



The yak could not remember how much time had passed since he had been abandoned in the park.



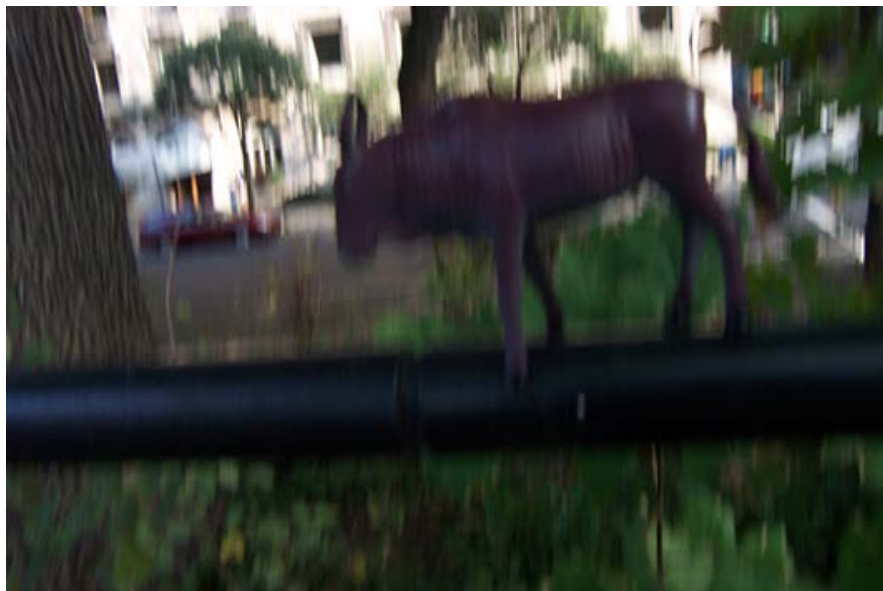
Indeed, it had been so long that the yak no longer remembered his life before the park at all.



Though aware of the city surrounding him, the yak gave no thought to exploring it.



until now...



...



The yak's first steps outside the park were faltering ones.



Plastic toy yaks are cautious by nature, and this one was no different.



After a short time viewing the busy street, the yak was gripped by terror, and decided to retreat back to the park.



On his return, the safety and seclusion of the park were empty comforts under the shadow of his new knowledge of the outside.



Though very frightened, the thrill of the outside was all too alluring. In an instant filled with both excitement and deep sadness, the yak realized he could never call the park home again.



Having made a firm commitment to leaving, the yak now had to ponder...



What to do to fit in?



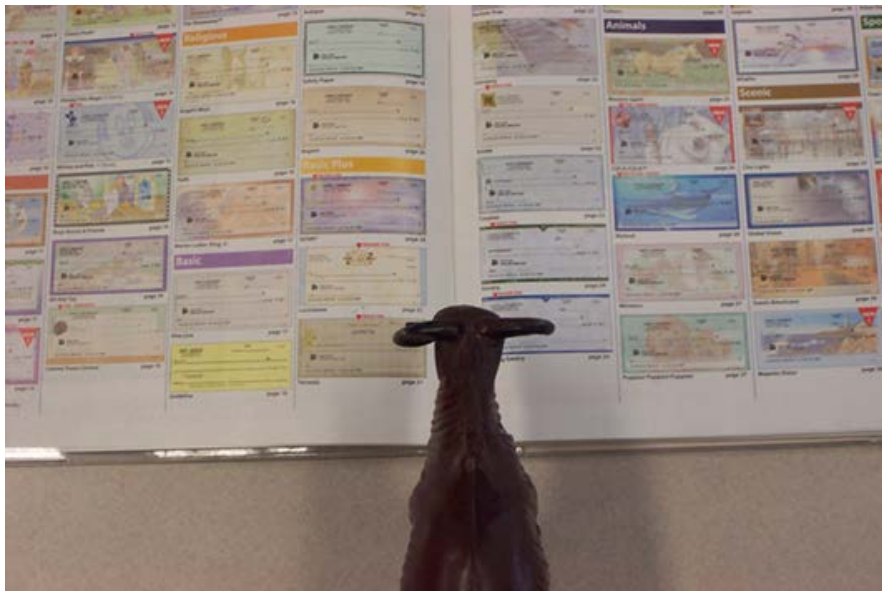
Why open a bank account of course!



