

66 Simplys

(A concordance to the novel “Kid Despair: More Notes from the Underground” by Paul Brucker)

- This is your evening and I am **simply** tagging along, however ungraciously.
 - To say a certain piece of music is good is **simply** to say you like it—it agrees with your taste, nothing more.
 - You might not like me. During this performance, you may worry about mutual fund fluctuations, daydream about adultery or **simply** nod off.
 - On the other hand, I would feel unnerved if you **simply** got out of your seat and started to dance. Spontaneous, uninhibited frenzy makes me uncomfortable. The lack of restraint, the letting it all hang out, the awkward, sloppy flailing.
 - In elementary school, the choir instructor told me to shut up and **simply** mouth the words because I was pulling everybody (especially him) off-key.
 - Of course, I could **simply** turn to you and ask, “Have you seen the mermaids sing each to each?” or “Will you dare to eat a peach?”
 - I wish I could **simply** blend into—without reproach—whatever milieu I find myself in—from the high-level descion makers on the the 40th floor, to the security guards on the ground floor and, through the revolving door, to the street musicians on the (you guessed it) street.

- My green pants were not meant to go with my jacket. (Am I so inept? Was I that stoned or, **simply**, colorblind when I got dressed?)
- I guess I'm **simply** old-fashioned and too nice of a guy.
- I heave a fistful of snow at the taxi window. Most of the powder **simply** blows back into my face.
- I wait for the sales guy to laugh. He doesn't. He **simply** goes "hmmm" and forces a smile. Perhaps, he has heard this joke, as well, too many times before.
- I **simply** don't have what it takes. The world, in general, doesn't reward people like me.
- Or is the payoff **simply** turning the other cheek and trusting that a supportive universe won't kick you in the butt?
- Is this a manifesto or **simply** a desperate attempt to elevate bellyaching and whining to an art form? I prefer to think of it as "more notes from the underground."
- Perhaps one of us, far less invested in the relationship than the other, is **simply** biding time, stringing the other along until a more suitable or exciting partner is secured.
- Now I **simply** lock my door out of habit.
- I **simply** kill time, looking out the window, watching the not-so-Great Society go by without me.

- Some of people you find on the street are **simply** nuts sprung, half roasted, from the nuthouse. Others have simply had too much of a good thing—liquor has them licked. I know the distance that separates those unfortunates from me is not very long.
- “I **simply** must get to the bottom of this mystery,” I say, placing an index finger on my nose. “Who took my herb?”
- Mother won’t give me any more money. She thinks it’s in my best interests to **simply** bottom out and face myself. Once my pain becomes painful enough, she argues, I will eventually “take responsibility for my life”—whatever that means.
- Either Liza will find the power to say, “no” outright or, more likely, she **simply** won’t have the money.
- More likely, the landlord will **simply** throw all my stuff out on the street one day while I’m at work. How long would my worldly possessions remain on the street? Not long. People will scavenge or outright steal anything.
- Instead, Shannon **simply** stops in front of me, dramatically sniffs the air and says, “Man, you really should invest in a can of Glade.”
- I don’t bother to inform him that he omitted his final consonant. (He probably doesn’t know what a consonant is). I **simply** continue, “But you smoke cigars.”
- Without the high, I will be left, **simply**, as myself.
- I love myself. Why? **Simply** because I’m me and I’m a lovable guy.

- I think Norman stole my pot. Maybe I could **simply** break down his door. Or bribe the housekeeper to open it, but if she really were holier-than-thou, she would refuse the money.
- With such a woman, I would get an instant uplift, **simply** by looking into her friendly face and seeing her smile back at me.
- Of course, I could **simply** spout a cliché. But even this won't do, insists a voice inside me. I would blubber and botch it.
- Whenever I see somebody with a peg leg, a limp or, **simply**, a goofy walk, that refrain comes up: "Got to get back to the Cumberland Mines."
- Do you propose that we **simply** yank off the life support for the poor, the helpless, the elderly?
- I, on the other hand, **simply** walk in a brisk and business-like fashion.
- Even though I knew right off the bat that she was a scam artist, **simply** in it for the money, she might have hit the nail on the head. You see, I've consulted fortunetellers before.
- Would you call that **simply** a polite, indifferent glance or a challenging but friendly invitation?
- Perhaps, it's a Hostess Ho-Ho wrapper or **simply** another, look-alike wrapper?
- My hotshot ad exec "pal" refuses to help me get an interview at his agency. It would be too painful to watch me fail, he says. Ostensibly, to make me feel less hurt, he says some people **simply** don't have what it takes to cut it in

advertising and not having “it” doesn’t make me less of a “valuable person.”

- The toughest part of my present job is **simply** being present. That is, staying awake.
- My co-worker looks so damn efficient, it makes me sick—or is it **simply** my hangover kicking in?
- Every day at work, I try to hide from the fear that it’s **simply** a matter of time before I am found out, exposed as someone who tries to expend as little effort as possible. A chill of shame spirals down my back, as I acknowledge that the corporation would be better served by someone who has its interests at heart.
- Throwing a blue pen into a black receptacle **simply** grates against the sensibility.
- “Oh, this is **simply** ridiculous,” I spout.
- Too bad we didn’t get any snow on Christmas. It **simply** rained that day.
- Beliefs are not that powerful. You can’t get what you want **simply** by wanting it intensely and often enough. I think human desire and will—and even imagination—don’t stand a chance against the laws of the universe. All you can do is simply stick your tongue out at the wall.
- Stunned by my rejoinder (or **simply** fearing my handful of rocks), the youth runs down the alleyway, screaming, “Faggot pervert, faggot pervert!”
- They have the economic leisure, the paid free time to **simply** study and perfect their art. They don’t have to struggle like I do.

- I'm loaded down with so much emotional baggage toward them. Perhaps it's better **simply** not to show up. If I had the gift of salesmanship, on the other hand...
- "If you feel miserable," Gary says, "then **simply** shift and reconfigure your belief system. Choose one that fully supports you. When you have a bad thought, simply thank that part of the mind for sharing and go on."
- "Don't ask permission to ask, **simply** ask," Jeff instructs.
- I **simply** lack the vision and power to take requisite, responsible steps to rectify my lot. You give me well-meant suggestions, in which I immediately see the flaws. What you propose cannot work—maybe for you or the proverbial someone else, but not for me.
- Apparently, that's an acceptable answer or someone else has **simply** buzzed me into her apartment building, no questions asked. Once inside, I turn back to face the shadow man, who gesticulates madly in the street.
- "There is no use complaining. It's God's will. It's **simply** something we, humans, cannot fathom or understand."
- Take for instance, Father's death. What a flop! He **simply** hung on and on, grinning and bearing it. No fear or other emotion expressed. No curiosity. No hope.
- If I were to die tonight, people would **simply** shrug their shoulders and say, "so what?" That is, if they said anything at all.
- I'll have none of your diagnoses and prescriptions tonight. I **simply** want to thaw out and get my rocks off—and I have nowhere else to turn.

- That's **simply** the way the hornet stings. But enough of this shtick already! Let's lighten up.
- Let's **simply** become austere, erect, and sublime.
- Better to **simply** exist and enjoy the simple joys, such as the fragrance from Liza's armpit. Better to simply submerge into the swamp, to dissolve and let Liza and I become one.
- But, I'm **simply** not wired for that.