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A Plot Against the Perfect Revenge: A Book of Poems

by

Casey Fuller

A Creative Work

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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement

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1: You Must Scuttle the Hulls

This Story

is questionable: my friend Johnny Perez tells me when we were twelve or so, when we went around to garage sales and bought anything long or sharp, when both of us had pump-action bb-guns, before we took the closet doors off their hinges to make

a fort, but after we set my yard on fire with bottle rockets, but before video games, when we made a rope swing out of belts and talked someone into using their mattress to land on, after we found the rock quarry where we learned how to swim, but before we dug an entire

car door out of the ground from behind my house, Johnny says, while walking on the trail that has been there as long as anyone can remember, we, with both of our bb-guns slung around our shoulders, came upon a wood crate half the size of a semi-trailer, and hearing

a noise from inside, put our guns down, picked up rocks the size of our boy-sized fists and, after banging at the side of the heavily nailed box for several minutes, knocked-off a side of wall, opened it, let out seven or eight scrawny dogs, looked at each other, then walked inside.

On His Way to Rome Keats Would See a Cardinal Shooting Birds

Unfortunate, he mumbled, like the first time he hemorrhaged blood, by now used to the plodding jostle of horse hooves and the course of the muddy road. Rome seemed far, and by now his thoughts spread outward, lengthwise, mildly acknowledging the haze he could see in the distance. It was beyond a question of queasy now, and the rhythmic carriage added to the feeling of illness and delusion and his thoughts almost seemed to reach to the hills and trees he could see. Occasionally he'd see Severn, his travel companion, who, because of the ground, could walk at the same pace as the horses, and the regular thoughts of food and pissing would come back to him. Although a port, he couldn't believe Naples smelt that way last night and how everybody ate spaghetti with their hands. Of course he didn't sleep. He tried shaking his head but he couldn't tell if he was responding over the bounce of the horses. Lazily, in the way a series of half-hearted ideas would cascade, he was thinking that maybe the world had eyes too, and when he wrote poems the magic was when the world looked back, openly, in gesture of wide mutual acceptance. He liked the idea. He was pleased that such a thought would register so clearly at this point. He knew he was being carried to more than Rome by these horses. So every thought of beauty was amplified with gratitude and joy, especially the birds, which were moving too fast to see, but whose songs he always loved with the feeling that seemed to be oddly overcoming him now. He tried at a smile, but wasn't sure if that registered either. And then was distracted by a red figure up ahead.

Sore Feet from Standing Too Long

1

Some days Odysseus wouldn't stir at all.
 He'd sit on a rock listening to the sea.
 It was as simple as that. Big bursting
 hexameters weren't invented to capture
 the continual motion made by the waves
 so he sat there with his sandals off
 and blew on his blistered feet. As Sirens
 and Furies danced far off in the distance
 he prepared himself by imagining the blisters
 entering his ears, his head, his mind.
 When he was done he would think about
 home: how happy he'd be; his beautiful wife;
 how some of the hills there looked like her
 resting on her side; their bed; the comfort
 of friends; the taste of ripe grapes; their
 trusty dog; and a stubborn but loving son
 who looked like him, who was, as chance
 would have it, looking out at the horizon,
 scanning the sea, imagining a small speck
 turning into the ship sailing him home.

2

Of course there is no Odysseus. He's made up.
 A blind poet with a lyre sung his name because
 it end-rhymed with *the wine dark sea*. He's your
 old friend Israel Marquez. He once shot a man
 downtown after wrestling away the guy's gun
 the summer you two shoveled shingles off townhomes
 while you were on break from community college.
 No one liked the labor mixed with nails so they
 gave it to the two half-Mexicans. The fight outside
 the bar began because Israel and the guy bumped
 shoulders. Simple as that. And Israel couldn't let go
 of something the guy said because a bronze medal
 in the Golden Gloves said he didn't have to. Quiet,
 a non-drinker, his worker hands already swelling
 into catcher mitt fists, all Israel would say is
 he walked toward the gun until it touched his chest.
 Then he smiled. The rest is a blur, a storm of leaves,

a man on an island looking out at the sea. You left him there in the fall, in a development where all the houses looked the same, shirt off, socks off, sitting on a tailgate drinking a Dr. Pepper next to his half-melted shoes as Kenny Rogers' "The Gambler" played on a station he didn't choose, and said, halfheartedly, *Bye*.

3

Or none of that's true. It was the summer you were roofing with Matt Colombo. Israel's father was a sheriff, a drinker, and after filling out paperwork all day after what he thought would be an action-filled and virtuous job, he'd come home and take it out on the wife and kids. The wife especially, who'd step in to take the place of her children, because, as she'd testify later, it was part of her duty. You fell out of touch with Israel. You used to go to Skateland together when you were twelve. He disappeared from the trailers into one of those houses with long driveways where nothing could be heard. He was roofing that summer but not with you. He came home to find his dad with a bottle in one hand and his mom laced up in her own hair in a headlock in the other. He was glad it was just a headlock this time and his dad had on the TV. The TV meant it was calming. Israel could just walk by into the bedroom and take off his work boots. His feet were sore. He'd say that was the reason. He said he felt this new stiff pain numbing his ankles and toes. And that was the reason. That's why he walked into the bedroom and unsnapped it out of the holster. His dad was on the deck by now, smoking, looking out into the forest. Nineteen years of being stranded were enough. All of this would be in the news. He lifted it up to the back of his dad's neck. Simple as that. White light, complete silence.

Patrick Swayze

Admit how you believed him.
Thick-jawed, country-hearted,
admit how you sought out trouble
for someone based on him
to come in and rush you away.

Admit how you admired
his feathered hair, the lean cut
of his arms, his dancer's body—
how you could imagine him
instead of watching football

on Sunday, installing a fence,
or digging a deep hole, or washing
your beat-up car as you looked from
your back window with tea, and he
waved up to you, wiping the beads

of sweat as he, good-naturedly,
completed your long list of tasks.
Admit how you were jealous:
the astonishing teeth, the true
nonchalance, the grace running

under the bad roles he was given—
the way he made you believe,
if given the chance, he could,
through a medium he would devise,
if only briefly, if he somehow died,

through an arrangement only you
could understand, some special code,
a bright glimmer, a few simple
words, on some Tuesday night,
ghost back to you from the otherside.

The Man Walking by in the Red Jacket

only looks to be drinking beer at 10 in the morning,
but that's just a can of tea, or one of those energy drinks,
and the brown bag concealing what you can't see,

is just that, a sign, a symbol, an agent to second guess
his better angels, a device he's chosen because in college
he learned the fine art of subverting your expectations,

with your propensity to categorize as thug, drunk, vagrant,
and what he's doing, and why his face is shaded red,
has nothing to do with the beer, which you already know

it isn't, and more to do with a cause that's put him on the street,
handing out pizza or clean socks to the homeless, some
inventive scheme, learned in college also, and, he's become

cold, he's been out all night, it's winter, and the man he's with,
rather than swaying and scowling and chewing something black,
is being taken to a place where he'll receive help from

the man in the red jacket, who, rather than some other way
you imagine it, as he disappears, disappears into what is good.

Huge Penises Shooting Giant Jets of Sperm

It is good to know some things are still sacred:
that there are ancient ideas one can turn to
when your boss asks you to close at the Arby's,

when your friends forget to text, or when your
girlfriend looks down at your contemptibly small
bicep as you struggle with the goddam jam jar;

likewise, when the Seahawks lose, your cat shits
on the sofa, or they are out of Red Baron pepperoni
and cheese pizza to go along with the cheap beer,

that, for whatever reason, is growing on you;
forget also the larger implications: precision
as a mode of apprehension, the presumed space

between the viewer and subject, the meanings
not quite accessible to you, the feathered nubbliness
you can't quite render in fur—what you have is

a spray can, the alley and empty wall, the light
yellowing the street and the beginning of the dark,
which you step into and begin rattling the canister's

small metal ball, where, when the act begins, you
imagine them, the thick-browed hairy troglodytes,
who, when confronted with the wall of their enclosure,

must have thought what you thought, and took back
their loss of power as you did, swirling up several
massive seven-foot symbols, and began on what to them

must have been the back of a warehouse door.

Jose Canseco

Massively statured he is talking to
Madonna with one eye on the fan
who keeps yelling YOUFUCKINGSUCKCANSECO!
He is not considering the pitcher
who is, by the way, very on,
his best fastball clocked at 96
and cutting in on the hands.
Nor is he seeing his future:
a can of corn that thwacks him
on the head and blooper-rolls
over the leftfield wall for a homer;
or how in twelve years he'll try
mixed martial arts and be kicked
several times in the shins by
a seven-foot-tall Korean named
Hong Man Choi before tapping to
a rear naked choke. No, he is in
the on-deck circle, he is swinging
a stock of lathed and sanded maple,
he's pissed but not totally pissed
at the fan making him look bad
in front of Madonna. He's flexing
his two mounds of muscular ass because
his flanks of ass-meat are where he
juices in the private of his palatial home
and they're sore. But his is not
thinking about that. In a second,
after the number 3 batter grounds-out
to the shortstop and he stops thinking
about Lamborghinis, he is about to
walk out into the rectangle made of chalk
for an at-bat in the majors.

You Don't Remember

much: a helmet railed with bars, a torso puffed
with stuffing, a barrel chest, insulated arms,

square boots shaped to bricks, corrugated legs
made for moving; the channel eludes you also,

but maybe it was careless flipping, or the idle
search for an eye-catching image, or maybe it

was educational; but certainly, after the man said
This is the best version, after a log swung down

and hammered him in the chest, after a boxer
came out and battered him to the body, after

he was pummeled by a club, after he was clipped
in the leg and flipped over a car, after he took off

the helmet, looked in the camera and said *Now
the suit is ready*, this man, in the masculine mode,

fulfilling what he always wanted to do, surrounded
by his friends high-fiving behind him, was led

to the cage where they kept the brown bear.

