

## End of Tales

A closed off street in the center of Berlin. Saturday afternoon. September 2016.

Men slouch on the side of a building, waiting. Women, on phones, with clipboards are busy. The women sport colorful, practical attire. The men don uniforms and old-fashioned suits. Those in uniform are armed.

Strange, yet familiar, it might be the new Tom Tykwer series, the first Netflix-produced German show. The men are sweating.

It is 1930s Berlin set in Berlin now. Seeing these men, costumed in uniform, naturally chatting with “contemporary” people enhances the feeling: threats are imminent.

The repetition of this oft-repeated narrative dispatches a creeping sensation of real things gone, of real things to come, of a cyclical transformation on the stroke of midnight.

A new right is replacing the familiar. Conservatism is being absorbed by a dark specter. It feels like repetition, yet rather than history repeating itself, it is as if a script culled from our based-on a true story and Reality TV fantasies has marched off the screen, and into our lives.

The played out copy of “reality” spells out the cliché, stranger than fiction. The omnipresent mendacity of alt-facts and fake news, of what’s real or not, of who is telling the truth, of who can handle the truth, jumbled with the rise of nostalgic romanticism, perverts the naive, the simple, the sweet, in an impatient demand for a better time. Hasn’t “The Dream” always worked for the few, rather than the many, while the rest of us made do with fairy tales?

All this talk of A Greater Time. Political rallying at the Boy Scout Jamboree.

“BE AGGRESSIVE

B-E AGGRESSIVE

B-E-A-G-G-R-E-S-S-I-V-E”

The political arena bares the tell tale signs of a ground acquisition game. Baseball, football. Crossing enemy lines to bring it home. Passes and steals. The good guys. The bad guys. The Russians vs. the Dems in the US election.

Once upon a time people, animals, places were traced into simulacra, to form an awesome animism,

to creep into our deepest desires. Dreams and hopes get packaged into mascots, as choices are siphoned into rallying cries.

The global is local. The personal is political. Man up. Stand by your man. Protect your team.

In times where simple fact started to become fictitious the innocence of fables, of moral tales, feel like a bygone era. When history is more like storytelling, less real than the films that portray them, a humansized queen of hearts crawling through a wardrobe suddenly doesn't seem all too surprising. History is written by the "winners", who all lived happily ever after.

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