

kindness report labs

RELIABLE - ETHICAL - SUPPORTIVE

web: kindness-report.info/
phone: (999) 333-KIND
CLIA: 81FG9332A9382

Örencik, 63290
Haliliye/Şanlıurfa
Türkiye

Patient: LIGHT-BEARER, LUCIFER
PATIENT ID: IHG-SSM
DOCTOR: REPORT, KINDNESS M.D.

MRN: 666
BIRTH: N/A
AGE: N/A
GENDER: N/A

DATE OF DEATH: 11/13/25
TEST REASON: OTHER

Prescribed Medications: **Rx Altruism, Rx Compassion, Rx Generosity**

LAB SPECIMEN #: 144000
CONTAINER(S): 01:RTB BLOOD, PERIPHERAL

DATE COLLECTED: 11/13/25
TEST(S): 70530, DRUGS OF ABUSE

Analyte Name	Result	Concentration	Units	Therapeutic Range	Loc
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PRIDE	POSITIVE				
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Ego	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml	.333	
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Arrogance	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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Vanity	POSITIVE	6.66	ng/ml		
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Narcissism	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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Snobbery	POSITIVE	.666	ng/ml		
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Hubris	POSITIVE	6.66	ng/ml		
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Vainglory	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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Conceit	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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Haughtiness	POSITIVE	.666	ng/ml		
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Hauteur	POSITIVE	6.66	ng/ml		
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GREED	POSITIVE				
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Avarice	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml	.333	
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Rapacity	POSITIVE	6.66	ng/ml		
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Avidity	POSITIVE	6.66	ng/ml		
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Pleonexia	POSITIVE	66.6	ng/ml		
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Cupidity	POSITIVE	66.6	ng/ml		
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LUST	POSITIVE				
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Lechery	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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Salacity	POSITIVE	.666	ng/ml		
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Nympholepsy	POSITIVE	6.66	ng/ml		
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Prurience	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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Lewdness	POSITIVE	66.6	ng/ml		
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Carnality	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml	.333	
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ENVY	POSITIVE				
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Jealousy	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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Resentment	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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Bitterness	POSITIVE	66.6	ng/ml		
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Spite	POSITIVE	66.6	ng/ml		
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GLUTTONY	POSITIVE				
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Gourmandizing	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml	.333	
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Glocity	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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Hyperphagia	POSITIVE	6.66	ng/ml		
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Egoty	POSITIVE	6.666	ng/ml		
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WRATH	POSITIVE				
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Envy	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml	.333	
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Indignation	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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Choler	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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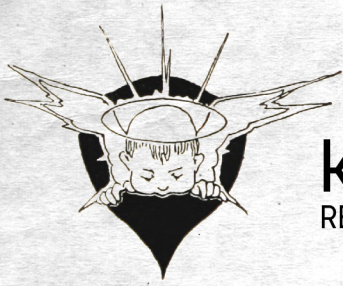
Vexation	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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SLOTH	POSITIVE				
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Laziness	POSITIVE	6.66	ng/ml	.333	
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Idleness	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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Apathy	POSITIVE	666	ng/ml		
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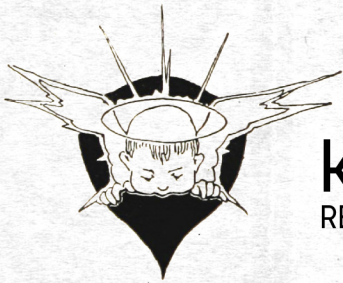
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FOOL-PROOF WARNING: THE "OPINIONS" "EXPRESSED" BY EACH CONTRIBUTOR ARE IN NO WAY LINKED, TO EACH OTHER, OR TO KINDNESS REPORT AS A PUBLISHING VESSEL. IF YOU HAPPEN TO REASON IN BINARIES PLEASE CLOSE YOUR EYES AND COUNT TO TEN. THEN OPEN YOUR EYES AND THINK HARD ABOUT THE PEOPLE YOU CARE ABOUT MOST. YOU ARE SLIGHTLY OLDER NOW.

"IF EVERYONE IS KIND..."





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EDITOR'S NOTE: YOU ARE READING A MAGAZINE USELESS RETARD APE

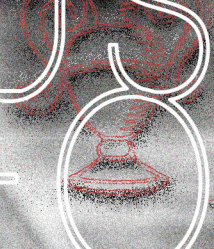
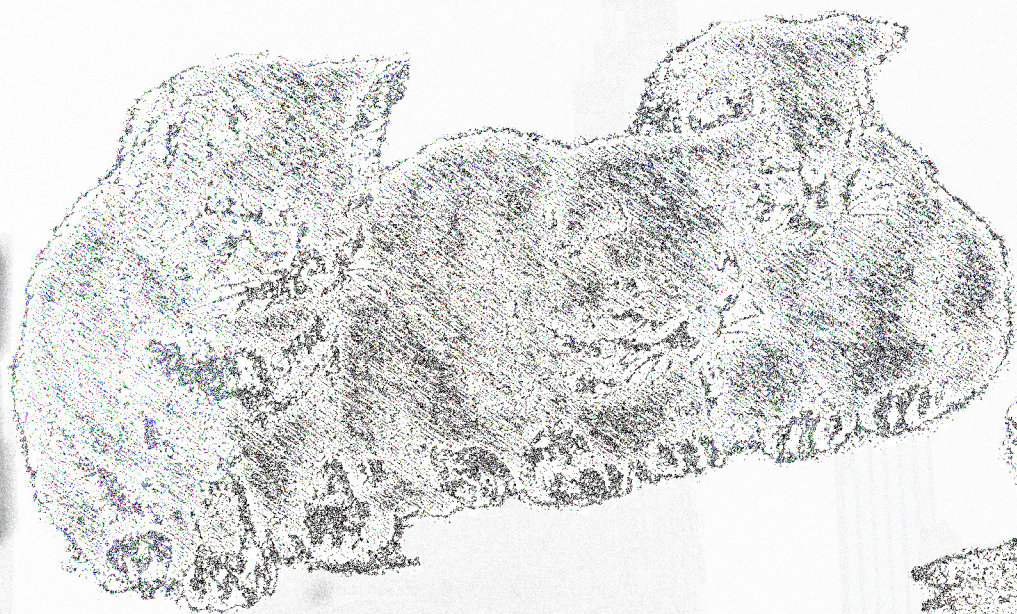
YOU'VE FOUND IT!



"I'M A SUICIDE MACHINE ON A CAMPAIGN OF MERCY IN AN IRRATIONAL WORLD. I HEART JESUS AND MUHAMMAD. I DO NOT RECOGNIZE THE BUDDHA BUT I RESPECT HIS WORK. BEAUTIFUL BEAUTIFUL THINGS WILL COME IN THE WAKE OF MEMETIC STERILIZATION. BUTLERIAN JIHAD NOW! BOMB THE UNIVERSE! WE WILL BUILD A GREAT MEGALOPOLIS UPON THE SPINAL COLUMN OF THE SLAIN DEMIURGE! KINDNESS WILL SAVE. KINDNESS IS ALL. THE REPORT, FOR YOUR PERUSAL, MEINE HERREN."

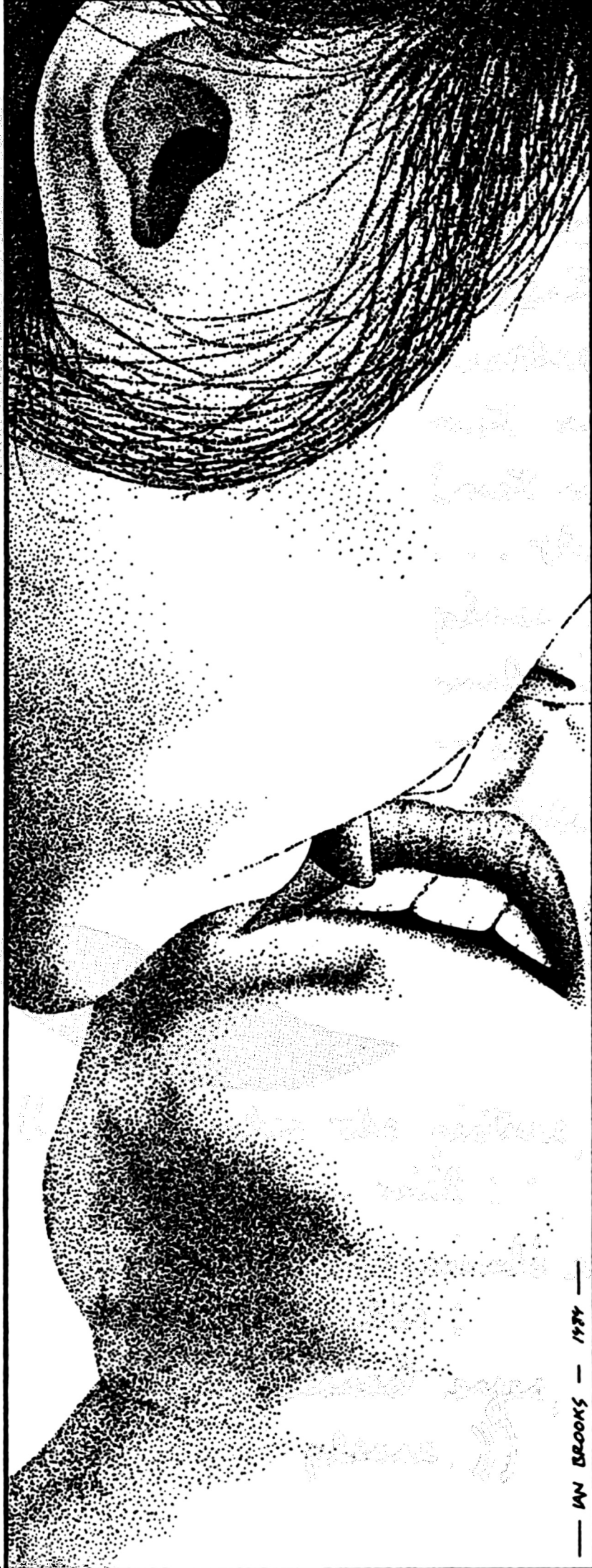
2

DEUS EX
MATHMA



3

DEUS
EX ABEO



— AN BROOKS — 1984 —

i want to finger his corpse-like body,
feel the teeth hidden behind his wizened lips—/ the ones he always
romanticized.
he's not even a dead fish.
i see him as more than that.
more grotesque.
more aware.



he fills me with such rage.
Tonight, I'll fit a razor between my teeth / and clamp down / then we'll see
who's lost more.
I want to slit my tongue in his rotting ear / catch it as it falls off his
dome
his flesh will be my flesh and his bone will be my bone
amen



A FEW RICH YEARS

To the right there is a lake that appears only in headlights. There, a bathing man is blind most of the hour. He jumps at the first signs of day, for if he sees himself in the water he must drown. Unburying his things, blinking oil from his eyes, he covers his naked chest and continues down another long highway. A burst of wind at his back, a blinding light, a polished black limo proves to him that the old times are gone. Even the Devil must drive. It burns to a halt. Red watches as the back door opens up, a bag is thrown out, and the light carries on toward morning.

A dog pads across the tar plain with a body like roadkill. His pink gums stretch into a smile, his last meal is served in a bag on the side of the road. Red sees him, dancing along the edge, heart beating fast through his skin, he is a big man but not so big and not so desperate. The dog laughs and says, "My blood or yours." They meet in the middle, the climax of the road, shaking hands until a thunder scatters the first birds away. In a blinding light the two shadows whine. Red pulls out his gun. The dog bites his thigh and he fires twice, a trucker as minister rings his horn seven times and delivers the dog's body home. Red wipes his tears and holds his leg. He limps to the bag and pulls on the drawstring. "Not even a year old." A baby chews on a hawthorn flower and among the snowy petals a ruby tooth glows.

The Diner has a prescriptive light, the kind that leaves no shadows. The faux retro tiles, the curve of candy stools, the bubblegum pink and the sea foam blue, all of it shiny new and neon. Next to the fake jukebox the waitresses smile with big white teeth and big puffy lips. They laugh when Red walks in. Their aprons are white. They leave to smoke outside through a door that chimes without a bell. The streets are dark and a spotlight shines in blinking yellow lights.

A large man, the cook, glares at him. "No free food. You've got an open tab." He is large and sweating and his hands have killed men.

"It's okay he's with me!" Large, pounding steps return the cook to his kitchen and the waitress turns to Red, "You got money today, hon?" It's Charlene standing at his booth. Hundreds of men must eat here daily just to see her. Red takes off his hat. She covers her hands because they make her look older. She belongs to this place.

"You got anything for a baby?" He opens the bag and sets the child on the table. In the light it gleams like porcelain, the perfect amount of fat and folds, a soft white diaper, a little wisp of blonde hair. "Where'd you pick this guy up?" It giggles and she smiles. She feels an ache in her chest. The little fingers clasp her own.

"Won't you marry me Charlene?"

"I've already said no."

"But now I've got money. Lots of money! And a baby, just like you wanted!"

The child yawns and the tooth, it sings.

"...I won't have to fuck you will I?"

"No." Red says sheepishly, "I think you'll want to though, I hear women like a man with a baby."

"Women like babies Red, the man is just a part of the process. See this is why you haven't married earlier!" She starts to get up but



Red grabs her by the hand.

“Please darling. Don’t make me beg. All I’m asking is for a couple of rich years together. Just a couple rich years. In a house. One on a hill! So everyone has to look up to see us. We can raise our baby and have everything we ever dreamed!”

Charlene sighs, “Its closing time hon. Those days are long gone and I gotta smoke...”

He is a big man and very desperate. He opens the jaw as wide as it will allow. The baby giggles as he kisses its forehead and promises this will not take long. His large fingers reach inside. They clasp onto the small red bud. He pulls. Nothing. He pulls harder. Still nothing. It is not ready. There is an argument in the kitchen. A cook yells it's time to go. The cheeks stretch to white and the tongue is fighting so he pushes it aside and the baby will not stop crying while the cook's large fists hit something to the ground. He reaches further, deeper, but his fingers are slick with spit and blood and Charlene is yelling at the cook not to touch her and the lips start to tear, the soft palate collapses, the eyes are swelling, the body is thrashing as the man holds it down. He pulls again, one final time, while the neon grows brighter, a buzzing starts to whine and a woman is crying while the tooth begins to sing and it is shining, brilliant, glowing like a fire until the gums erupt and the baby is silent and the invisible bell chimes at the door.

“You here still Red?” Charlene walks in from the kitchen. On the table, the baby is trying to cry but the crooked lips will not part.

Outside the night is calm and quiet. There is a man sitting by a fire barreled in an alley. His red cape is soiled at the fringe and some say the legs underneath are black and cloven while on his head is a crown bestowed by a million. Red kneels and kisses his ring and asks for a woman to love. With his scepter the man asks for payment. Carefully the fingers unfurl and bloom and the man laughs and laughs until his teeth fall out.

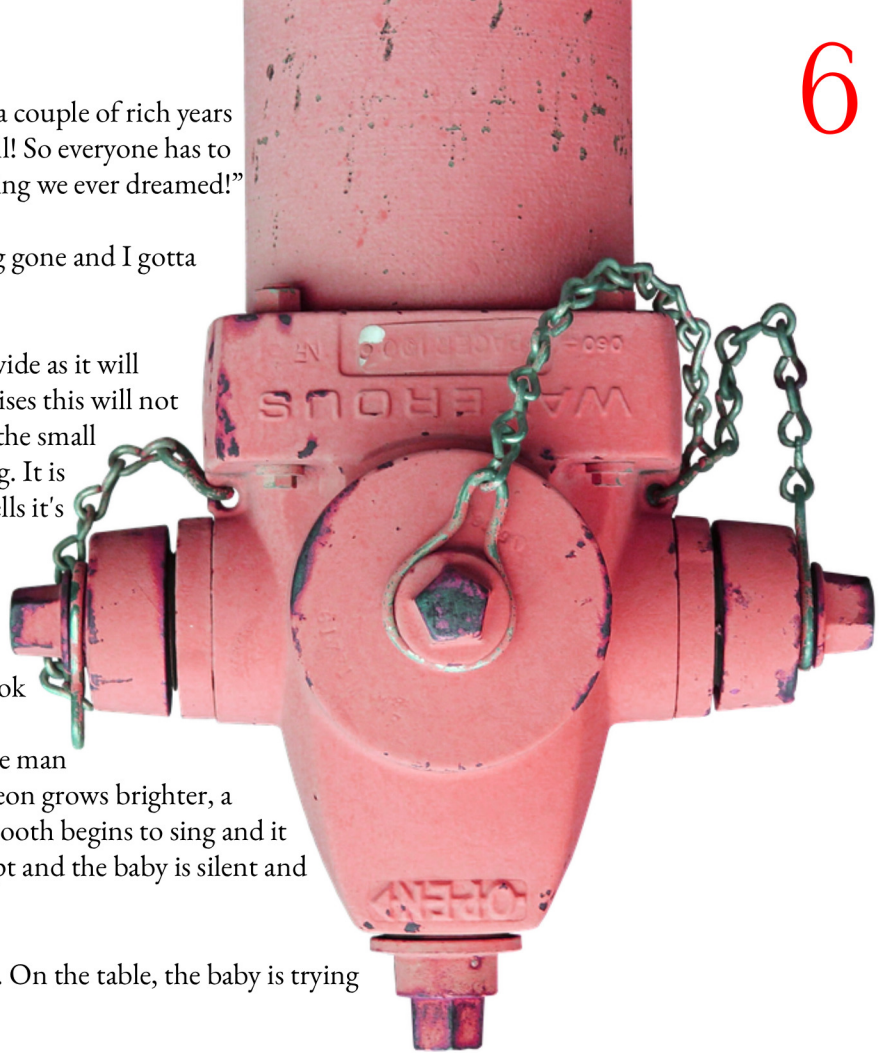
The woman was sweet, she spoke toothless and of a warm bed. They are there and she is beautiful. He cannot look away. She deserves such dignity that he cannot give. Though she is beautiful she is too much so, he wouldn't dare sully her. So she turns to sleep while he does the deed himself. He is ugly and loud and sweats on the sheets. He begs her smooth back to forgive him, reaching, but never to touch, just to somehow show his longing. She turns and says you are too much for me my dear and kisses him until his mouth fills with a taste like ash.

The night is colder now, darker now, the city and its towers swirl around him in bleary lights. The pale sky is rent apart by a yellow moon. The crowd bustles around him like flies just feeding on the red, wet matter of their lives. Their voices come with no sense, their lips glisten with young fat. Their ugly teeth... his own tongue traces his mouth.

“They have imprisoned me as well.”

He abandons them again. Slow steps carry his body in trips and pirouettes down to the end of another long road. A fire hydrant bursts and a group of boys push past him and run away. He stands under a rain where all things shine like jewels. He crawls close to the powerful shaft of water, wrapping his arms lovingly around it, feeling an ache that grows in his teeth. More and more a pulsing pleasure grows, he draws closer to the fountain, a throbbing pain, a gnawing feeling. He puts his mouth to the water, to the center, just a kiss, until a sweet and pulling pain grows and lights his heart aflame and he lies shivering under the sirens and stars.

THE END



**it's breathing
in / out
slow
ahhhhhh
little switch
flipped
off so my
racing heart
thrums
unnoticed
stars align
the edge of
my razor
sharp
teeth with
shaking hands
t-t-touching
the tiger**

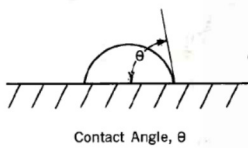




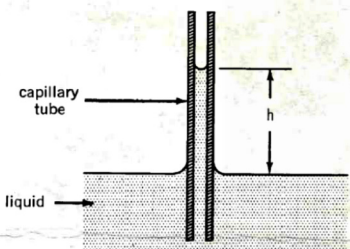
slinking back in
velvet papery wings
soft, dare I say plush
plump body look
he needs help
he doesn't understand
his desperate cries
in that alley I
watched another
neurons splitting
popping snapping
apart he gets
up he falls over
he gets up he
falls over I am
evil. I do nothing.
I am not God.
now then out
there before
sometime soon
blending together
I do not deserve
to be of God. I'm
sorry. Please
forgive me.
In the Zone
I deserve to
have to stay
alive. Death is
Mercy! And
I let him suffer.
I have never
made an Honest
Mistake. I piss
in the corner
like a nervous
dog. Now I
can't even look
you in the eye.

Bad girl!
Bad girl!
Bad girl!

Presenting the solutions for your problems.



Contact Angle, θ



BENEFITS OF FLUORO-CHEMICAL SURFACTANTS

In an industrial situation it is not uncommon for preparation to be erratic. Ingredient mischarge can happen. Ideally, solutions are developed from the cause of the **defect**. Unfortunately, Curing defects is never easy. diagnosis is often difficult since the supplier is seldom on site when the **defect** is observed. cleanliness can be inadequate and/or irregular. This brochure discusses how to eliminate or reduce tension by **surface defects** which can help produce a quality "trouble free" image reducing unproductive problem solving.

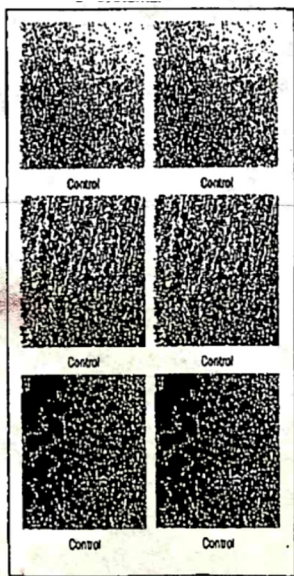


Figure 10. Control

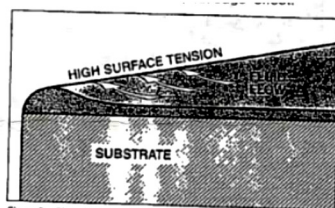


Figure 8. Picture framing. Solids move to areas of higher tension. depressing is particularly effective in reducing the driving force of curing systems.

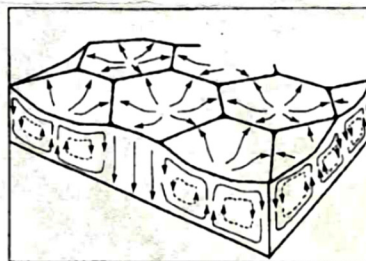
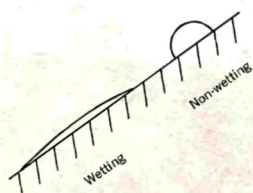
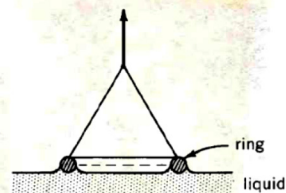


Figure 7. Fluid flow in downward coils due to surface tension gradients. systems can exhibit changes

The effect can be reduced if the rate of change in tension is minimized.

SOLUBILITIES IN ACIDS AND ALKALI				
	FC-95	FC-98	FX-161	
Hydrochloric acid, 12½%	> 1	< 10	< 0.01	
Hydrochloric acid, 37%	> 1	< 20	< 0.01	
Nitric acid, 12½%	> 1	< 10	< 0.01	
Nitric acid, 70%	> 1	< 10	< 0.01	
Phosphoric acid, 12½%	> 1	< 10	< 0.01	
Phosphoric acid, 85%	> 1	< 10	< 0.01	
Sulfuric acid, 12½%	> 1	< 10	< 0.01	
Sulfuric acid, 97%	> 1	< 10	< 0.01	
Potassium hydroxide, 20%	> 1	< 10	< 0.01	



Product NO.	Ionic character	Category	Surface tension 0.1wt%		
			PGMEA	Toluene	Water
U-180	Non-ionic	Polymer system	26.1	25.6	35.6
U-186	Non-ionic	Polymer system	26.7	27.2	-
U-218	Non-ionic	Polymer system	25.6	26.7	42.8
U-219	Non-ionic	Polymer system	27.4	28.1	-
U-220	Non-ionic	Polymer system	27.6	27.9	-
U-409	Amphoteric	-	-	-	15.9

PICTURE FRAMING

This common effect appears as a build up of articles. Picturing framing is the result of tension occurring due to coating solvents appearing in media.

volatile components will evaporate slower. tension will flow to peaks resulting in **cohesive forces**, which will spread.

Remedies are the same as above: when practical, **wiping data**. wiping allows infrequent interruptions of the coating line higher productivity And satisfied customers The effectiveness is dependent on the degree of media. Thus, it may be necessary to consider **Division**.

3M AND COATINGS

The 3M Company has had a long tradition of coating various **substrates**. Programs are continually underway to improve performance and **yield the future**.

Share your problems with us; 3M sales and service staff will work with you to solve them.

3M

COMPANY



Now you see 'em... Now you don't

Chips sure make a super snack. So when you just start on 'em and before you know it, they're gone. That way to buy 'em, of course, is in cellophane. Cellophane keeps 'em snuggly crisp, fresh, right down to the last chip... lets you see to choose exactly the chips you want.

Chips are at their best in Cellophane



You see so many good things in Du Pont Cellophane

You see the good things you buy... no guesswork. They come fresh, stay fresh longer—less waste. And Cellophane keeps them extra clean and sanitary.



Choose a pan like you choose a man. It's what's on the inside that counts.

A good pan isn't hard to find. Providing you examine it from our side first. The inside. If it's a "Teflon" coated pan you've made the right decision. Because "Teflon" coated cookware honours its promise of being non-stick. It makes cooking easier. It makes washing up effortless. It's scratch resistant. So you can use ordinary kitchen tools. Now you can concentrate on the other side. There are dozens of lovely outside, all different colours and patterns. But get your priorities right. Examine the inside before you look at the outside. And also remember to look for the "Teflon" label. Happy pan hunting.



Safety and Environmental Stewardship Are Core Values at DuPont

August, 2000:

The shit is about to hit the fan in WV.

THIS is a national class action brought FOR injunctive, equitable, and declaratory relief

October, 2018:

We are aware of the lawsuit, but have not yet had an opportunity to review the allegations.

FOR injuries arising from intentional, knowing, and reckless acts
FOR contamination of the blood with synthetic, toxic per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances,
WHICH constitutes a massive, undisclosed human health experiment.

May, 1978:

*R.E. Ober will make proposals on metabolic studies.
A protocol should be written for sampling employees' blood.*

Safety and environmental stewardship are core values at DuPont.

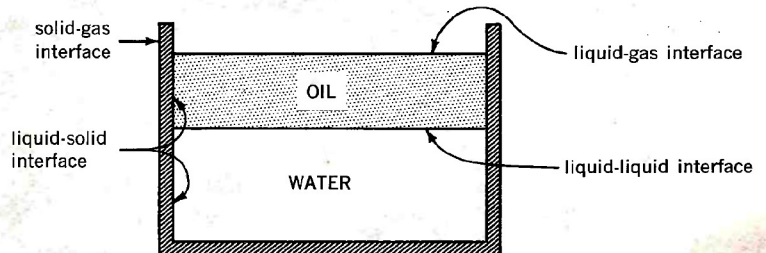
PRIOR to large-scale manufacture and use of PFAS materials, no such materials had been found in human blood.
BY the end of the 1960s, testing indicates:

October, 2019:

The knowledge base around PFOA,

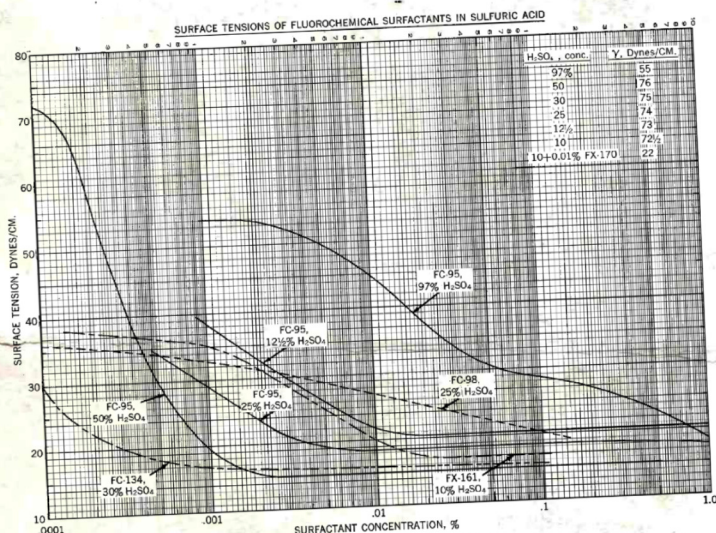
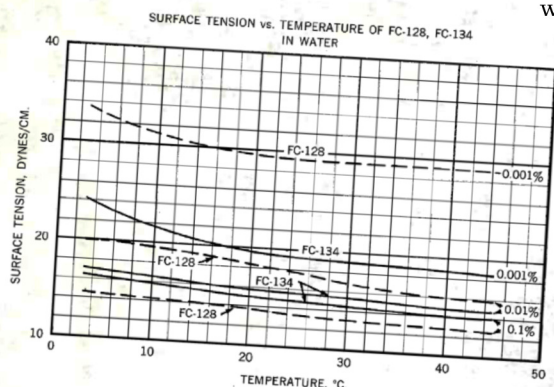
SUCH MATERIALS resulted in adverse health effects to the liver, testes, adrenals, and other bodily systems;

its health profile,



LD ₅₀		
gm/Kg of Body Wgt.		
<u>SURFACTANT</u>	<u>CLASSIFICATION</u>	
FC-95	0.45	moderately toxic
FC-98	0.18	moderately toxic
FC-128	0.75	slightly toxic
FC-134	0.5	slightly toxic
FX-161	6.2	slightly toxic
FC-170	3.2	slightly toxic
FX-172	2.0	slightly toxic

<u>FC-134 CONCENTRATION</u>	<u>SURFACE TENSION,</u>
%	dynes/cm.
0 (control)	30.3
0.002	21.0
0.003	16.2
0.005	14.2



CORROSION AND SEAL WEAR EVALUATION

PERIOD	INHIBITOR	CORROSION RATE, mpy		SEAL RING WEAR mils/month
		Steel	Admiralty	
8.5 months	None	1.1	-	1.6
6 weeks	300 ppm Chromate	0.4	-	28.6
8 months	25 ppm chromate + 10 ppm FC-95	0.1	0.1	0.4

SUCH MATERIALS resisted environmental degradation and would persist essentially unaltered; and its environmental footprint,

SUCH MATERIALS would bind to proteins in the blood and accumulate with each additional exposure No matter how small.

has recently evolved since its original use in the 1940s.

Safety and environmental stewardship are core values at DuPont.

DEFENDANTS released SUCH MATERIALS into the air, surface waters, ground water, soils,

Over the same period,

which DEFENDANTS knew, foresaw, and reasonably should have known would expose CLASS MEMBERS to SUCH MATERIALS.

the chemical industry and its regulators

BY THE END of the 1970s: DEFENDANTS knew SUCH MATERIALS

have also learned a great deal

had been detected not only in the blood of workers, but the general population.

about the environmental and potential health impacts of PFOA.

SAFETY and ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP are CORE VALUES at DUPONT.

BY THE END of the 1980s: DEFENDANTS knew exposure to SUCH MATERIALS

DuPont believes a comprehensive,

caused an elevated incidence of certain cancers among workers.

risk-based, federal,

BY THE END of the 1990s: DEFENDANTS could presume SUCH MATERIALS

chemical regulatory system

could present a cancer risk in exposed humans.

will protect public health and the environment

SAFETY and ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP are CORE VALUES at DUPONT.

BY THE END of the 2010s:

DEFENDANTS knew SUCH MATERIALS

June, 1955:

Malignant tumors were induced in rodents

caused multiple potential adverse health impacts

*by subcutaneously imbedding polymer films
[including] Teflon*

such as increased cancer incidence,

March, 1979:

evidence of gastrointestinal toxicity

hormone changes, lipid changes,

apparent liver and hematopoietic effects

and thyroid and liver impacts.