If You Were

arrested, if they came right through your unlocked door, if your wife was sleeping or combing her hair, who would come out of the magical ether to say you weren't guilty? You would be taken through the streets in a car you didn't know, asking and re-asking what you did wrong, until you eventually calmed, or convinced yourself you've calmed, pondering your rights and looking up at the clouds. You'd begin to wonder what you could have done, or what the person who looks like you could have done, and then you'd think maybe you did something wrong, and perhaps it was the accumulation of parking illegally along with running red lights, but no, it couldn't be, you're disoriented, floating, lost and flying away from the one story you know, where, yes, sometimes the opposite happens, but you've never heard of it going this far, where your hands hurt, they're cuffed too tight, and by now the benign, unharmed parenthesis that always seems to be surrounding you would be seen by someone, your inherent sincerity—the doe eyes, moist hands, a cardigan with leather at the elbows—would be recognized by one of the officers in the rearview, or your wife would call explaining something to them, and the high tension would be resolved by a harmony of cool heads and reason. You would be home any minute, you'd have your story to tell, people at work would gather around you, your daughter in her bedroom would still be sleeping, not even the dog would notice, you'd fall back to luxuriate in the comfort of your soft blankets, the TV glowing all over you, but no, these people don't care that you want a lawyer, they won't talk to you, the car keeps moving forward, you don't know what will happen, you're coming up to a building, this doesn't look like the city you know, when the two officers drag you inside, a man in a suit will appear, they'll follow him to room, drop you in chair, leave you with him, he'll sit down comfortably across from you, pluck something invisible from his lapel, a clipboard will appear, he'll click a pen, look at you under his glasses, and when he asks, because he asks, you won't be able to remember your name.

The Man Who Ordered Tea

looks skeptical. He must, after he tells the barista what he wants,
walk back and stand next to the rail by the door. What seems to misplace him

is the attention he has paid to his hair, the way it is seamlessly shaven
from a band above the ear and gelled back on top into a circular wave.

He seems to be staring at you. He seems to be surveying the room
noting that you have noted him and is waiting for you to go back

to your long, tedious book so he can take a good look at you and try to recall
if he knows you from somewhere, your significance, and, this is the hard part,

if you are the person in high school he did mushrooms with one night,
which, instead of opening up the sky into an ascension with the divine,

only made you both talk about your dads as you sat on someone's lawn.
It's something he thinks about when his mind empties toward his

second break at work after he's been looking at his computer too long
and his mind seems to open up into a field he's forgotten. If you're not this person,

if you're someone else, if you're someone he shared a short but memorable
laugh with in the line while waiting to pay for groceries, or someone

he sat next to during the bid portion of meetings for the last project, he must
recall an allusion to that instance, come over, and before his tea comes,

allude to it briefly, in the grain and tone that befits this coffee shop, so you,
or the man he thinks is you, can wallow in his considerable charm

by placing him behind you in your personal field for the next time, or,
when you recognize it, the time you consider to be the next.

You'll Find a Way

Your mom is going to be so excited! How come?
Pat Benatar is in town! For a concert! And she's
playing the Oregon Zoo! And your mom and your
mom's girlfriends are totally going! And they're
going to bring wine coolers and picnic lunches
although it will be time for dinner! And they're

going to take public transportation to get there!
The Max! Which is Portland's light rail system!
So they can drink lots of strawberry wine coolers
in their stainless steel water bottles on the way!
Or even a beer right from the can! It's going to be
so cool! And totally awesome! And so many t-top

Trans Ams are going to be there parked sideways
taking up two stalls next to so many glass-packed
Fire Birds! Plus Rick Springfield is opening! (Hubba
Hubba!) Who your mom likes as much Pat Benatar!
But the show is so expensive! And sooo sold out!
But you love your mom, right? You'll find a way.

A Young Teacher

goes to work in a small town. And the town is more like a village than a town. And the village is surrounded by great trees, woods, a dark forest. And the teacher has to walk a long, unpaved path

to get to school. And the forest surrounds him. And he images the trees as teeth and the darkness as where he is eaten. And when he gets to school his students are slow and seem to know nothing.

His work grows dull, tedious. So he begins to drink. Only on weekends at first, but soon every day. He becomes disheveled. His eyes grow wild, wide. He puts whiskey in his coffee before the morning onslaught

of class. He uses that word. *Here comes the onslaught*, he whispers, smiling for his students, as first period rustles into their stupid desks. The other teachers begin to whisper. He fears they can smell the liquor

and takes to wearing a cheap, musky cologne favored by his grandfather. Then, during a dark weekend bender, he dreams of a statue from the city. The statue seems clear to him, clean, precise. He cries then. He doesn't

know why. He recommits himself. His students seem smarter, or at least more willing. Some even seem to be catching on. He completes his year. He says goodbye, shakes hands, hugs a few students. The statue seems

to have returned him. He doesn't know how. He doesn't know where. He moves to the city, gets a job, marries, forgets the statue. He spends his time trying to remember the town, the dirt paths, the trees, the forest.

Going Down

is redemption moving up: that's why your guide says
Pass these in silence and you shuffle past the moans;

that's why the huge bellies are covers in feathers;
that's why you can see through their bodies to the wall;

that's why each image seems silvered in a sense of detail;
it's why some have shrunk like sticks and others are swollen

like wet logs; it's why a brown cloud raises from the sand
erasing what you know; it's why the terror of it

bathes you in sweat with memory; it's why you look down
rafting over the marsh of mixed souls; it's why we pause here

and speak of things omitted; it's how the catalogue fits together:
it's why it doesn't matter what direction you travel,

you keep coming upon huge ravines, reaching out for his sleeve,
stumbling on rocks, following the master that knows.

The Soul

The other day floating in my body
 which was totally there I saw a small boy
 pushing what was presumably his brother
 in a white plastic stroller up an incline
 over a bridge.

And their grandma
 or the woman who was presumably
 their grandma had Popeye hooks
 on both of her tattooed arms.

And their grandma
 or the woman who was presumably their grandma
 was smoking and saying *hurry hurry hurry*
 in a way that made the older one speed up
 and laugh.

And she looked proud
 coughing into the pit of her arms
 as they passed over the wooden bridge
 the gang graffiti noodling its large loose pasta
 on both sides of the bridge rail as she took
 quick pulls on her small cigarette.

And Plato
 who was not there but seemed to be with me
 inside me totally there began reconsidering his
 horse-drawn chariot of fire against the joining of
 there three laughing and pretending to pinch who
 seemed as pure as blackberries growing over grass
 while Kim and I walked back

from our last break
 after lunch.

Blue Hoodie

You have made it through many things I did not want to do
and many things that have made me very happy, and as a thanks

I keep wearing and washing you, putting you over wools and cottons,
and I am finally content to let you unravel at your sleeves so

you can keep revising where you end. I have wiped my nose on you
and you have spent much time in a canvas bag folded up with fruit

and you have brushed forklifts and bicycles and almost everything
I have written over the last seven years. I have lost you and found you

and used you for a pillow and when the police pepper-sprayed
the kids protesting on the corner you are the first thing I reached for

to cover my face. Strangers have worn you and my mother has sewn you
and I have scissored holes into your seams so you could be gloves.

I have gone to sleep in you and used you for a blanket and I have
woken up to find the person I most love only wearing you while

they made scrambled eggs for breakfast. You have touched me
more than anyone and known my habits as well as anything

and you have hovered around me like a blue kind of halo as I walk
through each of the buildings and out onto the thin decks that always

have the best views of the city.

When You Die

things that come after will be better. The fragments of tension you feel
for no one in particular

will resolve into perfect expression and you will be reminded of how
your limbs felt when you first went

swimming when you were young. No longer will the songs of the reckless
dissolve into empty alleys

or urinals appear in galleries reserved for art. Heroes that are heroic
will again ascend each tier

of the three-tiered podium and everyone who goes into a Target will come out
with something individual

and miraculous. Correct action without proper knowledge will become natural
and in most ways your life will

not seem like multiple arguments at elaborate trials. Nothing will feel
arbitrary, you'll focus on

being innocent rather than lost, and a third-person impersonal speaker will
never loosen out of you

during a time that's important. No one will say *That's the problem with a sense of
history*, worry will succumb

to description, reduction will not be required, and objects will again re-gain
the glowing, inner essence

of their being—you'll never be away, you'll be present at each moment
you're about to forget, all your

mediated, self-imposed distancing will stop, and love will ratchet-out like stars
gaining back what was taken

from the trees.

Well

well: the line between
the body and soul
seems less penetrable:
arms, legs, eyes, hands,
yes, all there, ready to
feel with, ready to pit against
a pattern only they can
make out by their slow
emptying, by wearing
themselves down, thinning
and grinding to tendon
and thistle, and by being
so worn, sensing the other's
removal, not a spirit
roaming beyond the trees,
but being able to look at
the cut-back forest, over
a life, with a scar on your lip
and the limb it refers to:
it's why you came back—
to see the place you fell from,
to find the one tree you can never
remember, to walk behind
the houses, in your old
neighborhood, to rediscover
what you thought was
solidly, permanently there
will always go half-missing.

Finally the Vice Deacons

told us the truth: our corporeality was indeed the true haunting, and the ghost world, and spirit realms, and the platonically merely-imagined where all the dead dissolve out into fantastic bands of pure gloaming, were real, and our bodies which we wished to extol and display their multitudinous physical splendor by parasailing and lovemaking and the pseudo-healing our inevitable ailments that will bring us down, upon entering, were merely corn-husked, sloughed-off, and our shells and all the understandings that came from what turned out to be shells were shown to fictions and, hardest of all, real enlightenment turned out to be a re-remembering of our previous perfections, before we were suited-out in our oddly flawed vessels, before we were born, so we had to work against the rhythms we were so accustomed, the heartbeats, the lovely gulps of fresh mountain air, our dry eyes from crying for millennia, the pangs of despised love, swollen feet from arduous labors, and the inevitable gas-passing after late evening meals—it was too much, we were not ready, we were still so immersed in the electric and repeatable flame of the cells ready to burn bright red we failed to feel the enclosure, the trap, the hollows that padded us out so keenly, the walls of embodiment sealing us off from where the real fire danced beyond us, where we all sat and praised the hazy display of mysteries emerging from our insides, which is why it had to be whispered, while we were beginning to bow one especially reverent Sunday morning, and this particular vice deacon, our particular vice deacon among the million or so deployed that day, began to bow next to us, began to whisper it to us so softly, so quietly, with what was still considered our proper name.

