacturer.

In the 2010s, following a long period of teenage evil (typical 90s-sleaze: corruption, bribery, antitrust violation, unlicensed data-brokering, and patent/trademark infringement scandal, naturally followed by retaliation against whistleblowers), Microsoft cleaned up its reputation and farced for a few years as "the adult in the room", expressing some performative interest in social responsibility: changing its code of conduct, doubling down on DEI, going net-zero on carbon, and relenting to EDPS and GDPR. Set aside for now, that the last of these is EU-specific. For Americans, the concept of data privacy protection is a quaint artifact of a time long past, like messenger pigeons or horse-drawn carriages. But at least for a while, I could say I was working at "the one that is slightly less evil than the other ones by some standards."

\*\*Speak not of carbon certificates, and their futility. Not because you're wrong, but because it's not the point. Oh my god, stop interrupting me!

Some of the Microsoft Kool-Aid is actually potable: consider for example, most Microsoft services are still paid, which means the product is the product. You have to buy PowerPoint and Minecraft. Companies like Facebook or Google who primarily develop "free" products profit by selling your biometrics, demographics, preferences,

character and consciousness – basically everything precious and human. These things are very valuable to the free-market. But seriously, what can you buy from Google? *They do not sell anything except for you.*

\*\*Yes, I know that Microsoft owns a search engine and browser, but if you're letting your consciousness get co-opted by Bing, this is kind of a personal failing on your part

Another, short, but salient point toward Microsoft's support of intellectual freedom: Azure embraces open source software, and is fully supportive of Linux (which is a competitor to Windows)!

But make no mistake, Microsoft is not an angel among demons. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

\*\* [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

We also contract private sovereign clouds to [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] governments. The last of these has seen a lot of buildout progress in the past few years. So, one merit of working a 9 to 5 at an evil corporation is that the entire experience is the real-life equivalent of an un-skippable nonprofit donation ad of a starving child: an ordinary tech worker is forced to confront certain abject truths, by which she is painfully transformed. My awful dawn into social consciousness through my experience in corporate comes to you in five parts:



**PART 1: There is no proof of absurdism more mathematically airtight than watching my country's economic backbone taken over so quickly and so totally by IT toddlers. Kafka would be jealous.**

Can you believe how young tech companies are? The tech sector now accounts for a record 40% of the benchmark S&P index, more than the next two largest components combined—healthcare and financials <sup>(1)</sup>. Most of the founders of the tech companies in the top 16 index slots are still alive. Our economy is dominated by toddlers.

Your retirement funds are invested in a financial habitat dominated by the whim of 45 year-old y2k-gold-rush egomaniacs. That's why we can't legislate proper data privacy laws. That's why Google/Amazon signed \$1.2bn with the IDF on Project Nimbus in 2021 <sup>(2)</sup>, and that's why Microsoft has been building out new Israeli datacenters for the past three years <sup>(5)</sup>. American profit-mongering has always been blatant in wartime, but the gears of war are now turned by Silicon Valley arrogance (the most dangerous kind of arrogance, which has the appearance of being *earned*), and now those gears are super-lubed by missile-targeting AI models <sup>(2)</sup>. We can't seem to stop inventing unique and highly distasteful ways to self-destruct <sup>(3)</sup>.

**PART 2: Exploring avenues for resistance in tech, The futility of**

There have been a handful of employees in the past year [REDACTED] who have exited Microsoft [REDACTED] about their disappointment in the lack of ethic demonstrated by Azure's IDF cloud contract. This raises awareness, but doesn't make a monetary difference as each of us is deeply replaceable. I learned this lesson all at once after a beloved coworker I found to be *integral* left, and life went on, impossibly, exactly as it had. We cannot resist by becoming ungovernable, because Microsoft is not a government. Inside of it, one has no guarantee of freedom of speech, or any other human right. Overt defiance results in expulsion, and the thousand people already waiting for your job are smarter and

more desperate than you. A mass exodus of everyone who bothers to care will result only in a revolving door of progressively more and more compliant workers, self-selecting for desirable sheep traits such as 1) easy lambing/no assistance, 2) docility/friendliness, 3) good lamb musculature/conformity <sup>(6)</sup>. In the end, refusal to participate is certainly brave, but its impact, if not its intention, is tantamount to escapism. What more can you do from outside than from within?

**PART 3: "We are all inside systems of great scale; all individuals can effect great change" or other bullshit you don't believe until you do.**

The first thing you learn working on a program of enormous scale like Azure, in a multinational corporation like Microsoft, is that a few lines of code really can cost a cool million. [REDACTED]

Many people think individual vegetarianism is trivially impactful, but such people have never written a bug that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Part of the illusion of power is its indomitability, but it is so easy to radically affect power (money), even an intern could do it <sup>(5)</sup>. I know this is contradictory to PART 2, but I spend all day reading loops and locks, each of which, shockingly fragile, has enormous consequence misused. High-scale systemic disruption is accessible to the individual person; it's just obvious at some point for an ordinary tech worker like me.

