A Faint Narrative

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A Faint Narrative

Artwork by Ilan Manouach

“"I am a project, a faint narrative in the narrative of the universe.”

The following two illustrations are full pages from the comic *Fastwalkers* (Echo Chamber, 2021), a "synthetic" comic, created with the use of AI and conceptualized by Ilan Manouach. These two pages (p. 139 and p. 368) show the uncanny nature of the imagery in this work, suggesting landscapes and figures, but never quite settling into real forms, despite the static nature of the medium. The speech balloons are similarly unsettling and unsettled, hinting at meaning but not adding up to any full sense. These pages include most elements we expect to find in a comic--panels with images, gutters, word balloons, and captions--but they do not form a meaningful sequence, and any search for narrative remains futile. The pages are suggestive in an additional way: The program that created *Fastwalkers* was trained on imagery from manga, more specifically hentai imagery. Hentai is sexually explicit material, and while these two pages (and indeed *Fastwalkers* as a whole) are not in any way explicit, many of the images certainly suggest naked limbs in various compromising positions. – Barbara Postema
When we look at the mind as it actually is, we may see that we are constantly projecting and manipulating our mental life and the world.

There is no transparency in things, for what is transparent is usually clear in intent, but the most opaque of objects is transparent enough to let through the greatest light.

Revealing that nakedness is all that hides out down.

Sunlight has to pass through the eye to cast light, then that light can never be other than tinted by the shade of darkness.

If moonlight has to pass through the eye to cast sight, then your sight can never be other than tinted by lustful intentions.

Beauty without symbols will always remain untold.

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