

# 4 POEMS from the MANUAL of MINDS + 1

By Seth Rosenman

To keep the poet's spacing, Hezekiah's note appears after the poems.

## The Dreaming Mind

is an inebriate  
doing her taxes, jumping through loopholes  
to figure cells in storyboards with the tools  
of a surrealist accountant: concordances compiled  
using esoteric criteria, lists of homonyms  
and domains of deities, encyclopedias  
of world cuisines; an expert in arithmeticking  
with fuzzy calculators and novelty pens,  
taking break after break to down 100-  
proof whiskey and cortisol in shot glasses  
with pertinent logos served on a pillow-top bar  
in a pub on a planet peopled with monsters  
Frankensteined from movies and the news,  
and others known straight from the files  
of consciousness.

## The Delusional Mind

is a blowing out  
and lighting of candles; is a feverish mind,  
tossing and turning in a gutter in a puddle  
of its cold sweat; is a grandiose mind,  
burning like a star, a lonely star being tested  
by rejection, close to figuring out the test;  
is a paranoid mind, not recognizing itself,  
spotting imposters at the dining room table,  
messages on labels in the cupboard;  
is a healthier mind after the cutting off  
of the diseased projecting part  
that projected onto itself another self,  
the chemical amputation that left behind  
a phantom itching to clutch the reins,  
a warning, a sick healthy warning.

## **The Lustful Mind**

is an accountant  
adding up to zero,  
punching the figures  
in the blue universe of his mind  
onto a spread sheet, projecting a film spliced  
with notches on his belt, random fantasies,  
and a cornucopia of porn into the black  
hole of desire. The seconds to come  
longing for eternity.  
The building to a release  
into nothingness, then the return to the red  
world, the real world, the need,  
like for water, for life, the call for a hand  
to touch his on the bed, to acknowledge,  
to share a counting: two then one then zero.

## **The Musical Mind**

is a mathematician pacing his cell,  
counting his paces, smokes, time,  
closing his eyes, filling the gaps  
that locked him up,  
orchestrating master schemes  
discordant in their complexity,  
beautiful in their harmony,  
the bars humming, the space perfect,  
the silence, figuring his play,  
calculating misconduct,  
counterpoint, revenge,  
its instruments, strident solutions  
from the strains in his head  
that never die down.

## **The Attractions of Home**

Stations of disturbed tombs, suicide blasts,  
the oppressed ghosts of broken protests.

Transfer stations of missed love mused,  
terminal stations of ignored horrors.

The city's edge, smoke and light of idling cabs  
and snack stands, darkening roads.

I work at the northwest corner of the blue box  
at the map's crux, a former city gate,  
towers of old technologies. The station that goes by  
something else, so I'm drinking

drunken alleys of chicken bones  
and wooden skewers. My old stop, her stop,  
the airport express. Tourist stops of dancing displays  
and weak snacks. The Museum of Bathing, Revolution Park.

The new line on a free rag's cover, views of slums  
from the elevated, billboards selling chicken picked  
easily off bones. Dry spiced succulent skewers. Then the deep,  
radically particular attractions of home.

**Poetry Editor Hezekiah writes:** *Rosenman has a mind certainly worth sharing with our faithless Fleas readers. It is also rare that we receive poetry relating accountancy imagery, especially right around the old deadline: Here are some lines we're indebted to credit him: "doing her taxes, jumping through loopholes," "is a paranoid mind, not recognizing itself, / spotting imposters at the dining room table," I love that one. And there is something about "...terminal stations of ignored horrors."...*

**THE POET SPEAKS:** *The poems about the different states of mind were inspired by the DSM, advertising copy, personality tests, a little Buddhism, and, of course, my experiences. "The Attractions of Home" was inspired by living in different cities: exploring a new place, making a part of it my own, and getting comfortable. It was also inspired by my love of planes, trains, automobiles, the places they take us to, and the space they provide that's neither here nor there.*

*My stylistic influences include Whitman, rock music, and artfully done movies and TV. I love poetry because it blows my mind that a few lines of carefully chosen words can affect my thoughts and emotions more than almost anything else. Poetry is the best vehicle for a voice, vision, and experience to be shared.*

**AUTHOR'S BIO:** *Seth Rosenman lives in the Philly 'burbs. He has taught high school English in the 'hood and the English language in China. He currently does a little bit of this and hopes to move on to some of that. He would like to return to China but will probably not return to being a rideshare driver or the womb. He reads often, writes occasionally, and submits rarely. His poems have been called poems by poets and readers of poetry alike.*