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Excerpts from two novels

Fragments¹ from *The Banquet*

CAVE

The pre-chamber of death

Every day the same dream, everyday I wake up with the alarm clock at the same hour. I go to the kitchen, I prepare my coffee, I take my low fat, cholesterol free, 0% sugar spread on my rice crackers and I take my extra vitamins, extra magnesium, extra calcium, anti depressive, anti anxiety, anti-stress pills with one single cup of water.

Everyday, the same dream.

I am at my own funeral, talking to an audience of hundreds of people!

I am revealing to them the secret of life. How I found it and what it is made of but when I start to explain how it tastes, two strangers come in, walk straight up to me and one of them whispers in my ear. He says that there is someone waiting for me outside who needs to talk to me urgently.

I pause, ask to be excused and follow the two people to the exit.

I come out into the street but there is nobody waiting for me.

I turn around and there is no sign of the two people that came in to get me.

I decide to go back and finish my speech but suddenly an earthquake begins.

Everybody that I ever knew dies at my funeral and I am the only survivor.

I look around trying to visualize the geography of my friends at my funeral and I see a blueprint of what had happened after I left, as if my speech had gone on without me. I had revealed a secret and everyone was eating a black birthday cake and toasting the end of my speech with poison.

I am the only one who does not know the secret.

I wake up.

(...)

1

Every day I wake up to the sound of the news on the radio.

That particular day, a group of scientists had found where innocence was located in the body. According to the research, innocence was secreted in the intestines. Coincidentally, the same place where Nietzsche, over a century ago, located all prejudices. That particular day I took my pills imagining them going down my throat, traveling all the way to meet my Innocence. I have been medicated against myself for the last 8 months. 8 months ago I was a successful, innovative, ambitious woman. I had the perfect job, the perfect husband, the perfect car, the perfect suits. I had the life of anyone's dreams. One day I woke up and I couldn't leave the house. The worry about what could be happening on the other side of my door was so great that I became paralyzed. I stayed still, listening to the loop of news on my radio alarm clock. At the end of the day I would go back to bed hoping the next day would be

¹ Translation from the script for the performance of *The Banquet*, not the final text of the novel.

different. But the next day was the same. I could not cross the room to the door, I could not leave my bedroom all day. I did not cry compulsively, I did not feel angry, I did not scream, I did not even seem to feel bad about all this. I had an illness, of which the only symptom was that I was unable to open a door.

Every specialist I saw diagnosed the same thing: I was afraid!

And they were right.

8 months later and I am on the verge of losing my job, my friends, my minimal and distant family, and somehow, I don't seem to care.

I am on a fast from the world and that is why they have prescribed pills, injections, and other medications to see if the world can be forced back inside me.

But the door is closed.

And I cannot open it.

CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS

Opening Speech

Not so long ago, birds, spiders, bees and the winds gathered for an urgent conference on natural law. In the time preceding such a conference there were always unusual disturbances in the weather. In the past, birds, spiders, bees and the winds did not meet as often as nowadays, so these unusual disturbances of the weather used to be rare and made the world aware that something important was being discussed. But lately, the urgency of the matters made them meet more regularly. The unusual disturbances of the weather have become so common that they do not serve as a warning to man anymore. The chairman of the conference, the oldest stork alive on the planet, opened his speech with a song that if it was in words, would sound like this:

STORK – We are gathered here today to reevaluate man's immortality and to consider putting an end to it or not.

Mankind has remained a mystery since it first appeared, nobody knows how such a fragile creature with no wings, no fins and not enough hair or feathers, can have survived for so long in our world and have developed to such a point that it can cause the extinction of any species, including its own. Once again we have come to decide whether to interfere with their natural evolution or not. If we all feel we must do so, we should plan very carefully the how and the when, the where and above all the what.

All the birds, bees and the winds clapped to the introductory speech of the old stork. Only the spiders with legs crossed, stayed, listening in silence, in the final row.