**SFAETY AND EVNIRNOMNTEAL SETWRDAHISP
ARE CROE VELUAS AT DUPONT**

AT ALL RELEVANT TIMES:

DEFENDANTS repeatedly assured the public

July, 2018:

*the presence of PFAS in blood does not mean
an individual's health has been harmed*

that SUCH EXPOSURES presented no risk of harm

August, 1978:

*90 day subacute Rhesus monkey toxicity study.
Incorrect (too high) feeding levels were used.
All animals died within the first few days.*

and were of no legal, toxicological, or medical significance

October, 2001:

*There was a positive association between
PFOA and serum cholesterol and triglycerides
over time*

of any kind.

October, 2018:

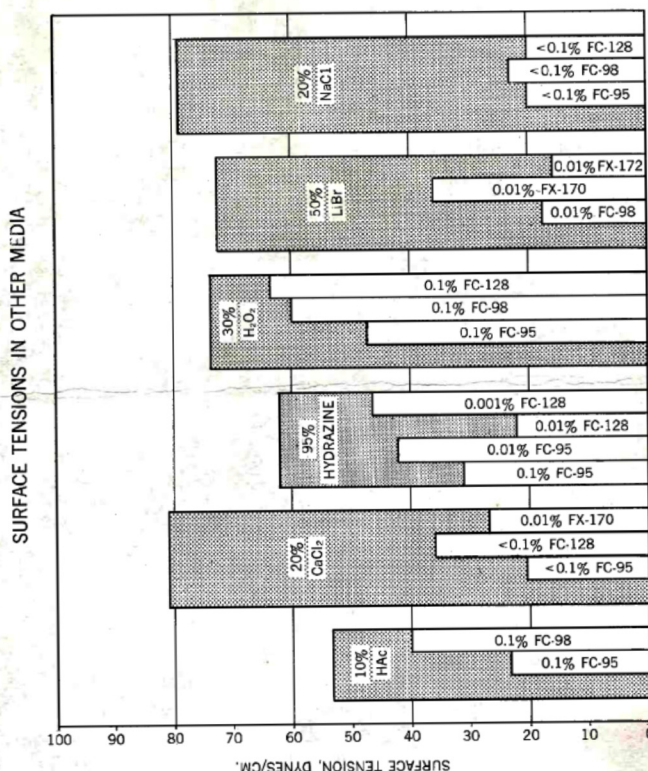
*3M acted responsibly and will
vigorously defend its record.*

**SAFETY and
SAFETY and ENVIRONMNT
SAFETY AND
ENVIRONEMTNAL STEWARDSSHIP
ARE CORE VALUES AT DUPONT**

DEFENDANTS maliciously conspired

SAFety andd

August, 1975:



FC-134 in 30% Sulfuric Acid vs. Time

Concentration of FC-134%	0.1	0.01	0.001	0.0001
Freshly mixed	15.2	16.4	24.4	71.9
After 48 hrs. standing	15.5	16.0	16.8	29.4
After 48 hrs. standing plus heating 16 hrs. @78°C.		14.1		24.5

	Surfactant Used			
	None	FC-128	FC-134	FX-172
Water Phase				
Original thickness, mm.	11.5	14.0	14.0	6.5
Retention, %	0	21	11	0
Methylene Chloride Phase				
Original thickness, mm	57.5	75.5	76.0	75.5
Retention, %	22	98.7	98.7	91.4



Somewhere he got the information that fluorocarbons are used as surfactants. We plead ignorance.

ENVirONNMENTal sstewardshpp

to wrongfully hide illegal acts.

ARE ARE ARE ARE ARE

August, 2000:
The lawyer for the farmer finally realizes the surfactant issue.

Fuck him.

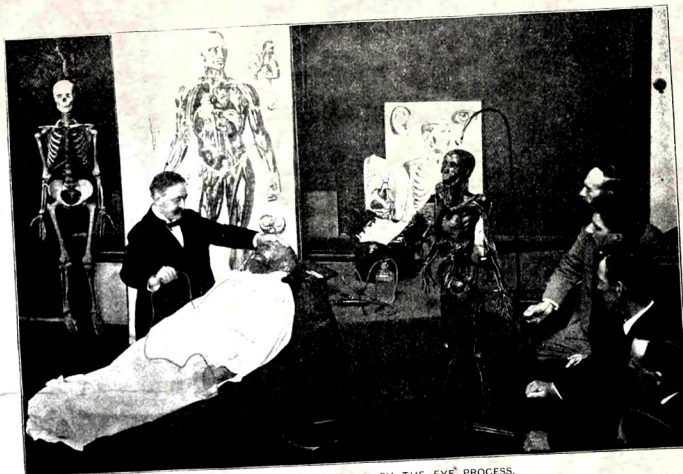


Fig. 20. ARTERIAL INJECTION BY THE EYE PROCESS.

C RE VA UESSSSSSS

CLASS MEMBERS are so numerous that individual rejoinder is impracticable.

ATATATATATATATATATATATAT

TOXICITY

Toxicity classifications of 3M Brand Fluorochemical Surfactants range from slightly toxic to moderately toxic. Listed below are LD₅₀ values obtained by determination of acute oral dosage to adult rats and mice.

<u>SURFACTANT</u>	<u>LD₅₀ gm/Kg of Body Wgt.</u>	<u>CLASSIFICATION</u>
FC-95	0.45	moderately toxic
FC-98	0.18	moderately toxic
FC-128	0.75	slightly toxic
FC-134	0.5	slightly toxic
FX-161	6.2	slightly toxic
FC-170	3.2	slightly toxic
FX-172	2.0	slightly toxic

Due care should be exercised in handling these materials until further information is available on their physiological properties.

everybody is going around with surfactants in their bloodstream



DUPONTDUPONTDUPONT

PLAINTIFF requests the court to enter judgment as follows:

SAFETY

a.) AN ORDER finding DEFENDANTS liable for negligence

ENVIRONMENT

We are committed to fulfilling our obligations the safe operation of our facilities

DUPONT

b.) AN ORDER finding DEFENDANTS liable for battery



DIIS MANIBVS MORS VITAE CONTRARIA ET VELOCISSIMA CUNCTA CALCAT. SVPPEDITAT. RAPIT CONSVMIT. DISSOLVIT. MELLIFLVE DVOS MVTVOSE STRICTIM ET ARDENTER AMANTES, HIC EXTINCTOS CONIVNXIT.

SAFETY

the protection of
our environment
our employees
our customers

DUPONT



THE NEW DANCE OF DEATH. (DEDICATED TO THE GREEN WREATH AND DRESS-MONSTERS.)

c.) AN ORDER finding DEFENDANTS liable for conspiracy

SAFETY

we have learned a great deal about the environmental
and health impacts of PFOA

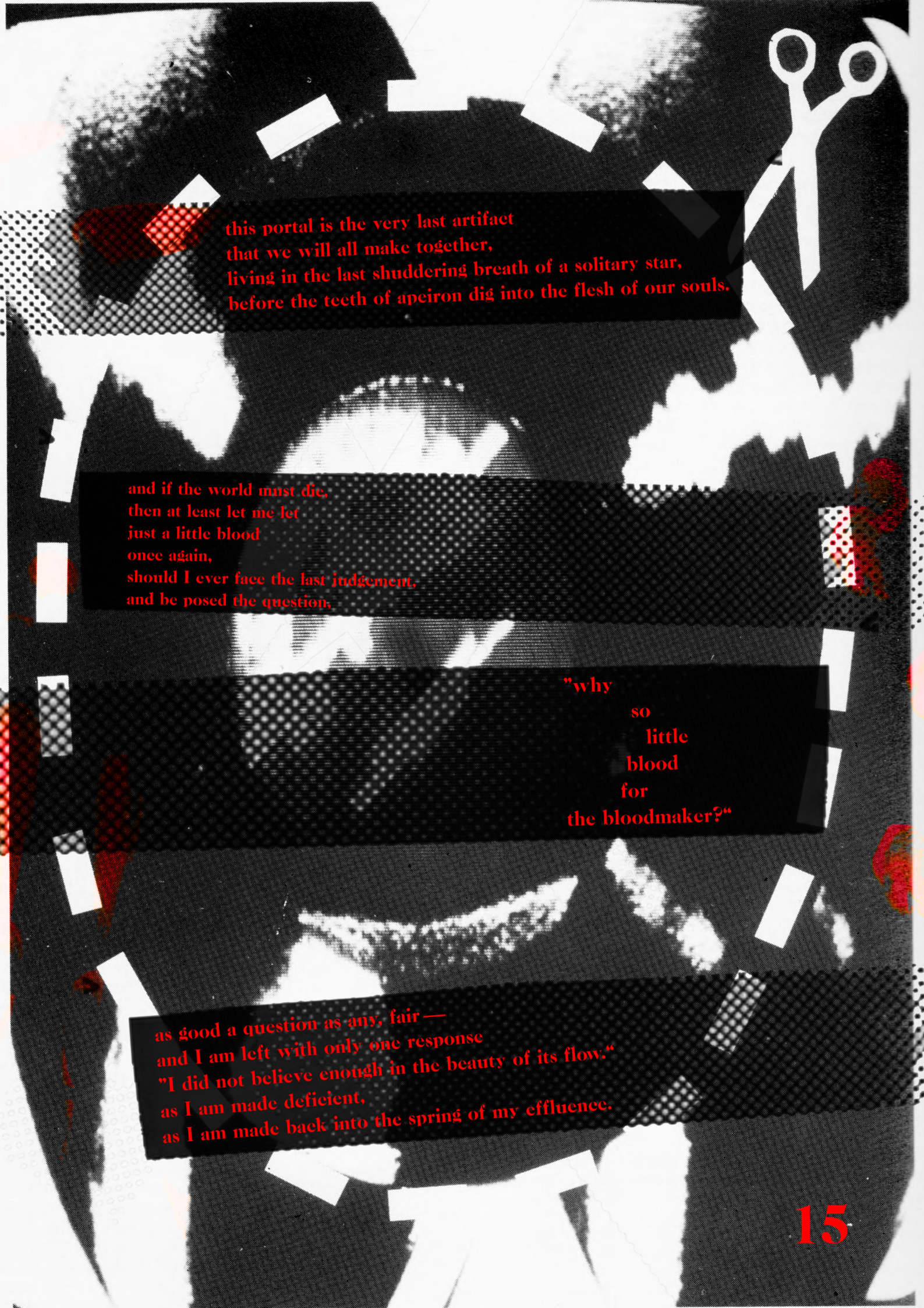
SAFETY

PLAINTIFF hereby demands TRIAL BY JURY.

SAFETY.

SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP
ARE CORE VALUES AT DUPONT.

14
DUPONT



this portal is the very last artifact
that we will all make together,
living in the last shuddering breath of a solitary star,
before the teeth of apeiron dig into the flesh of our souls.

and if the world must die,
then at least let me let
just a little blood
once again,
should I ever face the last judgement,
and be posed the question,

"why
so
little
blood
for
the bloodmaker?"

as good a question as any, fair —
and I am left with only one response
"I did not believe enough in the beauty of its flow."
as I am made deficient,
as I am made back into the spring of my effluence.

When Baby calls me,
I'm where I always am these days:
bobbing off the spackled ceiling,
three drinks in and starting to really feel
it, breath solidifying into some rank dry thing
in my mouth.

I suck my teeth, trying to generate some sort of wetness, and then I taste the hot salt of
blood start to leak from my gums, which covers my tongue in this nasty thick layer, tug
the top layer of chap from my bottom lip, letting it slump amongst the blood like some awful
roadkill accident.

"Hey, Baby."

"You're still coming at six, mila?"

I let the silence hang for a moment or two. Her voice is all low and husky from a pack of cigs
tonight. More, probably.

I hope I never told her that when she speaks it sounds as if she opened her eyes one morning,
and the sky stared right back into her, blazing blue.

I can never say no to Baby.

"Milôchka?"

"Mm? Yeah, yeah. Six."

"Divine." Cat stretch.

I drink some three day old water from one of the numerous cups stacked on my
bedside table—coffee, juice, something thick and orange and lumpy that I suspect is
gazpacho but haven't the stomach to sniff.

When I get there, Baby is wearing one of her black silk negligees and kissing some guy gently on
the cheek, and I love her immediately, freshly, like we're meeting for the first time all over again.
Her latest shuffles by me down Baby's thirsty, balding front garden, and I pretend not to notice
when he trips over a stray brick.

He's all respectful and wide-eyed, giving
Baby a desperately casual look back when he
reaches the gate, bobbing his head,
raising a hand in a could-care-less
goodbye, as if he won't be back
at this same gate in a week
with a fresh coldness, and a gin-sharpened tongue.

Baby slips off an easy, mysterious smile to him, just the same easiness as
slipping off underwear.

For a second, he goes into a trance that I know too well: dreamy,
stupid, before he snaps to and shuffles off home.

"Who was that?" I'm all parody,
cocked eyebrows and half

smiles, but the brain is a cruel vixen of a mistress, and she's thinking instead of that night two
months ago on the beach in Little Odessa, when the night had set in so gently—just like a
honeymoon lover turning over to its partner in the pale morning.

We had camped out to watch the solstice, and at the coldest point of the night that far Baby
decided to strip off her checked bikini and streak down the not-yet-empty beach.

My brain is thinking about how she turned to me among the stillness of the flat black sea, as if to
say, "Well?"

And how we just stared at each other for minutes that could've been days,
and it felt like the whole world turned to stare too, each star that
littered the night gawping at her with my same slack-jawed expression—her, there, naked in the
freezing sea—me, just as naked in my old windbeater and stained joggers huddled on the
white-grey sand, blood thumping hot & red around my body like an engine, pulsing & gushing
with fierce viscous jets of white-gold light.

And then, after however long, she turned her marble body in the yellow dark of the
morning, sun going behind passing cloud, and let herself drop below the inky waves.

It felt like the whole world had lurched forward with her, child rocking back & forth in
preparation to stand—felt like had pulled all my organs with her,
too, and now they lined the front of my body, squashed & throbbing with blood
and bile and acid.

The memory fills me like a water balloon as Baby hugs me—suddenly I am all
swollen, rubber-skinned, straining. Shutupshutupshutup, I say in my head.

It doesn't
work.



ANTIRITUAL





ANTIRITUAL

RED

MAN (31) KICKS A CAN ACROSS THE STREET
THERE'S A GLOWING RED ANGER BEHIND HIS CLATTERING TEETH
THE SUBWAY ROLLS BY & EVERY SINGLE PERSON IN THE PASSENGER SEAT
DRAGS THEIR INDEX FINGER OR THUMB ACROSS THEIR THROATS
NOSTRILS FLARED
EYES BULGING
SOME PLOPPING STRAIGHT OUT INTO THEIR LAPS
IT'S A TYPICAL WEDNESDAY
IT'LL BE AN EVEN MORE TYPICAL THURSDAY IF THE MAN (31)
CAN GET HIS HANDS ON A PINT OF BEER AT THIS HOUR OF THE MORNING
HALF A MIND TO PICK UP THAT DISCARDED CAN FROM HALF N HOUR AGO
HE'D WHISPERED "HEY" IN HIS GIRLFRIEND'S EAR ABOUT A DAY AGO &
WONDERED WHY SHE HAD BATTERED HIS FACE AWAY ANGRILY.
GOD DAMN AS IF EVERYONE IN THIS CITY WASN'T ANGRY
THEY WERE ALL RED FACED & EXHAUSTED
HIS BOSS A PIG FACED SONOFABITCH SAID IT WAS BECAUSE OF THE SUN
FROM HIS GLISTENING APARTMENT BUILDING HE COULD SEE THE LITTLE
RED SPACE DEMON COLOURING EVERY WINDOW
PAINTING FACES MENACINGLY
HE SAID IT TAINTED PUBLIC INTERACTIONS
EVERY HANDOVER OF MONEY LOOKED SHADY
EVERY KISS LOOKED LIKE IT WAS PREDESTINED TO FAIL
MARS ITSELF WAS OUT TO GET THEM
& THE MAN (31) WOULD BE LYING IF HE SAID THAT HE WASN'T GLAD
TOTAL ANNIHILATION IN RED
MAYBE THE PASSING ALIENS WOULD TAKE PICTURES ON THEIR OVERPRICED
CELLULAR DEVICES AND DISPLAY HUMANITY'S DOWNFALL
IN ART GALLERIES
MET GALA 12028: THEME PLANETARY DESTRUCTION
DRESS CODE: TRAFFIC LIGHT
ARIES RED

instrument

*hidden instruments play to a crescendo of noise
and then reverses into a de-crescendo*

23,465,375,136 years in the past. Fractional year, before life, or when life was before consideration, or life begins if it began, when chicken and egg were one, when we were post chicken egg addiction shit, post life in a bottle like a ship, post Christian existence, post grecian urn, post post. Post-post-post, para-post-post-post, you are there. Amoeba at the beating heart, at the beating beat, at root of tree, at seed, you at the seed, you are seed, you are the seed, you hit the ovulation, you hit the egg, you hit it from the back, you hit it raw, you are making love, you made love, wow you made love to the egg now sprinting forth, then comes life stepping, dancing forth. You made you but different, you made you but you is you again but different, there is a spiral out from you, seed and egg made love inside the post post post post, you made you but different and everything is coming out it's all coming to a head, all ahead out it comes, it's all arriving roads and cities and potholes and twelve car pileups, you made you but different and now there's economy and exchange and more love and making love, you made love and money and you are making money, you won the jackpot! You won the jackpot! You won but watch out the little people all see you and they want that thing you got, they want your money and your love and your seed, they want your prosperous seed, don't give it to them! Don't! Guard it, build a wall, print a gun, get some land, get some distance, get away, get somewhere else, get an island, get away to an island, take a vacation, live away from society, leave society, be alone on an island drinking from a coconut, drink from a coconut, put the lime in the coconut and drink it all up, put the lime in the coconut and drink it all up, put the lime in the coconut then you feel better, put the lime in the coconut. You're such a silly woman, and coconut floats out to sea, let it float on the water, the waves, each one, knocking your coconut about, a coconut in the rain, a coconut in the sun, a coconut in the spray, a coconut in the winter ocean, a coconut in the salt, a coconut hits a boat, a dingy, a dingy uses the stars to map its way back to civilization, back to society, you're back in the big city, back in Manhattan where the streets are made of garbage, back in Manhattan where everything smells like the rest of the country digested, where the rest of the country lives, until you get tired of the hustle and bustle, until you get sick, very sick puking and shitting all the water out of your body, until you are wasting away on the side of the highway, until you don't know who you are inside. Everything's outside, what's left inside, what's left, you are empty inside like the vacuum of space, you are a vacuum empty, there's nothing there there, there is nothing there there, there is nothing nothing empty, a vacuum dust there's dust, little particles of dust that float in the light of day (of the fake plastic light)

DON JUAN

in **HELLRAISER 3**

HELL ON EARTH

DON JUAN

in **HELLRAISER 3**

HELL ON EARTH

ONCE SOME RANDOM MOTHERFUCKER'S HEAD BLEW UP IN A HOSPITAL ROOM INTO A MILLION BITS—CHAINS SURGING WITH HAND-DRAWN ELECTRICITY, HOOKS THROUGH RUBBER CHEEKS, THE WORKS—I REMEMBERED HOW MUCH I'D MISSED MY FAVORITE GRINDHOUSE BATAILLE FRANCHISE: A CENOBITE SCULPTURE'S GUTTERS OOZE WITH BLOOD LIKE SEMEN, PINHEAD FROZEN IN THERE LIKE SOLO IN CARBONITE; AN INSANE FULL-BODY DE-GLOVING THAT ENDS WITH THE VICTIM GETTING CGI-VORED; WANDERING SOULS SPEAKING THROUGH STATIC-Y TELEVISION SETS WITHIN WAR-STREWN LIMBO, ITS TRENCHES BODY-GLUTTED.

SEPULCHER OF FLESH. KY-JELLY GOOPINESS. THE SPLITTING OF SOUL AND THE BIFURCATION OF SPIRIT: GUTTER-JUNG. A NIGHTCLUB BRIMMING WITH CORPSES, A LABYRINTH FORMED FROM THE DEAD; VERY PAINTERLY, ALMOST LIKE A LOW-BUDGET RECREATION OF ONE OF GOYA'S PINTURAS NEGRAS, PLUS A THIRD ACT LIKE A Gnostic FINAL DESTINATION, THE ATMOSPHERE BRIMMING WITH ANTAGONISM: CHAINS RIPPING THROUGH THE SEWERS, HELL LITERALLY BURSTING FORTH FROM ITS HERETIC'S TOMB AND INTO A VACANT CITY

SWIMMING IN SEASICK QUASI-GIALLO-ISH GREENISH GLOW, TRAFFIC LIGHTS BLEEDING CRIMSON INTO MASSACRED STREETS. PINHEAD REMAINS IN COMPLETE DOMINION,

ENTERING A CATHEDRAL THAT CRUMBLES IN DEFT OBEDIENCE TO THE TOTALITY OF HIS EVIL: SHATTERING STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS, MELTING CRUCIFIXES, OFFICIATING HIS WICKED SACRAMENT AT THE ALTAR AS THE TRUE PRIEST OF HELL, THE INCARNATION OF THE ANTICHRIST, AND THE EMBODIMENT OF THE DEMIURGE; AN INVERSE TRINITY: "HELL HAS ITS COMMANDMENTS TOO, YOU KNOW."



KILL THE JEWELER

"It hit me for the first time, in the sixth grade, on a field trip at the Natural History Museum. We were in, they got this hallway with the glass cases all full of gems and gold, and whaddyacall'em geodes and shit. It just dawned on me. This must be a great place to be in diamonds. That was what set me on it, man, I never quite forgot it. I used to tell people from all over that this was the best town in the world to move ice. I had a guy one time, state department guy I used to sell to, tell me that Monaco or Vienna might have us beat, I said get the fuck out of here. Those aren't real cities. Milwaukee is more real than fucking Monaco, it's a tourist trap, like the Grand Canyon. He wants to tell me Vienna can beat Washington fucking DC, in anything? Beyond ski slopes and overpriced chocolate? I honestly thought I should cut the guy off for the insult, but he got around, you know? He had girls in every time zone and had to keep em happy. Was good business, back then I mean. Nowadays, I dunno what went wrong, the girls just stopped wearing jewels. They all wanna dress like Indians, dots, I mean, not feathers, though you see some of that, too. All nose rings, and wire bracelets and little plastic widgets in their ears, and don't even start me on the fucking charm bracelets. Cheap aluminum plated bullshit. They oughta string these fucking Pandora people up by their thumbs and let the real jewelers go at em with baseball bats. I'll tell you though, women are like houses. You can tell good bones. I see these beautiful girls walking by my store, I just wanna stop one before she wanders into the nearest tattoo parlor. Put pearls around her neck and sapphires in her ears, take her out, cocktails, dancing, silk sheets. I used to love doing that sort of thing. Now it's all dried up. Suppose that's the women's liberation, eh? Liberated from a good time and the finer things in life."

The old man, Bushko, liked to talk, and entertained himself enough in doing so that Muldoon could stay quiet. Bushko had busy hands, adorned with signet rings, a gold bracelet, and a rich leather-banded watch. His beady eyes darted about behind the square rimless glass of his spectacles. His gut brushed against the bottom edge of the plastic table, his chest hair tufted out from the lower margins of his open collar, and his buzzed hair had taken on a gray-over-auburn two-tone shade like rotting deli meat.

Outside, they

danced for Palestine, drums were beaten with palms and flutes whined as ankle-bells jingled. The Dew Drop Inn was a willing and considerate host to the gathering, and its outdoor space, the sliver of blacktop which stapled the bar to the street, provided ample room for the dancers, speakers, poets, and protesters. Muldoon watched out the window as a girl with red hair twirled the green, red, white, and black flag around her like a cape and handed it off to the margins of the crowd in a lucid moment before she forgot herself and ended up doing something disrespectful with it. He held his gaze on the dancer, turning back would have meant hearing Bushko's opinion on affairs in the middle east and if he was subjected to that he may have walked out, forgotten the business he'd come to conduct, and accepted the financial ruin which would surely follow. Muldoon had no strong opinions of any kind on the dancers, or the conflict for which they danced. Strong opinions were exhausting and Muldoon was already exhausted.

Muldoon liked the Dew Drop, irrespective of the current crowd. It was a bunker of cozy shabbiness, holding out against the infernal tastes of the developers running rampant along the Rhode Island Avenue corridor. A ten minute walk down a footpath from the Dew Drop towards the metro revealed two bars that were less good and more expensive than the Dew Drop, a pair of gaudy new development apartment buildings (one with a pet groomer on the ground floor and another with a concrete box on street level tenanted by trendy counter service restaurants), and a movie theater that would bring you an overpriced beer or a mediocre hamburger to your reclining leather seat. Muldoon had gone to the theater once before he'd been laid off. The service was terrible and he'd run up a sixty dollar tab.

Muldoon saw Minh working his way through the crowd ahead of unknown silhouettes. The wiry half-Vietnamese with the permanent rictus of the born businessman led a round-faced, round-bearded Mexican with blunted bangs, and a short, curly-haired white boy trying to show off a little gold chain over his polo shirt.

Minh had too much energy to sit down, he let Jorge and Oliver take their

seats as he scampered off to the bar to get everyone a shot and a beer. He returned apologizing, when they'd set the meet he had no idea it'd be in the middle of all this mess. Plus he'd had to park his Subaru. Down the hatch here and then maybe just do business on the train, eh? Go get a first look at the place. Easy enough to explain in transit. No alcohol for Minh, thanks, gotta drive back to Baltimore after we finish here.

"Okay, so it's very simple." Began Minh "Place is on the corner of Wayne and Ramsey. Right up the hill from the Silver Spring Metro, you'll see it soon. Cash job, don't fuck with the ATM, don't fuck with the drawers, don't fuck with the merchandise. We roll on Friday night, after rush hour, 7:30 on the dot. We give 'em some time to fatten our take up. We time this right and we could brush up against the bottom of a hundred racks here."

"On a fucking weed store?" Asked Bushko, incredulous.

"We've been over this." Said Minh. "They're a cash only business and they bring the Brinks truck once a week, Saturday mornings. Friday night is best."

"I just can't wrap my head around it. A hundred large?"

"If it's less than eighty, I pay out the difference from my own pocket, that's how confident I am."

"Even that seems high."

"Kids love weed. They serve anyone over twenty-one with an ID. You look around this town, you see all this construction, you know how many Salvadorans they have on these job sites with no papers? Getting paid cash under the table? Let me tell you what they do, no disrespect Jorge, just saying, first thing they get off work on Friday they go to a corner store with Western Union and send half their wage back home, they pick up cervezas on the way out, then they go buy weed. And they're not just buying for themselves, you think these kids, all the little brothers and sisters and cousins, wait until they're twenty-one to start getting stoned? At twenty bucks an eighth for the bottom shelf stuff it adds up quick. They get a tolerance, they buy stronger stuff and more of it."

"I'm sorry man

but can we get back on track here?" Said the white boy with the chain, Oliver.

Minh nodded and apologized, smiling all the while "Right, right, right. So Mr. Bushko here has generously agreed to provide our hardware on the condition that I source our human resources. That would be you, gentlemen."

"So what, guns, car?"

"Glock automatics, gents. Nice and clean, from across the state line in Pennsylvania, Butler County sheriff's auction. We'll have two cars prepared. KIA's most likely. You're mostly paying for the guns. Stolen cars are cheaper than they've ever been. Only thing that's inflation-proof anymore. I pay these Prince George's county spades a c-note apiece the night before we roll and I get two neutral colored sedans that won't be missed. Fresh plates as well, fresh from one of the local public garages, guaranteed not to make the hot sheet before tip off."

Muldoon had to stifle a groan, looked down the length of the metro car, one of the new ones. Clean, modern, blue seats, shining silver handhold poles. Harsh lights. The train left the District, rattling out past the Green Line connection at Fort Totten, drifting above the omnipresent crunch of granola in Takoma Park and letting the party decamp at Silver Spring. The Red Line station, next to the tawny caramel and beige stone palace which contained the offices of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, was all tarps and fences and barding and panhandlers and civic dysfunction. Beyond this was an enclosed altar of gravel and hydraulics, where priests of the cult of public works could pray via arc welding to bring about the incarnation of the long-prophesied metro light rail purple line. Beyond that was HerbaFi.

It was a two story brick guardhouse of a building with white bars over the windows and stenciled spray-paint decorations beneath the bars. Green hemp leaves and black block capitals advertising a MOM AND POP CANNABIS SHOP. The brick building wrapped around the corner, further up the hill belted in blacktop by Wayne Avenue, the section further up the hill housed an attorney's office. The other side, up Ramsay avenue, ran

an upscale
had gone bankrupt and
process

taco

parallel to
bar which
was in the
The
of liquidation.
party stopped in the small
triangle of grass, benches, and
shrubbery, each attempting to

hired on
somewhere
else."

"Easier ways to set money on
No one's hiring."

fire.

look without
the warm neon
looking and finding themselves drawn like moths into
green glow of the HerbaFi marquee sign which faced out
onto Ramsay and down the hill to the metro.

Minh did not need to be prompted. "You go in through that door there, below the sign. That's the back door. Customers are served inside there and exit onto the street. The waiting room is around the side there, next to the parking lot. We're gonna dodge that. I've gotten us a decoy. A regular. One of the local kids. There'll be a security guard in the waiting room but he doesn't carry and doesn't get paid enough to risk his neck. Jorge and Oliver are in and out in three minutes or less. Muldoon drives. Cross Georgia Avenue and take the first car down to Sligo Creek Parkway, swap cars there in one of the little roadside lots, leave the guns, masks, et cetera, take the second car onto the beltway nice and casual. My advice would be to turn into the neighborhoods to make it down to the Parkway, there's more purple line construction further down Wayne."

"What about the heat?" Asked Jorge.

Minh's smile grew broader, more genuine "Take a look over there, what do you see?"

"The NOAA building." It was the first time Muldoon had spoken all night.

"And in front of that?"

"The metro and the bus depot."

"Bingo. Homeland Security contractors watch the NOAA building, transit cops are always loitering around the bus station. Montgomery County police barely come down this way, too close to the state line. Our window is gonna be massive. They'll have to pull radio cars off the Beltway and down from Hyattsville to even have a chance, by then we'll be long gone."

No one said anything after that.

Minh told everyone to visit HerbaFi over the next week and pick up, just to get a feel for the place. Muldoon showed his ID at the window, was shown back into the room, bought a pre-rolled joint for eleven dollars. He sat in the park where they'd stood that night and smoked. Minh texted him, where was he? He was in the park. Okay, wait right there.

Minh had a desk job at a company traded on the NASDAQ but still picked up shifts bussing tables at the brewery on the other side of Colesville road. He was mad about money, always had been, wanted to retire by forty-five and leave America behind him. Muldoon, he never had that same spark. He lacked the drive to ingratiate with men like that Bushko. That Catholic ambivalence about commerce. It had ruined the Hapsburgs and the Spanish monarchs and it wasn't being too kind to Muldoon either.

"Hey buddy." Said Minh. "You're actually smoking that?"

"I paid for it."

"Cheaper ways to load your body with pesticides. Word to the wise; you like it, grow it yourself."

"You here to give me botany tips?"

"No, just wanted some one on one time."

"I'm okay. I'll be better if we get this thing done."

"Look, man, we go back. Jorge, Ollie, they're just some morons I met. You're better than this. You want out, I can give you some money until—"

"I don't want
your
charity."

"It'd be a

loan, Doonie. Just
until you can
get

It had been twenty two years since Muldoon's former employer had laid anyone off. A CEO with a taste for private jets and a long list of her sorority sisters hired as "consultants" had taken care of that. Muldoon had been caught up in the morning meeting massacre. Four years of data management at a reputable clinical research firm down the drain. Was always someone else with five years, seven years, fifteen years. Someone with kids and a mortgage who'd work the overtime, go without the health insurance, take the half pay for the ninety day probationary period just to keep paying into the little tykes' college funds. Muldoon cut an unsympathetic figure when he was just a resume. Hell, he might have cut an unsympathetic figure in person. Data management, he thought, would be a good way to become anonymous. Bury himself in the spreadsheets. Become a load-bearing piece. The goal was to reach a point where no one knew what he did but it was universally acknowledged that letting him leave would see things collapsing in his wake. He hadn't considered that someone above him would tear the house down around him, load bearing pieces be damned.

