



FLOWING CITY

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by dotART - Art Association | Exhibit Around

Registered office: via del Veltro 30 - 34137 Trieste, Italy

Headquarters: via San Francesco 6 - 34133 Trieste, Italy

Tel. +39 040 3720617 | info@exhibitaround.com | www.exhibitaround.com

C.F. 90125960329

Cover photo: Florin Flacau

Short stories: Roberto Srelz

Translation: Zoë Rivas Zanello, Alenka Poropat

Proof reading: Andrew Constanti

Graphic design: Studio grafico Stefano Ambroset

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CREATED BY

EXHIBIT AROUND

Photography is fast.

Photography is slow.

Photography has to push you to look at what stands in front of you, to notice things, get captured by them, but not always to try to capture them.



Davide Marcelli (Italy)



Roberto Cenci (Italy)
Thirty Seconds In London

You-Are-Here

inspired by

Roberto Cenci's

«Thirty Second in London»

On the way home, inside a taxi which he had called, trying really hard to remember the company's name – was it the one similar to the tea brand? Or was that the advert for the sponsor? – Hollis laid his hand on Kim's knee and said that if anyone ever accused him of taking advantage of his own charm, he would be embarrassed if it ever happened in front of his mother. He asked her twice if she had liked it. Kim nodded distractedly, trying not to appear too annoyed or afraid. Her leg and hip muscles were sore. In the end, it was just work. In fact, when they had bent down to get the two white lines, she had even had fun. She had even enjoyed herself, although right now she couldn't distinguish the people along the road: she could only see a line of blurred shapes, and the red and yellow of the double-decker buses. Soon, they were going to arrive anyway, and she would never have to see him again. It was five o'clock and she had been up since the day before. At home, the fridge needed cleaning. To get out of the taxi, she took off her heels and she danced off with her coat moving in the air coming out of the Tube ventilation grate.

Hollis mumbled something to the driver, giving him a new destination address. The man did a U-turn and stopped not far

after Piccadilly to let the woman who was going towards the pedestrian area pass. The confidence that Hollis had showed with Kim disappeared straight away, once he remained alone. The good, cute, elegant and well-dressed woman he had met at the Thai restaurant turned out to be a serious drug addict and a whore. They had taken too much stuff, prime quality expensive stuff. Now he could only see strings of light and his eyes were burning. Doesn't matter. He will sleep on the plane. "I am sorry", the driver addressed him through the speaker with such a perfect native English accent. "This will take a second more. There's trouble on the street". Hollis rubbed his painful wrist. Fucking Kim had been tiring. "Yes, yes", he answered, "No hurry". 'Next time', he thought, 'I'll be more cautious. I'd like a normal girl. Yes, I'd like that'. Back home, in Rivera, he had two dogs. It would be nice, his girlfriend-to-be would love his dogs.

Look up at the house.

He got off. There was a woman next to the hotel revolving door. 'Do they still make revolving doors? I'm feeling dizzy, he thought. The woman was holding a phone. She started laughing at something. Her laugh reminded him of the sound of an automatic gun. He could also hear water flushing, and he then noticed one member of the hotel staff washing the pavement in front of the entrance, while the other was sweeping away the dust. He realised that the woman had a cheap Korean mobile phone: strange, in a place like this. The brownish heavy metal revolving door threw him inside, across the lobby, stopping only



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at the reception desk. The hotel logo consisted of a triangular shape inside a circle. “Need anything, Sir?” asked the young man at the desk while his colleague was talking to another guest, not far away. “Well”, said Hollis “I’m tired. I’ll pay everything right away and then I’ll go to get my stuff ready as I will be leaving tomorrow”. “Very well, Sir”, answered the young boy with a nasal voice. “I’ll prepare your receipt, Sir. May I ask where you are heading?” Risky. Hollis didn’t want to leave any trails. “Washington”, he answered. A waitress just went through the door of the bar. She gave the impression of being very cold. The young man smiled at him and asked “Would you like me to call you a taxi to get you to the airport?”

It’s years since I’ve been here.

