



"Crazy"
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I don't know if this has ever happened to you, but maybe it has and you can relate. Tell me if it has though, drop me a line and let me know, maybe then I won't feel so bad about it.

Have you ever... discovered that you're crazy?

Okay okay, before you jump to any conclusions or write me off as another old man who's taken a fancy to the word 'crazy' and decided to apply it to himself, bear with me. I'm deadly serious.

I'm writing now from my bedroom, as so many men are wont to do when they feel the need to turn thoughts to words. The lights are all off, I'm not wearing anything but boxers and a particularly soiled undershirt. The room's a mess, it has been all day and that doesn't help my state of mind because I'm a neat freak; I glean any order I can establish in my mind from any order I find around me. It's osmosis frankly. The monitor is a pleasing shade of blue. I can only appreciate the lighting arrangement if I step away from my desk though. Sitting here, I see only the white of my word processing program and the neon glow of 256-color icons. I know it must be pretty though, I've seen how this sort of situation can appear in movies and things. A half-naked man at his computer, lit only by the buzz of electricity and the very very diffused glow of a faraway streetlight. Yes, streetlight. Did I forget to mention that my bedroom has one window? Yes, it does. It looks out onto the city and I'm very high so I see it all. I'm more interested in the monitor though, I've been living in this room for almost four decades so I know the view too well to ever pay it any real heed.

Is there a picture in your head now? Do you know how I appear as I write to you? Good. Visuals are important, trust me on that. Now, back to why I'm in this position at all.

I had to write. I spent most of my evening laying across my bed and watching the ceiling fan circle. The little hanging light cord clacks so incessantly against the knob, it's like someone's thumbnail striking the rim of my glasses over and over and over... It's very cool in here, that's nice. Around 11pm, that's nice too. Nothing's been nice enough though, not for me, not tonight. Most of it's been spent laying across my bed, watching the ceiling-- wait, told you that. No, as I've watched the fan I've been crying but only half-crying. I can't work up real tears. I mean, my throat hurts, I'm unspeakably sad, but the tears won't come and I'm too proud to force them too. That's god damned unfair, I hope you know that. If I'm sad enough to cry, I want the fucking tears. Otherwise I have nothing to show for all of this but another unproductive night.

Oh my but the day was productive. Three new dead bodies in the furnaces and a roomful of blood and mako. That's productivity right there, sir, take my word for it. Sephiroth is quite disgusted with me but he won't say it. Little does he know that his face is like a book to me and I read every twisted little chapter he wrote today. Oh that boy, if only he were more like his mother or more like me. He's neither submissive nor domineering. He's fucking *normal*! He's hurt by this sterile environment, he's cold from lack of caring, and he hates my intestines, stomach, and spleen. That would translate to 'my guts' for my less creative readers. Sephiroth is the most normal, predictable young man I've ever encountered. I hate him dearly for that. He truly is the little Soldier that Shinra wants, he'll never be a leader, always the faithful pet of whomever holds his leash. Myself, Shinra, Jenova, whomever. It's a shame, I tell you true.

Maybe I'll put a shirt on. Funny. The room's empty and I'm almost seventy stories up yet I feel eyes from the window. I always feel eyes. ...do you? I always feel that my inner and outer monologues are heard by a crowd of people I can't see. So I try to make the show interesting. Thus why I write now. Are you still entertained? Fuck, I'd better make this into something with a sense of structure or you'll be bored. All right.

Okay.

I told you before: I'm crazy. I discovered that today. I am fucking insane. Pardon my swearing by the way, I can't help but do it when I write. Fuck *is* just another word after all. It has power, it draws attention to itself. Sometimes I need to say it. Anyway, I'm crazy. Crazy like those corkscrew stairs of the Mansion in Nibelheim. Here comes the interesting bit...

I always wanted to be crazy. Who hasn't? Crazy people are the freest people in the world. If you're crazy, you've passed all barriers; you don't care what people think of you, you don't worry about what will happen tomorrow, you do as you please and you tell the rest of the world to take a hike. Craziness is bliss. Don't you think?

Consider it.

The specimen are crazy. I make them crazy and they wander and drool all over themselves, smearing their fluids on the walls of their glass domes and they don't care that I'm watching them. They don't care about anything but their next meal and whenever I'll let them start screwing each other again. That's living right there.

I wanted to be crazy. Crazy wasn't beautiful but it was liberating. Out of my head, the mind of an animal. I wanted eight years of graduate school to leak from my ears like water, leaving me without an intellect. Maybe I could be happy if I was crazy, you know? Come now, you have to think that sometimes. I refuse to believe that I'm the only man who's ever thought this. Crazy people aren't depended on, aren't heaped with responsibilities. We live alone in minds sealed off from others and even from ourselves. It's Freud's argument made real and we never know the Ids that control us.

Oh cripes, listen to me. I'm referring to myself as one of them. How elitist.

