

Introspection of Understanding

WHO IS ALTISSIMUS Q?

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Why does the name exist and what does it mean to wear such a name?

In this document I aim to answer these questions and get to the core of this identity if I am to become it.

The word 'altissimus' came to me as a moniker in an introspection when I visited Nigeria in the summer of 2023. I was on the balcony of my family house on a cool, village night. Everyone was asleep and I was outside, enveloped in the breeze contemplating as I often did. I was lulled by the rhythm of the river of air threatening to carry my thoughts downstream with every careless tangent. As I wondered, my eyes fixated on the dark horizon that encircled the area. It was

demarcated by a hazy terminus hanging over distant bushes
where the gaze of sparse streetlights dared not go beyond.

I remember that I was in the middle of brainstorming lyrics
for an instrumental I had composed earlier that month and
suddenly had a familiar impulse. The impulse to capture that
feeling that has followed me since time immemorial. A
yearning. A longing for whatever was 'beyond', desperate, like
the panicked spasms of a swimmer who ran out of breath just
before the surface.

A straining of neck muscles.

A glazing of the eyes.

Like trying to gather sand in your hands.

I was always interested in ancient Rome and Latin at different
points in my life and even from an ecclesiastical perspective
as a Catholic. It sounds formal, universal, and revered so I
coalesced the ineffable into the term 'Altissimus'. The 'Q' is
an obvious modifier pointing to my first name (coincidentally,

Altissimus alliterates with my surname). I resonate with this letter, enough to reduce down to it.

It is mysterious, seldom used and sophisticated in form.

But what does wearing the name entail?

Naturally, there is the risk of imposter syndrome paired with an expectation. I anticipate being misinterpreted as egomaniacal, proud and/or fantastical but I will not sway in the wind as long as I can ground myself in legitimacy. But why am I, specifically, Altissimus Q? Could anyone else be him?

I primarily recognise myself in ascent and altitude; being top of the class, inverting underestimation, striving for whatever is the best. But why? Am I trying to prove my worth? Am I trying to hold on to a past reputation? This road is but a mirage without the real costs intertwined with it.

I remember wanting to go beyond it all: beyond the absurd games we play; beyond the lies we all accept; beyond the frameworks that bring harm to the harmless and praise to the predator.

Beyond every smirk, jibe and postulation that swore that I
could only stand tall on the skulls of others.

I am a rude protrusion in a homogenising system.

I am the crab that cut through the bucket.

I am a curve built by seemingly anomalous points and
Altissimus, is my asymptote.

As much as the doubt that occasionally plagues all people
would love to sully any positive self-knowledge and besmirch
any silver lining, the truth remains that Altissimus is not my
crutch, but my crux.

I know this to be true.

I look towards Heaven because I feel it is the only thing
worth pursuing. The only thing that promises to soothe the
ache. The only thing that offers reprieve from the question
reverberating in my cranium...

Who am I supposed to be?

Once upon a time I moved according to a compass not of my own
design. I climbed up because it was the opposite of down.
Whilst Polaris is still the North Star, I view it from the
latitude of my choosing and not my birth.

To aim ever higher.

To go ever further.

To love ever stronger.

Is that, Altissimus?