

**Day 16**

**Solipsism**

by

Chris Leyva

*A woman in all white pants and shirt. Comfy, like pajamas. Bare feet. She sits on the floor with her legs crossed.*

WOMAN

Babies. Infants. We call people “infantile,” but the behavior we’re critiquing is not that of infants. Infants aren’t stupid. I had a friend at work. Let me start that again. I knew a girl at work who went out to drink every night of the week. I don’t know why I called her a friend, she’s not a friend. She wasn’t a friend then, she’s not now. I could’ve said co-worker, but that sounds so... Clinical? She’d go out drinking and then come to work, wearing a ball cap, rubbing her eyes, double-fisting coffee and Redbull, and complaining about how awful she felt. People called her behavior “infantile,” but that’s an insult to infants. They’re not stupid. They’re not selfish or self-destructive. They’re not self-absorbed. They’re cocooned. I don’t mean fetuses, cocooned in the womb. I mean, infants, in the world, cocooned in their own minds. They are the embodiment of solipsism. Nothing beyond themselves exists. Nothing. Sure, they hear. They “see,” not colors and not detailed forms at the beginning. They smell, which helps them find the breast for feeding. They feel. They experience, but nothing truly exists beyond their knowing.

*(Beat.)*

I enjoy space. Look at all of you out there on that ball. Swirls of color. Majestic and unreal. Unreal. You are unreal. If I look out into the blackness and catch a glimpse of the earth, all I see are the colors, and no real evidence of any of you. You don’t exist to me. So, do you really exist? Does it matter? I don’t think that your existence has any bearing on me. Big talk coming from someone out in space. But life on earth, even my life on earth doesn’t seem real. I can think of memories, distinct and specific moments, flashes of a life I lived. Lived? But did I? Looking down there, looking at you, looking at what I used to be, it makes no sense. None. Zero. It makes as much sense as sending someone to space and leaving her here with no way back.

*(Beat.)*

How often do you catch the sound of yourself breathing? Mouth-breather? For me, I hear it more and more. In through the nose, out through the nose. It’s quiet, but not silent. And it counts off one less breath that I’ll be able to take soon. I meters and gauges all have since stopped working, so the only person able to truly track the oxygen levels is Fate. So, breathe. Think. Exist. Breathe. Think. Exist. Then, stop breathing. Stop thinking. Stop existing.

*(Beat.)*

God, I wish I had some lasagna.