Anyway, understand?

Thing was, I found out today that I was a different kind of crazy.

In almost sixty years it has never occurred to me that there could be different kinds of crazy. Wait, wait, I'm going about this wrong--

Okay, first maybe I should establish for you a sense of what I always assumed "crazy" was. Crazy, for me, was walking around totally free of all unwanted thoughts. It was... complete and total liberation. Yes, I admit it's somewhat of a sickeningly romantic notion but I can be sickeningly romantic if I don't take my medication. Heh. In any case, crazy sounded like a good deal and I wanted in. Sanity is so disgustingly over-rated. It's slavish, it's binding, it's false. I'll never be convinced otherwise.

Of course, I've always known that crazy doesn't equal pretty. Slobbering lunatics come to mind. Cloud Strife comes to mind. You should see the kid after a bad night. Hell warmed over is an understatement. Yet it's shallow to allow that to be an influencing factor in my opinions on the matter. So it isn't really. Besides, even when sane I'm not exactly the prettiest thing in the Shinra building. Physical appearance is trivial. It's the less tangible things and the more permanent things that create that halo glow about the notion of insanity. Freedom, rebellion, carelessness, those were the things. And perhaps... perhaps somewhere it is true. Perhaps insanity can be those things to some people, to the few fortunate sons of bitches who manage to turn lunacy into joy. But it isn't what I always imagined. The crazy are not happy. No, they're not.

Because crazy people are crazy in different ways.

I think one of the few things I've seen to prove this to me is Cloud himself. I always thought he was content in his role. He needn't think, he needn't act, he needn't worry. I was always there to reign him in and guide his body and mind in the direction they needed to go. I would worry about his welfare and he need only think on his precious memories, hold onto thoughts of a town burned to the ground and a General who proved false. He could withdraw from it all and live in the past as a lunatic without a future, I didn't give a damn. I envied him that. I thought all the freedom was a gift he'd been given, been given by me. I was bitter that he didn't see the grandness of it. He never has, he's never thanked me for so generously running his life for him. Never a word of gratefulness for all the years I've spent behind his controls. But whatever. I always thought he was happy, albeit ungrateful, beneath that mask of his. Happy. Happy despite it all.

But he isn't. He is sad and he is miserable and those tears I always thought were nothing but a form of amusement to him... they are true tears and I find my hard heart breaking sometimes to look at them. That doesn't mean I'll stop what I know must be done but it does make things harder to do. So so difficult to continue knowing that my gift of freedom doesn't make him content. Knowing that he is partly crazy but not happy in it. Knowing he isn't happy skews my perception of reality. If he isn't happy, than insanity isn't a release at all.

Unless he isn't insane. Unless he's only laying on the boundary lines like a man lays on the lane markers in a highway of moving traffic, flinching as the cars scream by. Either way, he isn't happy and so that's one delusion of mine shattered.

He's unhappy because his madness is not a desired one. He's never wanted the liberation, the release that I've offered. He wants his precious Tifa and his precious precious justice. He's just like Sephiroth. He's obnoxiously righteous. Spiteful. Spiteful because he cannot have a perfect world with a nuclear family, a house cat, and a slice of apple pie each evening for dessert. He won't have the sweet darkness, he wants his light and his sword. He wants my head on the end of it and if that's madness, that killing rage, he'll take that offering and embrace it. He'll swallow the madness of revenge like a tonic but always spit out my madness. He is spiteful and he's stubborn. He's Sephiroth's perfect clone and I despise him just as I despised Sephiroth.

Ah... Sephiroth. He's happy in his madness. He's not in the labs anymore, he isn't the little silver-haired boy forever frowning at my back. He's crazy and he's free and he's happy. If nothing else, he fulfilled one expectation of mine. He became a perfectly romantic depiction of crazy. He even has the maniacal laugh down pat. I see him sometimes. In my head, or in person. Jenova will send me picture postcards of his exploits, little transmissions of his image that sit on a desk in my head and I flip through them sometimes like vacation photos. He's my family. He's happy in the madness I've given him. He's happy and I'm happy that he's happy. I wish he could pass some of that my way. I wish Cloud could be more like him.

So do you understand now? Do you understand what craziness has always been to me? Cloud's insanity? Sephiroth's release? Even the petty, petty lunacy of Vincent Valentine when he becomes that thing that seeks only blood? Madness... I always wanted it because I always wanted to be free.

And yet...

And yet today, as I said before, I found out that I was crazy.

Now I'm terrified.

I'm a different kind of crazy because I find that I'm only crazy in parts. If I was entirely crazy, I think, I wouldn't be the miserable wretch I am tonight who's sitting beneath this clacking ceiling fan and can't quite work up the strength to cry. I'd be free if I was only crazy like Sephiroth or Cloud. But I'm not free because I'm crazy in a way that's binding.

