

YOU DON'T  
HATE  
MONDAYS  
BY GABRIEL  
RENE  
FRANJOU  
YOU DON'T  
HATE  
MONDAYS  
BY GABRIEL

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**MONDAY ~~A~~ EXTERIOR DAY**

**I'm broke, it'll have to wait.**

**Streets are dirty as always, wet as always. Noisy, too (sirens).**

**Smells nicer than usual, could be food or could be the rain or could be I'm distracted. Can't pay for the hot potatoes fried in animal grease and can't pay the guy: it has to wait.**

**MONDAY ~~A~~ EXTERIOR DAY**

**At the intersection, the stop sign is completely covered in them, unreadable. But you guess it anyway.**

**I read what's on the sticky papers but nothing remains once I've looked away. I'm smiling when I take my first step on the crosswalk, though.**

**I'm heading south through St-Gilles. Another odd job for today. By next**


**Monday I'm free. It's a harmless scam, another small victory over daily routines, and it's barely illegal (now where did I read that?).**

## **MONDAY ☹️ EXTERIOR DAWN**

**The day's not quite here yet, I'm cold, I'm annoyed, really it doesn't take much for a bad mood to set in.**

**Fuck do I hate Mondays, I think to myself, and I believe it.**

**I think I still have the piece of paper that allows me to drive, but I don't know where it is exactly. The car I had, I burned it, for fun, one time. Useless here, more of a pain than it is practical. I take the bus now, or walk. I know the streets, talk to them – I always whisper, and they always shout back.**

**MONDAY**  **EXTERIOR NIGHT**  
Walking backwards on the right path, hands in my pocket, kicking an empty can of beer across twenty-five meters of beat up concrete. Simplicity and ubiquity can cut through all the visual noise and urban clutter. Is that why those colourful add stickers for local fancy beers are always the ones that catch my eye? Or is it just like sleepwalking, you know, force of habit or whatever, I heard that when you sleepwalk you just do what you usually do during the day. Stick to what you know.

## **MONDAY ☪ EXTERIOR DAWN**

**And as I wait for public transport I feel like I'm being watched. There's this urge to pierce something: eyes, the clouds, a prick in my left index finger – I would then carefully deposit a tiny droplet of blood on some urban architecture to remind myself and everyone around that I am a part of this city too; isn't that why they do it, the artists, the rebels?**

**To remind and be reminded that they, too, exist?**

**Sometimes, out of the corner of my eye, black leaning letters on a white rectangle on a grey box remind me, too: I exist. Which is nice, and it's why I never have to act, never have to do it. I look straight into the surveillance camera as I climb into the bus.**

**... 'till next time.**

# MONDAY EXTERIOR NIGHT

The guy's a stuck up piece of shit, persistent. Where are the funds? I'm asking, I really am. I'm not in danger though, I mean I think we're friends. Night time right time. Down the grand avenues of the European quarter, what permeates is more a sense of nihilism than of unity. They're rising the tuition fees for foreign students. Europe is doomed, the street naively tells me. Either bullshit, or nothing new: we're all doomed. Some city dwellers are willing to fight though.

## **MONDAY INTERIOR DAY**

**There's this madman on the bus that keeps talking to me even though I'm not looking at him. Maybe he's not talking just to me but that's how it feels. He goes, it's not just about what's on them, but also how they are integrated into the environment, the most common placement are poles and crosswalk boxes at eye level. These are also the fastest places to be cleaned, you see, climbing a couple feet higher really weeds out the city workers and vigilante citizens or petty criminals convicted to community work who aren't dedicated to their jobs. That does make me smile a bit.**



## **MONDAY 6 EXTERIOR DAW**

**Repetition works: effectively, I wake up and go outside and do my silly little tasks every day, 'till next time (as they say). Who it works for is another question. The streets get louder by the minute and just when it gets unbearable it starts to rain, everything quiets down. They do their bidding in silence then.**

**Cutting out tongues was never enough to stop a revolution – actually, it wasn't even necessary.**

## MONDAY ☹️ EXTERIOR DAY

Why is everything closed? It's Monday. You think you can trust a routine, huh.