Another friend from Microsoft, [REDACTED], suggested simply dragging my feet: Employing the bureaucracy against itself, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This actually works. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] What's a one-day delay to production you ask? Well at the scale of these resources, it's a big fucking deal.



But here's the rub: I don't want to do bad to feel good. I like working hard, learning things, helping people, building stuff, good, simple and honest. Is that really so much to ask?

**PART 4: A cancer's only crime is that it wants to live so badly, it'll kill everything in the way. Can you blame cancer for wanting to live? Can you blame a corporation for abetting apartheid?**

Well, yes actually. 40 years ago Microsoft withdrew all business from South Africa, citing the government's policy of racial apartheid (4). So some cancers appear to be able to exert moral discretion, when the market conditions and the leadership is just right. This makes sense to me intuitively. Let's forgo arguments about public IPO, and the profit politics of moral perception (mostly because I can't hold my weight here, I don't know enough about it).

Simplify: when I think of the people who work at Microsoft, I think of myself, my boss, his boss, and his boss. These are all thoughtful, responsible people who implicitly understand the value of fairness, generosity, and human compassion. They are orienting the expression of these ethics through the profit motive, but if the medium is capitalism, then the wave travelling through it is still us, and what we owe each other here on Earth. How we speak to each other. How we teach each other what is important. How we connect to each other, in limited, but always expanding ways.

My bosses have made their lives about teaching and supporting me. In some ways, they're the most dedicated civil servants I've ever met. The agenda they drive is Microsoft's but the master they serve is me (this is how it actually feels from the bottom of a functional representative hierarchy, and I'm sad to know that most people have never had the kind of boss or mayor that makes this self-evident).

How can a company made of people like me, my boss, his boss, and his boss allow its tools to be used for genocide? How can the cumulative human project of all these good people be so foul?

Microsoft *has* and *can* and *should* act morally. All systems of human evil contain smaller, simpler systems of fundamental human love. This dissonance, this too is a radicalizing realization, not insofar as it is spurring me to radical action, but in that it helps me persistently resuscitate hope.

## PART 5

The final, and most meaningfully radical experience is this: I love my coworkers. My boss just had his first child, a little girl. She's a Pisces like me. Year of the snake, like me. I lend my hand to the war machine. I sweat for it, and so does he. His baby drinks off the tit leaking coins of the war machine. When I get sick, he responds to my out-of-office emails -- that he hopes I'll be well soon. I complain about an engineer from another team and he commiserates. Firmly, he explains that I must learn to work with him anyway.

One day, we talk about what it takes to get to the senior level in my field, and he says I should find an area of interest, something to know, own, care for, in a word: love. That's how I know it is time for me to leave. There's no work left here that I can love, and the longer I stay, the more my belief in love erodes away.

I'm going to quit my job next spring, not as a radical act of political defiance, not as a selfish act of escapism, but to protect myself, and the only thing left inside me worth saving: the belief in something good, simple, and honest. Even if it only exists inside of me.

## INTERMISSION

Hey there! You've been working hard, reading this wordy nonsense, and I just want to say that I appreciate your effort. I can't promise it'll even be worth it in the end, but you're in the final leg. There's only one more piece left. It's a long one.

Take this opportunity to have a short break...A cup of tea, an ironic cigarette...settle in. Maybe fix that posture (you're going to kill your back)

What now follows is a sudden and radical change in tone. I cannot account for it. Prepare your body.

And thank you again for reading!



# DARN THAT DREAM

"DIODORUS SICULUS TELLS THE STORY OF A GOD THAT IS CUT INTO PIECES AND  
SCATTERED OVER THE EARTH. WHICH OF US WALKING THROUGH THE TWILIGHT OR  
RETRACING SOME DAY IN OUR PAST, HAS NEVER FELT THAT WE HAVE LOST SOME  
INFINITE THING?"

- JORGE LUIS BORGES, FROM PARADISO XXXI, 108

In my dream, death sounds like a frog.  
The summer rain floods in through the back door.  
I close it a little too late.  
He has crossed the threshold into our land.  
We crouch on the floor prone  
and before we see him  
I am relieved.

1.

The summer here smells like Korea in the monsoon  
season: how relieved you are to see the rain sometimes.  
It has been boiling for days, lowering the sky down to earth.  
Only a few times does God  
feel so close, so as to smell his breath in the air,  
how he holds it to stop himself crying.  
It's a technique he taught me in childhood.

In my dream a woman is not my mother.  
She is old but not old enough.  
My poem is written on the ground.  
It begins with a line I don't remember.