While waiting, the yak eagerly anticipated all the choices he would have -



Checking or savings?



Which individualized checkbook best represented him?



Mutual funds or the stock market?



With all his choices made, the yak felt giddy anticipation & excitement as he used an ATM for the first time.



But wait.



In spite of all his choices: his keychain with bank logo, his commemorative 9/11 remembrance button...



...his own Personal Identification Number (PIN: 925 (spells YAK for easy remembering)) and his checking card with VISA debit capability.



In spite of all these symbols of his belonging, his prestige, and his individuality.



He felt a strange emptiness...



**Even after he left the bank, deep in his polyvinyl chloride stomach,
this emptiness... this nothingness... remained.**



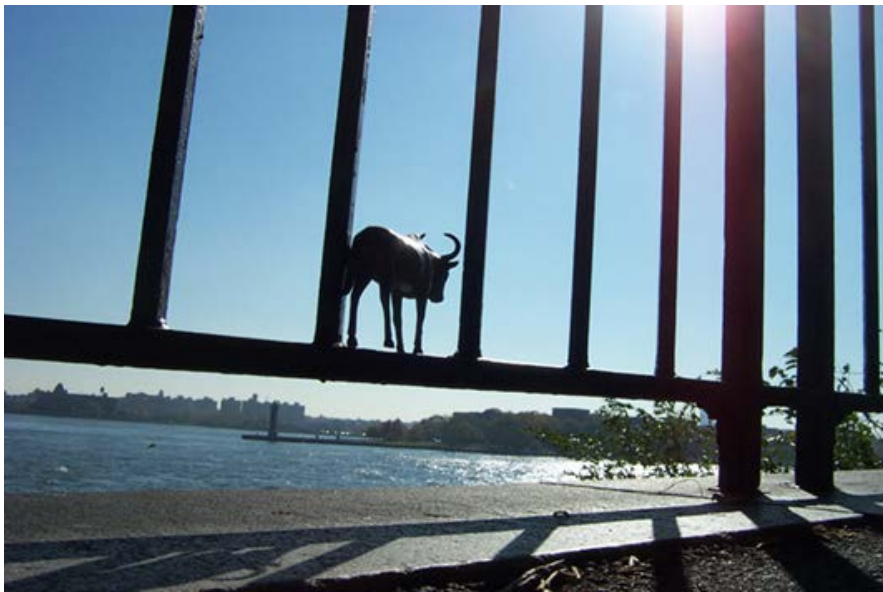
The yak found a quiet place to explore and analyze the source of his emptiness.



Exploration opened up a myriad of questions he was previously unaware even existed.



Was there a God? If not, what was the point of anything? But if so, where was the proof? And which God was the correct God?



The yak doubted there was one.

Then what would happen when he died? Would he retain his consciousness? His logical yak brain told him no, and this filled him with a deep feeling of terror.



**Weighted and fearful of the feelings opened up by these fuminations,
the yak hid himself in some nearby leaves.**



But hiding didn't help.



Plastic toy yaks clearly cannot exist outside the park with this belief system, he thought. And so, displaying the elegant simplicity plastic toy yaks have renown for, he decided he would need a new one.



Of the yak's time spent as a Muslim fundamentalist woman...



...the less that is said, the better.











In the end, the yak could not reconcile Islamic Law with modern society.



Life was simply too chaotic; the human will too unpredictably feral.



The Sharia, the yak thought, could never be successfully imposed without also creating a world filled with extreme violence.



And this truth, once realized, the yak could not tolerate.



Having now known the warm comfort of possessing a spiritual and philisophical base to view life, the yak felt even emptier then before.



As his cold logic betrayed him by ripping the warm consolations of certainty apart.



The yak's world again lost focus, and he felt very alone.



The yak's attempt to lose itself in casual sex was spectacularly unsuccessful.



