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*Transatlantic Transparency*

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The cadence of your speech starts to appropriate the soft monotone of your daily rituals: sleep, drink, paraphrase. At the party, the wine is pleasant but uninteresting. Art people describe their fantasies of direct action: writing, organizing, occupying, smoking cigarettes. Politics exist in the future-conditional. In his novel *Suicide*, Edouard Levé writes that "In their beginnings, events preserve the potential that they lose in their completion. Desire prolongs itself so long as it is not achieved." Ten days after handing the book's manuscript to his publisher, and in an action towards a 1:1 ratio between fiction and reality, Levé hung himself.

It occurs to you that there are two types of people: Americans who commit to practicing the norms of the cultures to which their wealth gives them access, and Americans who do not. The protagonist of Ben Lerner's novel *Leaving the Atocha Station*, a poet on a year-long fellowship in Madrid, writes that poetry reveals the original false premise of communication through text, or that language is a project that can't actually be realized: "my research had taught me that the tissue of contradictions that was my personality was, itself, at best, a poem, where 'poem' is understood as referring to a failure of language to be equal to the possibilities it figures." John Kelsey, writing on Wade Guyton, also locates the artwork in a space beyond human relatability even while operating within technologies of our own design: "this could even be a definition of contemporary art: an encounter with our own absence in the midst of the very activities we manage and monitor."

Even as it brings elements into a 1:1 ratio of visual proximity, transparency implies an impermeable membrane. With higher resolution comes an even greater remove: sleeping through a sunny day with the blinds down like a pervert; leading, at the same time, several privileged and unrelated lives.

- Tess Edmonson

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