

## Dead Time

Marcel Aymé

*Translated from French by Patricia Worth*

In Montmartre there lived a poor fellow named Martin who existed only every other day. For twenty-four hours, from midnight to midnight, he lived as we all do, and for the next twenty-four his body and soul returned to oblivion. He was quite put out by it for several reasons. As he had no recollection of the dead time, and as full days fused in his memory to full days, life seemed short, and to lengthen his days he contrived to make them dull. More than anything, he was ashamed of this anomaly that would have made neighbors look at him askance if it had come to their attention. Existing only every second day is an insult to common reason. Martin himself was shocked by it and believed it would be dangerous to tell the world that it must accept such an absurd reality. This is why he did his best to ensure that the secret of his intermittent life did not get out, and, for ten years which seemed like five to him, he succeeded in this perfectly.

Martin was not obliged to earn a living, his Uncle Alfred having left him an inheritance that allowed him to provide for the needs of his semi-existence. In his situation this was a unique opportunity, for there are very few jobs that allow the possibility of working only every second day, and perhaps there are even none. He lived in an old house in Rue Tholozé that runs straight up from one point of the curve delineated by Rue Lepic to another. There on the fourth floor he had a room which he had furnished himself at little expense and for which the annual rent was six hundred and seventy-five francs. He was a quiet tenant who never received visitors and avoided conversations on the stairs. The neighbors never had reason to complain about him and his concierge held him in high regard because he was rather good-looking and had a lovely dark moustache.

On the days he existed, Martin would rise at dawn so as not to lose a minute, dress quickly and go out into the street. It seemed to him he had gone to sleep not two nights before but the previous night, and his heart grew heavy thinking of the day during which he had not lived. Along the streets the shops would still be closed, and he had to go all the way to the Métro station to buy

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*Delos* Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 90–102. Copyright © 2021 University of Florida Press.  
doi: 10.5744/delos.2021.1010

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a newspaper which could give him some idea of those twenty-four hours that were impossible for him to place. He would tune his ear to the comments of passers-by and wonder what the world had been doing without him. The word “yesterday” that he kept hearing made him burn with curiosity, envy, and regret. For him it was the most painful moment of the day. Sometimes he would feel it was too hard to bear. To only ever know the day on which he was living, without yesterday and without tomorrow, seemed the most abominable of tortures. Having bought his newspaper, he would go and read it at the back of a café and have breakfast. First he devoured the headlines and then read over each page again in detail. At the counter, the morning men would be gulping down their coffee before going to work, exchanging thoughts out loud about the weather of the previous morning or evening. While paying close attention to their conversation, Martin tried to carve up his last memories of two days before, to make space for the events reported in his paper.

Then, consulting his watch, he had another reason to be anxious: the hour flying by. Reading yesterday’s news made time pass with frightening speed. Martin would rush to pay for his coffee and be on his way, taking streets he had chosen. He avoided the center of Paris where the variety of attractions did not even let him keep an eye on the swift passage of the minutes. One of his favorite walks was in the northern part of La Chapelle. He would go along Rue Riquet and emerge into the landscape of gasometers, railway tracks, and freight yards, which in their desolation seemed to stretch on forever. On his best days, time on these iron plains seemed to wear away slower than anywhere else. But at other times, not thinking, he would be enjoying a light engine, a wisp of smoke, or the curve of a rail, when suddenly he would notice that an hour had flown by because he had not paid attention to the time. Then he would nearly go out of his mind, start walking again, see his watch hands dancing ahead, and end up resorting to sly tricks he devised. Feigning, for example, that he had a train to catch, he would arrive on the station platform an hour early in the hope that time would appear to him inordinately long. But the virtue of his stratagem wore thin. And trips on the suburban tram in the hours of the lightest traffic, even on a day of fine drizzle, were no more deceptive. The movement of the watch hands on the dial accelerated and all his efforts to hold back time only hastened its flight. He tried staying in his room for a part of the day and stilling his mind by staring at a motif on the wallpaper. But his thoughts roamed despite his efforts, and the walls were so animated that he believed he must have been at the cinema.