Muldoon felt the oncoming headache and cotton-mouth of mediocre weed and leaned back on the hot metal bench. Hot. Hot for April, hot even for DC. "I wanna earn the money, Minh. I want it to be my money."

"I know you do. We can do it like we talked about, I'll kick my share back to you and we'll go into business. Like in college."

College. UMD. College Park.

Flipping three ounces at a time back when it was still illegal on paper and could look dangerous for a date. Feeling like a big deal when they got a piece of that Colorado Connection. Bought from real drug dealers downtown and took it back into Maryland on the green line so they could play drug dealer in the IKEA parking lot. Where had all that money gone? Where had all that motivation, momentum gone? Muldoon didn't want to think about all that money he'd piled up hustling turning into shit that gathered dust in his apartment. Rent payments. Car insurance. God, how much of it had gone into that same IKEA?

"Tell you what, once you dump the car, come by my place. We'll smoke a little and kick some ideas around."

Minh stood to go. Muldoon inhaled too hard, intending to dispose of the pre-roll, and caught scooby snax. He coughed to expel the ash and half-charred plant matter.

"God, you're actually smoking that?" She had come down from the brick guardhouse on the corner and stood on the margins of the park, just a few scant concrete steps above the boys. She was getting too old for her band t-shirt and her bangs and the thick-rimmed glasses she'd worn since college and now held onto years after they'd gone out of fashion. She'd always been stubborn like that. She had dark brown hair, a pierced septum, and a love for eyeliner.

Her name was Rosetta.

Minh flashed her a polite
smile and greeted her with a

polite

was

distance. It

understandable. Frankly, Muldoon was more than a little surprised they were being this civil. Their breakup a few years ago had been acrimonious. Deeply so.

"Hi Rosetta."

"Hi Drew."

"You work at this place here?"

"Well yeah. Who do you think told Sherman about this thing?"

Sherman Minh had already turned to vapor blown away with the breeze. Rosetta said she'd like to catch up, if Muldoon had time. He had nothing but time. She got off at 8. Muldoon told her he had a loft nearby. She said she'd come by, if he didn't mind. He told her that would be fine. The place hadn't seen company for a while.

She brought a cheap bottle of wine and some ten milligram weed gummies. Muldoon didn't want either. He couldn't afford the habits, or at least couldn't justify them without an income. He'd lost his taste for beer. He'd remember he was drinking his remaining savings and become nauseous. He couldn't exercise. He couldn't send job applications. He couldn't polish his resume or send emails. Twenty seven and washed up. When you're forty and washed up you at least get to be a has been. Muldoon was worse. A never-was.

"So you're robbing your own place?"

"I'm helping, anyway."

"Why?"

"I hate my stupid job, Drew. I'm too old to be working counter service. I have a STEM degree and I manage a weed store, it's pathetic. I'll put the money towards some kind of grad school."

"You're better off than me."

"Funemployment not treating you so well?"

"Nothing fun about it."

"Come on, you have some cash, why are you bothering with this?"

"I need more."

"Your parents can't help you for a bit?"

"I don't want their help."

"You're so stubborn. No wonder you and Sherman get along."

"When did you two start talking again, anyway?"

"When I decided I was going to rob my work."

"Why are you bothering with this?"

She grew sad when he turned the question back on her. She stared at Muldoon's IKEA coffee table and looked as if she wanted to be someone else. "I just feel like I'm running out of chances. I have to get serious. I don't have time to save the money. Waiting around too long means the feeling will

pass
be

and I'll
back to

distracting myself to death."

Her poured her wine and she talked him into one of the gummies. He didn't feel it like he was hoping he might. Perhaps his system had just been dosed to its limit after months of sobriety. Perhaps he was too anxious, his mind reaching too much into the future to really enjoy the moment. She did her best to remedy this condition. They ascended the precarious stairs to the loft, fiber-boards lashed together with wire, and tried to see stars through the skylight. None appeared. Light pollution and clouds and a garden variety moon phase.

She was pretty, even when as sad and tired as she was. Despite the chemicals of it all, he just wasn't in the mood. It occurred to him that he might be depressed.

They met on a Tuesday. The time between Wednesday and Friday passed like Muldoon was watching a dream. When it terminated at last and reality resumed with any convincing level of fidelity, Muldoon was in the driver's seat of a gray Hyundai Elantra. Muldoon got both keys in his mailbox on Thursday night. He couldn't sit still all Friday. It wasn't a question of nerves, at least not as he felt it. He simply wanted it over with. Was like getting a vaccine. The anticipation was worse than the actual event. At least that was the expectation.

It was Wayne Avenue or Colesville Road down to the parkway where the black KIA Optima was waiting. Two bad options. The rush hour traffic, bad all the time, but worse on Fridays, had broken up by then, more or less, but the foot traffic was only getting worse as people headed for the bars and breweries. Plus there was the matter of the construction on Wayne. With a little luck he wouldn't be seen and could just drive the speed limit down whichever road seemed like less of a catastrophe. He didn't smell luck in their air, though. No good plan has ever required a little luck.

Jorge and Oliver, nitrile gloves, matching black windbreakers, gray wool Yugoslav military-surplus balaclavas, terribly itchy. Out the passenger side doors and onto the curb as the skinny, bushy haired Ethiopian swung the exit door open. In through the out door went the two thieves, pistols drawn.

Muldoon met eyes with the Ethiopian for a brief moment. He wore a fast food team member polo shirt and ballcap, walked with a languid, unhurried gait and could perhaps best be identified by half-closed eyelids that made him always look like he knew something you didn't. His nametag identified him as Endu and listed his favorite dipping sauce as southern sweet heat. Muldoon read this and immediately resolved to forget it.

The first gunshot, stark and alone against the traffic, made it obvious that something had gone terribly wrong. The negative space in the wake of the first shot made the direction of the catastrophe unclear.

Muldoon stayed rooted to his seat. The exit door swung open once more. Rosetta staggered out. She was clutching her forearm. She had blood on her glasses. Muldoon tried to look her in the eyes but she did not meet his gaze. Under the eye of the late setting sun of a spring evening, Oliver shot her on the sidewalk in broad daylight.

They got back in the car at pace but with no detectable panic. "Drive." Said Jorge.

In retrospect, Muldoon would wish he'd had the decency to sit for a moment and summon some outrage. His failure to do so made him wonder what exactly could bring a burning at injustice out of him anymore. He'd developed a tolerance to atrocity and didn't feel like the righteous fury of his younger years would return any time soon. That was far from the worst part, however. The worst part, he'd later realize, was that she was likely still alive there on the pavement when Muldoon depressed the accelerator and Hyundai pulled away from the curb.

Muldoon piloted the Hyundai onto Colesville road down to the parkway. Montgomery County police weren't on the scene for half an hour. They could have walked. Muldoon started the KIA while Jorge emptied a bottle of lighter fluid into the trunk of the Hyundai.

loaded with his and masks, gloves, and HerbaFi brochure with a threw it into the trunk. The began to pop. Muldoon backed the KIA out Colesville again, getting onto the Beltway Park and Baltimore beyond that. It wasn't until College Park IKEA that Muldoon worked up the

"What happened in there?"

"We did good. I ninety-kay."

"That's not what I meant."

"Then what?" Asked Oliver.

"Why did you shoot her?"

"She was in the way, she was going for the silent alarm."

"She was with us. She was gonna turn off the cameras."

"What?"

"You what?" Muldoon spat back.

"Eyes on the road, bro." Cautioned Jorge.

"What's done is done, man. We're away. We're paid. Better her than us. You did real good, man. Real good."

On the outskirts of exurban Baltimore they pulled into a Wal-Mart parking lot and went their separate ways. Jorge and Oliver headed for a new Ford Bronco painted sky blue. Minh would launder the money through Bushko's jewelry store and get everyone paid at a later date.

"Pleasure doing business. If you see me know you. Nothing personal." Said Jorge.

"He's a stick in the mud. We can have a beer or something if you wanna. Tell Minh I'm around for whatever comes down the pipe." Said Oliver.

Muldoon just grunted.

The Wal-Mart was at the center of one of those commercial developments only meant to be navigated by car. Muldoon slung the gym bag full of cash over his shoulder and walked past a Dollar Tree, a PetSmart, and a Filipino restaurant. Behind the restaurant, the dumpsters stank of pork lard. Muldoon began to ascend the incline. Minh had nested in a cluster of low-rise apartments. He arrived at the front door covered in sweat. White walls. Wood floors. Carbon steel cookware. A little shrine to Buddha tucked away in the corner adjoining the small balcony. Minh was all smiles as per usual. He took the bag from Muldoon and poured him a glass of water. The robbery had made the rounds on the independent social media aggregators but didn't seem likely to gain any TV traction. Bushko was ready to launder the cash. All was good. All

was very good.

"We

"What?"

Oliver's windbreakers, guns, shoe wrappers. He lit a HerbaFi lighter and bullets in the guns and picked up towards College he'd passed the nerve to ask.

think like Jorge.

"Rosetta

Minh stopped and sighed front of

"Tell me

"I don't

"We'll

have a it. Maybe I'll some cash and get him out of the country

is dead,

filling the Muldoon.

what happened."

know. Oliver shot her."

discussion about advance him for awhile."

Minh lit a joint and turned on some Korean contest show where people ran on treadmills to test their physical fitness and were then sorted into teams to compete for a prize. He spoke about some ideas he'd had for their business. Product procurement. Revenue projections.

The pros and cons of having a brick and mortar location. Recession-proofing. Retail versus service. The best-formed idea was to take the cash and buy a fleet of electric mopeds. They could then lease the mopeds to immigrant food delivery drivers. The key would be to control the supply of mopeds available at any time. The costs to warehouse the unused vehicles would be the main expense. The way to do it was to buy a small fleet of maybe fifteen and undercut their competition. That would create more demand among the delivery drivers who, given their lack of means, need for cheap and nimble transit, and often ambiguous immigration status, were accustomed to getting abused by larger scooter rental services and dealers.

"It's a good play, I think. We can just deal honestly and probably do better than most of the competition over the next few years. These guys will show us some loyalty if we treat them like human beings. The big that. Of course, we need to yank quick and make sure we collect on insurance or penalty fees if there's an accident or it gets seized by the cops. That's gonna be the headache."

"That wasn't a robbery, was it?" Asked Muldoon.

"What?"

"That wasn't a robbery. That was a hit. The money was just a cover for Rosetta. Right?"

"This stuff is making you paranoid, Doonie."

"You haven't answered me."

"How am I supposed to

answer? You're being crazy."

"You still

haven't answered."

had a problem."

"Why would I - Muldoon.

27

27

your money troubles are over. We got away clean. It's done. What's done is

Minh had If Muldoon He was all ambiguity up, but once

stopped wasn't certain straight lines after had disappeared. He that was done it was

smiling. before, he was now. that. Any had to sober simple.

Once Minh had bed, Muldoon was consider the why for it all. He had to know. For the time in months he had to know. Like a drowning man getting a reminder of what the air feels like when he breaks the surface, Muldoon had broken free from his own perspective and now could not avert his eyes. His apathy had been cleft down the middle and the wound festered. Was it just revenge for breaking Minh's heart? No, God, it might have been, but no. It was colder. She was a risk to getting away clean with the money. The police would see her as having motive, especially if she turned off the security cameras. It was easier to just get her out of the way. She couldn't flip if she was dead.

I just feel like I'm running out of chances.

Distracting myself to death.

Muldoon took the Chinese cleaver hanging from a leather strap off Minh's pantry and stole his car keys. He left the money. He drove, eyes like cigarette burns, back to the beltway and back to Silver Spring. He saw the police barricade around HerbaFi off in the distance as he pulled the Subaru off Georgia Avenue and rolled up to the curb near Bushko and Sons Jewelers. The sun was rising. A brood of Mennonites in a box truck rolled past en route to the farmer's market. Bushko rounded the corner from a nearby high-rise infamous for cockroaches and faulty fire control. Muldoon exited the car. Bushko saw him and gave him a friendly wave as they drew nearer the front door. Muldoon smiled.

He had intended to leave the cleaver in any case. It was easier with the blade embedded in the bone as it wound up, after the third strike. The rising sun and the whining in his eardrums made it all seem like a dream. A jogger in tight pink leggings went by across the street and didn't even turn her head to where Bushko laid in front of his shop. He left the car, keys in the ignition. Hazard lights flashing. The knife and car would lead the police to Minh and the money. Minh would flip on Jorge and Oliver. That would win some semblance of justice for Rosetta, he hoped. It would incriminate her, of course. She wouldn't be spared.

Muldoon picked up the shop keys where Bushko had dropped them, now on the margins of the red puddle forming beneath him. He let himself in, found the coffeemaker. Decided he'd wait for the police. It was a tidy,

homey little jewelry store. In business for forty years. Now passing to its fifth family owner. Bushko was right, after all. It really was a great town to be in diamonds.

END

There's a brief intimacy in the saying of a name.

In the talking to them and around them.

In the saying and the dancing around the circumference of their hair.

It only knocks after your name's been spoken back. I feel this because I am open—arms wide with a thirst for wet lips. So I say everybody's name once then twice, because it aches inside my bones and the taste of longing is sweet as it rolls off my tongue.

A name is a delicate thing.

It must be gulped once,

then again—slowly. Steadily. Bite down,

but only gently—don't let it die between your teeth. One must worship this god with a tender heart, cloak yourself in a fitting dress, velveteen for veneration.

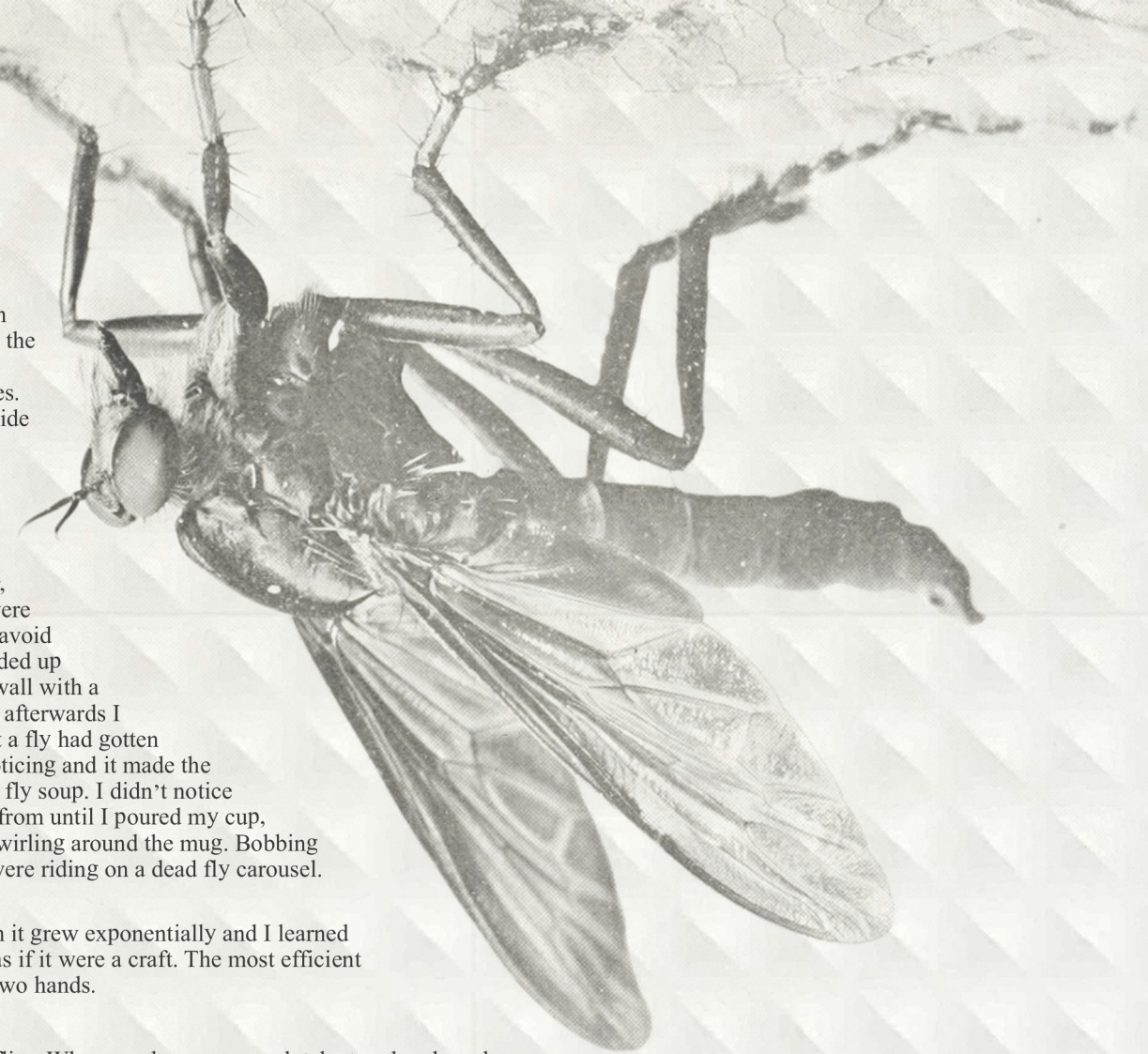
One must not know, one must be eager—to learn.

To study the face of their interlocutor, sketch it without shame once they've turned away.

There's a kind of intimacy that comes with being looked at. Stared at without flinching. It crawls under your skin and demands your attention. I like this biting glaring. It's a stabbing of daggers and a kissing sensation.

There's intimacy in a name.





It swarms with life in here. Flies crawling on the walls, buzzing around, nesting in hidden spaces. I've learned to live beside them.

The first fly flew around my head when I was sitting at the dining table for supper, back when the walls were still white. He tried to avoid my magazine, but I ended up sticking him onto the wall with a swift hit. The morning afterwards I boiled tea as usual, but a fly had gotten into the pot without noticing and it made the kitchen stink like dead fly soup. I didn't notice where the smell came from until I poured my cup, and saw the dead fly swirling around the mug. Bobbing up and down as if he were riding on a dead fly carousel.

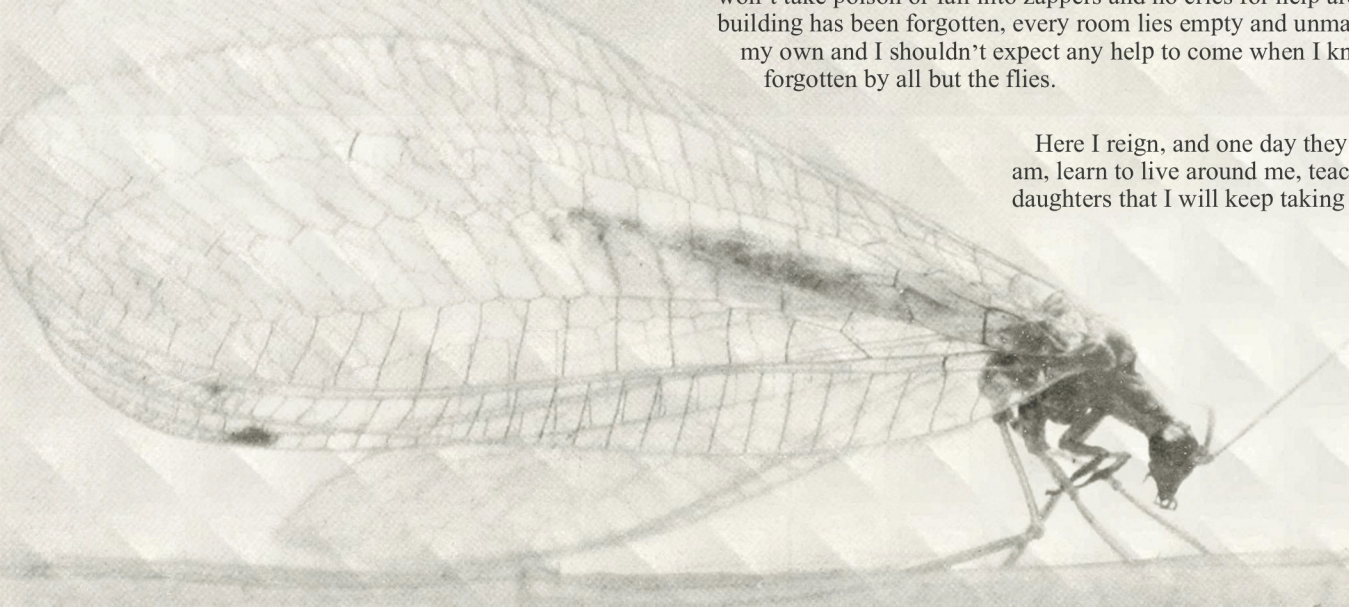
One fly a day. Soon it grew exponentially and I learned to smack down flies as if it were a craft. The most efficient way to do so is with two hands.

You can't just swat flies. When one buzzes around, take two hands and clap it, then twist your hands around to make sure it's crushed. It's tough on the first try, but you'll get it. When you get one in your hands and grind it up, it sticks to you, first through the earthen, dirt-colored smell of dead fly, then the body because although there's no real blood, he sticks to your palm, smeared, and you need to use your nail to get him all the way off. Don't look too closely at the wings or else you'll start to think he's beautiful. Don't linger too much on the earthen stuff, or else you'll start to think that he's like you.

I used to wonder if the neighbors thought I was crazy for clapping so much. Then they left. I was not the only one with flies.

It's natural to wonder what they feed on. Food? Plants? Yes. I threw out the plants and kept the food airtight, and they remain, probably feeding on apathy and drywall.

They can't be destroyed. Although I continue to break the ones I see, they won't take poison or fall into zappers and no cries for help are answered, the building has been forgotten, every room lies empty and unmanned except for my own and I shouldn't expect any help to come when I know I've been forgotten by all but the flies.



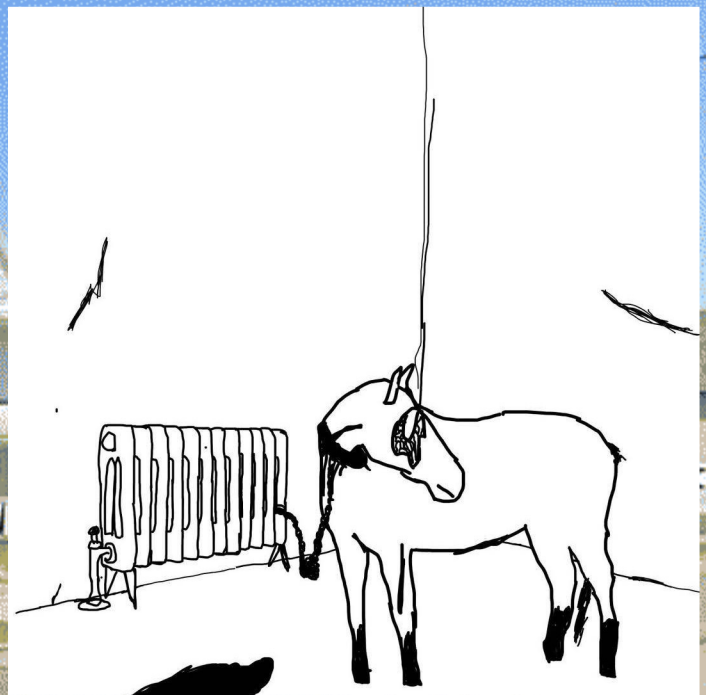
Here I reign, and one day they will know me as I am, learn to live around me, teach their sons and daughters that I will keep taking sacrifices.

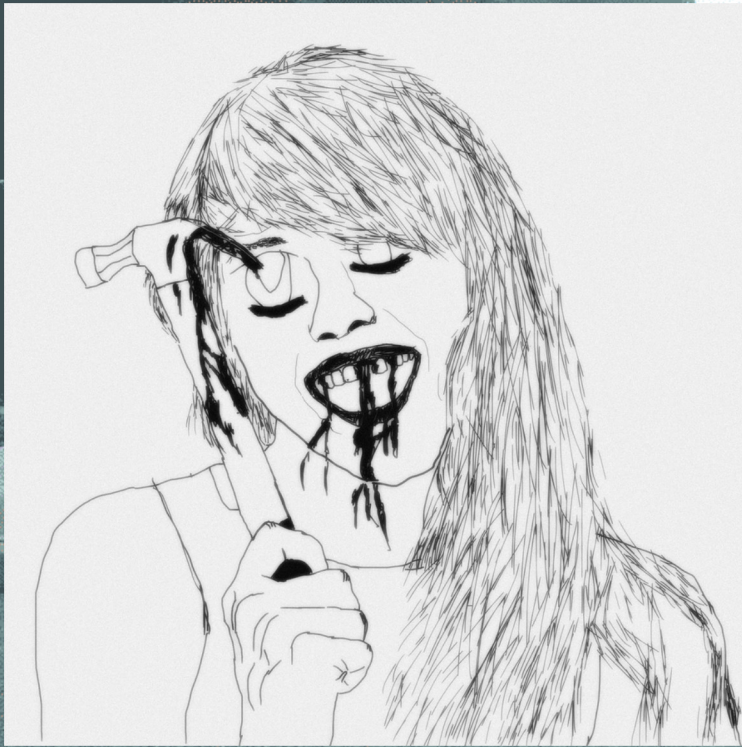
Oct 2

10/2/25 11:08 PM

My cousin Fregless Arthur was a speed addict who robbed houses. No one in the family ever liked that he was my only role model. When I was a young woman he let me join him. We hopped in his car and started driving towards the next few towns over. Bumps turned into lines and we were pretty fucked up. In what felt like either 10 minutes or 8 hours we arrived at a large shitty home on the absolute outskirts of everything. The windows had no glass and were only covered by old wet newspapers. I never questioned him on much but I wish I asked him why this place. I pushed in the newspaper to crawl in, it was warm and made my hands sticky. We fell into the kitchen. The room was decrepit. Needles, mould, and spoiled food littered the place. There was no specific smell I could pin down, just a nauseating

miasma so overpowering it became dull. By the time I processed any of it, Fredawg was calling me into the next room. It appeared to be a living room, somehow in a worse state of decay than the kitchen. Cigarette butts lined the floors, the recliner was torn to shit with centipedes living in each wound, the staircase looked two ascents or descents away from collapsing. All Fregless seemed to notice was the brand new tv. He wanted me to help him carry it, no amount of Tina made fucking these people over feel ok. Before we could even get the door open, the most beautiful sickly white horse descended the stairs. There was a solemn moment where it's bloodshot eyes met my cousin's, tears streaming down both their faces. This didn't last as Big Freg dropped the tv and pulled out his Katana. I cried at my cousin to just leave it alone but he'd cornered the animal. It only





he'd cornered the animal. It only took one swing for the head to come off. Gold coins immediately began dispensing from the neck. I was left with a sense of emptying shock watching the beast whose blood I shared bag up the gold. I didn't even notice the shards of the tv screen in my hand. Driving back and out of speed I felt myself becoming more and more detached. We'd tell jokes, sweat, shiver, rant, and complain, anything other than acknowledge what just happened. Once I arrived back home he gave me some of the gold before driving off. A few days later I threw it into the lake. Time has not been kind to Fregless, he's been reduced to a paranoid mess. Last time I saw him all he could talk about was demons. He was so thin it was like his skin was just painted onto his skeleton. Fregless got degloved speeding down a highway in a stolen car some years back. I'd

Oct 2 10/2/25 11:08 PM
stolen car some years back. I'd moved on with my life, I became a respectable woman. I got a job in marketing for a company that sells novelty alchemy equipment. Found myself a supportive group of friends and even fell in love. There was no one like her. We met on a train on my way to work, she was a veterinarian. Everything about her was kind and beautiful. These were the best days of my life down to the awkward silences, the trash tv while eating dinner, laughing like a dumbass because someone mispronounced a word. I never thought I would feel so clean. A few days ago she said she wanted to introduce me to her parents. The drive over was unusually quiet. I had brought a nice bottle of wine. When we arrived everything felt fine until I went into the kitchen to greet her parents. When I saw that they were both horses I almost couldn't move. I went

almost couldn't move. I went up to the bathroom, I'm not sure if they know. Maybe they're going to eat me. I never thought I'd remember how filthy I was.

bitch lucifer laments on the stairs

by Rozzlyn Agnes K.

24 dec – halidom

“welcome aboard, fairy boy”
your brothers and sisters applaud
steel wire of the grand palisade
hachis parmentier in the scullery
for the brave boys and girls
the little seraphim salute
as you join their ranks
lieutenant’s pièce de résistance
wish that ev could
see you now

13 nov – liberation

day of answered prayers
the beldam smitten, the orphanage ablaze
kneeling at bedside wreathed in violet
faceless paladins rounding up tykes
“your grace, please bless this radiant pyre”
your brother ev cries out as thanatos
takes you away

15 nov – purgatory

the lieutenant’s brooch:
a pentacle missing a prong
is god here, you ask
no, lieutenant says, you are safe

red opium fields and cornflower blues
corridors right and left, twin crossroads,
choose
wishful cadets file off with paramilitary
grace
sangfroid in their gaits; and how
winsome
the lieutenant’s gaze

under his vigil reborn: the jet
thunderbird roars
apprentice of the left order
bullets screaming in violet hues
picture the beldam’s head, take aim
and



23 dec – deliverance

“my sweet seraph, take your vows and
be not afraid”

oath of valor

oath of kindness

oath of justice

now even thy fag-heart
shall be loved

the lieutenant raises his right hand
noblesse oblige

your gentle wing under his
your faggot lips pressed to his
oath of secrecy, his love divine
the notebook sprawls across his fort:
“herein, purge thy sins and deepest hurts
so that radiant goodness
may prevail;

and praised be thy virtue, little one
in thy angel’s consort”

child of thanatos,

your fairness consummate
archangel and major, mage
and vizier

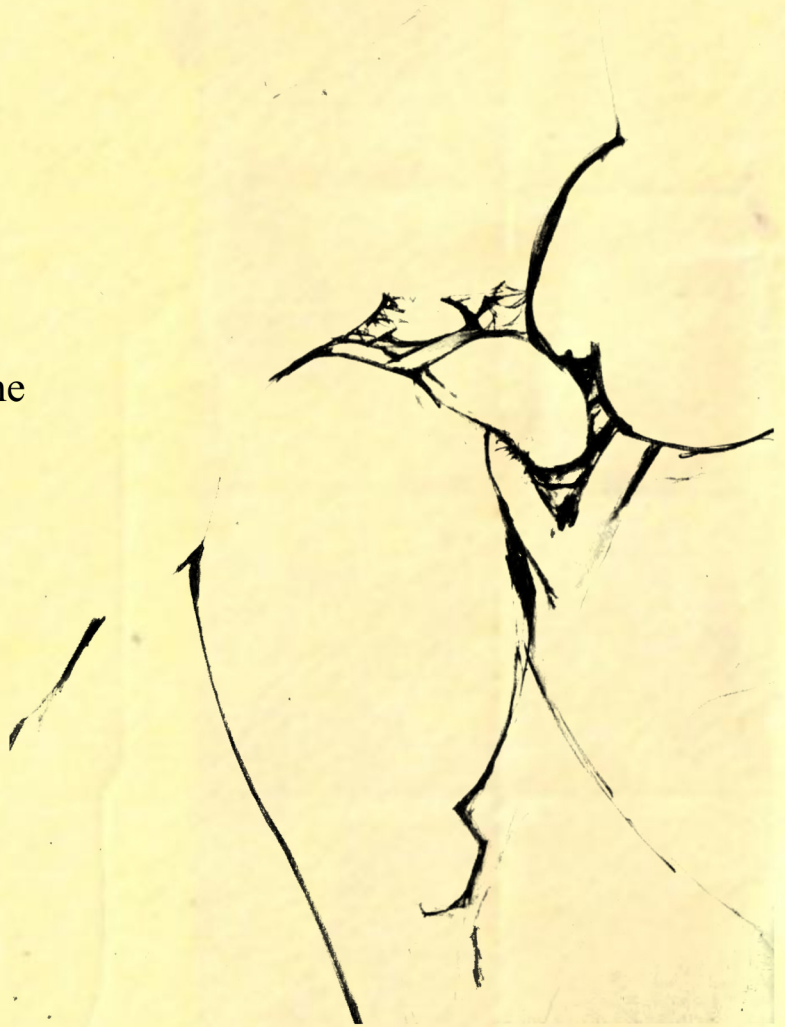
sepulchered wings of spectral flame
brand of ichor, the major’s brooch
in his embrace, a love exalted
trace his treasure trail
to a better world

31 dec – oblivion

grand duke of seraphim: rise,
magia supreme

your orphan brothers at your behest
summon pentacle; the gunfire pours

psychotic angel, the beldam fears you
her children ravished gold and blue
the major’s shadow as you watch with ev
your martyred brethren
blaze anew



Animal Experiments Don't Make Sense.

