

The Tailor

The grass is so green and the sky is so blue: it's law. At sunset it turns to orange and at night the white clouds move out of the stars' way, unobstructing the humbling view of the universe inside of which we all coexist, mindful of each other. And when the sun rises we wake and greet our neighbors before going on with our day.

Day after day the nicest of weathers orders peace and harmony: as above the sun shines on all and kisses pedestrians' heads with unlimited love, so below reigns perfect equity in this town where car accidents and homelessness were long ago eradicated through innovative endeavors. Any individual would be both soothed and energized by how wonderful our town and its people are.

Look: the milkman is here. His pristine white suit matches the pure white goat milk he delivers in shiny recycled glass bottles. I can't imagine my children drinking anything else as part of their balanced breakfast... And off to school they go.

The old lady next door is watering her front yard. That slight fresh perfume in the air is a kind new feature notifying her of her plants' thirst. Her vision and hearing might have devolved but her nose is still robust. The children salute her before embarking on the school bus... She waves haphazardly in their general direction. The children don't smell as strong as her watering scent alarm, but there is genuine affection among our neighborhood.

Only deviant minds would sneer at this idyllic setting and jadedly suspect some darkness behind the scenes; rest assured there is nothing of the sort here. No unspeakable secret harbored by the town's elders, no sudden burst of violence that triggers a chain reaction of abject horror, no desecration of an

orphan's grave, none of those clichés that used to pepper popular culture for the enjoyment of a mob of cynicals and perverts... We're beyond that. Here the clichés are good, just like the well tempered weather.

Look: the sky is so blue. Isn't it natural that it would be? Of course we prefer very green grass. And a moderate climate! Such shared perceptions constitute what we call society. Which we live in, with responsibility and civic virtue. The atmosphere fills up with our communal desire for goodness, much like trends propagate, until it reaches a critical mass. It's a proven method... That's how to better ourselves. One should rejoice in having partaken in shaping human society to its ideal state.

Painful incidents and lamentable crimes: those who superficially wish for their eradication, while privately delighting in their happening, excitedly misinterpreting others' deaths as proof of their own being alive, those miserable men had gone extinct. Times had definitely changed, and only for the better too. Which had seemed doubtful at one point. Darkness lies one step ahead, was a common motto. Despair breeding apathy... But the future had turned out to be bright. Behind the scenes the decadents decayed on their own. And finally had died out in silence. Progressive men progressed. All that leading to now, happily ever after.

The research and development in the creation of new materials had been tremendous: you could drop an egg on the floor, and not only wouldn't it crack, it would also stand up straight, facilitating its pick-up. Preparing breakfast was a breeze. Especially in households with children. They could run around, bang their delicate foreheads on doorknobs: no pain at all. All thanks to cutting-edge corporations working relentlessly around the clock, innovating new components while our families sleep comfortably... The joy of living in a house that allows kids to grow freely. Actually there are doorknobs only around the parents' quarters. The rest is smooth. Getting rid of sharp angles as much as possible, the design of the residence is kind and cozy, and naturally so is the town, as an accumulation of such houses.

It's common to hear people talk highly of how tasteful the town is.

The townsfolk are fashionable and don great, clear skin. Surely it must be the result of a healthy diet that focuses on the intake of fibers... Promenading with a green juice in one hand, and a leash in the other, an adorable poodle on its end. High-five with an evergreen branch on the way while all the manicured flowers entice the dog with a symphony of fragrances.

No need for coldproof garments as the weather is pleasant year round. Jackets filled with feathers plucked from dead birds, or hats or gloves fabricated by skinning alive critters cute enough to be loved as pets, are nowhere to be seen. They are as obsolete as talking about the weather. Of course the weather is nice, so why even mention it? Conversations about art and literature flow instead. Art and literature of the purest form, created in solitude by visionary individuals. Some spend weeks, months, years, inside of a small room working on their next masterpiece. The room is lit evenly day or night; if it weren't for a single clock on the wall, you wouldn't know time even existed in there. Struggling to output unprecedented ideas onto blank canvases or pages, perhaps even suffering for it. When the work is successfully finished, rather large sums of monetary compensation are offered. And the cycle goes on... I want to express gratitude to those ferocious creators. Passersby discuss the latest in poetic exploration, new advancements in color theory. Everyone actively works toward bettering their intellect.