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The only moments of optimism that Martin had were at lunch time. After buying a few provisions at the market in Rue Lepic, he would go up to his room to prepare his meal over a spirit lamp. His morning walk gave him an appetite, and by eating a steak or a portion of endives, he was somewhat consoled in his melancholy. "One day out of two," he thought, "perhaps it's not much, but even so it's better than not existing at all. It's better than being dead or not being born. When you think of all those who could've been born and whom chance didn't favor, or of all those who haven't had even one day to taste life, nor half of one, nor a quarter, you can't complain."

But wisdom and sound reasons did not console him for long. When they did not hold up, even on a satisfied stomach, they amounted to almost nothing at all, and the afternoons were no less cruel than the mornings.

In the evening, after a long walk in the solitary streets, he would return home at eleven o'clock, go to bed and fall asleep almost immediately. At midnight he would suddenly disappear only to reappear twenty-four hours later in the same place and pick up the thread of his dream. Quite often Martin had been curious enough to wait, fully awake, for the unimaginable moment when he would no longer be. He had never observed or sensed anything, not even his passing over. If in the second before midnight he was unbuttoning his waistcoat, he would find himself in the second after occupied by the same task. Yet, a whole day had just slipped away, and he had only to go down into the town to find the proof of it. As he was denied the sensation of this dead time, he had made the decision to fall asleep before midnight to avoid the anguish of a futile wait.

There was, in fact, very little chance that the mystery would ever be known to anyone. Martin would have had to commit the imprudence of being found at midnight in a much frequented place, and he took great care to avoid this. Once, however, he had a rather close call. On a day when he did not exist, water began leaking in his room and flooded the lower floor. When the concierge was alerted, she came knocking on his door, and, noticing it was locked on the inside, thought he was dead. She called in a locksmith and was very surprised to find in his room neither the dead nor the living. The tenant's hat was hanging on the wall, his clothes were folded on a chair, his towel, which seemed to be still fresh, was hanging on the window latch, but Martin was not there. No one ever suspected the truth, but news of the incident spread throughout the house. The next morning, Martin was coming downstairs early as was his habit, when the concierge stopped him and with a threatening look asked him the reason for this mystery. He

had enough presence of mind not to get bogged down in an impossible explanation and casually replied:

“My word, I haven’t a clue, but that plush bathrobe of yours suits you very nicely. . . . Ah yes, very nicely. . . .”

“Do you think so?” said the concierge.

She gave him a kindly smile and Martin was no longer concerned. After this accident he was careful, when locking his door before going to bed, never to leave the key in the lock.

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One September day, Martin fell in love and this was one of the very things he feared the most. Normally, when he spotted a pretty woman, he took the precaution of lowering his eyes. But that morning, he found himself in a butcher’s shop in Rue Lepic and heard a golden voice speak behind him:

“A small slice, about twenty to twenty-five sous’ worth,” and he was already in love. Turning his head, he saw a young woman with gentle eyes who had all that was needed to occupy the thoughts of a poor fellow who exists only every other day. She was moved by his fervent gaze and by the bachelor’s rib fillet he held in his hand, and gladly let him see her blushing.

Every second day he would run into her at the market in Rue Lepic and they would exchange tender glances. Martin had never regretted so much not living like everyone else. He dared not say a word to the young woman for fear that a romance would have vexing consequences. “How could she adapt to a man like me?” he thought. “It’s certainly not good for a woman to be a widow every other day. And then how would it look on those days when I don’t exist?”

However, one morning when it was raining, he offered to shelter her under his umbrella and she accepted with such a sweet smile that he could not resist confessing his love for her. Straightaway he bit his lip, but too late. She was already squeezing his hand under his umbrella.

“Me too,” she said. “I’ve loved you since the day of the rib fillet. My name’s Henriette. I live in Rue Durantin.”

“My name’s Martin,” said Martin, “and I live in Rue Tholozé. I’m very happy.”

Just as he was leaving her in Rue Durantin, he thought the least he could do was ask her for a date.

“If you like,” said Henriette, “I’m free tomorrow, all day.”

“It’s not possible,” replied Martin, reddening. “Tomorrow I won’t be around. But what about the next day?”

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They both arrived punctually for their date in a café on the Boulevard de Clichy. When they had exchanged their sweet nothings, Martin, who had thought a lot about the situation, sighed deeply and declared:

“Henriette, I have another confession to make. I exist only every second day.”

He saw from Henriette’s face that she did not really understand, and he explained the whole business to her.

“So,” he concluded anxiously, “I thought it best to let you know. Obviously, every second day, it’s not a lot. . . .”