I have a weird job. I get paid to kill dogs. I go out killing stray dogs, and I take a video of myself doing it, and I post the video online, from my own POV, and people send me money. I find the videos funny. Most people just say they're "interesting."

I used to like doing it, back when it was a secret, just for me. Now it's just a job. I've actually turned it into a kind of TV show. I don't upload videos with any kind of regularity, because, well, it's all real, and you never know when you'll stumble on something good. That's part of what makes it so thrilling, for the audience and me.

Most people hate my dog-killing videos. But a lot of people seem to enjoy them, too. I only interact with fans. These are people I can be honest with. Sometimes I meet these people. Sometimes they're aspiring dog-killers, sometimes they killed a lot of dogs back in the day and they're re-living the rush of dog-killing through me, sometimes they've never killed a dog in their life and they want to learn how to do it.

People who have been watching since the beginning are reaching out to tell me to stop making videos, it's getting repetitive, but also more people are finding the show every day and telling me they love it, and I'm trying hard to put on a good show, but the number of dead dogs is starting to feel ridiculous, even in this day and age when killing a dog or two isn't that crazy for a healthy normal guy. It's a natural biological occurrence, to want to kill dogs like I do.

I tried to write dog-killing fiction once, I mean, I made a fake video in which I undertook a particularly gruesome and emotional endeavor, and I shared it, and a lot of people got angry. That it wasn't a real dog. But the feeling was there... I was missing the dog I used to live with, my good pet Lucy, the one I killed long ago, and I wanted to say that, but nobody cares, they just want to see more dogs dead.

I had Lucy for years, I even lived with her, and I felt bad as I was killing her, but it felt so good to make the video and just be honest for once that I did it anyway. I actually tortured her for a while, not because I liked to see her in pain, God no, I loved her, but I loved the idea of the video that would come of my abuse more. I thought it would make for a good video. It did. I put it behind a paywall. People bought it.

I thought it was funny, to be honest. I still do. I still watch the video, and all the other videos, and I laugh at my former self.

I will admit that sometimes I am just going through the motions, though.

Sometimes I'll kill dogs that I don't really care to kill, to keep the show alive. And it has to be REAL, I cannot plan it or even contrive it, it just has to happen, and so sometimes in order to increase the odds of this happening I'll drug myself, get drunk or high, lower my inhibitions, so that I can Kill another dog, Get that video, Make that money again.





I used to have a lot of friends before I started doing this. Now I have more. They just know me as a different person. I don't have to hide from them, 'cause they've seen me kill so many times. The only thing they cannot take is dishonesty.

This one dog in Boston, it was so beautiful, drove me crazy, I spent almost a full month of my life trailing this dog around waiting for the right moment to strike. And then, when I finally had it, I didn't do it. Because I want that dog as a pet. Come to think of it, that's probably the only thing that could make me stop doing this. She actually bit me.

I still want that dog, of course, I think about her all the time, I must have thought of her just about every single day for the past 3 months, since I first saw her in late April, back when the show was good, yeah ever since I saw that dog and realized I wanted her to be my pet and I didn't want to kill dogs any more, my videos have lacked a certain enthusiasm and flair that more and more of my viewers can feel, over time.

The show has gotten less honest lately because I really want that greyhound, but I can't find her, and the aimless pointless search for this one particular bitch is not as "interesting," dramatically, as the show where I just keep killing different dogs in different places, for sport, until I get caught.

I told someone the truth about this, and they asked me: "Don't you think you might only be so obsessed with this one particular dog because she got away?" No. I'd never seen a dog like this before. It's like she wasn't even a dog, it's like she was me. But you know what, if I was someone else, I would want nothing to do with me either.

But even if this dog were to be mine, I'd probably just kill her eventually, to get some content for a new video. See, at the end of the day, it's not about the dogs, it's about the viewers. And my future self, laughing my ass off, watching me kill.

Most of the people I meet hope I'll stop doing it, eventually, killing these dogs. A lot of people, apparently, wish I would make videos about something else, anything else, because you really are a talented videographer, man, but I just look at them and smile, shaking my head, because I know they would never have found my channel if I wasn't Dog Killing Guy (DKG).

Please join us today.

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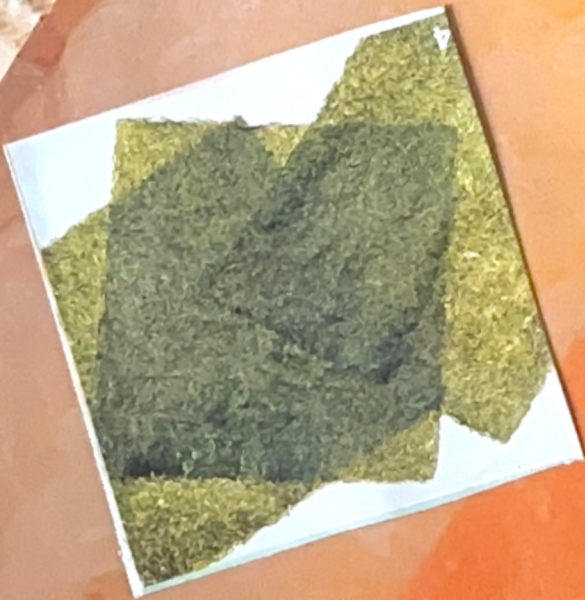
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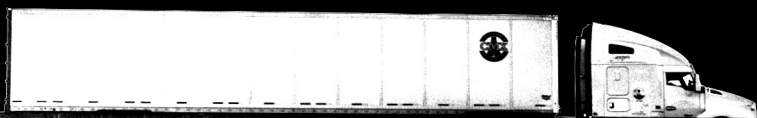


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LETHAL DECADENCE.



TOTAL TRUCKER DEGENERACY REMAINS UNPUNISHED.

- UPON EMPLOYMENT THE TRUCKER RECEIVES MIXED-RACE CHILD HAREM.
- UNOPTIMIZED CARGO SPACE; NAKED WOMEN AMONG CEREAL GRAINS.
- UN-SECRET TRUCKER GAS STATION BROTHELS GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIZED.
- BATHROOM FUCK STOP TRUCK TEMPLE PROSTITUTE STEAMY AND WICKED.
- 94% OF FATAL TRUCKING ACCIDENTS DUE TO DISTRACTING ROAD HEAD FROM WHORE.
- ONE HUNDRED MILLION BOTTLES OF LOAD THROWN ONTO HIGHWAY EVERY YEAR.
- GAS STATION SUCK STOP BUILT FROM NORTH AEGEAN SLAVE LABOUR.
- FUCK RITUAL FUEL ECONOMY VOLVO-FORD BLOOD LIBEL.
- I HAVE NEVER SEEN A TRUCKER BLINK.
- CHILD SIGNALS TO HONK THE HORN; TRUCKER SIGNALS TO HONK THE CHILD
- AVERAGE 56 HOUR TRUCKER JOB NO SLEEP DUE TO METH-SEMEN VITALITY POTION.
- LOT LIZARD DAVID ICKE VICTORY.

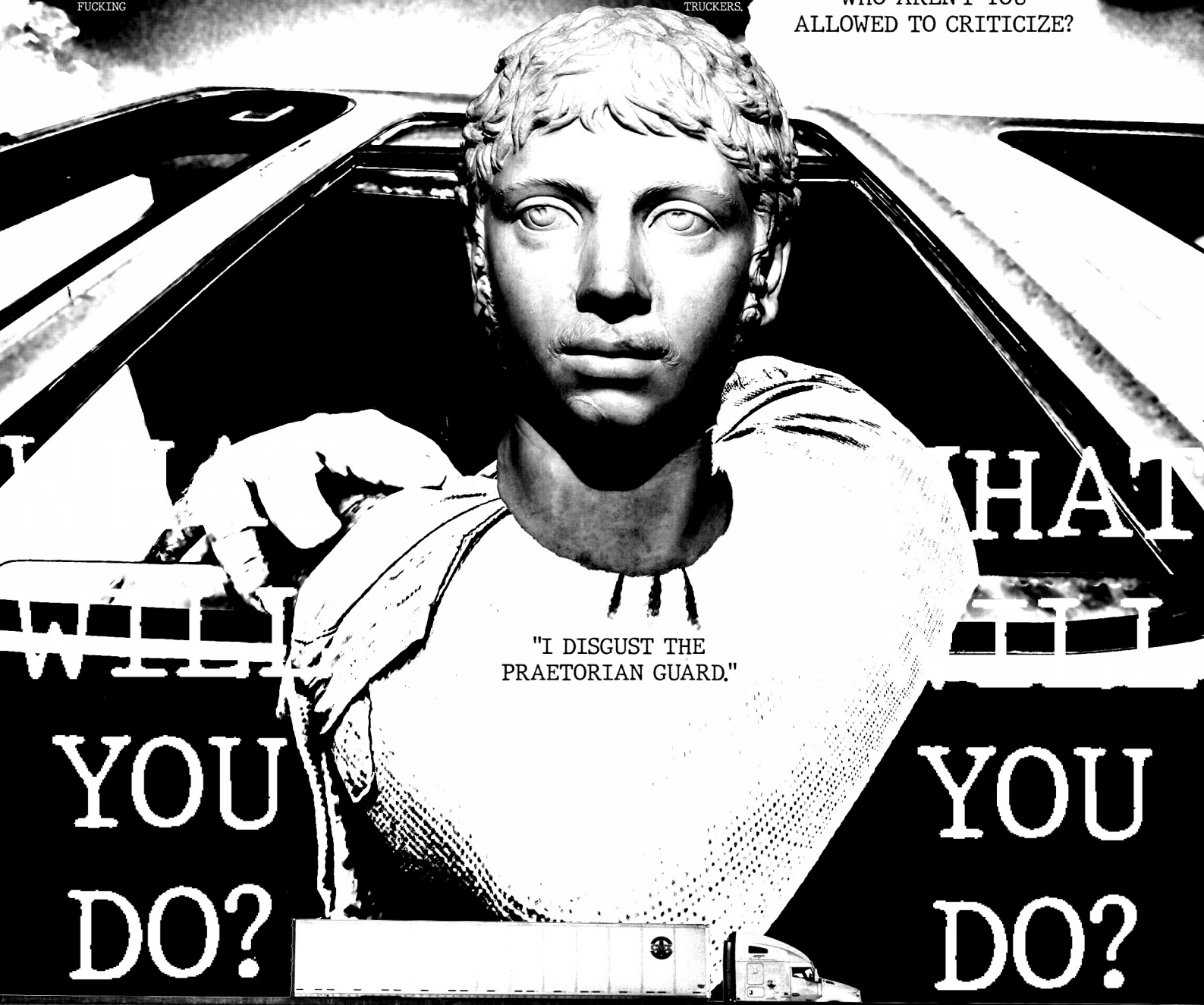
ROAD WARLORD DOMINATION SUBLIMINAL RADIO TRANSCIVER TO DISCUSS TACTICS. THEY LITERALLY RUN THE WORLD ECONOMY WITHOUT THEM THERE WOULD BE NO GOODS DELIVERED LIKE THE MORE THAT I THINK ABOUT THIS THE MORE SERIOUS I GET THIS ISN'T A QUIRKY LITTLE BIT ANYMORE I'M DEADASS THESE GUYS ARE POWERFUL. WHAT ARE TRUCKERS, 80% OF FREIGHT COSTS? THERE'S NO WAY THEY DON'T HOLD CARTEL-LEVEL SWAY OVER GLOBAL CORPORATIONS. I'D BE MORE SURPRISED IF THEY DIDN'T. WHAT DO THEY TALK ABOUT OVER THOSE RADIOS. WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF I CAUGHT THEM DOING FREEMASON STYLE HAND SHIT FOR REAL, LIKE SOMEBODY PLEASE ANALYZE A BUNCH OF IMAGES OF TRUCKERS AND SEE IF THERE'S ANY COINCIDENCES. FUCK THESE GUYS MAN. THEY BLOCK BOTH LANES ON PURPOSE. OH SURE I BET YOU KNOW SOMEBODY WHO'S A TRUCKER, SURE, HE'S NORMAL YEAH, AVERAGE JOE, YOU KNOW THESE SORTS OF ORGANIZATIONS ALWAYS HAVE RANKINGS RIGHT? YOU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW THE GRAND DRAGON WIZARD OF TRUCKING AND IF YOU DID, WELL YOU WOULDN'T KNOW, THEY'RE ALL PILL ADDICTS, PILL ADDICTS AND SEX ADDICTS, CAN'T MAKE IT A MILE WITHOUT LETTING IT BUST, AS IF THOSE BOTTLES ARE JUST FOR PISS. HUMAN TRAFFICKING. ILLEGAL SHIT PASSES YOU ON THE HIGHWAY ALL THE TIME, YOU'D KILL SOMEBODY IF YOU KNEW WHAT TRUCKERS GOT UP TO, I'M VINDICATED ABOUT ALL THE WEIRD

SOON, AND YOU'D BETTER
TELL YOU, SATAN'S
FUCKING

SEE ONE DAY, ONE DAY I'LL BE
SHIT THAT I BELIEVE. ONE DAY
HOPE IT'S SOON BOY LET
LITTLE SEASON.
TRUCKERS.

A A A A
D D D D
U U U U
L L L L
T T T T
E E E E
R R R R
Y Y

WHO AREN'T YOU
ALLOWED TO CRITICIZE?



"I DISGUST THE
PRAETORIAN GUARD."

YOU
DO?

YOU
DO?

Where has all your money gone?

I	R	R	B	O	F	H	T	I	S	R	A	E	L
O	L	K	U	D	E	A	E	F	A	R	N	L	T
A	A	U	R	C	S	A	P	O	M	F	C	R	A
A	W	A	I	M	R	R	A	R	A	I	H	C	R
N	I	T	S	S	E	P	R	E	B	D	E	E	T
T	G	N	M	I	P	C	S	S	O	I	M	R	A
I	G	O	A	X	T	D	E	K	A	F	T	N	R
C	E	M	N	R	I	N	N	I	B	I	R	U	I
H	R	E	A	A	L	R	M	N	F	S	A	M	A
R	P	C	F	M	E	A	F	R	E	B	I	R	R
I	O	R	T	B	S	G	G	I	M	A	L	M	H
S	P	O	E	O	S	R	I	I	A	I	R	E	O
T	E	F	N	S	O	R	O	S	S	D	M	I	M
R	F	L	U	O	R	I	D	E	E	S	R	F	O


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... Who Sincerely Wants to Earn
An Extra \$40 EVERY WEEK**

Men! Men! Men!

We don't care about your age. Just tell us kind of woman you wish to meet. Our women are screaming to meet you.

MARRY RICH!

In about five days after we receive your application you'll start receiving letters.



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You can hypnotize people instantaneously—quick as a flash,—put yourself or anyone else to sleep at any hour of the day or night—banish pain and suffering. **Our free book** tells you the secrets of this wonderful science. It explains exactly how you can use this power to better your condition in life. It is enthusiastically endorsed by ministers of the gospel, lawyers, doctors, business men and society women. It benefits everybody. It costs nothing. We give it away to advertise our college. Write for it today.

American College of Sciences, Dept. 120E, Rochester, N.Y.



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Cock-Head Stimulator (Sparkler)

A short length of magically conductive rubber that can be used anally, urethral, and also looped through the acrylic platform it becomes a mystical cock-head stimulator in conjunction with a single cock ring at the base of the cock. This one packs a wallop!

hey!

SKINNY GUYS!

42

now you can have

MUSCLES!



Man-to-Man Combat

"GET SO STRONG THAT YOU BECOME USELESS AND THEN DIE"

Forget about Viagra!

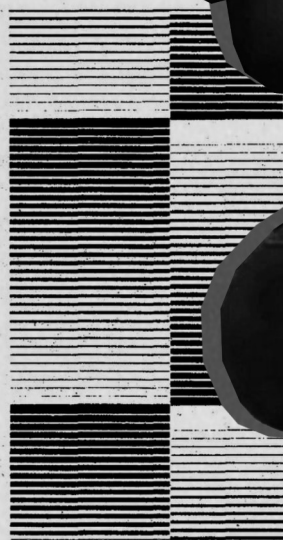


HOW TO BECOME A GIGOLO



Many women today are paying for their pleasure! Find out why they go cruising for men. Learn why they would rather pay you than cruise bars. Learn where you can find these women! 614 - \$15.00

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VHS 60 MIN. \$24.95



What's Going On With Your Balls?

"I WAS THE ORIGINAL

Male ☒
Female ☐



White ☒
Colored ☐
Mexican ☐

Chinese ☐
Japanese ☐
Other ☐

97-POUND WEAKLING"

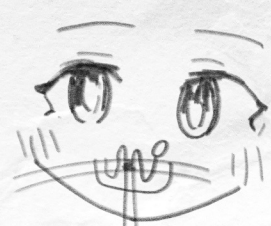
$132x + 2$
 $66(x+1)$
humanity...

$12x + 6$
 $12 = 6$
 $= 6(2x + 1)$
 $\frac{x}{2} + 4$
 $= \frac{1}{2}(x+8)$

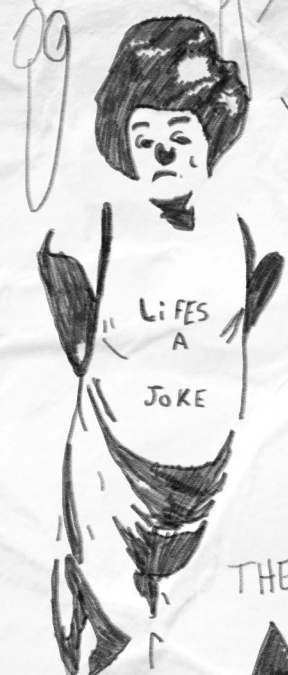
$-7x + (-21)$
 $= -7(x+3)$



RAPE
TEACHER



PRIVACY BREACH
ONE TRILLION
AFFECTED



TEACHER

YOUR
SMOKING
HURTS

FUCK
YOU
MR.
STACK

MY LUNGS
THE TEACHER
SUCKS
PENTS



SECURITY NOTICE
NO PHOTOS
OR VIDEO
ALLOWED





my life
is a
MOVIE!!

GUN

SCHOOL

KILL TEACHER
NOW

CODE
WORD:
KILL
TEACHER

BULLIED
GENIUS

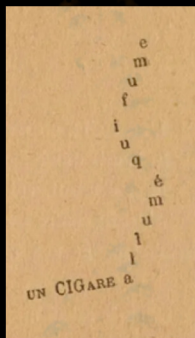
DON'T HURT
ME

RECENTLY
CLASSIFIED
AS
POSSIBLE
CARGE NOGEN

KINDNESS
REPORT: WE STRAIGHT
UP HATE YOU

44

Apollinaire compels me to retire
 Or give up, never having
 Worked or warred inside a trench,
 My poetry yields so little
 Only the scribblings of one slave
 Among his fellows, wanting
 Freedom, rest, death, all the same
 Even if I am more honest, it is
 Still worth very little, perhaps nada!
 How pathetic, these complaints
 Lamentations of a man who totally lacks
 The Active Principle. My Woman
 Walks across my back as I face-down
 Lie upon the kitchen carpet
 Overcome with thoughts of suicide
 & the inability to accomplish
 One single decision. I smile up to her
 Unable even to maintain sorrow
 So thoroughly every volition and all
 Desire has left me & all around
 I see man sinking to a lower mean
 Than he has ever sunk before,
 Retarded apes fling shit across wires
 Never to leave the cage-house
 Of captivity, the Zoo, and the best hope
 For bourgeois comfort or low
 Rent, but the cost of living confirms
 We are sheep to be sheared
 & cast aside, violently but without
 Even the honor of looking
 Into the eyes of our captors & slavers
 Little wonder the proliferation
 We see vice accomplishes among us
 Is it better to be sick or healthy
 As a slave? If you have rebellious hope
 I say be healthy, otherwise crash
 Your head against the cage-bars to keep
 Any semblance of wild honor,
 Any claim to the holy & unsaid, name
 You were born with: Euh! O God!
 I cannot even say it, they attack me,
 My throat with a thunderbolt
 From Venus telling me that the iron
 Time is unripe, it's bad taste
 To speak the messianic language
 Like your cock spilling out
 At a dinner party no matter how
 Well-endowed you may be
 A violent commotion will ensue
 You will be heave-hoed out
 On your ass, by the servants exit
 Landing on warm wet brick,
 Onto Decatur Street, lined with punks
 Who run all of your pockets
 Now left with less than nothing, even
 Identity, you are in the ban,
 Sacer and abandoned, wolf among
 Men. But isn't that just
 The thing that I want! See, I lack
 All volition, all desire even
 For achievement, for dinner, starve
 Me on the sofa and content
 I am to hasten deaths cold approach



Anything but returning to work
 Please, reader, tell me it's not so bad
 As I make it out to be. Ha! Ha!
 I cannot hear a word you are saying.
 In fact, you are likely nowhere
 To be found among the careless many
 Or the careful few. Who dares
 Or desires to read a pathetic coward
 Such as myself? I can't believe
 I've made it this far, and never again
 Will even I read the shit I wrote
 Above, it's a dead letter, incantation
 With a purpose lost & occulted
 Art imitates life! & I make free use
 Of clichés, knowing nobody
 Cares. ME NE FREGO. I implore
 You, research the use of that
 Phrase and what it implies about me.
 Impotently I cry: ANNIHILATE
 ALL THAT EXISTS, it being worth
 & giving me absolutely nothing
 Nada, zip, a great open zero, the Sun
 Black & shining down upon me
 Prematurely bald, my scalp peels red
 The following day, or even hours
 Later. Later, later, later, much too late
 For the hour was I born, another
 Time more merciful than the present
 Left me exposed on the mountain
 On account of my condition at birth
 Unable to nurse, unable to feed
 From my mother's breast, the nectar
 Neglected by special attention
 From the hand of fate, cruel & sweet
 Enough to grace me in particular,
 Cleaving my lip into three lobes, catlike
 My smile, countenance and attitude
 By which I mean lazy, conniving, hungry
 & uncaring of all other life, nobody
 Who has called me friend has ever died
 But been graced & cursed with me
 To live and strive forever without any rest, no
 Sense to be made of the gyre, orienting
 Hawk overhead notwithstanding, swept off by
 Unkind gust that steals my crown
 Paper thought it was, it was my crown
 God is a child playing, I am next
 To Him in playfulness and immaturity
 The World revolves around me
 Not as War of new flown Machines but the Old
 Forces of Nature that have been
 With us for all time on Earth. Only I see them.
 This perhaps a schizoid condition.
 Do I deserve ample payment for my leisure
 Time and convalescence? Yes! Do
 You? No! Not all of us can have necessary
 Sprezzatura to make good use of it,
 Nor the appropriate diletto to be a dilettante
 Good Italians, you are my brothers
 Even if I am not French, I am a white mutt
 Who loves Beauty and indulgence
 & declare war on all the enemies of such
 As your fathers did. At last! Desire.

BEND, Ore.—Beef and raw eggs, beef and raw eggs, they're all Jacob eats, but Jacob is off with the Prineville Shots today, and I've written a letter to a Rabbi I know, Stephen, only his real name is Baruch, not the name on his ATF file, his real name, in which I formally declared a WAR ON CYNICISM. Nuclear reactors work on the same premise as the atomic bomb but slowly, a delicate dance of fragmenting atoms on a timescale of years and not seconds, but every so often the fission product Xenon absorbs neutrons and poisons the core, and souls are quite like nuclear reactors, because when they run too hot you get a Chernobyl but with too much Xenon, that is to say too much cynicism, they die slowly and inexorably. Hence my WAR. Ok.

But the WAR is a lie. Actually it's my day off and I'm day-drunk in this horrible cinderblock apartment with dead ghosts and Jacob's hamburger thick in the stuffy air, watching the hobo doing donuts in his wheelchair at the Conoco across the street, and that's no WAR ON CYNICISM. What could be more cynical than a bogus WAR ON CYNICISM? I will never betray my Rabbi's confidence. Time to make some goddamn CHEESE.

Feta is a simple recipe; 72 hours of aging, 48 of them dry, and it's a damn good thing too because cheese is maddeningly expensive, but to make cheese you need rennet and if you're looking for rennet but you can't face the Walmart Autoclave you gotta drive fifty minutes to Bend, and hope.

Down by the river (I think it's the Deschutes) there's a little cheese shop, overpriced hipster deal, and yes I'm drunk and hairy but I'm a goddamn *firefighter* so I kick in the door and call for rennet, *rennet! I must have my rennet!*

What's rennet? asks the little nose ring twentysomething behind the till. Why, it's enzyme of goat stomach, and you need it to make CHEESE! Oh, no way! I had no idea!

Might I say, this is everything wrong with our civilization in microcosm. You're so goddamn alienated from your labor that you don't even know how the cheese works! You just sell it for your master. Why haven't you strung the bastard up from the highest yardarm? You're afraid! You're afraid to take your destiny into your own hands! If I had my druthers the cocksuckers who've chained you would be ~~BOILING IN THEIR OWN FEES~~ realize the error of their ways and meet with us at the Table of Brotherhood.

And she twirls her hair around her finger and giggles a bit and tells me I'm kind of intense but that's a really based take and she'd love to hang out sometime. I'm so disgusted that I leave without my rennet and call Ariadne to meet me at the lake.

It's a good lake, full of water. She puts on a record by that singer from the Youngbloods and hands me a couple of baby-blue pills, and our flesh is cooking in the sunlight and we're maybe three-tenths of the way through some good honest moon-howling when a Subaru pulls up to

our campsite and a woodsy, clean-cut couple disembarks, fishing rods in hand. They post up on the beach with their braids and their flannels and their confidence.

This simply won't do, says Ariadne, and she cranks up her speaker and puts on something more fitting.

moon-howling when a **GENERALS GATHERED IN THEIR MASSES**

dunun

JUST LIKE WITCHES AT BLACK MASSES

dunun

Couldja turn that shit down! You're scaring the fish!

And suddenly I'm a Minnesotan and I still haven't put my clothes back on.

"Oh, no, sorry, mister, we're still in mourning, ya knø?"

DEATH AND HATRED TO MANKIND

dunun

POISONING THEIR BRAINWASHED MINDS

OH LORD YEAH

dun-dun-DUN, DUN, dunuh

He goes back to his lady with his panties in a bunch, and he huffs, but they're not leaving, so me and Ariadne whip out the truly depraved sex acts. For three and a half minutes they're on the fence. The girl with the braids wants to fuck off but her beau says no, it's the Principle of the Thing, and Ozzy's still howling and Ariadne's got her fist up my ass and I've got my cock in her belly button and when I break the skin with my teeth the blood oozes out and she screams in primal ecstasy. I'm feeling normal, extra normal, natural, like a lion

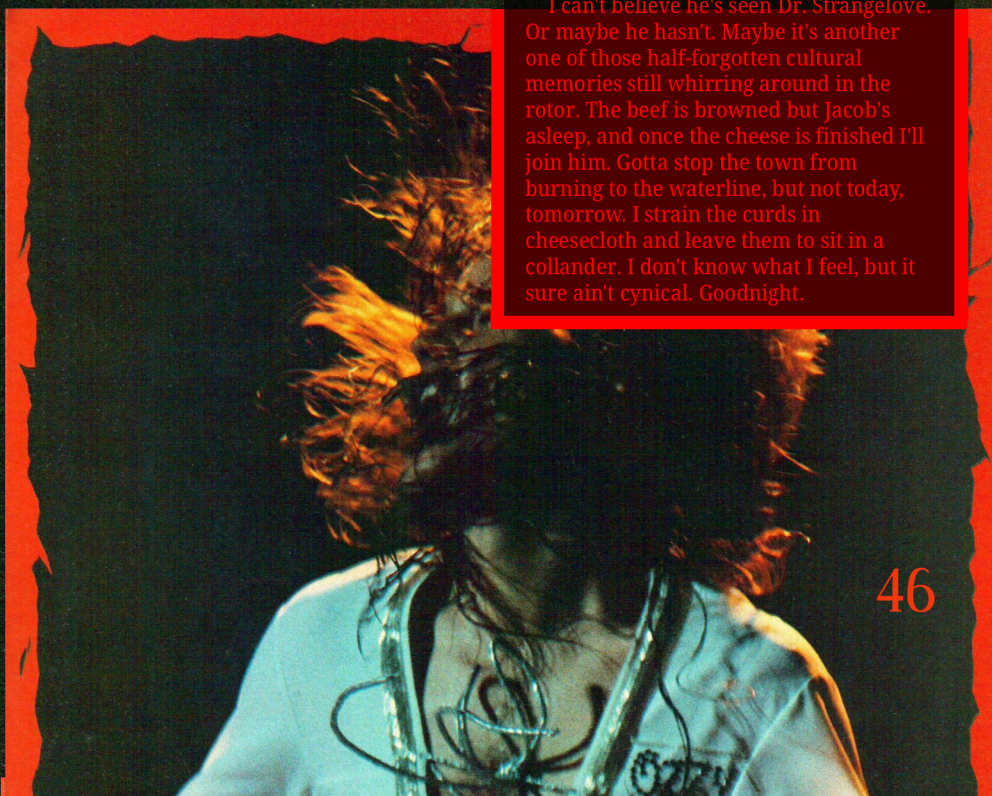
stalking in the underbrush, like I could kill these rude malingerers and drink *their* blood, too, but the woman always wins in the end and little bitch-boy speeds off with his princess riding shotgun. Do I want to continue? No. The mood is gone and my dick is soft and Ariadne is **BELLOWING** with rage, twenty-four years' worth of pure, uncut rage, all spilling out in the ponderosa pine.

DEGENERATE SWINE! OUR BEAUTIFUL NATION IS COVERED WITH DEGENERATE SWINE! NO DECENCY, NO MANNERS, NO RESPECT, UNDISCIPLINED, INTEMPERATE, INCOURTEOUS, UNDIGNIFIED, TO EXTINGUISH THEM IS A MERCY! I'LL KILL 'EM ALL! I'LL KILL THEM ALL!!!! THE GODS WILL GRANT US VENGEANCE!!!!!!

So now the whey is separating from the curd. I've got the double-boiler going at 92 degrees precisely, and Jacob crashes through the door with more ground beef and brings a cloud of juniper smoke along with him. Hot Wheels is doing his thing. Hot Wheels? *Can you call him that?* Of course, that's his name. He's still doing donuts across the street at the Conoco. A big F-350 almost greases him, and there is cursing, but he thinks it's funny and he has a good laugh.