Twelve

Those are scars on your lip, not freckles.
And those marks on your chin
are from when you flipped your new bike
in front of Travis Johnson's yellow trailer.
Looking at your arms you see small circles
from where you put out cigarettes, then a thick
serrated line from where you burnt yourself
making potpies with Rob Meyer.
Looking again you almost worry.
There were once lines on your arms, thin ones,
light little scratches no one else could see
except in the summer when you tanned.

It's easy to remember. You got them by chasing
your friend Johnny when you were a boy.
It was a few days after the incident with the bat
and the first time you felt an adult anger
raise inside behind the power of a body.
It was a look Johnny Perez, whose father once threw
a puppy off the roof of their house, had grown to know.
He was so scared that his best friend could look that way
that he ran in the first direction without trees.
And when he started through a big blackberry patch
you were so mad that Johnny saw you that way
(breaking your unspoken pact) you ran after to explain.

You don't remember why you were mad.
It wasn't about the bat that you wrestled over
at the bus stop that ended up thudding
Nano behind the neck as he tried to stop you.
What you remember is bleeding after,
covered in the lines where the thorns broke through,
dripping, a slant wind blowing between the cracks
you couldn't cover with wood, Johnny
quietly sitting on a cinder block beside you,
both of you feeling that something had gone
unbelievably wrong as you hid there in the woods,
peering out from your fort made completely of doors.

2: You Must Survey and Gather

The Time Before Leaf Blowers

Everywhere was like France. The industrious were dutifully employed. One was not judged on family connection or height of commission, but how well you dispatched the tasks you were given. Waiters, for instance, were very admired. Letter carriers were famous and called by name. Seamstresses were known by individual stitching. Policemen were singled out by how uniquely they whistled and waived the oncoming traffic with style. People wore nice leather shoes, some kept chickens, cars were in the way of bicycles. Even the small talk of your obnoxious neighbor was meaningful and your parents invited them to dinner. Nothing was attached to cords or needed to be primed to get the gas going. Strangers would stop to ask for directions and someone without safety glasses or headphones would stop what they were doing, lean on a broom, and exchange a few human words. No one looked down at an arrow on their phone. There were no phones. Phones could not help you. People tried so hard they communicated everything with love.

The Ironic Mustaches

They want to go back to where they came from. They miss the dusty saloons of Arizona so badly. They desperately long for the reemergence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. They crave the tube hat of the English Bobby hovering above them, a ready baton slapping the ham hock of their hand. They don't hate fixed gears or skinny jeans or hipster bars: that's just not home to them, it's not where they want to be. Not that they are all the same either. One bushy mustache wants nothing more than to return to the upper lip of Friedrich Nietzsche. It's a more eloquent speaker than the rest so the other mustaches pretend to text but they're paying attention. It has a plan already in place to return. It wants to start at Nietzsche's death then go back in time. It would be glad to go back to the last ten years of complete silent madness; to the instance before the silence where Nietzsche hugged the whipped horse to show his mysterious understanding. It would all be worth it, this mustache likes to say to his aloof, sardonic compadres. All that anguish. All the sorrow in the entire world. Just to feel the truth of it, the sincerity. Just to feel yourself growing back into Nietzsche's body.

Bro

Good people wince when they hear it now. The hardhearted respond in kind. The mediocre sort, the majority massing around in the non-committed middle, are slowly being brought under its sway. The problem, of course, is irony. It's been hijacked and abbreviated from its initial socialist intention based on sharing. Now, its code for cans of beer and mixed martial arts pay-per-views; for weight lifting and tribal tattoos that were cool at the turn of century; for Hemi-Chargers with classic spoilers. What's shocking is that some of the good-hearted originals, committed to the old ways, go on using it. They seem happy about its spread and point to it as evidence of humanity embracing its better angels. But those with frosted hair who are new to its employ view each embrace as a collar and elbow lock up, and imagine transitioning to a Thai clinch, and look for an opportunity to deliver a few devastating knees to the body. They long for each embrace to end impressively, to jump up on the cage fence, to preen for the arena of 20,000 ultimate fighter fans being broadcast on FOX Sports—all of which they know is imagined, except the adulation, which they believed is long overdue, a comment on their masculinity, and very deserved.

Angels

They have a tough time remembering where they are. Bright lights blind them and every direction seems the same. Likewise, the continual harps cloud their thinking. That's why they rely on being nice. They concentrate on pleasant things, which is all they care to remember, and by doing so believe they are doing the work of God. When they're sent to Earth they are given step by step directions. But when they descend down into all that imperfection they have a very tough time. The hard part is telling what's right from what's good. Usually they just float down to the first person they see and land on a shoulder, ready to council. What they say to their person doesn't seem to matter to them, nor which shoulder they land on, nor do their people seem suddenly brilliant or exceptionally kind. What is most difficult for each angel is to advise the best course for their person's mission. Unable to link an effect to a cause, they prefer to encourage. Unable to see a proper course, they affect a smile. This works half of the time. The other half they're down below the dais, good willed if not somewhat confused, whispering to a man who may or may not have two first names. And when the person asks if they think the pantry would be better, they answer *Yes, perhaps the pantry is a good idea*, and they float back with their person to the kitchen, beaming, happy to be helping, waiting for this Senator Kennedy, hovering ethereally beside the tomato paste and the man with a small caliber gun.

The Economy

It's happy to be an idea again. It prefers to be thought of in the class of angels, one hand clapping, and the good. It never wanted anybody to be unbearably poor or shamefully rich. It never liked Wall Street or people called traders. What it wanted was liberty, equality, fraternity. When Adam Smith came to it with the invisible hand, The Economy loved how clear that sounded. When the idea of the free market was added, The Economy focused on the word free. When the term laissez faire was uttered, the Economy welcomed it like a true Frenchman: with open arms, as a good friend. The Economy always preferred Rousseau to Adam Smith anyway, a field of flowers to a blackboard of equations, long walks in the countryside to a trolley in the city. Truth be told, The Economy is quite lovely. It keeps a garden, knits sweaters, bikes, and makes seasonal soups. That's why it didn't mind being referred to in the third person. What do I care how the world uses me, The Economy said, yawning, stretching its arms, waking up from a straw mattress, I'm an idea. Plus it was staying in Tuscany then, in a nice villa. It was quiet there and there was no internet. Then The Economy passed a transistor radio in a window sill and it couldn't believe its ears. Presidents were saying bad things about it. And bankers, too. Then The Economy charged its phone and there were all kinds of messages on it from people it didn't know. But The Economy didn't have good reception so it got down to work with the resources it had. It found a photocopier and made a zine showing how it was still an idea. On the last page is a drawing of Cat Power with her old hair cut holding a sign that says: YOU ARE FREE. The Economy spent the rest of its life sending those zines out to anyone who would listen. No one did. So it spent the last of its energy asking someone to turn it into a poem. Only a few listened. Then it died.

Brothers

One has a tattoo of an angel nested under the patchy hair on his bird-like chest. Another has a shining scar on his eyebrow like a Soviet sickle. Another has crutches and a cast from something he won't talk about at all. One has grown fat and tired and is holding a tallboy of Coors on his miserable lap. Another is questioning his gender and no longer feels comfortable with the pronoun "He." Another is going bald and keeps smoothing his comb-over with sad, conspicuous caresses. Many are lost in American football on the Chinese TV. A few are staring at devices two feet away from their sweaty faces. Many are imagining small but substantial victories at work or dreaming about professional wrestling promos from when they were twelve. A few are doing nothing at all and have no job and are hovering in the background like mysterious wraiths. Sharp tension mixed with indifference proves they're family; self-involvement and DNA may be the only thing they share. They don't look like much, no, because they aren't. But when they're asked to, they can stand up, form a half-assed circle, close their light brown eyes, and simply by holding each other's hands, make poems.

The North American Continent

Never mind the nature of your dislocation. Never mind the burly American poets warning you will go down, guiltless, on fire. Never mind your interior landscape, the intuitive lowlands, the mountainous chorus singing let me take you higher. Never mind the shroud of doves surrounding the last of your innocence, the sound of bones in your ears from those lost forever. Never mind the warm bellowing from the senators, the attractive President, your young but energetic mayor. Never mind the wild energies waving through you day to day, uncontrollably. Never mind the frivolities of spectacle, the carnivals, the ranges for shooting, the mall. Never mind the parade of life twisted into gesture, the light irony, those diaphanous shadows. Never mind euphemism rendering experience so falsely it's no longer communicable. Never mind the places that reinforce the field, that sense of envelopment. Never mind your febrile imaginings, those early tinges and tingles that you manifestly ignored. Never mind shoes so bright they hurt your eyes, your heart, your head. Everybody here has left their body. And nobody dreams. So never mind.

Convincing the Losers

It was hard at first. We didn't think you'd believe in straight hope. We thought what was immediate and physical and directly observable would convince you against us. We considered other options, of course. Drugs. Complex schemes. Jobs without purpose. Calendars that repeated the same day. Luminous detail. Handheld devices distracting you from the real. Small scale daily obfuscation so you couldn't see the large picture. Committees were formed. (We were filled with so much fear then: there were so few of us and so many of you.) Some thought it best to set up haciendas that specialized in corn or cotton, as we did in the past. Fixed economies were argued by some. Economies of scale by others. The debate was heated and, by our admittedly low standards, BIGLY. In the end, we decided it should stay exactly the same. Those who had everything were allowed to keep everything. And those who believed, those with true hearts who had nothing but argued on our behalf, those who were our staunchest allies and believed what we had would trickle down, you were the easiest to gather. Many of you believed you were receiving a commendation. You went willingly. You got on our trains without a problem. With pride on your faces, you crammed in, as if performing a duty, as if making something great again. You shook our soft, affluent, managerial hands, then rode off to a chimney smoking the ash of your future.

