

OLIVIER MARBOEUF

*The new new
and its price*

1.

**The hijab and porn
(Mia and Rodney)**

It seems that Mia Khalifa
Had only done porn
For three months
She became famous
Incredibly famous
And maybe even
A millionaire
Millions
Of views
In any case
Millions
Of followers
A community

She was welcomed
At universities
At business schools
It seems that
It's the perfect branding
Students and their professors
Stare at the column
Of profits
For them
There's no doubt
There's no cost
Or almost none
Three months
It's magic

Three months
And you erase from the map
All the history
Of other actresses who spend
Years toiling away
Trying to look surprised
Thrilled
In Los Angeles villas
With bay windows
And a view we're sure
We've already seen
On the same armchairs
In white pleather
Or beside a pool

There's always a guy
Who's cleaning
The pool
You know
But really this guy
At a given moment
He'll stop cleaning
The pool
That's when the story begins
The whole story
Begins
When he abandons his job
It's the dream scenario
Of a strike

It happens in Los Angeles
I think
You sort of see that it's there
Even if no one
Really says it
It's more a period
Than a place
The beginning of a
Post-Fordian party
When the mauve sky
Is reflected in the pool
And on the bay window
And maybe also
On the solitary eye of the actress
Who's waiting for
Late afternoon
A heart-wrenching
Light
Before dusk
On the silhouettes
Of closed
Car factories
On the slag heaps

In this late stage
Of capitalism
But elsewhere
At Toni Negri's
Maybe
And at Michael Hardt's
Too
They're talking about this new labour
Immaterial
Where knowledge
Is an economy
Imagination
Is an economy
And culture
Also
Art
They understood
Something
And someone laughs
About this sudden irony
This new labour
That no longer really
Resembles
The idea
We had
About labour
Before
In a recent past
That's completely forgotten
This new labour
Creates the conditions
Of a sort of communism
Spontaneous
Elementary
That no one imposes
On workers
That they produce without even thinking about it
It's surprising
Unexpected
An obvious
Communism
An obvious
Interdependence
An obvious
Interconnection
A community
A collective intelligence
That no one can deny
Or enclose

It looks like a fucking paradox
For the capitalism
Of this late afternoon
This atmospheric
Communism
But maybe not
Because at this party
There's something
Of communism
But without the desire
Of the commons
Obviously
Networks
Relations
Families
Communities
Whatever you want
But at a given moment
We'll need
A murder
To interrupt
And capture this slippery
Commons
To create
A new individual
Property
In this moment
So strangely collective
There's a hidden
Price
Somewhere
The innocent
Murder
By the New new

Mark Fisher
Understood
That this capitalism
At the start of dusk
Had no imagination
That it didn't need
To have any
In fact
Due to this extraordinary
Capillarity
This fluidity
Of the new work
At present

It only needed
To extract
The imagination of its enemies
To copy it
To deform it
To rename it
Discrediting them along the way
Because you need a murder
With this kind of illness
Of hallucination
Of cryptomnesia
Where everything seems familiar
But it isn't
Not really
Everything is repeated
And erased
At the same time
Because you need a murder

Every day is thus
New
And every day
The New new
Discovers
Other Americas
Never seen before
And this is why
The story begins
Without saying it
With a strike
As if it was
The first time
The man cleaning the pool
Got rid of
The idea of scarcity
And the false constraint
Of labour
To come
He no longer fears the repression
Of the police
Who are occupied
Outside
By something else
Monitoring the environs
Of the villa
Surely
Controlling the street
The highways
Subjecting bodies

Distancing the risks
So far
From this place of innocence
That we can
Act as if
We didn't know
That this costs
Something
Somewhere
As if
We could ignore
The murder
By the New new
Ignore
The sacrifices
As night falls
On Los Angeles
Rodney knows it
Nothing's happening
For the first time
But Mia doesn't know
That Rodney exists
Existed
She doesn't know
This scene
Lit by car headlights
This other ghost
Scene
She hasn't seen the footage
Images
Aren't enough
And Rodney died
In 2012
And Mia
Will come on the scene
Two years later
In other words
Much later