“But, yes it is,” protested Henriette, “it’s not really that bad. Of course, it would be better to be together all the time, especially in these early days, but life is like that. We can’t do whatever we want.”

Martin put one hand behind her shoulder, another under her left breast, and they kissed until the evening *apéritif* lights came on. An hour later, Henriette left her room in Rue Durantin and moved to Rue Tholozé. That evening, they hardly took time for dinner. They had eyes only for each other, and with every passing moment they were more certain that they were made to be together. The hour passed with neither of them giving it a thought, and on the stroke of midnight, Henriette cried out in surprise. Martin, holding her as they lay entwined, suddenly vanished from her arms. In the first moment of disappointment she was all but angry with him for disappearing like that without even a puff of smoke, but almost at once her love for him had her worrying he would not come back. She had a lot of trouble imagining that he had ceased to exist, even temporarily. And, indeed, the thing was unimaginable. Henriette could not help thinking he was in heaven, yet still a little in the room in the manner of the dead who prowls around eavesdropping on the thoughts of the living. Before going to sleep she said a little prayer with the aim of appeasing him, of gaining his favor and of commending him to God.

The next morning as she awoke in this new room, her heart ached as she thought of Martin. She lovingly pitied him to the point of tears, and at the same time feared him as a subtle, attentive presence. When dressing, she was careful not to put herself in a position that would wound the modesty of a witness, for the dead and all who have a foothold in heaven can easily turn malevolent. Heartless as they are, they like to quibble and have occasion to laugh slyly. At around nine o’clock, the concierge slid an advertising leaflet under the door. It made a slight brushing sound that came to Henriette’s ears as she was slipping on her stockings. She turned her head with a friendly smile but not

without a slight dread, and covered her bare knees. Her first thought was that Martin was manifesting his bad mood in the discreet manner of the departed. When she noticed the leaflet she was reassured and, at the same time, disappointed.

“I’d much rather be sure he’s here,” she thought. “How can I believe he’ll come back, if he really no longer exists?”

In the morning she had several outbursts of tears. The afternoon went much better. Martin had no more than a few hours left of his time away in this inconceivable nothingness, and gradually Henriette was delivered from all her worries by the promise of his return. She waited for him with loving impatience, as though he were a traveler who had at last come onto the familiar path to the house after a long sojourn in distant lands where thoughts no longer reached him. At around four in the afternoon, he must have been in Dijon eating a sandwich at the station buffet. Since his train was not leaving straight-away, he was filling the time taking a walk in the town. Henriette followed him through the main streets, put him on his train and chose a good corner seat for him, taking care to close the windows so there would be no draught. The local train stopped at every station. It was boring, but since he was on his way, there was nothing to do but wait.

At midnight, Martin’s body resumed its place in the bed that he had left the night before. At first nothing alerted him that twenty-four hours had flown by while Henriette had remained alone. He held her tightly in his arms, believing he was continuing the foreplay of their first night. It was only a moment later, when he saw the time on the alarm clock, that his disappearance came to mind. While Henriette was stroking his hand as though to console him, he looked anxious and the same question came to their lips: “Well?” It was Martin who responded first, shrugging:

“Well? Well, nothing. . . . Do you understand? Nothing. I existed no more than you existed a hundred years ago. For me, the whole of yesterday is dead time. . . . But for you, Henriette, it’s just time that has passed and you remember it. Tell me about yesterday, tell me about the day. What are the hours like when I don’t exist? How do the days fit together? Give me back what has got away from me, what has no place in my semi-existence. The newspapers say almost nothing about it. They don’t know. . . . they speak of yesterday for people who have already lived it. Tell me. . . .”

“This morning,” said Henriette, “I got up at eight o’clock. . . .”

“Yes, but before that. . . . from the moment I ceased to exist. . . .”

“I can’t say how you disappeared. . . . All of a sudden I couldn’t see you any more. I could still feel your warmth, the touch of your hands, and you’d

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already gone. I wasn't afraid, since I'd been warned, I was just surprised for a moment. Even though I knew, I stupidly lifted my head and looked for you in the room. There was a bluebottle flying round the lamp. Don't be cross with me, but I almost wondered if it was you. . . ."

"Oh, no, definitely not!" said Martin. "That bluebottle, I remember having seen it, too, a few minutes before midnight. Ah, if I were a bluebottle on the days I disappear, I would consider myself fortunate."