CAVE

Opening Speech

Welcome to the banquet of the second tree.

We are delighted you have accepted our call.

We have requested our guests, our gods, our ghosts and our absent friends to be here today.

We hope that you have taken your time to invite your gods and your ghosts too.

We have organized for you a well lit dining room at the right temperature to stimulate your memory.

13 people are seated at each table tonight: a he, a she, a ghost, a loved one, a traitor, a traveler, a scientist, a botanist, a philosopher, a taster, a doubter, a bird, and a god.

Banquets are reminders, travels in time. Turning us into simple passengers in the recapitulation of the History of the Earth from primal broth to puddings and cheese.

A banquet is a kind of promise that attracts hope and danger.

It tells us that life is short and it tells us that life is immortal.

A banquet is also a *pharmakon*,

A remedy and a poison,

A need and a desire of the body.

Internal, external, visible and invisible.

A meal is a totalizing experience, physical and mental pleasures meet.

Head and stomach take turns.

Two ways of absorbing the world, operating at the same time.

Ruminating.

Pay attention.

This is a menu designed to enhance your memories.

Pay attention.

Language is a poor resource to talk about the senses

We must try knowledge before we find out what it is.

We request that you rid yourselves of any unnecessary emotions, above all, do not eat if you feel indifferent. Pause whenever needed.

Banquets are organised whenever life turns dramatic and tonight is no exception. This is a farewell,

Pay attention,

This dinner is a formula, and you are a code to be broken.

2

How little do you need to do to destroy the life that you have? How little do you need to do to change it? How little has to happen for us to become someone else?

An old friend who does not know of my present condition calls me and invites me to come to Lisbon. He wants me to be part of an investigation.

The body of a girl had recently been found during some excavations in the centre of Lisbon.

He told me there was something mysterious about it. A mystery. Why not?

(...)

I was jumping out of a window to avoid the door.

(...)

I woke up to the sound of the train arriving at the station.

My friend met me and took me straight to where the mysterious body had been found, in the ruins of a Roman house being excavated in the centre of the city.

A girl preserved in an unguent of Aloe Vera, honey and olive oil.

Her body looked fresh and alive.

If you touched her, her flesh moved just like that of a living person. In her mouth they had found a dried fig, still intact and there were traces of mandarins in her throat. My friend explained that carbon dating showed she had lived in two different centuries. It had to be a mistake but no one could find out what it was. On top of all that, her body fit the description of another girl found in Rome in 1465, preserved in exactly the same way. They had invited me to try and find out where they were making the mistake. I started working on the body of the roman girl. I checked the skin, the rest of her body. The liver, her stomach.

Her organs were not really dead nor decomposing, it was as if she was asleep, still alive in the mechanical aspect.

THE CAVE

Mouth

The pursuit of happiness starts twice in the mouth.
The mouth eats, the same mouth speaks,
The mouth tastes, the same mouth tells.
When speaking, the mouth spreads out what we know,
When eating, the mouth takes in what we still need to know.
Tasting is a chemical process operating through humidity
Speaking is a memory process operating through air.
But the organ for both taste and thought is the brain.
The pursuit of happiness starts twice in the mouth.
Tonight, stomach and brain will be fed and revealed by the mouth.

(...)

CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS

The peacock and the chimeras

The first guest speaker at the conference on natural law was a very well dressed bird, with very extravagant plumage.

STORK – Mr. Peacock, please take your place at the podium,

PEACOCK – Thank you very much, thank you very much. Bon, mes amis, my dear friends, birds, spiders, bees and winds, as only you are aware, Humans are the only chimeras on this Earth that have been allowed to live for so long.

They are half nature, half human and thanks to this improbable condition they have caused the most inconceivable changes on our fair planet. Have you not noticed that in their restlessness, in their disquiet, they transform everything around them? You say they have no wings, they build them, you say, they have no fins, they create them. Unsatisfied with legs, they travel on wheels. They “changé”.

