

When Life is Stranger Than Science Fiction

Life is stranger than science fiction
when "Devs" seems oddly anodyne and quaint -
when I respond to the queasy colors
of "Dispatches from Elsewhere"
with a longing I usually reserve for
a wish to return to the expansive fields
of my most moving meditations
when I am filled with the substance
of a true elsewhere -
when "Omniscient" rolls its gritty Brazil
and surveillance of indignance into the asphalt
of parking lots where a betrayal of shocking proportions is meant to confound us,
but it is as nothing when the surveillance is real
and being used to do a better job in Asia
at corralling a killer than the
so-called great-again nation -
when "Ragnarok" is so delicious
in its icy Nordic-ness
because we can imagine that a virus
could not survive the glacial conditions.
Life is stranger than science fiction
when downtown Las Vegas
seen from a drone's eye
looks like a movie set,
not because of the schlocky neon glare
of misplaced Eiffel Towers,
but because it is completely empty,
waiting for tumbleweeds to tumble through
a minute before high noon -
when Budweiser beer advertises that it is pulling
all sports investment to support the work of
The Red Cross caring for people in stadiums,
and they seem like the good guys
to an avowed non-drinker -
and when Coors obviously runs ad after ad
during every break showing pretty people
drinking like gutted fish,
gills pumping to suck in the missing air
squandered by non-existent respirators.
Life is stranger than science fiction
when a national president calls a state governor
"that woman" because she dares to demand more,
and refuses to let the Vice President speak
to those deemed enemy for disagreeing.
Life is stranger than science fiction when,
walking down the driveway to my mailbox

to place a letter to the father I cannot see,
locked down in his nursing home,
I stop for a moment in the sun
and discover a cedar waxwing at my shoulder,
allowing me the gift of his brilliant yellow tail
and the serrated snap of super-saturated
scarlet wingtips
and the delicate brush of ivory eyeliner -
colors more cardinal than Dispatches from Elsewhere,
and I realize there is nowhere I would rather be.

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