Mia
In all this
Is at the apex
Of this hope
Of the end of work
And she's doing a new thing
Apparently
Necessarily new
In fact
It couldn't be any other way
Otherwise the branding
Wouldn't be
A masterpiece
That apprentice businessmen and women
Study in schools
That cost a lot
Whereas here
It's clear
In their opinion
It's awesome
Because it doesn't cost anything
For anyone
Apparently
Because for them
All the images
All the bodies
Are available

The story
Is that Mia performed
In a pornographic scene
We don't know if it was
In Los Angeles
We're not sure
There was
A pool
Either
Not sure
We'll have to verify
But we don't have the time
With the New new
To verify
It's not the point
It's not worth it
People are spreading
Rumors
News
Good or bad
They're gossiping
Gratuitously
The actor who dropped
His long net
Who stopped cleaning
The pool
Is paid
He's paid for this strike
Beyond the story of the strike
Nothing will be deducted
From his salary
He's even going to earn more
That's the reason for the strike
In his mind
Revolutionary

And the actress
Stretched out
Beside the pool
Or who looks at the very
Familiar view
Through the bay window
And suddenly assumes
A surprised air
Is also
Paid
But not us

We
We spread rumors
For free
We disseminate
Stories
For free
Not worth
Verifying
We work hard
And for free
Circulating
The images
And the murders
Erasing
All the stories
And proclaiming
That there's something
Never seen before
That has just
Happened
Before our eyes
This is how we too
Participate
In the New new
That we touch
With a finger
A New new
That gives different
names to old oceans
To old continents
To islands
Where no one will have ever set foot
It would seem
Uninhabitable islands
It would seem

And in our turn
We rename
We repeat
We slander
We clean
The place
For the new little kings
The little queens

Mia shot
A porn
With a hijab
There's also her operation
Breast surgery
But as for that
Others had done it
Before
And everyone
Knows it
In Los Angeles
And elsewhere
The perfect branding
Is the hijab
and porn

It created this particular excitement
Of a New new thing
Even if maybe it wasn't
The first time
It became the first time
It erased history
All the history
Of other attempts
And it was all that remained
It completely filled
The function of the new
It renewed the terms
Of a sordid Orientalism
It updated
The phantasm
Of the *beurette*
It radicalized it
We'd never seen it before
And yet
It was so familiar
We'd never seen it before
And yet
It was an image
That some people knew
Were waiting for
And so
The veterans
Of the Iraq war
Jerked off
And their children too
In chic universities
They jerked off

All over the world
It made people jerk off
And the Islamists
Didn't like that
Obviously
And the others adored
That they didn't like it
Obviously
For them it was
The masterpiece
Perfect
A reverse
September 11
Vaguely feminist
If you like
What Bush hadn't managed
To do
Because Bin Laden
Was there like a fool
At the back
Of caves
In Tora Bora
In Afghanistan
There where Bush failed
While Bin Laden
Became a famous YouTuber
From the depths
Of those damn caves
Mia succeeded
She'd found
A response
To September 11
Other videos
Somewhere
In Los Angeles
Or not
The hijab and porn
A community

Killing Bin Laden
Had served no purpose
In the end
With this story
No one really
Believed this film
But Mia
Had created
This Delicious
And fatal
New new
That we'll repeat
When it's our turn

Mia Khalifa was born
In Lebanon
Her family left
For the United States
She was 8
At 21
She began
Her very short career
In the industry
As they say
Her family is Christian
And so the thing with the hijab
I don't know if we can say it
But it's a little bit
Of cultural appropriation
Or just a Christian headscarf
Like they used to wear
In Lebanon
In Italy
In Portugal
There's a misunderstanding
About the story of the hijab
All the branding
Of the New new
Is maybe just a misunderstanding
But maybe that's not
The subject
Either
Because Mia is just occupying
An image that was already there
Which she didn't invent
A latent image
That's her stroke of genius
And the universities
The business schools
That welcome her today
As the queen
Of influencers
Are welcoming this image
Of the hijab and porn
That was already there
And when she realizes it
Is new
New
And already
Rotten too.

All the lives that this destroys
Don't matter
All the possible communities
That it prevents
Damages
Don't matter
The whole history
Of violence
Doesn't matter
The only thing that matters
The profits column
The innocent murder
And the freshness
The oblivion of the
New new
The magic
Of this other community
That we celebrate
That we repeat
Ad libitum

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Translation from the French: Liz Young