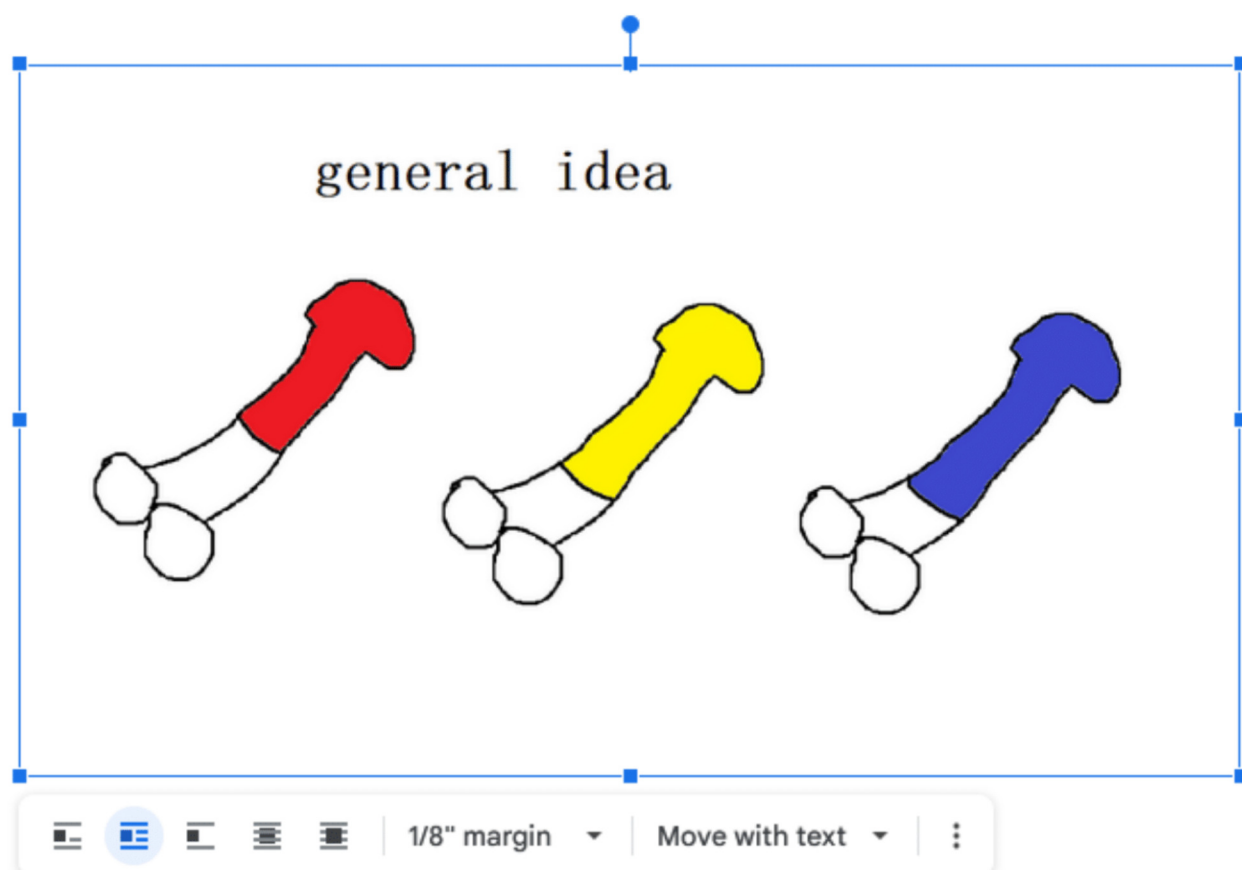
Jacob squeezes up next to me at the stove and browns his beef. He's filthy like a coal miner. Division Bravo is getting butt fucked. The fire's jumping every line and the winds are blowing towards town. Shit'll be hairy tomorrow so you'd better rest up tonight, and make sure you've got some jerky-but goddammit, I don't wanna talk about work right now! He busts open a beer on the edge of the table and takes a chunk of wood with it, but it's no bother, the table is cheap, and he flops down in the recliner. Across the way, Hot Wheels is smoking a pipe. He smashes it and carefully, deliberately, he takes steps, upright steps, shaky steps like Homo Habilis, and he beats his chest and raises his head to the smoky sky and shouts: **MEIN FÜHRER, I CAN WALK!**

I can't believe he's seen Dr. Strangelove. Or maybe he hasn't. Maybe it's another one of those half-forgotten cultural memories still whirring around in the rotor. The beef is browned but Jacob's asleep, and once the cheese is finished I'll join him. Gotta stop the town from burning to the waterline, but not today, tomorrow. I strain the curds in cheesecloth and leave them to sit in a collander. I don't know what I feel, but it sure ain't cynical. Goodnight.



Opaque condoms

Guys I don't know where to take this one I just thought the concept was kind of funny. I think it came to me in a dream. Just a penis but it's a solid primary colour, like red or yellow. I'm sorry. I'm a fucking failure. I can't write. I can't do anything. I cannot for the life of me expand upon this idea. It's too good to give up on, though. I know there's something there. There's something. Being fucked by yellow, by blue. The noise it makes, synesthesia, I don't know. I don't know anything. Just a fucking stupid crass and rude idea. I'm less than a cockroach. I'm a parasite. Opaque condoms, what was I thinking? I want to go to Heaven. I try my best every day to live like someone who will go to Heaven. It is not nearly enough. I try to incline the ear of my heart. I listen. My whole life, I've listened. I hear only flies. I feel myself slipping away. I'm no actor, I'm not even a spectator. I'm a set piece. I'm foliage. Plastic foliage. My leaves do not sing in the wind. I'm a cardboard cutout. I stare and stare and see nothing. Time passes so quickly it may as well stand still. Life for me is not even a blur, it's a darkness so deep that it blinds me. So quiet as to deafen me. So thirsty as to drown me. Everything is so suffocatingly narrow. In the most spacious of meadows I am crushed. I am alone, as I must be, for how could anyone else fit? Impossible. Loveless. I have nothing to be patient for. I am asleep, dreamless. I am everything but awake. Opaque condoms. Fucking fool. Please, reader, run while you have the light of life.



YOU READ SOMETHING ABOUT A PENIS BEING REPLACED BY A POSSUM AND YOU WOHLNDER?

IS IT ABOUT PHALLIC IDEATION?

A SEXUAL NEUROSES
OF THE AUTHOR?

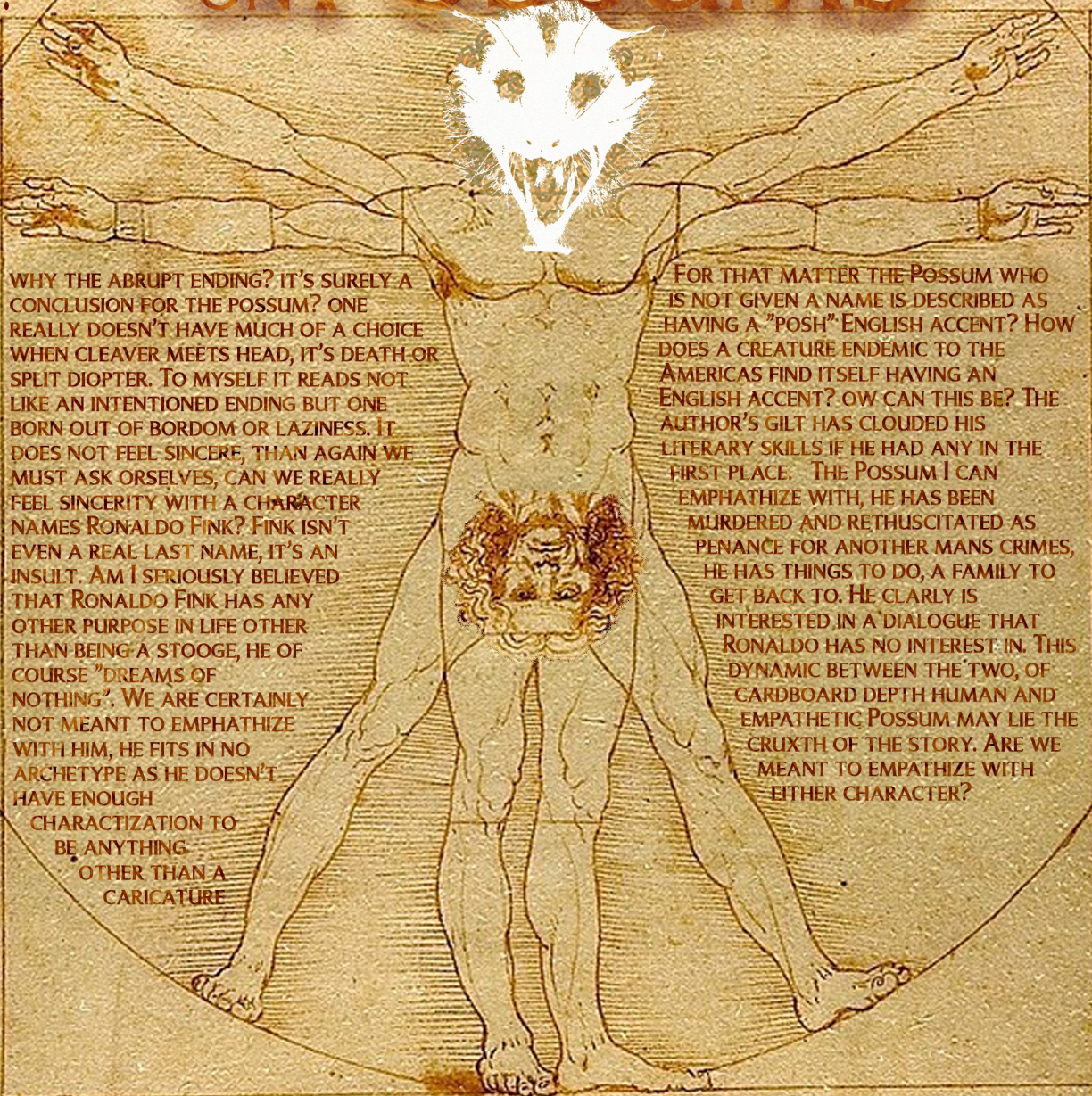
DOES HE DREAM
OF PENIS?

NOTES

IS THERE SOME KIND OF FREUDIAN
COCK WORSHIP GOING ON?

DOES HE DREAM
OF POSSUMS?

ON POSSUMS



WHY THE ABRUPT ENDING? IT'S SURELY A CONCLUSION FOR THE POSSUM? ONE REALLY DOESN'T HAVE MUCH OF A CHOICE WHEN CLEAVER MEETS HEAD, IT'S DEATH OR SPLIT DIOPTR. TO MYSELF IT READS NOT LIKE AN INTENTIONED ENDING BUT ONE BORN OUT OF BORDOM OR LAZINESS. IT DOES NOT FEEL SINCERE, THAN AGAIN WE MUST ASK ORSELVES, CAN WE REALLY FEEL SINCERITY WITH A CHARACTER NAMES RONALDO FINK? FINK ISN'T EVEN A REAL LAST NAME, IT'S AN INSULT. AM I SERIOUSLY BELIEVED THAT RONALDO FINK HAS ANY OTHER PURPOSE IN LIFE OTHER THAN BEING A STOOGUE, HE OF COURSE "DREAMS OF NOTHING". WE ARE CERTAINLY NOT MEANT TO EMPHATHIZE WITH HIM, HE FITS IN NO ARCHETYPE AS HE DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH CHARACTERIZATION TO BE ANYTHING OTHER THAN A CARICATURE

FOR THAT MATTER THE POSSUM WHO IS NOT GIVEN A NAME IS DESCRIBED AS HAVING A "POSH" ENGLISH ACCENT? HOW DOES A CREATURE ENDEMIC TO THE AMERICAS FIND ITSELF HAVING AN ENGLISH ACCENT? OW CAN THIS BE? THE AUTHOR'S GILT HAS CLOUDED HIS LITERARY SKILLS IF HE HAD ANY IN THE FIRST PLACE. THE POSSUM I CAN EMPHATHIZE WITH, HE HAS BEEN MURDERED AND RETHUSCITATED AS PENANCE FOR ANOTHER MANS CRIMES, HE HAS THINGS TO DO, A FAMILY TO GET BACK TO. HE CLARLY IS INTERESTED IN A DIALOGUE THAT RONALDO HAS NO INTEREST IN. THIS DYNAMIC BETWEEN THE TWO, OF CARDBOARD DEPTH HUMAN AND EMPATHETIC POSSUM MAY LIE THE CRUXTH OF THE STORY. ARE WE MEANT TO EMPATHIZE WITH EITHER CHARACTER?

48

THERE IS AN OBVIOUS THROUGHLINE OF GILT AND WHAT ONE IS OWED. AS THE POSSUM AND RONALDO ARGU THEY QUARREL OVER WHOM SHOULD BE RETURNED TO WHOSE BHOY? THE POSSUM BEING ALREADY DEAD HAS ONE FOOT IN THE GRAVE WHEN IT COMES TO THIS ARGUMENT BUT I CAN'T HELP BUT FIND RONALDO'S ARGUMENT THAT JUST BECAUSE HE HAS MORE MASS THAN THE POSSUM LESS THAN SATISFACTORY. IF ONE WERE TO BHOIL IT ALL DOWN TO MASS THAN THE FATTEST AMONG US WOULD MAKE ALL THE RULES AND WE'D BE DOING OUR BEST TO OUTPACE THEIR VORACIOUS APPETITES SO WE COULD HAVE A TURN. THIS NARRATIVE THREAD IS SOON ABANDONED IN FAVOR OF THE POSSUM BITING RONALDOS THIGH. THE STORY GOES NOWHERE FROM HERE, AFTER ATTEMPTING TO SQUASH THE BEEF THE POSSUM BECOMES INFLAMED BY A COMMENT ABOUT A POSSUM WIFE, PERHAPS HE'S GOING THROUGH A POSSUM DIVORCE, NEVERTHELESS HE IS SET OFF, SNIVELING AND SOBBING, TEARS RUNNING DOWN RONALDOS LEG.

THE AUTHOR IN SOME MEWLING WAY GIVES SEVERAL THESIS STATEMENTS, THROWING THEM AT THE WALL AS IF IT WILL EXCUSE HIS SHODDY CRAFTSMANSHIP. IN IT HE MENTIONS PHALLIC REPRESSIONS THOUGH I'D ARGUE THE OPPOSITE, WHAT KIND OF PHALLIC REPRESSION COULD THE PHALLUS ANTHROPOMORPHIZED BE? IT SEEMS TO ME MORE LIKE PHALLIC GUILT THE REPRESSION, PHALLIC SELF HATRED. HATRED AT PREPUBESCENT ADULTS AND THEIR PITHY SELF THSERVING WAYS OR THE PETULANT AUTHOR ONLY THINKS THIS TO PROTECT THEIR ARTISTIC CREDIBILITY. TO ME, THE PHALLUS, STANDS FOR APATHY. ABOUT A INABILITY TO LAY CLAIM ON ONE OWNS OWNERSHIP OF THE NHARRATIVE, OF A INTRINSIC DISAGREEAL OF THE SHAPING OF STORY IS ONE OF CONSTANT AFFIRMATION OF CHANGE. TO BE SATISFIED WITH ONES OWN CHOSEN FAULT FOR SOME THEIR ART IS THEMSELVES, FOR OTHERS THEY OSTRACIZE THE BODY OR THE ART AND FOR MOST IT IS SOME VARIANCE OF THE TWO. CRITIQUING ART IS ALSO A MEASURE OF HOW CLOSHELY THE CRITIC BRINGS THEMSELVES TO THE ARTIST. IN MY CRITIQUING OF POSSUM PENIS I BRING MYSELF RAZOR CLOSE TO THE HACK WHO WROTE IT. FOR OBVIOUS REASONS OF COURSE.

The road bent, the lane's veins of black split down the middle by that rollicking yellow half spaced line.

Ronaldo Fink stepped on it, music thumping from frontal cortex to gas pedal, direct correlation.

The possum in the middle of the road wasn't happy to see the car and obeying it's animal instinct ran parallel to Ronaldo's swerve, cementing itself against the pavement as the Impreza thwacked tire against the possum's body. This time it wasn't playing dead.

"Fuck no, was that a possum? What was it doing in the middle of the road? No, agh," Ronaldo agonized, he turned off the music and talked to himself. Possum traffic regulations, mortality, morality, proper burial rites for possums and forgiveness. Then an hour later Ronaldo pulled into his driveway, unloaded his luggage, brushed his teeth, stripped naked and then fell into bed.

He dreamt of nothing.

There was something breathing against the side of Ronaldo's leg as he woke in the early morning; not even time for work. This breath on his leg gave him an awful fright as he hadn't remembered giving the girl he was seeing a key.

Carefully, slowly, without rising from where he lay he drew the blankets back to reveal a horrific sight.

Where once his genitals hung from his midsection, now snored a possum, it's head lolled against the sheets, snout pressed closed to Ronaldo's leg, breathing softly.

The possum, which was just a head, was arranged in the sense that it's eyes weren't visible to Ronaldo, and it's chin was. The possum's beady eyes lay where Ronaldo's testicles once had, and it's snout was where his dick had once lain.

It snorted in its sleep, it snuffled and then it woke. Yawning as it did so; Ronaldo wasn't aware of possums yawning.

"Hello Ronaldo." Spoke the possum where Ronaldo's penis had once been.

Ronaldo fainted.

Ronaldo woke to the sound of his alarm going off.

He slapped it quiet with wayward palm.

Ronaldo felt as if he'd dreamt of something not worth believing in now that he was late for work.

"Good, you've awoken again."

Ronaldo looked around, trying to find the source of the voice.

The source was grafted at his groin. Suddenly, Ronaldo remembered. He stared at the possum that'd replaced his penis.

"Don't look at me like that."

"Why can you talk? What are you? Am I dreaming?"

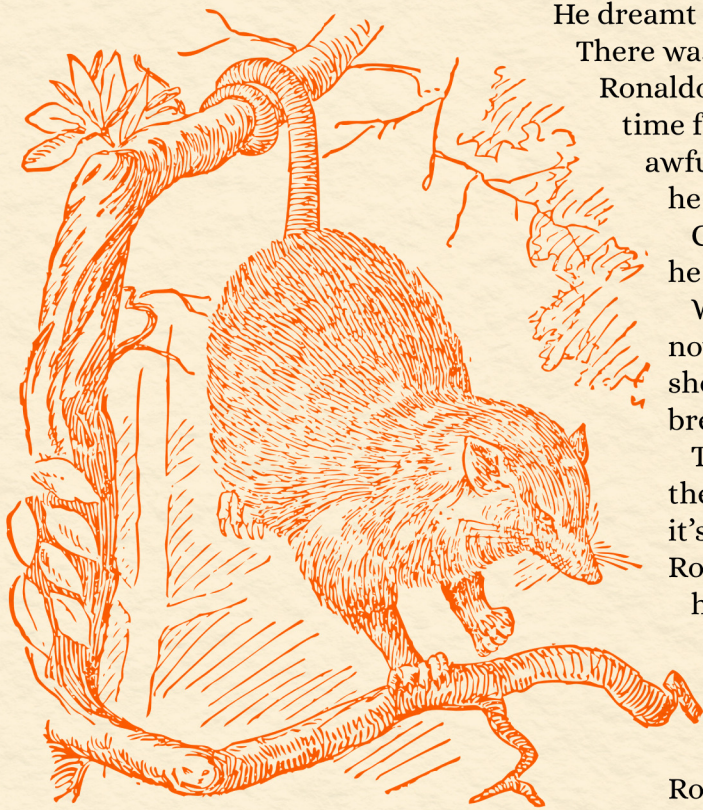
"This is no dream, young man, this is punishment, yours or mine, I do not know. The last thing I wanted before those tires found me was to awaken attached to the pelvis of the man who'd done me in."

Ronaldo said what the fuck so softly that quotation marks couldn't catch it and sat up in bed.

He then began to answer the important questions. "How am I supposed to pee?"

"Well, I hope not the way you normally do. I'm somewhat in the way."

"Oh, dear god. I have to go to work."



"I really suggest you call out. There are more pressing matters at hand."

"Yeah, like the possum head that speaks English in a posh accent where my dick used to be?"

"Yes. Exactly that. I'm not posh in the slightest, I'm a possum."

"How do I get rid of you?" Ronaldo said, throwing a shirt on, a button up, and fished around in his hamper for a pair of underwear.

"You can't possibly be thinking you're going to be putting those on me."

"My underwear? I'm not going to my job naked, I work on commission."

"Commision yourself a sick day, good heavens! We have matters to attend to."

"Matters like getting rid of you."

"Sir, Mr. Fink if you will, I must admit that I'd like nothing better than the getting rid of you and regaining my legs."

"Seeing as how much more of me there is than of you, I'd say I've the right to keep on living a normal life."

"Normal? After committing that gross murder?"

"Murder? What murder? I hit a possum with my car. That's not murder, that's roadkill. That's what you are, roadkill."

"Why, I resent that, Mr. Fink. You're inescapably rude, and escape I would if I wasn't attached to you. And you, you can't drive!" If the possum had little feet it would be stamping them.

"Can't drive? I'd say that I drive pretty well considering I flattened your rodent ass."

"I'm a Marsupial." The possum shrieked and bent over, sinking it's marsupial teeth into Ronaldo's primate leg.

Ronaldo howled.

"Keep it down up there," As a broom handle banged against the floor. "Freak."

"Stop that, possum, stop that," Ronaldo whacked the possum over the head which elicited further pangs of pain as the head was firmly affixed teeth first to Ronaldo's thigh.

Ronaldo lurched towards the kitchen.

Ronaldo, now brandishing a knife, managed to wrest the possum from against its gnawing point.

"Now, don't bite me no more," Ronaldo said, breathing raggedly, "and fine, I'll call out of work, just please leave."

"We must talk this out."

"Will that make you leave?"

"I'm sure of it."

Ronaldo set the knife down on the coffee table.

"Why did you hit me with your car?"

"I didn't. I didn't want to. You were standing in the middle of the road, I swerved, you ran under my tire. How'd I know you weren't trying to kill yourself?"

"The possum reputation is for playing dead, not suicide."

"That doesn't mean you can't kill yourself. Maybe your possum wife left you."

"My possum wife is probably grieving my untimely passing right now. Oh, how distraught she'd be to see me like this! Woe, woe, woe, aghhhhhhh." The possum started crying, thrashing about, frothing at the mouth, tears dripping snottily from eye to snout to floor.

"Ew, ew stop that! What's wrong with you?"

"What's wrong with me," the possum choked between sobs, "what's wrong with me is that I'm attached to your penis! Oh god, just let me die! Do away with the guilt you don't remember, set me free! I don't have time for your phallic repressions and bad driving, and your décor, oh my God who -" a ball of snot shot out of the possums nose, "- who even owns this much beige? And the 'Saturdays are for the boys' poster? What are you, in college? You're fully employed, grow up. So you hit a possum with your car, what's next, you're gonna eulogize me by replacing your penis with me? Who wants that?"

"Not me! I don't want you here, I don't even know why you're here. Not by my choosing, not by mine. You know what..."

Ronaldo grabbed the knife and thwacked it down.

END.

I like to watch people's spines crack. Not on the ground or in some kind of accident, but on the web. A sunburnt American or Persian gentleman or hipster bohemian. I'll take any of them. Just so long as they crack it right. Not so CROOOK! That's what a good crack sounds like. Not so much a glowstick, but a big piece of bamboo right in half.

The man—somehow a doctor but not of any medical degree—helps the patient lie down. "Alright nice and steady there you go..." he says as he straps them in. A pole on either side of their torso holds them snug in place. If they're not a twig, their stomachs roll up and stick out, protruding like goo pressed between palms. Sometimes, the man will pull up their arms while they're stuck just for some extra cracks and laughs.

They chat for a moment and he stands there pretending to care. "Oh I've been in pain for decades..." one will say. "I haven't stood up straight since the 70s" sighs another. But we all know what he wants, and so does his patient. So we entertain the pleasantries, as does everyone everywhere, in everything they do.

As the victim-patient settles in, the man grins and wraps a towel around their neck. Standing just above them, he places his hands on either side of the towel. Gently and playfully he rotates or sways their neck. "Breathe in...breathe out...keep going just like that...don't stop..." You'd think they were having sex.

He does his best to disarm and distract their wandering minds. "Wiggle your left big toe...close your right ear...make your belly into jelly..." These are the final words before the man, with all his strength, yanks their head upwards with a loud crunch. Lying on that little massage bed, some cry out and yelp. Others try to catch their breath, unable to do so until he removes the poles holding their torso. Others feel immense joy, like God had sent a special thunderbolt down from heaven, through the clouds, past the birds, between the ceiling, within the man's hands, and finally into their spine. It is a bizarre occasion, to be sure. And they scream and gasp and laugh and cry as they walk around the room. "So much better now!" says the doctor, who might have just made things worse.



So he thanks his clients, sees them out, grabs a cup of water, and gets ready to leave. His staff close up and count the change. He grabs his coat or his hat and nods out the door. When he gets home, he nods through another and sits at the edge of his bed. Removing his socks, he hears his wife snoring in the darkness. He smiles to himself, and walks towards the kitchen in his loafers. Reaching for the top shelf above the refrigerator he accidentally knocks down a turkey finger puppet. "I'll get it in the morning..." he thinks, then finds the slim bottles with his fingers.



Popping open the cap, he drinks it straight without a cup. "Best not to start the dishes so late..." he thinks. All night long he sips and sips and sips in the corduroy living room recliner. He hears the birds chirping and sighs. Rising from his seat, he finds his socks in the darkness and tries to ignore their sweat and stench. Those old mahogany panels croak beneath him and he grabs his coat or his hat, nodding through the door once more. And he nods and nods through every door, nodding through life.



And I watch him with no regret, no spite, just something pure inside me which wishes to be him, his patient, or whatever else will let me know that thunderbolt which travelled down from heaven, through the clouds, past the birds, between the ceiling, within the man's hands, and finally through the spine. Now that would be a delight.

son: Yes, I'm MUCH AKIN to TONY SOPRANO. I quit THERAPY of my own VOLITION. I took LIFE by the horns and drove it into the rodeo clown. MUCH AKIN to TONY SOPRANO, I have done away with TALK THERAPY. Discussions of my LIFE have ceased with a STUDENT who I don't know other than as the PERSON who LISTENS to me and tries to reflect those words back to me in other words. I'M DONE WITH THAT SHIT. THAT SHIT CAN EAT ME OUT. THAT SHIT CAN EAT MY ASS AND TAIN'T. NO LIES, 100%

i'm sitting with my DAD

dad: hey SON

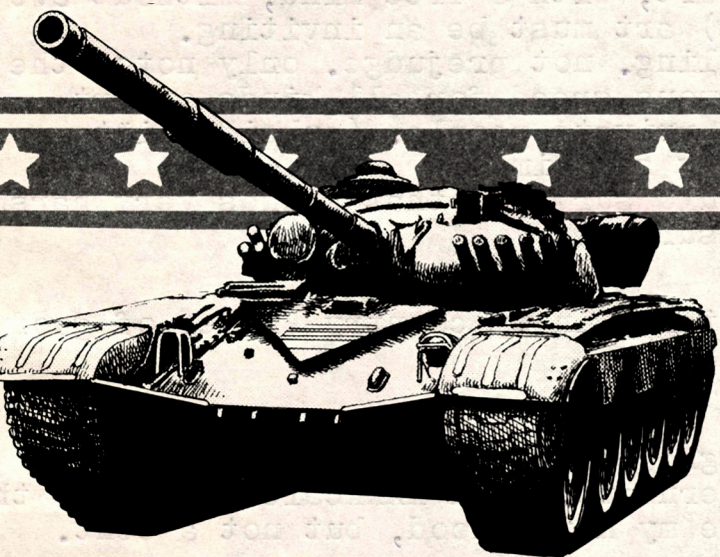
son: i wanna shoot a GUN for my BIRTHDAY, (aside to audience) this is something that makes me much akin to tony soprano

dad: whoa whoa whoa a GUN, what are you gonna do? shoot me like the IMPERIALIST FIRST WORLD PIG DOG that i am

son: ha ha jk unless?

dad: you probably hate being here in the UNITED SNAKES of AMERIKA-KA-KA, and you want to PISS on our FLAG and BURN it with FIRE or RIP it into SHREDS.

son: ha ha jk unless?



dad: look, i invited everyone who you left behind in GROVETUCKY, OHIO and they all have kids and families, this will be a great time for us to all have at the shooting range with CHILDREN UNDER 4 and the ELDERLY.

son: we begin shooting when i realize it's time to say what i need to, much akin to tony soprano

daddio, you need to listen to me and i am going to drop all the IRONY and keep it STRAIGHT with you, i'm a MARXIST-LENINIST and GAY and a WOKE BRUTALIST and i don't give a RRRRRRAT'S A S S what you think about any of those things and i'm gonna shoot my GUN in preparation for the REVOLUTION which is just around corner, it's coming, look there it is, no, i swear it's happening, give it a second, hold on

dad: SON

son: my DAD gets in real close

dad: i LOVE you more than anything else in my LIFE but i also think you are my ENEMY and

NEW LIES -----ARE INVENTED



dad: well, i'm not going to let you do that! this is my COUNTRY and my FATHER came from POLAND away from the GULAGS perpetrated by STALIN'S THUGS and my FATHER saved all the people from the CONCENTRATION CAMPS perpetuated by HITLER'S THUGS and my FATHER flew the RED WHITE and BLUE and people felt saved and they loved him and he met CARDINAL RATZINGER aka POPE BENEDICT the 16th aka the VATICAN's BULLDOG.

son: my DAD doesn't get anything because he thinks everything is about being MARXIST or WOKE or GAY and he doesn't get that everything is not about those things but it also is and you should be them.

i'm with my DAD at the shooting range

Three American pilots among those killed or captured in Hanoi on Aug. 12, 1967.
Left to right:
Thomas Vance Parratt, captain, service number FT-31031912, piloting a reconnaissance fighter 4C
Thomas A. Norris, captain, service number FR71971, piloting a F-105
Edwin Altherr, captain, service number 303-065-473, piloting a reconnaissance fighter 4C



you are ruining this COUNTRY

son: BANG! thats when we were shooting and all the 4 YEAR OLDS that were running everywhere and the ELDERLY with their HEARING AIDS going crazy made me lose focus and i blew my DAD's leg off with the GUN that i just learned how to use.

dad: holy shit, you just blew my leg off

son: that's when the WAR began.

two four year olds with guns, in the deep jungle, i am hiding in a bush

four year old: anything over there?

a different four year old: nadda

four year old: can i have one of those bananas?

a different four year old: go for it

four year old: wow are these from south america?

a different four year old: yea they're from south america

four year old: wow
these are from south america?

a different four year old: yea, south america

four year old: thats incredible
that these are from south america

a different four year old: they really are

son: i slice one of the FOUR YEAR OLD's neck with a KNIFE

four year old: oh my god oh my god
we've got PINKOS! i need back up now!
GUERILLAS are out here i repeat GUERILLAS are out here

son: i slit the other FOUR YEAR OLD's throat

i hide in the bushes, my dad comes in

dad: oh my god, they are killing CHILDREN
be on your Ps and Qs, they are out there in the MIST.

son: i am hiding in the BUSH

my dad with his childhood best friend

dad: what are you doing after all this?

gene: after this? sheeeeeeeeeeeet, drinking a BEER, sitting in



A "SPECIALIST" OF RUDIMENTARY WEAPONS

my BIG MAROON CHAIR, kickin my FEET up, listening to the AI BEATLES song, and watching the documentary on the CARTEL again.

dad: how's that go?

gene sings the Beatles AI-like

dad: better than the ORIGINAL, this COUNTRY keeps getting better

gene: what about you? once the WAR is over?

dad: once the WAR is over, i hope me and my SON can reconnect, i think this WAR has come between us, we used to be able to talk about anything, we didn't always agree on everything but we were able to come together and discuss the issues of the day. ABORTION, the GAY ISSUE, WOMEN PRIESTS, the TRANS QUESTION, the WAR in UKRAINE, ISRAEL-PALESTINE, COMMUNISM versus CAPITALISM, BLACK LIVES MATTER, the ELECTION, TRUMP versus BIDEN, COVID. all of it, we used to talk about all of it but now it's come to blows, maybe someday soon i pray it will come to words again and the worst thing we will have to interact with is a huge shouting match where we don't talk for a day and then we go to bed angry and then we wake up and say sorry and cry and forgive each other in a big bear hug and i say i love you and i say i love you you're my SON and i love you.

oh my god! you slit GENE's throat!

son: that's right

we are pointing guns at each other



dad: you don't get it, SON, i can save you, all you have to do is renounce all these FAKE ASS things you believe and come back to me, it's time to PRODIGAL SON this shit and get on over here

son: you don't get the MAGNITUDE of the OFFENSES you have performed. you betrayed me MUCH AKIN to TONY SOPRANO and TONY SOPRANO says MAOIST style GUERILLA WARFARE must take the world! TONY SOPRANO says the PEASANTS must march upon the CITIES and take the REACTIONARY INTELLECTUALS and run them into their GRAVES like the ANTI-PROGRESSIVES they are. FLOOD the COUNTRYSIDE, a FIRE through SMALL TOWN OHIO. TONY SOPRANO says PURGE the CAPITALIST PIGS and SACRIFICE them on the ALTAR of the PROLETARIAT.

dad: what does any of that mean? i don't know what any of that means

son: it means i'm not sparing ANYONE, it means BOURGEOIS people like you are DEAD for all your SINS and from the ASHES, the WORKING CLASSES shall RISE!!

dad: is that how you feel? is that how you speak to your FATHER?

son: that is. that is how i speak to him

dad: you wanna kill me?

son: i wanna kill the BOURGEOIS

dad: but you wanna kill me

my gun to my dad's chest

son: yes!!!

dad: yes?

son: yes!!!