These human chimeras spend as little time as possible on surviving, insisting instead in thinking and making sense of everything.

And when they are not changing themselves, they insist on changing everything that surrounds them. They are obviously not happy with their animal condition and yet they seem to “refusé” to become more human. One half is clearly blocking the other half! They are so fast and so self absorbed that they have arrived at a point where they insist on recreating everything in their own image. Yes! My fine feathered friends. Yes! And now, not content with existing in their own two halves they have started inserting themselves in pigs, in rats, in birds and in plants too! Soon, if we are not careful, we will all be chimeras like them! I have personally seen my friends in the city behaving with humanity! It’s chaos! Soon we will no longer know who is who, what is what, what is who and who is what! We have to stop them now, before it’s too late! (Sounds of boos and cheers)

The peacock left the stage to the sound both of boos and cheers. The audience deeply divided over what they had heard.

Only the spiders stayed silent, with legs crossed, suspended in the final row, listening cynically to the others arguing with each other.

5

The DNA of the roman girl keeps dividing, does not shrink.

A strange and unusual process keeps putting her DNA sequences back on the end of her chromosomes.

Her RNA journey is constantly rewriting the last carriage of DNA.

The immortality wagon. The roman girl was dead but her cells were still living a second life.

How did her telomeres stop shrinking?

And when?

I focused on her tongue again. It still produced saliva.

If only the tongue could still talk if words were a physical substance, like cells, like components, I could separate one molecule at the time and find the imprint of the last words she had spoken.

Would that explain?

What if words were physical and the process of what we think would be stored in the tongue, ordered in line, just ready to be spoken?

Would we be able to see a personal pattern in all the spoken and unspoken words like the rings in a tree around her tongue?

Would we be able to see how old?

How young her words were?

How many times did she ever speak?

How many times did she say the same things?

What did she think before she died that she could not say but was left imprinted?

CAVE

DNA

DNA is a very long train that leaves a carriage of passengers behind every time it stops at a station.

In the last wagon travel the telomeres, responsible for replicating genetic information.

Shrinking with each cell division.

Shrinking every time the train stops.

Until the last station, death.

No passengers left on board.

6

It was good to be sleeping in a house where I was not afraid, so far, of opening the door, but soon, the recurrent dream of my funeral came back and this time made me wake up in the middle of the night. One night, tired of not being able to sleep, I went to the lab. When I arrived I could see the lights were on. I moved slowly and silently to the area where the roman girl was kept and I saw a woman pulling the tongue out of the body. We surprised each other and we didn't know what to say. He spoke first:

- Can I invite you to dinner?

He seemed so at ease and his face was so strangely familiar to me that I said yes to his invitation.

He told me he believed this roman girl was present at the last attempt to recreate the banquet of the second tree on the 1st of November, day of the dead, in 1755, when the earthquake in Lisbon struck. According to him, this roman girl had died just after she ate, so it meant she had never digested her dinner.

- Using genetics we can trace all the particles in her tongue and her stomach and reconstruct her last meal,

I asked him to slow down. What is the banquet of the second tree?

THE BANQUET OF THE SECOND TREE

1

In the beginning there was a garden not with one tree but with two.

Twins.

Every year there was a big banquet around one of these trees.

Everyone celebrated, everyone was blind.

They ate the leaves, the branches and the flowers, they even ate small insects living in the tree but for some strange reason they had never touched the fruit of the tree that gave them shelter. The tree was so old and the weather was so hot, that the fruits were born dry and would last for centuries, untouched.

Birds, spiders, bees and the winds used to gather in the top branches to discuss philosophy, watch the people eating, having fun, and get the crumbs left at the end of the day. At the last banquet, someone suggested trying the fruit for the first time. Everyone was excited with the idea and the bravest one picked a fruit, took a bite and passed it on. When the round was complete and everyone had tasted it, all the other fruit fell from the tree, touching the ground for the very first time. The weather changed abruptly. Every one present gained vision and an enormous appetite. They all looked at each other and saw how different they all were, all women.