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Henriette quickly got used to Martin's absences. She saw herself in the situation of a wife whose husband is occupied away from home every other day. Really, Martin was not greatly to be pitied. When he did not exist, she could be sure he was not suffering. Taking everything into account, it was perhaps better than if he had actually been occupied by tedious or grueling jobs. Besides, Martin was feeling happier now that they were a couple. He was less obsessed by the desire to snatch back the dead time. By virtue of hearing Henriette give him all the details of her days of widowhood, he ended up convinced that all of life's days are about the same, the only difference between them being what each person brings to them. He even wondered sometimes if existing only every other day was not a luxury, and he almost had the delusion that he had chosen the best time to live.

Time seemed to fly quicker than ever and it no longer occurred to him to be frightened of it. Love and Henriette's presence had transformed his life. He loved her dearly and did not want their joy to be troubled by regrets and pointless calculations.

"In one month," he said, "you have thirty days of happiness, and I have fifteen. But we arrive at the end of the month together, that's what matters."

"No, I don't," protested Henriette, "I don't have thirty days of happiness. When you're not here I get bored, I'm even depressed."

She said such things, in a way, just to please him. The truth is that she coped easily with the days on her own. She could catch her breath, enjoy the pleasures of contemplation and faithfulness. Her love had an odor of wisdom and friendship that tended to moderate Martin's fervor. After two years together, a discord developed that for a long time remained hidden, at least for him. Henriette had enough free time to think over the strangeness of their situation. She felt no regrets and simply strove to keep up appearances. It was not her fault if time had not marched at the same rhythm for him and for her. Her love, which had lasted two full years, had neither the freshness nor the ardor that Martin's love retained, having aged only one year. What's

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more, the days of widowhood favored reflection, judgement, and examination of conscience, just the thing for tempering a passion. Martin sometimes had a fleeting sense of this interval, but he lacked time to delve into it further.

One night when he was returning to existence, he found himself lying in the darkness, finishing a sentence he had begun the previous night at the moment he disappeared. As Henriette seemed to be taking her time responding, he reached out his hand to feel for her and discovered he was alone in the bed. He turned on the light, his hand shaking. The alarm clock showed midnight and Henriette was not in the room. He sensed all of a sudden the depth of this dead time over which he had no control, and all the activity it could hold. A place beyond, close yet inaccessible, which until then he had only heard of, was becoming an almost tangible reality. Henriette's absence seemed to him to have lasted for two minutes, but was deep within this other world and had lasted for hours. Martin felt faint and almost called for help. He got up, walked round the room, and having reassured himself that she had not taken her luggage, went back to bed. Henriette came home at about a quarter past midnight and said with a calm smile:

"My darling, please forgive me but I went to the cinema and the film ended later than I thought it would."

Martin dared not respond other than by a nod, for he was afraid of letting his anger get the better of him. Objecting to Henriette's outing to the cinema would have led to his reproaching her for her normal existence. She guessed he was hurt and cross, and took his hand in both of hers. Martin was irritated by this affectionate, almost maternal gesture. He thought she was ashamed, as healthy people can be when around the sick who are condemned to immobility. Henriette leant her face against his. Her cheek and lips were cool from dashing home through the town before midnight.

"Are you angry with me for going to the cinema?" she asked softly. "I assure you, if I'd known I'd be coming home so late. . . ."

"No, of course not," protested Martin, "why would I be angry with you? I would think you had every right to go to the cinema, and even anywhere you please. What you do while I don't exist concerns only you. I have nothing to do with it. Even if I could know every one of your actions and movements, can I judge them without having lived through those days myself? You're free to act as you choose. Your life belongs to you, and just because it happens to coincide with mine from time to time. . . ."

"Why do you say from time to time?" interrupted Henriette. "Our lives coincide every other day."

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“Oh, I know, it’s not your fault!” concluded Martin, sneering. “You’re doing what you can.”

