

Douglas Coupland 1,000 Word  
Short Story Award: 3<sup>rd</sup> prize winner



## SYMPHONY OF THE FLYING INSECT Dominic Murphy

And it was exactly thirty two minutes past the hour of three when the fly saw a wall, literally screaming with graffiti, as if its emotions were shown all over its face it was that easy to read and one particular act of vandalism catches the fly's eye, the one that was next to the "here is my sex face" scrawl, even though there was no sex face to be seen and I remember thinking that when I walked past it once and the fly sees this message and when the car stupidly swerves out of nowhere and there are no survivors, not even the fly, at least he has this little sense of happiness in his little fly heart but anyway, this happened at least six hours before the start, at nine twenty five and nineteen seconds, which I remember because at the time I was just nipping into this new retro coffee shop called "Toast" that I'd heard about in this vintage

clothes shop and everything started from a flash that went off and the fly was suddenly an adult with his cocoon laying to his side, disintegrating in the heat, and it was strange because he had been waiting for this moment his whole life, and suddenly the fly had left the pupa stage and was suddenly a man and it had taken literally no time at all, even less time than it took for me to be served at the cafe which wasn't retro at all and was playing rap music at this time of morning and when the fly looked up he was welcomed by a shade of red which was, almost kindly, allowing a comforting amount of light to enter and then he flew out, not noticing that this was the first time he'd actually used his wings, as if it were the most natural thing in the world and found himself in a red flower, stained with yellow but a happy accident-type stain, like Tie-Dye I presume and this flower was being held by a couple who were motionless, as if time had decided to seize as if to have a breather then suddenly the flash went off again and it must have been one of those self timing cameras because no one was controlling it and the young woman giggled, as if she had been keeping this giggle in her whole life and the man smiled loudly and being polite the fly leaves them in peace and decides to explore through the open window and into the park, dazzling with green and right there is where I had a picnic with a past lover but she had issues that I don't like to get into and let's just say this burn on my arm

wasn't a mistake and the fly sees a girl waiting at a bus stop and suddenly everywhere gets a little darker as she screams down her mobile WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME I LOVE — HELLO? and suddenly, her phone is smashed into a million pieces on the floor and an uncontrollable fear mixed with hatred mixed with sorrow fills her and she sobs but years later, the girl would look back at this whole situation and laugh, now that she has kids and everything but at this particular moment in time her life had just ended and when the bus speeded past she imagined hurling herself in front of it and becoming one with the road and all the angels and saints in heaven but she didn't and she got on and began her life again and the fly couldn't help but feel pity for her but he didn't understand why 'cause, to be quite frank, he's a fly and then it was exactly forty nine minutes past one and the fly was soaring across the city, the huge metropolis gliding beneath him a thousand times over and suddenly he sees a man's head hanging out of a sky rise, smoking a cigarette for all it's worth and when the fly gets closer he notices that this guy is probably a little bit too close to the edge and he's shaking and at this particular moment in time I was at the book shop, deciding whether to get some Easton Ellis or this poetry book by that fucked up director whose name I can't remember now but the guy was hanging out and it will say this in the newspaper and on the TV because at any second the guy

drops his cigarette and suddenly he's falling after it, the ground coming ever closer and the fly couldn't believe it and he flew down, hoping to catch the ever falling man but the man kept on falling until he smacked straight down onto this bus and as you can imagine it wasn't particularly a pleasant sight but I can't be one to judge as I wasn't actually there and the guy died as did the passengers on the bus, one of whom was the girl who didn't look back and laugh on the whole situation and get married and have kids cause she died and isn't that a shame and anyway, and I must apologise if I'm rushing and not being as sympathetic as I could be but I guess I don't have much sympathy anymore and the fly is staring at the wall, and he sees the love ode, next to the sex face thing, and suddenly he wonders whether "Maz (hearts) Caz" now as much as he did when he'd risked everything to scribble his desire on the wall and I remember this moment well 'cause it's the moment the stupid fuck of a taxi swerved into my car which sent me straight into the wall and my last ever sight, ever, was of a squashed up fly and be it a sudden rush of hormones or guilt or something but I just collapsed in sorrow for doing this and gave up and died...

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