They looked around and not so far from the tree where they were having a banquet, they saw the other tree. The same trunk, same leaves, but different fruits. One of the women, compelled by her new feeling of hunger, ran to the second tree. At that moment, two strangers came into the garden and asked her to follow them outside. She had never left before, she never noticed there was an exit.

They said there was someone outside that needed to talk to her urgently. She followed them and everyone else stayed inside waiting for her. When she went out of the garden, there was nobody waiting. She turned around and there was no sign of the two people that came in to get her. The moment she decides to go back into the garden, an earthquake destroys everything including the two trees. Only she was alive, left with an incredible hunger and a terrifying first vision of her dead loved ones.

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By the time she finished her story, it was dawn and the roman girl had deteriorated completely. All that was left of her was her tongue, her stomach and her liver, which we had removed and sealed in an air tight bag.

CAVE

Stomach

You see the food on the table.

You send a chemical message from your brain cortex to your nerve cells in the lower brain.

The lower brain sends the message to the stomach,

The pancreas stimulates the production of enzymes, acids, mucus.

Your mouth starts to water.

Hormones move through your bloodstream and prompt cells to release the fatty acids needed to digest food.

Your pancreas secretes insulin, turning the digested food into more energy, more thoughts, more secrets.

Before you take the first bite, your body is ready.

BANQUET OF THE SECOND TREE

2

The earthquake destroyed the first garden
spreading the particles of the two trees throughout the planet.

The garden was destroyed but it did not vanish,

Nothing disappears, everything stays.

And everything is something made of particles, cells, genes

Everything is made of molecules.

The same molecules that make a man, can make an animal, a plant or a tree.

The same principles whether you are a bacteria, an animal, a plant.

The same amount of proteins whether you are a fly or a person.

The trees did not disappear.

They are in a man, an animal, a plant, other trees.

CAVE

Artificial Drop

Everyone carries ghosts.

Private meditation machines.

By taking this drop you make sure you keep all the thoughts and impressions of what you experience and taste this evening.

Take this drop to activate the meditation machine,

And add to your memory

The first impression

The first smell

The first taste

The first thought and reread the past.

You are everything at the same time.

What you are

What you were

What you will be.

Take this drop and open your cellular Pandora's Box.

Everyone carries ghosts.

You can best see them after a favourite meal,

After digestion, when the stomach is empty, and that is why we fast during sleep.

Awake we are busy grasping and interpreting the world at every instant.

At night, we fall asleep in the following order: taste, sight, smell, sound, touch.
When we dream we feel or see but we cannot smell or touch.
We wake up the ghost.
What we are, what we were, what we could have been.
The ghost keeps our memory alive,
Like dreams inside dreams,
Stenography of the cells,
The disease of immortality is spreading and will be inherited by our descendants.
(...)

*

From the novel *Going up not North*

First there was silence. The first time I spoke I was put in prison.

This book is dedicated to...

Well... that is a good question isn't it?

Maybe to everyone who helped to nearly kill me and then resurrect me.

A little changed, but at least alive.

Yes, all those readers who made me possible.

Not only to philosophers who read, holding their heads in their hands, while developing complicated theories about the world,

Not only to those old Greeks with their parchments unrolling into their laps,

But also people who prefer to read with the book on their knees,

people who prefer to lie down, on the bed, on the sofa, people who read on the balcony so that they can peep at pretty boys going down the lane.

people that cannot resist and read the final page of the book first, people that can not start the day till they read every single sentence of the newspaper including the obituaries,

lovers who read to one another, students reading before an exam, a teacher to a student, a mother to a child. To all the people who read in buses, in prisons (and I have been there!), or

in large queues while waiting for their social security number to come up, whoever reads to learn, whoever reads to forget, to pass time, to endure, to resist, to discover, or to move on... whoever

yeah whoever...