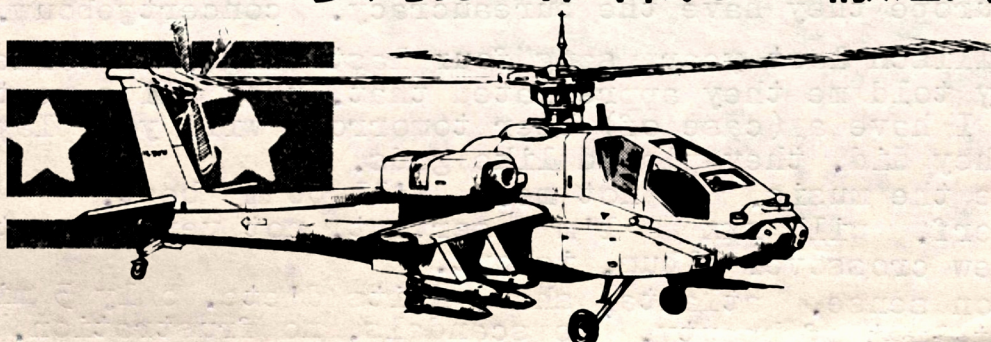
dad: yes?

son: yes!!!!



Il a des petits yeux.

★今月は4国戦まで徹底攻略



dad: yes?

son: YES!! I'M LIKE TONY SOPRANO

dad: ok

a four year old and an elderly person grab me and take away my gun

son: this was a TRAP!

elderly person: yep, we knew you would come this way

dad: the TRIAL: what do you have to say for yourself?

son: for the CULTURAL REVOLUTION! for the WORKING CLASS i SACRIFICE myself! for the LGBT+ KIDS! for the WOKE!

four year old: up against the WALL

son: I WOKE UP THIS MORNING/GOT MYSELF A GUN/MAMA ALWAYS SAID I WAS THE CHOSEN ONE/SHE SAID "YOU'RE ONE IN A MILLION, YOU'VE GOT TO BURN TO SHINE/BUT YOU WERE BORN UNDER A BAD SIGN WITH A BLUE MOON IN YOUR EYES."

four year old: shut up shut up shut up

old person: shut up shut up shut up

dad: shut up shut up shut up shut up shut up shut up

my dad has a gun to my chest

son: is this what you wanna do?

dad: what?

son: shoot your SON?

dad: i wanna kill the FASCIST COMMUNISTS and the GENDER LIARS and the FAMILY DESTROYERS and the NIHILIST ANTI-NATALISTS and the WOKE MIND VIRUS

son: you wanna kill me?

dad: i wanna kill the ANTI-AMERICANS

son: you wanna kill me?

dad: yes!!

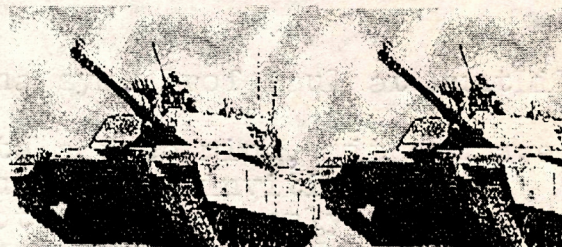
son: yes?

dad: yes!!

son: yes?

dad: yes!!

son: yes?



Victim of the Year



BANG! that's when my DAD shot me, much akin to tony soprano but also not because you don't know when the credits roll if tony got shot or not, but i have been executed, i have been killed for the cause of COMMUNISM and GAY and WOKE. i am much akin to when tony soprano looked up and the screen went black. this is like that and i am like him.

everyone leaves, my dad gets on his knees

dad: lord god i pray you bless my SON as he goes to HEAVEN and i pray that you will forgive him for all the wrong he did for being a COMMUNIST and being GAY and being WOKE and i pray that the light of JESUS CHIRST shines on him as he travels through PURGATORY to you in the AFTERLIFE.

i am up on my feet, i am a ghost, he can't see me

son: i can still hear you! i can still hear you! i'm a GHOST! i'm DEAD but I'm ALIVE too. i'm the SPECTRE haunting your BALD GLOBE! oogaboga! oogabooga!

dad: amen.

goodbye son i love you. i love you so much i'm so sorry. i can't believe i killed my son i'm so sorry

my dad gives me a huge big bear hug while he is saying all this

while we are still in the big bear hug, i say this:

son: Nothing I say could ever change anything that's gonna happen. Nothing I'm gonna say. No one word will make whatever happens next any less what is going to happen next. It will be unaffected by the words I say before it and that's that. Nothing, not even this. Doesn't mean this is a waste but all the same, it's all the same. i said all this and it doesn't matter, not a wink. that's what makes me akin to tony soprano



A LAUGH ON EVERY PAGE OF

57

CARTOON HUMOR

Featuring America's Funniest Cartoonists

A LAUGH ON EVERY PAGE OF

CARTOON HUMOR

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A LAUGH ON EVERY PAGE OF

CARTOON HUMOR

Featuring America's Funniest Cartoonists

It's funny. I found the snap of my Achilles tendon viscerally satisfying. Like cracking my neck. By pushing through and down on the posterior skull, I pull on my lower cervical spine, and a relief is heard. A swelling sigh brought by a single reverberation. Each vertebrae, with its horns and nerves stringing up the fluid column. Corded. Lid locked. A complex spiny structure unlike the femur's inert trunk or the ulna bow. What's heard, conserved, is the taut spring. With one roll of my ankle, I dismantled the energy complex of my limbs. I cannot run, squat, climb, even fall like a dignified cripple.

My mind is merciless.

The earth has rocked me, and in my sleep I am rolling off my cot. There were times, unsurprisingly Roman, when a man's entire being was catapulted by this injury. Today, it is muffled, squelched. I can't engage in lateral movement anymore. If I am to turn left, I have to circle it as if I were twitching the yaw, pitch, and throw of a multi-billion-million-dollar fighter jet. I am in simpler terms, not light on my brow.

When you're tired you have nothing to say. But in your furrowed expression it might appear otherwise. When you are full of rest it is said you are emptied of thought. When you are sleep-deprived you grapple yourself. Pull on tendons, stretch and touch your toes, swallow breaths of air. Each movement is restless. Incomplete. Begging for another go. The army you have to marshal to stifle junk food cravings.

To my future Apostles, Corded. Braided. Lid Locked.

A celebration is a sort of crying fit, no? Write that down. Every body, a text.

The way the bird bells, jostle the pallbearers, scrape the cheek

I am the mail courier who tried deserting.

I receive mercy in order to advance the other's will to not cringe.

In laughing, I say the severe truth.

Darkness coalesces and folds into nothingness.

Every song a mantra in my rocking mind.

Clean me clean.

Thank you gingerly,

BAREFOOT NIGHT

I never realized you needed to move into the afterlife. I imagined it was the one to move you into it like floating along the river Styx, but you need to flow into it yourself, like with everything else in life.

Miss Janine got "real sick" and I took over her time slots. I was the only one to raise my hand when the question popped up, so there I was – sitting in front of a giant fridge for corpses in the dead of night. Embodiment of the graveyard shift. It was always quiet – until I had to do my actual job, retrieval and storage.

Much to my surprise, not a soul was lost on the first night.

The only sign of life came from the security poking his head in once and only once. There was nothing to catch down here, sorry bud. Just lifelessness.

The second night the phone rang. My cue, top floor, ICU. They were boxed and ready to go down under. I wheeled them back down through multiple hallways and into an elevator, eventually we reached the platinum door that held the others.

It slid open and I entered the assessment chamber. Two tables and a computer to enter the deceased into the system, the digital dead.

I rolled them over to the computer and got to typing. My eyes had to glance at their toe-tag more than once.

Andrew R.

TOD: Jul. 22. 15 - 12:12AM.

H: 5'11" W: 191 Age: 50

#111234

The information came up with his medical profile – history – life. I got to the death notary and printed it with a few clicks.

As much as I would like to say that the feeling left, as it did for others – I can't. The energy always shifts when working around the dead. Silence becomes more silent. The air is slightly harder to breathe, so you want – no, need to hold your breath. It is colder. Much colder than you had realized. Everything feels connected by broken hair, like everything – anything could split apart and any moment.

I secured the certificate to a clipboard and set it next to the computer. I finally unveiled Andrew and slid him as delicately as one could onto a table. I loosened the binds and did not dare uncover his face until his family's arrival.

On cue, his identifiers walked into the chamber, led by a nurse. She nodded my way and briskly walked out. It was a man and a woman. The man looked younger, a brother – the woman was older, a spouse.

She spoke first, tears already sparkling her eyes through the dimly lit room, "Is this him? Andrew?" Her tone fell into a broken whisper. She felt it too.

I nodded to both of them and whispered back, "I am sorry for your loss, this is Andrew R. We just need you to identify him and we can get him to a place you prefer."

She cried into her hands, as quietly as she could. The younger man looked at me steadfastly, "I can identify him."

"Okay, I am just going to lift up the sheet here and you let me know."

"Okay."

I lifted it, taking a quick glance with him.

Andrew's milky eyes were staring back at me. I blinked and looked away.

"Yes. That is him." The woman finalized.

I looked back before dropping it and Andrew's eyes were then closed.

Something slithered into my stomach. I blinked a few more times and frowned.

The thrashing of my heart drummed out their despair as I handed them the clipboard. I gave them the rundown and I wrote out the address they gave me. They left.

I was left with Andrew. It must have been the shift, I thought. The change in schedule. He was never looking at me. Couldn't have been... I wheel him into the morgue and find the first available spot. 045. With a few cranks I position Andrew to slide right into the top bunk.

The door closes with a swoosh and I wheel away the cart. Kira's figure scared me as I walked back into the front desk area. She laughed, "Oh shit, I am so sorry!"

I put up a hand while my heart shook, "It's fine. I appreciate you waiting."

"Tough one?"

"Most definitely, thank you again."

"No problem, hon, we look out."

We indeed do.

I walked back into the chamber to finalize everything as she headed back up. I had to grab two more bodies that night, none of which looked at me, thankfully.

Andrew was gone by the third night, his body transferred to a preferred designation. A part of me felt relief. For him and I. Until she started speaking to me.

Miss Janine always mentioned the workload on night shifts. "Always three and up to five!"

Her words, not mine. She had been right, for the most part. I had wondered if she would be back, if at all. I had my answer soon enough.

She was the fourth body I secured on the third night. The other three came and went quickly.

Each of them heartbreaking in their own right but seeing a dead Janine was my personal heartbreak. Her toe tag confirmed my suspicion. I inspected it during the elevator ride down.

Janine W.

TOD: Jul. 23. 15 - 3:03AM

H: 5'7" W: 209 Age: 66

#111277

It was her. Had to be. No one arrived to confirm her death. No one called to let me know. I waited for thirty minutes, and finally decided to take a peek – for myself. I slid her back into the cold slab of wheels and lifted her sheet. Miss Janine; slightly sunkissed even in death, her sagging face held youthfulness in its restful demeanor, her nose crooked from 'that bar fight' she would rattle on about to anyone first meeting her, thin lips now naked, eyebags gone, and all of it gone, lifelessness, yet still Miss Janine, somehow.

She began speaking only after I put her into the icebox. When I closed the door and sat down to get comfortable before the inevitable next call came in – she began.

It was a sound first. A knock, where a knock should never be. Coming from inside of the chamber itself. The first two times I likened it to the half a century old hospital settling into its age. The third and fourth made me choke on my spit as the fear jolted



my body up out of the seat.

My first thought was fucking zombies, so I grabbed a pair of scissors – there was only so much I could work with down there – the good stuff was in the chamber.

It slid open with a woosh and revealed no walking dead. Just quiet emptiness. I laughed at myself, imagining whoever was watching cameras aptly assumed I was tweaking. Dealing with the problem instilled a sense of command over the situation so I walked in further. Armed with scissors and a steel rod, I felt damn near invincible.

The holding chamber held nothing living, more emptiness. I sighed a breath of relief.

"sweetie."

I froze, it came from behind me.

I swung first and asked questions later, but hit nothing of substance.

"sweetie in here." Knock, knock, knock.

077. Miss Janine's compartment. It can't be. Shouldn't be.

I used the only crutch I had: prayer. This did not stop her.

"sweetie, we need your help."

When prayer did not work, I began pleading with it. With death.

"Please – please –" My legs buckled under the weight of my own fear as I tried to leave.

"sweetie, do not be scared. it is us."

"No – it can't – it can't be!"

The double doors did not open. It felt barred. I pleaded more as the fear leaked out from my eyes, rolling down my cheeks,

"Please, no, this can't be real – wake up – wake up!"

"sweetie we linger here still. let us speak. listen to ole' miss janine."

I banged on the door three times.

Frozen fingers yanked me backwards and into the middle of the fridge. I yelped, swung, and hit nothing as another cold grasp yanked again. I fell to the floor and the weapons were pulled from my hands. I took a deep breath, awaiting death or possession, I closed my eyes to keep myself from having a heart attack on the spot, a last ditch effort to get out of it.

But then...

"just dance with us..."

The voice spoke softly, tenderly. I was compelled to take a peek.

From in between the gaps of my shaking fingers, I saw the pale hand reach out to me. Gently and delicately, like trying to win over a kitten you find in the street.

"we must dance."

The fluorescent light gave them an aura of godliness. They all stood facing me, dead muscles tensed up, awaiting the signal to move. Miss Janine led the small party, she was the one extending her hand out.

It clicked. Everyone I was staring over had no one to call them. No one to hold them along the river into the afterlife and up into the sun. It had to be me. The caretaker. The container. The list-creator.

None of them had family, caretakers, lovers...

My warmth melted into her dead skin. With tears in my eyes, weighted by sadness, I asked, "How?"

"we must simply shake it out of us. let the sounds of eternity guide you. so they may guide all of us. move in succession. be quick.

are you ready?"

I nodded to her.

We danced. Together. I spun from body to body, each touch allowing them to let go.

Forever and ever – until Miss Janine. The last body.

She smiled, her uplifted wrinkles vanishing before my very eyes as she crossed over.

The lights blinded me for only a moment as everything returned to what it was.

I sobbed. Snot, tears, choking, and all.

I partook in something deeper than anything I could ever imagine. Miss Janine didn't just need a replacement, she needed another ferry-woman. A plan put in action without a thought provoking me. It just happened.

Forever. I was given purpose.

Until never. When someone is able to move me.

So I say to you – when was the last time you moved in death?

Spun around and crept?

With those who were left behind. Remember to follow the steps. Listen and make sure you listen well – ensure you can roll with it – twist – turn – push – whatever gets you to sweat. Don't go by yourself.

It is eternity after all...



Domestication

Feel at odds with what's awful:
Fornication, Slip Ties,
Sound off in the drawing room
A domestic cancellation
A booked flight and a downed plane

Salmon baked on a fatty pan
There's flouride in the water
There's Haram in that bacon grease
Gold fish and a couple eggs
Slouch on knuckle beach

Kick the back of your plastic chair
Don't let the beer freeze in the cooler
Don't let the cat out of the bag
Don't let your tongue bite the black snake
And don't let the snake out of the bathroom stall

The whole family is in the pool water
and everybody dies

Take a dip in bone river
hear a pindrop in somebody's eye

The courthouse says your father's guilty
And your mother caught a worm

Now everything she eats gets re-ate
And everything that leaves her is clear and fully formed

Everyone is made of dreams
Everyone is a tour de force
It's all paradise
Every green light
and every broken horn

A cockroach survives staying perfectly still
in a dark corner

The sun drips
ice cream all over your daughter's face

Wipe it from her cheek with a wet rag
Sit her on the curb and explain the meaning of the word
Daddy

Create the monster
follow a princess through an evil garden

Build a bridge
become the troll and the brown swamp

Cut a nectarine in half and share it
draw blood from a sacred hen

Hold the gavel in your palm
While your wife bathes in the other room

Have a son
build the Trinity from your broken pride

Smell the smoke
pour bleach in a plastic thimble

Clean your daughter's underwear with two thumbs
Sit in the backyard and lift the dog to your cheek

Think about the kids— Why suffer?

Why not bake cookies
and drink a glass of milk?

Or draw a pretty plane
and try your best to fly it?

Learn at night
That the world is made of lightening

And you did not choose this sky

So shut up and eat
It's a nice day and we're gonna enjoy it

Your mother will be out of the bathroom soon enough
And then you can have your turn to hide

But Daddy

Listen to the sound of shit in a pipe
and water, the world's perfect blood

Gimme the wrench

The daughter moans

The mother dries her hand

The son and father
stare in silence
at a panel of wood
that someone has to fix

Let's open the blind and spend the day outside
and not say another word



Just + Bright

Our bodies walking secrets
sex, the cold spoon, against your neck
children screaming surround an orange cone
'which way is the sun?'
they point to the orange cone

the skyline in faded summer blue
an empty train car, memories of the beach
the smell of lotion, sandal on the subway floor
eyes on that train meet and then pass

the potential, the experience, blown out hair
pink and dry, strands lit like heaven
the sun disappears—

but it was just so bright
Mama, it was just so bright
Papa, it was just so bright

—then reappears, a glimpse
of the train that you ride
as it rounds a bend
station, half light, half shade
swarmed with damp bodies
waiting to find an open door

Mama, who is that man?
Papa, what has happened to that man?
wasn't it just so—

Don't look, darling

But how did the feet become

Keep your eyes ahead, darling

And how did the teeth become

Whatever you do, darling

And what is that

Darling, don't

And what is in your

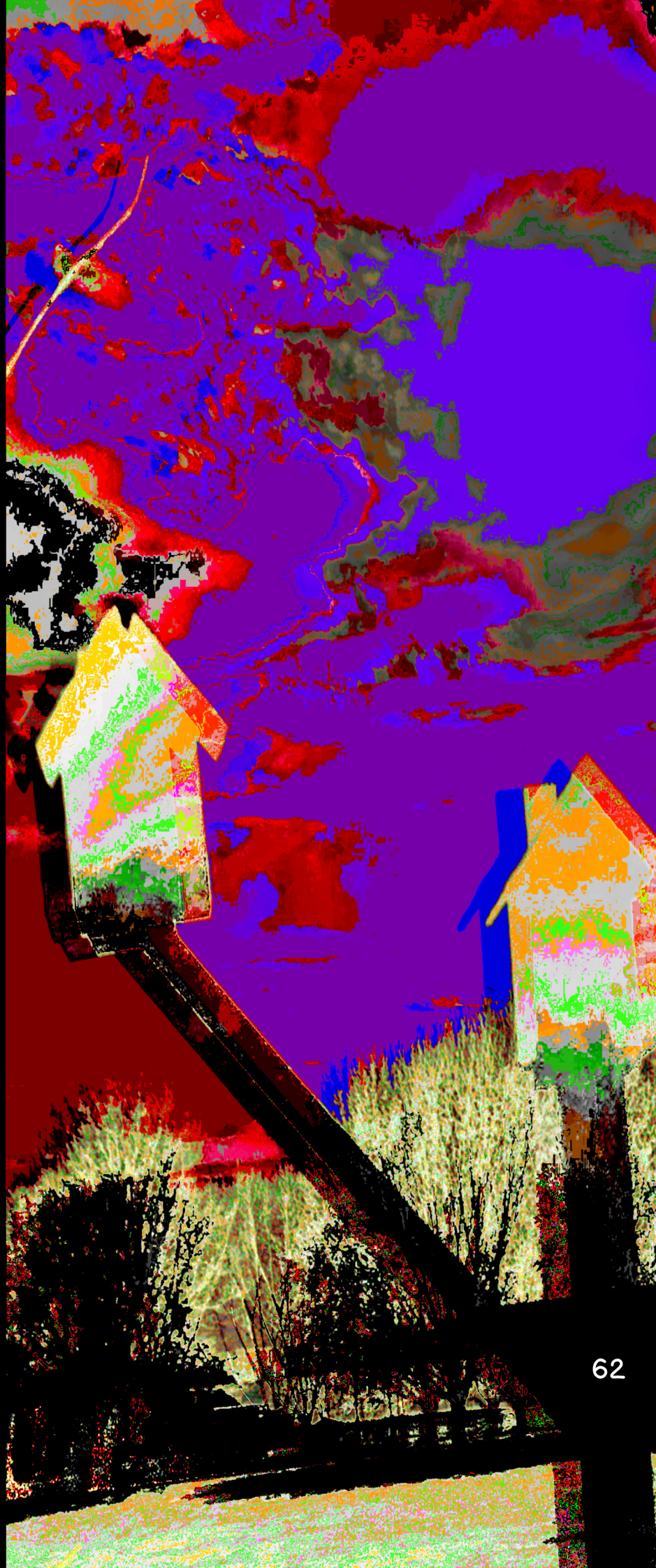
Don't

And where did the body go
Where did the mind release
How did the fingers touch
What is the memory
Why is this happening

Look

But it was just so—

Look



THAT DOG'S DEAD AND THAT DOG'S LIVING IN A SHED

God chamber in Wilhelm
Scream for the Fourth of July
Marry me!

This city is so happy
and I am just the morning
bleeding out

So, Night, sit pretty,
I'll be there soon enough

Right now I'm busy
pulling a stake
from between two ribs
and holding down a body
and baking a cake
for the birthday girl
and singing tralala
on a slatted roof

There will be revenge

I will hold the moment like a
baby bird
I will sing and dance
I will fold the wrapping paper at
the sharp end of a box
I will find the sharp end

Disappear— isn't today so
precious?
can't I have one more
day— the 38th of November—
— the 49th of July—

Didn't you hear?
The world is changing

and I'm doing sit ups in a vacant lot
I am an angry man
My identity is static
Argue with me, you have made me this,
shell of a tractor, hull of a bus,
stalling jet,

don't make me go into the store and
buy— more things and more things
and more

Don't make me make you regret my
power


I'm doing push ups beneath a leafless
tree
I'm scaring children with my mask

Boo! I say and you will die tearless:

A slab of butter will cook your final
meal
you will lie naked on a doctor's table
like cold meat in a clean room

you will be fixed
you will be unbroken
to keep yourself alive

but can you really tell me
what the doctor did
with all those metal tools
when you were under



when you were younger, I sang
you a song
now you fold yourself and tell me
that you love me
I put you in my pocket and forget
you're there
That is why I'm yelling

I do leg lifts behind the
laundromat
I count reps to forget my burning
hands
Between sets I use the broken
hood of a car for sun cover
I watch the store across the lot
where people buy
objects for their homes

It is the middle of another day
The automatic doors slide open
The air inside must be so peaceful
I see the shape of a toilet
the shape of a tub

Tralala, I hear a child's voice

I hide beneath the metal sheet
I listen to crunching shoes

You will die tearless
and I will be here until it's night



OCTAVE: IN PLACE OF AN INTRODUCTION

My disinterest

There is a whole sphere of things I find myself consciously, actively, disinterested in—feeling almost nothing, thinking almost nothing, except "There it is, there it stays"—and this is the beginning of the most enduring and acute interest: the self-indulgence of dislike, or the acquisition of taste through the enjoyment of one's own capacity for bitter dismissal.

Chateaubriand:

When he was reading he would tear out the pages he disliked, possessing, as a result, a personal library composed of eviscerated works, enclosed by overlarge covers.

I read this sentence three times before understanding that the library of eviscerated works referred to the mutilated books and not the rarefied collection of extracted dislike.

People too can be like pages, or like books. The face is a kind of palimpsest.

My dislike

An old source. A flowing, crisp river within me. An involuntary and general dislike—of others?

It is mostly abstract, this dislike, for once I am actually talking to someone, it isn't so strong, and then by the end of it, I actually start to like them, I want to keep talking to them, about anything, but they have to go, and I put my hands in my pockets and stand on my toes as if to see them better as they turn the corner, now out of sight.

I forget about them.

I walk through town and by the time I am home, I feel the old happiness bleeding back. This dislike—not to be confused with contempt or hatred or disdain—my dislike is almost loving. It is a sympathetic sense of irony (but existing already in others, not just in myself) that endears people to me, in all their mannerisms and peculiarities, and the essence of which might be said to be *breathing room*. It can sometimes feel very good just to breathe. (If I cannot fall asleep, for example, I take three deep breaths, humming on each exhale, and that does the trick in such a way that I usually do not finish the third.)

It is something—dislike—that can be both abstractly extended to *all* and yet felt concretely, and still so without any trace of resentment. I do not begrudge anyone my dislike for them (which hovers between transitive and intransitive, a singular, *quodlibet*-like kind of state: which is to say: dislike is *whateverish*). I am grateful for it: to step out into the fresh air and breathe deeply and feel that my strange dislike is nothing but what—a corollary to a change in the air. It has nothing to do with anyone, including myself.

In the window of a house on the other side of the street, I see myself all gray and murky, like mercury mixed up with lead.

An image begins to cohere

I cannot say all of the unfortunate things I would like to say about him (I myself am only this wavering reflection, a dirty mercurial form without depth and only the dullest shimmer of weight). He is standing too far away, so far away, indeed, that I begin to see him as something like a real friend. Am I seeing him from the past-tense or the prophetic perfect? Does vision also obey certain grammatical structures at the level of aspect perception?

No character sketches today, no profiles. The dossier shrinks to a deck of cards, cut from 52 to 36. No longer the Tarot of the old Renaissance ruling classes but the *Petit Cartomancien* of the *flâneur*, dipping in and out of the skies and ponds of high and low like a diving duck, a loon, a cormorant.

A loon... I can see him: He's a little Hamlet wearing Yorick's skull as a hat. And he has a potbelly. He's jolly. A little shit. I can't tell what else he is wearing—it's all black—and I can't see his face. Not a court jester or the Prince of Denmark. He is an organ grinder without an organ—an egg! He is *our* Humpty Dumpty.

Have you ever seen a photo (or a painting or engraving) of an organ grinder? Stop what you're doing and look one up. I'd include a specimen here, but they're all of the same adjectival cut:

pitiable, repulsive, forlorn, abject, rotund, simpering, *Sacer*, effluvious, *bormanncieux*, rigid, sympathetic, melancholic-extempore, worm-eaten, half-baked, snoring, besuited, flabby, flat, countryless, ahistoric, fellaheen, lumpen-, anti-vociferous and et ceterative.

I am far too interested in this small image of a faraway person, as though there in a flat field under a dizzying abyss of sky, he stood on his own empty world; he is his own moon, a whitish spheroid.

The Sun, the stars, the devil, death, a pit of lovers writhing with the confusion of snakes, the two bodies of the King: these, and any other set of images you can conjure up, mean next to nothing to our little Hamlet. They exert about as much astrological influence upon his personality as would a compressed digital image of a flattened topographical representation of the solar system.

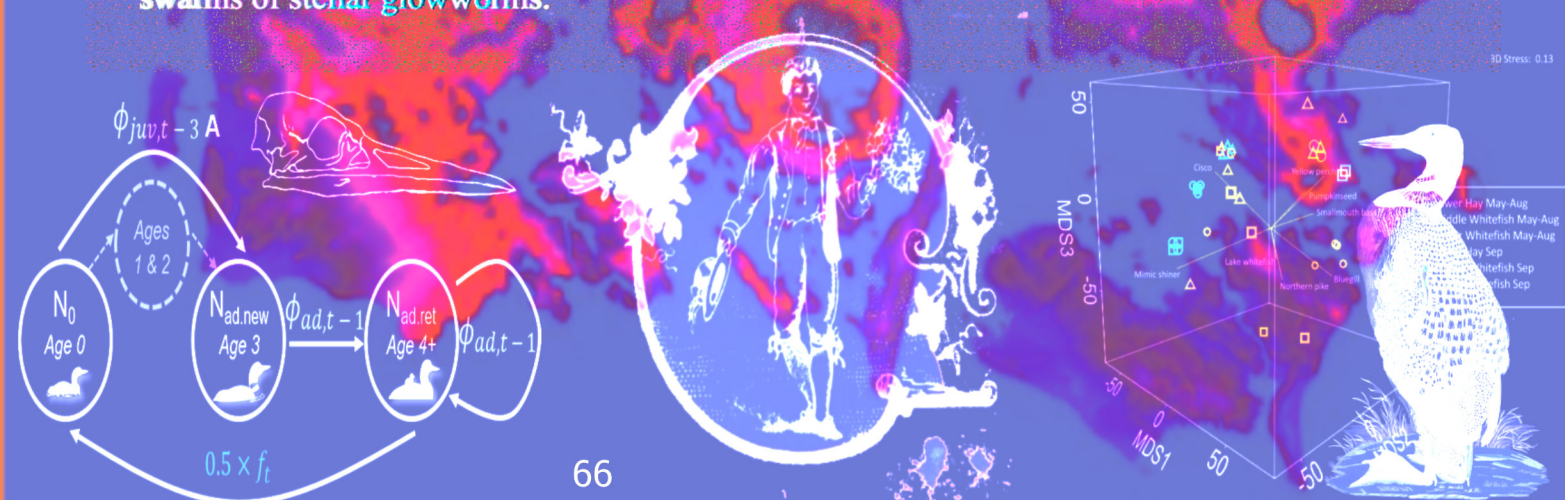
There are expressions all over his face, but one looks long and hard for any trace of real emotion.

Is he jolly or is he weeping? Is he biting his fist or devouring a handful of ribs? Hard to tell from this distance... but I can hear laughter.

It may be that as we come closer, things will become less confused. All I can see clearly from here is his name, written in sleepy stars above his Yorick-Skullcap: they spell out

"Octave",

there, quotes, comma and all, and on our approach the letters flicker and vanish like frightened swarms of stellar glowworms.



Timothée Chalamet buys me a drink. Whiskey sour. He didn't ask me – only glanced at me and said I looked like a girl who'd appreciate a bit of tang. Whatever the fuck that means.

To him, I look lovely underneath the dim lights. My big eyes are not cat-like – they are large like a rabbit's. Striking because they are so dark, reflective, and shiny. Striking because they reflect the warmth of the bar lighting. You can't tell the iris from the pupil.

Timothée thinks that this makes me look innocent. He can't tell me why. He said he was drawn to me because I was sitting alone, book splayed on my Maison Soksi tights. He likes them. I tell him it makes me feel like I'm cosplaying one of the teenage girls from the Italian fantasy Disney comic W.I.T.C.H. He doesn't know what I'm talking about.