The townsfolk enjoy looking at each other's clothing which, in the absence of any demand for protection against the natural elements, necessarily pursue comfort and style. Look: these adorable twins are clad in quilted plaid bodysuits that charmingly match their stroller's upholstery. No one could be blamed for confusing them with endearing stuffed toys at first glance, yet their slightly milky smell definitely indicates they are real babies, very alive at that. If the beautiful woman pushing them happens to be their mother, which is highly probable, one can only expect the toddlers to grow up to be as eye-pleasing as her. For all I know they could one day inherit her outfit, a lovely patchwork pale pink sundress, its refinement sure to never go out of fashion. I must once again express gratitude, but this

time to the local tailor, who fashioned these accoutrements of the highest quality.

Indeed our town is lucky to have this tailor live among us. He has been in business for as long as anyone can remember, and few would hesitate to praise his devoted service to the fashion craft as the pride of our community.

Grethe, 78, who operates the local kindergarten, always wears the tailor's creations when teaching. She owns many pantsuits in bold colors, each decorated with one type of imagery per outfit: the orange one features appliquéd flowers, the purple one stars and planets in sequins, the mint green one farm animals embroidered delicately in metallic threads. This last one took over a hundred hours to complete, and is rightfully the crown jewel of Grethe's collection. But she refuses to be precious with her garments.

"Any child immediately understands the imagery on these clothes," Grethe points out. "They are all archetypal things, whose names you must know perfectly by the time you enter elementary school. The kids love to circle me and point at the images. They run their chubby fingers on the images, feeling them at the same time as they learn their names. Sometimes they even fight each other to get a closer look at their favorite one!"

Grethe pauses, as if reflecting tenderly on her long career. She has seen many of her pupils grow up.

One of them, Elyse, 34, credits her old teacher as a sartorial inspiration.

"I just remember all her outfits so well... My favorite was mustard colored and had all these lace sea creatures on it. I loved it. My final day at kindergarten, I begged Grethe to let me try it, and she actually agreed!" Elyse giggles. "She just stood there, in her underwear, while I pranced around with clothes way too big for me. Later I realized I was probably stepping on all that delicate lace, maybe even damaging it. But Grethe didn't say a word, she just stood there with a smile, happy to see me happy."

Now Elyse tears up at the sweet memory. With a

trembling voice, she apologizes for being emotional, although no one is criticizing her for it. She leads us into her closet to inspect her collection. Elyse is a respected antiques dealer: she explains she needs to dress in a manner that pays reverence to the great relics in her care, and for her, only the tailor's garments can make it possible.

"The other day, I was showing a client a collection of early 21st century wooden sticks. Their provenance is long forgotten, but just looking at them, you know they are exceptional. Anyway, this is what I was wearing that day, and I believe it helped sealing the deal."

She pulls out a ribbed wool chemise woven from multicolored threads. Subdued, yet hypnotic, "just like the grain of the sticks. The closer you look at it, the more you get lost in its delicate, natural patterns; both the sticks and this dress." She laughs.

Like every garment the tailor makes, this one is unique.

"Sure, I get compliments, but I've also learned not to outfashion the antiques themselves. The clothes should complement the objects. As for me, I almost consider the tailor as a business partner."

She gets teary-eyed again, no doubt overcome with gratefulness. We leave her in her closet, the camera slowly panning over all the tailor's creations.

Back in the studio, our local news anchor, Herbert, concludes the story.

"I almost got a wet one rolling down my cheek myself," Herbert laughs. "And I know the man. I've been going to him for years. Truth be told, I'm wearing one of his suits right now. His exacting craft and strong work ethic are to be highly praised. This tailor, he is the real deal. In fact, so real that he declined being interviewed on camera. Said he'd rather be sewing in peace. Now I respect that. We did, however, find this old footage where he makes a brief appearance. That's all from us for now; have a great evening, and see you tomorrow."

As the camera zooms in on Herbert's dapper pinstripe suit, the footage he promised fades in. It's grainy and blurry and can hardly sustain prolonged viewing. So the channel is switched to something jollier. A shame, really, as no viewer sees

what's being broadcast once past the dizzying signals: footage of empty decaying streets, the tailor walking toward the camera from afar. Although his face is nothing more than a blot and cannot be made out.

After all, one only needs to visit the tailor's shoppe, where he lives and works, to see him in the flesh. Which is exactly what Herbert is up to this morning. A little bell signals his arrival and soon the two professionals are shaking each other's hand firmly.