## MONDAY ☹️ INTERIOR DAY

Bus guy: necessity is the mother of invention, right? I looked into the kind of vinyl that the government uses for registration stickers so they can't be stolen off of license plates, crazy, the stuff is called destructible vinyl and flakes off in teeny pieces when you try to peel it, it costs about twice as much as the regular stuff but is very worth it in some cleaner cities.

I thought maybe the key was to not make eye contact, but that's never worked.

## MONDAY § INTERIOR DAY

Remember: check on yourself as much as you check whatever else it is you check. Gotta make it through another day in this place, but by next Monday I'm out of here, no doubt. I just have to make it through this week. The customer complains (not in a mean way) that the name written on my employee badge is unreadable. I had a friend who worked coding the webshop for a company that exclusively sold name tags in bulk. You know, the kind of tags that a loving parent would sew on the inside of a child's jacket. My name is so and so and this belongs to me. Apparently they made upwards of twenty-thousand euros on a good day. The lady is polite, actually. It's not that bad.

## MONDAY EXTERIOR DUSK

Today was a good day. They happen more often than you might think.

Yesterday was a good day too.

Today the streets make me laugh.

## MONDAY EXTERIOR DAY, INTERIOR DAY

The bus is late. When I get in, having already gone through being pissed off, calm, pissed off again, bus guy tells me about the time he licked a sticker depicting a banana on a traffic light pole and tripped on acid for three days straight.

# MONDAY 🌐 EXTERIOR DAY

There's always something new.

There's always more of them,

somehow – some I might recognize,

there are the local classics by now,

but always some weird new ones

that I can't explain. The part of the

world that never stops makes you

feel so good.

**MONDAY ☞ INTERIOR NIGHT**  
For pride, for fun, for expression,  
for disgust, for love, for rage, for joy,  
for the shy, for the damned, for the  
gilded, for beauty (in rare desperate  
specks but still), for melancholy  
sometimes even. For being alive.  
No one can explain it. There's no such  
thing as a good reason.

## MONDAY EXTERIOR DUSK

The bus guy gets off before me this time. He's laughing hard, slapping his paint covered hands on his pant covered pants. Five minutes later, I'm outside too, further away. I was able to repay a little bit today, the rest will go to food and drinks. This other thing I want, I'll slip it in my pocket and just walk out. It really is that easy sometimes. Other times, not, that's just how it goes, c'est la vie someone once told me. To some, this is the only way to do it, the only way to live – not because of necessity, but because of what they call honour.

Remember: the world is mine, no one is illegal, leave girls alone. Keep walking.

MONDAY ☞ EXTERIOR DAWN  
It's cheap. That's why they do it.  
Everyone's broke. Everyone I know is  
pissed off.

MONDAY ●● EXTERIOR DAY  
Along the canal glossy paper catches  
the sun. A flag smiles. How many  
years in Brussels, and still not a word  
of Dutch. Next time, next Monday,  
again. A dirty smile, exposed teeth,  
under blue sky, this week and then the  
next and the stickers and the words  
that decay and those that spawn:  
water under the bridge.

MONDAY ✂ EXTERIOR DAY  
Haven't seen the guy on the bus lately.  
Hope he's alright. Maybe I should have  
talked to him. Maybe I should have  
told him my name, at least.



**MONDAY ☹ EXTERIOR NIGHT**

**I'm not sure it's over but it does feel like something has been won, just a little. Feeling a vague sense of satisfaction, I walk home in the empty avenues of the south, protected by the trees, the drizzle barely touching my skin.**

**At the intersection, bathed in the harsh yellowish of those goddamn street lamps, I stop, even though there's not a car in sight. No more trams, no more buses. But the traffic light is red. I stare at it, waiting for a change. Then a movement on my left, I turn and down the road, under the railroad bridge, I see them: two hooded figures, small, wearing all black, stroking the wall with oversized brushes. Even from a distance I see the**

**drops and splatters rain down on them. No sound. They must feel me staring at them because they turn their heads. A freight train bursts onto the bridge and the noise covers up what they yell to me. Before the train has even passed, my head bolts the other way as a police car, sirens blazing and wet tires screeching rushes up the avenue. It dopplers away, and once the train has gone, the two kids have disappeared. The light turns green. I take a step.**



**MONDAY & EXTERIOR DAWN**  
**Fuck this, the bus is late again.**  
**Another Monday.**