Heaven

People aren't alive there. Angels play pinochle and do the best they can. There is never a last minute to put things off to. Dirty clothes don't mountain-up by the bed but dissolve into a lesson on clarity. Garbage doesn't exist. No one recycles. Trees are imagined but in the best possible way. No commas are needed; no colons. Nothing with words needs to be said. Language is a shorthand sent through varying the light of your chakras. Everything is forgiven although there are no mistakes. Nothing is forgotten although a cottony haze pervades all thinking. God is a sun melting the fluids of your core. Your friends and family on Earth are vague halfhearted amalgamations of the time before bliss. You pretend to pay them no mind out of respect for the Almighty. But you find yourself waiting expectantly beside each door.

The Intuitive Lowlands

Not many animals are needed there. Fruit grows well. And vegetables, too. Various farmhands work from sun up to sun down speaking their respective language. Small houses, barns, tractors, water, food—not much is required except work. But when the workers on the land look up they can sometimes see the mountains disappear into the clouds. That's when those on the mountains can't see; that's when those on the mountains have to reach out to feel with their hands.

Metaphysical Crud

Unchecked, it builds into a film. Unscrubbed, its crumbs clog every road. Unseen, it crusts over the eyes and suddenly you seek paradise by repeating one word over and over and over. For a while, you could buy sharp squares of bamboo from Japan and scrape it away after saying a prayer. For a few years, some said it would flake off into scabs of gold as soon as you stepped into the Ganges. A few self-proclaimed extremists said it was fine and you should pile it on and build the crust so high a carapace of armor developed and no one could hurt you with guns. The small problem, of course, is only specialists can really see it clearly. The large problem: working with it closely encourages its spread. Indiscriminate, friendly to fraternity, wholly committed to equality, it operates under the auspices of good intention and brotherly care. But in close quarters it cakes everything. Some cities have been known to be altered forever. Those places seem to develop a thick viscous membrane discernible even from satellites in space. Only a few have ever escaped after the membrane appears. Fugitive accounts are very rare but all say the same thing: everything begins to buzz, and you feel like you're covered with bees. Then the sky opens into gold brilliancy no one can take. Then horsemen appear in the air.

Why You Stopped Writing Poems

They got in the way. They felt like little speed bumps in the life you were leading. You got tired of conjuring a whole world in the few words you were overhearing. Your neighbors with their high fence seemed less fearful than you first believed. The gravel crack of car tires seemed less like being crushed and more like pulling into the driveway at home. Natural things occurred. Your parents became flesh and blood people who needed help reaching dishes off the top shelf and less like metaphors in a darkly plotted drama trying to sleep with you. Jung seemed wrong. Marx became foolish. Whitman seemed sad and full of what you now see as terrible longing. You lost sense of the line. You gave up referring to ideas and movements and began to forage in the forest all alone. Big screen crystalline TVs were there for you, of course. And all the internet forever. And at night the bright blue light from your I-phone washed over you like you were first being born. Quiet things happened. In ways you could no longer explain. So you stopped trying. Then one day you were just typing instead of writing.

Good Policy

Nothing can prepare you for an attack that's not coming. Nothing, then, is what is inside each gun. That's what the Joint Chiefs must advise the President about in the Oval Office, nothing. That is the reason soldiers must be sent also, nothing. Nothing, like a small reverberation, is what the soldiers must think about their deployment. And out there, in the field, it's what must separate a friendly from an enemy, a life from the non-living. See how like a little whisper it seems to slide in so well without even being said; how it ripples through strafing the jungles, or explodes out in shrapnel above the desert air. Martin, Malcolm, Medgar, Bobby—see how it can boy-band the names that saw it into oblivion. And how back behind the official statements (so smart, so dumb) it's the only thing left to believe in. And how like an old friend looking across from us with great tranquility, it smiles back, believing in us also, happy we've made the journey, reaching out to embrace our hand.

Such Great Heights

From such great heights people appear very small. Their buildings look like plastic toys. The great trees look like tapered toothpicks. The traffic at the end of the day looks like ants swarming for honey. Those bridges crisscrossing the river look like a 3rd grader threw some spaghetti. Faces cannot be seen. Nor the fish in yesterday's newspaper. Nor the neighbors talking about nothing. Nor the two girls practicing free kicks in front of trash can goals. People can't piss you off. Flowers are such miniscule freckles you would decline to say they have hue. From such great heights, none of your family could be there in that city. Or your best friend, Juan. Or your sullen cat, Kafka. You could stand there from far away with your hammer no problem. You could stand under the sky in your golden casino, bashing out black holes in the copper windows with one hand, a rifle stock stuck to your shoulder, a finger on a thin metal trigger ready on the other. With no problem. It would be no problem at all.

The Valley of the Obvious

Halogen lights light every hallway. Street lamps are on even during day. Every idea is so bright it hurts your head and eyes and odd organs inside your body. Nothing is cool or shadowy. Time is not discernible by night darkness or an implied forward moving arrow. There is no darkness. There is no arrow. You live in a lowlands where a shallow river passes. No one fishes there. Each fish can be seen swimming by, struggling against the invisible. And everyone feels so bad hooking them out of the clearness. So bad.

Innocence

Funny to find it after all this time. Strange to feel it there among all that's roiling. Silly yet sad to imagine it leaving like this: a window growing smaller and smaller until it's no longer there. Odd to always imagine it in a car speeding away. Specifically, in the rear window with you waiving until your face turns into an ash gray flake. Difficult to imagine that car coming back, you behind the wheel, your face growing larger and larger, a smile emerging as you gain back all the loss. So you don't. You sell your car, buy a bike, and out there a foot away from the swarm of city traffic, feel it burning back in the legs.

Line Breaks

They never understood you either. Demure, elegant, reserved—their power always seemed to emanate from a far field you never ventured out to. Early, before they ended it abruptly, you would show up suddenly with a six pack of Coors and a bucket of chicken, knocking at their undented door. You laughed, belching, and said see how Romantic you are, just like Shelley. You thought the vigor of your coarse spirit would make them feel like they were being swept away. You believed the appeal of your limited resources transfigured through your personal brand of threadbare magic would bridge your two perspectives. You thought they'd like the t-tops in your Trans-Am. Who knew their Latin was as good as Caesar's? Who knew their vocabulary encompassed Greek, modern and ancient, peppering the dull potato of your enthusiasm with words like hamartia and apokoinou, words they thought you should pause on and listen to? Who knew they immediately understood your appreciation of them extended only to the sound of breath measured against beats of the heart, and they thought you unstudied, foolhardy, churlish. No, you would not listen. You have bad ears from all the Metallica concerts, yes, but your mind is like every American's: filled with untouchable light, white whales, jazzy riffs, catch phrases, letters to the world. They looked across from you and felt only a cavern of symbols, deep echoes, pure void. You tried to listen but there was sauce on your face, which you wiped with a shirt sleeve, and stood there hand on your hip, like Whitman, looking at great distance. When they cleared out their dresser drawer, they displayed as much passion as you remember them ever showing, and said, Just take a look at this mess. When they shut the door of your crappy apartment with their trademark prim click, the litany lifted: burger wrappers, weed bags, lotto tickets, trucker hats, empty cans, condoms, footballs, cigarette butts, Maxim magazines—and suddenly there was no floor, no ceiling, no walls, no boot soles to look under, nothing to distinguish one thing from next, no poems to speak of, everything became continuous, and there was no air.

The Greatest

Only later would you find their hands were always wrapped with rock hard plaster. Only after a deathbed confession was it understood their gloves were covered with an illegal ointment blinding your eyes. Only after a court order did the lab results show the water bottle labeled with the red X was the cause of their astounding level of energy in the late rounds. Only after the testimony was deemed permissible did expert phlebotomists show their blood was transfused with the purest oxygen in the world. Only after embarrassing real-time inquiries streamed on C-SPAN did they confess to the constant group therapy they needed to keep it going. Only then did they acknowledge their broken lives were pieced backed and held together with a special synthetic glue designed for the purpose. Only after verifying all the chronologies in their copious notes did they admit the entirety of the lives were arranged to defeat you “using all necessary resources and treasure to accomplish this objective.” Only now did they confess to being exhausted, spiritually and physically; that the previous judges had been bribed; that Congress had been in on it; that highest levels of the administration were involved. Only now were they ready to sign the affidavit, the proclamation that you in your heart of hearts knew all along and kept inside and thought you’d meet your maker with: that you are the champion of the world.

Unusual Harmony

You've always heard it. It's always back behind the mass of clatter in large unwieldy rooms. Heavy rain seems to score it. Wind in summer leaves sound like a high hat sizzling its air. Stadiums filled with pissed fans, highways at a crawl, your neighbor's lawn mower at 7am, the handful of times you've felt it pause around the presence of a gun—it seems to have anticipated even the dumbest instance and incorporated you into its musical plan. Somehow it seems to have divested you of the difficulty others have gone through and become permanently stuck on. It perpetually seems to be readying you, opening you up into fields you're barely prepared for, ushering you on small spur of the moment journeys where you're always just showing up in the nick of time. And there you somehow always are: walking near an elementary school, at dusk, beside a massive chimney, ten thousand swifts suddenly undulating in intuitive sheets, a tornado of them tumbling just barely above, as you're there, hearing it loudly, with the person you love most, watching it, holding her hand.