I... a humble native from Flatland, dedicate to you, inhabitants of space in general, and to you, solid readers in particular, in front of this book at this very moment,

... ..

whatever you're thinking,

I count on you to turn each one of these pages, wishing that just as I was introduced, through reading, into the mysteries of three dimensions, having been given only two, that you shall slowly begin to understand the bidimensional world and discover the insights of flatlanders, and that in this way we can change the course of History through laws of fiction.

Chapter 1

Flatpeople cannot be in space, but boy, can we read books.

We can slide over the outline of the letters and follow the labyrinths of lines that make up each word and sentence, and in this way follow the stories written in any book made of flat pages. It sounds difficult, but in fact, for a flatlander it's natural and considered one of the most exciting sports – it is a bit like swimming and diving after throwing yourself into endless corridors of playground slides, while competing as a gymnast at the Olympics on every apparatus at the same time, simultaneously doing your taxes, cooking a 3 course meal for the entire family while making love to your wife and preparing a brilliant financial analysis for a company that is about to go bankrupt.

It is also a dangerous sport and the reason I ended up in prison.

Life used to be simple:

I lived in a very ordinary house like this one,

On a street like this, in a suburb of a city like this, in a little country like this...

Everything was made out of simple lines going north, south, east, west or in any of the 360° that encompassed our world.

Everyday I got up direction south, got dressed diagonally southeast, while complaining to my wife, still southwest in bed, that I had no ironed shirts, I ate my breakfast, brushed my teeth northwest, northeast, northwest, northeast, remembering I should make an appointment with my dentist for a check up and went out, always heading north ...

My life had a clear direction.

At the end of the day and on the weekends, me and my family used to walk through groups of letters like g-a-r-d-e-n, s-e-a-s-h-o-r-e or p-a-r-k and that would be it.

We could even visit exciting foreign emotions like SCHADENFREUDE... SAUDADE... TRISTESSE... PATHOS... WABI SABI....

Life was simple and abundant in Flatland.

There were no such things as solids, volumes, textures, or problems such as time or space.

To know the distance between the line of a house, for example, and the line of a tree, we would calculate the amount of blurriness surrounding those lines – the blurrier the further away! This was one of the basic principles of distance in Flatland that prevented people and things bumping into each other all the time. Very practical and no one ever bothered to ask themselves why.

But while we are dealing with practical matters, I guess some of you are trying to imagine what I look like! Since you have one more dimension than me, you cannot see me, the same way I cannot see you, since I have one dimension less than you.

Or should I say the reverse, since I have one dimension less than you, you cannot see me and I cannot see you since you have one more dimension than me...

But it is very simple:

You are reading a book right now, right? Imagine I am here beside the letter X, oh there is no X, well what is a good word with a X...

You are reading a book right now, right? Imagine I am here inside the axis of the two lines that make the letter X... I know some of you can see 4 unfinished triangles around, but that's not me... a little bit below that you can see the shape of a triangle.

Now, imagine you could lower your eyes to the level of the page or imagine the book would tilt until you have the page at the level of your eyes, got it? This way you come very close to our flat condition and how we look at things... so if you could look at me from the top like

you see now you would see a triangle but the closer you get to the same level as the paper you would see me only as a straight line... but the difference is that I am very very very very small ... so you have to imagine this line is shorter, so short that for your eyes I am just a piece of information that looks like... well, not much really, on my own... but get a lot of us together...

[\(an X made of dots\)](#)

Anyway... I was talking about reading!

It is an amazing sport, specially because it is always varied and you can get all sorts of different emotions besides getting technically very good at it...

For example: if you are in good shape, you can sport-read whole paragraphs in one go... but it's tricky ... I once saw my cousin fall all the way from the top of a page of Brothers Karamazov and not stopping until he was impaled on letter A half way down page 37 of Kafka's Metamorphosis, without even noticing he had changed authors, let alone thematic content.

