

Under pressure, Art and Drama, and then we will feast.

Lying on the single bed. The loaves are invisible, stored inside the treasure chest bed. Suddenly, the doorbell rings. I jump up, open the door, stick my head out, pull it back in, and slam the door.

It's Mikky. I told him not to come too early. I'm not ready. *(I lean against the door, eyes closed)* I am about to give a reading at a café in Agoura Hills, in the San Fernando Valley north of Los Angeles. My friend, who is familiar with the Wednesday open-mic shows, has finally found the guts to step up this time, strum a few chords, tell some jokes, and then introduce me for a moment of literature. *(I open my eyes)* I haven't decided what to read yet. Inside my head, anxiety and excitement are tickling each other. *(I hum a few lines from a Leonard Cohen song)* "everybody knows that the dice are loaded, everybody rolls with their fingers crossed."

He is called to the stage, I'm next. My heartbeat increases. His act is over. / Already?!

He says my name in the microphone. / It sounds good.

It's loud. My fellow spectators are becoming an audience. So I get up. / You had it coming.

Down the rabbit hole. Will the fall ever come to an end? *(I continue the song)* "that's how it goes. Everybody knows."

I'm not much of a bread-head; despite what you might have heard in the past few days. I can't help hoping that somehow I'll be able to make a living doing what I enjoy the most, continue sharing food and words. I am afraid that nowadays the art world doesn't give much space to dreamers.

There's a novel by Kilgore Trout (I keep pulling him out, right. He is a product of Kurt Vonnegut's imagination, and one of my favorite characters of the summer) about a planet where citizens submit works of art to the government, and they are assigned cash values according to the spin of a wheel. Everybody has a chance, right, we are all artists. Then, we find out that the wheel is rigged. Sounds dreadfully close to reality.

Thank goodness there are people like Mikky that allow parallel experiments to happen. *(I climb up to the window, look out)* He looks impatient. He might not realize that my way of expressing my creative abilities isn't typically visual.

Hand-crafted sentences are hard enough to produce. We expect so much from each other. *(I slide down slowly)* Ears, eyes, noses pointed in my direction, minds digesting my words, stomachs growling in tune with the food I offer. This audience, this time, this space, I owe it all to him out there. I can't work otherwise. Not that I don't want to, it's just that it makes no sense without that. Without you.

In Los Angeles, there is a little bookstore called "Stories", with great books, tables, cakes and coffee, and a backyard with friendly people writing stories of their own. When I found that place, mixed feelings jumped up and down in my stomach: "wow, here are people like me!" and "Oh no, more people like me".

A guy started reading a poem out loud to his friend. I couldn't help but eavesdrop. His verses were tragic. He sounded so vulnerable. Yet he had enough determination to express his feelings, regardless of how they would be received. Makes you want to let go, doesn't it? Relax - read your writing to any stranger who comes up. *(I sing Janis Joplin:)* "Freedom's just another word for 'nothing left to lose'."

So what IS there left to lose, in fact? I just keep finding things these days. There is an amazing amount of great junk in the streets of Germany. My luck started with these shoes, in Berlin, abandoned in a fabric bag in Prenzlauerberg, and just my size! The night we arrived in Dresden, Charlotte picked up a sweater on the sidewalk. Then, I was riding to the studio, worrying about these performances, when I found this sheet, a crucial element to the set! Walking home another day, I found a plate to serve you bread on!

We were getting so used to finding free stuff on the curb that when we saw some blackberries in a bowl on a chair holding a gate open, we nearly took them. An old lady popped up from under a bush, grinned and pointed to the price on a cardboard sign. This was the product of her schrebergarten, part of the mandatory 70% of edibles that you are supposed to cultivate in these allotments.

"Growing your own food is like printing your own money," said Ron Finley. He is a gansta gardner from South Central, Los Angeles. An itchy part of town, to say the least. Finley says food is the problem there. Seems like their bread is always buttered on the wrong side.

You know, there is a mad law about buttered bread always falling on the buttered side! Defeats gravity. Or does the butter make the bread heavier on one side? Or does it have a magnetic relationship with the earth?

A British stage magician, Nevil Maskelyne, wrote in 1908 in the Art of Magic: "It is an experience common to all men to find that, on any special occasion, such as the production of a magical effect for the first time in public, everything that can go wrong will go wrong. Whether we must attribute this to the malignity of matter or to the total depravity of inanimate things, whether the exciting cause is hurry, worry, or what not, the fact remains."

Finley thinks that providing free healthy food and getting the neighborhood involved in its production is the solution. Like the Diggers of San Francisco, he believes in freedom with a consciousness of the community in which we live. I find that inspiring. Reverse Murphy's law.

Here we are, at the end of my third performance, thereby concluding the Dresden residency, and everything that could have gone wrong should have, by now. I hope things have been as good for you as they were for me, and I thank you all for coming, and Mikky Burg for inviting me, and especially for trusting me. Enough with my bread and butter letter, let's eat.

I open the bed and hand plates out to people, and we all leave the room through the brown door against which I was leaning on and bring the food outside to tables that will have been set up (weather permitting) during the performance.