Aside from obvious physical limitations,



the yak found the company of strangers to be fulfilling for only short, fleeting moments.



With drugs, the yak found greater satisfaction.



Unfortunately, this bliss was short lived, as the aching pangs of addiction took root.



While obscuring his emptiness & pain, the yak felt the murky plateaus of narcissistic inspired reaction damaged and obfuscated his ability to feel authentic emotions.



He thought of this most while the drug's effects would fade away.



**His old doubts & trepidations flooding back worse than ever, along
with a new feeling;**



a searing self-hatred & belief that he was a hedonistic fraud.





Sometimes, during particularly extreme intoxications, the yak would dream himself back at the park.



No longer thinking the park as limited and boring,



the yak now filled it with sweet nostalgia



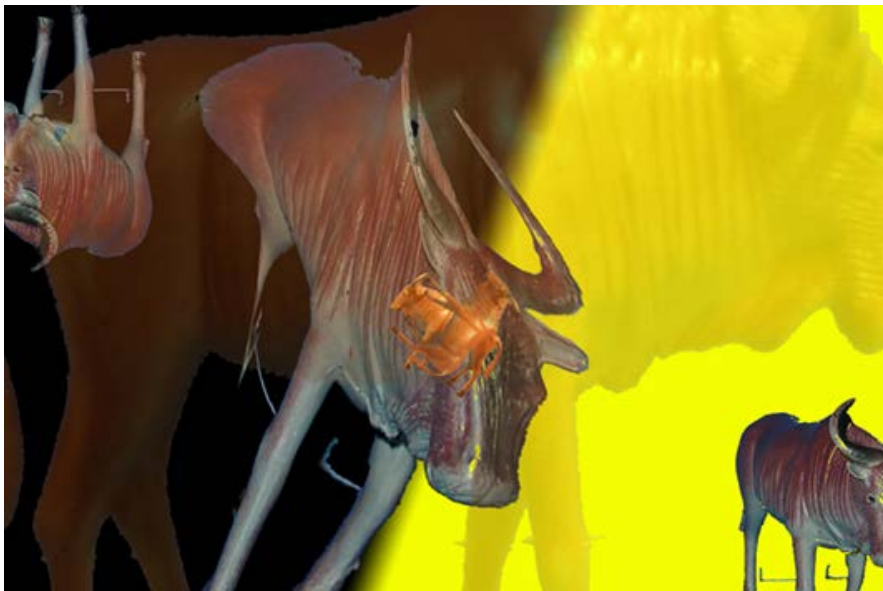
for a simple and beautiful past...



**And cursed the day he bit the apple to discover not only the city
outside...**



but consciousness itself.



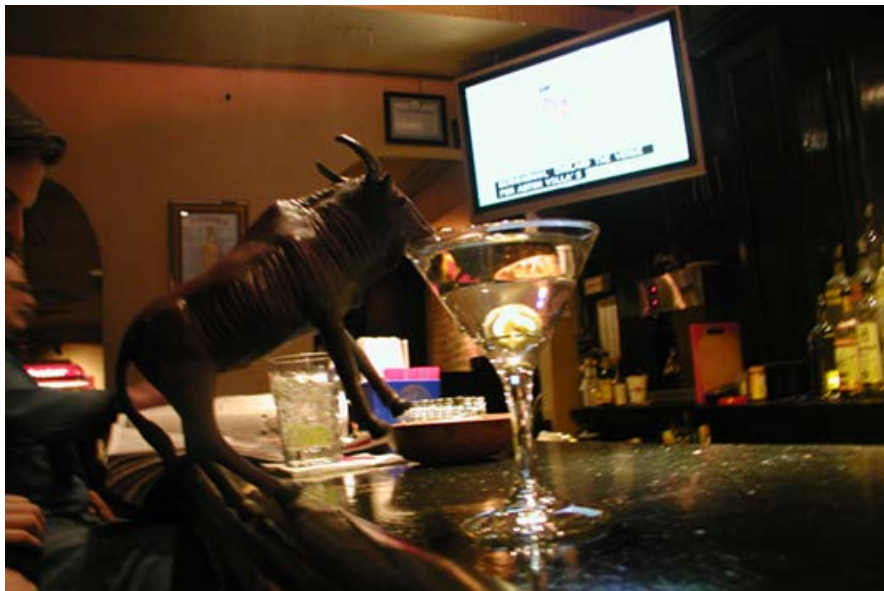
This same consciousness which now attacked him with a single malicious thought,



repeated ad naseum like a diseased mantra:



Soon came the inevitable rehab



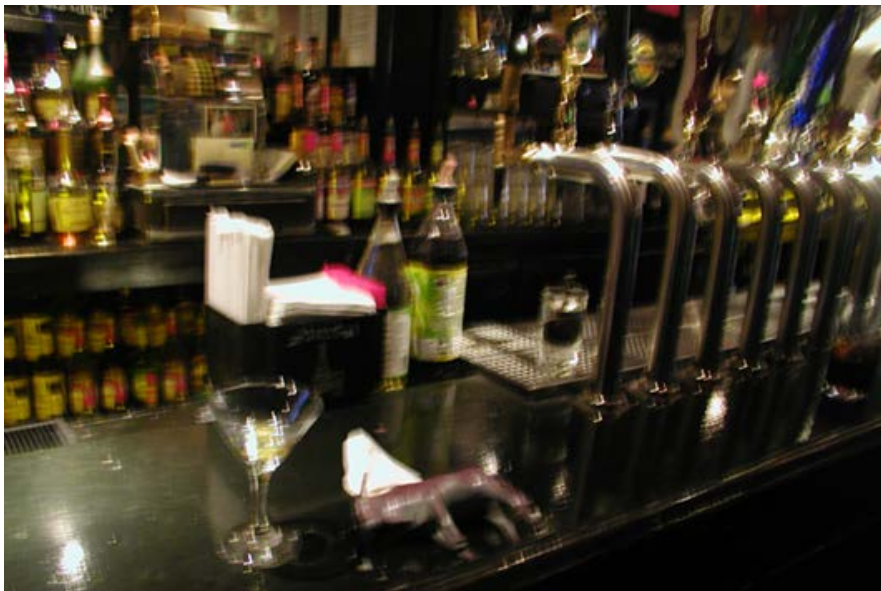
and inevitable relapse.



At some point, during the days of non-stop drinking



the yak decided to run away.



"Details could be worked out later."



And the yak entered a dark sleep.



The yak spent many months on the road.



Plastic toy yaks are pleasant, if quiet, company for those who pick them up.



During these months, the yak got to see much of America.



But eventually, luck and money ran out.



In desperation, attempts to sell his body at truck stops were unsuccessful.



And winter came.



One particularly dark night, the yak found himself alone,



with snow and darkness as far as the eye could see.



Is this the end, the yak thought?



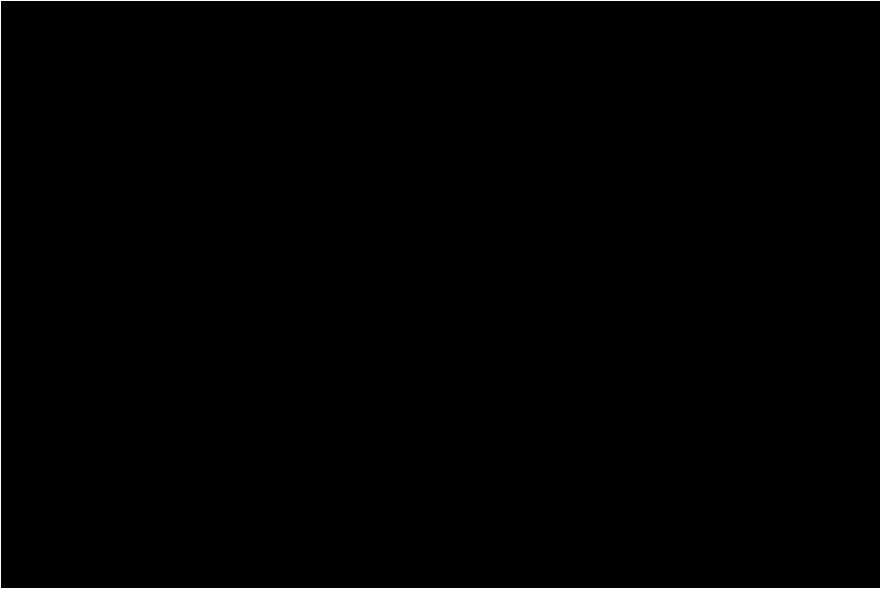
What have I been searching for?