"Did you catch our reportage last night?" Herbert asks. "In our highly advanced information age, only real stories about real people can give satisfying insight into how our society works. We did a pretty decent job with that story on your work. What people want is enlightening news that makes you pause and reflect, not just junk that's quickly chewed down and forgotten. And today I want to order a new suit, I seem to have gained some weight."

Herbert likes to talk; what he prefers is listening to himself. It would be a lie to call this man unentertaining: his voice and his face constantly move musically and annihilate any boredom. He is good at his job. The tailor is even better at his, which always starts with listening to the client and their needs. So he doesn't interrupt while Herbert continues.

"Of course, I know that when you make a suit, you take into account slight fluctuations in body shapes that are always bound to happen, especially with someone not exactly that young, such as myself. I recognize the craft. But I've been all over the place recently. Everyday I notice a little bit of new fat on me, here and there, just this morning even as I was taking a shower. See this?" He turns around and shows the back of his thighs. "Must be all the sitting in front of the camera. The flesh just sags. Anyway I was thinking about a new pinstripe suit. Something chic. Did you notice how I pointed out my suit last night? The cameraman did a good job, zooming in. Made it look real fancy. Not that it isn't, because I know it is."

It is finally the tailor's turn to talk.

“Ah, aging, let me tell you about it. You don’t know what’s coming, not yet you don’t. But rest assured. No matter how old I get, my craft will always be exacting and my work ethic strong.” He adds: “As for that story last night, I really don’t see how it’s anyone’s business. All I do is make clothes, and if people are happy with the result, good for them. I don’t think everyone needs to know everything about everything and everyone. But I don’t mind, as long as you’re happy with it. That’s your craft, I guess, just like I have mine. Anyway, let’s take new measurements.”

The tailor is ready with his tape, always professional. With swift and precise movements, surprising for a man of his age, he assesses Herbert’s body, jotting down numbers on a paperpad, focusing more on the hips and the low waist, which have ripened by a few inches. Then they both go through heavy binders of fabric samples in which no two are alike, yet all share a similar polish. Every fabric the tailor uses is sturdy and will age beautifully. Naturally nothing is cheap, but that is life. Business is conducted efficiently.

“Thank you. I get giddy everytime I get to order something new from you,” Herbert glows like a child. “Can’t wait. Now I have to run, I’m going to report on a new company. Maybe you’ve heard of it: personal care aides, tailored to each client’s requirements. Pun not intended! All the servants are unionized too, and their data processing is completely seamless.”

The tailor picks up on that last part.

“Seamless, you say. I don’t trust anything that’s seamless. Bond alone can’t hold textile, and god knows they’ve tried. Nothing like a good old seam, just like my father taught me, and his father taught him before that, and the father of his father, and his father, or maybe his mother, I forget, and his or her father, etc, etc.”

Sensing he awoke some memories that might make the conversation lengthier than needed, Herbert writes a deposit check, shakes the tailor’s hand and he’s off to work. Unfortunately he’ll suffer a fatal accident while broadcasting a few hours later, but the state of the art new personal care aides soothe him as he takes his last breath. His only regret will be his inability to report his own death... Too bad, it would have sounded fantastic.

He can even imagine how he would start the story, he opens his mouth and starts forming a sentence, but the unionized servants' pacifying lullabies drown out the words.

A tailor's craft is a solitary one, and in that it might resemble the work of an artist. In creating clothes, however, it's simply out of the question to let your imagination run wild and end up in a fantasy world, especially when, like the tailor's father had always told him, "clothes make the man. Not the other way around, remember that." He did always remember that. Clothes are not a topic of idle and speculative small talk, like some books or pictures can be. It would be unthinkable to do as some artists and poets did, and get drunk on the job while pushing globs of paint around, chainsmoke while scribbling incoherent thoughts, or go days without answering urgent correspondence or calls from creditors. Precision down to one sixteenth of an inch is the norm, and one should never expect to be thanked, much less admired, for it. Case in point, the news story from the other night. Grethe, Elyse, all they talked about was how the clothes helped them achieve a higher goal: rightfully so, thought the tailor, whose dignity came from knowing he contributed to a better world. He knew he was a great tailor. A semblance of gentlemanhood forbade him from considering himself the best tailor, but he knew he was very very good.

This greatness was not achieved in a day. It took centuries of passing down knowledge, each generation building upon the previous one. Sometimes the tailor goes through one of the dozens of chests filled with family memorabilia. Ancient parts from broken sewing machines. Ribbons woven from a type of silk that has since gone extinct. Yellowed pressed flowers that provide ample inspiration to the tailor. Some loose gems. The most cherished: a medal given to his grandfather in recognition of his loyal services. That man had tailored for the prince, back in the old world. Sweet sweet heirlooms...