But watch me:

[\(image of letters spreading in movement\)](#)

That was a paragraph where Hermes Trismegistus explains the whole idea of decomposition of a body in search of gold, page 37 of the Opus Magnum...

... and the next second I can be sliding in a totally different landscape such as this:

[\(image of a lightning\)](#)

That was part of the "Electrical Theory" by Giordano Bruno, which I am very deeply into these days, and one of the reasons why he was burned alive by the Inquisition.

It is fun to slide through the boudoir of Camille, or 200 pages of Tolstoy's battles while my son is caught in a tornado with Dorothy as her house is lifted out of Kansas and transported to Oz. (...) The meeting point at the end of the sport was always in an Ian Flemming novel, one of our favourite stories to slide through. We would always end the day there with a competition: STORY BOARDING

To see who could hold on as long as possible, sliding non-stop until the end of the page, arrive there first and hope for the page to be turned.

(...)

Chapter 2

One day, lazily sliding for a bit of relaxation, I accidentally discovered a strange letter like this :[\(fingerprint of a reader on the left bottom corner of the page\)](#).

I thought it was such an amazing letter with so many lines that no doubt it had to have a lot of meanings. I took what you would call a "lot of time" in your world, to memorize this amazing letter and started investigating it.

At dinner, I discussed and shared my ideas with my family. My wife thought it was just another of my weird hobbies and my son kept telling me it was a landscape letter, not meant to be de-codified.

Still, I persisted with my investigation and still today I wish I had never paid that much attention to it. Maybe I'd be happier though more ignorant today.

But at the time I could not know what kind of tragedy I was getting into.

On another day, it was a Sunday, I was a bit bored, sliding at random, and I ended up in a police report... I discovered this:

Report nr xf 234533176 ref 11/65/04 (image)

Date of birth: 16.05.1962

Height: 1.85m Weight: 83kg
Colour of eyes: blue/grey
Colour of hair: blonde
Observations: Accused of escaping custody...

I could not believe what my bodyline was sliding through!

This “strange letter” was a fingerprint!

Well, I know what a fingerprint is, I just had not slid through one before.

But, the issue here is, that for me to be able to find a fingerprint in Flatland, there has to have been a contact between this suspect and my world.

But a fingerprint requires a finger, and a finger requires a hand, a hand needs to be linked to arms, and arms don't just float around without bodies. And they should all have a head on top and legs below and they usually come with feet attached. A real person.

Just like James Bond so... this meant that somewhere, James Bond complete with martinis, beds, blonde girls, submarine cars with sophisticated gadgets, laser watches, creepy guys with bad teeth, midgets with razor hats and so forth... all really existed!

Every single thing that I had ever come across while sportively reading actually existed already somewhere else and everything that was written was true!

Everything was true!

You cannot imagine how devastated, how flabbergasted I was ... even if you think you can imagine, you can't, because arms and legs and chests and fingers, and toenails and pretty blonde girls and dry martinis must be pretty normal in your life, you pretty much start from that when you are born...

But imagine a guy, well... actually a dot, a simple dot like me, that suddenly realizes the house he has cared for is nothing but a design for a 3D one in your world, a map is a detailed guide to one of your real cities, the clothes I wear are only patterns to make better ones in beautiful fabrics I have read about but never imagined really existed!

My life was fake ...and every single sentence I have read in my life was actually an enregistration of what is really happening in another dimension.

My life was fake and James Bond was out there living the real one.

I almost collapsed.

First I was speechless, then seriously ill, I could not even read that would give me nausea... but then I decided it was my mission, to make Flatland a better place.

It was time for a change.

I formulated my concept of the third dimension and called a press conference to tell all my flatmates about what I had discovered.

I presented it to a very surprised audience, imagining I would be celebrated for my discoveries instead I was dragged away by Flat-police-Landers who accused me of taking reading sports too seriously and disturbing the peace and tranquility of Flatland.