And why has this search made me feel so alone?



And then the world went black.





The yak would later describe his days after waking up in the hospital as pivotal.



Left with nothing but time, and without much external stimuli,



the yak came to a philosophical and spiritual peace he had never imagined possible.




A long life would follow.

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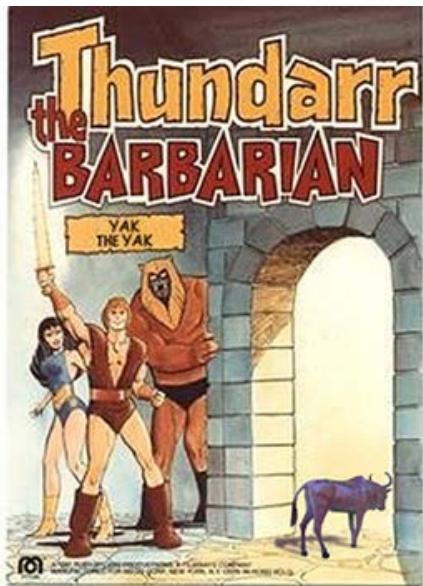
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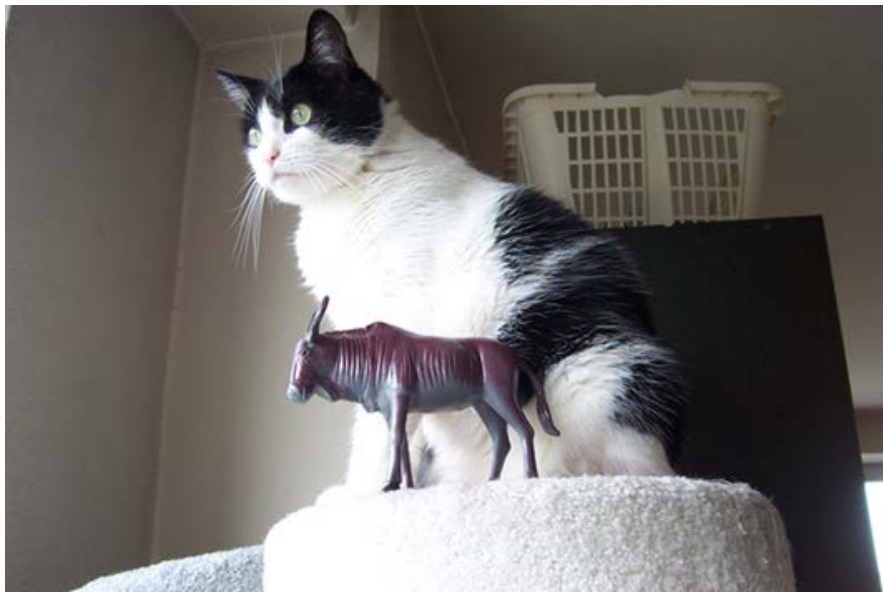
There was some time spent modelling.



As well as his well recorded period as a comic book acting star.



Though in all of its travels, the yak never met one of its own.



He did find love.



And despite inter-polyspecial differences, the love was strong and lasting.



And when she died, the yak never loved again.



One 4th of July, when he was old and knew his time was near



the yak wandered up to the roof to watch the fireworks.



And remembered the park.



The decision to leave no longer filled him with regret or joy.



It was simply inevitable.



It was.



...

The Yak Book

Concept and photos by Clarisse Miller & Michael O'Shea

Written and published by Michael O'Shea

Additional photos by Paul Yates

Additional graphics by William Pierce

Photographs taken from 2002-2007

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