We don't have much time. Things are accelerating, and not always for the better. No time to be observing an old man deep in his recollections. We have to keep moving forward. Looking back is of no use. The countdown has already started.

Understandably the tailor clings to his lifestyle. Who could blame him, it's all he has ever known. Meanwhile entirely automated factories can churn out complete outfits that fit like a glove. Free next-day shipping to your residence. Measurements are calculated directly from your smart bed, your smart fridge, your smart shower.

The tailor's grandfather's medal has turned dull over time. You would need really good eyes to read the inscriptions on it...

The single clock on the wall keeps ticking, whether you can hear it or not.

The tailor is going through his mail. A much better activity than inspecting an old medal. The pawn shops have drawers full of them. It's highly probable one will be offered to the tailor too, once he dies. The city, or the neighborhood council, or some other benevolent group of well-minded people will take care of that. A little congratulation to alleviate the loss of a beloved figure. Who would then receive such medal? It is public knowledge the tailor has no offspring. His only roommates are dress forms and mannequins. Should the medal be set into the pavement for all to admire, only for it to corrode and become illegible sooner or later? A sincere effort by the authorities is required.

Just then, a flier sandwiched between two governmental envelopes is noticed. In cheaply printed garish colors it asks: Got medals? We want to buy them! And under it, Bring us your old junk. You might be surprised at the treasures in there. Hell, you might have real gems in there! We pay cash and on the spot. Come

The flier ends midsentence, due to a cropping mistake the printers made. They must have been in a hurry to finish their job... It all feels like a bad omen so the flier is trashed

immediately.

Going on with his work day, the tailor cannot seem to shake the ominous feeling off. He takes many more breaks than usual, stopping his hands and looking around, observing his workshop. In those moments he almost wishes he were a smoker, for it would provide some sort of mindless activity to indulge in, rather than just standing around in silence. But he is a healthy man. And there is no doubt the odor of stale smoke would taint his creations. The clients would frown and refuse to pay, and he would go out of business. Unthinkable. So he goes back to work, diligent as always.

Yet, as some sort of precaution, although unclear against what exactly, he goes to his treasure chests and picks out the medal. Something bugs him still. Better put it somewhere else, just to make sure. Searching for a better resting place, the first thing the tailor notices is the suit he had started for Herbert that sits abandoned since the customer died. He places the medal inbetween its soft, protective cashmere fabric, and its lining of silk. He sews it all up, sprinkling some of the loose gems in there as well, and he feels relief. Plus he's glad he found a good use for the unfinished piece, which he puts away among his collection of not for sale clothes he keeps as design references in the back of his shop.

While the tailor gets a good night's sleep, an avalanche swallows a whole village in a backwoods region. Over forty are confirmed dead, their insides filled with snow. For those who escaped in time, it's unfortunately still too early to rest and mourn their deceased relatives. First they have to battle the cold, huddled in the abandoned church, the only structure that survived the disaster. Even the thick stone walls don't quite protect from the harsh winds. Have you ever experienced such bone-chilling weather? Real cold that robs you of both your physical and mental energy, leaving you with no compassion to spare. Animal instincts kick in... It's a relief no one has any strength left to fight over the little bits of food some escaped with. The survivors are exhausted and bunched up in fear, the

scene could have taken place in medieval times. I hope a swift rescue team restores the real meaning of “danger past, God forgotten,” quite an apt proverb. But for now, there is nothing to do but pray. The situation is completely out of anyone’s control. That’s how horrible it is.

Thank god the tailor doesn’t keep up with the news: it’s unlikely he’ll hear of this.

A few days later, just as the medal incident was about to leave his consciousness forever, the hauntingly personal advertisement now probably in some landfill far away, the tailor notices Grethe at the market, who is arguing loudly with the fishmonger. Some fish she had bought contained something that shouldn’t have been in there.

“I understand... Yes, yes... I’m deeply sorry... Again I apologize...” The fishmonger’s woeful tone invites pity in the heart of the onlookers, who are quick to make their way elsewhere, avoiding confrontation. “Let me just say, in my defense, that all our fish are wild caught... Maybe the seabeds are littered and that fish had swallowed a debris... What is the government doing? This is evidently a bigger problem...”

