

Every time I write about Palestine, I want to legitimately crash the fuck out.

"Newborns are starving to death."

That's a heavy statement.

But to describe what that looks like in visceral detail, in some vain attempt to rally people to give a fuck, is just too much for me.

Do you know what it means for a newborn to starve to death? Do you know what it means when a baby suckles an empty breast for the tenth day in a row, not because she believes food will come, but because it's the only thing her body knows how to do? Do you know what it means to have nothing inside you, to be nothing but skin and bone and pain and crying? I watched an old man literally drop dead from hunger, give his last breath for hunger, and I watched it while I lay in fucking bed, while I scrolled Instagram reels.

You know, when you're hungry—like really starving—your body begins to eat itself. It begins with the fat. What are babies known for? Baby fat. Can you imagine what a starved, malnourished newborn looks like? Can you imagine giving birth to that child in a tent, as the bombs fall, while you yourself are hungry?

It's not like I seek it out. It's not like I search "*children starving to death en masse, video footage, 4K.*" It exists in our feeds because this regime is directly causing and profiting from what you are seeing. The powers that rule over us are using our resources to kill people just like you and me en masse, right now. Children are dropping dead from starvation right now, and there is a direct line of responsibility to me, sitting here, passively consuming that as content on a capitalist-owned platform. They are making good money from that man's death. The only question that remains is how long it will take for them to make good money off yours.

At a certain point, we need to stop thinking about brand deals and clout and who has the coolest newest shoes and whatever the fuck bullshit-ass beef you have with whomever is distracting you from this shit, and we need to start thinking about the logical conclusions of this happening in full view in front of us.

The people who are doing this live great lives. They make \$270K a year. They have healthcare, private pools, golf courses, country clubs. They are living so much better than you, even at the lowest possible end of it all. I mean, if all the Palestinians die, if they all starve to death, if Israel bombs the rest of them, if the last thing you see from Gaza is Bisan's corpse—do we just go back to *"Okay, I just need to lock in?"* Do we go back to watching dropshipping courses?

What the fuck, man?

I cry about this.

*"A revolutionary must realize that if he is sincere, death is imminent due to the fact that the things he is saying and doing are extremely dangerous. Without this realization, it is impossible to proceed as a revolutionary."* —Huey Newton

I don't have a solution.

I don't know what the fuck to do. I get people emailing me sometimes asking what to do. I don't know, man.

I just know I'm fucking tired of seeing dead kids.

And I know that my life is not worth more than the life of those children just because I was born closer to capital or because of the color of my skin.

It bothers me how worried some people are about absolutely meaningless language games when there is a need for serious organization to be built. When there is such a high degree of absolutely necessary work to be done.

I see posts from these *"Good Trouble"* protests, talking about how the goal is to be peaceful, to work with the police (the same ones who train with the IDF) to report people who engage in disruptive behavior.

Where are the ten motherfuckers who chain themselves together to shut down the Brooklyn Bridge? Where are the port seizures?

And now, we have ICE entering the fray in a heavy-handed way. Taking people, disappearing them. The reports coming out of *"Alligator Auschwitz"* are nothing short of horrifying. Brown-skinned people being brutalized for capital. The same exact shit you saw in Gaza, happening here. Still, the narrative is about peace. *Whose* peace?

Imagine having your parents taken by ICE, having to spend what little money you have just to figure out where they are. There are rumors that some of these flights are dumping people into the ocean. Let's hope they are rumors, because we know Pinochet did this in Chile. We know that the Coca-Cola company hired death squads to kill union leaders in Colombia. We know the Pinkertons were hired to do much the same here, over 100 years ago. We know the stakes, and yet—no realization. No action. Nothing but hollow actions and false gestures.

I am just as guilty.

*"During the Vietnam War, which lasted longer than any war we've ever been in—and which we lost—every respectable artist in this country was against the war. It was like a laser beam. We were all aimed in the same direction. The power of this weapon turns out to be that of a custard pie dropped from a stepladder six feet high." —Kurt Vonnegut*

None of the people I read about won.

None.

Assassinations, deaths of despair, decades of imprisonment, or simply the defeat of reformist compromise.