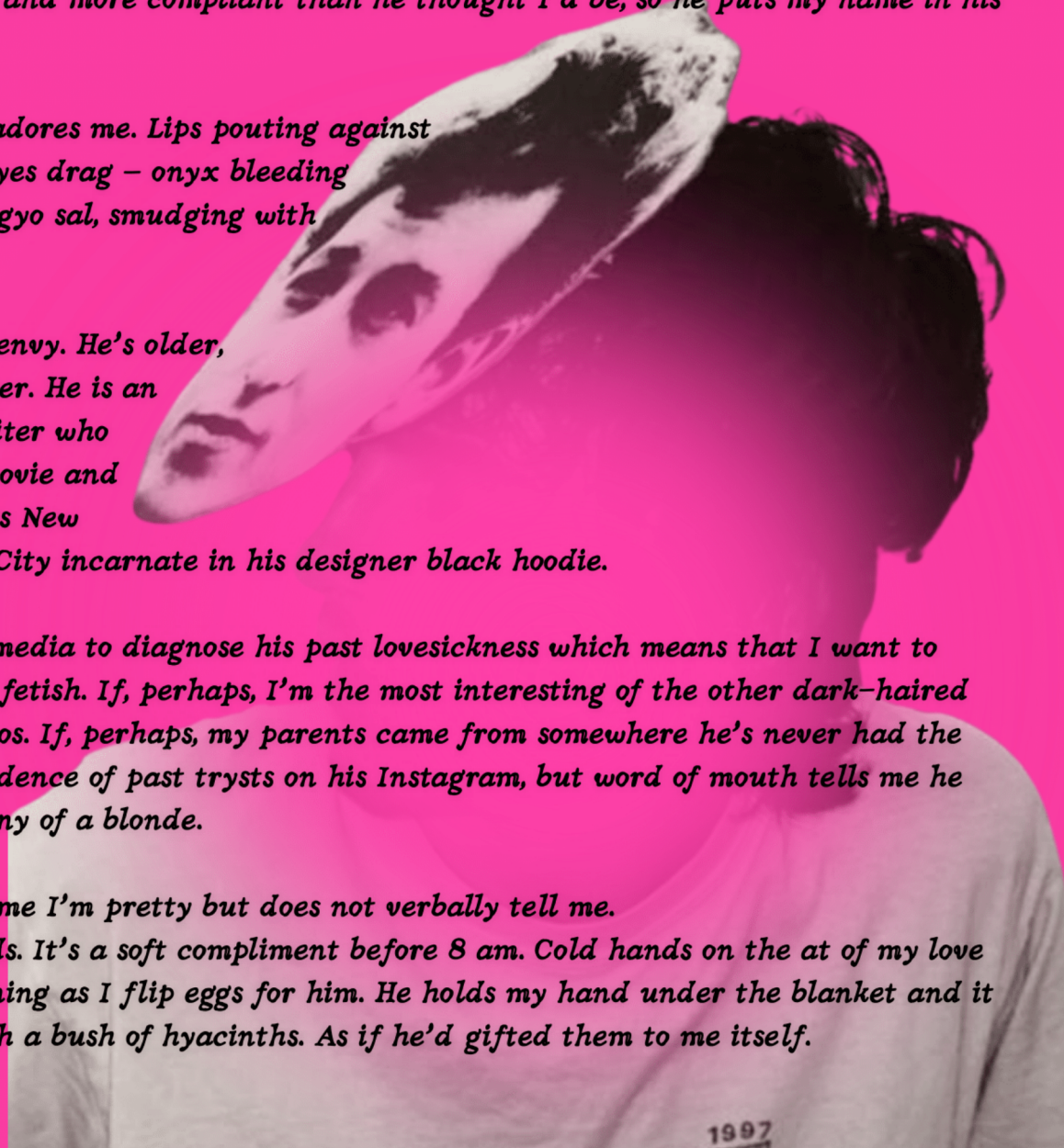
When he tells me I look innocent, I think it's because several thoughts pass his bombarded psyche when he looks at me. It's unimportant, but he knows better than to say it out loud. I am perfect and soft and wet and more compliant than he thought I'd be, so he puts my name in his phone.

When he looks at me, he adores me. Lips pouting against his fingertips while my eyes drag – onyx bleeding into the pockets of my aegyo sal, smudging with cosmetic charcoal.

Timothée is everything I envy. He's older, he's been in the city longer. He is an established actor and writer who has been published for movie and art critiques. He embodies New York City. He is New York City incarnate in his designer black hoodie.

I stalk Timothée's social media to diagnose his past lovesickness which means that I want to check if he has an Asian fetish. If, perhaps, I'm the most interesting of the other dark-haired women with dragon tattoos. If, perhaps, my parents came from somewhere he's never had the cuisine of. There is no evidence of past trysts on his Instagram, but word of mouth tells me he usually enjoys the company of a blonde.

Timothée Chalamet tells me I'm pretty but does not verbally tell me. He tells me with his hands. It's a soft compliment before 8 am. Cold hands on the at of my love handles, my stomach turning as I flip eggs for him. He holds my hand under the blanket and it feels like walking through a bush of hyacinths. As if he'd gifted them to me itself.



Timothée Chalamet's face is distorting as the seconds pass while we have sex. I whimper underneath his scrawny frame. He is lithe but he is strong. He is pinning me down. He smells like citrus and tobacco and sourdough. A church pew in Hell's Kitchen.

His mouth is carnation-pink and blooming. His eyes are darker than they usually are. Brown. Amber. Honey. They reflect depths when brought upon the light. It's what I see now. He tells me that I am delusional. I'm seeing things. They're green. It's 2 in the morning, hours after he fed me magic mushrooms on an everything bagel, and his eyes are purple and pink and red.

We take a shower after we eat Cheerios. He wraps his arms around me under the flood of hot water and it feels like being held by a ghost.

My acquaintances tell me that I look good when I walk around with Timothée. A hand clasped in cursed hand. He is so tall and pretty and lithe and we don't look good together no matter what anyone tells me. They tell me that I'm lucky because of how beautiful he is. They know I'm his even though we don't tell anyone about our affair. We don't go out much. We usually stare at each other in my bed.

Timothée Chalamet is really getting into Bob Dylan. His impression is spot-on – almost better than my friend Edan's. His hair is growing thick and curly with the hint of a stache on his upper lip and he wears my sweaters because they fit him. I like drowning in menswear in the winter.



@gwendolynbrown8248 6 years ago

Sometimes! u feel like your fading away.



Reply



Timothée Chalamet is really getting into Bob Dylan. His impression is spot-on – almost better than my friend Edan's. His hair is growing thick and curly with the hint of a stache on his upper lip and he wears my sweaters because they fit him. I like drowning in menswear in the winter.

Timothée writes songs on his guitar and they are never about me. He only talks about Bob Dylan, who he now has an encyclopedic knowledge of. He dreams of blonde girls and California skies and refuses to talk to me after sex lately. We have different worldviews. I've been asking too much of him.

He doesn't tell me, but Timothée Chalamet thinks I'm a little fool. A beautiful little fool, as Daisy Buchanan says. He likes that I'm mean and pretty and listen to him, but again, I am too much.

I think he's scared that I know too much about him. That he's gotten desperate for my attention, that my best friend might not like him. He likes it when his neck is bitten. I like the little mole underneath his collarbone.

Timothée Chalamet lives in my room and he doesn't like me and he reads me poems that he'd bookmarked on archive.org. He is hard to read and he scolds me when I cry. He apologizes with his hands.

I get Timmy to be in my TikTok videos and all the comments say 'Oxford Study.' He ignores me often. I stalk his ex on social media – she is a beautiful graduate student studying the echolocation of whales. She loves Joni Mitchell. That's all that he's been listening to lately.

Timothée does not tell me when his plans are and I hang on every word. He's free on Saturday night, so I wait for him. He never comes. I call him and he sounds disheveled, as if he hadn't been thinking of me at all, as if he'd only remembered my existence when I'd called. He was at the club with a friend who looked just like Joan Baex and he couldn't come over and I had to drink the bottle of wine I bought all alone.



MAREN (CONT'D)

Lee, for God's sake, let me up--

LEE

I want you to eat me. I want you to feed! Bones and all! I'll just-- go, ok? Up to space. Come find me later--? Ok?



Timothée Chalamet dumps me in Central Park. Except we were never together, and he tells me sincerely that he doesn't hate me, even though I was too clingy at the holiday party he took me to. He didn't introduce me to anyone. I didn't notice – I was drowning in red wine and said things I shouldn't have said.

The next week, he shows up at my doorstep. His face is more gaunt than I remember. I suppose he's always been gaunt, and I liked that about him. But now, underneath the blue-grey sky, he tells me that he feels so horrible, like a wound that's been played open. But it's difficult to listen – I'm overwhelmed by smells in the following order: An ashtray, Maison Margiela's By The Fireplace, a cloud of Geekbar vapor, Milkdud pits (caramel only), an Xbox controller covered in nail polish, a lox bagel, a glass of chardonnay, and the slightest whiff of roadkill.

I can't listen to him because a supercut of our affair is playing in front of me and glowing and I can't see his face anymore. The emotions and unread text messages grab me by the throat, serpentine, and the blurry figure behind me keeps chanting, Did you love him? Did you love him? Did you love him?

I slam the door closed. When I open it again, there is no one there.

It wasn't until I stepped outside that I began to suspect it was a hot day.
I felt feverish, and to my face the sunlight brought an almost chemical burning sensation, and I began to sweat.
Full removal of my coat prompted uncontrollable shivering, so I wore it awkwardly balanced on my arms, over the elbows
, effortfully tensed and bent.
Setting out under the blinding sky, the dog panted and dithered, and we slowly covered the streets between our home and the paper shop.

It was on the return journey that I heard a rasping moan, and saw the dog with its nose to the ground,
eyeing something small and dark and shrivelled.
I stooped down with a bag, reaching for the lump,
shading my eyes from the sun, and determined that the thing was in fact a slug,
slowly hardening in the heat.
It was almost completely dry, and yet I could still hear his feeble moan.
The dog had started to cock its leg by a parked car, and instinctively I picked it up and held it over the slug.
The feeble moan became a horrified cry, so I swiftly put the dog down, and vainly searched for another source of water.

The slug whimpered again and once more my instincts directed me, this time to fall to my knee.
I tore apart my dry lips and eventually summoned a small pool of saliva by repeatedly lifting my tongue.
The effort made me retch, and the first drop missed, but the second landed squarely on the slug, and he gasped: "Oh, thank you! Thank you!"

The next day I felt no better. I sat at the upstairs window, wrapped in a blanket, occasionally returning the dog's anxious gaze.
It was my birthday, and I had received two cards. Upon opening them I discovered that both were from my grandmother.
They contained generous gifts of money, and I was wondering how best to rectify the problem of the accidental duplication.
She was quite probably past understanding any attempt to explain the situation. Could I somehow discretely return it to the bank?
It wouldn't have mattered so much if she had sent a cheque, like she used to do.
I tried to imagine how a person could forget cramming that quantity of money into an unyielding envelope.

The sky was a brilliant blue, and people drifted by in the unseasonable heat wearing hastily assembled summer outfits.
A small crowd had gathered beneath my window, and a young girl was pointing at the pavement.
I leaned out for a better look. Something on the ground glistened in the bright sunlight.
It looked like a series of letters. An I, an L, an O, and then what might have been a V, or a perhaps a heart.
And there he was. A slug, the slug, my slug was half way through smearing a heart shaped trail on the flagstones.
As he looked up and saw me he exclaimed, "there she is! My saviour!" The crowd looked up. I shrank back into my window.

It was after the people had dispersed, and I reached out to close the window, that I heard a huffing and a grunting,
and peered out once more to see the slug climbing the drainpipe. "My saviour," he repeated, drawing closer to my hand as it lingered on the pane.
I allowed him to kiss it, as was clearly his wish,
and pointedly asked if there was anything I could do to help today.
I assumed that my evident state of poor health would serve as an indication of the empty nature of the inquiry.
The slug sighed and said, "my girl, you are a rare creature, unique in your generosity, truly a heart of gold.
No-one but you thinks to ask a lowly slug how she could be of service to him.
You saved my life yesterday, you know." For a moment I wondered if he had come back to grant me a wish
He continued, "I will never forget. Of course, I am elated to be alive today, revelling in every encounter, every sensation, every glorious moment..."
Then, fixing his gaze on me he spoke more solemnly.
"It's a little harder to live fully when you're penniless, of course, but such is my situation, and I must accept..."
He trailed off as his eyes shifted in the direction of my grandmother's duplicated cash offerings,
which sat in two small, neat stacks by the window.

You can imagine how woodenly I uttered my retort, and only after a pause during which I felt a wave of sweat and anger sweep my face.
Feeling each word tugging nausea closer as it caught in my throat, I whispered, "do you want some money?"

"Oh goodness, no, I couldn't possibly, but oh! Oh yes! Madam, if there is one thing I need... But really, I couldn't possibly.."

"Here", I said aggressively, thrusting a handful of notes towards him as he teetered on the window frame.
He wobbled, and slipped a few inches down as I retracted my hand, a little ashamed of my petty reaction.

"Bless you, ma'am, but I can't take it from you now" he gasped, with a hint of incredulous scorn, as he caught his breath following the slippage.
"Look, you see that hedge down there? Could you possibly leave it there for me? I will ensure it is swiftly collected".
I did as instructed, wondering whom he might enlist to assist in the retrieval and management of the funds.
Returning to the hedge a little later I found the money gone, and in its place a series of perfectly parallel silvery trails.

The next week, feeling no better, and perhaps worse, I arranged to see a doctor, and was referred for tests.
It was during the slow walk home from my appointment that I once again encountered the slug.
A brasserie had opened on the corner of my street, and I recognised his black form sitting at one of the tables outside.
He seemed considerably larger now, and was accompanied by a blonde lady in furs, with a zebra skin handbag,
and a young man with a tiny moustache, in a creased linen suit.
A champagne cooler and two full ashtrays flanked the woman, who fumbled in her bag whilst maintaining a grip on a long cigarette holder.
A waiter stood by looking slightly impatient.

"Oh brother", she deeply drawled, now simply stirring the contents of the bag with her hand, rather than searching.

"I don't have so much as a penny on me today. This is so very embarrassing".

The slug slithered over to her, barely dodging a shower of cigarette ash, cooing, "oh never fear, my love. I shall settle this".

He spoke a few quiet words to the waiter, who nodded, evidently satisfied.

As the slug's companions wobbled to their feet, I jeered, vicariously fortified by the clinking of glass bottles rolling around the table.

"I should be wary of drinking so heavily in the sun. You might get dehydrated".

The woman blinked at me and then laughed as she poured a half finished bottle of Perrier on the slug's head.

He tittered sensuously, and caught my eye, but before he could say a word I had turned my head and quickened my pace, breathing the still, humid air like an angry bull.

I saw him again the next day, very fat and drunk, lying in the shade of a public litter bin. Sweeping past, I heard distantly the slow, beseeching song of his voice, as though it were lodged in the back of my head: "My saviour..."

The tests were inconclusive and I was prescribed some experimental medicine.

The weather was colder now and I had wrapped up warmly to collect it - a little paper bag containing a small glass bottle.

On the way home I saw him again. I turned the corner towards my house and there he was, seemingly still drunk, and faced by a huge black bird.

The bird hopped towards him. "Help me!" cried the slug, and, seeing me, he sighed with relief.

I looked on. The slug repeated his anguished cry before the bird moved in and snatched him from the gutter.

His fat body bulged out from the bird's beak, and I heard him cry out once more as the pair became airborne.

I had no option; I flung the little bag, weighted by the glass bottle inside.

It flew up, and by the grace of God it struck the bird squarely on the belly, causing it to lose its grip on its quarry.

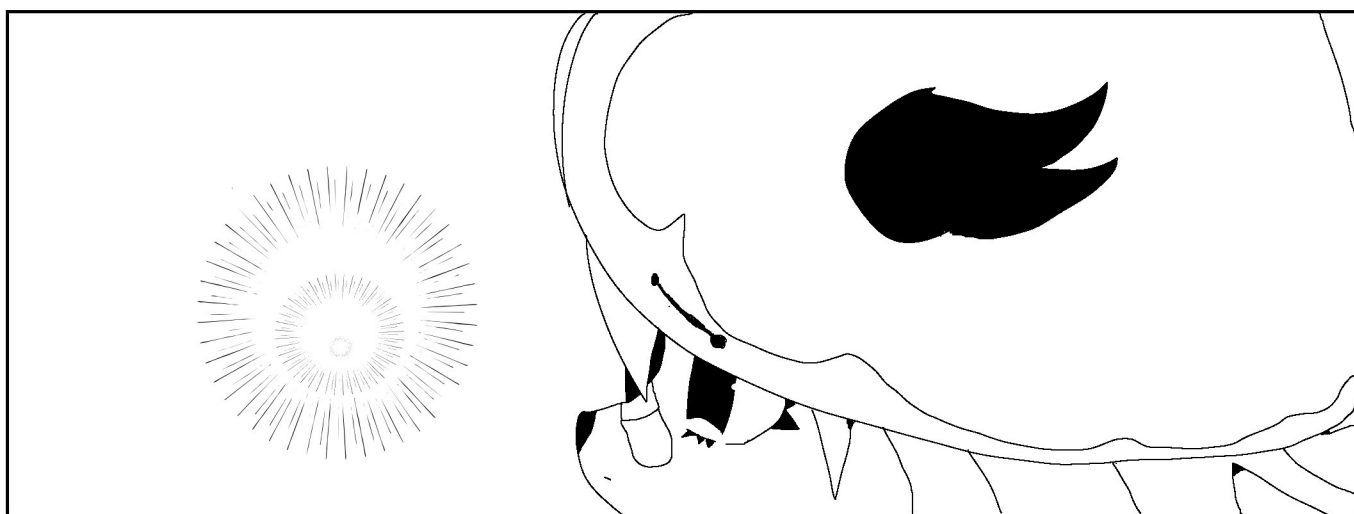
The bag came down with a quiet smash a few feet away as the slug tumbled through the air and landed on my shoulder.

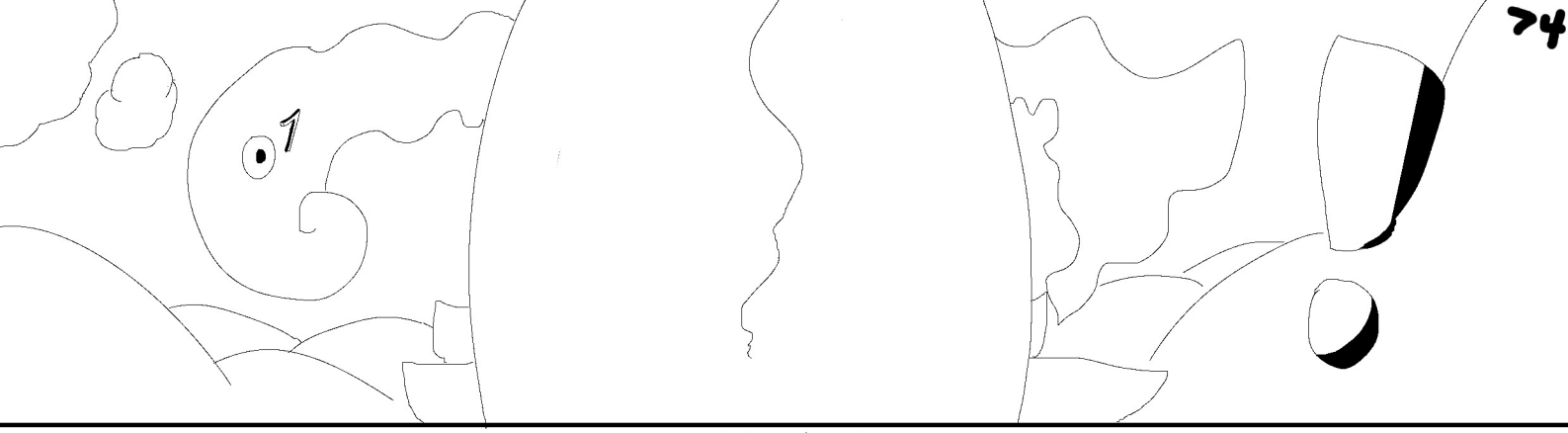
We saw the bird seek refuge on a nearby rooftop. "Thank you, oh, thank you! Thank you, thank you, thank you!" gushed the slug.

"Why did you hesitate?"



Do
go
to
Heaven





"Crack!"



I
will
find it!



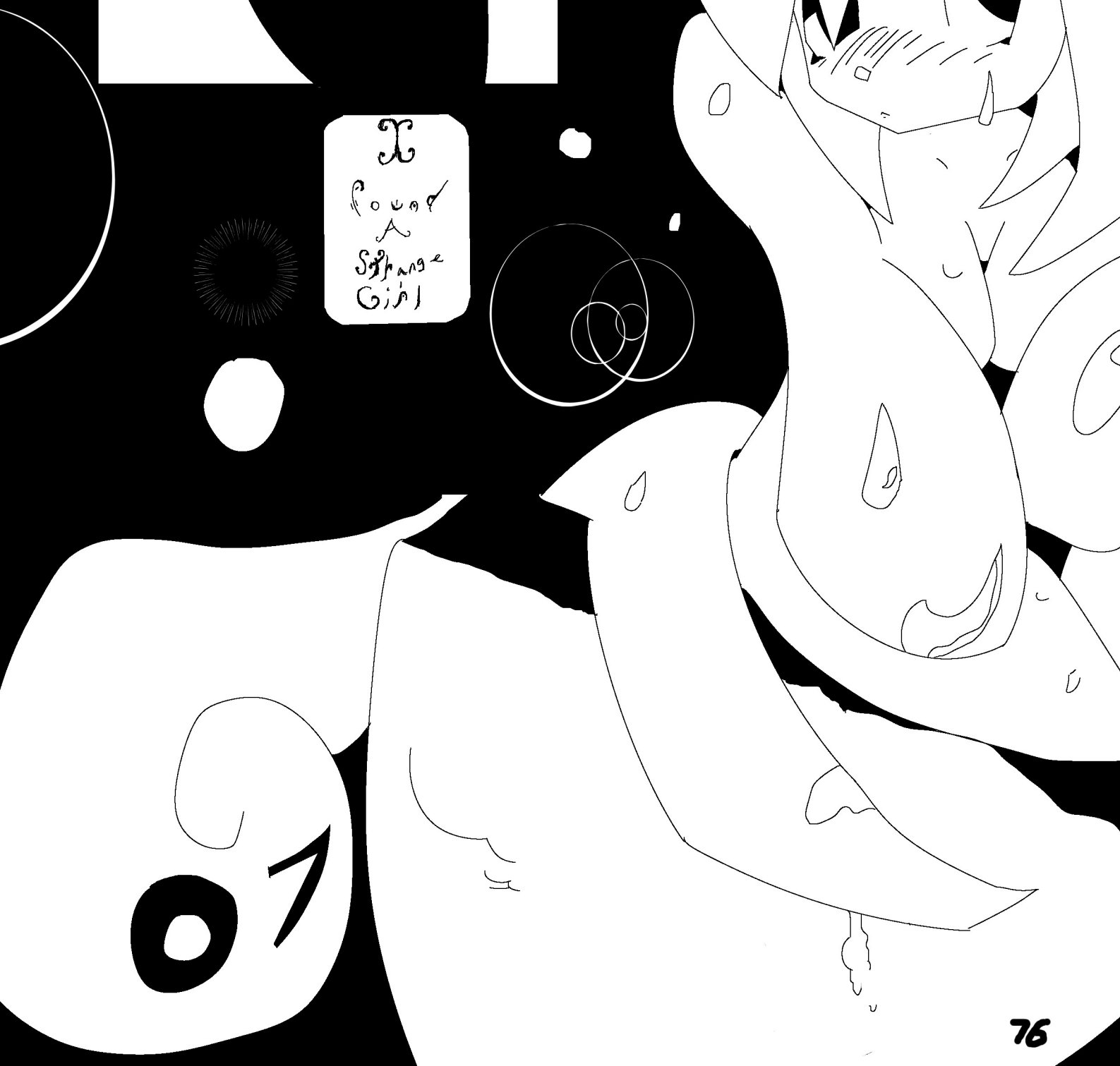
The
one
who
loves
me

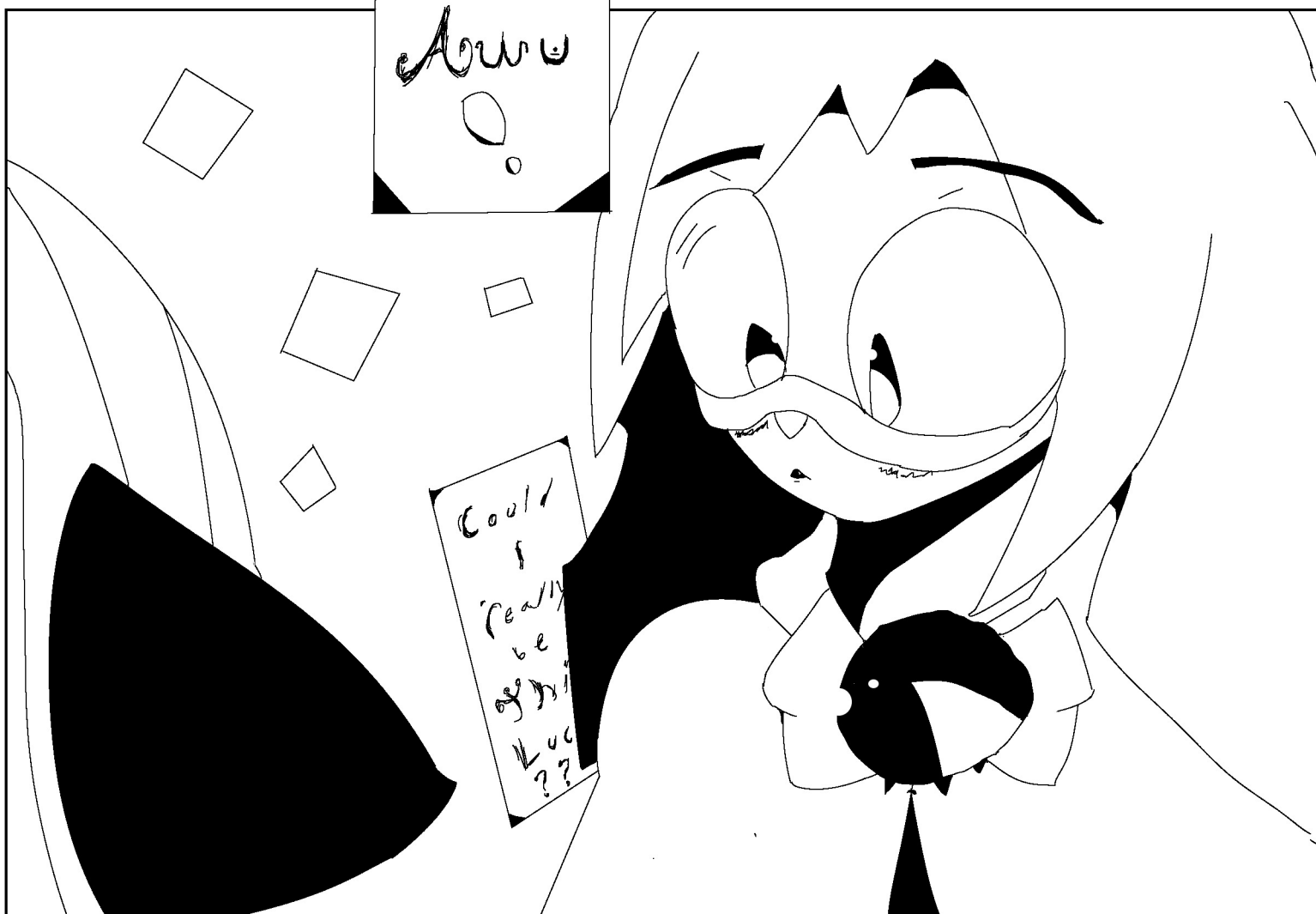




While
making
my
Daily
Pounds

Found
A
Strange
Girl







**'Slut Hymn'
(or: into the shoeless night)**

(on papyrus)

**a translation of 'Lecto compositus vix prima silentia noctis ...' attributed to
Petronius Arbiter. Its clear, brief Latin given diabetes by Hannah Bannanah.**

I In my bed I'm chosen, composed
by teeming force, @ the start of quiet,
in the quiet of night, Grown for this and
harvested *'in pieces, in single portions;
in different places; at different
times.'* I'm in possession of a foolish dream.

This
Lord Cupid understood,
so woke me from one dream to next,
this dream here to stay, he said,
'You scholar of mine,'
'with your heart a thousand,'
'alone you are alone?' (he sd.)

and flung me to the shoe-less night,
& night of self,
near-nude I walked,
each route dreaming that
circle dream of Love, Insistence
beyond shoe-wearing,
and in incidence, piety -
for his argument was air-tight.

The silent din of roads and birds, their
loyal mob of song.

 them and their dogs
recited me a kind of silence
til its clang were measured sound.

Right Now/Hurry/Accelerate/To Go/ To Move In Pain;
whatever halts me cannot turn me,
 roman roads
 have read me
 all they have on shame. (thoughts, too, r hiding
in the dustbins,)
Stuck.

And in the hold of stillness, in its clasp on air,
in its night that lays on skin with no-one anywhere,
 I am yet moving, will not be un-flung,
to bring some beating heart to bed.

 the candle fights the smother of night,
reason enough,
and the Empire in my narrow chest.

I am the proud stranded out of bed,
if not Lover then Statue or Bum or Ghost,
Here again I keep the tradition, for Cupid,
Guerilla King in Exile Cupid, Shoeless,
I am yours.

(adversaries in the dustbins, hush)

II

(refrain)

'The moon shell beds down with the wave like-snow,
Only Time squats here in my bed, Oh.'
(I'm mangling Burns' Sappho).

CRAS ORIETUR

CRAS ORIETUR

I have an, um, report here that a, uh, certain city, mm, uhh, reported yesterday that it was the first day in over a thousand years, since, you know, the beginning of record keeping, um, that, uhh, the sun did not shine at all, all day. So, for a thousand years, you know, per the uh, meteorological record, the sun shone every day in, ummm, even in days like in winter, or, uh, yeah, and so yesterday the Meteorological Society reported that their instruments, uh, had not picked up any, you know, signals, or uh, beams, that would, you know, indicate that, and, uh, they took a report of the, uh, population, in case of like, uhm, instrumental failure, and, allegedly, uhh, no one had reportedly seen the sun at all that day either, so, as far as they, the uh, Meteorological Society, know, the sun did not shine yesterday even for a minute or two. And, obviously, everyone was in quite a uh, tiff over this, because the uh, every day for, you know, a thousand years, the sun had shone on this city, or, you know, as per the Meteorological Society, and although this wasn't, um, common knowledge or anything because, uhh, people, I guess, felt that they were getting enough sun one way or another, but once the uh, Society announced that this, y'know, had happened, everyone was pretty upset; the chief meteorologist, who's, um, he said that this was obviously, uh, and I quote here, "completely unprecedented, given that, uh, the meteorological record had not been interrupted in nearly a thousand years," uh, so, the mayor is going to hold a symposium to plan what, umm, might be done about this and its, uh, implications...'