He nearly laughed while getting into the black car. “Washington. Of all places, why Washington?” There was a photo in the corner for the hotel trips: one of those big, well-printed posters, showing a panoramic view in which, behind the glass, you could see a dome. Could be Washington, or maybe Rome. You could see the reflection of the visitors and the ornamental plants next to the sofas in the lobby. The dome seemed to be surrounded by plants, appearing between the palm trees and the sky. The reflected men and women in the hotel were like shadows, a ghostly crowd. “My father”, he thought, “He would tease me and tell me that I am always seeing ghosts”. Hollis has always had a vivid imagination. His father, on the other hand, didn’t. Everyone said he hardly ever used to show his emotions. He was never

angry and he never laughed. Everyone said that you could see he was alive only when he was drunk. Four times a year, never more and never less. And on those occasions he would cry, say that his life was horrible and that everything was so miserable, then he would push Hollis, shout at his wife and leave. He would disappear in the countryside, and come back a few days later, not every time though, once he never came back.

Back to the hotel. I can move on.

There was no map in the lobby, one of those maps on which you can find the “You-are-here” sign. He needed one of those maps, but there was none. It was hot, extremely hot, scorching. He was about to ask the receptionists to turn the heating down, but he then realised that he was probably the only one who was hot. Looking out of the window he could still see lines instead of cars, he was shivering for the cold one moment and the next in a heat flush. “Who cut this stuff?” In the lobby there was a red carpet with a lion on it. “*Dieu et mon droit*”, he read “Who knows what it means”. He picked up the papers they had prepared and collected the key. In the lift he could see that the floors went from 1 to 18, skipping the number 13. He was staying on the fifth floor, in room number 56B. The doors to the rooms were made of fake wood, but they seemed to be strong enough. The light came from the lampshades hidden behind the fake columns. At night the light seemed red, while during the day it seemed white. There must have been an automatic air perfuming and air circulation system – still not covering the smell of the



UNDERGROUND

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BY APPOINTMENT TO HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II
TEA & COFFEE MERCHANTS & TWININGS AND COMPANY LIMITED LONDON

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TWININGS

tapestry. He didn't hear a single sound since he had gone upstairs. He entered the room, opened the window, stopping only to stare at those moving lights in the street until they disappeared. The fresh air made him feel better.

Step on the train.

“The thing is some people are terrified. They are afraid of even just stepping outside. I can't imagine them being able to feel guilty or angry”. The woman with dark skin sitting in front of Hollis had got on the train at the stop before his; the crowd started to move, time for work. Or time to head back. Bond Street. Hollis got out of the taxi straight after leaving the hotel: a detour. All according to the schedule: he had asked to be taken to the corner near the park, and then away. It is better not to stand out too much: no need for luggage. Everything he needed had already been sent to the other side of the world. It's that animal instinct which saves your life. “This means that they are scared of living. They are locked up, imprisoned, I think. Frozen inside. With no emotions. And why is all that?”

The woman was about forty years old. She had that sort of sophisticated and elegant beauty which had never been on the cover of a magazine, not even in London. However, the beauty that did reach quite high levels of society and decided to stay there and grow old. At the same time many other women grow old together with her but do not keep her beauty.

Hollis was enjoying watching her. “What do you think?” he asked her. “Did you get on at the Arch?”. Hollis scratched his

head. “Yes, at the Arch. One stop before you. I think I feel sorry for how they have to live”, he answered, “especially when I am tired. But I am also really glad that there are women like yourself, here in this city. It is extremely grey here, everything passes so quickly.”

Step off the train.

They continued to chat for a while. The woman smiled and was talking a lot. “I try to do so, just as you said”, she said. “You mean with your diet?” answered Hollis. “I try, of course. I’m not saying that I always succeed. My intentions are good, though.” “I’m pleased. You are such a beautiful woman”. “Thank-you”, she said, smiling. She appeared to be embarrassed. “Excuse me”, Hollis got up. “I’m getting off, I’m getting the bus to the airport”. “Oh”, she seemed disappointed. “Will you come back to London?”

Hollis focused on imagining the eyes of the women that he would want to be his partner. She had a nice perfume, peculiar but intriguing. “No, I’m afraid I won’t. Bye, hope to see you again though.”

When he emerged from the underground darkness, he found himself under such a clear night sky that he could see the stars through the reflection of that city, moving within him and everyone.



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↓ Central line



MARBLE ARCH STATION

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Alessandro Manchia (Italy)



Romina Calini (Italy)