As if to express that no such shift of responsibility would be accepted, Grethe is further incensed by the fishmonger’s poor excuse. Did she scold her pupils in a similar, strong-willed manner? The fishmonger keeps apologizing to her. Being a professional merchant, he also does not forget to apologize to the passersby who are discomforted by the old woman’s pestering and lecturing. What a scene. Isn’t this something that could be done with just a word of caution? It certainly is a hindrance to shoppers who are struggling to create a dining experience that is not only nutritious, but also pleasing to the eye through the arrangement of a variety of fresh ingredients. Perhaps somewhere children are eagerly waiting to be fed. “Don’t worry, mom will be back soon,” a kid reassures his younger siblings. The family puppy is starving too. Stomachs need to be filled as soon as possible. Grethe is disturbing the peace, clearly, and the tailor goes to intervene.

Grethe, with one last roar, shouts her will to never buy anything from this irresponsible vendor, and turns towards the tailor. That's when it hits him that she isn't Grethe, not at all. She isn't even an old lady. In fact he's a relatively young man... Impressive how his voice seemed more mature than his age. How did the tailor mistake him for Grethe? It's as if all the beliefs he'd been holding on to, without ever having to question them, were nothing but a foggy dream. This huge shock compels him to briefly doubt his own sanity.

"Who are you?" He yells at the man, although he could be asking himself, actually. Before the startled man can answer, the tailor realizes his outfit is curiously similar to one he had been making for Grethe. Although the details differ slightly, the general proportions and signature playfulness are definitely reminiscent of the pantsuit, still incomplete in the workshop. "Where did you get your outfit?"

"Oh, this?" Without a trace of the fury he was exhibiting a moment ago, the man begins to explain with a soft demeanor that convinces you that indeed, the fishmonger must have been a crook, and what was found in his fish, truly despicable.

"I got it online a few days ago. It was pretty cheap too. Do you think it's too much? Like, too gaudy?"

How to accurately convey the tailor's consternation in this moment? One should sit comfortably and exhale a slow sigh of relief, grateful of never having to experience such brutal and immediate dismay. The shock from earlier is blown away to nothing. Shock followed by more shock. A big discount on shock today at the market.

Bummer the man will never know if his outfit is too gaudy, for the tailor, blown-away by all that shock and all sorts of wild emotions, ran home without responding. But then, it's also true that the opinion of a master clothier is not cheap, and this man wasn't a paying customer anyway.

Let's take a moment to sort out the situation here. Details liven up a story, but too many obscure what's really happening. And frankly, our ability to follow and tolerate such confused ramblings is slowly ground down. We don't have much time.

First that flier urging to sell the medal. Undeniable that it was specifically targeting the tailor.

Now a cheap copy of one of his work-in-progress pieces. Although of dubious confection, it couldn't have been a mere coincidence.

What happens twice happens thrice. And when it rains it pours... Trite idioms run through the baffled tailor's head. He fears increasingly bizarre events will happen unless he does something. He hastily pastes a temporary closure sign outside and thinks hard.

If possible, one should always have enough time to do things, and act in a relaxed manner. Don't forget to stop and smell the flowers, etc. Well, take flowers for instance. The tailor loves them. Often he would fantasize of one with perfect petals, one with lots of them, say, a chrysanthemum. How often does one find a perfectly petaled chrysanthemum? There must be contests and breeders, the same way some go crazy for orchids. Engineering a chrysanthemum to its perfect petalness sounds tedious. He could go buy a bunch of chrysanthemums and pick their petals and recompose them on a stem until he gets to one that has perfect petals. But the patchworked newborn would not last. What the tailor really imagines, is that he'd like to go look for a flower, conveniently in the meadows, as soon as tomorrow morning, until his hand reaches for the perfect one, or until he gets bored and go home. How often does one find such a flower, by chance? It would be too much looking. He'd rather gaze at several flowers at once, sweeping. One needs to see the whole picture to fully grasp the problem at hand. A vagrant would know such secret gardens with panoramic views of lush blossoms.

But there's no time for a leisurely stroll. Flowers don't matter now. Even if we have to step on them, what matters is to

keep moving forward at any cost. Yet the tailor cannot provide a logical explanation for what's happening. No wonder his mind drifts off. All he can sense is that someone, or something, is watching. For what purpose? For no purpose, only because it is possible. It's been possible for a while now, although many forget this. What is possible will inevitably happen. No need for an agenda for that.

In any case, the priority is to get away from all that scrutiny, before it's too late.

The temporary closure signs will never be taken off, even after the sun completely fades the words away. The blank piece of paper stays there until the tape holding it deteriorates and blows it away.