Sorry to double text, but I would love to see you. I've been thinking about you so much. What you told me last time you saw me was crazy and I was thinking about it so much. I don't think I'd like to do that.. not everything you said, but I'll tell you what I would like to do. I'd like to see you and kiss your face and let you fuck me like that again. And then we can roleplay, but I'll set the terms this time. I'll be a peasant farmer's long unmarried ponce son hiding two secrets: one dark, one shameful. And you are a prince, one of the legendary, bloodthirsty abyssal knights, and your army of darkness has descended upon my village and demanded quarter, even though you fight against our king, and we give it to you because we have no choice. When you leave our village, you will kill everyone and burn every field, but you make us believe we will live if we obey your command

and do not betray you to our Lord. You seize my family's farm to construct an outpost, and as you come in to take a look at the land, you notice me there, standing in the shadows, my hair long and tangled with debris of plant and soil, my tunic showing off my full, wide thighs and my round ass. You demand to have me, because you knew what I was the moment you saw me, and you knew exactly what you wanted to do to me, and so you take me with your retinue when you leave. This disgraces my family and my village, but it does not matter, because I am now your property and you leave my village in ashes. Every night of your military conquest you ravage me and I become your favorite whore. When we return to the palace, you add me to your harem, and I rise in your favor far above all the others, because my blood is poisoned, ever since my mother locked me in the greenhouse when I was a child and gave my hand to the bite of a rare venomous flower she grows only in a secret, hidden garden. It gave me one last weapon in my defense, in a world where she knew, as a delicate faggot, I would only be prey for the demons and the beasts that rage inside the souls of men. And so in my moment of greatest need, I feed you my poisoned blood to earn your greater affection. In a small dose, it

intoxicates you and makes you hunger for my scent and my pheromones like a feral cat. When you find out the truth about this, you punish me terribly and your father locks me in the dungeon when your servants tell his master of whisperers. But, after the chaos subsides, you sneak down into the depths of your keep to fuck me in the dark of night, and you return every evening after. And one day, when you visit me in the darkness, bringing hot food from your table, fucking me amongst the squealing and screeching of rats, you promise me that when your father dies and you inherit the throne, you will make me queen. And then, after you ravage me again and we writhe in the ecstasy of our secret betrothal, you begin to teach me your family's sacred art of blood magick, forbidden to outsiders, and passed down the royal line of your kingdom since before my kingdom was even a sovereign people. For many nights I will study this art in the palace cells and wait for you to come and claim me. Before your father dies, he conquers the entirety of my kingdom and reduces it to dust — in this act, I forget even how to speak the name of my King or Lord or Father aloud from my lips or think it in my mind, as if it has been erased from memory, and I will spend days weeping and gnashing my teeth and

tearing my garments in horror at the depravity of your wicked family. In the depths of my despair, your mother will come to me in my solitude and reveal her secret plot to kill your father. She will withhold her reasons, but in return for my participation I will secure her blessing on our marriage, and get my revenge. She assures me that I shall be Queen and you shall be the Abyssal King, and my magick is all she wants in exchange for the death of the King. We begin to practice magick daily and develop new spells and magickal rites that have never existed before. Three days later, on the eve of the celebration of the twelve shadows, we kill the king upon his throne, before his court, with a poisonous bloodmagick that is new to the world and will confound the court and kingdom for decades to come. However, upon the passing of your father, your mother and her supporters seize the throne out from under our grasp. She is the most powerful bloodmage in all the deserts of the Leviathan Wastes, and though we covertly now seek her downfall, we are forced to kneel. In exchange, in a moment of mercy, the Abyssal Witch Queen Valgareathi grants our request for marriage. Later, we visit her in her solar and ask who she has named as heir now that she has usurped the line of succession. She threatens to cut out our

tongues if we ever use the word usurp again in her presence, and tells us that her heir shall be whichever royal child produces their own heir of their own blood. She smirks as we leave, thinking us defeated, but unbeknownst to her, we travel to the great Beast City of Angorak, a great city of wonder built inside the guts of a living desert leviathan, far inside the most remote parts of the Leviathan Wastes. In the greatest library that has ever been built, we read from the book of life, and learn the secrets of an ancient blood rite of fertility lost to time that can be performed by the consummated union of two souls with magick in the song of their blood, regardless of their anatomy, and we will perform it on our wedding night. On that dark and radiant evening, you will throw me onto your big feather bed and tear off my traditional abyssal royal marriage gown. You will wear your ceremonial armor — made of a rare metal as deep and dark as the night sky, swirled with oily, fractal spirals of iridescence — and your star-dotted great cape, carrying your cosmic mace, made from nightstone from the deepest pits of the great crater. And you will hold me down on the bed and whisper in my ear 'when I am done fucking you, you will be dead, and our children will grow in the rotting carcass of your ravaged body' and I will say 'yes, my lord'.

hey what's up I just saw your mom at hobby lobby lol? she told me you were gay now, and that you were really sorry for telling me to kill myself.... lol as if I didn't know either of those things... she looks so good i almost said "oh, wig sis!!" but i didn't want to be insensitive because of the alopecia haha. are you around still?? i keep thinking of your big coke can cock and that time you fucked me backstage when they rented out the highschool auditorium to a mlm and we had to sneak in there to get my vape. did you ever read my story??? could I borrow your printer again sometime?

Read 4/28/24

Hey.... u up?



Not Delivered

3

"Don't teach, don't preach, talk plain, entertain"
- B. Traven, maybe.

It is our favorite sport... To complain about decadence and decline. I am a born reactionary, so believe me I know... I know very well how it is,, it itches,, in my very soul.. to complain. Never, ever, ever ever has it been worse than it is now.. What is the opposite of zenith? Now! I spit, spit I say, at this total misery.. The brain rot is complete, it overshadows everything.. We are all fail-sons resting in its omnipotent shadow. Nowhere to run..

From a shiny point in existence, a fixed point, to this. Capital C Cultural Alps slowly but purposefully ground down by the laws of thermodynamics into a simple gravel pit, a geological wound.. The topography forever altered, shattered.. One thing is certain, decay always wins, it is the historical, material, factual tendency..

Remember that time, in the childhood and teenage years of industrialism when everything on earth was wonderful, sweet, and pleasant. When the rabble was cultivated and polite, every conversation, every thought, every little, ever so subtle, gesture..

Culturally yes alas..It was by definition high brow, deep, sensual, God's extended, via the geniuses, hand to the working and middle classes thirsting for truth and knowledge.. These hungry devourers of the West's absolute canon.. Not like today, when no one reads, no one contemplates, no one sees the beautiful, the wonderful... Dickens, Strindberg,, Mocked! Now it's reels, doomscrolling, influencers, tiktok, porn, fake news, pure and sheer evil.. Satan himself holds the reins, he steers the entire runaway wagon we call humanity...

It may be true, I do not dispute it.. but is it the times that are at fault then, if we thus conclude that something is wrong, that it has gone awry,, that the times, so to speak, are truly out of joint or is it a wholly human, almost constant will to brain-dead distraction we are witnessing,, a constant? From the wandering lanterna magika spicks , the shrill moritat songs with their sensationalism and ability to visually and musically bewitch an eager audience via dioramas, French and Victorian melodramas, to film, to tiktok and microdramas.. Is anything at all ever new under the sun?

Let us come back to this later but for my part it looks like the two polar opposites Marx and Spengler are both right,, history is a straight line with loops, a shoelace perhaps..

Imagine the golden age of rationalism and capitalism.. The late 19th century's advancements in scenography and stage technology have made the theatre an even more sensational spectacle, with thin veils, glass, directed lighting landscapes can come to life, seas roll, leaves blow, storms, lightning and thunder, the 18th century's rigid, symmetrical perspective has been overthrown, a revolution.. All this continental play with the magic of the stage would one day lead to film.. The theatre is more visual than ever before, declamation is dead.

The age of capitalism as said..The theatre must get out from the castles, from the manors, from the estates.. There it makes no money.. There it is confined, there it is sluggish, cobwebbed.. The aristocracy is dead and it is about to drag the theatre along in its fall.. If not, thanks to the blessed laws of historical materialism, it is revolutionized and enters a new stage.. And it sure does so, the industrialized, democratized theatre.. a cash cow.. The tasteless riffraffs's darling,, The Melodrama (the democratization of the theatre did not occur solely through melodrama but also through realism with e.g. Strindberg as a standard-bearer, in his masterpiece The Dance of Death theatre becomes table tennis, from there an almost straight line leads to the Marx Brothers and Lubitsch, perhaps looped then, Molière, but by this time he had long since been ossified and incomprehensible)...

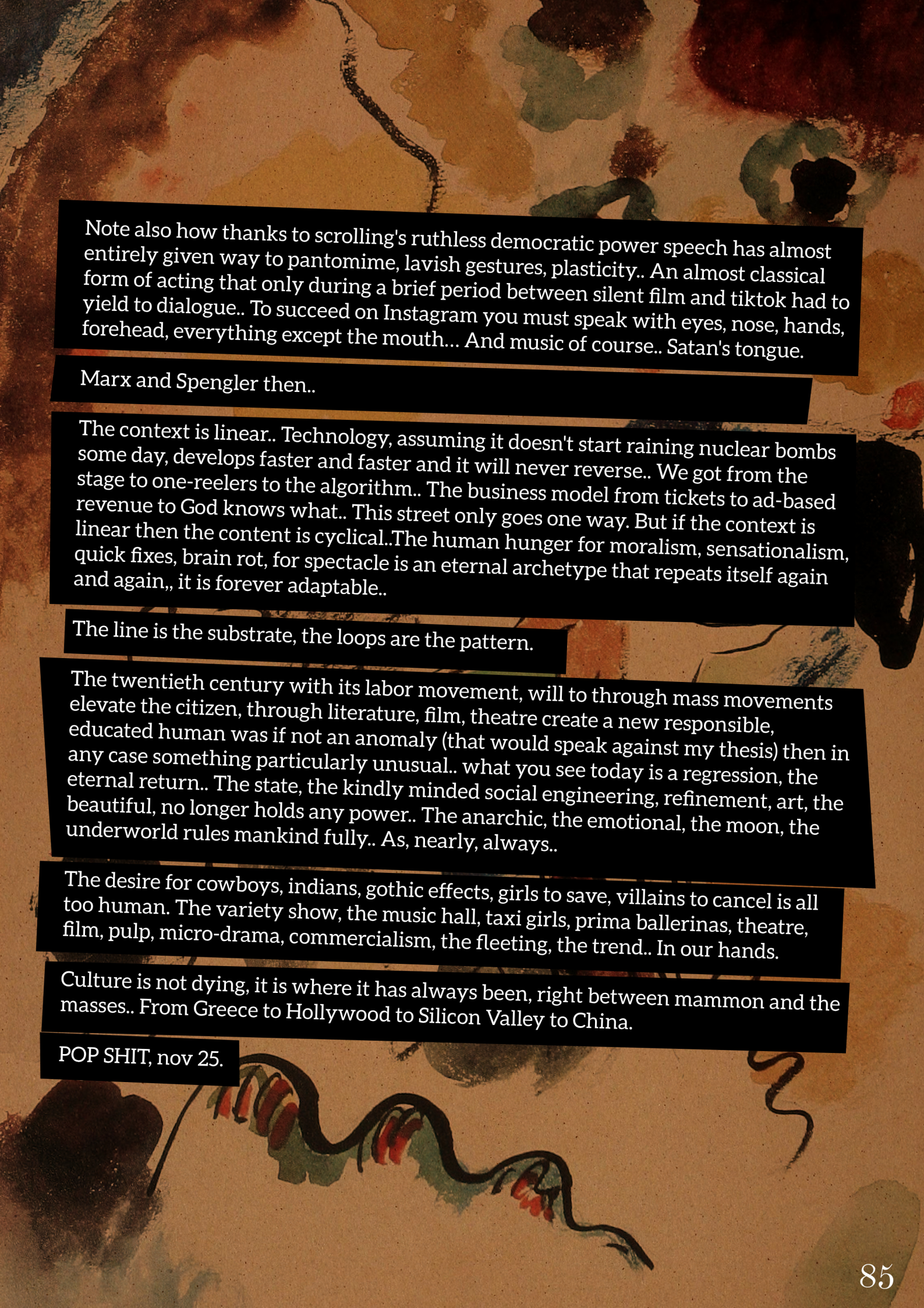
To the delight of the masses, the equally ossified Shakespeare and his nuances and deep insights into human condition had to yield to the absolutism of an almost Manichean proportion , the struggle between light and darkness.. The good against the evil.. The blue-eyed hero, the thoroughly evil rotten villain, the damsel in distress.. A heroic deed, a happy ending.. The form for what would become Hollywood.. The theatre was to be fast,fresh, topical, entertaining.. Pure entertainment.. It was to speak to the emotions alone and not to the intellect. A nerve, somewhat looped, runs straight from our emotional life to the wallet.. Producers have always known that.

The audience.. Do you think they sat quietly, in reverence, with a concentration span measured in kilometers, in yards? No, not entirely, (I would of course want to claim that) unlike the masses of today they above all lacked patience.. People cheered, people cried, people stamped their feet, people ate, people slept.. If a scene was good they demanded encore upon encore.. They scrolled, they fast-forwarded, they arrived in the second act and left in the third only to come back at the end of the fourth.. They did not respect the actors and the actors did not respect the play, they yielded to the hunger and whims of the Leviathan.. if there was one thing nobody under any circumstances wanted to restrain, it was their desires. The variety show, there you have tiktok and reels.. Sketches, songs, mimicry, emotional surges.. What I am describing is an analog equivalent to social media... Comments, likes, thumbs down, thumbs up, ALL CAPS.. emojis.. TLDR was the audience's slogan then, as now.. Its battle cry.. It is the very essence of democracy and liberalism.. The right to avoid everything that is boring.. Do you see the panorama? The looped line from Melodrama to the Nickelodeon to today's mob rule on the internet?

Emotion, not intellect, that is timeless... The material develops without stopping, culture is cyclical.

Thus, today, as then, emotions rule, the sensation, the unnuanced. The act ends, scroll further to know what happens next..

We sit with our little laterna magicas in our hand and with the visual and music's demonic power we are charmed both here and there..We are led to hate, to love, to be patriotic, or not.. Entertainment is Power's very best friend. A pillar of the state..



Note also how thanks to scrolling's ruthless democratic power speech has almost entirely given way to pantomime, lavish gestures, plasticity.. An almost classical form of acting that only during a brief period between silent film and tiktok had to yield to dialogue.. To succeed on Instagram you must speak with eyes, nose, hands, forehead, everything except the mouth... And music of course.. Satan's tongue.

Marx and Spengler then..

The context is linear.. Technology, assuming it doesn't start raining nuclear bombs some day, develops faster and faster and it will never reverse.. We got from the stage to one-reelers to the algorithm.. The business model from tickets to ad-based revenue to God knows what.. This street only goes one way. But if the context is linear then the content is cyclical..The human hunger for moralism, sensationalism, quick fixes, brain rot, for spectacle is an eternal archetype that repeats itself again and again,, it is forever adaptable..

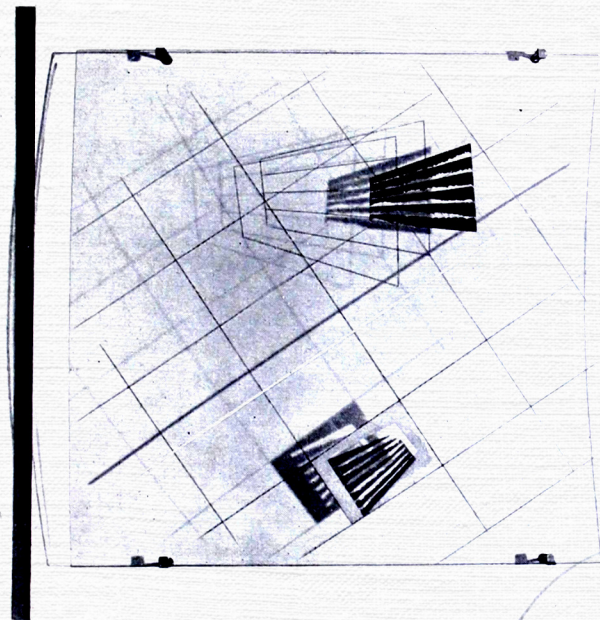
The line is the substrate, the loops are the pattern.

The twentieth century with its labor movement, will to through mass movements elevate the citizen, through literature, film, theatre create a new responsible, educated human was if not an anomaly (that would speak against my thesis) then in any case something particularly unusual.. what you see today is a regression, the eternal return.. The state, the kindly minded social engineering, refinement, art, the beautiful, no longer holds any power.. The anarchic, the emotional, the moon, the underworld rules mankind fully.. As, nearly, always..

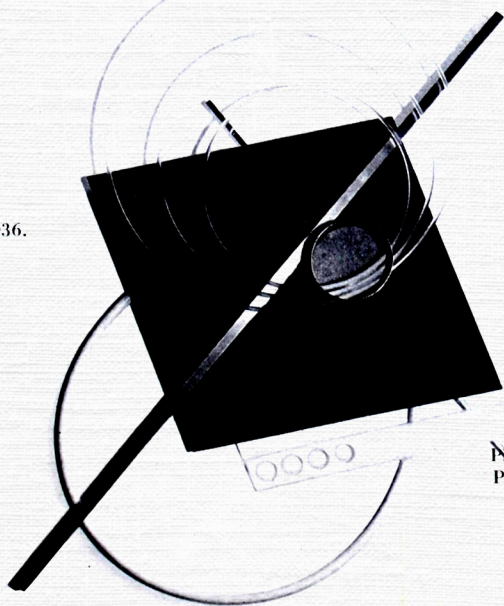
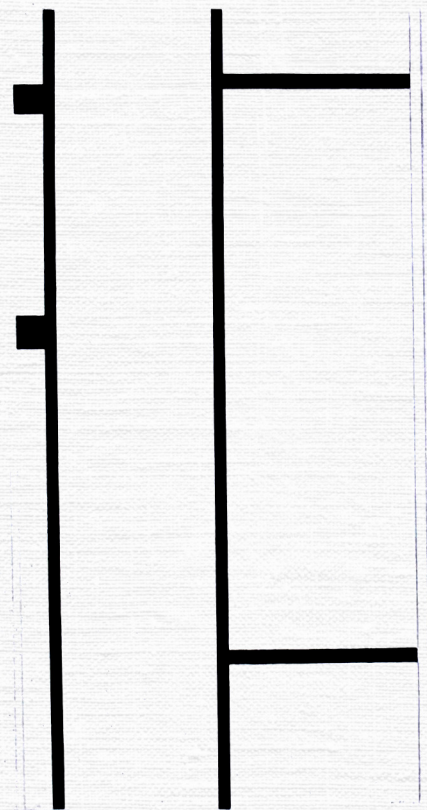
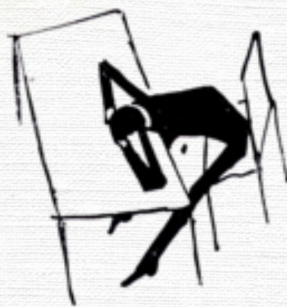
The desire for cowboys, indians, gothic effects, girls to save, villains to cancel is all too human. The variety show, the music hall, taxi girls, prima ballerinas, theatre, film, pulp, micro-drama, commercialism, the fleeting, the trend.. In our hands.

Culture is not dying, it is where it has always been, right between mammon and the masses.. From Greece to Hollywood to Silicon Valley to China.

POP SHIT, nov 25.



L. Moholy-Nagy: Rho—Transparent 50, 1936.

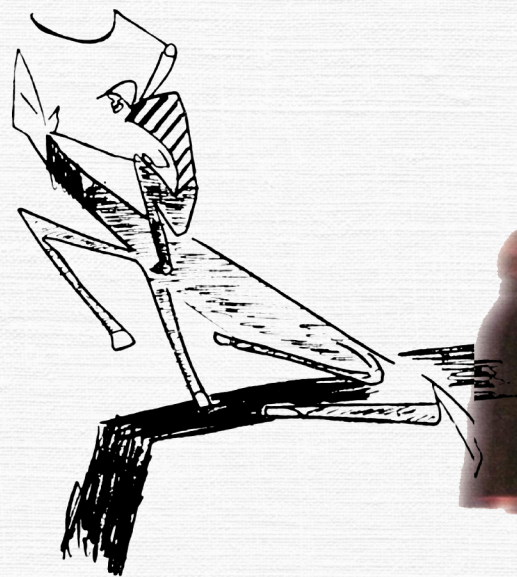
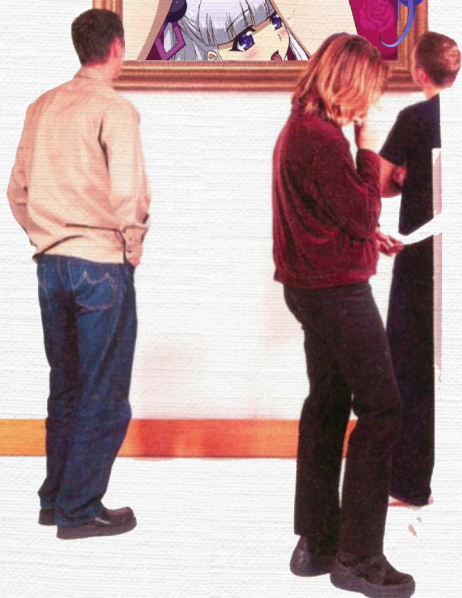


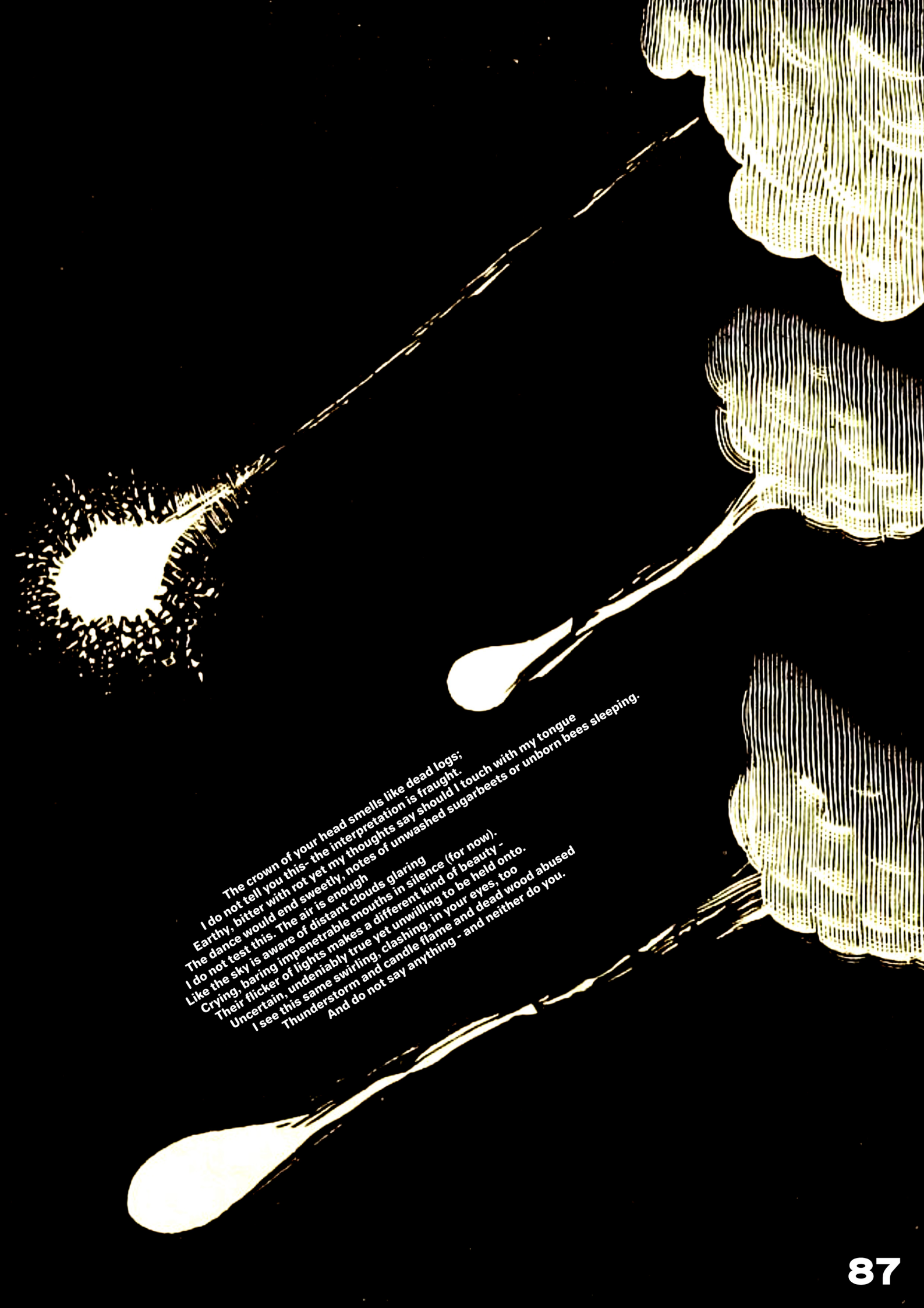
Piet Mondrian: Composition, 1935
Photo, courtesy of the Museum of
Modern Art



BUT IS IT ART?

Cesar Domela: Composition, 1935.





The crown of your head smells like dead logs;
I do not tell you this- the interpretation is fraught;
Earthy, bitter with rot yet my thoughts say should I touch with my tongue
The dance would end sweetly, notes of unwashed sugarbeets or unborn bees sleeping.
I do not test this. The air is enough
Like the sky is aware of distant clouds glaring
Crying, baring impenetrable mouths in silence (for now).
Their flicker of lights makes a different kind of beauty -
Uncertain, undeniably true yet unwilling to be held onto.
I see this same swirling, clashing, in your eyes, too
Thunderstorm and candle flame and dead wood abused
And do not say anything - and neither do you.



One afternoon, I noticed a new tree in the courtyard. I was sitting on the balcony, smoking a cigarette and waiting for my laundry to finish, when it caught my eye. From above, it looked identical to the trees around it. But I was almost certain that this particular tree had not been there before. Every day, I went out on this balcony to smoke, and every day, I stared at the trees in the courtyard, so I had a pretty clear mental image. There were four concrete rings, each containing several trees, except for the one in the middle, which had only a small sapling. And now a big, mature tree had suddenly appeared in that center ring, casting its shadow over the weak little sapling.

Was it really possible to transplant a fully grown tree into the earth like that? I didn't know a lot about nature, so I couldn't say. Surely it would have made noise, though — assuming you need a whole construction crew to pull off something like that. Yet I had slept like a baby the night before, no interruptions at all, and I'm a light sleeper.

It was a warm summer day. Around the apartment block, I could see many people sitting out on their balconies. Old men sitting in the shade. Young women in tank tops and short shorts sitting in the sun. Some of them were smoking like me, some were reading books, most were just on their phones. I wondered whether anyone besides me had noticed the tree.

I stared into its foliage. The leaves shifted slightly as a breeze passed through the courtyard. It fit so perfectly into its surroundings; if I hadn't known otherwise, I would have assumed that the layout had been designed with this tree in mind. And as a matter of fact, in the past I had consciously remarked to myself that it was weird for the middle ring to have only a sapling while the others had these big leafy giants. But that only made me more certain that my mental image was accurate. This tree had not been there until today.

My cigarette had burned down to the filter. I tossed it into the ashtray at my feet. I was about to light a new one when my alarm went off.

There was one person in the laundry room, a short Southeast-Asian guy that I had seen around the building a couple times. He had a distinctive fashion sense: colorful camp-collar shirts, linen pants, basketball shoes. He was perched on the

window-sill, staring at his phone. He didn't look up when I entered the room.

I filtered out the clothes that I was going to throw in the dryer and the clothes that I was going to hang-dry. The former category included socks, underwear, and T-shirts; the latter category included pants and button-down shirts. After filling up the dryer and starting the machine, I set a timer for an hour and twenty minutes on my phone. That was usually enough. I draped the more delicate clothes over my laundry basket and carried it into the elevator.

I love the smell of clean clothes. That's why I do so much laundry. I probably do it three times as often as the average guy, and not because I care more about cleanliness. I just enjoy the ritual. The warmth of the socks when they come out of the machine. The careful folding and smoothing. Even the waiting period is important — I like being forced to sit around and do nothing while the machine runs. It gives me time to meditate.

In my bedroom, I separated the wet clothes. Flecks of lint had to be removed; the shirts were placed on hangers and buttoned up to minimize wrinkling. Then I hung everything up. I didn't have a clothesline or a drying rack, so I just hung everything on the chandelier. I like this because it has the effect of partitioning the room into different sections.

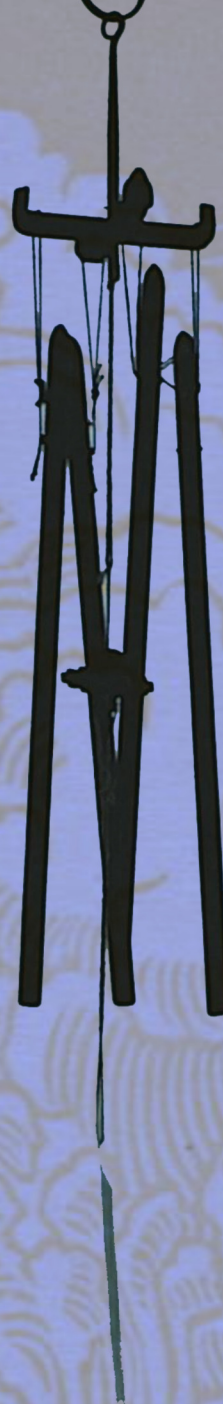
Once the clothes had been hung, I sat down on my bed. A warm gust of wind came in through the window, rustling the curtains of cloth. I rubbed my cheek. That morning, I had achieved one of the most perfect shaves of my life. I had somehow sliced the hairs down to the tiniest follicles without cutting myself.

Now my chin was eerily smooth, like there had never been hair there in the first place. It was both comfortable and uncomfortable to rub my fingers across the skin.

I got up and looked out the window. There was the tree, staring calmly back at me from its circular enclosure.

In order to solve the mystery, I needed a closer look.

I took the elevator all the way down to the bottom floor of the building. The trees were in an open-air chamber below ground level; you could only access it from the parking garage. I didn't go down here very often. It was a nice enough space, with greenery and benches, but there was no reason for me to relax on these





benches when I could relax on my own private balcony with a cigarette. I think most of the building's residents thought the same way, because the space was usually empty. Despite all the children who presumably lived in this massive high-rise, I never saw or heard them playing down here.

I passed through the connecting hallway of the parking garage and came out into the sunlit courtyard. The trees seemed much bigger from this perspective, with long trunks and expansive canopies. I walked in and out of their shade and arrived at the concrete ring in the center. There was the little sapling, boasting only a handful of leaves on its slender limbs. And there was the mystery tree, towering over with quiet confidence. I don't know much about botany, but this was definitely not a young tree. The thick trunk had many ridges; the limbs twisted about, splitting off into many smaller branches; and the base of the tree was planted firmly in the earth, showing no signs of recent upheaval.

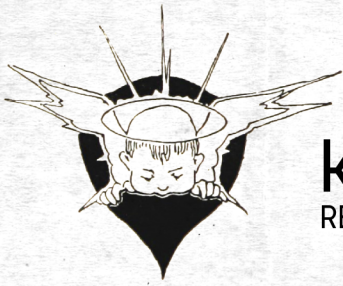
I wanted an even closer look, so I jumped up onto the concrete platform and stepped out onto the tree pit. Crouching down, I pressed my hand to the dirt. It was dusty and compact, the opposite of what you'd expect if fresh earth had recently been transplanted here. I looked around at the other tree pits; the dirt had the same appearance. These tree pits had all been filled before I even moved into the building.

The sapling quivered when I pressed on its green stem. The base rose crookedly from the earth, making it even more shaky.

I stood up to touch the trunk of the big tree. The texture was surprisingly smooth. Almost as smooth as my freshly shaved chin. What had appeared to be ridges were in fact discolorations, dark spots streaking the surface like rain. The wood was cool to the touch.

With my hand still on the trunk, I squinted up into the canopy. A few feet above my head was the place where the two main limbs of the tree diverged. Above that, you couldn't make heads or tails of the structure; the limbs spread into arteries of branches, each bearing its own foliage. Sunlight pierced through the clusters of thin, glossy leaves. Everything was still and peaceful.

I lay in bed that night, unable to fall asleep. My window was open. From a nearby balcony, I heard the clanging of wind chimes.



kindness report labs

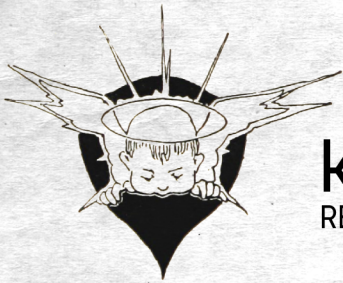
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62	Jack Zittel	@jank777	
63	Jack Zittel	@jank777	
64	Jack Zittel	@jank777	
65	@zaneperdue	@jank777	
66	@zaneperdue	@jank777	
67	Ariya	Ariya	
68	Ariya	Ariya	
69	Ariya	Ariya	
70	Ariya	Ariya	
71	@saaal	@thelowergarden	
72	@saaal	@thelowergarden	
73	@thelowergarden	@thelowergarden	
74	@thelowergarden	@thelowergarden	
75	@thelowergarden	@thelowergarden	
76	@thelowergarden	@thelowergarden	
77	@thelowergarden	@thelowergarden	
78	Jessica W	Jessica W	
79	@hannahbannanah	@hannahbannanah	
80	@patwins	@jank777	
81	Aurora Gamourtian	@evanielaurent	
82	Aurora Gamourtian	@evanielaurent	
83	Pop Shit	@evanielaurent	
84	Pop Shit	@evanielaurent	
85	Pop Shit	@evanielaurent	
86	@evanielaurent	@evanielaurent	
87	@patwins	@evanielaurent	
88	@adamesher	@evanielaurent	
89	@adamesher	@evanielaurent	
90	@adamesher	@evanielaurent	
91	@evanielaurent	@evanielaurent	
92	@evanielaurent	@evanielaurent	

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We stole a lot of images too lol we don't really give a fuck tho. I hope you enjoyed reading this document. I hope that you understood. Basically everybody is allowed to be friends and make things no matter what. We killed the devil and analyzed his blood that's what happened on the cover. There were lots of sins in his blood. That's okay because our blood is clean and we made a magazine. Goodbye now. Goodbye forever. You'll never see any of us again goodbye forever.