Mandela/Slovo, two I've been studying deeply. Is South Africa communist? No. Were they able to do land reform? No. Has systemic whiteness been dismantled? No. It is hard to say they *"won."*

Imagine you are on the street. You are wearing 40% polyester pajama pants you bought from Walmart because it's warm and that's what you could afford. You've spent the last seven hours essentially walking from one part of town to another. You have not eaten, and the only thing you've been able to drink is stolen hose water and a single 89-cent Polar Pop from the Circle K, along with two stolen refills. What the fuck does revolution mean to you?

Imagine you are from West Virginia. You were born in 1999, grew up in a town of 400, and got the education that goes with that. You land a job in the mines—it pays decent, better than the Dollar General. You have no future aside from the same despair you see take the

elders around you, and your livelihood, the same that will kill you, is the same that is killing the very land you're so deeply connected to. What the fuck does revolution mean to you?

Imagine you are from South Louisiana. The Sackler family got your parents before you knew the difference between a Vicodin and a Perc. You moved every year because that's where the work was. You decide to work offshore—after all, it's better money than Dollar General. You, like your uncle, end up so damaged from the labor that you live on disability, never able to hold more than \$1,000 in a world where that number feels smaller and smaller by the day. What the fuck does revolution mean to you?

The reality is, the same systems that genocide abroad brutalize at home, while those who claim to be allies to the brutalized seek moral absolution via the placement of blame on the brutalized. It is not our fault as leftists—no, no, no—it is the working class. No, scratch that, there is no working class! There's only a Starbucks in my suburb, and those workers? They can't be working class. No, no, never mind the vast expanses of fields that edge this town like a bad porno made with a purple-haired girl you wish you could find where she uploaded that shit.

The suburbanite posts to the 4chan thread. The Starbucks worker reposts an infographic about how the *"Mexicans"* do the *"work no American wants to do"* and how we should be *"grateful they work so hard,"* not realizing she works hard too. Not realizing her progressiveness is predicated on the same colonial structures that abuse those farm workers, who live lives just like hers—fathers, brothers, workers all the same, now ripped from their families for working and providing, as any human wants to do.

They both see the same feed, the same brutal realities, the same genocide abroad.

ICE comes to her coffee shop—janitor, maybe a few others on the cleaning crew, she doesn't know. Coffee she serves made possible by death squads; profit margin on her paycheck made possible by her wage labor exploitation. She texted her dad that morning: *"Love you, pops."* He's in his 50s, same age as the janitor, same age as the cleaning crew foreman, same text message he sent—*"Amo mi hija"*—before being taken. She asks if they have a warrant. She resists, if just for a bit, but it was signed by a judge, and she has to comply. He's taken as the news in the lobby talks about the starving children in Gaza.

There is only struggle. This is the only constant. The accelerationists were right: things will only get worse, and will continue to get worse faster than predicted. Historical materialism tells us the same. The struggle has been ongoing far longer than any of us have been alive, and, in my own relative first-world, white-skinned privilege, has been fought for longer than I can truly conceptualize.

*"We should rid our ranks of all impotent thinking. All views that overestimate the strength of the enemy and underestimate the strength of the people are wrong."* —Mao Tse-Tung

All that I can do is embrace the despair, I suppose. Take the grillpill. Stack some paper, make some cash. You know, maybe donate to a charity or three along the way. That is what they tell me. But they would be so very incorrect—the type of incorrectness that can only come from a man who has the heart of a coward. To embrace the despair and wallow in the impossibility of change, the nihilist doomerdom of many, is no less pathetic than a dog begging for a burrito on a summer Sunday. There is simply no place to beg for space from the people doing the killing, because to do so is tantamount to doing the killing yourself.

*"I must fling myself down and writhe; I must strive with every piece of force I possess; I bruise and batter myself against the floor, the walls; I strain and sob and exhaust myself, and begin again, and exhaust myself again; but do I feel pain? Never. How can I feel pain? There is no place for it."* —Harry Houdini

Imagine if someone like myself were to surrender to the abyss. With all the comforts therein. With the comfortable bed, the shade, the means to escape the heat, the shelter, the shower, the running water, the fridge, the space to hang out, the friends who will spot me \$10 for food no matter what, the food that I can buy with those \$10, the power that powers the microwave, the television playing *SpongeBob*.