The Crush of Banality

Hard to see all that pressure. Hard to feel the slow weight accumulating around the bones. Hard to recall your laudable attempts, the unusual harmony surrounding your first forays, the easy grace of exploring the unknown. Hard to remember with adamant insistence that you are free; that capacity for movement exists in all space; that life exists and identity. Easy, however, to display stamina rather than range; to call everyone together for another meeting; to ask for small Toyota-like changes to the system that's mostly not working. Hard to remember a time without feckless bunglers imagining inane hypotheticals just to fill the day. Hard to hear your coworker's stories as anything but a trail of fragmentary turds. Hard to listen, listless, absorbing their words bluntly, counting each time you're called bro. Hard to hold back your yawn as they finger a small screen to display the omnibus pics of their loose toothed children, their quiver of cute dogs, their new Pergo floor. Difficult to see them attending to their devices with greater care than people; to hear the litany of places they'd rather be; to feel yourself as an invader of their personal space and time. Hard to fear the harmless; to see the brutal forms fitted out all around you; to hear the halfhearted chuckle always aching under the breath; to take it seriously after so many years. Hard to remember not being bogged down with your daily regimen, your lagoon of lost causes, the buttoning and tightening of fasteners appropriate for the office. Easy to be diligent; to fall into the role you were given; to facilitate the work that pertains to nothing you love, your life, or identity. Easy to take detailed, scrupulous notes in lieu of the poems you once could have written. Difficult to recognize the person in the bathroom window. Hard to look it in the face as you wash your hands. Hard to see it in halogen's white buzz, in that quick glance instead of the telling stare, in the outline pulverized in dust, in the dark cave echoing what's no longer there.

Experience

It never wanted to be apart from the whole. It never intended to be a part of anything at all. For the longest time it never thought, let alone of itself. Before that, pre-thought, it assumed it was there among the plants and animals, the rocks and stars, a force approaching pure presence. Only after long tiresome dialogues with petulant Greeks did it agree it could be seen a version. Only after the British Empiricists gave it tug on the ear was it told to shut up because it could be organized for the good. Later, it never agreed to the method where it was sectioned off, counted, and put in a tube. It never thought of itself as belonging to a quantifiable method, a process within a community, a school. Now it only wants to be left alone again, to feel its feet on firm ground, to hear the sluff of its boot stride out into that firmness, to reach out with the chuff of its hand before it becomes a complete fabrication and, as it remains on certain church ceilings in Italy, have the hand of God reach back.

3: A Gap in the Causeway

The Work of God

You must strip your ships of their sails, rid yourself of permanent stores, and scuttle the hulls
 into a million seemingly
 unassembleable pieces. No one must believe there is any way but forward. You must move inland
 then. You must survey and gather
 information about this foreign land. You must unfold your official papers, marry a native who
 speaks the language, and show her your
 golden book. On the way, after you defeat them, you must add thousands of Indian warriors to
 your group and call them *your allies*,
 but only after you find they are adamantly opposed to the major power of this empire. You must
 say you are on a mission from
 God, lift your eyes to the sky, then write letters to your king. You must not be chased down by
 the ship of fellow countrymen
 who have come to relieve you of your unendorsed methods on your unsponsored venture. You
 must risk it all. You must split your
 forces. You must leave one hundred and twenty men under the control of your most trusted man,
 Pedro De Alvarado, and
 you must march your men back down the mountains to the coast. You must launch a midnight attack
 on the forces who have arrived
 to arrest you, capture your fellow countrymen, and present them with an offer: stay here, participate
 in this conquest, or die. You must
 enter the empire's capitol now, accepting the gifts they give you, the gold necklaces, the wreaths,
 the flower laurels. A man with
 you must write: *I do not know how to describe the names of things first heard of, seen, or dreamed
 of before*. An Indian from
 the empire must write: *You seized upon the gold like monkeys. You starved for it. You lusted for it.
 You stuffed yourselves like pigs*. They must
 let you enter the empire's capitol because they believe you can be annihilated quite easily. You must
 capture their leader then. You must
 leap forward in the middle of a religious ceremony, seize their leader, and set down many thousands.
 They must write: *Our musicians you*

attacked first, slashing at their hands and faces. They began to sing again, but without warning, you put them all to death. The singers,

even spectators, all were killed. You have one hundred horses, eighty crossbows, eighty harquebusiers, and two thousand warriors from

an ally tribe. You need to be isolated in their capitol now, trapped, bound in a handful of limestone buildings. From this isolation

you must repeal repeated attacks for three weeks. And now it is time: You need to kill their leader. The leader's death must appear ill-

fated, mysterious, caused by an unappeased, vengeful God, and bleed into ongoing, fear-burdened conspiracies. Now you must kill

the nobles, too. You must toss them from the terraces, tumbling the bodies to the street, their corpses a raw rumple of exploded

searment. You must take advantage of their ritualistic, ceremonial sense of battle and begin your all-out war. You must emphasize

the killing. So you must, logically, run out of food and water and gunpowder and become very, very desperate. Your eyes must glaze with

the stricken gloss of nightmare affliction, which is passed on to your soldiers and allies without the use of words or gesture. In

the middle of night you must flee from the city. But you are on an island. You must become confused, electric, your body lit and

tilted by the equatorial heat of the New World. Before you flee, you must realize you are on an island, and the only way to escape

is across one of the four causeways, all of which, to isolate you further, have had their bridges removed. You must realize there is

only one option: You must make a bridge. You must gather all the wood. You must tear at the walls, break apart the benches, and use

everything. You must risk it all. You must embark on a midnight escape, with hundreds of your Spaniards, thousands of Indian

allies, carrying all the gold you've collected, and try to flee from this capital city taking the shortest route, the causeway to the west. You

must muffle the horse hooves with cloth. There must be a rainstorm. You must acknowledge the

luck of this rainstorm and, to this
blessing of quiet, give thanks to your God's symbol of beneficent grace, kissing your gold crucifix
profusely, grotesquely. You must
move across this causeway now, setting off an alarm, causing the empire's Indians to descend on you
from both ends of the causeway, from
all sides of the water in their canoes. You must be met with a hail of arrows, stones, spears. Thousands
and thousands must envelope
you as you attempt to fight your way across the western causeway. All your Indian allies must die
in this process. You yourself must
almost die when you fall in the water, only to be pulled back at the last second by your men. Many
of your men must now fall in the
water and, unwilling to let go of the gold ransom they're carrying, drown. You must lose all your
artillery, all your horses,
all the women. And now you must find your temporary bridge cannot be carried to the causeway.
But you must also find the gap
of the causeway filled with the bodies of the horses and dead. And now you must cross on the bodies
of your companions. You
must lose almost all the men who sailed from the Old World with you. Nearly annihilated, you must
fight your way around the lake. You
must leave over one hundred Spaniards behind in the empire's capital city. You must flee around
the bank of the lake, still fighting,
as your companions are painted, forced to dance, and sacrificed at the top of the great pyramid.
Then, over your shoulder, you must
look back. Because your name is Hernan Cortes. And in order to allow the work of God, you must
imagine a perfect revenge.

3: You Must Launch a Midnight Attack

Deep Sleep State

1

Sleep deprivation may be used. You have indicated that your purpose in using this technique is to reduce the individual's ability to think on his feet and, through the discomfort associated with lack of sleep, to motivate him to cooperate. The effect of such sleep deprivation will generally remit after one or two nights of uninterrupted sleep. You have informed us that your research has revealed that, in rare instances, some individuals who are already predisposed to psychological problems may experience abnormal reactions to sleep deprivation.

2

It is possible to kill a man with the bare hands, but very few are skillful enough to do it well. Even a highly trained Judo expert will hesitate to risk killing by hand unless he has absolutely no alternative. However, the simplest tools are often much the most efficient means of assignation. A hammer, axe, wrench, screwdriver, fire poker, kitchen knife, lamp stand, or anything hard, heavy and handy will suffice. A length of rope or wire or a belt will do if the assassin is strong and agile. All such improvised weapons have the important advantage of availability and apparent innocence. The obvious lethal machine gun failed to kill Trotsky where an item of sporting goods succeeded.

3

The interrogator is positioned directly in front of the detainee, generally no more than 18 inches from the detainee. With his fingers held tightly together and fully extended,

and with his palm toward the interrogator's own body, using his elbow as a fixed pivot point, the interrogator slaps the detainee in the detainee's abdomen. The interrogator may not use a fist, and the slap must be delivered above the navel and below the sternum. The technique is used to condition a detainee to pay attention to the interrogator's questions and to dislodge expectations that the detainee will not be touched. It is not intended to—and based on experience you have informed us that it does not—inflict any injury or cause any significant pain.

4

(Excised) as instructed that upon awakening, she would proceed to (excised)'s room where she would wait at the desk for a telephone call. Upon receiving the call, a person known as "Jim" would engage her in normal conversation. During the course of the conversation, this individual would mention a code word to (excised) when she heard this code word she would pass into an SI trance state, but would not close her eyes and remain perfectly normal and continue the telephone conversation, she would then carry out the following instructions:

5

We understand that this technique is not designed to, and does not, cause severe pain, even when used repeatedly as you have described. Rather it is designed to wear down the detainee and shock or surprise the detainee and alter his expectations about the treatment he believes he will receive. In particular, we specifically understand that the repetitive use of the walling technique is intended to contribute to the shock and drama of the experience, to dispel a detainee's expectations that interrogators will not use increasing levels of force, and to wear down his resistance. It is not intended to—and based on experience you have informed us that it does not—inflict any injury or cause severe pain.

6

Cramped confinement involves the placement of

the individual in a confined space, the dimensions of which restrict the individual's movement. The confined space is usually dark. The duration of confinement varies based upon the size of the container. For the larger confined space, the individual can stand up or sit down; the smaller space is large enough for the subject to sit down. Containment in the larger space can last up to eighteen hours; for the smaller space, confinement lasts for no more than two hours.

7

The essential point of assignation is the death of the subject. A human being may be killed in many ways but sureness is often overlooked by those who may be emotionally unstrung by the seriousness of this act they intend to commit. The specific technique employed will depend upon a large number of variables, but should be constant in one point: Death must be absolutely certain. The attempt on Hitler's life failed because the conspiracy did not give this matter proper attention. Techniques may be considered as follows:

8

With the facial slap or insult slap, the interrogator slaps the individual's face with fingers slightly spread. The hand makes contact with the area directly behind the tip of the individual's chin and the bottom of the corresponding earlobe. The interrogator invades the individual's personal space. The goal of the facial slap is not to inflict physical pain that is severe or lasting. Instead, the purpose of the facial slap is to induce shock, surprise, and/or humiliation.

