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Lightshow Slideshow
by mundane

| Dose: T+ 0:00 | 6.5 g | oral | Cacti - T. pachanoi | capsule |
| T+ 0:00 | repeated | smoked | Cannabis | plant material |

Body weight: 110 lbs

It had been planned for my birthday, but with mom coming into town and staying with us that week, I opted to push the plan up a week. Mom knows and supports, but that doesn’t mean she has to be added to the mix. Particularly since I wanted a big, long day of introspection.

Anyway, seven days isn’t much. I think I’ve got twenty-eight down by now. I went into it feeling like I was about the face the worst year of my life (with no end to the misery in sight), and came out thinking that it was one of the better ones so far (and it’s only up from here).

It’s the thought that counts.

I hadn’t communed with the cacti since November and was feeling in need of a long trip. Since cactus was my first, I think I started out expecting full days of psychedelia, which the others I’ve tried have so far not delivered. An afternoon with mushrooms is wonderful, but I was craving a day.

I was very much not looking forward to the ingestion. It’s become tough to poison my body after a while, no matter how much I tell my body I want it. ‘Remember the euphoria?’ I say. ‘Yes, but what about all of the nausea, discomfort, digestive irritation, vomiting - not to mention the taste? *shudder* That taste…’ is what I’ll reply.

‘Man up and take it, dammit. You’ll get over it,’ is the ultimate word on the matter.

But man do I psych myself out over it. I woke up Monday morning nauseous, knowing what I was going to do. I couldn’t exactly recall the taste, but I knew for damn sure it was terrible. Going down wasn’t so bad, though the orange juice chaser I use doesn’t taste nearly as good as it used it. It’s when it comes up (and up and up over and over) that things are bad.

Those are the moments that come to mind whenever I smell those tar-filled capsules: those wonderful times spent dry heaving long beyond the point when I’d figured there was just no more to throw up. And I wonder if another morning in front of the toilet is in store for me, and my stomach cramps up, and my gag reflex gets ready, and I remind myself about paying the piper.

It’s difficult, but it’s worth it. To me, at least, it is.

So I ate an apple, smoked a bowl, and took a hike - you know, Monday morning stuff. The weed seemed to make the recollection of foul odor and taste more vivid, which in turn made it easier to build nausea. I took my time over the hills and along the path, in no rush to get back to the truck.
and capsules.

Wanting to spend the time trodding along in more productive pre-trip mode, I thought about my twenty-eighth year on the planet and the twenty-ninth that I have ahead. Considering the substances that have helped turn my life around, I again had to shake my internal fist at the system that keeps them illegal. I hate the lengths that I have to go to in order to access the best therapeutic tools I’ve encountered, particularly when they could get me into trouble when I myself am causing no trouble.

The pot had worn off by the time the dog and I got back to the parking lot, and I felt ready to get on with it. I hadn’t had any water on the way back, ensuring I’d be nice and thirsty for that OJ. I pulled the scales and capsules out of my backpack and weighed out 6.5 grams in 6 capsules. Sort of a light dose and one I wouldn’t normally take without syrian rue, but rue is guaranteed vomiting, and I had a different experiment in mind.

I took them two at a time, holding them between my teeth before swallowing them with a swig of juice, doing all I could to avoid tasting or feeling the capsules themselves (though there was still some desire to connect with the repulsive via the briefest of touches of tongue to tar, to remind myself of exactly that which I was avoiding so adamantly). It wasn’t really bad at all, but I still had to quell the gag reflex at the end of it.

With that, I headed home. The mescaline was going to take a while. If anything, I could’ve been in danger of throwing up before reaching home, but even the nausea would likely take longer to set in (should it come) than the drive. It was about 9:00 in the morning and the roads were clear. I thought about the timing of everything, when I should take the MDMA and when I expected the whole thing would start. Mescaline’s a bit of a tough nut to crack. I’ve been fully immersed by hour two, and I’ve been still patiently waiting for things to get going by hour four, both times on similar doses. I’ve been euphoric on it, I’ve been disoriented on it. It leaves me tired, bodily, mentally. It can be difficult to keep my eyes open, but it can also be tough to relax. We’ve yet to hit our stride together, basically.