Inside, the tailor is busy, the busiest he's been. What he's working on now is certain to be his masterpiece. He gathers all his personal belongings, all his precious trinkets, all his memorabilia accumulated over the years. His movements are swift, precise, full of vigor. He goes at it, unstoppable, full of life. All these things are sewn into clothes. The thick fabric he uses is sure to provide surveillance-proof safety. The shape of the clothes moves further away from that of a human body. Finally untethered by the repetitive demands of human silhouettes, the tailor's creativity runs wild. Had he ever worked so selflessly in his whole life? Bulbous moments meet sharp angles, all constructed finely, all filled. All the small things, all the papers and objects passed down through generations are hidden inside dresses and trousers that are a complete mystery as to how they should be worn. Even the most cutting-edge stylist would scratch their head and switch careers in despair, if confronted with what looks like a cross between long johns for some chimeric monster and a kind of perhistoric makeshift tent...

Powerful designs that easily transcend trends and fashions. Whether they can be called designs or not, they sure do possess uncanny power. The craftsmanship is impeccable: what a pity the tailor has no progeny! To think that these skills will die out and be lost forever. Although no one can guarantee that

the hypothetical offspring would follow in the tailor's footsteps. No one can force them either.

Not one to be content with garments, the tailor continues to encase things, now inside of dress shapes and mannequins. The mannequin, an attempt at a fairly faithful representation of men and women, has existed since antiquity. All ancient civilizations, which are represented in the great museums of the world, have left prestigious traces thanks to figurines adorned in the fashion of their time, offering us a reflection of the daily life of our most distant ancestors.

The tailor's mannequins don't quite showcase a specific lifestyle to display for future generations, and few would even be able to really identify them as representations of human bodies, for they were altered beyond recognition, obeying the same freestyle obsession that was now the only reality for the tailor. Yet they are more than worthy of being housed in well-respected institutions; the word "art" can be conveniently applied to them, as it's often used as a stand-in for a somewhat less elegant formula: "what the hell is this?" Each protruding knob is a hiding spot, not unlike a womb. Behind each seam is a room.

The clock doesn't tick anymore. The tailor has no time to be winding it, and anyway, it's already inside some fabric shape, dense enough to muffle its sound.

All the appliances also have to be carefully embedded inside of other soft things. At first the tailor neglected hiding all that heavy equipment. They didn't seem important enough to him. But when it becomes apparent these appliances include a degree of intelligence and communications that enable automatic or remote control, based on user preferences or external signals from a utility or third party service provider, the tailor bangs his own head. He hadn't used any of their smart features, and had not even activated them, whenever that was possible. In fact he deplored the disappearance of simple, reliable, easily repairable

gas stoves and fridges. At what point had mere machines started to talk among them, and worse, talk back? This was the unholyest of sins. Machines stripped of their machineness, acting like your friend, forgetting they were nothing but tools. He didn't want progress if that was progress. A conspiracy all of society had agreed upon without informing him of it. It was forbidden to refuse it. There was no freedom of choice. You couldn't cook an egg without some sensor analyzing how consuming it would affect your cholesterol level or whatever. Gone are the days of enjoying a decadent omelette in peace. Was that too much to ask?

So he hides them deep. That way they'll remain quiet. Even if they inadvertently blabbed, deep in stillness no one is there to hear them spill any of the tailor's dietary secrets or any other information they might possess. When he runs out of fabric and mannequins, his shop overrun with demented shapes, he still has gadgets that need to be disconnected from the grid and put away. It's almost over, no time to waste, the oeuvre is nearing its completion. Keep going, you're almost at the end.

The tailor doesn't hesitate when he opens up his stomach with his trusted fabric scissors. They glide as smooth as ever. They're vermeil, so no risk of infection either. There's plenty of room inside. He pushes apart some organs and inserts as much as he can. The intestines can be stretched out and allow more hiding place. The lungs are pretty spacious too. Soon nothing is not hidden. He then sews himself up with sturdy leather thread.

No, he's not dead... Look: he's just sleeping. He did work hard, and the sweet repose is his reward. Looks as if he'd never had such a deep sleep before, judging by his tranquil face. I wonder what he's dreaming of. I wonder if the innumerable bacteria inside his body get to enjoy the marvels of technology he put in there. The sky is still so blue and the grass so green when the tailor wakes up, but all the windows of the shop are now covered and the door is blocked by shapes, so he cannot see that.

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