Henriette let go of his hand and left the bed, shaking her head with an annoyed pout. While she was removing her clothes, Martin pretended to be falling asleep and studied her out of the corner of his eye. She undressed in silence without caring that he could be watching, nor even thinking he might be. In her demeanor, in her features, there was something out of the ordinary, something distant; a languor, a distracted manner and perhaps, thought Martin, even a regret, as though she were lingering over the memory of that other world she had just left. This is how she must have undressed on the days he did not exist. With her clothes off she appeared in an irritating nakedness which certainly did not lack presence, but which seemed to be still moving in a strange light. It was too easy to imagine her with a train of admirers. Indeed, Martin imagined it, and hardly slept that night. He listened to Henriette’s peaceful breathing while thinking of the ghosts of the daytime that haunted his girlfriend’s sleep.

What had been accidental became a habit, and at least once a week Henriette happened to come home after midnight. These delays exasperated Martin but provided him with only meagre excuses to get angry. A woman must go to the cinema occasionally, Henriette would say. He champed at the bit without even having the consolation of dreaming up acts of revenge. Every minute that she was late seemed to him an intrusion of the dead hours into his already reduced existence. He became taciturn and remained so until the day he realized he was jealous. The suspicions he was struggling to repress seemed reasonable in the end. A man who exists only every other day, he told himself, is predestined to be a cuckold and his woman, in order to remain faithful, would need to be so somberly virtuous that he could hardly take pleasure in it. This did not stop Martin from bombarding his own woman with questions that were also reproaches.

“Oh, come on,” protested Henriette, “there you go imagining things.”

Her calmness was driving Martin out of his mind. He ground his teeth, laughed nervously, sobbed, hugged her passionately and began again asking the same questions. Henriette found he had become quite intolerable, but she patiently told herself that she had peace at least every second day and that her lot was still enviable. Her determination to remain faithful was slightly shaken when Martin explained to her that, unless she was stupid, it was impossible that she would not have a lover. One day when he did not exist, she met a blond and sensitive accordionist named Dédé. Before he had even spoken to her, she decided to prove she had a mind of her own.

“As you can see,” Dédé said, “I’m seeking affection. It would be quite simple for a man who didn’t care for deep reflection, wouldn’t it? He need only settle for the gratification of his aesthetic ideal. But an artist cannot. In love, an artist sees further than the act, and if you ask me why, I’ll tell you it’s because he needs to be understood and appreciated in his art. Naturally not all women aspire to this. It’s up to us to know how to distinguish between them. But for you, I have the right and the duty to tell you: you fit my concept of a woman.”

Dédé had a devastating way of looking into Henriette’s eyes that stripped away her few hesitations.

Martin was no more nor less jealous, and every day that he existed the same scene played out three or four times.

“I know you have a lover,” he would say. “Swear to me that you don’t have a lover.”

“Of course, my darling, I swear I haven’t,” Henriette would reply.

Every second day Henriette met the accordionist in the room he occupied in Rue Gabrielle. She loved him madly yet without giving up her love for Martin. Dédé, who was justly proud of his qualities as an artist, claimed to be removed from the duty of fidelity. He said he was a bee that went round gathering nectar to enrich his sensitivity as an accordionist. It was not long before Henriette experienced the pangs of jealousy. She better understood Martin’s sufferings and showed him more compassion. When she swore her eternal love to him, there was now a touching warmth in her voice.

But women who have two loves on their mind are almost never reasonable. Under the spurious pretext that he had just taken in his old mother, but in reality to defend his right to freely gather nectar, the accordionist declared to Henriette one day that he could no longer entertain her in his room.

“Well, then, you will come to my room,” said she.

Dédé expressed his reluctance at length, but eventually accepted. He arrived at Rue Tholozé late in the afternoon on a day when Martin did not exist, and dined in the room with Henriette. He was preoccupied with the words of separation that he wanted to say at the moment of his departure, and his hostess was no less preoccupied with what she feared hearing, so that when the alarm clock stopped at a quarter past ten, neither of them noticed. At midnight when he returned to existence in his bed, Martin was shocked and dumbfounded. There in the middle of the room with his back turned to him was a man in his underwear, who was speaking seriously, while Henriette, head in her hands, was listening and crying. This is what the man in underwear was saying:

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“We can’t escape the laws of destiny, Henriette. You don’t have what it takes to understand me!” Martin would not have any more of this, and put the two lovers out the door. The accordionist was so astonished by this apparition that he did not think to ask for his clothes. Martin threw them to him out the window with Henriette’s, and got back into bed where he hardly slept.