*"Are we supposed to take out Spider-Man and SpongeBob? They don't have any heroes. We have a country in front of us with a large population and a large landmass, but it doesn't have any heroes. All of their heroes are cartoon characters—they're all fictional."* —Iranian cleric, Shahab Moradi

[<https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/slovo/1971/slovo-10-years.pdf>]

Anyway, *HOUDINI Magazine* is dropping two new hot indie game reviews! That's right, folks, we've got two itch.io gems reviewed exclusively for *HOUDINI Magazine* by a brand-new writer, Paruko!

Do you see how disconnected it all feels?

My friend, when I was growing up, this was a good friend of mine. We'd always chill, we'd watch *Dragon Ball Z* together and shit. Trailer park. His pops was strung out. Mad strung out. He lived on a diet of chicken nuggets. Always burnt. Why? Pops would be passed out, nodded off from the H after putting the chicken nuggets and the absolute cheapest shoestring french fries you can imagine in the oven. Sometimes, hot dogs to change it up, but still the same. The days when his dad wasn't nodded off? He was a mean son of a bitch. I remember the taste of those nuggets, because they were always somewhat burnt, because we would have to be the ones to take them out. There was never a timer.

He laid drywall, did odd jobs, and despite the addiction, never failed to provide some type of substance to his kid (and to me!). What does revolution mean to him? What does revolution mean to my friend, who just wants his dad to make something like the blessing that is four nights a week of leftover spaghetti? There's levels to this. Never forget that.

There can be no struggle without the mandate of the people. No hope to win without a mandate. The consent of the governed to be governed by the government—this no longer exists. Yet they have over 300 military bases around the world. Yet they spend billions to kill and billions more to collect souls for the slaughter in their soon-to-be-finished yet already operating swamp execution camps, where people are being forced to eat from dog bowls naked under the guards' watch. The Nazis hid their camps; we sell merch for ours.

"*Good Trouble*," the protest sign says. I grab some McDonald's on the way to the march—a quick snack, a large fry, nothing major. We get down to the march. "*Hands off NATO*" (all members have funded the genocide). "*Back the Blue*," one of the boomer signs near the police pop-up says.

We march. There's an energy. The sirens escorting us. The feeling of struggle as we cross the bridge.

I spot another sign: "*Kill 'Em in the Midterms*."

The midterms are about a year and a half away. It takes less than a month to die from starvation. All but five members of Congress voted to send an extra \$500 million to the entity.

My favorite streamer told me to vote for one of the people who voted for the funds sent to the entity. After all, we have to start slow when we move the people to the left!

Another decade passes, another species extinction. Another degree hotter. Another dozen miles of coast lost. Another mass-televised genocide to post about.

Ecocide.

Genocide.

Ecocide.

Anyway, here's Peter Thiel to talk to you about birth rates! Did you know you can get a salary advance if you donate your eggs? This video is brought to you by SunnySide. *We know eggs!* White women under the age of 25 get a \$500 sign-on bonus! Use code MUSK during sign-up to claim your reward. That's code MUSK for a \$500 sign-on bonus! That's what, like a quarter of your rent? Come on, just let us harvest your DNA data already!

**\*\*Not valid in the state of Texas due to the new *"We Really Do Not Like the Idea That Women Are People Act."* Please have your male escort provide his banking details upon sign-up.**

They killed Joe Slovo's first wife, Ruth First, as a means to demoralize him—which says as much about the evil of the men who have the power as it does about the way they view women and their relation to men.

The level of sacrifice required by those who know what is required of them to enact the change they desire is often too great for those who seek the change they desire. This is the nature of the game. And yet, the sword can still parry; the single strike is not a death blow. The blood is felt in the throat. The brain and the stomach become equals, and the fight continues with teeth bared like a wolf. Gaza is bombed, blockaded, and starved, yet even still, the Palestinians plant olive trees. This is the only way forward.

What is revolution to any of the people mentioned? It's not a single battle, a single action, a single protest. It's the fucking refusal to stop swinging. Even when your hands are broken. Even when your throat fills with blood. *Especially* then. Tell Nat Turner he is hopeless. Tell Hamas they have no reason to fight. Tell John Brown there is no point. Doing so would be a farce. There is nothing left in the face of despair but a raw optimism, a revolutionary optimism. This is the only way forward. Perhaps we cannot win, but by struggling, we cannot lose.

*"Who is the Joe Rogan of the Democrats!?"* they run headline after headline. All I can think is, *"Who is the Babe Ruth of guerrilla war?"*

Erik Houdini