I'm crazy with vengeance. Crazy with love. Crazy with hatred and crazy with zeal. It used to be enthusiasm but that monster grew and now I'm haunted by a woman that I never knew. I'm so sane in other ways though. I see with crystal clarity all of my lunatic ambitions and it hurts me now that I'm so far gone. And yet, because I'm crazy with self-indulgence, I cannot or will not quit any of it. But that's not what makes me miserable because there is maybe one person on the Planet I care enough about not to hurt and you know something? He's too crazy to give a fuck.

I'm building to a point, to some mounting crescendo, some epiphany, some trumpet-blasting resolution that will clear these cobwebs from my head. At least, I'm hoping I am. I can see this all ending in a whimper. Can't you?

I'm not free. I'm crazy but I'm not free. There is my thesis statement and the facts to support it are too dark to type. I feel my fingers tremble against the keyboard and they will not type them. This phantom audience, those eyes I always imagine upon me, they would read over my shoulder and I should redden in shame, that crazy man who torments the sane man. Which would redden? The sane man or the insane man? Should I type my secrets and see?

Sephiroth would laugh at me, just as he used to when he was a little boy. If he could see me now, hunched over this computer, with my hair hanging disheveled in my face and my glasses half off, he'd laugh his insane laugh and wonder why I felt the need to examine these conflicting emotions at all. He'd be right too. This is all a waste of time. It's the only way to retain my sanity though, at least for now, at least for a little while, at least what parts are left.

But to be crazy, to be free...

See? I'm wishing for it again as though it were some trinket from Wall Market I could buy and put away. No. It's something aloof and unattainable that I can't even see much less grasp. I'm wishing for that ideal of insanity that Sephiroth has! I gave it to Cloud! I gave Cloud his insanity and he would not hang on to it! Why!? Sephiroth is so happy in his madness yet Cloud was always so miserable in his? The answers elude me and I wonder why I mayn't be allowed to sample the gift first-hand, to be the specimen in a new experiment.

I have to keep it up, these questions, I have to put the thoughts to words and reign the sane parts in before they destroy me. It's the sanity, the sanity that hurts. If I were entirely crazy like my dearest Sephiroth, what fun these final days of Shinra would be. Cloud... Cloud was miserable because he still possessed a glimmer of intelligence. It won, that glimmer. But I killed anything that was reasonable in Sephiroth so that when he found that Library, he accepted madness with open arms.

You see, Sephiroth! Don't say your father never gave you anything! I made you the happiest man alive. I stay in this building for you, close to this weapon and I'm waiting. Half-mad with Jenova too cruel to take me entirely. Tonight I write but there are nights... there are nights... there are nights when my inner voice screams so incessantly that I become dizzy with it because it will not take a breath. When tree limbs look like human limbs, naked and writhing beneath veils of leaves and I blink and I blink but they won't stop moving and they become more human than the humans around me.

My fingers are trembling against the keyboard now so that I can barely type. Would you send me some scrap of writing, Sephiroth? A postcard from the edge? Let me know your secrets, son, because I want to be just as crazy as you when I grow up. Crazy like one who stands in front of a mirror and over analyzes everything on their face; the little irregular crinkle in the lid of your eye when you close it. The one lash that doesn't conform and run parallel with its brothers. The little acne scar just to one side of your nostril. A single strand of hair that I missed when I shaved this morning; a tiny freckle... the way my nose is somewhat too long for my face. The way my profile is uneven from one side to the other. The way I'm so fucking ugly. Crazy so that you can't sit still, you pace back and forth from one end of the room to the other, talking aloud all the while so that your mind won't be able to interject unbearable thoughts. Talking like a madman, talking like a madman and you realize that you ARE TALKING LIKE A MADMAN. Yet you don't stop, maybe the realization just makes you laugh and you start playing with the notion, playing it up for the invisible eyes that are ALWAYS watching. You let your voice lilt, you punch the walls, you chew the sides of your mouth, all the while eyeing the little scalpel perched on the desk, shining in the light from the window.

Then the loneliness. You get so lonely that you want to shout and see if anyone will come. But you don't, because you know the place is empty and there's no one to hear you. Not even the little voice in your head because a part of you knows that voice isn't real, it's only yourself amplified. A comfort that stops being a comfort after you've relied upon it for too long.

It's horrible to be crazy. Yes, it is. It isn't the glory I always thought it would be, it's complete agony and I'm so lonely I'm not sure I can keep loving these people who always leave me alone. Why should I care about a world that does not know me and doesn't care to stick around and make sure I'll be okay? But fuck it... if I don't give it reason to care or stick around why in the hell should I blame people if they don't? I used to use that argument to defend Lucrecia against myself... aaahhhh... these are the thoughts I talk aloud to silence.

I hate these thoughts, these sane remnants of a man who used to give a damn.

Ha. You see?

A whimper.

by GlassShard

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