

SIX DAYS AND SIX NIGHTS



Morten Knudsen

08.04.22 - 18.09.22

After great pain, a formal feeling comes
-Emily Dickinson

Some say that grief makes time cease to exist. Perhaps because it necessarily infects the components of an entire existence, including its time. Perhaps grief's time becomes as non-linear as a painting. Maybe it is a surface more than a line, something black in your eyes no matter how long after grieving begins.

The pictures in here, they can be an elegy. They can be a job, a way to inject everyday life into your hands. The pictures in here, they are pictures from a tragedy. On the power of tragedy one can ask: is it more powerful the closer in time it occurs to a miracle.

Tragedy hangs in here, but its pictures are not unambiguously dramatic, they are quiet and full of force, as were they beginnings of a new day. Spirals can look like anything, and the frantic drama of grief is invisible to anyone but the mourner. Spirals can look like anything: transient optimism and abyss and hallucinations, eternity and beginning and end, and then suddenly a hot sun or something gleaming you can seize that actually knows its direction. Spirals can look like anything, they are signs of various endeavors. For instance:

To get up repeatedly, and stay standing.
A systematic response to the hunch that beauty itself has abandoned language.
A systematic attempt to bring it back.
Screaming in a landscape or a bathroom.
And so on.

A spiral never ends, a son never ends, a father never ends, a grief never ends, orange definitely never ends either.

The pictures in here, they tremble. Perhaps because being made was more important to them than being seen. The importance of a face to cling to while time disintegrates. This exhibition's only face is that of the hospital priest, a face with eyes which soothe for a living. About faces one can ask: are you aware, whether or not you have one when you're grieving. Another person's face, by contrast, that is something to admire, also through white-hot catastrophe. Maybe grief makes everything silhouettes.

The pictures in here, their vulnerability resemble a human being's. These pictures are hardly eternal, a tragedy's monumentality is hardly eternal, but both will exist through a life, like gardens where flowers will wither and stay.

Morten Knudsen's son Ernst lived for six days and six nights.

By Nanna Friis