

Somewhere between instinct and a tightrope I guess. The instinct imagery comes to me like a mongrel mutt sniffing around the mailbox posts, or the black birds vying over the cornfield for some unmarked boundary that I'm not aware of. Do those lines move, daily or weekly? I wonder.

The tightrope is clearer for me, though I assume a lot of people imagine some large circus tent, a hastily constructed Taj Ma Hal built in the middle of midwest America. Wy, hey, and up she rises. The inevitable smell of animal manure, straw under foot, blurs of activity moving too fast to take it all in. A grand design built especially for deception and loot carry. Yes, that's probably the better analogy.

Yet for me the tightrope (I believe the pros refer to it as "the wire"); always hangs above a chasm. Often in my mind there is no thing below to see, perhaps some cool mist. The assumption of course is there is no net, no salvation, no survival. I have recently come to hate that word- survival.

I drink, I fall down- no problem. I guess the older I get the more it feels like survival is for sissies. I even venture a guess that most successful suicides are propelled forward by that very thought. Well? Haven't YOU ever come to a realization for yourself and wondered if that really is the secret to soldiering on? We all have these thoughts, don't bullshit me, my therapist told me that, so it's gotta be true. We're all poets, so none of us are. You can either decide to let the information depress you toward the manic place you romantically hope it will be, or you can use it to define the areas to avoid. Yes, little signposts I guess, telling our little minds that for right now at least, it's OK to feel that way.

But then I consider the mind, my mind. Exclusive of others I suppose, you might make me believe that I really do generate original thoughts. In the meantime however, I'll stay back in the haze and keep looking for an opening. After all, I'm careful and aware. I only take the pills when there's pain, and I never drive a car when I'm on them. Trust me, I get around just fine without wheels under my ass. So yeah, I've learned plenty on my own. As you might suspect, I've learned that most of what we're told by the talking heads is wrong, or at least deeply flawed. That's where the tightrope really comes in.

When you walk the wire you walk it alone. A clear mind makes it easier, and cleaning your mind in preparation is essential. Yep, survival is for sissies. Hope for the best and expect the worst? Screw that! Plan for the best and be prepared always for your demise.

I mean, it is gonna happen, right?

~ T ~

Lean Russell Tightrope