9

The facial hold is used to hold the head immobile. One open palm is placed on either side of the individual's face. The fingertips are kept well away from the individual's eyes.

10

(Excised) was instructed that when she awakened, she was to proceed to (excised)'s room. She was told that while there, she would receive a telephone call from an individual whom she would only know as "Joe." This individual would engage her in a normal telephone conversation. During this conversation, this individual would give her a code word and upon the mentioning of this code word, (excised) would go into a deep SI trance state but would be "normal" in appearance with her eyes open. (Excised) was then told that upon the conclusion of the telephone conversation, she would proceed to the lady's room where she would meet a girl who was unknown to her. She was told that she would strike up a conversation with this girl and during the conversation she would mention the code word "New York" to this other girl who, in turn, would give her a device and further instructions which were to be carried out by (excised). She was told that after she carried out the instructions, she was to return to the Operation Room, sit on the sofa and go immediately into a deep sleep state.

11

For walling, a flexible false wall will be constructed. The individual is placed with his heels touching the wall. The interrogator pulls the individual forward and then quickly and firmly pushes the individual into the wall. It is the individual's shoulder blades that hit the wall. During this motion, the head and neck are supported with a rolled hood or towel that provides a c-collar effect to

help prevent whiplash. To further reduce the probability of injury, the individual is allowed to rebound from the flexible wall. You have orally informed us that the false wall is in part constructed to create a loud sound when the individual hits it, which will further shock or surprise the individual. In part, the idea is to create a sound that will make the impact seem far worse than it is and that will be far worse than any injury that might result from the action.

12

The detainee's hands are shackled in front of his body, so that the detainee has approximately a two-to-three-foot diameter of movement. The detainee's feet are shackled to a bolt in the floor. Due care is taken to ensure that the shackles are neither too loose nor too tight for physical safety. We understand from our discussion from OMS that the shackling does not result in any significant physical pain for the subject. The detainee's hands are generally between the level of his heart and his chin. In some cases, the detainee's hands may be raised above the level of his head, but only for a period of up to two hours. All of the detainee's weight is borne by his legs and feet during standing sleep deprivation. You have informed us that the detainee is not allowed to hang from or support his body weight with the shackles.

13

The most efficient accident, in simple assignation, is a fall of 75 feet or more onto a hard surface. Elevator shafts, stairwells, unscreened windows and bridges will serve. Bridge falls into water are not reliable. In simple cases a private meeting with the subject may be arranged at a properly caused location. The act may be executed by sudden, vigorous (excised) of the ankles, tipping the subject over the edge. If the assassin immediately sets up an outcry, playing

the “horrified witness,” no alibi or surreptitious withdrawal is necessary. In chase cases it will usually be necessary to stun or drug the subject before dropping him. Care is required to ensure that no wound or condition not attributable to the fall is discernible after death.

14

If the detainee is clothed, he wears an adult diaper under his pants. Detainees subject to sleep deprivation who are also subject to nudity as a separate interrogation technique will at times be nude and wearing a diaper. If the detainee is wearing a diaper, it is checked regularly and changed as necessary. The use of the diaper is for sanitary and health purposes of the detainee; it is not used for the purpose of humiliating the detainee, and is not considered to be an interrogation technique. The detainee’s skin condition is monitored, and diapers are changed as needed so that the detainee does not remain in a soiled diaper. You have informed us that to date no detainee has experienced any skin problems resulting from the use of diapers.

15

Falls before trains or subway cars are usually effective, but require exact timing and can seldom be free from unexpected observation. Automobile accidents are a less satisfactory means of assignment. If the subject is deliberately run down, very exact timing is necessary and investigation is likely to be thorough. If the subject’s car is tampered with, reliability is very low. The subject may be stunned or drugged and then placed in the car, but this is only reliable when the car can be run off a high cliff or into deep water without observation. Arson can cause accidental death if the subject is drugged and left in a burning building. Reliability is not satisfactory unless the building is isolated and highly combustible.

16

(Excised) being in a complete SI state at this time, was then told to open her eyes and was shown an electronic timing device. She was informed that this timing device was an incendiary bomb and was then instructed how to attach and set the device. After (excised) had indicated that she had learned how to set and attach the device, she was told

to return to a sleep state and further instructed that upon concluding the aforementioned conversation, she would take the timing device which was in a briefcase and proceed to the ladies room. In the lady's room, she would be met by a girl whom she had never seen who would identify herself by the code word "New York." After identifying (excised)'s then to show this individual how to attach and set the timing device and further instructions would be given the individual by (excised) that the timing device was to be carried in the briefcase to (excised) room, placed in the nearest empty electric-light plug and concealed in the bottom, left-hand drawer of (excised) room, go to the operations room and go to the sofa and enter a deep sleep state. (Excised) was further instructed that after completion of instructing to tell this other girl that as soon as the device had been set and turned on, she was to take the briefcase, leave the (excised) room and go to the sofa and enter a deep sleep state. (Excised) was further instructed that after completion of instructing the other girl of the incendiary bomb, she was to return at once to the operations room, sit on the sofa, and go into a deep sleep state.

17

Finally, you would like to use a technique called the "waterboard." In this procedure, the individual is bound securely to an inclined bench, which is approximately four feet by seven feet. The individual's feet are generally elevated. A cloth is placed over the forehead and eyes. Water is then applied to the cloth in a controlled manner. As this is done, the cloth is lowered until it covers both the nose and mouth. Once the cloth is saturated and completely covers the mouth and nose, air flow is slightly restricted for 20 to 40 seconds due to the presence of cloth. This causes an increase in carbon dioxide level in the individual's blood. This increase in the carbon dioxide level stimulates increased effort to breathe. The effort plus the cloth produces the perception of "suffocation and incipient panic," i.e., the perception of drowning. The individual does not breathe any water into his lungs. During those 20 to 40 seconds, water is continuously applied from a height of twelve to twenty-four inches. After this period, the cloth is lifted, and the individual is allowed to breathe unimpeded for three or four full breaths. The sensation of drowning is immediately relieved by the removal of the cloth. The procedure may then be repeated.

18

Except in terroristic assassinations, it is desirable that the assassin be transient in the area. He should have an absolute minimum of contact with the rest of the organization and his instructions should be given orally by one person only. His safe evacuation after the act is absolutely essential, but here again contact should be as limited as possible. It is preferable that the person issuing instructions also conduct any withdrawal or covering action which may be necessary. In lost assassination, the assassin must be a fanatic of some sort. Politics, religion, and revenge are about the only feasible motives. Since a fanatic is unstable psychologically, he must be handled with extreme care. He must not know the identities of the other members of the organization, for although it is intended that he die in the act, something may go wrong. While the assassin of Trotsky has never revealed any significant information, it was unsound to depend on this when the act was planned.

19

It should be noted that even with the change of locale in the transfer point, the experiment was carried off perfectly without any difficulty or hesitation on the part of either of the girls. Each girl acted out her part perfectly, the device was planted and set as directed and both girls returned to the operations room, sat on the sofa and entered a deep sleep state. Throughout, their movements were easy and natural and the member of the charforce and the guard were, to all intents and purposes, completely unaware of what was taking place although they could clearly observe the movements of (excised) and (excised).

20

If the assassin is to die with the subject, the act will be called "lost." If the assassin is

to escape, the adjective will be “safe.” It should be noted that no compromises should exist here. The assassin must not fall alive into enemy hands.

21

We understand that if the detainee makes an effort to defeat the technique (e.g., by twisting his head to the side and breathing out of the corner of his mouth), the interrogator may cup his hands around the detainee’s nose and mouth to dam the run-off, in which case it would not be possible for the detainee to breathe during the application of the water. In addition, you have informed us that the technique may be applied in a manner to defeat efforts by the detainee to hold his breath by, for example, beginning an application of water as the detainee is exhaling. Either in normal application, or where countermeasures are used, we understand that water may enter—and may accumulate in—the detainee’s mouth and nasal cavity, preventing him from breathing.

5: You Must Say You Are on a Mission from God

The Alternate Bios

1

Casey Fuller has two lost uncles. One is named Don, the other Andy. Missed payments, a yard full of cars, the power shut off, a halfhearted garden, Casey Fuller's Uncle Don

went the slow way poor people do: fast food, the county cops, a slow eviction. He ended up two towns over living with his ex-wife's mom, obscured by a shaggy mountain man

beard, only showing when his dad died. Casey Fuller's other missing uncle was more mysterious. An outdoorsman, a former state trooper, an athlete in college, Casey Fuller

once watched this uncle's cut-fastball clocked at 92 miles per hour. He quit being a cop, tried fighting fires, found work at a mill, and decided turning boards over with his hands

was better than busting kids for weed. Then he gave his whole heart to fishing.

(What Casey Fuller wonders is how we know anything, how we can make any claims,

how anybody observing can have any knowledge at all?) Uncle Andy's coworkers said he was hit in the head by a 4X6 and suddenly became cross. He quit the mill, put his

few things in storage, and moved into his truck. The last time Casey Fuller saw his Uncle Andy was on a bike trail where he was dressed in fatigues. Casey Fuller and his uncle had a talk then.

Does it matter what was said? Does the reader really need to know? Here is what Casey Fuller feels comfortable with: where it happened was so close to Casey Fuller's former place of work

it's uncanny. He drove a forklift there, broke down boxes, swept. Vigilant, ever wary, completely worried his work would consume him, he hung a heavy bag from a rack

to work out frustration. Chin down, elbows in, turning his hands over at the ends of his shots the way his Uncle Andy taught him, Casey Fuller would also practice ducking imaginary

punches coming straight for his head.