Two days later he tried to pick up the threads of his life as a single man, and in Rue Riquet he watched the morning fog spread across the flat brown plains of the La Chapelle district. But time to him seemed long and he thought midday would never come. His watch hands turned slowly and nothing he saw interested him. The idea of having lunch alone in his room was unbearable, and he went into a restaurant. The meal, which lasted less than half an hour, seemed like it would never end, to the point where he became afraid when he thought that time was slowing down.

He learnt from his experience of the morning that he should spend the afternoon at the cinema, and as he was leaving he bought a crime novel, but nothing could be done to beat the boredom. All the days of his existence dragged with the same slowness and he came to wishing he could live no more than one day a week or even one day a month.

One evening when he was sinking into a nostalgia for the dead time and was dreaming of taking refuge in it forever, Martin tried to react against it and decided to lead an adventurous life. As he left his room after dinner time, he punched the face of the first man to come along.

The man went off quickly, mopping his nose, and from the top of the steps in Rue Tholozé swore violently at him. Martin listened to him for a moment, and realizing that time was not passing any quicker, gave up the game. He hoped to find adventure at the cinema. By chance he sat next to a young woman whose knees he started squeezing with little enthusiasm. In any case, she left in the company of the man on her right who had squeezed her first.

Martin went out and strolled along the boulevard. He had decided that, in full sight of everyone, he would face the moment of his disappearance. Suddenly he spotted Henriette on the other side of the road. She was sitting at a street café in the company of an elderly man. Martin, paying no attention to the cars, crossed without looking. A taxi speeding along did not have time to brake. Strictly speaking there was no accident, Martin having vanished into thin air the very instant the bonnet of the car was upon him, but as he was never to be seen again in Montmartre, there was reason to believe he had had sufficient time for the impact to be fatal.

Henriette, who had recognized poor Martin, said to her new lover:  
 “Oh, it’s already midnight.”



A mentor and proofreader of my translated fairy tales once suggested I might be interested in Marcel Aymé and suspected that many of his eighty-seven short stories remained untranslated into English. I eagerly read Aymé’s fables for children and then his collection for adults, *Derrière chez Martin* (1938), where I discovered “Le Temps mort.”

Marcel Aymé (1902–67), a French novelist, dramatist, and writer of fables and fantasies, first published this story in *Candide* in 1936. The protagonist, Martin, lives with the handicap of existing only every second day. Though the story is illogical and fantastical, Aymé’s language is not poetic but restrained and humorous. He resisted a pretentious, ambiguous style, and for this reason his clear writing, for a translator, can be deceptive. On my first reading of the story I believed the translation process would not be demanding, but of course it always is.

Two examples will illustrate the kinds of snags I was caught in. I spent hours dwelling on the author’s meaning of one word, as literary translators can do. Here it is “linge.” At first I wrote *towel*, which I could imagine hanging from the window latch to dry. But my elderly proofreader said it was underwear, called “linge” in the 1930s. However, several dictionaries, including some published in Aymé’s day, defined “linge” as washing, household linen, or, at best, women’s underwear. I chose *washing*. Another reader suggested it was his collar and cuffs, but a few native French speakers were certain it was his *linge de toilette*. Their opinion gave me confidence that in Aymé’s mind it was a towel. I also considered that the author had put Martin’s “vêtements” on a chair, and if “linge” were an item of clothing, he would have named it. Then there was the scene where the concierge enters Martin’s room thinking he is dead. Though the key is in the lock inside, he is not there, having vanished for twenty-four hours but not through the door. Martin takes care, after this close call, “lorsqu’il fermait sa porte avant de se coucher, à ne jamais laisser la clef sur la serrure.” I was baffled by the key needing to be removed and wondered if I’d translated it right. But I watched a film based on this story, *Les Jours où je n’existe pas*,<sup>1</sup> that includes this door scene and finally I

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1 *Les Jours où je n’existe pas* (*The Days I Don’t Exist*), 2002, a long, slow film directed by Jean-Charles Fitoussi, loosely based on Aymé’s story. Parts of it are reworked, with an ending even stranger than the original.

understood how the old lock and key hardware functioned, the key being used to lock the door inside or out.

When I tell friends about “Le Temps mort” and the man who exists only every other day, their response is thoughtful silence. The absurdity leaves them imagining this semi-existence and wanting to know more. They are fascinated by the foreignness, the strangeness they attribute to its French source. Because of such conversations, the long wait to see this translation in print has not been dead time.

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