I wasn’t feeling anything by the time I got home at 9:40 AM. I immediately went for that bit of ecstasy I have left. I had a half tablet (the seller had said it was a quad) that I’d been intending to save for Coachella, but I wanted something special for the birthday occasion, too. The pill had already cracked into roughly quarters, so I took the smaller of the chunks and bit it into bitter, medicinal dust. I then licked my fingertip and picked up whatever residue was on the bottom of the little plastic stash container and rubber it along my gums and under my tongue. Drank some water to get the taste out of my mouth and to fill up my stomach with a bit more to throw up, should I need to. Running out of contents to throw up during a mescaline purge is no fun.

I went about getting chores done and things straightened out. I’d picked up the fallen toys and vacuumed the room the day before, making sure everything was neat and clean. Seeing a bunch of trash and clutter while on mescaline tends to bum me out a bit. I also threw my bedding in the wash, knowing I’d be spending a good deal of the day spread out on the bed and wanting it to be clean and fresh, as well. With nothing left to do but wait, I started in on some more weed.
It had been about an hour since taking the capsules, and I was starting to feel somewhat spacey. I was really wanting things to get going, but the come-up seemed to be taking quite a while. I took the MDMA early on, because in the past combining the two has really gotten the mescaline going. I was hoping it would give things a kick, wear off gradually, and eventually fade, leaving the mescaline in charge. I wondered if the residual trace amounts would stay in effect for longer, one drug strengthening another.

Alas, there was no rocket start; just a long, slow, weird come-up. I had to lie down in the face of full-body nauseous strangeness and a dreamy discomfort that came with the lessening of my ability to think straight. I closed my eyes and hoped to use the state of quiet awareness to gauge how things were coming along. I could feel a happy energy flowing through me, which I attributed to the MDMA. Already I was worrying that I had taken it too early, but part of the point was to get another experiment in before Coachella (god willing I get some rolls for it), so I wasn’t too concerned. Live and learn.

The blackness had not yet become psychedelic, but it was a bit tough to focus my mind. I felt bubbles of pressure coming to my face, behind the sinuses. As the pressure moved up to the forehead, I imagined it was the gentle opening of my third eye. ‘Prying open my third eye’ as the Tool song says, only this wasn’t DMT, and it wasn’t prying it open, just creeping up.

I opened my eyes again and finished up the bowl of Headband. Visuals started to build, slowly. 11:30 - just a bit over two hours. ‘Be patient,’ to quote another Tool song. I still felt vague, disoriented. And very, very tired. My eyes, especially, were tired from the get go, as if looking had already worn them out before I’d even seen anything. I was stuffy in the head and constantly needed to pop my ears. I’d been seeking deep thought, not total amnesia. I watched the clouds and pictures on the collage (the still frames from films momentarily looking like they were small bits of animated moving scenes, like .gif images) for about an hour before deciding that before I went on any more, I needed to get my head straightened out with meditation.

I turned the stereo off and shut the window, dressed my bed and changed into sweatpants. I snuggled under the blanket, brought the laptop closer, put the earbuds in. The meditation I chose to do was a self-affirmation one, but I’d only half-remembered that before starting in on it. With my furry-eared cap pulled over my eyes, I settled into a comfortable position and started to take deep, conscious breaths. The sense of vagueness followed me into the peaceful blackness, but I was still conscious enough of self to follow along with the direction my thoughts were being taken. I was very calm, feeling very open to my potential and generally good about myself. The meditation’s a little more ‘you have it within you’ than Stuart Smalley-esque, and in the defenses-down state my mind was it, it all felt very positive and reassuring.