2

She got his mom. She got his sister. She got his dad when his dad when over to straighten this whole fucking thing out. Then she got Nano. Then she got Johnny too. Then she got

Marie and Chenoa both, within seconds, going back and forth on both of their skinny legs. When the cops came, the Kochs denied she was theirs, but she got a cop too before

she hauled ass into the mystery of the woods. Short haired, part lab, a mutt mix, a white strip running under the belly, everybody knew she lived under the bleached boards of the Koch's

wood porch. Mrs. Jones, Doug Stewart, Bob LeDoux, every single one of the Hargets— she kept score, and after implanting purple marks through your skin she just big-backed

and death-growled until you narrowly passed. Filled with fear, scared beyond belief, hopeless and aware what could suddenly break out at any moment, Casey Fuller kept an eye out

for trees he could climb and neighbors' houses he could just run into. She came on a Saturday. She nosed her way in through the screen door. Casey Fuller was in the living room watching

professional wrestling on the unbroken furniture. Everything, all his attention, was on the small images projected on the screen in front of him. His work? Where has it appeared?

Where does he currently live? Like all things forever inside him, it began with a slight rustle shimmering on the side.

3

Casey Fuller was once in a pickup. The pickup was silver, a single cab, a 4-cylinder with a white stripe that ran down its sides and met up at the tailgate around one

word: MAZDA. He had a baseball bat on his lap. No use wondering where the baseball bat came from (so much is condemned forever), here is the part that remains useful:

Casey Fuller's friend Adam was riding in the truck bed with a bat also. The person who would come to shoot Casey Fuller was driving. Here's what they were doing:

out on Hawk's Prairie Road, out on South Bay Road, out on Johnson's Point Road where they would eventually crash, the person who would come to shoot Casey Fuller

would pull up to houses with long driveways. Then, in the American grain, with the entire tradition of troublemaking behind them, Casey Fuller and his friend Adam

would jump out of the pickup and, with wood bats that may well have gone back to Little League, bash mailboxes off their 4x6 posts. Fresh faced and without a need for

a razor, 17 at the time, with a long queue of mailboxes already taken care of, Casey Fuller had an idea. He knew where the governor lived. It wasn't far. If the person

who would come to shoot Casey Fuller would drive there, Casey Fuller and his friend Adam could bash the governor's mailbox to a 12 ounce can of Coke. A background lit

with silver, a night so bright it's blinding, who can refute the realm of forms where perfect ideas come from? They went. Someone from the imperfect world saw them.

A chase occurred. Who knows who it was, where they were from, whether they were a concerned citizen or an agent from The State? Here is what always happens: a corner

is too sharp, a pickup is too fast, the trees are always welcoming. Casey Fuller's work was clear: to embrace those trees. He appeared in those trees that night. And like

best friends always, not even midway through the journey of his life, they continue to embrace him like an entire forest.

4

Casey Fuller once met a homeless boy in the forest. His name was Brandon and he was from one trailer park over. Not a word about why he was there,

not one thought about being all alone. He asked for one thing: could Casey Fuller get him a can of soup? Then another: could he stay in the fort Casey

Fuller made with Johnny Perez? Casey Fuller said yes and yes and went to look through all the cupboards back home. All Casey Fuller remembers

about Brandon is his face, his hair, the color of his eyes. (They appear now with secret depths, one surface sliding into the background as another

becomes the focus.) It was summer. There were thousands of brown birds. The woods were a blaze of bright green. Casey Fuller has never asked this

of anyone, but pause here and picture his 11-year-old hands: carrying a can he found through the worn paths behind the trailers, flipping it in the air

like it was a game, tucking it like a football, when, in truth, it was the earliest form of his work.

5

Casey Fuller once took two weeks off from school. He was a junior, he just quit wrestling, and his Volkswagen Rabbit was being fixed out by Skateland toward

the end of South Bay Road. The arrangement he worked out with his mom was this: he'd drive her early to work, drop her off at a building with underground parking,

and come back at 4:30 to pick her up. He'd use her car. A coppery 4-door Toyota Corolla with light brown interior. What Casey Fuller remembers about these

two weeks is the time. How he went out to bodies of water to skip rocks. How he sat at a rest stop and thought about nothing. How one road kept turning into another

then another then another. When his car was ready, he went back to school. He forged a note saying his dad was sick in Idaho. His teachers, of course, dismissed

him as lost. When he asked what he could do to pass, one repeated the word from the rest stop: *nothing*. He can't remember what happened to the Volkswagen. He still

has dreams about his missed assignments. His mom went back to driving to her job and never noticed the miles on her car. His work has appeared in food people have

eaten, clean hub caps, stacks of junk mail, cardboard boxes raised 40 feet in the air.

6

The Ford Pinto has a rear mounted gas tank. If the Pinto is hit from the rear at 30 miles per hour, the rear end of the car buckles into the back seat. In such a collision the gas tank bashes against

the differential housing which, with four sharp protruding points, gashes the gas tank and spills out gas. With a spark from anything (including the buckled rear end), the gas bursts into flame.

This is at 30 miles per hour. If the car is hit at 40 miles per hour, there is a very good chance the doors will be jammed and the passengers will burn to death inside. Manufactured between

1971 and 1984, the Pinto was thought of as "Lee's Car." Iacocca's specifications were clear: the car was not to weigh an ounce over 2,000 pounds, or cost a cent over 2,000 dollars. Generally

it takes 43 months to put a car in production. Ford took 25 months to design the Pinto. There were, of course, ways to modify the Pinto to avoid the collision problem. Ford knew they could provide

a fire prevention device in the gas tank. It would have cost 11 dollars per car. But that threatened the goal of 2,000 pounds and 2,000 dollars. At least 500 burn deaths resulted from the Pinto's

gas tank placement. In preproduction planning there was a different location for the gas tank. This is the same location as the Ford Capri. The Capri can withstand rear impacts of 60 miles

an hour because the tank was mounted above the differential. "You miss the point entirely," said an engineer testifying to the Senate, "safety is not the issue. Trunk space is. You have no idea

how stiff the competition is over trunk space. You can only fit one set of golf clubs in the Capri." The expected recovery of installing the device was 49.5 million dollars. The cost of putting

those devices in, spread over the whole run, came to 133 million dollars. Ford valued each human life at just over 200,000 dollars. So the device was never put in. That was the reasoning

involved. That was the world Casey Fuller was born into. And that is where his work first appeared in these poems.

7

Once, while riding home on route 125, in the 5th grade, sharing a green rubbery bus bench on the way back to the trailers, Casey Fuller saw his friend lift up a pant leg, pull down his

sock, and scratch off a brown, dried, penny-sized piece of shit from his calf, which Casey Fuller didn't mention, but just sat there and watched, remaining silent, which, out of the blue, created

a new work for Casey Fuller, one where a sail opened up inside him, one where he would wait 25 years for the wind to die down and write the right words.

8

Then Casey Fuller woke up in a room with a blue bedspread. The covers were slightly tangled, but he remained under a good portion of them except for his left leg. Various things were on the wall. A picture of a girl with a sunflower, a cross-stitched wheelbarrow, a calendar opened to June with a horse eating grass. The carpet was green and there was an oval, burgundy rug by the door. The door was shut. It was by a desk. The desk had various knickknacks on it and several ceramic dogs. A clock was there, too. It was made of brass or painted gold. It had four balls rotating back and forth under a glass jar to show the time. The room smelled bad. Casey Fuller looked down on the carpet and saw why. A big blue bowl was beside the bed filled with vomit. It took a second but Casey Fuller figured the vomit was his. His head hurt. He couldn't find his shoes. His pants were on and that made him happy. He looked around. Casey Fuller had to admit he didn't know where he was. His work appeared behind him in whatever he did the night before. And his job was in front of him, where, after a few minutes to consider it, with one shoe in his hand and no shirt, he had to go up and open it, and walk through that closed door.

9

Casey Fuller once caught on fire. Then Casey Fuller caught on fire again. Then Casey Fuller caught on fire a third time. Each event spreads out over time, unlinked by anything except instances of burning. Looking back, having it out with what he remembers for the final time, searching for the bubbled skin that bears the mark, his whole future condemned to what he'll never be able to see or say, this is how Casey Fuller sees the rest of his life from now on: his whole world spreading out through the seasons, each year bursting then dying, bursting then dying in a conflagration of orange and yellow leaves.

10

Out on Carpenter Road, toward the hills where it ends at Hawk's Prairie, where Casey Fuller once saw a cougar crouched low and disappear into a field owned by the Whitakers, where the speed limit was

50 but there was notoriously never a cop in sight, when the clouds were out and the night was either deep slate or double black, with someone in the passenger side who wasn't used to it, going 80, on the

descent of the second hill (not the first where cows grazed and hang gliders practiced during summer), Casey Fuller liked to cut the lights, shift it into neutral, click off the ignition, and because he liked to hear

the sound of knowing these roads like the back of his hand, roll down the window, feel his body rise up, and coast.

11

Casey Fuller used to cut weight for wrestling. He'd put on thick clothes, dark blues made of cotton, and sit on a hearth near a fire. He'd buy tart pink and green candies that would bring up his spit.

He'd go to Kmart, buy silver suits made of plastic, and run in place like he just landed on the moon. He'd deny himself food and walk out by the corn-colored portables while his friends received ice cream

scoops of spiced meat for lunch. On match days he'd deny himself water and lay outside weight training class covered with a safety mat he would unbutton from the wall. Piss, he'd welcome; shit, he cherished;

vomit came naturally and he was happy to run less laps. Dark blues, tart pinks, yellows, greens—the time seems special now for Casey Fuller. What he remembers is a parade of bright colors and

the eyes of his opponents. A week after state, on a whim, at the yearly banquet, he got on a scale to see how much he weighed. The coach was watching and decided to turn it to a game. Whoever

gained the most from their wrestling weight got a free pizza and was declared the winner. Casey Fuller gained 23 pounds. He came in second to his practice partner, who won state, and went undefeated.