Chapter 3

I was sent to prison, convicted of violating the basic principles of citizenship and Geometry of Flatland.

No visitors, no contact with the outside world. Only allowed to sport-read twice a day, under the strict supervision of a flat therapist to keep my bodyline in reasonable shape, and ensure my return to normal flat thinking.

This is when I learned how to read “between the lines” and pretend I was only sport-reading when I was actually doing secret research to save my reputation and prove there was another dimension out there by developing a 3d model in a 2d world.

I can give you a pretty good example of how reading between the lines it works.

There’s no police like Holmes
James Joyce
([another page...](#))

There’s no place like home
Wizard Oz (find author)
([another page...](#))

We can never go home again
Marshall McLuhan

You see?

All communication between the readers of an image and the makers of an image takes place on a 2 dimensional surface. Communication is nearly always carried on a 2D level.

And that was what had bothered me for so long: Why had the Spacelander come to Flatland in the first place and left his fingerprints in my world?

What were you doing here?

Spacelanders go to Flatland in order to transform and perfect information that can be used in their 3D world. But what if Flatlanders wanted to have space in Flatland too, that would require a Dimensional Expansion never dreamed of before, wouldn’t it?

I thought and thought and thought about these two worlds and realized that if the written world had been invented by Spacelanders, then everything that happens in 3d world must go through 2d world first. This means that letters are codes to produce space.

Somewhere in all the reports, books, articles and other bidimensional documentation, the transformation processes are described in detail – I just had to do it backwards - it was just a matter of finding the right formula.

I decided to be very practical and dedicate my research to finding out more about the mysterious fingerprint beings and find what qualities they have that I don’t have.

I started comparing everything I read to everything I have. This way, I would arrive, by an empirical process of comparison and elimination, to a list of empirical elements that would only exist in Spaceland and this way find the empirical components I needed to create an empirical 3d model in Flatland.

(Lists of what flat people have and don’t have)

Basically we are the same but you have more...

But what more?

I studied this list over and over to find which of the mores would make the important difference between us and you.

And suddenly I realized it was movement...

of course! I can only go north, south, east west, northeast and so on, but you can go up and down! And to be able to do that you need to have volume...only things who have volume can jump up...and fall down!

Volume and movement, volume and movement...

My 360° life style was shattered.

I started immediately trying to create volume by launching things above myself, but that is not an easy task to accomplish in Flatland. Things don't fly and things don't fall in my world. I needed volume !

But where could I keep volume in Flatland? I needed a box to keep my volume in!

And a box is just a cube!

So I tried making a cube by dislocating a square so many times that I could tie the different layers together and gradually compress them until I could create a cube.

Then I searched in a dictionary for a similar image to see if it had all the same qualities as in Spaceland and that is when I read:

Cube in perspective...

Perspective... perspective...

Perspective – / pə 'spektrv / n 1(a) [U] art of drawing solid objects on a flat surface so as to give the right impression of their height, width, depth and position in relation to each other; (b) representation of a three dimensional space in a two dimensional reality.

Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary

This was becoming a nightmare! You had already invented cubes like the one that took me so long to build!

You not only use me to reason about information, but you also want to make me look like you without allowing me to be you!

For you, I am just a representation of your reality!

OK!

I only wanted to make a simple model of the 3 d world in Flatland, but now the game was something else... I wanted to talk to you, I wanted to make some things clear... I wanted to become 3d... if everything in my world is a representation of yours then the key to access your construction is hidden in my landscape.

I bet you never thought of that?

Well, it was clear I had to get out of prison ... there was not much more I could do there... I started planning my escape, not only out of prison, but out of Flatland completely... just as I was about to finish, I was unexpectedly released on parole.... My reading between the lines had looked like good behaviour. I had been a model prisoner.

Translated from the Portuguese by xxxx