In my dream you need me more than I need you.  
In my dream the smell  
of your hair  
In my dream  
how each tooth bends to make me my father  
and he stands over me, ripping them lovingly out.  
In my dream, how my stomach drops to meet the ground,  
ripples spreading like circles of a finger print  
The middle pricked with a small swell of blood.

Ishita tells me that there are two kinds of anemics:  
Those without iron left in the blood, and those  
Without iron left in the bone. The body reaps its own  
Foundation for roof tile to keep the rain out  
and you won't even notice the crumbling until  
the sky has dried up finally, and so has the grass,  
and the wild iris pushes up through the threshold,  
remembering its passage from the other world.

2.

To cure my indigestion, my dad takes my thumb in his hand.  
He rolls it around and pinches it, pressing a warm friction.  
My blood rushes in filling the skin.  
He boils the needle with a lighter.  
To check the temp, he licks the point.  
Then he pierces the thin part of my thumb,  
between the cuticle and the first knuckle.

The first time he does this, I'm too shocked to cry.  
We watch as relief balls,  
a perfect radial tension,  
and scientifically, he wipes me clean.



Better? I am.



That is because it is a relief to finally see  
what is wrong with you.

So that when new bruises or wounds appear on the flesh  
they fit safely into the shape of my old misery,  
blood sipping metal from bone,  
red dread of red dream.

In my dream my brother makes good on the threat to kill  
our dad. I wonder if he knows how close any of us ever got.  
The hotel pen in my hand, blue on red,  
my fist insolent with blood. That is the first time he was right  
when he called me below human.

3.

I dreamt we were on a hill and  
you walked away and away from me and  
you did not look back once and  
I wish I was a pile of salt so that the stinging could  
be physically explained.

Dread of my dread, you,  
glowing from the part inside me which is secretly  
delighted to be of the war machine.

The thing is, one does not really imagine the storm troopers happy.

One does not imagine that  
the stormtrooper's father crept into his room at night,  
and gathered his hands into a cup, and cried held  
tears into them, and that when his father begs for forgiveness  
the trooper grants it because that is what you do to fathers,  
and that one day, the trooper would be  
at work for the empire, unblocking buildout for  
Israeli missiles, and that his boss who is just about the age

of his father would tell him he is proud of him.  
And he is doing a good job.

That day I finished my meeting and held my breath in the bathroom.

4.

In the summertime,  
my feet always bleed in the exact same places.  
Those little cells understand the faith of something destroyed  
enough to liquify and recrystallize new.  
You imagine death as renewal because it hurts, but not  
every pain is a growing pain.

Strange sometimes, how wounds continue to weep  
through their scabs. One day,  
the scars will have faded darkly on this knuckle  
and my fur will return here, materializing  
from iron marrow, and I'll remember  
how you once threw avocados for me in your kitchen,  
so indulgent your hands, how they made me laugh.

People like us, our mortal wounds are carved in  
mirror images so that if we held hands and lay  
side by side, we would imprint behind us a  
red Rorschach butterfly, some kind of  
brutal symmetry, and if you  
held me to your chest in front of a  
large beam of light, an errant photon could make it  
all the way through our matching exit wounds  
transforming, as through a glory hole, from  
one pain into another,  
cauterizing everything shut.



5.

In my dream, a man stands in the corner of my room  
draped in my clothes. Sometimes he will come lay down next to me  
and at those times I wonder if he will ask my forgiveness  
again. I know I will give it again and in my dream  
these little fires fester into soot.  
I spit it down my windowsill, still lit  
And watch as the dense little star glows and glows  
Near, but small, so that it looks the same as something  
Burning far, but huge.

Darn that dream

That wakes me, wanting it so badly that  
I force myself back down to sleep  
Put myself back down to suffer  
In the sweetest possible way:  
*Familiarly.*

6.

I insist on reading the rest of my dream poem:  
*I want a cheese sandwich.*  
*All I have is*  
*can't let you go.*

"I will make sure you eat a cheese sandwich in India."

You say this easily  
like you aren't de-barbing me horrible,  
like you aren't performing some delicate alchemy,  
hotly gilding me from the inside out.  
You are the only version of the sun  
that we can look directly at.

The flowers you cut me are purple.

Two lilies  
soft as pup flesh  
two marigolds  
(you should not miss a bee...)  
They wilt nice and slow  
and I know that you have somehow  
deemed me  
deserving of  
apotheosis.

But still, I'm frustrated.

All I have is wounds.

All I am is wounds:

red, pulling, itchy, shiny.

Now that they've finally sunk into my skin

I have the rough urge to  
miss them.

I am promising not to smoke anymore, but  
you must permit me these

small acts of self-destruction so that  
there is something burning to blame  
when my flesh peels off of my body.

Then I can reason it to metamorphosis,  
and learn to love the coarse sand composite of all things  
bullied to peevish permeates.