12

Anyone who likes plot will love this story: it's gray, green, brown and starts far off in the sky, but slowly, in the way that long focus gradually begins to move, colors turn to patches, those patches to trees, and

just inside those trees, houses begin, small structures at first, but then much larger homes, substantial dwellings, ones with architectural lines, ones with kept yards near bodies of water where, yes, there she

is, the co-star of this story, a girl named Nikki, who is just now 19, who is closing the door to her Jeep Cherokee, she is flipping down the visor to mirror-check her hair, tamping her lips, buckling in, turning

the ignition over and starting out down the driveway, past the entire soccer field her dad made for her brother, past her two similarly housed suitors who have been best friends since the second grade, past

the dentists and optometrists who commute to Seattle, out of that opulence, out of the sphere where her dad owns the wood mill three towns over, where Casey Fuller's un-lost uncle still works

with his hands, into Casey Fuller's neighborhood, which is nothing more than a semi-circle of single and doublewides, where she opens her door, jumps out, they embrace, and she and Casey Fuller walk

out into the trail behind where he lives, into the woods, where the scene zooms down to a single image, a small circle, a close up of their two held hands.

13

Naked, in bed with his girlfriend, sleeping, covered in a quilt his grandma made him, in a complex called—no shit—The Corporate Apartments, where all windows had a view of other windows, in his

room, in an apartment he shared with a roommate, Casey Fuller heard a slight rustle, some voices, nothing special, then something louder, some yelling, some dishes breaking, then wrestling, fighting,

loud smacks, so he jumped out of bed, opened his door, looked, and saw three men wrestling his roommate to the ground on the living room carpet, pinning her arms behind her back, kneeling her

legs down, tightening a wire tie around her wrists, and Casey Fuller, not knowing who they were, not thinking why they were there, not having any clothes on, his scared penis completely out for

all to see, pulled off the biggest of the three, somehow got him down, had his arm in a tight lock, and seemed to be evening the score until another one of the men pulled out a gun, pointed it casually

at Casey Fuller's chest, and with great calm handed Casey Fuller a stack of stapled papers, which said the men were bounty hunters, they were here for his roommate, this was legal, completely legal,

all of which was on the papers, and all Casey Fuller had to do was read them, which he stood there and did, naked, in that room, as the three men began to haul off his shaking and sobbing roommate,

which was Casey Fuller's completely lost half-sister.

14

Blond, filled with freckles, tall, all elbows, an all-state defender in soccer, from a house way out in Boston Harbor, with a long driveway of his own, with a garage as big as a barn,

without as much ill will as these poems cast him in, in all of Casey Fuller's class photos going back to the 2nd grade, in images that mark their innocence going back to when

their moms dressed them, with a matte gray Toyota Corona in the driveway that Casey Fuller's dad sold his family, that they would use as a commuter instead of a primary car, the person

who would come to shoot Casey Fuller lived a normal life, had a normal name, loved a cat named Muffy, had a dog named Sam, wore his baseball cap with a bent brim and, being

a boy still, seeing so much floating through his world untouched, reached out into that mist, pulled out something silver that perfectly fit the hand, and walked out into the world where

everything was bright and young.

15

A cool night, rainy, deep black, a low fog faint but thick around small bodies of water, so gray and black then, the driver tipsy, stoned, the rows of haze coming up quickly

as the driver presses down on the gas, the person who would come to shoot Casey Fuller sitting beside him, in the back seat, sipping bad beer, in a red and white Ford Explorer,

with a set of subwoofers so loud no one could think, let alone see the mama deer ambling out in front, aimless, innocent, light brown, the driver locking up the bad brakes, but

with no use, a side swipe, in her hind quarter, lifting her, spinning her onto the other side of the road, into a field where, rather than asking if everyone was okay, rather than

pausing and considering their dumb luck, rather than continuing on and just steering it home, the driver whips around, slams it in park, and as near to where the deer

disappeared as possible, pulls something shimmery from the glove compartment, the person who would come to shoot Casey Fuller doing the same from his jacket pocket,

and both, cackling loudly, going out to finish the job of the Explorer's busted bumper, found Casey Fuller, who, looking for a job also, followed, into that field fogged with

haze, ready to receive what was coming his way.

16

Then Casey Fuller got into a fist fight, in a bar, on Christmas Day. He just turned 21, his leg was finally healed from being shot, and he just moved back in with his mom one town over.

His friend Adam's mom went to Chicago for the holidays. So Casey Fuller and his friend Adam had the place to themselves. The place was huge: 3 stories, a massive deck, a barn, a stone trail

leading out to a row boat and a pond. They decided to throw a series of 300 person parties the first week Adam's mom was gone. What Casey Fuller remembers is carrying an English

Wolfhound around while shouting, shooting a real arrow through a fake door, jumping off a banister onto a living room full of drunk, dancing, semi-conscious people. So the second week

Casey Fuller and his friend Adam decided to chill. Covert ops to the liquor store. Large bottles of clear vodka. Darts at Denny's. Small tumblers while the under-aged drove them around.

(This is before Casey Fuller had real work, when what appeared appeared before him palpably.) On Christmas, everything closed down. Adam looked through the Yellow Pages and called all

the bars. One was open. Casey Fuller and Adam drove there post-haste, without a use for Latin in their foreseeable lives. Another man folded his arms in doorway. Words were said. He and

Casey Fuller decided to flare into mythic images. Ripped shirts, rolled eyes, dumb yelling—what can Casey Fuller tell you about those images you haven't heard before? Running,

laughing, limping where he thought he was healed, his hand swelling into a honeyed ham, Casey Fuller's work was to admit it to his friend Adam: today was the day a son of God was born.

17

Casey Fuller once fed green apples to brown horses. Casey Fuller once saw a real wolf. On Carpenter Road, late one night, low and crossing the second hill, Casey Fuller once saw an actual cougar. Once, Casey Fuller's docile mostly housebound kitty, Hailey, hauled a dead rabbit over a 7-foot fence. Once, two stray dogs fought in Casey Fuller's trailer. Once, a Saint Bernard bit Casey Fuller right in the middle of his stomach. One winter a car engine killed two of Casey Fuller's kitties because all they wanted was to stay warm. Casey Fuller once caught tadpoles from a drain ditch and slept with them in a coffee can in his room. At night, while he was sleeping, coyotes would run across Casey Fuller's backyard during summer and they were so close he could hear the pat of their paws punctuate their hysterical yelping. On 4th Avenue, after buying his first computer, Casey Fuller was once stuck in traffic because two gray whales kept swimming under the 4th and 5th Avenue bridges. *Animals*, with one word a life can happen. Searching then failing, finding what's there, looking back for one thing then uncovering another, Casey Fuller's work has always been like that: retrieving what's lost, then attaching his name.

18

Without work, not totally lost but without income coming in, married and deferring his college loans, up early, trying to compensate for what he lacks by making breakfast, sweeping, washing dishes,

cleaning the cat box, folding the laundry, and soaking the black beans he'll make for lunch, on a cold day, the temperature near freezing and a low fog hanging in what's left of the trees, at 7 in the morning,

carrying his wife's bike down the stairs because a bike plus two panniers requires affection, snapping her helmet strap, telling her he loves her, reminding her to take her time so she stays safe, his arms

akimbo, admiring her as she begins her 6-mile commute into the heart of the city, still somewhat out in the road, with a woman and her yellow lab walking on the sidewalk behind him, watching him

watch his wife pedal away, in his only pair of sweatpants, with the woman behind him smiling then saying "I love Portland" as she passes by, simply because of what she can see from the scene, the life

Casey Fuller and his wife are leading, where anyone watching can say those three words, and by saying them have those words surrounded in a poem, surrounded by other poems, and have those

poems bound and held together in a book about the work.

.

19

And yet so much still remains: still bright, saturated and ready for the right moment to arrange on the page. So much remains left unsaid. And yet what can ever be done: each brightness fading,

each color graying, each room ashing over with what could only be described as clouds. So much, so many directions, never enough time, never the right words... Here is the last thing Casey Fuller

will say about his life lived in these poems: remember how Casey Fuller used to drop his mom off and tell her he was going to school, then drive off into the world without a destination at all? One day

he felt like going to the ocean. Almost in anticipation, almost as if by looking back it was all part of a plan, he saved his lunch money for three days so he'd have enough gas. It was still cold, an early

spring, the camera zoomed out as wide as it would go to take in what he was seeing. The horizon was silver tinged with wisps of blue behind light brown clouds. He was there. All the earth before him

was sand. Then, without knowing why, without wondering who was there to see, without regard for what he was wearing, without a strategy, after looking at the waves rolling green on green

on green, Casey Fuller did what you hoped he'd do, and walked out into the entire ocean.

Casey Fuller grew up in a trailer park in Olympia, Washington. He was a terrible student in high school and had to take early morning weight training to get enough credit to pass. After stints at rolling burritos, washing cars, and delivering mail, Casey Fuller thought the idea of going to college might be pretty okay. So he went to junior college, and then The Evergreen State College, both in Olympia also. At Evergreen, Casey found that he enjoyed reading long books and writing obscure papers without understanding tradition. But also at Evergreen, Casey Fuller took classes on Shakespeare, myth, the essay, political economy, cognitive science, evolutionary biology, and Robinson Jeffers. It was pretty amazing for Casey Fuller. Eventually he stayed too long and they told him to get out. All of this prepared Casey for a job at The State where he opened envelopes all day and stamped their insides with one word: RECEIVED. This turned out well for Casey Fuller because he could continue to think far thoughts and read *The Critique of Pure Reason*. Eventually, Casey Fuller was promoted to the warehouse where he was alone most of the time and took to listening to books on tape. This, too, turned out well because Casey Fuller found there was enough time at the warehouse to go to school while listening to his tapes also. So he went to school for writing and wrote poems between spells of moving cubicle panels and forklifting boxes of forms. Other things happened as they always do and Casey Fuller decided to quit The State and retire to The People's Republic of Portland, Oregon. Along the way, Casey Fuller got two cats and a wife, a couch, a bed. Things stacked up in a room. Of course, there is always so much to say. Casey Fuller loves so much. He walks up to animals and embraces them freely. He enjoys biking, the wind on his limbs. So much. The smallest thing can shake him forever. There is never enough time, never the right word. So much, even those two words, even right now so much is coming right at him.

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