The lightshow was going strong by now. Spirograph flowers of fractal light constantly morphing and shifting, bumping in to other geometries, sliding and spinning; impossible to get a clear, definitive look at, but full of radiant transforming patterns, beautiful beyond description. Such gorgeous patterns, so many angles, so many fractures. I was beyond relaxed when the meditation ended. And while I did have some electric body buzzing, I only got a body charge, never a head
shock. I don’t know if this is of significance, as the shocks seem to come whenever I’m relaxed. Maybe it’s relaxed with some other emotion or feeling tied in, like tiredness. I still haven’t figured out a pattern to those shocks.

I laid unmoving in the bed, in the blackness, breathing deeply and feeling completely open, but in a comfortable way, not in a vulnerable way. I wanted to keep my eyes closed, but I also wanted to see what my visuals were like at this point. Also, to get on with the rest of the day. It took me a while to be able to focus again once I’d opened my eyes once more and taken off the cap. Light was so bright, so diffused. I felt still too relaxed, disoriented. It took me a while to get everything situated again, and I nearly lost my balance when I finally did stand up. Walking was its own tipsy challenge.

Meditation, lunch, weed: that had been what I’d told myself. It was now 1:30 in the afternoon, and the only things I’d had since 6 PM the night before had been an apple, a bottle of orange juice, six and a half grams of mescaline tar, some water, and a quarter tab of ecstasy. And a couple of bowls of hunger-inducing cannabis. I didn’t really feel hungry, but once I’d gotten to the kitchen and started shoving handfuls of blue corn tortilla chips in my mouth, I knew my body wanted food. I threw some taquitos in the oven (typical simple trip food) and a Coke in the freezer. I wasn’t sure about adding even more caffeine to my system, but it seemed like the best thing to drink, bubbly and delicious.

I bid my time while waiting for my food to be ready, watching the golden paint on the wave-textured wall of the bonus room. It didn’t look as amazing as I’d hoped it would, but I also attributed that to my continuing tendency to zone out if looking at something for too long (when looking at something for too long is often the most rewarding thing to do, leading to intensified visuals and ever-revolving chains of thought).

Food ready, I retreated to my room once more, starting up the playlist on random again and turning the volume up high. I loaded up the hash attachment I have for my bong (concentrates officially carry a felony charge in California now, which I feel like mentioning since I’ve already gone over a few other felonies - may as well add this one) with some Super Lemon Haze full melt and did my best to get good hits. The device is a bit difficult for me to use, and especially when I can’t tell if I’m seeing smoke or ‘seeing smoke’.

Before the hash kicked in and everything got stronger, I wanted to get some food down. My body felt both good about food and appreciative of eating, but at the same time a little overwhelmed. I had to eat slowly, taking deep breaths and chewing very thoroughly. Swallowing was a bit of an effort, and I felt like the food was just sitting in my stomach. The cold soda smacked hard behind the eyes, made my teeth tingle. My stomach began to feel bloated and distended.

Things were building as the hash started to hit. I couldn’t eat any more after the third taquito (out of the normal six). I set it aside and laid down. ‘Comfy in Nautica’ came on, and I turned off iTunes’ randomizer, figuring I’d stick with ‘Person Pitch’ for a while. Before ‘Bros’ had reached its midpoint (less than fifteen minutes later), things were too overwhelming. The music, normally my absolute favorite while tripping, was just too bouncy, too driving. I needed calming, soothing
euphoria. I clicked the random button on again and pressed ‘next’ three or four times before my savior came on: Rufus Wainwright’s ‘Slideshow’.

This is a song that awakens such euphoria in me that I named my vaporizer ‘Rufus’ after a night with it and this track on repeat. I closed my eyes, assumed the fetal position, snuggled up with my pillow, and let the euphoria swell with the orchestra and Wainwright’s voice. It was a perfect six minutes and twenty-two seconds. I felt much better when the song was over, ready to relax and enjoy the trip. I pulled the computer close, so that I could change songs more easily, and stretched out on the bed. Whenever I feel too vague on mescaline, I find it helpful to look at something simple that I can examine very closely, so I grabbed a CD from the desk.