7.

How then, to dream a dream good enough to love  
but wet enough to forget? Is it possible  
to swim and sleep like a shark does?  
What do you do with the love you had for the child  
once it has sweetened with age? What do you do when  
all that's left of your old father is you?



You begged me to love him. I crumbled to love him.  
I sucked marrow from my own marrow to love him,  
my space bones, dug out to core-rotten pumice,  
and even as my teeth fell out, I loved him. But  
now I'm the ghost on the subway platform,  
turning my head a little too far to be attached.  
Under my shirt collar, a perfect invisible line where  
the guillotine got me, and where the village doctor  
breathed me back to life, but I was never really the same.

It's normal though. This is what adults do.  
They all go to work, pretending to have their heads.  
They all go to work, loving old fathers,  
croaking like frogs,  
stinking like dusty porch dogs.  
They all smell the rain and miss their dreams,  
and they all keep dreaming,  
even shattered like cicada glass,  
even salted around the gills and  
hung out to dry  
all the same loving each other anyway.

8.

Let him die,  
the wretched ghost,  
the ancient father,  
has no host.

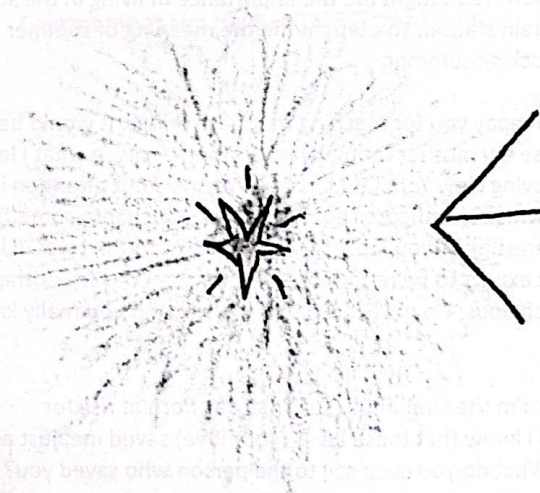
You drag him on,  
stillborn dread,  
already white,  
already bled.

Let that blood

Let it  
until there is no more  
and everything left is sand,  
lilies, croaking softly,  
sand, lilies,  
sand.  
Sand everywhere,  
All of it sand.

It does not disappear,  
As all matter is conserved.  
Instead it goes where dreams go  
when you wake up.

Back in, just deeper.



All artistic credits to CC (thank you for drawing these!)



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This edition of the zine is dedicated to Dear Ishita,

Happy 26<sup>th</sup> birthday! Congratulations on making it another year on Earth. No one ever gives you enough credit for the courage to simply last. So firstly, good job on this.

When I moved to New York, I didn't know yet how important you would be to me. Yes, you saved me from the harrowing apartment hunt, and you taught me how to find the L train from anywhere if my phone dies, but your biggest gift to me was to teach me how to love this place. You taught me to people-watch on the train when their guards are down. You took me to the skyline at Domino park, and showed me the good bars in the East Village where one might conduct sloppy make outs with tongue in relative privacy. You taught me that the sun touches my bed when the streets are wide and the buildings are low. You taught me the importance of living in the second floor and near a train station. You taught me the meaning of summer here. The meaning of fucking summer.

There's no way to repay you for teaching me these things. It would be like trying to reimburse my mother for making my spine because what I learned from you about loving New York City has become me. Your attention is an ancient alchemy which transfigures everything you touch into something beautiful and interesting. If you looked twice at a dust mote, I would look twice too. I didn't expect to be reborn like this, through this friendship, but in retrospect it's obvious: How we love, is all we are. And you really know how to love.

Sometimes I think I'm the kind of person who was born at risk for unhappiness, and I know that these loves (your love) saved me, just as love saves everyone. What do you even say to the person who saved you? Maybe simple is best:

I hope that your birthday is a wonderful day, I hope it was warm or at least bright. I can't tell you how much I am looking forward to your next year on Earth. Happy 26<sup>th</sup> birthday. Thank you for being my friend.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) This zine is going digital! You can still get analog paper zines mailed to your door, for a donation of ANY amount made to the University District Food Bank! Even one dollar...Find the donation link on my blog at [hannahs.garden](http://hannahs.garden)
- 2) Guys I'm sorry for making a blog, but I'm 24, and am thus compelled. I could no longer resist the call of the void and I think you should just be grateful it's not a podcast.
- 3) If you don't fill out the form on my website for an analog zine, you will not get a paper copy of Issue 4, but digital zines will be free to view online henceforth!
- 4) You can subscribe to digital updates via my blog.
- 5) This zine now accepts correction, suggestions, and feedback. Contact me at [Lim.Hannah0228@gmail.com](mailto:Lim.Hannah0228@gmail.com)