

BLOW UP

There's a brilliant story of Julio Cortazar's that I particularly like. It's called "Blow Up". Its original title "Las Babas del diablo" or "The Devil's Drool", took on the title "Büyüdükçe" when it was translated into Turkish. Michelangelo Antonioni's film "Blow Up", which won 'best film' at the 1967 Cannes Film Festival, strongly inspired the name because it was adapted from this particular short story of Cortazar's.

In the film and short story, a man who is wandering around aimlessly on a Sunday takes a photo of a couple he sees talking in a park. When he takes the film home and prints it, he notices a silhouette on the ground immediately behind the couple. He enlarges the photo, reprints it, and then blows it up again. As the photo is blown up, he's shocked to see that the silhouette in the background is actually a dead body.

In the story however, the man, after printing the photo, enlarges it in order to re-witness what he's seen and hangs it up opposite his desk. He notices something different every time he looks up from the translation he's working on. The angle of a leaf that's fallen on the ground, its shadow, the shape of a cloud in the background... He's in good spirits. While thinking about why he hung this 'moment' up in front of him, he suddenly begins to see hallucinations of what he's captured in the photo. The more he thinks about it, the more he notices the helplessness of the young man who is being forced into a trap.

The language used by Cortazar in the story is a little different to what the reader is familiar with because the hero is the witness of an event – the narrator – a third person, and first-person who is a part of the event. And this language is a masterful game within the perception of being a witness of a particular moment.

The reader and viewer are both engrossed in this 'dark' moment that's continuously being blown up. The fear grows in you the more the image is blown up because the moment you've feared is now at your door.

I've always thought about how this moment that grew from an 18 page short story to a 110 minute film could later grow again from a single frame.

Murat Pulat answers my questions by taking one of a sequence of moments, just like Michel in the story, in its purest form, and enlarging it with just one single moment; Yes!

Furthermore, he blows up a frame from a sequence of thousands of frames that make up a life-film in such a way that we either see the murder presented to us by Antonioni or Cortazar, or the terror of a hopelessness in the face of a huge conspiracy. To top it all off, by unwillingly transitioning between first person and third person...

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