

LH & 13 ODW

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Once in a while I try to spend time in my head not thinking about anything. As a visual person the color gradients created through my lids' depth, the outside light and the movement of my eyeballs are too distracting. So I have to visualize an image.

A classic picture –screen-saver-like– that always came up and was useful for that purpose was a picture of the sea. Easy. But when I went on trying to create this calming and soothing emptiness one day a very different picture occurred that struck me as very alien. And it scared me a little. I had and still have no idea where it came from. But it works at least as well as the sea view, if not better.

What I see when using this image is a curved plane sitting on a black background. The curve is not wavy; it rather resembles the thermoformed back of a pill package. This pill — it is just one imprint-like curve I see — would be oval with a perforation meant to be broken in two. The edges of the oval imprint transition to the flat area of the plane at a 45° angle. The surface is flawless, the color a shade of white. The light on the plane is very dynamic. Soft but dramatic, shadows and highlights. The materiality of the surface is undefined, unreal even. It is not shiny nor really matte. Neither hard nor soft.

The reason why this image seems so alien and even uncanny to me is that I suspect it to have a virtual origin. It does not seem to be generated from a memory, a dream or my usual visual vocabulary. It is not really pill packaging, this is just the closest comparison I could find to describe its shape. It is a variant of something familiar but processed. My mind must have found ways to mimic the look of a digitally generated image. Or it is an image my mind would always have been able to create and I just read it now as digital or non-human. Either way, that uncanny 'unnatural' look works for me in this particular moment. Maybe it having no origin I can excavate in the vast areas of my personal memory also means its potential as a source of constructive void.

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