Should you ever find yourself on mescaline, I cannot possibly recommend the underside of a CD more. This particular CD was tinted blue, as well. It’s the minutia of mescaline that truly thrills me. Looking at something intently produces an effect similar to looking at living cells through a microscope, only these are tightly packed and working together to dance in choreographed geometric patterns. Add to that the shifting colors on the underside of a compact disk, and you’ll know what I mean by my recommendation.

My eyes were finding it difficult to focus on any one thing. Should I look at the surface of the CD? The lines in it? The dust particles on it? What about gaze unfocused into the colors? Look at the little skittering details? I focused on one, then another. Never being able to settle, my eyes changing focus second-to-second. I wondered if the MDMA had given me nystagmus, but I think I usually find it tough to focus with mescaline, whether or not I’ve had ecstasy with it.

After watching the colors in the CD for some time, I moved to the carpet in front of the stereo where I had two flower-shaped candles burning, one pink and one yellow. At first I found their flames too bright and watched them instead reflected in the tinted glass of the stereo cabinet, fully immersed in the fractal glow which extended into the radiant aura of light that the flames were casting. Through the glass, the beige carpet was overlaid with dancing fractals, looking far more lovely than a beige carpet ought.

When finally my eyes had adjusted to the glow, I looked at the candle flames themselves; watched their white shining hearts, saw the tips as blades of sharp, pointed gold. No, it was far more beautiful than gold. It’s what I wish golden light to be, and maybe that’s why it is. Maybe mescaline taps into the way I wish to see the world, so radiant and achingly gorgeous, so ordered and lively and interesting. Everything fully engaging and too beautiful to do justice with weak description.

But the darkness was still there, literally, tangibly. When zoning out and trying to take the visuals to their relaxed-focus extremes, the blackness would iris in on my peripheral vision. The more relaxed I became, the darker my vision. Then I’d snap out of it, open my eyes wide, and see everything brighten up again. I had to wonder what would happen if I zoned out completely, let the iris close in and swallow me in blackness. It was something that I did not want to attempt.

I began to feel a bit uncomfortable in the room, somewhat vulnerable. It was about 3:00 in the afternoon, and I expected no one to be home for many hours, but I felt like the fact that I had my
bedroom door open left me open. Like I couldn’t really let myself go because I could be intruded upon, as 99.9% unlikely as that was. I usually leave it open when I’m home alone, but I couldn’t get comfortable until I had gotten up and closed it. Then I was able to start becoming comfortable.

One of the bits I tend to not mention in these reports which is actually an important part of all of this is the sexual aspect. I tend not to mention it because of all the sexual hang-ups I have, but I guess it’s time to get it down.

The short of it is: I didn’t have a lot going on downstairs for a quite a while. The genital piercing I got improved things, and masturbating (sex with self being the only sex I have) started resulting in a strong orgasm or two. Cannabis improved things even more, and I can have 20+ minute orgasm cycles when stoned (unsurprisingly, it worked much better when THC worked better, but it still works). I’m not tolerant to [other] psychedelics like I am to THC, so I can still get there tripping, should I be of the mind to (certainly am not always). Once begun, I sometimes have to put it to a conscious end after twenty minutes or so, just because it is exhausting in a way, and I find it difficult to go on much longer. It was during either the first or second times experiencing these (on weed) that I decided heaven couldn’t possibly exist, as an eternity of bliss would be far too much to take. You need moments of normalcy in order to enjoy a state of bliss, otherwise bliss is normal and there’s nowhere to go.

So it’s something I’ll do from time-to-time when taking these things. Just holding the metal bar against my clit was enough to get the cycle going. Feeling it there, every nerve on fire, all of my focus on the sensations. Even that was almost too much.

Song after song went by, four or five of them. I could feel the internal muscles swelling, constricting, releasing in wave after wave, my throat burning from suppressed screams. Climaxes gave no relief, but rather built to even higher peaks. Even after I’d taken my hand away, I could feel that cluster of nerves burning, and the cycle continued with no active participation on my part (aside from focusing on the sensation). I don’t know anything about chakras or tantric practices, but it seemed to me that I’d tapped into something along those lines.

I laid in bed calmly after, listening to the songs, watching the clouds. I felt worn out, very tired. A headache was settling in. The pressure in my head was becoming uncomfortable, and I opted to choose gum so that I wouldn’t need to be constantly popping my ears. My previous experiences with ecstasy and mescaline have always been at night, and I’ve managed to fall to sleep before feeling the come down. So I don’t know if this was it or something else, but I felt like the trip had really taken a toll on me.

Still feeling vague, like I wasn’t remembering the lessons I was learning, I smoked again to amp up the visuals once more. I felt like they were slipping, but they came back strong. Then it was clouds, music, and grooving toys. Things went on into the evening, but I was out of it, ‘like butter stretched over too much bread,’ as Bilbo Baggins would say. It was something like that, anyway. I felt like too much of me had been required for the day, and I was ready to recover and digest.

I went to the kitchen for more chips and watched the walls in the bonus room again. In the textured arcs, I saw what I imagined to be a benevolent Egyptian pharaoh from ancient times, watching


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over his golden kingdom. Or was he Mesoamerican? The headdress he was wearing looked like it had a snake coming off the top, so I figured he was Egyptian. I don’t know why I thought he was benevolent, but he seemed to have a kind face.

Sister and bro-in-law got home around 6:30 PM. Visuals were still going lightly. I wondered if it was too early for bed. Daylight savings had just sprung forward a couple of days before, so my body felt a bit discombobulated. I vaped some kush and felt no different. Tired, but alert. Still too much going on. I hit this state near hour eight or nine of mescaline: I’m exhausted and want to sleep, but I still know it’s a rare state to be in, and I want to stick with it. But I also know how to get back to it, even if it is a bit tough.

By 8:30, I was too worn out to go on. I put a couple of indica hashes on the bed of ashes in the bowl of the bong and turned the blacklight on, the main lights off. The music was left on, but the volume was lowered. Once I’d had a good look at how things looked under blacklight, I was able to finally close my eyes and relax. In the blackness (not quite as resplendent as before), the ringing in my ears became my focus, and it grew and became louder. I felt the head zaps coming on, but felt powerless to do anything about them. I tried to force through them, those electric charges which seem to originate deep within the body until they came to a violent climactic shock in the head, tried to accept them and let them pass through. But they’re difficult to ignore.

I was on the verge of sleep when the worst shock came. It felt like I had been attacked from within by an angry animal. Blinding white light flashed across my vision as something that reminded me of the sound an angry dog makes when snapping burst in my ears. I was immediately upright, shocked out of my state and deeply rattled. I wasn’t even sure what had happened at first, feeling like I’d been struck violently from somewhere within myself. Like I’d had that dream where I’m falling, only I didn’t wake up in time.

I was scared at that point and unsure of what to do. What was my mind doing to me? What did it mean? I turned off the stereo, first thing. One of the speakers rings lowly, and I thought maybe that ringing was exacerbating the internal ringing in my ears. But my own ringing didn’t stop, and I was afraid to face the darkness again with the shocks and attacks. I’d smoked so much all day because the marijuana’s effects had never been very strong (because I’m a multiple-bowl daily smoker), and if that last bit with hash wasn’t enough, then I feared it couldn’t be relied upon for this.

I keep a few hydrocodones about, in case of situations like this. Ones I’ve been prescribed but not needed to use at the time. Afterward, I always feel it’s a shame to bail out on a trip like that, but it’s tough to keep going when I’m exhausted and unable to relax. So I took one of the 5mg ones, biting it into foul powder before swallowing it with water; I wanted it to start working quickly.

I was asleep before I felt it.

As I write this the day after, it’s all still being processed. The pebble’s just been dropped, and the ripples are only beginning to spread. I can draw no conclusions as of yet. Life continues and experiences build on each other, and it’s still just all one small link in a very complex chain.